

THE LAST FILIPINO  
A Play in Two Acts

**SYNOPSIS:** *From the moment of his capture to his deportment to Guam, Apolinario Mabini takes a firm stand on Philippine Independence at the twilight of the Philippine-American War. But what does it take to make a man so obstinate in his principles to take an oath of allegiance to a conquering nation?*

**CHARACTERS\*:**

**THE FILIPINOS:**

APOLINARIO MABINI	-paralytic on a wheelchair
EMILIO AGUINALDO	-Revolutionary Leader and President of the Philippine Republic
PEDRO PATERNO	-Politician
FELIPE CALDERON	-Politician
ANTONIO LUNA	-General

FILIPINO POLITICIANS, SOLDIERS, CITIZENS, etc.

**THE AMERICANS:**

ELWELL OTIS	-General
ARTHUR MacARTHUR	-General
J. FRANKLIN BELL	-General
HOWARD TAFT	-Civil General
ELIHU ROOT	-Secretary of War

AMERICAN POLITICIANS, SOLDIERS, CITIZENS, etc.

**A VEILED WOMAN**

\*as the play has a big roster of characters who only appear once or twice, it is encouraged that actors should play dual or more roles, but it is in the director's discretion.

**SETTING:** Mostly in Mabini's mind, as he recalls, narrates, and speculates the events from 1898 to 1903

**SET:** Mobile tables, chairs, and elevations, also a screen for projections.

## ACT I

*[The stage is dark except for a single light source focused on a wheelchair. The stage is filled with different silhouettes. From those silhouettes, MABINI walks in and activates the projector.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:            JANUARY 4, 1899*

*[McKINLEY hands a letter to an AMERICAN SOLDIER who hands it to OTIS. OTIS reads it aloud. The FILIPINOS stop to listen.]*

OTIS:                            *[Reads.]* To the People of the Philippine Islands:  
   Instructions of his Excellency, the President of the United States: The United States forces came to the Philippines to destroy the power of Spain, and to give the blessings of peace and individual freedom to the Philippine people.

MABINI:                        *[to the audience.]* Revolution and Political Development. I take political revolution to mean the popular movement aimed at making a drastic change to the organization of the three public powers: legislative, executive, and judiciary.

*[McKINLEY stands beside OTIS.]*

McKINLEY:                    *[reads from his notes.]* It should be the military administration's paramount aim to win the confidence, respect, and affection of the Filipinos by proving that the mission of the United States is one of the benevolent assimilation. In the fulfilment of this high mission, the Filipinos must be sedulously maintained the strong arm of authority, to repress disturbance and to overcome all obstacles to the bestowal of the blessings of good and stable government upon the people of the Philippine Islands under the flag of the United States.

*[AGUINALDO steps up.]*

AGUINALDO:        [*reads.*] General Otis styles himself Military Governor of these Islands, and I protest with all of my soul against such authority. I have not recognized, by word or in writing, the sovereignty of America over this beloved soil.

I published this proclamation in my Manifesto addressed to the Philippine people on the 12th of June.

My relations with the United States did not bring me over here from Hong Kong to make war on the Spaniards for their benefit, but for the purpose of our own liberty and independence.

OTIS:                Then let's see what you will do, Mr. Aguinaldo.

*[FILIPINO SOLDIERS surround the AMERICAN TERRITORY, while the AMERICAN SOLDIERS position themselves inside to defend it. Both parties shout threats at each other.]*

*[MABINI faces the audience.]*

MABINI:            [*to the audience.*] If the change is gradual, it is called development. Prudence resolves conflict and favors development, slow, but smooth and mostly painless. But development is impossible if the social organism does not adapt to it. And failure to adapt will lead to stagnation, paralysis, and death. Against that danger, is revolution necessary.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        FEBRUARY 4, 1899*

*[AGUINALDO and FILIPINO GENERALS exit. FILIPINO SOLDIERS slowly advance to AMERICAN TERRITORY. AMERICAN SOLDIERS ready their rifles, shouting threats. Shootings proceed, with a lot of FILIPINO SOLDIERS falling. A FILIPINO GENERAL tries to get the FILIPINO SOLDIERS in order, to little avail. AGUINALDO enters again to intervene.]*

AGUINALDO:        Stop!

*[The AMERICANS and the FILIPINOS stop shooting. OTIS approaches AGUINALDO.]*

OTIS: Your men insisted on advancing despite being warned not to.

AGUINALDO: I assure you, this attack was against my orders.

OTIS: Nevertheless, fighting having begun, must go on to the grim end.

*[OTIS leaves AGUINALDO and joins the AMERICAN SOLDIERS.]*

AGUINALDO: As the defense of this nation is entrusted to me, the friendly relations between the Americans and Filipinos are broken.

OTIS: *[to the AMERICAN SOLDIERS.]* We will crush them in no time. We've crushed less civilized people before.

*[A VEILED WOMAN enters and holds MABINI by the hand. She leads him to the wheel chair. MABINI sits and turns his back to the audience. The VEILED WOMAN moves to the corner of the stage and watches as the play progresses. The PRESS enters. In the background: different tableaux of AMERICAN and FILIPINO SOLDIERS fighting.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR: MAY 22, 1899*

*“L'INDEPENDENCIE TONKINOISE”, A FRENCH NEWSPAPER*

FRENCH PRESS: It is quite a sight to see the Americans surprised, to think that they could get the Filipinos jumping for joy at their mere presence. The Filipinos are standing up, ready to defend their Constitution and their desire to have their own Government.

The Filipinos did not want to become Spanish subjects; why would they want to be American? That's why the Americans have no choice but to wage war.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: MAY 23, 1899*

*THE SINGAPORE FREE PRESS*

SINGAPORE PRESS: The Americans have made a very stupid move, trying to subdue a people who will not allow themselves to be treated like cattle. Now they resort to military tactics condemned by their own Constitution. This will be a stain on the reputation of humanitarianism of the United States.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: MAY 30, 1899*

*THE HONG KONG TELEGRAPH*

HONG KONG PRESS: America's war with the Philippines is not as popular as its war with Spain, due to its treatment of the Filipinos as slaves. The Filipinos, instead of enjoying peace and a government of their own, are forced into war because of American ignorance.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: MAY 30, 1899*

*THE CHINA GAZETTE*

*[In the background: Tableau of a BLACK MAN being tortured and hanged by AMERICANS.]*

CHINESE PRESS: In other news from Georgia: a black man, Sam Hose, accused of murder was found tortured, hanged and burned by the victim's neighbours. The perpetrators allegedly collected souvenirs of that event.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: THE PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC LEDGER*

*[AMERICAN PRESS steps in.]*

AMERICAN PRESS:           It's hard to believe that such barbarous acts would be committed in Georgia. Such atrocity would not even be found in semi-civilized countries like the Philippines...

