



**TRAIL OF UNFULFILLED DREAMS**

**BY**

**REBECCA ALVAREZ**



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### **\*\*\* Trail of Unfulfilled Dreams \*\*\***

*Dear Reader,*

*I am so pleased to introduce my second book which has always a special place in my heart recalling the lives of my close departed relatives. I belong to a large family and there were countless events of the past that became alive in this book particularly from those who passed away long ago. I was inspired and stimulated to write from the perplexing and incomprehensible facts of human differences. **Trail of Unfulfilled Dreams** is the essay of their daring love-life, their fears, their miseries and other love disasters as their life went on. This book constitutes a personal selection of my various researches of eulogies reflections of relatives and friends based on their life experience and a great horde of some trivia-love-affairs, which I knew or had heard from family stories. The underlying stories were based on true facts, most of the true characters had passed away and the names are pseudonyms out of respect of the dead.*

*"The dead do not need to rise.*

*They are a part of the earth now and the earth can never be conquered for the earth endures forever, it will outlive all systems of tyranny. Those who have entered it honourably, and no men entered earth more honourably than those who died in the war and pain have already achieved immortality.*

*This involved an amusing search which I would fain more fully commemorate; since it took me a great degree, and instructive form of an enquiry into some of my families 'old nobody's interested notes and journals'.*

*"True, I talk of dreams,  
Which are the children of an idle brain,  
Begot nothing but vain fantasy".*

*And, yes, I've been bringing their lives back in my dream from time to time and they always hold a very special corner in my heart. I hope you enjoy reading.*

*Yours Truly,*

*Rebecca Alvarez*

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\*\*\* *About the Author* \*\*\*

Rebecca Alvarez - Pseudonym - born in September 27, 1946

Educational Background: Six Years Elementary & Secondary School, Four Years High School -SI Academy, Four Years College in University of Lyceum, Manila, Finished degree of Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service. Migrated to Austria in October 1973 – 1976 worked as Foreign Language Secretary, hired by E. Schicht & Company, Wels, Upper Austria, Nature of business, Import-Export of Fashion Jewellery.

June 1977 – November 1977 – Hired by the Austrian Consulate in Montreal, Canada. Worked at the International Trade Fair; “The Man and His World” as Austrian Booth Hostess.

December 1977 till July 1978 Employed as Medical Secretary by Doctor Mangubat in New Brunswick, Canada.

August 1978 back to Europe, worked in Germany till mid- January 1979. Back to Austria

February 1979 back to Vienna, Austria worked as Sales Staff Arts Division with Omega GmbH in Vienna, from February 1979 to January 1980.

April 1980 till December 2007 worked with Erba Science GmbH Vienna, Export/Import Dept. later Entity changed to Fisons Instruments, Thermoquest GmbH, then changed to Thermo Electron then to Thermo-Fisher Scientific Instruments.

In March 1981- till to date Married to Wilhelm Karlberg (Pseudonym) an Austrian, Bio-Chemist in Profession likewise worked with the same above Company from 1978 till 2018. I retired middle of 2007 and began the Writing Hobby.

November 2017 – Ten days On Writing Retreat Workop in Bosloe Cornwall UK

September 2018 – On Line Training – Plot and Structure, Techniques and exercises for crafting a plot. How to Grow a Novel, Sol Stein on Writing and Structuring a Novel, Essential Keys for Writing an Outstanding Story.



### \*\*\* **Author's Note** \*\*\*

Books became my passion and reading my obsession, they had the power to deliver me from my clumsy life to magical places where rules were fair and everyone was equal. I devoured biographies and stories of skilled authors to find out how they went about their craft. I had read stories of happiness and wonder, of pain and fear, morality and sexuality, some with religion, education, of survival and triumph, of the land and its people's life -history and some just plain personal.

Each chapter in Trail of Unfulfilled Dreams contains mixture pieces of varying lengths and moods, written in different context. I build up this book to my explanatory power and its profound implications of myself and my view of the world. The narrow domestic walls that habited tradition and prejudice that had erected between lives of different individuals. I think that a great part of my book is good-humoured, perhaps even humorous. These are series of various fantastic forbidden affairs, a teasing outdoor adventures; a substantial collection of erotic experiences and most of these stories are formed by a comic sweetness; the humour that are grounded in human nature. My preference for dealing with my subject matter, for "seeing my story", through the opportunity and the sensibility of some more or less detached, several characters in this book are not strictly involved, owe their names although no physical or personality traits are all fictional.

It is my nature that when anything unusual occurred, my natural curiosity could swiftly evolve into suspicion. There was something deeper in my own character, a need to get to the sources of the matter, to learn not just what happened but how. Above all to know why, to understand the human dynamics behind the choices of decisions that had been made. If I learn the roots of the matter, my restless imagination isn't satisfied until I can build the answers, to present them objectively and passionately.

