

Kidnap: a documentary on the abduction in Sulu of ABS-CBN broadcast journalist Ces Drilon and her crew by the Abu Sayyaf Group

By CES DRILON

Days of captivity in the depths of Sulu

As I made my way through the wild fern and thick vegetation in the depths of Sulu, little did I know that I was to cross the line from a reporter chasing a story to becoming the story—and make headlines for many days.

As we walked for about three hours in the oppressive heat that fateful June 8, I did not feel threatened. But as it turned to dusk and after our “safe conduct pass,” as Professor Octavio Dinampo referred to our guide, Juamil “Maming” Biyaw, disappeared, I began to feel a heavy sense of foreboding. Juamil was called by two armed men and was brought away.

When I asked the professor why this had happened, he told me Juamil was just being brought to “our man,” referring to Radulan Sahiron before our audience with him. Juamil was a relative of Sahiron and accompanied Prof. Dinampo in an interview he had with Sahiron in February 2008. The professor had told me no harm would come to us as long as Juamil was with us. Prof. Dinampo had told me he had known Juamil, who was with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) for more than eight years, and was aiding him in his peace advocacy work.

I began to worry about the diminishing light for our interview, but as things turned out, it was the least of my worries. By this time, the armed men, around eight of them, who were to escort us to the interview, took all our things, except for the camera and camera equipment. We were told that we were nearing our destination. We walked as it was getting dark, even when it was raining. I thought to myself, “Is this story worth it?”

New amir

It was almost a year and a half since Dinampo, professor at the Mindanao State University in Sulu, and I had explored the idea of an interview with the new amir of the Abu Sayyaf. This was shortly after the death of Khadaffi Janjalani was confirmed in early 2007.

I was in Sulu in January of that year after the Army’s Special Forces killed Abu Solaiman, a top leader of the group and believed to be the mastermind of the Dos Palmas kidnappings in 2002. The AFP said the Abu Sayyaf was nearly finished and it was only a matter of time before they wipe out the notorious group responsible for a series of kidnappings and bombings in the country.

Who would be the new leader of the Abu Sayyaf was the question on everybody's minds. I had asked the professor to explore the possibility of an interview with Radulan Sahiron. That began our quest for Sahiron, whom Dinampo believed would be the amir of the Abu Sayyaf.

Sahiron is said to have been wounded in an encounter with the Philippine Marines in September 2006 where Khadaffi Janjalani was mortally wounded. He is also believed to have lost his son Ismin, in that battle.

There is a lot of legend that surrounds Sahiron, also known as Commander Putol. He is said to have lost his right arm during the height of the MNLF fighting in the 70s. He is looked up to as a brave warrior and a skilled horseman despite being having only one arm.

A top military commander based in Sulu believed him to be sick and ageing, and that he was almost 70. However a US Treasury report in 2005 puts his age at 53. In 2005, the Arroyo government suffered a major embarrassment in its anti-terror drive when it crowed about his arrest, only to retract it. The man they had captured lost not his right, but his left arm.

Surrender?

But while Sahiron's exploits in battle are legendary, the warrior was also quietly making overtures for surrender to the government. Shortly before our scheduled interview, a Mindanao legislator informed me that Sahiron had written a top security official with ties to the MNLF, exploring the possibility of surrender. The legislator told me Sahiron's overtures had been discussed in a meeting between President Arroyo and a handful of legislators from the area. One legislator from Sulu asked the President to pursue the matter and was given the go-ahead by the chief executive.

Prof. Dinampo told me our interview would just be in the town of Indanan, the town next to Jolo, the capital. Privately, he said it was his hope our interview would signal the possibility of peace talks between the government and the Abu Sayyaf. It seemed an incredible idea, but he had said even a military general had already been communicating with Sahiron, whose ascension as amir of the group is believed to have moderated the Abu Sayyaf.

The Abu Sayyaf ready to put down their arms?

All these factors convinced me that the time was ripe for the interview. But we were never to see Sahiron.

My crew, Jimmy Encarnacion and Angel Valderama, and I, together with Prof. Dinampo, ended up captives for nine days, held by armed men with no ideology, only cruel force and the lust for money.

Long nights

While in captivity, the nights seemed endless. By 6:30 or 7 in the evening, we would be in our hammocks, ready to go to bed. There would be no light of any kind, save for the tiny light at the end of the lighter, just in case one wanted to go to the comfort room, which was

any spot in the vast jungle, but near enough to the camp to assure our captors we would not attempt an escape.