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        JULY 3, 1899*  
*“HOMO HOMINI LUPUS”*

*[MABINI hands a sheet to a FILIPINO.]*

FILIPINO:                *[reads.]* In the opinion of these enlightened people, the Filipinos do not go beyond the label “barbaric” or “semi-civilized.” And what if the Filipino doesn't burn or hang a Spaniard or American? The explanation would probably be that the colored race recognizes the superiority of the white. Had Sam Hose been white, he probably would not have been burned.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        SEPTEMBER 6, 1899*  
*“WHAT IS THE TRUE MISSION OF THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION?”*

*[MABINI turns around and faces the audience. The PRESS disperses.]*

MABINI:                 We cannot deny that the Treaty of Paris legitimizes Spain's transfer of control to the United States. But does this fight make us Filipinos unjust? We are fighting for a God-given right, while the United States fights for a right established by men. Even if they were to win, their victory will only be by force and not by reason.

*[THREE FILIPINOS enter and stand behind MABINI.]*

FILIPINO 1:             We should already consider ourselves lucky that the Spaniards are gone; why not give way to the civilizing American domination?

FILIPINO 2:           It's madness to wage war against a nation like America; our salvation from ruin depends on our submission to American sovereignty.

*[The THIRD FILIPINO faces the FIRST and SECOND FILIPINO.]*

FILIPINO 3:           Annexationists and Autonomists! Independence is the way! It's the sole fountain of well-being, the glory and honor of our people!

MABINI:               Wrong. Independence is just a means to our true goal.

FILIPINO 3:           What is that?

MABINI:               Civilization.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        DECEMBER 10, 1899*

*[An AMERICAN SOLDIER approaches MABINI and wheels him away. The THREE FILIPINOS scatter. Stage lights open. The stage is filled with AMERICAN SOLDIERS and GENERALS. An AMERICAN SOLDIER runs to GENERAL MacARTHUR and hands him a note. MacARTHUR reads the note and then runs to GENERAL OTIS to hand him the note. OTIS reads the note, and then runs to ROOT, SECRETARY OF WAR, to hand him the note. ROOT reads it. Silence. ROOT signals an AMERICAN SOLDIER to type something out. The AMERICAN SOLDIER finishes typing, and hands the note to ROOT who, in turn hands it to OTIS. OTIS steps forward and reads the note to the audience.]*

OTIS:                   *[reads.]* Apolinario Mabini, captured. *[MABINI is wheeled in by MacARTHUR]* The Members of the Philippine Commission here declare that Mabini was the head and front of the insurrection *[TAFT enters]*. General Emilio Aguinaldo is only the figurehead, *[AGUINALDO enters.]* but Mabini was the brains and the directing power behind him. He is a paralytic, but of extraordinary ability, and his counsels have been conclusive among the insurgents.

[*ALL but MABINI and OTIS exit. OTIS approaches MABINI.*]

MABINI: Am I a prisoner?

OTIS: Should you be one, Mr. Mabini?

MABINI: Your soldiers did escort me to you, Your Excellency, as I was travelling peacefully across the country, so you tell me.

OTIS: Is there a reason for you to be a prisoner?

MABINI: I have been adviser to President Aguinaldo until a few months ago. Given my circumstances, I have no public or civil duties in the Revolutionary Republic, much less military.

OTIS: But you can't prove that.

MABINI: But you can't prove otherwise either. I cannot be a prisoner of war.

OTIS: Nevertheless, given your opinions about us in the newspaper, you are clearly an insurgent.

MABINI: Or simply a concerned private citizen who performs his civic duty. Does this make me a prisoner then?

OTIS: Will you promise to stay away from politics?

MABINI: I promise to conduct myself as a private citizen should.

[*Silence.*]

MABINI:                   And I promise to not communicate with the revolutionaries for whatever reason. *[Pause.]* You will have to keep me within Manila though. Anywhere else, they might communicate with me.

*[Pause.]*

MABINI:                   Am I a prisoner, then?

OTIS:                     No.

MABINI:                   May I request for another living quarter?

OTIS:                     No.

*[OTIS leaves MABINI and exits. MABINI begins writing.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        DECEMBER 25, 1899*

*[GENERAL WHEELER approaches MABINI.]*

WHEELER:                Mr. Mabini, I hope your accommodations are well.

MABINI:                 As well as they can be, General Wheeler. What can I do for you?

WHEELER:                I suppose you do understand that we want peace as much as your people. That perhaps this conflict is really just a misunderstanding.

MABINI:                 That remains to be seen.

WHEELER:                Tell me, do your people want war?

MABINI: For 300 years, my people have not waged war against the Spaniards, except in 1896. The war we are having right now is just a continuation of the war against the Spaniards. It's not war that we want; it's our sacred and inherent rights. We are just willing to wage war to secure those rights.

WHEELER: So you didn't want the Spanish style of government.

MABINI: Correct, along with the chronic ills that came along with it.

WHEELER: But we're not Spain. Surely, our government can provide you your... sacred and inherent rights.

MABINI: Including our sacred and inherent right to govern ourselves?

WHEELER: Would you rather have General Aguinaldo govern you? Is he your idea of how to govern yourselves? Are those who serve under him happy?

*[AGUINALDO enters. Silence. MABINI stares at AGUINALDO. AGUINALDO exits.]*

MABINI: Filipinos, not just Tagalogs, will be happy to have the President of their choice. People follow Aguinaldo because he embodies the general aspirations. The moment he ceases to embody that, support for him will drop.

*[Pause.]*

WHEELER: How do we end this, then? This revolution?

*[Silence.]*

MABINI: Simple. Just give the Filipinos the independence they are fighting for.

[*Silence.*]

WHEELER:           You do know that under the flag of the United States, you can have progress, railways...

MABINI:            Of course we want progress. But like other societies out there, we believe that the best government is the government run by our own. [*Silence.*] General Wheeler, I do not mean to impose, but I would like to take advantage of our correspondence to address the US Congress.

[*MABINI hands a sheet of paper to WHEELER. OTHER AMERICANS enter. WHEELER walks towards the AMERICANS.*]

WHEELER:           [*reads to AMERICANS.*] The war in the Philippines has already caused so much death and grief on both sides and this does not sit well with the image of the United States.

[*FILIPINO and AMERICAN soldiers enter. Battle re-enactments.* ]

WHEELER:           [*continues reading.*] To govern is to know what the people need and want. If you claim that we are incapable, how much more capable will you be, you who have just arrived on our islands and hardly know anything about us?  
                          You can ask me back: how well will our government fare?

[*AGUINALDO enters. ALL, including MABINI, look at him. AGUINALDO exits.*]

WHEELER:           How well will our government fare? That, I cannot answer, as I can neither speak in behalf of the Revolutionary Government nor, as your prisoner, make contact to them. But the action I ask from you if for your sake, and not ours; your honor and prestige demands that you do what is right.

[*Silence. WHEELER and AMERICANS exit. SOLDIERS exit. OTIS enters and approaches MABINI.*]

OTIS: I thought you promised us that you'll not take part in any form of politics.

MABINI: I have done nothing unbecoming of a private citizen. I have not been in contact with the revolutionaries, not even to persuade them to surrender unconditionally or to give up their ungentlemanly tactics against you...

OTIS: And yet you still have the gall to send notes to our Congress! [*Pause.*] We have been very lenient to you and not just because of your health. Word is on the street that you are so impoverished right now that if we did not catch you and bring you here, you would have starved!

