

= Janina San Miguel =

Janina Miller San Miguel ( born November 14 , 1990 ) is a Filipino beauty queen who was crowned Binibining Pilipinas World at the Binibining Pilipinas 2008 beauty pageant . She gained notoriety for her performance in the pageant 's question and answer portion , where she lost her composure and gave an unfocused and rambling response with a thick accent . A video of the incident has garnered millions of views on websites such as YouTube .

San Miguel resigned from her title in September 2008 , citing personal reasons including the death of her grandfather . The title was transferred to first runner up Danielle Castaño , who went on to represent the country at the Miss World 2008 pageant .

= = Background = =

Janina San Miguel came from a poor family living in a residential compound in Quezon City , Metro Manila . She is the eldest of three children , with her father working as a jeepney driver and her mother as a laundry washer or " labandera " ( hired to wash other people 's clothes ) . She has Indian blood among her ancestors .

At the time of the Binibining Pilipinas 2008 pageant , San Miguel was a freshman student taking up broadcast communication at the University of the East in Manila , with the ambition of becoming a professional broadcaster . She had previously garnered first runner @-@ up at her school 's Mister and Miss UE pageant , and said she joined the Binibining Pilipinas competition to gain " experiences , new friends and opportunities " .

= = Binibining Pilipinas = =

The 2008 Binibining Pilipinas pageant was held on March 8 , 2008 at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City , Metro Manila . At seventeen years old , Janina San Miguel was the youngest contestant of the twenty @-@ four women in the competition , as well as one of the tallest at 5 ft 11 in ( 180 cm ) . Early in the competition , San Miguel had won special awards for Best in Swimsuit and Best in Long Gown .

= = = Question and answer = = =

As part of the question and answer portion of the pageant , candidates were made to randomly select the name of their questioner @-@ judge out of a fishbowl . The name that San Miguel picked was that of Vivienne Tan , who asked " What role did your family play for you as candidate to Binibining Pilipinas ? "

San Miguel responded :

As San Miguel lost her composure in giving her answer , the audience reacted with jeers and applause , as well as laughter from the panel of judges and other contestants . Midway through her answer , pageant host Paolo Bediones encouraged her off @-@ microphone to continue in Tagalog , though she proceeded with her response in English .

Despite the problems with her answer , she went on to win the competition and was crowned Binibining Pilipinas World . The criteria for judging the winner of the pageant allotted 80 percent to physical beauty , leaving just 20 percent to be divided evenly between personality and intelligence . Bediones later defended San Miguel , saying " I admire her for not buckling under the pressure and for being as blatantly honest as possible " . However , he also added , " No matter how badly she may have performed in the Q & A , she couldn 't have lost much considering she had a huge headstart in the scores " . Winning the title made her the official designated Philippine delegate to the Miss World 2008 pageant , which was scheduled to be held later that year in Kiev , Ukraine ( the venue was later moved to Johannesburg , South Africa due to the conflict between Georgia and Russia ) .

San Miguel has admitted to being offended by criticism of her response . In an interview with

entertainment commentator Ricky Lo a week after the event , she explained that she did not comprehend the question clearly when she was on stage at the pageant , due to the softness of the questioner 's voice . When given another opportunity to answer the same question , she smiled and said , " My family is my inspiration " .

= = = Reaction = = =

Video clips of her response have been uploaded to YouTube and garnered over 3 million views . Rep. Eduardo Gullas , a senior lawmaker in the Philippine House of Representatives who authored a bill to reinstate English as the medium of instruction in schools , said the video of the incident was " tormenting to watch " , and added , " She is a Filipino , and English is our highly favored second language . So people expected more from her . " Following the incident , the director of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority offered to coordinate with pageant organizers to conduct English courses for all Miss Philippines candidates to better express themselves .

San Miguel 's response has drawn comparisons between her and Melanie Marquez , Filipina winner of the 1979 Miss International pageant who is well @-@ known for her shortcomings in speaking English .

= = = Resignation = = =

It was announced on September 30 , 2008 that Janina San Miguel had resigned her position of Binibining Pilipinas World . A short official statement released by Binibining Pilipinas Charities said " The untimely demise of her grandfather , among other personal reasons , has caused her undue stress , thus hindering her from fulfilling her duties for the said title " . Her resignation came 6 1 ? 2 months after winning the title , and just 2 1 ? 2 months before the scheduled Miss World pageant .

The announcement of her resignation was met with speculation that San Miguel had been forced by Binibining Pilipinas pageant organizers to relinquish her title due to a lack of professionalism during preparatory training sessions , which strained the patience of her mentors and superiors . In a later interview , she admitted that due to multiple conflicts in schedule she was unable to attend all the training sessions arranged for her by pageant organizers , which included sessions to improve her speaking ability . She also admitted to throwing a fit in the middle of a rehearsal when she received news that her grandfather was dying , and demanded that she be allowed to leave .

In accordance with pageant rules , San Miguel 's title was automatically transferred to the first runner up , Danielle Castaño . Castaño represented the Philippines at the Miss World 2008 pageant held in Johannesburg , South Africa in December 2008 , where she placed as a finalist in the Miss World Beach Beauty fast track event and a semi @-@ finalist in the Miss World Top Model fast track event .

= = Entertainment career = =

San Miguel was strongly considered for a role as a contestant in the second season of the reality television series Survivor Philippines , which began filming in May 2009 . Though one of the show 's criteria is that the contestants must not be celebrities , San Miguel was not regarded to be a celebrity by the show 's producers . Show host Paolo Bediones ( who incidentally also hosted the Binibining Pilipinas pageant ) explained in an interview that she was a shoo @-@ in for the part , but decided to back out at the last minute .

In August 2009 , San Miguel became a contestant in the third season of Celebrity Duets : Philippine Edition . In the season 's first three episodes , she performed duets with Maureen Larrazabal , Bituin Escalante , and Paolo Ballesteros . However , she garnered the lowest number of text votes in the first round of eliminations , and became the first contestant voted off of the show on September 12 , 2009 .

San Miguel has stated that she is refraining from focusing full time on her entertainment career due to her ongoing studies , though she continues to work on her figure in preparation for modeling

opportunities . On October 23 , 2009 , she was one of the ten finalists in the Philippine qualifying round of the Ford Models Supermodel of the World modeling contest , which was held at the SMX Convention Center in Pasay . She advanced to the top three , but the contest was won by Charlene Almarvez , who went on to win first @-@ runner up to Karlina Caune of the Baltics in the Supermodel of the World finals held in São Paulo , Brazil .