

**another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory**



# **SIQUIJOR SEDUCTION ZONE**

*The initial meeting of Agents 32 and 33*

by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) ..... May 2013

Monique (future Agent 32) friend-requested me (future Agent 33) on facebook on May 10, 2010. We know this was the date because Monique still had the friend-request confirmation e-mail, which she stumbled upon while cleaning up her yahoo in-box.

Back at that time, there was no psecret psociety; we were running under the Café 23 flag. I would encourage our nascent cottage coterie by stating things like: Ultimately, there are no non sequiturs - none. It was a lot of punnery, puzzlery, and puffoonery. Some caught the pop fly and had a ball. Others felt wise to do otherwise.

We waded in word play by day; lounged like chaised lizards by night. We even brought Café 23 to real – physical – bars in Metro Charlotte and Greater Los Angeles. Wait, maybe that was the early psecret psociety phase. *Early onset cosmosis.*

Anyway, we decided to drop the Café 23 banner altogether, as there were java joints around the globe using that alphanumeric name. Lawsuits just didn't fit our frame of preference. We certainly didn't want to be pulled into a court room in Rotterdam. Well, actually, if the trip was pre-paid with some free time ... that would be very tempting.

I recall a recon trip to Central Coffee at Louise & Central (in Charlotte). I asked them if I could leave a few short stories on the literature shelf – like this short story, the one you are reading now – and they stoically declined. I remember thinking: *What kind of coffeehouse doesn't allow local publications? A boring one.*

I don't know about you (though, I would bet my imaginary pot farm that you are smarter than me), but local lit is the first thing I alight to when I go into a coffeehouse. *Ah, maybe they're just following the Starbucks model of the sterilized faux coffeehouse experience.*

My thoughts would later be confirmed by an independent older Caucasian lady who noticed our lurid, soccer-length socks and neon shirts, and cheerfully said: "Only happy people wear bright colors."

I replied, telling her that we were indeed happy, but the bright colors were primarily for safety, as we were riding our bikes. She smiled and walked on.

Ah, but let's get back to 2010. Our amorous online correspondence continued through the spring and summer. Chats, messages, e-mails, and all that 'hidden between the lines' stuff.

Then on September 20<sup>th</sup>, I left for Monique's mysterious island of Siquijor. Isla del Fuego, the Spanish called it when they sailed past in 1565. Not because the small island was on fire, but because there were so many fireflies (or lightning bugs as they call them around here). They say that they lit up the Narra trees, and were collectively visible from miles away in the Bohol Sea.

Well, I know that leading off sentences with *well* is not so swell, but after 22 hours of combined flight and airport time, I was in Dumaguete. The coastal city was already bustling in the humid, morning heat.

I then caught the ferry to Siquijor town. The passage was relatively calm, and took about 50 minutes.

Once on Siquijor Island, I took a 38-minute (yes, I timed it; such a temporal nerd) jeepney journey to the town of Lazi on the southeast coast. I finally saw Monique for the first time on Aljas Street at Alvarico Street around noon. She was more charming than expected. What a doll. A pinay princessa with a heart of gold. I spoke first.

“Ah, it’s so great to finally meet you, Monique. You look beautiful.”

“Thank you, Parkaar, [my ailing alias] but those are your words, not mine.”

“My words are true, my dear. I tell no lie, standing, sitting, or lying.” *Or lying?*

“What did you just say?” she asked, sensing a pun run.

“Come closer, and I’ll whisper it in your ear.”

She laughed for a couple of seconds. “Ok, sure.”

Monique walked up to me. I bent my head down and kissed her on the lips. Then I whispered in her right ear: “Mahal kita.” [‘I love you’ in Tagalog, the official dialect of the Filipino language]

“Wow, are you getting ahead of yourself, kano?” [kano is Filipino slang for an American; it goes back to WW2]

I chuckled. "I'd pass my self by to get to your self any day, Monique. You are truly better than imagined or advertised."  
*Advertised? What?!*

"You are making strange statements for your analog audio recorder that you told me about, aren't you, Parkaar?"

"Somehow, I knew that you would say that, Monique. Somehow I just knew."

"I am already onto your little game, dodong." [boy or young man in Cebuano, the primary dialect of the Central Visayas region of the Philippines]

"Holy dodoy, daday! [made-up nonsensical Cebuano-sounding words] Hey, let's go to a beach resort, sexy lady."  
*Yey, he thinks that I'm sexy.*

"How about Salagdoong? It has a great view of Maria Bay. And it has air-con, [air-con is Filipino slang for air conditioning or air conditioner] my loverboy." *Condoms? Check.*

"Sure, let's do it." *Absolutely.*

"But, you first have to meet my parents. They are so eager to meet you."

"Why, most certainly!"

We walked about 100 meters to Monique's parental home. I met her engaging mom and relaxed dad. After a two-hour chat, we bid them adieu and hailed a pedicab (a motorcycle-powered passenger vehicle; a very common mode of transportation in the Philippines).

It was a scenic 15-km ride to the resort that took about 20 minutes on the Circumferential Road. The pedicab then pulled off the asphalt onto some sandy gravel.

“Ah, we’re here.” Monique said.

“Nice place. Good first choice, my gwapa pinay.” [pretty Filipina]

“Salamat, mahal.” [‘Thank you, love’ in Tagalog]

“Walay sapayan, [‘You’re welcome’ in Cebuano] mahal.”

We walked up to the hotel office and got a room on the top (3<sup>rd</sup>) floor. Once inside the room, I walked out on the balcony. The view was travel-show magnificent.

“Wow, you were right, Monique; the view is phenomenal.”

“I know my little island.” *Indeed she does.*

The whole C-shaped shoreline of Maria Bay was visible. The bay’s water was many shades of blue: a splotch of cerulean here, some indigo there, some azure further out to sea. A tropical postcard.

I turned around, and Monique gave me the ‘well, we’re here, and the time is right’ look.

We got busy in paradise. An order of pumperoni pizza. Sausage dog in tunneloni. There were worse places and times on this old orb.

After the initial round of carnal lust, we made our way down to this craggy small conical island that was connected to the

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