[*VEILED WOMAN stands up. MABINI stares at her.*]

MABINI: For that, I am extremely grateful. You are also correct on that one, Your Excellency. I am that poor. But you did not bring me here as a charity case.

OTIS: Have we abused you in any way to deserve this?

MABINI: Your Excellency, I write so that the fighting will be put in proper context; that this war is about ideals and not hatred. I did not think that you will deprive me the goodwill and generosity of the American people.

OTIS: And your idea of enjoying our goodwill is by fighting us.

MABINI: My fight is a moral one. Your generosity to allow me this will make a favourable impression to the Filipino people, in the spirit of free men.

[*The VEILED WOMAN sits. Silence.*]

OTIS:                   Just... just be careful with what you write. I warn you.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:       FEBRUARY 22, 1900*

*“THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE PHILIPPINES”*

[*OTIS steps back. MABINI begins writing. A FILIPINO reads out what MABINI is writing.*]

FILIPINO:            [*reads.*] The United States has made themselves arbiter of what will happen to the Philippines and the other former Spanish colonies.

[*An AMERICAN SOLDIER approaches OTIS, who listens to the FILIPINO. McKINLEY enters.*]

FILIPINO:            [*reads.*] You may claim that no American owns any Filipino, nor that you own any of our lands. And yet you cite the Treaty of Paris and the twenty million dollars you have paid for the Philippine Islands to assert your claims. You do not own us, but you claim the right to legislate over us and over our properties?

McKINLEY:           If the United States were to leave the Philippine Islands alone, the Filipinos would descend to barbarism and anarchy, followed by endless fighting and bloodshed.

[*Battle re-enactments. AMERICAN and FILIPINO SOLDIERS enter and fight.*]

FILIPINO:            [*continues reading.*] This fighting and bloodshed is already happening, because we Filipinos are not savages despite the President insisting that we are.  
                          If you want to live among us, we welcome you warmly. But we do not need your protection that relegates us as inferior citizens.

*[The FILIPINO GENERAL gets caught and is dragged away by the AMERICAN SOLDIERS. FILIPINO SOLDIERS disperse. OTIS approaches ROOT, the SECRETARY OF WAR.]*

OTIS: Secretary Root, Mabini is taking advantage of whatever liberties and leniency we give him.

ROOT: General Otis, have you not told him to cease from meddling in politics?

OTIS: I have, but whenever I do, Mabini takes it as an opportunity to debate with me on the right to express political convictions...

ROOT: ...and how have you responded?

OTIS: I haven't.

ROOT: Good. He wants to debate with you, hoping to prove himself correct.

OTIS: My fear is that his political expressions are going to keep the insurrections alive. Have you seen what kind of material he comes up with?

*[Silence.]*

ROOT: Tell him to cease writing, or we may interpret it as encouraging insurrection and therefore treason.

OTIS: I will do, sir.

*[OTIS approaches MABINI. The VEILED WOMAN stands up and walks to stand behind MABINI.]*

OTIS:                    You may call whatever you write as political expressions, but these expressions may be interpreted as treasonous when it encourages insurrection. And the moment this happens, even your disability won't save you. Do you understand?

MABINI:                All right. I do.

OTIS:                    Will you stop writing now?

MABINI:                I will keep my political expressions to myself until further notice.

OTIS:                    I shall take that as a yes.

*[OTIS signals two AMERICAN SOLDIERS. They approach him.]*

OTIS:                    Keep close watch on this one. And mind you, he's very sly.

*[The TWO SOLDIERS position themselves behind MABINI. The VEILED WOMAN leaves MABINI. MacARTHUR enters and approaches OTIS.]*

OTIS:                    General MacArthur.

MacARTHUR:            General Otis.

OTIS:                    Any news?

MacARTHUR:            There is a new Philippine Commission headed by Taft, and we've caught another insurgent, Pedro Paterno.

OTIS:                    As I said, the insurrection is melting away.

*[MacARTHUR hands OTIS a note. OTIS reads it, nods, salutes MacARTHUR, and then exits. As they speak, some AMERICAN SOLDIERS bring PEDRO PATERNO to MacARTHUR. The AMERICAN SOLDIERS leave.]*

MacARTHUR: Do I have your unconditional surrender, Mr. Paterno?

PATERNO: You have, Your Excellency. *[Pause.]* In fact, I am very willing to help your cause.

MacARTHUR: So early and so eager?

PATERNO: So humble and so willing, Your Excellency.

MacARTHUR: Without much struggle?

PATERNO: What is the point of struggle, Your Excellency, if we can all agree to your direction?

*[MacARTHUR does not reply. He instead looks at MABINI. The VEILED WOMAN enters and stands behind MABINI.]*

MacARTHUR: He is a slippery one, this Mabini. He compensates for his condition.

PATERNO: I can imagine, Your Excellency.

MacARTHUR: And very smart. It's a shame that he doesn't see things our way.

PATERNO: A shame indeed, Your Excellency.

MacARTHUR: Mabini would be quite an asset to have in the American Consultative Assembly of Filipino Notables. He would settle this insurrection easily with a little convincing.

[*Silence.*]

PATERNO: If you may, Your Excellency, I might be able to sway him, being a fellow Filipino like him. What he needs is a bit of Filipino touch.

MacARTHUR: About time too. You have my permission.

[*MacARTHUR exits. PATERNO approaches MABINI.*]

MABINI: I believe I am not allowed to meddle in politics unless it is to the advantage of the Americans.

PATERNO: And how is your health, Mr. Mabini? Getting better, I suppose?

MABINI: The same. How's your loyalty, Mr. Paterno? Ever changing, I suppose?

PATERNO: We are all on the same side here...

MABINI: All sides are the same to you, Mr. Paterno.

PATERNO: We are all on the side of peace.

MABINI: If you put it that way.

[*As MABINI and PATERNO talk, ROOT enters with an AMERICAN SOLDIER. MacARTHUR enters. ROOT sends the AMERICAN SOLDIER to MacARTHUR with the letter. The AMERICAN SOLDIER exits, as MacARTHUR reads the letter privately.*]

PATERNO: I'm now heading the American Consultative Assembly of Filipino Notables...

MABINI: Notable for what, I wonder. It was only last year that you had a speech inspiring our countrymen to go up against the Americans...

PATERNO: Times change, and with it, we have to change tactics in achieving peace.

MABINI: I will not argue with that. You are, after all, notable on that subject.

PATERNO: Peace?

MABINI: Change.

PATERNO: Very opinionated, as always, Mr. Mabini.

*[MacARTHUR faces the audience, and reads out another proclamation. PATERNO and MABINI turn to listen.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR: JUNE 21, 1900*

MacARTHUR: By the direction of the President of the United States, I pronounce an amnesty to any insurrectionist who will renounce their connections and acknowledge the sovereignty and authority of the United States in and over the Philippine Islands.

*[A FILIPINO SOLDIER lines up in front of MacARTHUR.]*

MacARTHUR: This amnesty includes complete immunity from the past and absolute liberty of action for the future.

*[Another FILIPINO SOLDIER lines up in front of MacARTHUR.]*

MacARTHUR:           And to ensure the peace which was lacking here since 1896, if you surrender your rifle in good condition, the United States military will pay you thirty pesos for it.

