[00:00:00]

[MUSIC] You weren't listening to Tell Me You Story where we connect to HLS staff on a personal level [MUSIC].

[00:00:17]

I got the job. I called my dad, said I got a job here in Singapore and he started to cry [LAUGHTER]. He said, are you sure you can stay there by yourself? You can live there, by yourself? I said, yeah I'm already 25. Then she started crying. I said, but I can't, I said dad it's only five hours away by plane ride from the Philippines. We can visit me every week if you want. He said, I have to have my kids around. I didn't sign the contract, came back to the Philippines.

[00:00:53]

You did go back.

[00:00:54]

I did go back. I don't I don't like my dad crying [LAUGHTER]. When I came home, I said, what am I going to do now? Go back to my last job. I don't want you anymore. My former professor reached out to me one day and said, I heard you got your Masters. I'm supposed to teach in this school teaching Principles of Economics or Economics 101, you have economics courses in Masters in your MBA right? I said, Yes. Would you mind taking over the classes? Yeah. Are you okay of taking over my classes, I said, I'm not sure. I don't have teaching experience, then he said it's only like part-time four sections if economics, I said, I don't have work, I left the opportunity, Singapore. Then, when I started teaching, I never looked back.

[00:01:59]

Really?

[00:02:00]

I loved it.

[00:02:04]

Out of, the blue, you haven't experienced with the subject that you are going to be teaching, but never taught before.

[00:02:10]

Never taught before.

[00:02:10]

Even the mutation came out of nowhere because you didn't have I have and then came and experience to teach someone?

[00:02:17]

Yes. I went there, my former professors said you don't have to apply, don't have to, but I did a mock teaching which made me sweat a lot because I didn't teach before. I did a mock teaching, the chairperson liked it. I said, okay. I took over for courses for the first semester at least I had something to do because I didn't know what to do with myself after I came back. When I started teaching those four classes of economics. I never looked back. I loved it. I loved the experience. I don't know why. I don't know, I guess at the end of the day, it made me feel fulfilled that I did something productive. I taught 40 students per section, so 160 students.

[00:03:08]

One hundred-and-sixty students.

[00:03:09]

Yes.

[00:03:10]

How was your relationship with them in general?

[00:03:13]

They liked me. When I was younger as a college instructor, I was strict but also funny. Maybe that's why they liked it.

[00:03:27]

You're not too strict or to disciplined.

[00:03:31]

No.

[00:03:32]

You also oversight that relate to them somehow.

[00:03:37]

Of course, I put in a lot of real-world experiences, real-world examples should economics courses. I think that's what they really liked the most.

[00:03:45]

Do you think that raising your brothers helped?

[00:03:49]

I did. think of it one time. Sometimes I think when I was teaching them and they're getting what I was teaching, I liked it when I was very young, 10-years-old. I think that's on.

[00:04:03]

[OVERLAPPING] Even understanding.

[00:04:04]

At least yes.

[00:04:06]

That not much about what you're talking about your brothers relate to the students is not really what you are teaching per se, but how you relate to them because somehow are those kids again, giving you a hard time. I had to be strict in some part and let them be in the other ones.

[00:04:29]

It also taught me how to be patient because what I know a 10-years-old is on the level of what? A fifth grader. They are kindergarten, you cannot expect them to understand easily because they're kids. I think that practice with my brothers, I took it with me when I started teaching.

[00:04:58]

Managing a little bit in terms of the give and take, how far you can go and how far you need to stop and what do you need to make them understand? Say, hey, the boss here, it's me, I have the money, I buy things, so don't mess with me right now. It's cool to be where we have the grades. Be careful.

[00:05:16]

Be careful you bet.

[00:05:18]

You fall in love with teaching. How long that lasts?

[00:05:21]

I taught from 2015 until I came here full time. That's from 2011, from 2017.

[00:05:33]

Why did you decide to come to US?

[00:05:37]

Because of love, no [LAUGHTER]

[00:05:41]

That could be a good reason.

[00:05:42]

My boyfriend, then now my husband.

[00:05:48]

You met your husband in Philippine.

[00:05:51]

I actually, I met my husband in 2007.

[00:05:55]

2007.