We feared another group would take us. The professor had warned me the group could get bigger, wanting to get a piece of the action. He said that would complicate matters for us.

While trying to sleep, I could hear all sorts of strange sounds from the jungle—bird calls and insects. Ordinarily, the sounds would send a chill through my spine, but I got used to them.

At night I would constantly wake up and look to the horizon for signs of a new day. One night, I woke up at midnight thinking it was already daybreak.

The armed men would begin the day in prayer, just before the break of dawn. I would be awake before then, impatient to begin the day. As they prayed, I would pray silently with them, counting the Hail Marys on the rosary with my fingers. After the prayer, I would get my coffee, often from an old man with a limp, who I later learned was only in his forties.

Prof. Dinampo told me he had seen the man before with the MNLF. The old man was tasked to prepare our meals and keep house, later on assisted by a boy who told me he was 17.

The old man seemed pleased that I liked my native coffee strong without any sugar. He said it was the best way to have it. And it was the best thing I had in our captivity where meals were limited to noodles and rice, or rice and soy sauce.

On some days we had dried fish or sardines. The fish was salted and tiny, smaller than the thumb. Each one among us had two or three pieces each. The sardines were an occasional treat, one can which the four of us shared.

One day, a one-armed man, who seemed to be in charge, would tell me that the people of Sulu could not afford to eat the fish from their seas. I told him they should fight for their right to fish in their municipal waters and not the huge fishing boats. It was an attempt to educate them, that there were many local causes worth advocating.

On our eighth day of captivity, Sunday, we were served beef! This sent the men in the camp into fits of excitement, hollering about the prized meat.

Biscuits and crackers

While those tasked to cook breakfast would be busy gathering firewood and cooking rice or noodles, our guards would busy themselves cleaning their handguns. They carefully wiped them to a sheen and would handle their weapons for hours. I would look away and carefully position myself away from the barrel, lest an accident happen.

In between lunch and dinner, there would be crackers and biscuits of all kinds. The armed men loved to munch on these and the jungle floor would be littered with wrappers. Jimmy, Angel and I would always try to keep the place clean, putting the litter in one pile or in a plastic bag, but the men just throw their trash anywhere.

Every time I was given my share of crackers, I would hide them away in my bag, just in case food ran out, or just in case there would be a chance to escape so I would have supplies.

Water was kept in plastic water gallons, fetched from a spring below the camp. This was where we got our drinking water or water to clean ourselves. I would transfer water from the plastic gallons to two empty plastic bottles I kept in my bag.

Our guards who were not tasked with any housekeeping work would stay in their hammocks all day, chatting or taking naps. The commander would lie in his hammock, playing with Prof. Dinampo's cell phone.

One time I remarked I wish I had a book and asked them if they were interested in reading and if they had a library. One guard remarked that he was slightly interested. The only book I saw some read was the Koran.

I thought they seemed content to stay idle, lounging in their hammocks. They did not perform military drills or exercises. The more menial tasks like fetching water or gathering firewood were assigned to the younger ones.

One boy, who kept guard when I took my first bath in a pool of water with a spring and a mini waterfall, told me he was only 12 years old. Another was only 15. And another, who was skilled in cooking was 17. They all told me they never went to school. One time I asked the 17-year old why he never went to school. His reply broke my heart. He said he didn't want to because he "may end up an engineer."

Ransom and guns

On June 9, the second day of our captivity, I still hoped I could do my work and followed up our interview. I was told not to worry about it and to have coffee and breakfast first. I looked around and saw the group had swelled to about 20 armed men. The men did not seem on alert; some were still sleeping while others busied themselves to cook.

I sat beside the professor who had told me quietly to expect the worse, that there may be no interview and that we may have already been kidnapped. My heart sank but I did not betray my fear. The men in our hut were busy cleaning their handguns, something that would become routine for them at the start of the day for the rest of our captivity.

At about seven in the morning, I was called to see the "commander" alone, some distance from our hut. The commander told me, "ito na lang ang sasabihin ko sa iyo, kidnap for ransom na ito (I am only going to tell you one thing. This is kidnap for ransom.)."

I took the news without batting an eyelash, even if my heart sank and my knees seemed to turn to jelly.