*[MORE FILIPINO SOLDIERS line up and surrender their rifles to MacARTHUR. AMERICAN SOLDIERS pick up the rifles, and then both FILIPINOS and AMERICANS exit. PATERNO turns to face MABINI.]*

PATERNO:            Perhaps you would like to put these opinions in much greater use when the Assembly meets to talk about...

MABINI:             Peace?

PATERNO:            Yes.

*[MABINI looks at the VEILED WOMAN.]*

MABINI:             My poor health would just spoil the gathering.

PATERNO:            I see.

MABINI:             But since you want my opinions, I'll give them to you now. If the American authorities allow freedom of press and legal assemblies, they will get a fearless and uncompromising public opinion. Now is not the time to build parties. Material peace is nothing, if there is no moral peace to come along with it.

PATERNO:            Thank you for your opinion. I will mention this to the Assembly.

*[PATERNO turns to leave, but eventually approaches MABINI again.]*

PATERNO: As for my opinion, though, with regard to Aguinaldo...

MABINI: ...Aguinaldo is not a matter of debate but the people. Why settle for a palliative if we can reach for a cure? You never settle for peace that you might lose at any moment. Good wishes to you and your Assembly.

*[PATERNO leaves MABINI and approaches MacARTHUR.]*

MacARTHUR: Any luck?

PATERNO: No, Your Excellency.

MacARTHUR: So much for the Filipino touch.

*[Silence. The VEILED WOMAN leaves MABINI.]*

MacARTHUR: Either that, or he doesn't find you Filipino enough. Perhaps our more recent gesture of generosity will help change his mind. It will just be a matter of time before he approaches me. I know it.

*[PATERNO exits. MacARTHUR signals the AMERICAN SOLDIERS to wheel MABINI to him.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR: JUNE 22, 1900*

MacARTHUR: You certainly took your time before coming to me, Mr. Mabini.

MABINI: Your Excellency must pardon me. If there were any delays in our meeting, it was because I was afraid.

MacARTHUR:           Afraid? General Otis was alarmed with the kind of articles you send in the newspapers. And now you tell me that you're afraid of us meeting?

MABINI:               I was afraid that we would be wasting each other's time, knowing that you were a busy man. But you must have heard that I am stubborn...

MacARTHUR:           ...and very frank. What is it you want?

MABINI:               It's about my right to express myself.

[*Silence.*]

MacARTHUR:           We will not be debating about that.

MABINI:               I am not here to debate. I am here to request for it. I was told that I was no prisoner, but my experience under General Otis told me otherwise. I was told that you told ...

MacARTHUR:           I never told anyone anything pertaining to you and your freedom.

[*Silence.*]

MABINI:               Thank you for that clarification, Your Excellency.

MacARTHUR:           But I assume you are aware of the amnesty proclamation I have just made.

[*A FILIPINO GENERAL enters with his FILIPINO SOLDIERS and surrender. After the AMERICAN SOLDIERS get their rifles, the FILIPINO GENERAL huddles with the FILIPINO SOLDIERS, sneakily peeking if there are AMERICAN SOLDIERS about.*]

MABINI:               I have heard of it.

[*Silence.*]

MacARTHUR:           Then take the oath of allegiance and claim your freedom.

[*Silence.*]

MacARTHUR:           This is your chance. What are you waiting for?

MABINI:               For the American authorities to swear that they will respect our rights as  
free citizens.

MacARTHUR:           Are you obliging me to take an oath?

MABINI:               Why shouldn't Your Excellency? In all cultured countries, the citizens are  
obliged to obey the constituted authorities, only if the same authorities respect the  
inherent rights of the citizen.

MacARTHUR:           General Otis was not exaggerating after all when he talked about you.

MABINI:               All I want assurance of is for my individual rights as an individual. This  
has nothing to do with the Revolution.

MacARTHUR:           It's already been assured. Will you take the oath then?

MABINI:               Not until I see this assurance written down.

MacARTHUR:           The assurance can be found in the United States Constitution, see? And I  
am authorized to implement these assurances you desire once arms are laid down.

*[AMERICAN SOLDIERS come in and arrest the FILIPINO GENERAL and his FILIPINO SOLDIERS. The FILIPINO GENERAL and FILIPINO SOLDIERS are led out.]*

MABINI:               That's where the problem is. Commodore Dewey tells Aguinaldo one thing; your government does something else. You offer us complete freedom in your own terms so long as we take the oath. The good United States giveth, the good United States taketh away. If you want to win us over, do assure us that freedom that neither you nor your President nor any authority can take back.

MacARTHUR:           Such guarantee is unnecessary. The Constitution...

MABINI:               The guarantee is indispensable. Since you do claim sovereignty over us with your amnesty proclamation, you could easily claim our freedom as well, as both sovereignty and freedom are rights natural to us Filipinos.

MacARTHUR:           You are such a lawyer.

MABINI:               I used to be a politician. When I served under the Government of Aguinaldo, I required guarantee that any formal agreement be subject to legal approval. I need this as well before I take any oath of allegiance. I need that formal proclamation of assurance for our natural rights.

*[Silence.]*

MacARTHUR:           I cannot believe you got me to debate with you, Mr. Mabini. And just when I said that we are not here to debate.

MABINI:               You have your reasoning, I have my reasoning. I hope our reasoning combined opens our eyes to reality.

MacARTHUR:            Since you have been very frank with me, I'll be very frank with you. I can see you don't trust us. I have to admit that I cannot trust you either, Mr. Mabini, to help me bring peace to the Philippine Islands. Let me remind you, however, that you have been outgunned and outmanoeuvred by our forces in every way. To continue in this struggle is futile.

MABINI:                You are telling this to the wrong person, Your Excellency.

MacARTHUR:            When you get the chance, and I know you will, Mr. Mabini, tell General Aguinaldo that if he avails of this amnesty, he can implore the generosity of the American people to grant the Philippine Islands the liberties you desire.

MABINI:                My sincerest apologies, if my opinions have sounded rather rude. I do struggle with my language, as I try hard to make myself clear.

MacARTHUR:            Apology accepted.

MABINI:                That being said, I request to appear before the Philippine Commission.

*[Silence.]*

MacARTHUR:            You want to appear before the commission?

MABINI:                Please don't think that I am merely being obstinate and arrogant. If you would allow me, I would like to make use of all the peaceful and intelligent means possible for the peace we all want to have.

*[MacARTHUR signals the AMERICAN SOLDIERS who rearrange the stage to form the TAFT COMMISSION. MacARTHUR steps back. MABINI faces the COMMISSION. GENERAL BELL enters to watch the proceedings. The VEILED WOMAN enters and stands behind MABINI.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        AUGUST 1, 1900*  
*“THE TAFT COMMISSION”*

MABINI:                I have been your prisoner for almost a year now because I would not recognize your sovereignty. But how should we understand sovereignty? England, for example, exercises sovereignty over two South African Republics with regard to local administration; however the English still recognize the complete independence of these two republics. All my efforts up to now have been so that you give us a solid guarantee to our rights and freedom. You give us that guarantee, and peace is sure to follow.

TAFT:                    Your point being, Mr. Mabini?

MABINI:                To what extent does American sovereignty cover the natural rights of the Filipino?