[00:05:57]

He's been courting for 10 years [LAUGHTER] He's a US Marine, or he's a US Marine veteran now, but he was a US Marine then. He was stationed at Iwakuni Japan. One day he and his buddies skim over, they have the leave or something in Japan. One of the places or the place that they wanted to go to is Philippines. I don't know why. It's so happened that one of his buddies is a cousin of my friend who owns a restaurant. Then one day said, come over and let's eat or something. I went there and his cousin or her cousin and my husband was in the group, he was there too. This is from my husband lips., he said, he saw me and then said I'm going to marry her one day. We met that day, and because it's long distance because he was in Japan I was in Philippines, we kept in contact through that time. Sorry for those who are younger, but we kept in contact through Yahoo Messenger.

[00:07:13]

Yahoo Messenger?

[00:07:14]

Yahoo Messenger.

[00:07:14]

Was there already, very modern because it could be letters, posting sending via was already a Yahoo message?

[00:07:22]

Yeah.

[00:07:23]

In Brazil I always make a joke that people who don't know AOL, “you got mail”.

[00:07:29]

Through Yahoo messenger. Sometimes the on phone, he would call me a long distance from Iwakuni, but then he came back here to the United States and then I think his contract with being a Marine was done, but we stayed in contact after I came back here.

[00:07:54]

Question and you don't need to answer either because it can be a secret. He saw you and decide, I will marry her. Did you have the same reaction?

[00:08:05]

No, because that time I was focused on my career being a college instructor.

[00:08:12]

But he was a nice guy, just a nice person that you met and was cool and that's it.

[00:08:20]

The only reason I talked to him is because one of his buddies is a cousin of my friend. We were in the same table.

[00:08:27]

Look at you, you snob. He fell in love with me, of course he did.

[00:08:33]

I said show me first I said.

[00:08:34]

That's lovely.

[00:08:36]

It was 2007, so we kept in contact for 10 years. 2007 I got admitted in the extension school. I came here in 2017. When he found out, because I told him. I'll be coming to the United States. We're attending the summer school for extension school. I have a cheesy story, but from Baltimore to Boston, he would come here for the summer. He would come every weekend.

[00:09:12]

Every weekend?

[00:09:13]

Every weekend for the entire summer term.

[00:09:16]

This man loves you [LAUGHTER]. He was not a joke. That's beautiful. What's his name?

[00:09:23]

Danda.

[00:09:24]

Dan?

[00:09:25]

Danda D-A-N-D-A. He would come here Friday night. He would leave Baltimore through bus and then come here, he would stay at an Airbnb. I don't know where. Then we would meet the next day and go around Boston, Cambridge showed him Harvard of course. Then Sunday afternoon he would go back. Then the next week same again.

[00:09:56]

How long until he asked her the question about will you marry me?

[00:10:02]

That was 2017, 2018 he went to the Philippines, because I'm only here during the summer. 2018 he went to the Philippines for my birthday, January.

[00:10:16]

[inaudible 00:10:16] when he met the entire family?

[00:10:18]

Yes, he met my brothers and my dad.

[00:10:24]

Then I toured him around the Philippines. He loved it, not only because the Philippines are beautiful or something, but because his dolly I said, my dollar is worth a lot in here. [LAUGHTER] I can do more in here.

[00:10:39]

Yes.

[00:10:40]

Yes. We were able to go from the northern part of the first major island resort. I turned him around. I drove for him, he saw many resorts or mountains, etc. He loved it there. Then 2018 summer, I came back here for the summer again. But he was already here. He actually moved here in 2000.

[00:11:11]

Knowing that you were coming back.

[00:11:12]

Yes, because he know I am coming back.

[00:11:14]

This is beautiful.

[00:11:15]

He moved here from Baltimore, started looking for a job here. He found a job and in 2018, I came here. Since we were all boyfriends and girlfriends, I stayed in his place I don't have to rent or something while I was attending, again, my second summer school of Harvard Extension School, and then went back again to the Philippines. All the way, I was still teaching part-time. He went back March of 2019, that's when he asked my dad.

[00:11:50]

He talked to your dad.

[00:11:52]

Yeah, March of 2019 for his birthday that time.

[00:11:57]

That's amazing. Did you say, yes, finally?

[00:12:02]

Well, he only asked my dad that, I didn't know. [LAUGHTER] My dad didn't even tell me because I guess my dad thought that I'm not serious [LAUGHTER] because to be honest, he's my first boyfriend ever. For 33 years, I didn't have a boyfriend. He was my first boyfriend. My dad thought okay, he asked me fine. [LAUGHTER]

[00:12:34]

She doesn't care.

[00:12:36]

He doesn't care. I said yes, he might say no. The proposal was a beautiful story. I was already here. I came here, June of 2019 and the plan is already stay here permanently with him. One day, I think it was July, July of 2019 he said let's go to Isabella Stewart Gardner because he likes it there. It's not as big as the MFA.

