

IMMIGRANT LIVING:  
101 AND BEYOND

MONETTE ADEVA MAGLAYA

*(Stories can teach, heal, entertain, remind and bring home a message with laser-like accuracy and oftentimes, with latent comment. They appeal to all ages. I like the old ones best: the Greek and Roman classics, fables, legends and myths of every nation. Dusting them from the vault and mining them for meaning, I like to take a look at them with fresh eyes and newer understanding and see how ancient truths still apply in the way we live as human beings, still going through the same struggles and needing all the understanding we can get, despite advances we've made in a the last few thousand years. Like organic fruits and vegetables from an older gene pool, these stories come with little manipulation and artificial embellishments, and perhaps, are a good thing to chew on. Simple, organic, direct — these are the stories we remember. Here's one of them on vanity, self-absorption and karma.)*

LONG ago when enchanted creatures peopled the earth, there was a nymph called Echo. She probably rated a nine and a half on a 10 point-attractiveness scale, gorgeous, knowledgeable and

## Unrequited love

*"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity."*

— From Ecclesiastes

perfect in every way except for one thing — she was a chatterbox nonpareil. She liked to hear herself talk far too much and perhaps, with a tinge of hubris, would insist on having the last word in every conversation.

Juno, the queen of the Gods, was so irked by Echo's habit that she meted out a punishment just for her. Echo will no longer be able to talk, except for one tiny concession — she will be able to say only the last word.

In the same forest where the nymphs lived, there was a young man named Narcissus who was so classically handsome and perfectly proportioned that all the nymphs oohed and ahed and fell in love with him at first sight. Picture Michelangelo's marble sculpture of "David" in flesh and blood or a composite between DiCaprio and Brad Pitt. If he were real person today, he would have made the cover of People Magazine's "Sexiest Man of the Year." His fans became legion that all that adulation got into his head. He became extremely vain. No nymph was good enough for him.

One day, Echo espied Narcissus while he was hunting with his peers and fell like a ton of bricks in love with him. She longed to tell him of her feelings, but in her afflicted state, she became

painfully shy and simply contented herself silently watching him from a distance, shadowing Narcissus' every move. Narcissus, however, became aware of her shadowy presence and talked her out of her hiding place. Echo could only repeat the last words of what Narcissus was saying in their conversation so she may have come out sounding like a mindless idiot, vexing Narcissus. Besotted with love for the hunk however and believing Narcissus' plea that she come out so they can be joined together, she finally overcame her crippling shyness and revealed herself. Narcissus felt she wasn't good enough for him and scorned her for her bold presumptuousness and repudiated her total being, sending her away devastated in the most cutting words, slashing and burning her very existence, swearing he would rather die than be with Echo.

Poor Echo! Her heart broke into a million little pieces. Beauty and light dissolved into darkness for her until nothing held any meaning. Refusing food and drink, Echo grew pale and consumptive and faded away, leaving only her far-off voice in the distance. It is said that Echo haunts the mountains where she answers all who call but only with the last words.

Narcissus meanwhile contin-

ued to break one hapless heart after another in the most mean spirited way, until one day, one totally aggrieved nymph with her heart shattered, prayed to the powers that be, for vengeance, to inflict punishment on Narcissus to make him feel the pure pain of unrequited love, to make him feel how it is to give love and have it flung back in his face. Her prayer was heard and in a world of swift and even-handed justice with no lawyers to cloud the issue, appropriate punishment was served.

One day Narcissus chanced upon a pool with water so clear, it looked like a mirror. Bending over to drink, Narcissus saw his own reflection, thought it was a water nymph, and forthwith, was smitten with the image on the pool. He fell for himself, hook, line and sinker, not unlike celebrities who read their own press and believe them to be true. But I digress.

Narcissus tried to embrace his own reflection in the water but his attempt to touch or kiss his beloved ended in frustration each time. The image in the water dissolved into ripples, disappeared and came back on. Narcissus had to be content just by looking at the mirror image of himself in the pool, day and night, without ever knowing the joy of touching or being loved in return. He now knew, up close and personal, the excruciating pain of multiple rejections from the same object of his affection. Still he persisted, becoming rooted to the spot by the pool. He now knew how it

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The  
Voice  
of  
FilAmerica

Political empowerment is still a treasure that eludes us as a community here in America. While we are the second largest Asian American community in the United States, we have yet to harvest the power that comes from our numbers. The Voice of FilAmerica features elected and appointed officials — regardless of political affiliation — in the different US states who are of Filipino ancestry. As your Filipino American community newspaper, the Asian Journal recognizes the fact that we all have a responsibility towards bringing political empowerment to fruition, especially for our future generations. It is our hope to have our voices heard all over America.

