

Abortion Talk

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Abortion? Yeah, I know it. I've seen TV shows about it. I've heard people –medical doctors, lawyers, social workers, priests – talk about it. It sounds... painful, gory... a little gross, especially those which involve a bloody mess in public toilet bowls. Yeah, public toilets are the worst because it is such a dirty place.

Have I ever met woman who has had abortion? No. I mean, who has right? You'd have to be a little illegal to meet them. What do I mean? Just that, illegal. Abortion is illegal. You don't go around saying you've had abortion or you know where to go to get one – you can get locked up if the wrong people heard you. No, I haven't heard anyone locked up for saying they had abortion. You got to have proof that I actually did it. Noooooo. I didn't have abortion. I'm just saying that if I told you I had abortion, you can't get the police to arrest me because you have no proof. I could be lying to you. You don't know me, I can be lying to you and you won't know it, right?

But I'm not lying to you. You're too serious. Of course, yeah, abortion is a serious issue.

My first abortion – hahaha! Look at you! I knew you'd react like that! No, no abortion for me.

As I was saying, my first “abortion” (hahaha!) was a long time ago. I was at the city hall, maybe there to pick up some document or what, when I heard these two women talking. They were just behind me on the line. One was telling the other of her daughter who was maybe 13, 14 years old and got pregnant by her boyfriend. Her boyfriend, not the kid's. The mother filed a complaint in the barangay against her boyfriend because he got her kid pregnant. Yeah, rape. Anyway, so the mother wanted to get rid of the baby. She didn't say so outright but anyone can guess that. She said something like, it's not good for her daughter to carry on with the pregnancy, she's too young, the

baby will only be a reminder of what happened, blah, blah, blah. And the other woman, the one she was talking to, said, If you really want to do something about the baby, I know a manghihilot.

Yeah, just like that. In a public space, speaking in a normal voice, just your everyday conversation while waiting in line. The mother pretended to be shocked at first, like no, no, but she didn't fool me. Later, she asked, Is the manghihilot good?

Of course people talk about abortion. Other people's abortion. Nothing illegal about that. And who was I anyway? Or other people in the line? I'm not a police, and even if I was, why waste my time on abortion cases?

But you know who I heard actually reports abortions? The hospitals. Don't ever make the mistake of going to hospitals to get cleaned up after a messy abortion. I met this social worker – young, new at her job. She's assigned to the emergency room of a provincial hospital. She told me that every now and then a woman comes to the emergency room, alone or with a friend -- rarely with a man – bleeding heavily between her legs. She'll ask them what happened and nine out of 10, they'll lie and say they don't know, they fell down, they miscarried a few days ago. But tell them they might die if they're not telling the truth, because the doctors might give them the wrong medicine, maybe 6 or 8 will come around and tell her it was a hanger, or Cytotec, she drank too much of that pamparegla from Quiapo, or the manghihilot gave her a wrong medicine. So the social worker reports it to the police. She picks up the phone and dials the police station straight away to report. She told me the hospital can get into trouble if they don't report because abortion is a crime. The woman? I don't know what happens to them. The social worker didn't say much about them, only they committed a crime so they must be reported.

That's all I know about abortion.

My opinion? It's a sin against God to kill people, right? And it's illegal, you can get jailed for abortion. The girl who was raped? Well... I'm sure she won't be jailed, she's young, it's not her fault she got pregnant. But I don't think I can go back to church if I had abortion. It's a mortal sin.

I think it's okay, you know, if it's just less than three months. I mean, it's just blood, not even human yet. After the third month, you know it's already human. I've seen a fetus, yes. Funny now that you asked that. The first time I saw a real fetus was in a jar that this woman carried to a rally. She doesn't want abortions to be legalized, and was spouting Bible verses too. I thought it was very

un-Christian of her to display a fetus, instead of giving it a decent burial. I wonder where she got it.
The hospital? Oh, hospitals have foetuses in jars?

That's it. I don't really know much about abortion. I don't know who had abortion around here.

When will this shown on TV again?