*Although some of the matter didn't really involve me personally. I love writing to my own satisfaction, it helped keep me sane and agile.*

*"It's a writer's job to imagine everything so personally that is as vivid as our personal memories.*

### \*\*\* Introduction \*\*\*

It was a great time for people during the sixties, in which to be living, enjoying the music of the Beatles, The Doors, The Mamas and the Papas, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, The Beach Boys, The Rolling Stones and many others. *The Age of Aquarius, it was the decade of Sexy Sixties. Sexual Liberation was the mood of the day. The AIDS nightmare was some years in the future. In America people hip to read underground newspapers, go to underground parties, and listen to underground music. Flower Power, Free Love and psychedelic experience were in vogue.* Women all over America and Europe were engaged in the *Sexual Revolution. The Pill was having an immense psychological impact* on how women viewed their sex lives. It would take years to evaluate the effect the pill had on society. Women were making inroads into what was once considered a man's work. It wasn't too difficult to get a job and it certainly wasn't difficult to spend money. For many, it was rough and frightening time in which to be living. There was the war in Vietnam where so many lives were lost. Kids who had never heard of Vietnam were drafted into services sent there and never to return. Many Americans of all colours were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. There was rioting in some cities where scores of buildings were burned to the ground; many never rebuilt. There are people who got caught up in the drug culture. It was the decade of change, the decade of turmoil and upheaval. While some thought it was a great time, others thought they were in the suburbs of Gomorrah. For the rest of the world America was a free country, a cradle of modern democracy and the home of the rights of Man.

Far East Asia wasn't dramatically affected but struggled and made the best what was left over of the Second World War. Maharlika the spice island of the East most of the south Atlantic considered pearl of the orient, an archipelago of islands stretching over thousand miles to the sunny oriental tropical seas. In pre-colonial times the inhabitant of this island called themselves Maharlikans. The island was under the Spanish colony till the Americans helped them to be free and gained their independence in 1945. Most of the ruling middle class spoke Spanish till today. Their main nutrition is mainly rice and vegetables, the productivity of fruits, pigs and wild buffaloes allowed some variation of diet. The island is remarkably green and fertile with forests where five hundred species of birds fly through the air of the island, fern and staggering variety of plants is alive with exotic flowers. The island was governed by Spanish influence politically and religiously till nearly the end of eighteenth hundred. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century there were many European settlers and various races came to Maharlika, missionaries, traders, farmers and many others scattered at different islands to settle down. In the absence of official records it was assumed that there were four Delarosa brothers among those traders. The settlers who mostly came from Spain considered Maharlika as their home and started to build their life. At the beginning of nineteenth century one of the Delarosa brothers, Felipe Delarosa married a maiden Delia Plata from the small province called Capri where they settled made their living in farming. The weather suited to raise cattle they planted fruit trees and sold their crops to the neighbouring towns. There was no winter in this part of Asia only rainy and earthquake season, the young Felipe was blessed with his farming and was successful in his trade.

He was fortunate to earn good money bought more lands, hired several helpers created jobs for those poor people from Capri. He became a trader after a good harvest sold his product in larger scale and was able to support the growing family. The other three Delarosa brothers settled down in the nearby town called Trivago.

#### *The Delarosa Clan – Nine Boys and three Girls*

The name Felipe Delarosa was then a legend and very well known in all the nearby towns. He stick to the conventional rule to help those who are less blessed and this rule became the centre of his gravity, he was proud of himself to be the giver. Since those day's people were deep down religious they considered having many children are blessings and graces granted by God, therefore it wasn't absurd that as time marches on unnoticed, Felipe and Delia had twelve children three of them were female and the rest were male. It was amazingly incredible how a tender woman like Delia could bear twelve children, in her declining age Delia stopped bearing children. In those days precautions weren't a word and defying the need of a husband is probably impossible, rearing children were their great connection with the world and its most felicitous and spiritual. It was no servitude since it informs everything and enables them to inhabit and enjoy all they touch and looked upon. Felipe built a house to let his children have each little space. The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything, they just make the most of it that comes along their way. Those times when life gives you a hundred reasons to cry, they showed life that you have a thousand reasons to smile. In the end it's not going to matter as long as you have your family around you. Delia was a virtuous woman, she was a prize beyond rubies she was like the queen Mom. She runs their house and kitchen with surprisingly precision. Parents those days don't plan the future of their children, there's no word like 'important aspect in life' children grow without grievances or resentment, they were just happy to be in a large family. Felipe trained his boys to be a trader to follow his footsteps, **but not all nine boys wanted the farmer life** so as time left their childhood and became adult, they tried to find their own way of life.

Delia Delarosa mother of twelve children knew this very well that someday her children especially her boys won't stay with them till the end of time, they would go to some other places of the world to explore. They won't stick together all their lives but stay in contact. When children detached from their parents mostly mothers who purely suffered without consolations (Locos Parentis), when the children went to strange places, the dread and fear how they deal with their life away from home. However, Fathers are more tolerant in this regard, in fact they inspired their children to venture, it would be alright to set their children free, especially to his sons, to face their own battle as long as they learn and obtain an *occupation to be proud of* that would be the necessary instrument of survival, that could support themselves and their future family. Those days Mothers were more protective not to let their kids escape from their wings but they couldn't keep their children under control especially when they became adults.



## ***The twelve Children of Felipe & Delia Delarosa and their Grandchildren:***

Manuel Delarosa married to Risa Palmer;	Children: Walter & Edith
Gloria Delarosa married to George Delmar;	Children: Manuel, Babylon, Dude, Hilda, Delia
Laura Delarosa married to Carlos Espinosa	Children: Elizabeth, Eduardo, Adelina, Chris
Rosso Delarosa married to Leticia Nunez;	Children: Vance, Gino, Gerald, Benny, Jessica
Medio Delarosa married to Saria Villars;	Children: Marbella, John, Lyra, Jen, Cel, Rem
Julio Delarosa married to Chita Lumpert;	Children: Gisela, Nena, Rene, Lolita, Alfredo
Suzy Delarosa married to Baste Olmert;	Children: Elmer, Lazio, Ulysses and Rumelia
Nardo Delarosa married to Panna Tajo;	Children: Benjie and Bella
Perry Delarosa married to Sonia Jordan;	Children: Bruno, Calvin, Teddy
Peter Delarosa married to Betty Banes;	Child Only son John
Conrad Delarosa married to Clara Montez;	Children: Tania, Penny and Jeffrey
Denice Delarosa remained Bachelor	later married to Harriet Evans