*[The COMMISSION convenes in hushed tones for a while. MABINI waits patiently. The COMMISSION settles down.]*

TAFT:                    The aim of American sovereignty is to give you a good government in accordance to the American Constitution.

MABINI:                But the principles of the American Constitution point out that sovereignty belongs as a natural right to the people. The American Government, by assuming sovereignty, is committing an injustice that demands reparation.

*[The COMMISSION convenes in in a more agitated tone for a while. MABINI waits patiently. The COMMISSION settles down.]*

TAFT:                    We are not authorized to discuss these abstract matters. We have orders to let our opinions prevail, even after hearing your opinions.

MABINI:               Very well then. Just for the record, I find it useless to air and discuss my opinions with anyone who cannot listen to reason.

*[The VEILED WOMAN wheels MABINI away from them. The COMMISSION is more agitated.]*

TAFT:                 Why don't you help us study the contributions we are about to impose on your people?

MABINI:             Since I find unjust all contributions imposed without the cooperation of the Representatives to give them, I cannot take part in this study without the representation and mandate of the people.

*[BELL gives MABINI an amused slow clap. The COMMISSION disperses and the AMERICAN SOLDIERS rearrange the set. GENERAL BELL steps up and approaches MABINI.]*

BELL:                 Mr. Mabini.

MABINI:             Your Excellency.

BELL:                 Please. I am here as a friend. I am James Franklin Bell.

MABINI:             Very well, Mr. Bell...

BELL:                 General Bell.

MABINI:             General Bell.

BELL:                 But you may call me Franklin.

MABINI:             General Bell suits you better. What can I do for you?

BELL:                    Nothing much. Just a friendly chat. One friend to another.

[*Silence.*]

MABINI:                Very well, then. Let's chat.

BELL:                    I have always admired your candidness on these urgent matters. Your opinions may be unpopular, but at the very least, they are sincere.

MABINI:                Thank you, General Bell.

BELL:                    I hope that you believe, as well, that I, not as an official, but as an American citizen, wish for peace amongst our people as well.

MABINI:                Who doesn't wish for peace?

BELL:                    But you see, it is very difficult to achieve peace if your people do not see what my people are trying to do.

MABINI:                What are your people trying to do?

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        SEPTEMBER 13, 1900*  
*BATTLE OF PULANG LUPA*

[*AMERICAN SOLDIERS march in.*]

BELL:                    We are trying to bring welfare to your people.

MABINI:                Welfare!

*[The VEILED WOMAN leaves.]*

BELL:                   It will be difficult for you to appreciate this welfare if your people keep up this war against us. Consider the effort and sacrifices we have made for you.

MABINI:               The only effort and sacrifices I see is with your show of arms and military force and hardly with any reason. With that, my people have been responding appropriately.

*[Gunshots, some of the AMERICAN SOLDIERS fall. The others look around for where the shots are coming from.]*

BELL:                   Appropriately! Let me tell you that your people have responded with ungentlemanly tactics, such as guerrilla warfare.

MABINI:               You have your ways which suit you best. We have ours.

*[The AMERICAN SOLDIERS make a slow retreat, dragging their fallen comrades with them. They encounter some FILIPINO FARMERS.]*

BELL:                   Be that as it may, but your ways are what civilized countries would call murderous.

*[The FILIPINO FARMERS bring out their bolos and set upon the AMERICAN SOLDIERS.]*

MABINI:               Guerrilla tactics would have been deplorable if both sides have already been fighting at equal risk. But you already have your superior numbers, your superior firepower. In these matters alone, we are indeed weaker.

*[More gunshots. The FILIPINO FARMERS fall. They are dragged out by the remaining AMERICAN SOLDIERS.]*

BELL:                    See? The defeat of your forces is inevitable; they better give up their arms, and spend their energies helping our people revitalize these islands. Why don't your people just spare yourselves the grief?

MABINI:                Because victory is not the only measure of war. If it were, we might as well forget about morality and justice; the reasons why wars are fought. As war laws allow you to use your strong war elements, so too do these laws allow us to deploy guerrilla warfare; for the weaker nation is fighting for its liberties, for its natural rights, even at the cost of death, of dishonor.

BELL:                    And at the cost of proving to us that you are too uncivilized to govern yourselves.

MABINI:                On the contrary; fighting your people only proves that our people know what is naturally ours and what we have to give up to attain those rights. After all, your people have resorted to this kind of war as well, against the English.

BELL:                    All your people have to do is to show patience. Learn from us; we have experience. In fifteen, twenty years at the most, when your people have developed the right attitude to govern themselves, the American people are sure to grant what your people desire.

MABINI:                So you claim that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that you will teach us to govern ourselves.

BELL:                    Frankly put, yes.

MABINI:                I have a question then.

BELL:                   What?

MABINI:                When you declared Independence from the English, who taught you to govern yourselves?

BELL:                   But it took you three hundred years to shake off Spanish rule, and only succeeded with our help!

MABINI:                Because my people were ignorant then. But now that our eyes have been opened to a bigger world out there, I am sure it will be different. You may defeat us, but so long as our natural rights are denied of us, we will not stay defeated.

BELL:                   Your people are in for a lot of punishment.

MABINI:                Please do not misunderstand me. It is likely that my people will submit, but we will not submit unconditionally. You are only giving us two options: dishonor or death. Neither is appealing. If push comes to shove, it is our duty to be ready for death.

BELL:                   Your desire for absolute independence is impossible.

MABINI:                No, not impossible. It will just take time and your government's guarantees. If your government can guarantee the Filipino's natural and political rights and realize the full equality among our people in the Philippines, I guarantee you that I will even help out with whatever advice I can give.

[*Silence.*]

MABINI:                I hope my frankness did not offend you, friend.

*[An AMERICAN SOLDIER arrives and hands a letter to BELL. BELL reads the letter, and then walks to MacARTHUR. As they speak, the AMERICAN SOLDIER hands another note to MABINI. Upon reading, MABINI starts writing.]*

MacARTHUR:           Obstinate man, isn't he?

BELL:                 Not the typical man with a disability.

MacARTHUR:           Not a typical native.

BELL:                 Not so. He has a one track mind.

MacARTHUR:           A sharp one, though.

BELL:                 Indeed. By the way, *[hands a letter to MacARTHUR.]* A letter, sir, from Aguinaldo.

*[BELL hands the letter to MacARTHUR. As MacARTHUR reads, MABINI finishes writing and hands the note to an AMERICAN SOLDIER. AGUINALDO enters.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:           SEPTEMBER 23, 1900*

MacARTHUR:           *[Reads.]* Emilio Aguinaldo, President of the Republic, Commander-in-Chief, and Army Chief of Staff:

AGUINALDO:           I hereby appoint and authorize Mr. Apolinario Mabini to accept communications and discuss conditions of peace which will serve as the basis for the recognition of Philippine Independence.

*[The AMERICAN SOLDIER brings the letter to BELL.]*

BELL: A Memorandum for General MacArthur.

