



## Razor's Edge

By  
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### *Fair Advice To Would Be Writer*

*"Here is my brotherly advice to applicants. If your goal is to serve our countrymen never aspire for popularity - that would be the wrong reason. Embark instead on a crusade against abuses in the government, or fight to dismantle the political dynasties proliferating in many provinces that make a mockery of clean elections. Better yet, if you have a good mind for economics then write about how to solve our chronic financial crisis that has plagued our impoverished people for so long."*

NEW YORK, NY, April 08 (*PinoyGlobal*) - My publisher has requested me to screen applications to our paper from prospective columnists because the pile is rising high already. Going over them, I have noticed that they only want to be in the limelight with Filipino Times and, of course, [www.filtimesonline.com](http://www.filtimesonline.com) and Global Pinoy Online ([www.filamimage.com](http://www.filamimage.com)). These are my column's Internet online editions, which are very well read. The nobility of writing to inform Filipino-Americans on the actual situation obtaining in the motherland is relegated to the backseat in the applicants' files. Their ego is the center stage of their intentions. Filipino Times and Global Pinoy Online dislike ego-tripping writers. So I have rejected all applications thus far.

Here is my brotherly advice to applicants. If your goal is to serve our countrymen never aspire for popularity - that would be the wrong reason. Embark instead on a crusade against abuses in the government, or fight to dismantle the political dynasties proliferating in many provinces that make a mockery of clean elections. Better yet, if you have a good mind for economics then write about how to solve our chronic financial crisis that has plagued our impoverished people for so long.

Praise only the good, not the evil perpetrated by so-called leaders whose badge of distinction is their ill-gotten wealth and power through the muzzle of a gun. If you have

to criticize the same people again, see to it that you are not repeating the same issue/s. Use another subject in which they have failed our people. Always adhere to the canons of responsible journalism, and be stoically uncompromising.

Bear in mind that nowadays critics of the government are belittled as modern day Don Quixotes who are fighting windmills. Readers can be fickle, you know. Take it from battle-scarred political journalists and columnists. For one thing nobody will massage your ego, definitely not the people in general. Public opinion is too ambivalent to be relied upon for encouragement. Only your great love of country can motivate you. In a manner of speaking, ours is unrequited love.

The balm to this lonesome trail is to imbibe the wisdom of moment-to-moment lovers, who rationalize their short-lived Byzantine affair in these delicious lines, "It's not how long the winter, it's not how wide the sky, it's just how sweet the time between hello and goodbye." Embrace your passion to serve the nation, with no ulterior motive in between, and your bliss will carry you through turbulent times.

Do not be afraid to use big words. If people do not read you because they cannot understand the words you use, don't let it bother you, there will still be legions reading

you. Millions read heavier stuff like Time Magazine, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, and a host of magazines, great books, etc. They also surf the Internet and the blogs, some of which are loaded with highfalutin semantics and are kilometric, too. Most of the newspaper readers are very intelligent and many of them are professionals. Those who are “no-read, no-write” do not read you anyway, so what’s the problem?

A true writer never sacrifices clarity for brevity. If you believe you can abbreviate your message, you are right - and you can stop with the title for it conveys everything being the gist of the column. But then we have to emphasize certain points and that’s when the details come in. Hence it’s hard to truncate the article. Those who cannot read will have the same problem even if you use the English and grammar of Pepe and Pilar or Jack and Jill. They should not discourage or stymie your style. Just write with conviction so long as your objective is not to impress.

We in the media know the nation may be proud of you today. But tomorrow it can drop you as a detestable vagabond if a tissue of lies about you picks up momentum in the cabal of gossipmongers. Our infernal colonial mentality makes you unpopular when you pit yourself against government officials. Notwithstanding their abuses and blatant corruption, many people will still lionize and defend the scalawags with official trappings. This is because the public is awed with men and women in power and high society.

The irony of it is that they are really a loud minority. The majority actually roots for you in silence. But that’s just the crux of the matter. They keep their sympathy to themselves at the very time that you crucially need moral backing against scoundrels for hire who relentlessly condemn you.

Needless to stress that we are plagued by the culture of money and power, which dates back to our colonial days when Dons were lords because they were moneyed hacenderos. Marcos and those after him exacerbated this syndrome, wallowing in a cesspool. Pres. Arroyo and her ilk magnified and institutionalized the illegal acquisition of wealth multifold, via full-scale corruption.

Only when your cause triumphs are people euphoric for you because in their perception you have gained the

upper hand. But even that could be short-lived. As I said earlier, if they think you’ve made even a minor indiscretion you will be back in the dustbin or trashcan. Thus even the scum of humanity looks down on a critic. But if you are not after bloating your ego, do not be disturbed. Continue until the Walls of Jericho crumble down. Being unpopular is the price of taking the cudgels for the people. But it’s worthwhile if you value their cause.

My detractors accuse me of being a horse with blinders against Madam Arroyo. But they do not admit that nobody writes against her quasi-military government that tramples on individual rights and mocks at the common man’s dignity! The budget to malign critics, hype slogans and spread rancid propaganda about the president’s illusionary accomplishments is so awesome that it could afford to bribe every single newspaper publication and writers willing to prostitute the soul of journalism. Which reminds me of Kahlil Gibran’s “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country,” which was cogently used by Pres. Kennedy. Indeed, if not me, who and if not now, when will anybody expose the excesses of the Arroyo governance?

Most people can be bought, that is why nothing seems impossible to her majesty. Especially because some wayward members of the fourth estate do not have the moral fiber to resist her enormous dole-outs - with due respect to the noble ones who doggedly carry the torch of press freedom despite the horrendous threats, enticing bribes and risk of false criminal libel charges. Not to mention the danger of assassination.

If ever I am still around it is because I am in the citadel of freedom (America) that unqualifiedly protects the right of anybody to express his exposes without fear of reprisal. The entire US government zealously protects those freedoms and I am under this orbit (shield). Without my God-given right to freely voice my convictions I would rather be deaf, mute and blind.

To our applicants: you may join us so long as you adhere to the canons of journalism that guide our objectives. Forget inflating your ego. Only then may we consider you for our bandwagon.