At the later years their children married and had children that seemed enough to inhabit the whole island. Time rushes like the sun that all male Delarosa became handsome young men of their days. They were all breed from a good stock, entirely different individuals with different characters, different ambitions and different dreams for their future. When they became older reached the age to detach from their parents and parental house settled in different countries as nature dictated, each of them had changed their personality. However, they never forgot to bear in mind what their parents Felipe and Delia taught them when they were kids, the good moral; the religious conviction of catholic faith, dignity, respect and honesty. They were aware that social considerations can shape history. The past taught them that a village, a town or a city, no matter how large, is only as good as *the people who lead it*. The real leaders, not just the ceremonial frontmen could change the world into a better place to live. *Does realism go with good birth? (Ad Infinitum)*

Therefore as their parent's words in God's ears, all the Delarosa men thanks to their proper upbringing, they all became good law abiding honest citizens wherever they reside in their later life. The mere fact that all nine Delarosa boys were born gifted and handsome, it was natural that women run after them and those were the days when men wanted virgin-brides, or the kind that men fancied. All of them married the woman they love became dedicated husbands and good fathers. They weren't womanizers or howl women to bed for an hour fun. On the other hand they weren't born Saints, their mother Delia Delarosa a morally hygienic woman somehow taught them to be good husbands but then again some of them couldn't resist temptations from attractive maniacal women. In real sense of the word they were alpha and omega men if given opportunity they make use of it. Ergo they had messy love affairs that turned into intolerable degree of family problem. Jealousy is the most involuntary strong emotions, it steals the consciousness it lies deeper than thought. How could one continue a partnership when one of the partners was capable of a long, insidious remorseless betrayal? But all Delarosa women were reasonably forgiving, patient, kept going, stick to their husbands through thick and thin till the end of their days. Unbelievable but sad to be true.

### \*\*\* Chapter One \*\*\*

*'Gloria Delarosa Married to George Delmar' 1st daughter of Felipe and Delia Delarosa*

It was a warm shining day when the distant rumble of an engine drew Gloria to the window and saw her eldest son Manuel arriving with his new conquest in tow. She smiled and all the members of the family were curious to know who might be the young beautiful woman. They were both affectionate to each other and more receptive to affection. Gloria Delmar a sixty two year old widow of George Delmar her husband who died in his late sixties in a car accident left his wife five children and a tiny inheritance to feed them. There were two sons Manuel twenty seven the eldest, Dude twenty three and three daughters Babylonia twenty five, Hilda twenty and Della eighteen. All Delmar lived in Maharlika half of their lives. The two story concrete house of Gloria Delmar economically furnished was fully inhabited always a busy hour during breakfast and dinner. Gloria was still a pleasant looking lady at her age, an outright resolute woman a beauty of her day who was extremely engaged attending the whole bunch. The management of daily household brigade was a heavy task, she sees to it that the fridge always filled up, that no one goes out of the house hungry. Of course it won't be long that her boys will unhook from their mother's skirt, detach from their parents and would be on their own. Gloria's heart ache when thinking that moment will come when a member of the family leave the house for good for whatever reason. *There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and let the future in.* It seemed she hated to see them go but loved to see them leave to face the future and live their own life.

Manuel at his late twenties an extraordinary specimen, a good-looking and lovely figure of a man, daring, tall, brown skin, charming love-me-eyes was part of his sweet personal asset. The meeting, knowing of women, girls in the university was his normal life. He had few crashes but no steady or serious relationship, concentrate his studies to reach his goal. But women love him, at his time he was the flavour of the year, it was a real challenge for the female species to conquer him. During their University Ball which was always held before the semester end there were always surprises for those who graduated scholars especially for the male students. The event was held in the University hall and the event organizer sees to it that the hired catering produced the best delicacies of the country. *The males were in their tuxedos and females were in their stunning evening gowns so much so it was the night of their nights.* Most of the party guests were family members, relatives and close friends of the graduating alumni. Love was on the air, band gave out the right dancing music. Everybody were on their rejoicing mood, just watching the young people in their overwhelming hour was indescribable. Most of them were sons of fortune and daughters of silk-stockinged world. Their parents were folks of quality, delighted that their dreams for their sons and daughters became reality. The evening was mild warm and the caterer were in roaring trade, everybody enjoying the buffet, after dinner there was a sort of program and show, then dance for all the graduates, the most awaited exhilarating hour for the fabulous men and gorgeous young women.