I tried to reason out with him. I told him to call me Ces, recalling somewhere that as a hostage, it was important for him to consider me a person and not just a commodity.

The commander was surrounded by ten to twelve men. I asked if Radulan Sahiron knew about what they were doing. He said he didn't. He said that he was scared Sahiron may learn about it. Later, his men told me that their commander was hard-headed and didn't follow orders.

Where is Sahiron, I asked. They said they didn't know.

"Is he alive?" I asked, remembering what the professor told me that he overheard from the armed men that Sahiron was hurt in a bombing incident.

The commander said he didn't know the whereabouts of Sahiron.

What cause?

I tried to convince them that granting me an interview would be better, to convey their cause to the people. I told them I was one of the first journalists to cover the massacre of seven civilians and a soldier in Ipil, Maimbung in February, that I was the only one to report on the case of Visma Juhan, a woman injured by a bullet from an M203 rifle grenade used by US forces while training in a military camp in Bud Datu.

The commander remarked that they had given an interview to a former colleague in ABS-CBN but it never was aired.

I asked if they had political demands. "Political demands?" the commander scoffed. He said they had none and that the government doesn't listen to such demands.

I said the professor has been fighting for peace, to which the commander replied that nothing has ever happened to the professor's proposals.

'Just a reporter'

During our days in captivity, our captors would listen to the radio. It was surreal sitting in the middle of the jungle listening to news about us.

One night, the one-armed man said to me, with a pleased smile on his face, that I was an important person. I said no, I was just a reporter.

Some of them didn't know who I was were it not for the radio broadcasts. It would have been funny if not for the following day, when I was told that they had information that I was related to Senator Frank Drilon. I was afraid they would drive up the ransom demand for us.

In my journal, I wrote:

I've always had a romanticized view of Sulu. That outlook was shattered today. What turned these young men into the monsters that they are? What went wrong? They have a deep hatred and a warped sense of the Muslim struggle. My mistake was my being so naïve in hoping that the man I was to interview would present a different view of the Abu Sayyaf. I was wrong. Apparently the message never even got to him. Greed and hatred got in the way. If we are to believe the commander in charge, he just decided to form a team

to kidnap us for ransom. The poor professor who arranged this was naïve like me. He said this will be a very big scoop. The irony is we became the story. I want to hang my head in shame.

But there was a principal behind all this, it became clear to us as the days wore on. The professor believes it was none other than Sahiron himself.

Facing death

For the first days, my cell phone, with Smart as the service provider, was used by our captors to contact my family, and for their own use as well. By the third or fourth day, the battery of my cell phone was used up.

They transferred my SIM card to one of their phones and continued to use my line. The group would send a messenger from time to time to charge the phone, I assumed, to a nearby village. At some point when communication was urgent, we would wait anxiously for a courier to come back with a charged battery. The group had control of my cell phone but there were times when they would hand it to me to call or text. I sent messages surreptitiously.

I would also look immediately at the call register to see who they contacted, or who called them and I would copy the numbers in my notebook. I could do this because I would pretend not to know the numbers of my family by heart and would always have my notebook handy. I would look at messages in the inbox and outbox and at one point, copied a message in Tausug as swiftly as I could.

All this information, I have shared with the authorities. I also managed to send messages to my family and ABS-CBN about our whereabouts. They were tension-filled moments because I had to look nonchalant even when my heart was pounding so hard. The unit was no longer mine so I had to familiarize myself with the cell phone quickly.

I would carefully erase my messages from the sent box so as not to leave evidence. My heartbeat quickened when once, I realized that I did not clear the text from the phone. It was fortunate that I was given the phone to call again and I had an opportunity to double check. But nothing was so fearful as the time I had reported that ten to 12 men had left camp, including the supposed commander, a day after Angel Valderama was freed.

When I had the cell phone, I told Jimmy Encarnacion to be on the lookout and to alert me in case they would come near. I then rapidly texted the message, with the professor egging me, "Don't forget, go delta." My hands were shaking as I sent the text; "Ten men left, only about twelve here. Now is the time to go delta."

