

January 12, 2006

Dear Papang,

First of all I'd like to thank you for your great gesture and continuous desire to have me be with you in your company despite our previous differences and pains.

Allow me however, to relate to you an incident that happened last December, a day after I send my 14 pages letter to Mamang.

After receiving continuous text from my staff at pier 16 asking me what they have to do because accordingly, Engr Clyde and Colonel Guerzon were presiding a meeting which was described as if "sobra pa na dwenio, makagumita uwi" and asking them that they have to decide whom they will support, Aleson or Alex because according to Engr Clyde that "talagang wala na si Alex sa Aleson, hinde na maayos ito", I emailed a copy of my 14 pages letter to them in the hope of explaining what is happening to our family business.

However, even after the email, Engr Clyde and Colonel Guerzon were still demanding from my Pier 16 staff for their decision which prompted me to go to Pier 16 office the following morning.

When I arrived the following morning, Clyde and the Colonel greeted me nicely and they invited me outside the canteen and we had a nice talk over bottles of mountain dew in which I was able to elaborate and explained further the content of my letter to Mamang.

After having a nice gentlemanly conversations with them for more than 2 hours, exchanging pleasantries, life stories, jokes, inviting them to visit me in our Corinthian Residence, and even exchanging celfon numbers, I requested Clyde very nicely with appropriate reasoning that I prefer him *for the moment* not to stay at pier16 but consented having Colonel Guerzon stay respecting too well of your long family friendship ties with him.

At first he says he is waiting for Romy Princepe but I called Romy and he said has no appointment with Clyde that day.

Then he reason out that he is following some papers in Marina and that he has to stay for 2 – 3 more days. I offered him our E. Rodriguez house where he can stay more comfortable, it's closer to Marina I said. He says that it's difficult for him to stay there because he will have difficulties with transportations?!

He shoots for reason to convenient himself not even caring to know that our E. Rodriguez house is main road for jeepneys and taxis.

But *more irritating* is the fact that both of us knows that our Pier-16 Office is not accessible to jeepneys or taxis. It's a 15-20 minutes walk thru heat, dust, and dirt to the nearest road where jeepneys plies.

And yet he insist with his reasons which prompted me to insist (but still in a nice manner) that I shall have to asked driver Edwin to drive him to E. Rodriguez house. As I brotherly embraced to escort him to our Isuzu pick-up, he appealed for the last time "*konting respeto naman Alex, aalis naman ako mamaya*", professional naman ako and he promised to leave on his own before noon.

And so I obliged to give the man his honor.

After an hour or so driver Oliver came with the food I ordered. I asked him to look for the Colonel outside the yard to invite him for lunch but both the Colonel and Clyde were nowhere to be found.

After lunch, a police mobile came in looking for me.

The arresting police officer, Colonel Duran, with three (3) escorts with long fire arms, escorted by Col Guerzon, carried with him a photocopy of my suspension order issued by you and used it as a basis to invite me to their police station ?!

I was surprised and shocked but calmly told the arresting Colonel that this is a family problem which our "family" friend Colonel Guerzon knows and fully understand. At that time I had no inclination that the Colonel was responsible of bringing in the police for my arrest. I even continued to say to the arresting Colonel Duran that Colonel Guerzon understand fully well of what is happening, hoping to get his support.

But to my shock, Colonel Guerzon responded "Na-intindihan namin ikaw kaso hinde mo kami na-intindihan!, I treat you as a son but your father is ordering us to evict you and we are just following his order!".

Just two hours ago that same very morning I thought I was able to explained to the Colonel about how I valued Pier 16 as my home especially to almost everything in it were solely because of my effort and ideas. I even mentioned many times to him that any person whom my parents would insist to stay in my house and would insist to do so *even knowing* my story is *only taking advantage of the situation* and I would consider that person only having a personal agenda of his own and not to help our family differences.

In my 14 pages letter to Mamang I prominently mentioned Colonel Guerzon, even mentioning my hope that maybe thru him, being a very close to you and a good family friend, he will be able to help me talked and maybe convince you and Mamang that its best to retire.

But I guess I was wrong about the Colonel. He has his own personal agenda, his own personal interest.

He continued by saying that you have ordered them to evict me and that they are just following your orders and he further suggested that I should get myself a lawyer to depend myself so this family problems of ours can be solved in court if needed. Kunin mo na nang abogado, he mercilessly continue to suggest.

I depended myself by saying back to him, with the arresting police officer listening, that I also treat him as a second father, him being a close family friend.

But a real family friend should not bring it to court much more bring in the police to even arrest me!

I told him that such family indifferences should first be better solve by the family either talking or asking other family elders or family friends who are in a position to act as in between.

I mentioned the name of General Mison. I asked that he call you to ask the number of the General so that I can call the General myself and ask for an appointment. I told them that a month or so ago, I had a dinner with the General and Mrs. Mison together with Nelson and during which I had more or less express a little of my problems with you after he asked me how I was doing along with my father.