[00:13:15]

Yes.

[00:13:15]

Yes. He likes it here.

[00:13:16]

It's a wonderful museum area and everything like that.

[00:13:20]

It's very romantic.

[00:13:22]

Yes and feels like a house more than a museum.

[00:13:25]

It's a big house.

[00:13:26]

It is a museum, you all know, but that is the shape and I don't know, intimacy of a house or something.

[00:13:33]

When we went there, he wanted to start at the top floor. I was like, why are starting at the top floor? That was our third time to go there anyway. Why are we starting top floor? Just to mix it up.

[00:13:45]

Nice.

[00:13:45]

I said okay. We started at the top floor going down and down. When we were in the ground floor, the garden area, he was sweating like a pig. I said, what's wrong with you? He said nothing. Hold on, I'm going to go to the bathroom. He went to the bathroom three times. Then he always comes out wet in the forehead or something. Then we went to the garden part the middle one and then that's where he asked me.

[00:14:14]

Wow.

[00:14:17]

The more sweet part of that day was a stranger took a picture and a video because she saw what was happening.

[00:14:27]

Just the two of you there.

[00:14:29]

Yes. Without that stranger, we wouldn't have any picture.

[00:14:31]

You wouldn't have anything. Do you think that he was nervous to ask or that you would not have said yes?

[00:14:41]

Because he knows that I was still too focused on finishing extension school. Or I think just asking because.

[00:14:52]

It's a big deal.

[00:14:53]

It's a big deal.

[00:14:54]

Doing that production in the middle of the Isabella, the only the garden in Isabella.

[00:14:57]

There were a lot of people there. It was summer.

[00:15:02]

People react?

[00:15:04]

Actually, nobody reacted.

[00:15:05]

More than the person that were there. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:15:07]

Added in the picture. After he asked me, and I said yes, blah, blah. We were walking, we were smiling, and then this stranger actually, it's a couple too approached us and she actually said, I want to apologize for I don't know if you wanted it to be too private or something, but I took a picture and a video. Then we're like, really? I was crying a little bit.

[00:15:33]

That's lovely.

[00:15:34]

Because she said I saw what was happening and I noticed nobody was taking a picture of you or you didn't bring a camera.

[00:15:42]

This is beautiful.

[00:15:42]

It's really beautiful.

[00:15:44]

What a sweet, wonderful person.

[00:15:47]

Then she shared, of course, she sent over the picture to us and that's on our wall now.

[00:15:52]

That's lovely. Wow, what a beautiful story, and this person that had the kindness. I can see that because it is a private thing, why were you filming this? Some people might ask mind your own business. Then she looked for you and she will give it, that's a wonderful gift.

[00:16:10]

It's not like she snapped a picture just out of whatever, but she made sure that flowers were also in the background.

[00:16:18]

Wow.

[00:16:19]

It was like a professional did it.

[00:16:21]

Wow, that's wonderful.

[00:16:22]

Really nice.

[00:16:23]

When Harvard happened?

[00:16:26]

Harvard happened?

[00:16:27]

Yeah.

[00:16:28]

HLS?

[00:16:28]

Yeah, so you were finishing your master's degree?

[00:16:31]

Yeah, I finished in 2020 and that was during the pandemic so nobody was hiring.

[00:16:39]

You finished your course online then?

[00:16:41]

Yes, and then I graduated virtually as well May 2020. Everything was closed and I don't know what to do with myself. I was getting frustrated because my papers were not also pushing forward because the immigration officers are closed.

[00:17:02]

You had to do with the immigration as well.

[00:17:05]

Yes. In 2020, my former chairperson back home reached out to me. She said, are you interested in teaching online? Because here in the Philippines, everything's closed as well. Classes were transferred to online, and we don't have a lot of instructors. You're in Boston. I know that the time is backwards, if it's morning there, it's night here, and vice versa, but are you okay teaching here online? I said I'll take anything just so I have something to do. My husband was working at Brigham and Women's, so he still has to go to work and I'm all alone at home. I don't know what to do scared because of the pandemic. I needed something to [OVERLAPPING].

[00:18:04]

Take your mind off.

[00:18:05]

Take my mind out of it. I taught since 2020 until today. I'm still teaching online.

[00:18:13]

You're still teaching?

[00:18:13]

Yes.

[00:18:16]

You graduated, now you're still teaching and then you got a job at Faculty Support Services, which professor are you working with?

[00:18:23]

I have seven visiting professors.

[00:18:26]

Visiting professors?

[00:18:28]

Yes.

