

HAZEL DELA VEGA



My name is Hazel P. Dela Vega, born on January 27, 2006 in Sahud-Ulan, Tanza, Cavite, Philippines. My mother's name is Lilybeth F. Pabilonia and my father's name is Sofronio B. Dela Vega. My father died when I was in kindergarten. My family is quite huge and confusing because my father is the second husband of my mother. Before they met each other, both are already separated from their first family. My mother has two kids from her first husband but when they separated, my mother only took my brother. After several years, my mother met my father and they had two children. These children are me and my younger brother. Unfortunately, my father was shot, and he died. I was not able to finish my kindergarten because after my father passed away, I lost appetite in going to school. My mother decided to transfer in General Trias, Cavite where her siblings live. My mother worked as a farmer for some months and she also became a domestic helper just there in Cavite. Then, I started going to school again with my older brother. Unfortunately, I stopped going to school again because my mother is working and there is no one who will take care of my younger brother. So, I repeated grade 1. After some years, my mother got to know my step-father, Salvador C. Orogo, Jr. He is from Albay, Bicol and my mother met him in General Trias, Cavite. He does not have any family yet nor a partner when they knew each other. But he accepted us and our mother even though he knew that he will already serve as the third husband of my mother.

My step-father is younger than my mother but he treats us as his own family. We are already three children at that time. After two years of staying together, they decided to move to Albay where my step-father lives. It was quite hard for me to accept this at first because my father's relatives are in Cavite; but I was able to understand it. My life is different now from before when I was still in Bicol. Before I see buildings, malls and other infrastructures, but in Albay, I can always see the trees, carabao and coconut because our house is built in the forest. It is there where I experienced walking for a long period of time and cross small rivers just to go to school. I was in grade 3 when I transferred to Oringon Elementary School. My life there became more challenging but I really did my best and luckily, I became the top one in class. I really feel motivated during this time. I experienced going to class barefooted because my slippers got destroyed and we did not have yet any money to

buy a new one. Eventhough I feel ashamed, I still went to class because I really did not want to miss our lessons.

I admit that I also have my shortcomings to my family especially to my mother. After my father passed away, I became cold to my mother. I am a papa's girl as what they call it. It's quite strange for me to become sweet to my mother but now, I really try my best. Time has passed by, and our family got two more children. Though we are just siblings from the side of our mom, I had already treated them as my real siblings. At some point, I feel neglected because my needs are not prioritized because we have to give way to our younger siblings. Therefore, I am finding my own way on how to earn money for my school projects. I learned how to pick fallen coconut in the forest and exchange it for money. In that way, I was able to have school supplies like bondpapers. I really strive for my family. Every time my family has a quarrel and my family does not have something to eat, I am crying and reflecting about our situation and I really don't want to stay in that situation. One time, my mother left home and went to the city. It was only me and my sister who were in the house and it was already 1:00 PM and my mother has not returned yet. I thought of a way how to get food because my sister was already hungry. I went to the forest and looked for jackfruit which I cooked. At a very young age, I already know the household chores and my mind already thinks as an adult. After cooking the jackfruit, we ate it and waited for our mother to return home. I also experienced accident in our place. I was stabbed in our school during night time on October 2018. My companion was my teacher and my friend. Unfortunately, my teacher died and only my friend and I survived. I always put in mind whenever I walk going to school that I don't want to stay forever in that place. I want to help my family to live in a house made of concrete hollow blocks and to have our own rest room. I want to help my siblings in their studies.

My biggest dream is to become a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). I love organizing things, solving and challenging myself. I enjoyed Bookkeeping that we had. I was able to enter in the Sisters of Mary Girlstown through the help of the alumni. Then, when I arrived in this school, I really feel blessed and grateful for everything that happened to my life. I accepted it as a blessing. In this school, I have learned everything that I want to know especially about values and morality. I am very grateful because I wear my complete uniform from head to toe. I have been transformed inwardly because before, I was the black sheep in our house (as what my family calls me). But now, I am already industrious and a responsible child. I already have a good relationship with my mother and with my family. I am very

grateful for the scholarship that I have received. I promise to use it efficiently and I will not forget those people who helped me out. My past memories will serve as my inspiration to arrive to my destination. I surrender everything to God and I always give my trust to Him that He will never abandon me.

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