IT’S CHARON: A FEATURE STORY ABOUT HAZING

by:
Cyan C. Mangaoang
Campus Journalist, Magsaysay National High School

An eerie voice whispered my name as I found myself in a desolate place. Slowly, I walked towards it like a cat that followed it owner.

Dark and odd.

His face was black and he rode a gritty boat that floated above a soulless river. The river had no reflections. The river didn't flow.

I wondered why I'm here so I asked the ferryman for my way home. The man just stared at me and asked for some coins so he could take me to where I should be. I searched in my pocket and went anxious when I saw nothing.

I remembered how they assaulted me on the night of August 19. The cadets were asking for my allowance but I spent half of it. For the punishment, they battered me like an animal: weak and helpless.

To be a soldier was a commitment and fate because my father was a retired colonel. I was raised to be strong and honored but the people whom I thought to be an ally have stopped me from dreaming. Even if I wanted to, I can't. With these cold hands, I can't.

Frigid and Silent.

I was freezing with the absence of the wind. I was lost but there's no way back. I was here but this is death.

According to a report by Philippine Star (2017), after over two decades since the passage of the Anti-Hazing Law, there has only been one conviction. This was in 2015 when the Supreme
Court found two Alpha Phi Omega members guilty of violating the law for the death of University of the Philippines-Los Baños (UPLB) student Marlon Villanueva in 2006.

On room 209 at 10:40 pm, my clock started to lose its time. I had a lot of bruises and wounds but the pain of seeing my family was the worst. I failed them for not being able to fight for myself. For not being able to reach my destination.

And here I am again, in the same scenario.

Lost and numb.

The ferryman started to row his boat. In order to reach the end you have to give something.

But I don’t have something, and I realized that I do not belong here. But I guess I do not belong anywhere, for it was not supposed to end at room 209.

No more voices.

As I was standing in an empty place I'll wait. Until justice brings me to where I truly belong. Like a cat that went home to its creator.

References: