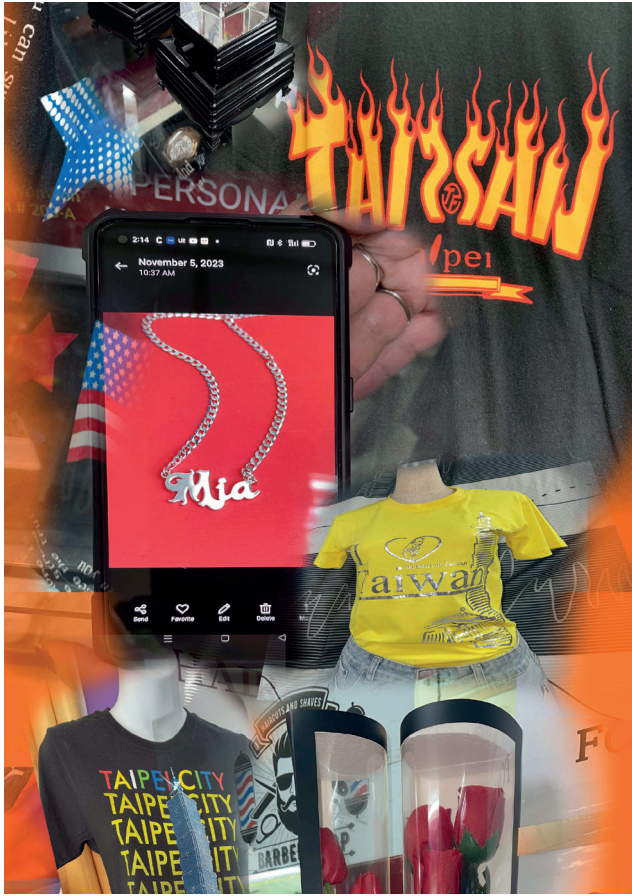


■  
PAGHAMON  
NG PAG IBIG  
*CHALLENGE*  
*OF LOVE*

Wu MeiChi  
■



Gorgeous Shop



Sarap!



### Daily Words

Kumusta – Hello, how are you?

Kain tayo – Let's eat

Masarap – Delicious

### This is not a souvenir & I'm a Superwoman

Inside King Wan Wan Mall, there are many souvenir T-shirts printed with the words 'Taiwan' or 'Taipei.'

She has lived in Taiwan for 21 years. Almost all of the money she earns is sent back home, to support her parents and pay for the education of her four siblings. Eventually, the family was able to build a large house.

When the siblings grew up, the whole family took a group photo outside the big house, all wearing 'I Love Taiwan' T-shirts.





### Name

Many shops inside King Wan Wan Mall are named after the owners themselves.

I once spent a long time browsing in a small jewelry shop. The owner told me that customers could customize jewelry with their own names. She showed me many examples of different names.

A name is not fixed. In order to meet the expectations of different employers, some adopt different nicknames. Some people even have several names at once.

One woman changed her Facebook name to the name of her dog, simply to avoid being found.

### No Heater

Boss I. runs a hair salon.  
When I tried to make an appointment with her, she said,

‘Taiwanese people like washing their hair with hot water, but I don’t have a water heater in my shop. Filipinos are used to cold water.’

Even when she and her husband go back to the Philippines, he still cannot get used to washing his hair with cold water.

‘You are my friend, so I can do your hair, but we don’t take Taiwanese customers.’





### Dress Photo Shoot

Boss M. took out a gold dress and said, 'I bought this, but it's too small.'

'We sisters want to go outside and take photos together.'

Boss M. is the owner of a nail salon. She has been married in Taiwan for more than 20 years. She said she has done many kinds of jobs before, and now she works as a translator.

There are two or three people in the shop. During the weekdays they each have their own jobs, and on weekends they come to Wan Wan Mall.

Later, I saw them wearing the dress on Facebook.

### Video Call

'Hi! Look, this is my boyfriend. He's working in Australia now.'

Her boyfriend lay shirtless on his bed watching television, seemingly uninterested in talking.

One hour passed.

Two hours.

Three hours.

Four hours.

The phone screen remained on.





### Daily Words

Mahal kita – I love you  
Miss na kita – I miss you  
Ikaw lang – Only you

### Somewhere Only We Know

I only met him twice.

The first time, he was happily singing karaoke.  
He had a beautiful voice. The song he sang was  
Keane's 'Somewhere Only We Know.'  
That was my first impression of him.

The second time we met, he was singing again.  
One of the songs he sang was 'Uhaw' by Dilaw.

He told me he had already worked in Taiwan for  
eight years and could no longer stay.  
He would have to return to the Philippines.

That was the last time I saw him.

A few months after he returned to the Philippines,  
I received the sudden news of his passing.





*Sabik nang mahalikan  
Already excited to kiss*

*Mayakap ka't masayaw sa ulan  
And hug and dance you in the rain*

*Ang mundo'y gagaan  
The world will be lighter*

*Mundo ko'y gagaan  
My world will be lighter*

### Going home

My big brother will be returning to his hometown soon.  
He told me he doesn't really want to go back,  
because he is currently deeply in love with his new  
girlfriend, even though he is already married.





### The Tent at Home

'I hate my husband, but he refuses to divorce.'

Divorce would bring too many legal responsibilities for the one who owns the property. So she lets him stay.

No one in the family likes him. Yet, he remains.

Inside the house, he lives in a tent.

### Tour Guide

I am dating a Taiwanese. He has taught me many things about Taiwan.

We often go to different restaurants to eat. I taste which flavors are familiar to me and which tastes feel unique.

We are still together. He is like a tour guide.

I don't know where this relationship will go.





### Pinoy Sunday

He said: 'Meichi, how do you see people like us?'

He said: 'Taiwanese people usually don't like to be friends with us, because we work in factories and our skin is dark. Just like in this movie. You call us foreign labor, right?'

On the television, the film *Pinoy Sunday* was playing. In the movie, two migrant workers carry a large sofa back and forth on the road.

He said: 'This looks like me and my friend. When we first arrived, we also carried a sofa around on the street like that.'

### Daily Words

Ingat – Take care  
Salamat – Thank you  
Gwapo – Handsome  
Maganda – Beautiful





Find happiness inside this box

### Endnote

Developed during a residency with the Not Just Love Stories team.

What remains are fragments of conversations—voices that continue to circulate, even as they detach from where they once belonged.