When we realized they could not understand English, I would give clues while talking to my brother, Frank. I remember I said: "We are on a mountain I climbed before, check with my office what mountain that is (referring to Bud Daho). My rest house, referring to our camp, is facing a mountain that sounds like an old man (Mt Matanding) "

In another call I said, "Frank, I have a rest house (referring to our camp) which has 20 caretakers (referring to our guards). This rest house is 3000 meters from a lone house facing the sunrise. Tell the caretakers they have to clear the area around the rest house. Also there is poison ivy there (referring to the bomb), they have to be careful."

Negotiations

I was ordered to call ABS-CBN to inform my employers that I was being held hostage.

When I asked who they were, the commander said, "Lost command."

I asked, whose lost command?

"Just lost command," came the reply.

I called the head of news and current affairs, Maria Ressa, on my cell phone. I was also instructed to tell her not to tell the military about it. It was a brief conversation, and I was told to tell her to expect another call. They said they would tell me when I should call again.

I was instructed to return to our hut and not to tell my companions anything about the conversation or they would be tied.

We were told we had to leave the camp. By then, the kidnappers had demanded a P20-million peso ransom for us.

It was made clear to me, which I conveyed to the kidnappers, that the company had a no-ransom policy. I also told them they cannot expect anything, since I had defied instructions on the eve of the interview not to proceed with it and instead to just hand Prof. Dinampo my list of questions for Sahiron and a mini-camera which we also brought with us.

I tried to bring down the price and bargain with them. The one armed man had told me the ransom could not be brought down.

P2 million only

We were on the move again, passed more homes but they became more and more far apart from each other. One had a radio that I could hear some broadcast from.

The civilians did not look threatened by the armed men, who could be mistaken for soldiers. They had the same uniform, complete with the army insignia and carried the same m-14 and m-16 long arms. We stopped on a grassy slope where water was flowing on a well-built pipe made out of bamboo above the ground.

It was on the ridge that I talked to my sister, Grech, for the first time. I also talked to my mother, who was crying on the phone and finally my youngest son, Andre.

Before night fall, the armed men set up camp in a narrow ridge of the mountain covered by trees. They laid out a plastic sheet for us, the material similar to rice sacks. A plastic tent was put above it, tied to the trees. This was where we were to sleep. We were given a plate of rice and a child-size serving of noodles. It was for the four of us. I didn't eat my share.

Shortly after nine in the evening, the one armed man brought me my phone again and said I must talk about the ransom with my sister. My sister told my captors that all we could afford was P2 million.

I heard one of the armed men remark that they would start digging. Alarmed, I told my sister, "Let's borrow money, maybe I can borrow from ABS-CBN."

Patikul

As we got ready to rest, Jimmy, my cameraman, said we must cover our ears for the ground was filled with giant ants. I thought of my panty liners in my bag. I peeled two of them to get the cotton stuffed inside to protect our ears.

But we were ordered to move. As we got up, we saw new faces. We walked for probably an hour, until we reached a lone house overlooking the sea. Before approaching the house, we were made to wait and I assumed they were sending the occupants away. The house like many we saw on the mountain, was on stilts, it was roofed but had no walls. The cold was bitter that night and I shivered all night in my damp jacket.

In my journal I kept throughout our captivity I wrote:

The cold was biting and our feet were damp, my rubber shoes caked with mud. I slept fitfully and was shivering from the cold. I was woken up to start transferring again. The view we left behind was worth it though. The sunrise gave the sky an orange glow. The sun rose over the mountains and gave the sea a soft light. There was an island close to the shore but no one could tell me what its name was.

All throughout our captivity, the group was careful not to reveal where we were or to mislead us by giving wrong information. In the next days, I would pass information through text and through my phone calls, based on the description of the area that Prof. Dinampo would give me.

The area we moved to was where we spent the next six days of our captivity. About four men brought us to the area but before we climbed the slope, they made a great show of planting a bomb, they said in case soldiers were to come.

We were on the eastern slope of Bud Daho, 3000 meters from the lone house where we were first taken, facing the sun RISE. The slope we were on was facing a smaller mountain, called Mt. Matanding.

Bud Daho is a storied mountain, where more than a century ago, thousands of Tausugs, including women and children, were massacred by US soldiers. The professor told me if there was any opportunity to escape, we must head west. West was the more populated area of Patikul, the baranggay of Danag, where Jimmy and I began our climb in 2007.