Manuel's exhilarating moment when he was introduced to the surprise number of the evening, a young beautiful Lina Salcedo, a twenty four years old fresh discovered cinema actress who was invited as special guest of the event. She was the star-focus of the hour, male students were thrilled to take their turn to dance with her. Standard height of 1,7 and a breath-taking catwalk figure, black silky long hair, fair baby skin, beautiful green eyes with those long natural lashes like wings, gracious and a real beauty of her time. She didn't need to wear much make-up, there are indeed human being born with extraordinary beauty and talent. She was absolutely one of them. It seemed she did enjoy being surrounded with so many handsome career aspirants who someday will become somebody. As a bonus she was a product from a good stock with an ambitious stunning Mother Lucia Salcedo a former Miss Universe, Father Greg Salcedo an industrialist successful Bank Owner. An awesome couple who belongs to the upper ten thousand of Maharlika. As honey to the pie Lucy's father own a textile factory and Exporter. Lina's only Brother Henry Salcedo aspiring Medical Doctor, the family is complete. A huge Villa in the country side where crème du la crème often invited to dine. The high society, actors, actresses and Politicians of the Island were always around at their luxurious parties. Therefore influential connections were at hand and Lina's publicity is taken cared. *"Wer hat der hat" He who had money had everything. Money doesn't stink and speak all languages.*

Lina danced like a professional dancer, it was amazing to look at when she swished back her long curly hair over her shoulders, threw up her chin so that the boys could see her cleft chin pointing straight to her dance partner. Her eyes slanted above the wide high cheek bones, they glittered like a rough sea under a harsh sun. She was unbelievably beautiful like her mother. The night went on till the sun started to shine in the early morning and before Lina took off Manuel was able to get a *definite* **YES** for a soonest rendezvous. It was like a bullet that struck his brain like an arrow that hit him right in the centre of his heart. He stopped breathing for a second asked himself, is this what is called love-at-first-sight? No doubt of it he was in-love and wasn't able to put her out of his system ever since the party, she occupies his mind day and night. Manuel was hit like a nuclear energy hooked himself and felt she's interested in him. He was restless thinking that she is the one to be his future wife to get old with. His rabid feeling like a teenager who fall in love for the first time was ridiculous for his twenty seven years. Eventually she wasn't a bad catch though a college under graduate instead she went to an acting school to be a movie star and seemed successful. At the time she was always in the tableau as aspiring actress on her way up to be famous. However few days before the day they're going to meet Manuel had sleepless nights he was in euphoria, scared sick, worried, nervous whether he is good enough for her or he won't be valued by her parents. Courage and good humour were the breath of the day. Finally the day came, he picked her up for a candle light dinner at the best restaurant in town. In his smart coat with elegant tie as if he's attending a summit conference, Lina in her gorgeous channel suit, short skirt as if she will go to an important job interview which of course very chic and daringly attractive.

The evening was warm and the ambient was intimately cosy. Before the appetizer drink they talked about their childhood days, her plans and family affairs. By the time the first course being serve the subject were about his University days, his career and his family. By the time the desert was served the subject was about his future plans to go abroad. After their dinner they went to a first class club where Lina's father is a member, before the night was over the next date was being noted and scheduled. It was a lovely evening dropped her home and they kissed on the cheek goodbye. She saw him how he stared at her with love and deep interest since he had glanced at her leg with full admiration. She had the same feeling towards him, when two people clicked and the alchemy intertwined you don't need many words to express each other's feelings. He woes her like she was a princess. Manuel didn't take a hard time to call Lina's attention, his imagination to become his wife was at the moment is vague. The fact that 'Water seeks its own level' meaning her rich parents must have an imaginative figure of someone coming from a rich and famous to be their son-in-law, bothers Manuel's mind. He needed to speak the definite word to her that he love her and wanted to marry her, live with her happily ever-after (*dum in finem vite*) until the end of our days. *"It's every man's nightingale to celebrate the glory of the moment"*

After their second date they became an item, eventually they still have a certain stumbling block how would Lina's parents react. But she's surely confident that her parents won't disagree Manuel Delmar to become their son-in-law. The excruciating part of the process whether her parents accept Manuel since he was just a middle class fatherless guy. He doesn't come from a rich and mighty family. He studied hard, made himself to be someone someday, he wasn't a sensational prince charming but very much alive and had a *compus mentis*. It's known that if you're a son from a father worth millions, most women view you in a completely different light. *Unfortunately Manuel wasn't one of those sons of fortunes*. But he was convinced and believe that Lina Salcedo love him just what he is, she has a big brain on top of that little body. Manuel waited and see if impossible become possible.

*'Manuel Proposed to Lina'* The Salcedo family had an intimidatingly exotic air, the grand and grandparents had Spanish genes, they were in absolute sense of the word brought up in such a way bit snobbish to others that doesn't belong to their class and crowd. It was hard for Manuel's family to join such fortunate people, the moments of truth that privately they don't play the same league of the superlatives. It was like fire and water, nevertheless Lina wasn't very much worry about their situation, but Manuel's family did, especially his younger sisters. Anyhow both families doesn't need to stick together, they can get rid or get out of their way in non-threatening manner. Gloria with the whole family rejoiced of Manuel's choice but Mama Gloria said, Son you should establish yourself first before thinking of anything like getting married. You are still young and there's no hurry to settle down. These words sunk in but at the back of his mind he doesn't want any of it delaying his plan to marry Lina. Manuel was a very sensible man, behaved like he took over the role of his father. After his graduation he got his first job in a well-known chemical institute, earned his first money, then wait for a while and proposed to Lina.