*[As BELL reads, MABINI writes another note. Battle re-enactments happen in the background. AMERICAN SOLDIERS enter. AMERICAN SOLDIERS hunt for AGUINALDO while AGUINALDO keeps relocating.]*

BELL: *[Reads.]* The authority vested in me by Aguinaldo shows that, despite the defeats, the armed people persist in the ideal of Independence. I also believe that the majority of the Filipinos persist in the same ideal as well.

*[AMERICAN SOLDIERS see AGUINALDO, but he escapes, pursued by them. MABINI finishes writing, and gives the note to the AMERICAN SOLDIER. The AMERICAN SOLDIER brings the note to TAFT. As BELL continues reading, TAFT reads his note quietly.]*

BELL: *[continues reading.]* It follows, then, that to grant Independence, would be the most efficient way to satisfy Filipino sentiments, even if this Independence comes with reasonable limitations your people may impose.

But the word Independence is unpleasant to American ears as control through American domination is unpleasant to Filipino ears. So long as the words control and Independence are raised, both peoples shall continue to be in conflict.

*[MacARTHUR and TAFT look at BELL. Another battle re-enactment with AMERICAN SOLDIERS taking a lot of FILIPINO HOSTAGES.]*

BELL: *[continues reading.]* Is it possible to have a relationship between the Americans and Filipinos without resorting to these words? That is the problem. I have proposed an alternate solution to General Bell:

The establishment of a government that can guarantee and realize (1) the Filipino's rights, both natural and political, and (2) full equality between Filipinos and Americans in the Philippines.

*[FILIPINO SOLDIERS emerge and surrender to the AMERICAN SOLDIERS. The SOLDIERS and the HOSTAGES exit.]*

BELL:                    *[continues reading.]* The American authority should decide which of these two proposed solutions to pursue peace in the Philippine Islands. You have shown yourselves as good soldiers in the field; all they need now is to show their good honor as men.

MacARTHUR:            Let me see that.

*[As MacARTHUR reads inaudibly, TAFT reads his note.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:            SEPTEMBER 27, 1900*

TAFT:                    Mabini's Independence Plan:

- (1) The Filipinos want a completely independent Republic because it is the political form fit for a people living their own lives.
- (2) The Filipinos will recognize the United States as their liberator.
- (3) The Filipinos will recognize the twenty million dollars paid to Spain for the cessation of the Philippines as a government loan, as these are expenses incurred for independence.
- (4) Matters related to the Peace Treaty will be done in Manila. The Constitution of the Philippine Republic will be based on the American Constitution with modifications that apply to the Philippines.

These are the sacrifices, among a few others, that the Filipinos are willing to render, as they desire an actual, rather than a nominal independence.

*[TAFT gives the note to the AMERICAN SOLDIER who, in turn gives it to MacARTHUR.]*

BELL:                    What will our response be?

*[TAFT and BELL look at MacARTHUR. AMERICAN and FILIPINO SOLDIERS attack each other. MacARTHUR looks at the Battle re-enactments; the AMERICAN SOLDIERS are having the upper hand. MacARTHUR writes a note and hands it to the AMERICAN SOLDIER. The AMERICAN SOLDIER approaches MABINI and hands him the note. MABINI reads the note.]*

MacARTHUR:           No negotiations. We want Aguinaldo's unconditional surrender first.

*[MABINI looks at the battle re-enactment. All the FILIPINO SOLDIERS have fallen. AGUINALDO enters and looks at the scene. The VEILED WOMAN enters and walks over the corpses before she exits.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:       OCTOBER, 1900*

*[MABINI puts the note aside and writes as a FILIPINO reads out what he is writing.]*

FILIPINO:           *[reads.]* Since Aguinaldo's return from Hong Kong, the Filipinos have looked up to him as the embodiment and champion of their ideals and aspirations.

*[The FILIPINO looks at AGUINALDO who is helplessly looking at the fallen FILIPINO SOLDIERS with the AMERICAN SOLDIERS dragging out the bodies.]*

FILIPINO:           *[continues reading.]* And this is Aguinaldo's monumental task, not only because of unanimous agreement, but because he refused to allow anyone else to take his honorable position.

*[A bloodied LUNA enters, staring at AGUINALDO. AGUINALDO stares back. LUNA exits.]*

FILIPINO:           *[continues reading.]* If he allows himself to break under the yoke of discouragement, to simply abandon his cause, it will not only be unheroic, but an outright infidelity. Considering his position, this is a high place to fall from.

[AGUINALDO, BELL, MacARTHUR, and TAFT look at MABINI.]

FILIPINO:            [continues reading.] We are not saying that a leader should seek death through acts of bravery. But if it becomes impossible to avoid death without incurring dishonor, one has to accept it as a sacrifice for ideals to triumph.

[AMERICAN SOLDIERS enter, hunting down AGUINALDO. AGUINALDO exits again.]

FILIPINO:            Let this not be mistaken that we are encouraging Revolution. But this is when the Philippine Revolution will have to reveal its nature. If the Revolution is not the result of wretched ambition; let it show its virtue. This war is not a matter that will be resolved through a show of force, but through the show of ideals.

                        Perhaps, this way, the Americans can help the Filipinos improve themselves instead of opposing it through war.

[MacARTHUR approaches ROOT.]

ROOT:                What do you need?

MacARTHUR:        Permission to use stronger measures in handling the Philippine issue, so that we may put a more apt closure. I will finish what Otis should have done a long time ago.

ROOT:                Stronger measures?

MacARTHUR:        Deportation of anyone who is clearly in favor of or aiding the insurrection.

ROOT:                You may deport them to Guam until the hostilities are put to an end.

ON THE PROJECTOR:    DECEMBER 27, 1900

                        "THE FEDERAL PARTY"

*[PATERNO approaches MABINI and shows him a sheet of paper.]*

PATERNO:           What do you think?

MABINI:            You formed a party.

PATERNO:           Yes, the Federal Party. The Philippines, in time, will become a State of the  
North American Union.

MABINI:            Is that so, Mr. Paterno?

*[MABINI begins to take notes. He continues to take notes even as he talks with PATERNO.]*

PATERNO:           Now is not the time for idealism, Mr. Mabini. You want guarantees for  
your freedom and individual rights? How can you claim these without peace? It  
would be impossible.

MABINI:            And that is why you side with the constituted Government to legally  
subdue the armed Filipinos.

PATERNO:           Precisely. And, as you see, we are making a lot more progress than you  
ever have.

MABINI:            Good for you.

PATERNO:           Thank you.

MABINI:            Except that there are some problems that I do see.

PATERNO:           Such as?

MABINI: I have to be careful with the way I word things. I fear that one would jump at any excuse to string me up.

PATERNO: Then just be careful.

MABINI: Your party wants us to be a State of the North American Union, correct?

PATERNO: Correct.

MABINI: Despite the distance we have from them?

PATERNO: The world is getting smaller, Mr. Mabini.

MABINI: But I am not just talking about geographical distance. I am talking about our culture as well, not to mention the color of our skin.

PATERNO: I know where this is leading. It all boils down to your solution: that peace will come when independence is given.

MABINI: Just the guarantee of the rights natural to us. You say that peace is necessary for rights to be exercised, but peace does not guarantee rights. Rather, the satisfaction derived from the exercise of rights achieves peace.