## Romy Cachola

by JOSEPH PIMENTEL  
AJPress

HE is one of the first Filipino Americans to be elected to the Honolulu City Council since Hawaii's statehood in 1959. FilAm Hawaii Councilman Romeo Munoz Cachola represents District 7 (Salt Lake, Kalihi, Aliamanu, Stadium and Airport areas). He currently chairs the Affordable Housing and Economic Development Committee. He is also the Floor Leader during each City Council meeting.

Cachola was born in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, Philippines. He studied at Quezon University receiving a Bachelor of Laws and Master of Laws degrees. He immigrated to Hawaii and settled in Honolulu where he became an entrepreneur and realtor.

The 64-year-old began his political career during the early 1980's. It is reported that Filipino Americans in his neighborhood urged him to run for a House District seat to represent them. He won and represented House District 39 and House District 30 in the Hawaii State Legislature House of Representatives from 1984 to 1992.

He continued his service as a legislator until his election to the Honolulu City Council in 2000. During his years as a member of Hawaii's House of Representatives and City Council, he advocated for the World War II Filipino Veteran's Equity Act.

His uncle Jesus Cachola, was a World War II veteran. Cachola's uncle had lived with Romy Cachola and his wife so he understood the



plight of many Filipino soldiers striving for their benefits.

"It's a fairness issue. They fought for freedom side by side with Americans," Cachola said to the Honolulu Advertiser. "Before they all die, at least, the payments are the right thing for the US to do."

His uncle passed away before the US approved the Filipino Veterans Equity Act.

As a member of the Honolulu City Council, Cachola has been an integral part in the development of Hawaii. He has served as a chairman in a number of key positions with budget authority.

He was Chairman of the Zoning Committee, considered one of the most powerful positions in the City and County of Honolulu.

In 2003, his peers elected Cachola as floor leader.

In 2005, Cachola accompanied Mayor Mufi Hannemann in a five-day trip to the Philippines to build and Reaffirmed Honolulu's sister-city relationships with Manila, Vigan and Laoag.

Cachola was reelected to the Honolulu City Council on September 18, 2004. ■

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Is there an alternative  
to filing bankruptcy?MINDING  
YOUR FINANCES

ATTY. RAYMOND BULAON

FOR people who are considering bankruptcy as a way to get out of debt, some questions constantly arise. Am I doing the right thing? What other options are available? If I decide to file bankruptcy, should I file now or do it later?

Filing for bankruptcy is a serious decision to make. Unfortunately, a lot of people are hopelessly trapped in debt that it is their only chance of starting over. Most of them already have late payments, collections, judgments, etc. on their credit report. Some are in danger of getting their wages garnished, their bank accounts levied or their property and assets being taken. If you are in any of the above situations, filing bankruptcy may actually help you more than it can hurt you. It may be just what you need to turn your situation around and change your life for the better.

In certain cases, there may be alternatives to filing bankruptcy.

1. Settle with creditors- In some cases, depending on the nature of the debt and the amount owed, it may be possible to settle directly with creditors, often for less than full amount especially if you are offering a lump sum set-

tlement. For example, my office regularly settles debts for 40-60% of the amount owed. Where the debtor doesn't have the cash to settle, an installment plan may be arranged. Late penalty payments and interest may be waived. Bill collectors are aware that as time goes by, the ability to collect from the debtor diminishes. Often, the creditor will choose to take something now rather than wait forever to collect.

2. Review your monthly income and expenses- If you are living beyond your means, perhaps you can sit down and take a good look at exactly where your money is going every month and simply cut out unnecessary expenses. Review detailed information of your monthly income and monthly expenses to better understand your resources. I find that a lot of people don't even know exactly how much they owe and how much they are paying to their creditors every month. This is unbelievable. If you need to cut expenses to the bone until you pay off your debts, then do it. Some people are so lazy to even look at their monthly budget that they often overlook expenses that can easily be eliminated without much sacrifice.

3. Do nothing (Well, at least for now) - I normally don't recommend this option because if you do nothing, oftentimes your debt problems will only get worse over time. Sooner or later, you will need to face the music and deal with your creditors, so why not do it now? You can't shun off from them forever. In some cases,

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