

## Quandary

Contributed by Zwiesel Gaile I. Cantuba  
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"I will not allow you to enroll for this second semester."

Ouch. What would you feel if you were told those words? Shocked? Perplexed? All color that was left in me during that encounter momentarily escaped. It's as if I was doused in ice water. What will I tell to those people sending me to finish college? Worst, how would I tell them? I was on the verge of gathering the needed requirements needed for me to transfer in the College of Human Sciences for 3 semesters until I finally get back in the College of Nursing.

"Hand over your appeal and let's see what will happen."

I was losing hope. I wrote an appeal stating my side of the story. I believe that I haven't done anything wrong. The only problem that I have was that I was born poor. I didn't have that much money to shoulder my tuition fees. Yes, I am a member of the SLU band but that doesn't entail me to totally free education now that I am in my senior year. There are deductions but still the remaining amount is still hard to pull together.

I made up my mind. I would take up Philosophy and Legal Studies in the mean time and save what's left of my pride and dignity as a student. But, someone prompted me to push through with my appeal. Then my 20 days of solitary confinement started.

"Bakit mag-isa mo lang nagduduty? Ano bang kasalanan mo?"

"Balita ko suki ka dito?"

"Oo nga ma'am pati sa community.haha!"

Truth is I didn't do anything that is way detrimental or fatal to my patients. As stated earlier I was poor, enough said. What was nice about being confined for 20 days both in the hospital and the community is that I learned a lot of things not taught under the supervision of a CI. I was free to take care of patients. I was responsible for the things that may happen to them. During those times I felt like a staff nurse. At first, I was cautious of the things that I was doing; I would do my sample charting only to find out 30 minutes before the shift ended that I could write directly in the chart. They allowed me to medicate either the left or the right wing. They would also allow me to prepare IV medications with their close supervision. I would read amazing cases once only found in MedSurg books. I would listen to doctors explaining procedures and cases. I was able to hear the lives and drama of clerks, interns and staff nurses.

Maybe, this was advance training in my part. Sad to say I am not that excited in head nursing activities as much as my other batch mates. Been there done that. Really, it's true when they say experience is the best teacher.

"Maybe, you're just like the rest of them. After the board exams you would all leave the Philippines."

Truth is, I won't be leaving the Philippines abruptly. Yes, I have plans of going out of the country, trying my luck in greener pastures but definitely I would come back. There are too many things I wanted to achieve but sadly time races me neck to neck. People laugh at me when I verbalize that I wanted to take up Philosophy and Legal Studies then probably pursue Law or Medicine then get in touch with the CIA or FBI as part of their forensics team.

"Ms. Cantuba, learn from this mistake. Know your priorities in life."

I know my priorities and that is to finish nursing in a couple of month's time but I am a holistic person. I don't dwell on a boring lifestyle. I like to go out and experience life not taught in the four walls of the academe. I need an outlet that will keep me sane after the going to all the cacophony of nursing.

I am a writer. My soul lies in the pieces I do. It helps me escape a cruel world. It adds balance to the dreary routine of hospital duty, 4hours lecture and review classes offered. It breaks the monotony of being confined in a sacred space of figures and academic accomplishments.

I am a musician. I owe so much to the talent that has helped me finish my college education. Again, with writing, it gives me a sense of life and vitality. Music gives me eternal hope that there's more...so much more with academic life.

"You may be biting off more than you could chew."

Behind a leader, I believe, lies efficient and great followers. I may not be able to fulfill all the needed requirements enough to finish a certain task in any club I belong but I bank on the knowledge that my staff will do their responsibilities. I do not apply authoritative management but hence participative in that manner. I let my members to their part, trusting

them fully that they have understood my instructions, believing that I should follow-up once in a while to check on their progress. I am thankful, really, that I was blessed to have such well-organized members.

Life is unpredictable. It is a battle. I am ensnared in the cross fire right now. Fortunately I have the reason to move on.

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