Although he had nothing like properties or rich parents to show, he provoked his luck like a poker game. They had been dating and making love was always a part of it. Then the result wasn't surprising that Lina missed her period, it doesn't need a guessing game she is carrying his baby. Without spilling the beans to anyone, they kept their secret for a while. They arranged a meeting with her parents, before the scheduled time Manuel had been so nervous what would be the outcome. Anyway, he was in his elegant attire, parked his car in front of the huge Villa and Lina came running to meet him introduced him to her parents. He was welcomed in a wonderfully furnished living room, space like a whole floor of a hotel, then offered a drink a margarita to relax his nerve. After the small talk, he went directly to what he came for proposed to ask for Lina's hand. *The only thing he could offer to Lina and her parents was that; he is an aspiring chemist wished to proceed his doctorate and further studies as a lawyer in America.* One day he'd be a pride of his wife and family. It was like a death sentence either Lina's parents drop him or accept him. Manuel's body was shuddering while waiting for Lina's parent's verdict. Astoundingly they didn't have any objection to his proposal to marry their daughter. He was one of the brightest student in the university and earned his scholarship, a weapon to go abroad so no one could stop him. Lina was delighted in all of Manuel's plan and very much pleased to be his right and left hand. Manuel floated to the seventh heaven, he thought he would strive more to prove to Lina and give her what she is worth. Love was burning on the air, they couldn't keep their hands off from each other. So much so they would tie the knot as both party agreed the date for their wedding. A memorable exciting day of their life, it was a sad feeling for Manuel's siblings to loss their brother and would belong to a family which wasn't their kind. They were sad and happy at the same time. His mother wept when Manuel told her how the future looks like. Gloria was very sentimental person, she could never get along with Lina's parents and relatives due to language barrier. The Salcedo's mostly speak Spanish and English, Gloria only speaks the Maharlikan vernacular, therefore there's no need to think like they won a relative, they are absolutely strangers to each other. The primary thing Manuel and Lina were happy.

#### *'Manuel Delmar and Lina Salcedo's Grand Wedding'*

Of course the luxurious wedding is being planned by a famous wedding organizer of the city. Manuel's mother Gloria was speechless to hear all the arrangements without involving his family, told his mother that everything is taken cared by a professional wedding planner. Gloria had no way to object on any of the foregoing event, Manuel was in his marriageable age so he didn't need necessary parental permission. When all was said, for a certain moment his siblings were switched into mute modus, they had nothing to say about anything about the wedding preparations. The wedding planner was in roaring trade to comply all the wishes of the bride as well as her parents. Manuel was in truly sense was the Groom and nothing more which he accepted with poise. All things were pretty sure being worked out down to every tiny detail by the planner and no one could interfere in or invoke or object to what they are doing. The red carpet where flower leafs with glittering sequence rolled out from the church entrance thirty meters long way up to where the bride and groom sited, the beautiful decorated aisle made the picture.

The day was warm and the sun shines like the heavenly radiance joined the happy hour of their life. The in and out of the church were decorated like a town fiesta in a Spanish tradition. Lina's gorgeous bridal gown designed especially for her from an *au couture a la Parisienne*, make-up was simply perfect, she didn't need much, she looks like a true princess and the bridal bouquet was made especially out of fresh various colours of roses. The groom's tuxedo had been made to order perfectly tailored, fitted him like a prince, the bridal entourage a platoon of young bride's maids in their marvellous gowns with those six sweet little girls in their long white dress carrying baskets full of flower petals, two cute little boys in tuxedo as ring bearers. The regiment of extremely handsome good-looking best men in their best elegant tuxedos. Their wedding attire were indescribably fabulous that curious seekers and outsiders' crowded all over outside the church just to witness such event. Few smart couples who served as wedding witnesses sited on the first row. The officially hired aggressive photographers and reporters were strictly instructed when the exact time they do their job. The ceremony officiated by a Bishop together with his army of crew also hired by Lina's father, surely a palatable donation to the church was set aside. To complete the entire wedding razzmatazz were the battalion of Aunts and Uncles all of them called Salcedo, part or some of them came right straight from Spain and the United States. To complete the wedding ensemble Lina's parents Greg and Lucy Salcedo came with their best attire who looked like member of the royals. Of course all Manuel's family and few selected close relatives were invited with their simple outfit compared with a 'vanguard Salcedo group. The Delmar bunch looked like as if they were a part of the Salcedo's household crew who were given privilege to have their seat at the church side row were partly intimidated to witness such extravagant wedding. The air smelt honey and money.

Babs, Manuel's sister with her long gown made of taffeta with her long hair pushed up and her bit thick applied make-up appeared like Madame Pompadour who's going to explain something to her underdogs where God lives. She too was born beautiful but she couldn't compete with Lina's young beauty. She sat beside her mother Gloria in her conservative fine dress who seemed to look sad instead of being joyful at the other side of the row. The whole church was full of elegantly dressed invited guests and of course the well-wishers. Last but not least the Salcedo's hired the best famous singer in town who gave her allegory and repertoire the holy song AVE MARIA as part of the ceremony. Most women in the church became sentimental, tears rolling, some of them really sobbed that messed, spoiled their make-up. This was always a part mostly in weddings. The sensual part of the process was the kiss of the bride that all people rejoiced. In front of the church they built an Arc in heart shape, on top of it were tiny bubbles and a pair of white love birds hidden inside. *By the time the couple went out by the door the arc automatically opened the birds flew out spreading some love messages on the air and the rain of rice, coins and petals scattered towards the bride and groom as a symbol of luck to have enough to eat, more money and many children.* Afterwards the bride turned her back and threw her bridal bouquet backwards and was caught by one of the bride's maid as usual. At the end it was like watching a *Hollywood film a wedding made in heaven*, is every woman's dream. *The couple could have said "We did" since she's already pregnant instead of saying "I Do"*

The wedding reception was held in a huge hotel venue occupying three hundred people. There was a choreographer who commanded when and what to do next during the event; the cutting of the wedding cake, the show, the opening dance etc. The hotel offered the best cuisine in town where delicious dishes made the table. All the tables and chairs were covered, decorated in white, the table setting was like a dinner in Buckingham Palace. When all guests were seated, before the first serving Lina's father Greg Salcedo still good-looking in his late fifties gave the first wedding reception speech, then the big applause followed by her brother Henry Salcedo, a rich idle aspiring medical doctor who already spent many years in college, shallow, not to mention arrogant and infuriatingly puffed up by his own self-consequence. It was a crowd where money smells and match-making, where the rich and famous crème du la crème gathered, where the next business deals noted. It's one of the million weddings, a bombshell for the tableau and the gossip magazine. The wedding event appeared in every fashion magazine for a week. The feast ended in the early morning and everybody has to get back to their usual daily routine with hang overs who were still in the state of euphoria being one of the invited on such wedding party made in heaven.