This I said should be the way to help solve our family differences and not to suggest to bring it to court or worst to call in police to arrest me!

And so with that story, the arresting police officer had a clearer picture of what was happening and the "family friend" Colonel's true colors were exposed and because of this they didn't have the conscience-reason to arrest me and bring me to their police station.

Before leaving, the arresting Colonel even invited me to come visit him sometime as he said his station is just nearby at Pier 14. After office hours he says we can drink a bottle or two at his office.

Colonel Guerzon still requested one sentry to be left behind. I went back inside my office and stayed there until past 5 pm. The re-tired Colonel, Clyde stayed sitting outside the container yard guarded by the sentry with long fire arms in hand.

Of course I could have gone to our pier office the following day and continue to do so until the Colonel will feel unwanted staying outside in the yard. But I opted not to waste my time as I can do many other important things in my Pioneer Office which has better facilities to monitor our operations.

When I was vacationing in the States I received a text from Pier 16 staff Chara that you had a memo ordering her and driver Oliver to report to Zamboanga Main Office. I was told that Colonel Guerzon demanded from you that if both of them would not be transferred he would resign!?

Oliver is my personal driver and occasionally I allow him to go to the pier if I don't need him. He is from Manila. I don't understand why he would have to be ordered to report to Zamboanga Main Office.

When I called to ask Mamang, she blurted out to say that "no sabe ya kame con kien ele ta trabaja" and regarding Chara she says there was a reason but can't remember what but that she will ask and tell me later!?. Whatever their reason was, their transfer *was more to please the Colonel's desire* than the operations at our pier office.

Chara was sent by main office Zamboanga, personally recommended by Ely Castro after I have to fire out all my Manila Pier Staff because of their threat to mass-resign. Among the four employees at our Pier 16, I consider her the best and brightest and rightfully was acting OIC until you designated the Colonel. Her only mistake is that the Col, who has zero knowledge of shipping operations wants her out disregarding even to send a replacement before her departure.

It is painful for me to allow her and my personal driver to resign especially it is very obvious that the only reason I can think of is most likely that the Colonel doesn't like them because of me. But because you or Mamang choose to have them transferred I allowed them to do so that we shall have peace in the family house.

It pains me no less to remember how both of you resisted your own son's demand and protected Lindamore, Jane and many others while this Colonel's demand were given.

Maybe it's the Filipino culture in us that you give the best plates of the house to your visitors. But will still it be right for parents to continue to deny the best plate to their son if their son so desires?

Sometimes last December before I left for the US, I scolded Ely Castro over the phone because when I had asked for photocopies of the Provisional Authority (PA) of our vessels I received a reply from her that I should ask from you. I'm 100% sure she knows that PAs are public documents and that anybody can have copies of it. And I'm 100% sure that she knows that if she tells you that I'm asking for such simple request you would deny me. Her act of bringing my request to you is typical of people surrounding Mamang and you who whisper limited information to your ears (for us to quarrel). One thing leads to another as I scolded her on these and told her to take a leave for rest of the month but defiantly she challenged and angrily contested that she will resign instead!

This kind of people speaks to Mamang and you so nicely and they support and cater to all your needs. But we are family and we should not fall prey to such personal need that encourages us to go against each other.

Even Bobong had complained to Stephanie and me that Ely has had the nerve of getting angry and shouting at him.

Our family should always abide by the rule that we shall never employ anyone who offended anyone of our family member. It is a rule to keep the family all together no matter what the consequences will be for what good shall fortune be if the family loses one member much more be at odd with one another and (over an employee)?

Employees are replaceable. Family members are not.

We should not be ashamed to let our employees know that this is our family business rule because they too have family and having such house rule in their family is but right. I don't believe anyone of our family member would have the conscience to terminate just anyone for his or her pleasure.

So in response to your beautiful letter asking me to leave our mistakes in the past and to join you in uniting the family without anymore recalling hard grudges and ill feelings against one another, I'm willing to take another chance of reconciliation *with only one request* and that is that each/any family member namely you, Mamang, Nelson, Bobong, Jay Jay and me would be given the respectful right of terminating any of the company's employees *especially those who have offended him or her*.

I don't have any problem with whosoever will be in control of the business *within us*. I'll support and help to my utmost capabilities as being true to my belief of taking care of our family business operations.

This is my only one request and if agreed upon I would like that it be carried on and approved in your next board meeting.

All that is needed is that we love each other more than anyone to keep a united family.

But if for any reason my *only one* request cannot be granted, then let me choose to exit the family business carrying forever a heavy heart for I'm sure that I have done my very best and have said all that there is need to say to keep our family together.

God Bless whatever decisions the family *especially you*, shall have for us.

Your son,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alex