As it is, we were already in Patikul, the stronghold of Radulan Sahiron. This was what the professor told me. When I had the opportunity to text, I would send the location to my

family members and to Charie Villa, my immediate superior in ABS-CBN. I had also sent the same message to Vice Governor Lady Anne Sahidula, who was chosen by my family to represent us in the negotiations for our release.

Threat to behead

We were constantly in fear, but I would try never to betray it to our captors.

It was on June 11 that the first really frightening experience of our captivity came. It was close to sunset, when Vice Governor Lady Anne, who was on speakerphone, told my captors all my family could afford to pay was P2 million.

They grabbed the cell phone from me and went berserk. The one-armed man, whom I later learned to be Commander Harris or Commander Tek, looked at me with blazing eyes and said we were going to die in the jungle.

We held hands and prayed. I never prayed so hard. Then the men took Jimmy and Angel and tied their hands behind their back. They were made to kneel on the mud. We were told that if the money didn't arrive the next day at two pm, they were going to behead Angel.

The man holding Jimmy turned to me and said I should put on make up so that when they ship my head via LBC to ABS-CBN, I would look pretty.

I tried to be as calm as I could. My calmness in the face of all these threats surprised me. There was no other choice. To be hysterical would have achieved nothing. I could not do anything to comfort Jimmy and Angel and all I could was offer them a drink from the plastic gallon, as they were hogtied. I wanted to cry, but I held myself.

Then Angel and Jimmy were brought to separate hammocks, with one hand tied to a tree. When things settled down, the professor told me we had to undo the group's "misuara," or consensus. He said he had to make a counterproposal to the group otherwise, if the P20 million doesn't come, they would be forced to uphold their ultimatum.

We had to save Angel. We quietly discussed what to propose. The professor said, what if we offer a cash advance to lift the ultimatum? He talked to the one-armed man in Tausug. The professor came back and said the group would meet again to discuss our proposal.

Cash advance

By nine pm, the one- armed man came to tell me that they had decided on a P5 -million cash advance by two p.m., to cancel the ultimatum on Angel.

I called the Vice Governor and pretended I was talking to my sister, because they were so enraged by her. I said, " Sister, they are asking for five million so that Angel will not be beheaded. It has to be with Mayor Isnadji by two o clock p.m. tomorrow."

It was the day before, the morning of June 10, that our captors had told us that it was Mayor ALVAREZ Isnadji of Indanan who they could trust to receive their money. They said the Mayor's son, Jun was a friend of theirs, who will not fool them about the money.

I was surprised when they mentioned the Indanan mayor, because one of the very first things they warned me about, aside from not telling the authorities about our kidnapping, was for my family not to deal with any politician, because they said the politicians would only keep the money for themselves.

This was how I convinced them to accept the vice governor as my family's representative.

'I would die, too'

It was the longest night of my life. I prayed hard and confronted the possibility that I too may die. I could not live if one of us is beheaded. I would also die myself.

I wrote in my journal:

June 12, 5 a.m. Sunrise, again a beautiful orange glow in the east that somehow eases the brutality that envelopes us. I prayed the rosary again as the sun rose. It eases the soul and calms me. There is an ultimatum issued by the group that if P5M is not received by the mayor of Indanan at 2 pm today, Angel will be beheaded. I could not write that yesterday as it was difficult. I took the news as calmly as I could. And the possibility that I too may die here."

At 11:00 a.m., I wrote:

I am leaving my fate up to God and only hope there will be an end to this." Then at 1:40 p.m., another entry: " We just learned of Angel's reprieve. Angel was very happy. We are all happy. I just said the rosary and I feel a sense of peace."

It was past the two p.m. deadline, when the one armed commander approached my hammock and said that the P5 million was already with the mayor and that the ultimatum on Angel had been cancelled—and that he was going to be released.

It was good news to us!

Without hesitation, I agreed, but asked that I must explain this to Jimmy. We all agreed and wished Angel well. They warned me that I must instruct Angel not to talk to the authorities or our safety will be jeopardized. Some 12 men prepared to bring Angel out. It was June 12, Independence Day.

Second ultimatum

It was on the 7th day of our captivity, on the evening of June 14, that we moved camp. It was also the day that the second ultimatum was issued. Before transferring, Commander Tek told me that the second half of the ransom of P15 million had to be in by Monday, June 16, or one of us would be beheaded. And as if to soothe me, he added that the mayor had asked them to extend the deadline to Tuesday, June 17, and the group agreed.

