

Written by

Friday, 08 May 2009 12:09 - Last Updated Friday, 08 May 2009 12:26

Last week, Nelia Bernabe, a long-time friend and colleague, wrote an excellent and exciting story in her "Flipside" column titled, "Beware the Wrath of Old Men" that appeared in the Friday, May 1st issue of the *FilAm MegaScene* of Chicago.

It's about the squabbles and bickering of old men, acting like "old women" and so forth. It was good, it was funny and it was well-written. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

I have always enjoyed Nelia's writings. I like her style. She writes easily. Reading her writings always put a smile on my lips. She reminds me of my favorite columnist, Maureen Dowd, of *The New York Times*

She bites. She scratches. She growls. She purrs. She's a lioness; she's a pussycat, rolled into one ... or either one. She's a satirist. She's a storyteller. She's a journalist, a columnist and very opinionated. Columnists are like that. They opine ...

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Nelia seems to talk to her readers when she writes. And, she writes from the heart, I think. To me, that's the picture of an accomplished writer.

Most of the time, I'd read her column and just say, "hmmm" to myself or laugh aloud to myself. Other times, I'd shoot her a comment and simply say, "Hey, that was good. I enjoyed that."

Some of my comments are sometimes kind, but sometimes, they're not. Some are gentle, but some are blunt, coarse and rough.

Her column last week compelled me to write this to her:

Hello Nelia,

Oh, come on, Nelia, my dear, don't be such a party pooper. Leave us, "old farts," alone.

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□

We're having fun, can't you see.

□

Perhaps, it's disgusting fun to you.

□

But to us, it's good old fun.

□

The fun is called

DOM

's fun.

□

It's a form of jiving.

□

Like dyoking.

□

You have to be a member of this exclusive club to understand our ways.

□

You have to be an old fart, like us, to understand the ways of an old fart.

□

Yes, indeed, my dear, you have to be an old fart to be able to appreciate and understand CORRECTLY the wisdom of old farts.

When you reach our age, you and your peers would be doing the same thing, too, I am sure ... jiving and dyoking the way we do.□ I suggest that y'all should.

□

Otherwise, you'll grow up to become bitter C's.

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If I deserve a butt "spanking" for saying that, help yourself, my dear.

N elia answered:

Not a party pooper at all, Jess, but if it was intended as a joke, I don't think anybody was laughing except you and me. Believe me, I laughed too but it got quite crass after a while.

□

Not a question of me finding it disgusting either.

□

I am a big girl, I can handle things way worse than the play of words.

□

I wondered why you didn't jump in, but I figured you were in the sideline cheering and goading your ass off...

These guys gave me a topic to write about... But think about it – these pent-up emotions need to be channeled somewhere where we can reap some great benefits.

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seminar would be good...now, don't pick a fight with me and start a volley of e-mails between us because I am a big fan of yours.

□

Bitter C, ha!

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□

C'est la vie...

A few days passed by before I replied:

Hello Nelia,

I've been meaning to respond to your e-mail for the last five days now, but I keep getting distracted with flurries of e-mails from the "old farts." □ You know about the Hatton-Pacquiao fight ... I told them it was just a con job and a "Manny Pakyaw Productions," just like the long-ago FPJ productions, where the late Fernando Poe, Jr. was always the bida. □ I also told them that Pacquiao likes to fight ONLY boxing champions who have retired and past their fighting primes. □ But because of the lure of big-time money, have come out of retirement to fight the so called Filipino "Pacman." □ Filipinos, all over the world, got fooled again by that fight.

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After I've said that, I was immediately inundated with a tsunami of e-mails from the old farts and from a couple of die-hard fans of Pacquiao.

Your story last week seemed to have created a lot of buzz, too. Don Azarias, Romy Marquez, Joseph Lariosa, Bobby Reyes, Tom Bonzon and many others ... including me, reacted to your story ... as you said like a bunch of "old women."

□

Ha!

You're a riot, I think. And you created one with your story.

Congratulations. I agree with your suggestion of a "seminar." It'd be fun to meet all the old farts in person, dyok and jive with them and join in the laughter of their

***DOM
jokes.***

□

They're really a bunch of good people, I think.

□

□

If you're game, let's do it.

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□

I wonder if the others, you know, the true, blue "bitter C's" would be game, too.

□

What do you think?

Jesse

PS: I am a bigger fan of yours, by the way.□ And, for a long time now.

N elia's response:

Hey Jess,

I really don't mean to create any buzz, that's the last thing I want but a

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buzz is good especially for a lightweight drinker like me ... hahaha. I respect everyone especially the ones who were here way before me.

□

People who are close to me (a handful) know that I do not call attention to myself just to do it.

□

Believe me Jess, I have mellowed a lot.

□

Gone are the days when I used to swear like a truck driver.

□

Gone are the days when I would go toe to toe with a 6'2" American guy and verbally duke it out with him until he cried.

□

No kidding but once in a while, the old me surfaces but I try to walk lightly now and I play 10,000 questions with myself first.

□

If I feel that I have something to say and it's a perspective worth sharing, then I'll go ahead and do it.

□

Otherwise, I am just here trying to quietly figure out how to make a difference in this crazy world.

The seminar is a great idea. Imagine having Joseph Lariosa and Perry Diaz in the same room. For as long as everything is professional and something good will come out of it, I say we should do it.

□

Maybe FilAm MegaScene should sponsor it.

□

In good jest and in the name of solidarity, a good ribbing will go a long way.

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Thank you for believing in me – my writing, that is. It is encouraging to have you on my side.

□

I still have a long way to go but I am slowly getting there.

All the best,

Nelia

My answer? It was short and sweet. ***“Nelia, my dear,” I told her, “as a person and a journalist, you’ve got a lot of class”***
.

JJ

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