PATERNO: Our party is not the one to give in. Fighting will only bring us ruin; we have to accept American sovereignty. In time, the Philippine Islands will be a State, and the Americans will grant us citizenship.

MABINI: I disagree.

PATERNO:               What is your other option, then? Support the insurrectionists? You know they have no chance.

MABINI:                The insurrectionists fight because an unconditional surrender will only be interpreted by the Americans as absolute conformity. At least a forced surrender will wash their hands clean of having voluntarily accepted an uncertain future.

PATERNO:               Enough of this. The United States, with its tradition and democracy, will give the Philippine Islands a good government. Why fear unconditional surrender?

MABINI:                Because it will affect not just you and me, but all Filipinos.

*[MABINI gives his notes to a FILIPINO. The FILIPINO reads it, and then hands it to an AMERICAN SOLDIER, who brings it to MacARTHUR. MacARTHUR reads it and signals BELL. BELL approaches MABINI.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        JANUARY 15, 1901*

BELL:                 We've let you talk enough, friend. And in the end, we will agree to disagree.

*[BELL wheels MABINI away. ROOT, some AMERICAN SOLDIERS, AGUINALDO, and some FILIPINO SOLDIERS enter. MacARTHUR takes out some notes and reads it out.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        JANUARY 17, 1901*

MacARTHUR:            *[reads.]* In pursuance of authority obtained from the War Department, the persons whose overt acts clearly manifest to be in aid of, and in sympathy with the insurrection, and is, in every regard, opposed to the pacification, will be deported to the Island of Guam, under surveillance, until peace is restored, in a public declaration that hostilities in the Philippines has been terminated.

*[MacARTHUR hands another note to an AMERICAN SOLDIER who brings it to ROOT. FILIPINOS and AMERICANS enter to listen to ROOT.]*

ROOT:                   *[reads.]* Mabini has been found a most active agitator, persistently refusing amnesty and maintaining correspondence with insurgents in the field while under our protection in Manila. He has also made offensive statements in regard to the recent proclamation enforcing laws of war. His deportation is vital.

*[ALL leave, except AGUINALDO.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:       MARCH 23, 1901*

AGUINALDO:           I could use some good news.

*[FILIPINO SOLDIERS enter with AMERICAN PRISONERS, including GENERAL FUNSTON.]*

FILIPINO:             Good news, sir, we've captured an American General.

AGUINALDO:           Excellent!

*[The AMERICAN SOLDIERS suddenly free themselves. The FILIPINO SOLDIERS hand out guns to the AMERICAN SOLDIERS. ALL point their guns to AGUINALDO, who fails to escape or fight back. FUNSTON approaches AGUINALDO.]*

FUNSTON:             Excellent news indeed. *[To a FILIPINO SOLDIER.]* Tell General MacArthur, we finally caught General Aguinaldo.

*[FILIPINO SOLDIER exits, running. Blackout.]*

END OF ACT I

## ACT II

*[The stage is dark except for one light source. TAFT, ROOT, and an AMERICAN enter.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR: 1902-1903*

AMERICAN: How long will we keep Mabini exiled in Guam?

ROOT: For as long as it takes.

AMERICAN: We cannot blame him with the way he looks at us. Even some of our fellow Americans believe that we have—pardon the term—become a usurping power in the Philippines. Who would make an oath of allegiance to a usurping force?

ROOT: Do not get the issue wrong. Mabini is not a prisoner. He can go wherever he likes. Whenever he likes.

AMERICAN: Except to his native land.

ROOT: Until he takes that oath of allegiance, we fear that he might rekindle the insurrection.

AMERICAN: But the war is already over. We have already won. Surely, he'll respect that.

TAFT: Mabini is a cunning man as he is stubborn. Unless we extract an oath from him, there is no assurance that he will not create trouble for us.

AMERICAN: Trouble? But he's a paralytic.

ROOT: That's what a lot of people said.

TAFT: It's obvious that you don't know him.

ROOT: He has to make that oath.

TAFT:                   That's his only way back to the Philippines.

*[ROOT, TAFT and the AMERICAN disperse. AGUINALDO enters.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:       APRIL, 1901*

AGUINALDO:        I hereby renounce all allegiance to any and all so-called revolutionary governments in the Philippine Islands and recognize and accept the supreme authority of the United States of America; I do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to that government; that I impose upon myself these voluntary obligations without any mental reservations or purpose of evasion, so help me God.

*[MABINI is wheeled in by VEILED WOMAN. RICARTE enters. AGUINALDO hands a note to an AMERICAN SOLDIER who hands it to MABINI. AGUINALDO speaks as MABINI reads.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:       DECEMBER, 1901*

AGUINALDO:        We have agreed that you are one of those who can help a great deal in the well-being and pacification of the country. There are people working on it that you may be allowed to return that we may all discover and work on those plans for the welfare of our country.

*[MABINI crumples the note. Everyone except AGUINALDO, MABINI, and RICARTE exits.]*

MABINI:            By this time, everyone who was part of the Revolution has either died or taken the oath of allegiance to the United States. Even Aguinaldo, who was supposed to be the embodiment of our ideals, caved in. *[AGUINALDO exits.]* Only I and General Artemio Ricarte are left. We would not give in.

[*RICARTE exits.*]

MABINI:               The Americans considered us dangerous because of our influence. So they brought us out to Guam, away from our homeland. All did seem to be lost.

[*MacARTHUR and OTIS enter, circling MABINI.*]

MacARTHUR:       All did seem to be lost?

OTIS:               All is lost.

MacARTHUR:       Your Revolution failed.

OTIS:               For all your obstinacy, this result was inevitable.

MacARTHUR:       You should have taken that amnesty offer from the very beginning.

OTIS:               You could still take your oath now.

MacARTHUR:       You should. The revolution's over.

OTIS:               Or do you think that the revolution will continue so long as you resist?

MacARTHUR:       So much for your grand lectures on internal and external revolution.

MABINI:            Why did we fail? Why did the Revolution fall?

[*FILIPINOS from all walks of life enter the stage, including AGUINALDO, PATERNO, and FELIPE CALDERON.*]

AGUINALDO:            *[to the audience.]* The reason for our defeat is obvious. We were going against bigger forces with superior arms and tactics.

PATERNO:             *[to the audience.]* We did not really lose. It was a win-win situation. Some people just couldn't see what had to be done.

*[The VEILED WOMAN holds MABINI's hand. MABINI stands up from his wheelchair and walks around. The VEILED WOMAN exits.]*

ON THE PROJECTOR:        APOLINARIO MABINI'S *La Revolucion Filipina*

MABINI:                Let us revisit that past to see our weaknesses, falls and errors; there is nothing wrong with that. To turn a blind eye is worse, and it would allow an outsider to discover our faults and broadcast it to tarnish our image. To confess our sins would provide us with useful lessons.

*[CALDERON turns of the projector.]*

CALDERON:            Stop! *[to the audience.]* If there was anyone to blame for the fall of the Revolution, it would be him. *[Points at MABINI.]* We were already on our way to becoming independent. We had declared our independence as well as had our own flag on June 12, 1898. We, the Congress, already started working on the Constitution on September 15, shortly before the Spaniards and the Americans began working on the Treaty of Paris.