After a week rest from the hassle of their wedding, Manuel and Lina flew to Venice Italy for their fourteen days honeymoon trip. It was a memorable time for them to see Europe for the first time, enjoyed, discovered the European culture and learned a part of their history. They were back to their normal life after their honeymoon trip, they spilled the beans announced her pregnancy. Lina didn't seriously proceed her movie career since she was advised by her doctor to take a break. Everybody especially her parents were flabbergasted to hear the announcement but glad to have their first grandchild, though it was done as cash-in-advance before their wedding they had fulfilled the exercise of mating. A year later their son Gilbert Delmar was born, a perfect beautiful boy, a product of love and passion. As life went its course Manuel was busy with his application of scholarship to MIT Boston he was very much surprised when he came home in the evening when Lina informed him about the wedding gift given by her father. A huge incredible nice Villa at the outskirts of the city where most of the superlatives resides was like a small castle, trees around, a garden pavilion, a swimming pool, a gym ready for the guests to exploit. A large playground prepared for the grandkids. The house was surrounded with exotic plants ordered from foreign countries. There were tulips, wild roses and more types of plants that didn't exist in Maharlika. Everything was designed by a foreign Architect and Loan designer. Manuel was quiet uneasy on the flow of how Lina's parents revolving their lives, he didn't feel comfortable of feeding them the comforts that Manuel doesn't earn himself. He wanted to give his wife the comforts but at the moment he's still striving. Rom wasn't built in fourteen days. So Lina has supposed to wait, but No, her father will do it and don't give him the choice. *The injustice of life is that those who have money doesn't make their fingers dirty because money always does everything for them and those who have nothing can lick their fingers and the only justification of life is that everybody dies.* In real sense Manuel didn't marry Lina because of her money but still it's a predicament for him not being able to deal with her parents. They were such an awesome pair and remarkable couple.

Lina a normal height young woman with all the glory of being born beautiful, Manuel a tall handsome ambitious young man, to complete their heavenly life their cute son Gilbert was the crown of their happiness it's almost a paradise. When their son turned four his features are becoming clear that he was born from two beautiful people, he was as cute as a button. He was an intelligent specie breed from a perfect stock. Meanwhile Lina had been complaining some breast pain, they have to go consult the family doctor and went through an MRI to truly find out what she has, she was an active young woman, healthy food so there was no fear of any serious illness. *'The shocking reality'* was that suddenly their sweet incomparable world started to fall apart when Lina was diagnosed to have a breast cancer, she has to be admitted for a rash chemotherapy. What a horrifying tragedy for Manuel with their four year old son. They were just few years married it wasn't a long marriage. Love doesn't allow logic, but Manuel told himself "Pace yourself" was one of his most repeated maxims. Unfortunately everything changed, the worries, the pain, thinking to loss each other was unendurable but in spite of the tragic fact, they wanted to escape this morbid announcement of her doctor, they wanted to enjoy their life with their child and love as long as it takes. Lina's father engaged the best physician in town as well as from abroad who tried to cure or delay her illness. However in the sixties medicine wasn't that advance yet, breast cancer at the time was still a deadly ailment. Today in the twenty first century several cancer are being treated successfully that patients lived much longer or some were even cured and survived. The second blow of Manuel and Lina's life was the sudden death of Lina's parents Greg and Lucy Salcedo on their way to Australia in a horrible plane crash. Her father was on a business trip and never came back. This was a blow for the young couple, accidents, imperfections placed inside a pretty pattern. *'A man's life of any worth is a continuous allegory and very few eyes can see the mystery'*. *"There lies the hope – to be those eyes; to lift the stone and let in the light."*

All the incidents were such a torment that caused Manuel's mental agony. He couldn't conceive why all these happened in his life. He love Lina more than anything else in his life, he has reached the ultimate point of an emotion. It's like punching one's hand on a wall, but a wall that is so thick that it hurts. He'd been quite in love in his teenage years but never got as far as touching that wall, which is the end. No one does it often in a lifetime, the popularity of an individual in life often manifests itself in death. The disjunction of the person you love who is the centre of your gravity is more painful than if you are hit with a bullet. Both of them were firm believer of catholic religion, they were married and blessed in the church. Manuel's firm conviction began to shake he asked God why he allows this disaster happen. Despite making all possible allowances avoiding all arguments he could hardly accept the faith that he would lose his wife forever. His life came to a standstill could hardly breathe and sleep, eat or drink. He felt there was no more life and no desires of gratification he would have deemed reasonable to fulfil. Manuel felt how wonderful if he would be struck by a lightning to have reached the pinnacle of happiness, to die with his wife. Why can't one be satisfied with a patch of happiness without feeling depressed afterwards?



