

I remember her vividly as Miss Edith Arroz, my Teacher-in-Charge in Fifth Grade at the SU Elementary School way back in schoolyear 1952-53. Good, nay Great Teachers are not only remembered; they live forever in the hearts of their students, especially those who have imbibed their influence. Miss Arroz impressed me very much that there were mornings I ended up coming late to class because I spent some time picking fresh and bright colored wild flowers along my "short-cut route" to SUES from Lo-oc, where we first lived, to specially give to her. I think she was torn between admonishing me for my tardiness and appreciating the gesture.

Molding a child's life, teaching them to build and pursue dreams, and preparing them for larger things in life, are among the many legacies that, for now, I can think of that Miss Arroz has shared and left as a teacher. After our ways separated, the closest connection with her that I somehow faintly remember was when her nephew (I think) Tito Piansay was one of my students in the SU High School Boys Dormitory which I had the opportunity to manage in 1967-70.

Just realizing that she is gone has, all of a sudden, created a dent and a vacuum in my whole being, acknowledging that she has contributed in no small way to my childhood development and experience. In a deeper sense, it also causes me to celebrate with all of those who love her, a life well lived - with the greatest and noblest of professions as a teacher. For forever she will be Miss Edith Arroz to me: my 5th grade Teacher. As my parting words to her in 1953, I say "Good-bye, Ma'am!"

by Gideon Alegado
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