



Tuesday, April 24, 2007

My Grandfather


A Dedication to my Grandfather
-Stewart

My Grandfather

When my mother was ten, my grandmother married a Filipino immigrant: Bartolome Aledo (Bart). He was my only real role model of manhood; and I am blessed to have had him. He taught me unconditional love, sacrifice, and the honor and dignity of work. For his adopted family, he worked himself to the the bone.

Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* describes a seemingly frail, quiet old fisherman - possessed of a hidden, bottomless well of stoic endurance and to the marrow strength, borne of sheer will; my grandfather was such a man. The small, seemingly frail Filipino worked endless years of back-breaking farm labor, from the moment he stepped off the boat in 1929 till his 77th birthday in 1987. He wore himself down to literally nothing - except raw sinew sheathed in skin like thin leather-and he did it gladly, for his family.

Most people cannot comprehend work like that. Visualizing the life of the Chinese railway worker is, perhaps, the closest they will come to understanding. Most people, if they did not die from it, would lie down and *wish* for death after a couple of months of that kind of labor. My grandfather did it all his life with a big, false tooth grin-while calmly looking all he met right in the eye, as equals. Down inside, he knew that in his world, the world of hard work, he was King, and his family was, for him, the treasure that made him as wealthy as anyone alive.

Posted by Stewart Rhodes at 11:35 AM 

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