*"Death of Lina, Manuel Delmar's Wife"*

*"It's better to have loved and lost than never to have love at all"*

Four years marriage wasn't long enough to enjoy each other's company. Fate didn't allow them. Lina suffered a short time, sadly she died in her young age when their handsome son Gilbert was still a baby of four years who didn't register that he lost his mother he thought she was just ill and will be alright. Lina showed in her face that she never wanted to leave her husband and son but medicine wasn't able to save and cure her illness. It struck both families who sympathised Manuel's fate who was left with a four year old son, he was nearly paralyzed in his dismay, he felt he was to be blamed for the illness of his wife, he could have detected something was wrong with her, he could have her examined when the cancer just started, but he didn't have no idea. He felt down to earth guilty of not being attentive to the tiniest pain his wife was dealing. There was a sense of depression in his assessments of his talents and his prospects. Before leaving her grave he promised to love her forever and one day they will be reconciled in another world. He became abruptly older than his age, acquired few wrinkles, devastated for the loss of his young wife. He was totally down felt sick with despair, his whole body was weak as if joylessness were a condition that shrivelled the cells. Every day he brought flowers to Lina's grave and licked his wounded heart. Manuel believed in every point of the Catholic faith, yet at times like this he hated the initiator of it all. *In his solitude he thought Justice can be just as hateful as injustice, more so often enough, because injustice puts on a level with the wielder of it, whilst justice is more hateful because it emphasises our own inferiority.* It was this faith that made him so easy a victim when love had at last appeared clad in the attributes of romance, the imaginative man's indestructible dream of a rounded passion. But in taking this sentimental episode it gave him faith in the great adventure to come.

However time always heal the wounds as it hurried by, but miserableness is like a small germ he had inside him always wriggling to create a serious sickness. Of course what he wanted might not be the same what he's going to do or what he thought to do. He tried to live again with the memories of his wife, the sentimentality of the distant time, to feel them then without irony. Although Manuel felt the solitariness of his soul and melancholy, the hunger of passion was for him sometimes unbearable. It was a happy short loving marriage and he want to stick to the conventional rule that whenever one lost her/his partner, one should observe three years of mourning before he could consider any serious commitment. In his current situation his depression assumed a terrible magnitude and he was acutely aware of the symptoms. He tried, however unsuccessfully to live again, he wanted to sleep longer wanted to forget all about his sadness and the torment of his soul. He didn't want sympathy from all corners, for him sympathy was for Losers who couldn't deal with their own fate but he was definitely not one of those. Two years of abstinence after the death of his wife he broke the conventional rule with a bit of guilt tugging at the back of his mind, not completing the three years mourning, he started to accept invitation from friends and seeing colleagues without any malice. But still his pain-filled body that handicaps his spirit saps his courage.

It was usual in birthday gatherings that lots of friends and colleagues were invited. Manuel slowly recovered forgot his feeling blaming himself for the death of his wife, his feeling swung violently of being miserable and prayed: God have Mercy on me and may the soul of my loving wife Lina rest in Peace. " Eventually the reservoir of gossip among friends that said; Money couldn't hold the nobility and the rich forever, many of them were convinced that *"Death is the only justice of nature that no one could hinders"*. The weather was mild warm Manuel thought he has to go visit Lina's grave afterwards, he will spend little time for his mother Gloria and pour out his concealed true feelings of distress, painful revulsion of being left alone. His mother had always open ears to her sons whenever they came and spoke to her about their lives. Manuel wasn't a sportive person, his only sport was golfing not really a serious player, and he just gave his friends a company hear stories about their personal lives and family. You cannot buy loyalty, you cannot buy devotion of hearts and minds or souls you must earn these. Manuel didn't want to divulge his true feeling to his friends, he didn't want anyone to be privy to family discussions. Knowledge might be power, but secrecy thrills the soul. There wasn't any male friend whom he could confide his innermost feelings, he kept his sorrow to himself. Though some of his colleague tried fishing information about his life, the issue of his wife's death quickly became moot, the neon swirls around the roof of the entire building and illuminates the area he politely conveyed that it's just psychologically normal to feel sucked when you lost someone you love in your life. His colleague understood his feelings that they have to be careful mentioning the subject.

Manuel noticed one of his female colleague Elfie Montana, single in her early thirties, inch smaller than him, blue eyes, long curly lashes, ravishing figure, lovely, she's someone to share a sin with. She always tried to get close conversation with him, laid some opinion about their job which he thought it was rubbish ones, wouldn't it be double-rubbish twice? However the new system has certainly given them a good deal of time to kill. Manuel didn't loss the mind of admiration what he sees or saw, but only mere appreciation of beauty, his heart was numbed and closed, he couldn't feel any lust or at least at the moment. There was nothing not even virtually, the intense of his love to Lina covered his heart like it was packed with a hard metal and needed to melt before he could open his heart. This was part parcel of the short life he spent with his lovely wife. As he steered his way to his office through the jostling crowd of Laurel Street his relaxed muscles did not grow tauter or his lounging gait less desultory. His shoulders were hollowed by the usual droop, he must have lost weight. It was only his face that the difference was perceptible though even here it rather lurked behind his features than openly modified them, showing itself now and then the cautious glint of half-closed eyes that were full of sorrow. He spent most of the nights brooding why his fate was so cruel, he slept with tears rolling down his cheeks. On the other hand his mother and siblings understood his situation and they were at the end of their wisdom how to help their mourning brother, to bring him back to his normal cheerful mood. Not to annoy him, they didn't utter pity how miserable he looked, there were most of the time like tears about to roll from his eyes that he tried to hold back.