[00:18:28]

Wow.

[00:18:29]

They're at the permanent faculty.

[00:18:37]

How did you find out about applying for Harvard or you had already in the background?

[00:18:42]

No, actually, when everything started opening up, my papers are already okay so I can now work, I said, what can I do here? What can I do? I started searching and then I saw this faculty assistant job somewhere. I saw the duties and responsibilities I said, these things are the things that I did that I call myself a faculty member, except of course the teaching part. Well, back home the faculty members don't have the luxury of having a faculty assistant. They do everything themselves. They manage their own course sites.

[00:19:34]

They budget if they have one and everything.

[00:19:36]

The reimbursements, they do it themselves.

[00:19:39]

Grades and preparing classes.

[00:19:41]

Yes. Photocopying, providing copies to their students, coming up together with their course packets, etc., we did it ourselves. I said these are the things I did, these are the things I've been doing. Why not just take a chance?

[00:20:01]

Perfect match.

[00:20:02]

Perfect match, except, of course, check and teach law courses. I applied.

[00:20:11]

Who did you talk to first?

[00:20:13]

First, it was Miriam.

[00:20:16]

I remember Miriam, lovely. She took a leave. I think she left because she's taken a course in Washington DC.

[00:20:23]

She's taking law school.

[00:20:23]

She is wonderful.

[00:20:24]

She was wonderful and then after she left, she entrusted me to Darryl.

[00:20:31]

Darryl Muranaka.

[00:20:32]

Yes.

[00:20:32]

My God, how difficult it is to work with Darryl.

[00:20:35]

That's not difficult, he's very nice. He's always supportive.

[00:20:40]

He's a wonderful guy. I know him for a while.

[00:20:44]

He's been here?

[00:20:45]

Yeah, for 20-something years. We did one story on him as well. He was talking about everything and I love Daryl he was a wonderful person. What now? You are working with the Faculty Support Service which I assume that's a wonderful person. Daryl is also wonderful.

[00:21:07]

A wonderful manager.

[00:21:11]

What else?

[00:21:12]

I'm flying once a week to DC. I'm taking my doctorate.

[00:21:19]

You were taking a doctorate degree?

[00:21:21]

Yes.

[00:21:21]

A PhD in Washington DC?

[00:21:24]

Yes, at Georgetown University.

[00:21:26]

Georgetown. Nice. What are you taking your PhD on?

[00:21:33]

Liberal studies, a concentration on international security.

[00:21:37]

International security?

[00:21:38]

Yes.

[00:21:39]

How long is going to work for you?

[00:21:41]

It's a part-time program. The program caters to working professionals. It was perfect for me. The coursework will take three years. There's comprehensive exam and then of course a dissertation. How long it will take for us to finish dissertation is dependent on how lazy we are.

[00:22:11]

How was the environment in Georgetown?

[00:22:15]

Georgetown, I can't particularly. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:22:19]

Because you go once a week, [OVERLAPPING] then you just get they're going straight through your [OVERLAPPING] classes, you don't have much time to be in environment or the campus in general. That makes sense.

[00:22:30]

Yes.

[00:22:31]

You mentioned at the beginning of our conversation that you are also trying to have children?

[00:22:37]

Yes. A challenging process because I'm already 37 and we've been trying, of course, since we got married.

[00:22:54]

Yes.

[00:22:56]

I have some Filipino friends also here that said for some reason when they came here in the United States, it became difficult for them to conceive. [OVERLAPPING] It's like a common denominator among them.

[00:23:12]

Among the Filipinos that you know?

[00:23:14]

Yeah. One of them never had the chance to have a kid. One of them went through IVF. Which is weird because her family or her background, her siblings have at least four children.

[00:23:31]

Wow.

[00:23:34]

She has like seven siblings. They're like okay with conceiving. When she got here for some reason, she only had actually one kid through IVF.

[00:23:48]

Through IVF.

[00:23:49]

Yeah.

[00:23:49]

Talking about pregnancy and the process going through IVF and some more. I was talking to Sasha Tulgan and Carolyn Hubbard over what they went through. They have two different experience and two different outcomes as well in the same topic and everything doesn't need Caroline mentioned as well. The deadline or age limit that you should be trying, 35 and everything. It's interesting to see what they went through and how they prepare and to be able to go through I think would be interesting for you if you want to listen to that as well.

[00:24:32]

I will let me know when it's available.

[00:24:35]

We hope that you are going to make it available. We will announce via the newsletter as well, make sure that everybody has a chance in more a sense of I have a more support group. [OVERLAPPING] That they can talk to each other and know each other because I think this is an important part of the show. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:24:51]

Actually we have girlfriends here.