It was also the day I received a text from Senator Loren Legarda. Commander Tek, the one-armed man had given me my cell phone to show her text. By this time, the “commander” had left with about ten men. He left Friday, the day after Angel was released. Professor Dinampo had told me he saw some of them receive money. “Good for six months,” he overheard them say.

I asked if I could call the senator, because by this time, I could no longer reach any members of my family. It was a big relief and a great comfort to hear a voice from the outside world. She told me, “I am working for your unconditional release.” After our conversation, I sent a text to Loren, “ I have faith in you. Please send my love to my mom and my boys.”

The camp we moved to was a short walk downhill, about 30 minutes away. It looked like a place that the armed men had used before. I was assigned a bamboo cot with low nipa walls but no roof, so they tied a plastic sheet above it. Immediately, below the bed, our captors set up hammocks for Jimmy, the professor, and Commander Tek. Some distance away were other makeshift huts, surrounding my own “hut.” There was even a makeshift kitchen.

The professor told me we were on the west slope of Mt. Matanding. I made a mental note of it just in case I had an opportunity to send a text on our change of location.

Sunday evening, as I was on my bamboo bed, Jimmy and I were roused from sleep, our hands tied. They accused us of trying to escape. It would have made me really scared but I refused to indulge my fear. I just prayed and tried to go back to sleep.

They were getting more and more cruel with us. Jimmy was now always tied with his arms behind his back. My arms were tied in front. They would untie us only when meals were served. My bag which I used as a pillow was taken away from me. I worried more about my notebook and the notes I had written on it.

Very early Tuesday, the day of the ultimatum, the men had already begun to threaten to

behead Jimmy. The men gave me the phone to call my family. I called Senator Legarda, gone was the calm in my voice. I told her, please tell me if there is money, otherwise I will prepare my fate.

It was before noon when I called her again saying they were ready to behead Jimmy. A bolo had been taken out. Then I heard a loud slap. I screamed and cried in shock. I slumped on the cot and hugged Jimmy, crying on his shoulder. Then I had seen that a rope had been tied from his arms behind him to his neck, with a piece of cloth tied around it. I had an empty feeling in my stomach.

They made me call my family to ask exactly how much money they raised. I called Senator Legarda instead. In the middle of the phone call, I saw one of the armed men hit me from the corner of my eye. Again, I fell on the cot. In the middle of my sobs, I remember asking Jimmy, where was I slapped? Why don't I feel pain? But Jimmy was already begging the men for his life. I told the men, "Please behead me instead."

By then, after all my prayers, I had asked the Lord to prepare me to accept my death calmly. At the same time, I tried to think, could they be bluffing? But I had made up my mind, that I would not beg these men for my life.

As they hit Jimmy with the butt of a rifle and the bamboo bed, I said, "Please, please one last call, one last call to my family!" But the phone rang and the image of the man who answered the call will forever be imprinted on my mind. He was laughing as he spoke to the phone, spat on the ground, ended the call and said to us, "It's over, you are free."

Free, at last!

On our long walk to freedom on the 17th of June, I asked one of our guards when the one armed commander lost his right arm. I was told that Commander Tek was with his family in a jeep when they were ambushed by the military. Commander Tek, he said, was only five years old then.

I asked myself in my journal: "What kind of life will I go back to? What about these people? What is life to them? What is their purpose? What is mine?"

I still have to discern the answers to these questions. And as I face the consequences of my actions and for my error in judgment, when I brought my team aboard the jeep that would take us to our abduction, the only certain thing I know is that while my family forgave me unconditionally for the ordeal I had put them through, the institution I belong to will demand accountability.

As journalists, we demand accountability from public officials. For now, the first honorable and decent thing to do is to accept the sanctions that may be meted out to me, that I too am ready to be accountable for my actions.

It will be a long time before I return to Sulu. It would be foolhardy to go anytime soon. I can only hope that even as the ransom paid will sadly go to more arms and resources for the bandits, the focus on the province will galvanize the nation to address its dire situation.

While I condemn the actions of the group that took us, I also condemn the system that allows them to thrive.

"During the day, when you gaze at the deep blue sky or at night as you look up to the darkness dotted with stars and a crescent moon, " I wrote in my journal, "you wonder how the Sulu sky can shelter such cruelty."

Source: ABS CBN News <http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/storypage.aspx?StoryId=124850>