They noticed when Manuel came to visit his son Gilbert who stayed with Grandma Gloria, he was happy and tried to be cheerful to see his son but seemed to be out of his concentration most of the time, his mind was far away, he stared on the air as if always figuring how he could fly and his siblings tip toed what to ask or say something to him. Manuel thought it wasn't the end of his life, he is still young and fit he could still start a new life with a new woman build a family. It tore his mother and sibling's heart to see him suffering, they tried to console him on their own way. Often they saw him secretly sobbing, tears constantly running down his cheeks, he lost weight and his family feared he might be ill, he couldn't leave his growing beautiful son with his mother. He must see to it that Gilbert would have the chance to live and enjoy his life. He has the right to have it, though without mother and the physical presence of his father in the sense that Manuel only comes once a week to see him. The boy went to pre-school and during his elementary he was sent to the most prestigious private school for boys in the city. He grows up in fine clothes, delicious platter and selected friends. When Manuel came to visit his son and family, he used to say I'm glad to be home, he believed it was his own firm conviction that he really felt the correct emotions of love and joy to be there with his family, forget for a while the grief and hate that he lose his wife. He had always been a good man at zero hour. Ever since those terrible days when he buried his wife, he have feared the possibility of an overwhelming powerful pain-source overrule his life. He nursed himself so as not to suffer too much, Manuel thought what a queer gamble his existence is and he was embarrassedly awkward in the midst of his joint misery and fear. He figure out that there are two roads diverge utterly that may lead in the end to heaven when supposedly he could reconcile with his wife or to hell. Only later one sees how much and how awfully the fates differ. Yet what were the reasons for the choice? Did one know what one was choosing? Certainly not. There are such chasms of might-have-beens in any human life.

When Manuel returned to his house, the kitchen was empty with disconcertingly final sort of emptiness. It seemed the clock had stopped. Everything was put away, the cupboards closed and locked. The hot sun blazed through, the curtains which were half drawn, making them glow like stained glass. The placed was naked abandoned, like a house waiting for a new tenant, the emptiness frightened him. He went softly and quickly through to the stairs where the sunshine didn't penetrate, the rooms were dark and sullen he listened to the silence of it. His relief that he was able to sleep and dreamed finding his wife at his side, he embraced his wife's pillow as if she was there with him. Then he woke up horribly shaking bathed with his sweat on his pillow wet from his tears, the disappointment to find himself alone on their bed in a beautifully decorated master bedroom. He went to his kitchen drank some cold water to calm his nerves and had a cold shower at dawn. It had been disturbing him the question why his wife left him, she could have taken him with her. It was extremely a desperate moment in his life, he was horrified to become insane craving his wife's presence. But he shuddered at the thought that she would never come back, his love is dead.

## \*\*\* Chapter Two \*\*\*

*'Manuel's normal life begin'*

Two years after the death of his wife Lina, Manuel tried to be rational, he started to spread around, greeted few of the visitors whom he knew from the past. He found some new acquaintance, one of the women who gathered around name Luisa de la Cruz about his age was introduced to him, also a college graduate as a chemist but wasn't active in the working world. She was interested to know him better, at the first moment he didn't consider any danger since she was not really his type, a plain looking awkward but along the flow of conversation he learned that she has a rich father Alejandro de la Cruz a self-made man paper factory owner and an ambitious mother Dulce de la Cruz a teacher in profession who had a nose always up. Carlos de La Cruz only brother aspiring Economist Banking and Finance. It's not that she is interesting even she had a good well-off family but Manuel couldn't think of any relationship since he was not yet free from his wife's death. Let alone flying thought of marrying someone with a domineering father. He wasn't hopeless that he just suddenly marry anybody that comes along because he was lonely. After few changes of idle talk, he noticed that Luisa had eye on him. Manuel showed in an unapproachable way with his slightly vacant look that he is not yet ready for any commitment. He explained to Luisa that his wife just died two years ago and hinted her that he had no intention to have any conjunction at the moment. Luisa registered this one and said teasingly she will do her best to let him forget his dead happiness. He might have been frightened of the way he was feeling, but his desolation was so profound he was almost insensate.

He felt calmer now, the day was warm, the garden was beautifully decorated and the food was delicious gave the right atmosphere for a garden party. At first moment Manuel was remote, nervous the kind of person you always worried about speaking to, in case things went wrong, but he is rational person who had a good sense. Though solitude with secrecy were essential to him at times, he tried to show he wasn't lonely that he enjoyed the hour. The host was like an ambassador to introduce Manuel to some women who whispered their sympathy for the loss of his wife. It was recorded and entirely known that he is now a widower single available for the marriage market. But basically he returned to a negative desire which reflected again his fundamental need –that his life should not be dull, ordinary or mechanical. Looking at his life as it had developed and recognised that all the happiest moment in the past seemed to be the only moments he would have, he wanted to live with the past. Of course this was strange odd because you can't live your life forever reminiscing the past, you have to move on. However among many matters thrown into relief by a refreshed acquaintance Luisa indirect an oblique view of her presented actions; like she gets what she wants, no matter one likes it or not. It maintains one's sense of proportion but Manuel wasn't able to have all those, to avoid her was nearly impossible. He knew and saw Luisa's follies of romantic disposition, he wasn't obliged to recognize, but wished innocent pleasures without penalties. What a modern type of a woman, Luisa invited him for a candle light dinner, their enjoyment was a tribute to others without being loss to themselves.