[00:24:53]

Yes, because it wants to have a group. That's my intention with all of this, is to make the community more closer in different aspects. Whether you are going to be releasing one on grief. In terms of as co-workers, how can you relate to someone that has lost a loved one and being supportive without being awkward. Sometimes even intrusive in a way that you don't know trying to be nice and not being the best time to do that.

[00:25:24]

Sometimes when we get awkward we tend to avoid them, [OVERLAPPING] which is weird.

[00:25:30]

When the person needs the most is when. [OVERLAPPING]

[00:25:32]

When you avoid them.

[00:25:34]

All these things, and if you have a circle that you can relate to it and you can talk to you and maybe just for the sake of I'm going through this, you have been through this. What do you think? Just for the sake of speaking the same language in that aspect. That's what our idea is. Stay tuned because maybe that can be something. Why I'm just amazed is and let's get the credit for whoever brought you here to talk to me, which is Melanie Baez [inaudible 00:26:07], that's also in fact, support. Because the first thing she told me, we were talking in the tunnel. I was going somewhere near the library she was coming back. “Edgar, I have someone that you have to talk to. What you're talking about? For the podcast, and then she went on, she has, what did you call it?” [OVERLAPPING]

[00:26:28]

Triple life.

[00:26:28]

Yeah, [LAUGHTER] she has a triple life at gotten. You need to talk to her because I've seen. Who is this person? Do you even know if she wants? [LAUGHTER] She didn't even know. I'll talk to her. But that's okay. Now she's right. Because you have the triple life.

[00:26:45]

I have a triple life. I'm teaching. I'm working here full-time and I'm taking my doctorate studies.

[00:26:51]

You are trying to have a fourth life.

[00:26:53]

A forth life to be a mom.

[00:26:55]

Amazing. You are going to try to do all this together. Good for you.

[00:26:59]

Yes, it takes a lot. Someone with their family over here, for them it would be challenging but at least you have the support. But for me I'm anxious because it's only me and my husband. The good thing is my husband is very supportive and he's actually now opted to work from home full time, so when the pregnancy becomes successful. He'll be there.

[00:27:28]

Great give you support [OVERLAPPING] wonderful.

[00:27:31]

He's actually cooking for me. [LAUGHTER] Washing the dishes, washing the clothes because I have the triple life [LAUGHTER].

[00:27:41]

Unbelievable Arlenie. You were lucky. Well, you should say no, he's doing what he's supposed to do. [LAUGHTER]

[00:27:51]

But he's supposed to be washing my clothes. [LAUGHTER] He washes the clothes the clothes. I fold it.

[00:27:56]

Exactly. I think Brian and I we have a deal more like that as well. I do the laundry, he folds. I cook most of the time. He doesn't cook at all, but he likes to eat and usually I say that is it, what is cooked here is why you have to eat, don't complain [OVERLAPPING] He never complains. He's fine with that. Whatever is there. But this is great.

Listen. Thank you very much for accepting to talk to me. I loved our conversation. [OVERLAPPING] I wish you all the best. I'm sure that you are going to do great when your PhD, I can't wait for you to have denote the results of your journey with your kid?

[00:28:38]

Well, I hope it's a him. Yes.

[00:28:43]

That's your first thought, that it will be a him?

[00:28:45]

I wanted to be him because I grew up with brothers.

[00:28:49]

You know how to deal with the kids.

[00:28:50]

I know how to deal with the guys. [LAUGHTER] I don't know how to deal with a girl.

[00:28:56]

Maybe it be a girl, that's a new experience. You fifth lifestyle that you are going to have. But whoever is coming, would be loved them sure. Because you both are wonderful people. I don't know your husband but just by his story I think he's a phenomenal person. I wish you all the luck and everything else. Now that you know each other, please feel free to reach out. You know where I'm in HR. We can chat. I would love if your husband ever comes to one of our picnics, [OVERLAPPING] please I love to get to know him too.

[00:29:31]

I love to stop by the Human Resources. You have a lot of snacks there, Sometimes I go there to get kisses. [LAUGHTER]

[00:29:37]

Yeah, please do. It'd be lovely. We have some folks that that are very lovely as well. Good community as well. [OVERLAPPING] Very thankful that you came and I'll see you around. [MUSIC].

[00:29:52]

You're welcome.

[00:29:52]

Thank you. For everybody listening out there. I'll see you around until our next guest. Bye-bye.