*[CALDERON walks to MABINI.]*

CALDERON:            We would have finished and propagated the Constitution sooner, had not Mabini interfered and asked for amendments to the draft we proposed. The Philippine Republic already having a Constitution would have been part of the

discussion in the Treaty before it was signed on December 10, 1898. It would have made a difference.

MacARTHUR: Oh!

OTIS: So the Popish Apolinario Mabini is not infallible after all!

[MABINI sits down on his wheelchair.]

ON THE PROJECTOR: DECEMBER 13, 1898

[CALDERON hands AGUINALDO a folder, which AGUINALDO brings to MABINI.]

AGUINALDO: What do you think of the Constitution?

MABINI: If you approve this Constitution without amendments, you'll be contributing to the failure of our people and ideals.

AGUINALDO: But I was assured that the Constitution is meant to empower me...

MABINI: ...and if they are able to sway you without the use of a Constitution, how much more when they have a Constitution backing them? The Congress will have greater powers, and we know that they cannot decide anything without a general consensus. With the Americans occupying Manila after booting the Spaniards out, we can only speculate on their intentions. This is why what we need right now is speedy decision. Your speedy decision.

[Silence.]

MABINI: At the end of the day, everything is up to you. I don't have to be here, considering my poor health. But what I'm telling you right now is not for myself.

With my state, I can't wield power if I wanted to. I'm not even doing this for you. It's for what we want to achieve for this country.

*[The FILIPINOS, including PATERNO and CALDERON face MABINI. CALDERON steps forward. As MABINI and CALDERON argue, AGUINALDO is in the middle, listening to both statements.]*

CALDERON: We hear that you wish for some amendments, Mr. Mabini.

MABINI: Indeed, Mr. Calderon. President Aguinaldo should be empowered to nullify any act of the Congress that may be harmful to public welfare.

CALDERON: And what might be harmful to the public welfare?

MABINI: That you try to amass greater power than the President.

CALDERON: Would you rather have it the other way around?

MABINI: With the powers the Congress claims to have in the Constitution, they can easily turn the President into their puppet.

CALDERON: Let's face it: the Congress is comprised of intellectuals, while the military is generally comprised of ignorant people. The Congress is the true representative of the people.

MABINI: Not while we are in the proximate danger of war. Besides, it is not the right time to draft a Constitution, while our independence is not yet recognized; and while we are at this state of tension with the Americans, the moment we declare our independence in that Constitution, our options for negotiations will be limited as we may easily transgress the fundamental laws of the state.

CALDERON: I could easily say that what you are proposing is a bid for despotism and tyranny. A Presidency with so much power?

MABINI: It is what we need at this time. Let me remind you that the Revolutionary Congress is just a consultative body.

CALDERON: And let me reiterate that the Congress represents the people. If the Cabinet does not disagree with the Congress, it would also mean that the Cabinet does not have the support of the people. Do feel free to say that we agree to disagree, Mr. Mabini.

[*Silence.*]

MABINI: Are you asking me to resign as Aguinaldo's private adviser?

CALDERON: Private adviser? More like a dark cabinet. But you are smart, Mr. Mabini. You do know what I mean.

[*MABINI stands up and walks around again.*]

MABINI: [*to the audience.*] That was a cue that I had to distance myself from Aguinaldo. But after some convincing, he prevailed upon appointing me as Prime Minister instead.

It did not matter, though. The Congress was able make me resign soon after. Towards the end of April, I was tasked at one point to have someone negotiate with General Otis.

MABINI: [*to the audience.*] I sent Colonel Manuel Arguelles to do the negotiation.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: MAY 2, 1899*

[*ARGUELLES enters and approaches OTIS.*]

ARGUELLES: General Otis, we would wish to request a ceasefire.

OTIS: Granted, on one condition.

ARGUELLES: What is that, sir?

OTIS: Unconditional surrender.

[*Silence. FILIPINO SOLDIERS and AMERICAN SOLDIERS enter and clash. Everyone falls. ARGUELLES approaches MABINI, stepping over bodies as he does so. MABINI has already sat down on his wheelchair.*]

ARGUELLES: Sorry, sir.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: MAY 5, 1899*

[*PATERNO, CALDERON, and AGUINALDO enter, stepping over bodies as they do so.*]

AGUINALDO: Yes, Mr. Calderon, what is it?

PATERNO: The Congress wishes to express its lack of confidence in Prime Minister Apolinario Mabini. We wish him to resign.

AGUINALDO: On what grounds?

PATERNO: On his failure to negotiate with the Americans; on his insistence on having war; on... we can come up with a whole list.

*[AGUINALDO looks at MABINI. The VEILED WOMAN enters and touches the bodies of the fallen SOLDIERS. They stand up and exit quietly.]*

MABINI:               It's all right. I will resign. I must give the chance for better people to do service to their country.

CALDERON:           For once, Mr. Mabini, we agree on something.

MABINI:               Not necessarily, Mr. Calderon. It is just that I respect your lack of confidence in me.

AGUINALDO:           But who do you recommend to replace Mr. Mabini, then?

PATERNO:             I, Your Excellency.

CALDERON:           Mr. Paterno is highly noted for his diplomatic skills.

MABINI:               Diplomatic, no doubt. Mr. Paterno has this skill for smelling out the path of least resistance.

PATERNO:             I know how to achieve independence by means other than war.

MABINI:               I do not doubt that.

AGUINALDO:           So be it, then. Mr. Paterno, if you accept...

PATERNO:             I do, of course. If you will excuse me, I have some negotiations to make.

*[PATERNO approaches an OTIS. Scene freezes to a tableau.]*

MABINI:               Or some bums to kiss.

[*MABINI stands up.*]

MABINI:                    [*To the audience.*] ...I no longer became part of the Revolutionary Government by May 8, 1899. So what did go wrong after my departure?

[*CALDERON and PATERNO step back.*]

MacARTHUR:                Does it matter? Whatever the reason, you have failed!

OTIS:                        There's no action that will give you what you want!

MacARTHUR:                No need to revisit what cannot be changed.

MABINI:                    It's not for change I revisit these.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        JUNE 5, 1899*

[*GENERAL LUNA enters. He approaches a FILIPINO SOLDIER.*]

FILIPINO:                  General Luna, sir!

LUNA:                        Where is President Aguinaldo?

FILIPINO:                  His Excellency is in Tarlac, sir.

LUNA:                        In Tarlac? But I received a letter telling me that I should meet him here in Cabanatuan.

[*A gunshot is heard.*]

LUNA:                   Who did that?

*[FILIPINO SOLDIERS surround LUNA.]*

LUNA:                   What...?

*[FILIPINO SOLDIERS set upon LUNA.]*

LUNA:                   Assassins! Cowards!

*[LUNA dies. The scene freezes into a tableau. MABINI walks into the scene.]*

MABINI:               *[to the audience.]* The death of General Antonio Luna exemplifies the reason why the Revolution failed.

PATERNO:             *[to the audience.]* Luna had his death coming to him. His actions dictated it. Even Mabini would not deny that Luna was a very disagreeable character.

*[MABINI sits down on his wheelchair again.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR:       MARCH 7, 1899*

*[AGUINALDO approaches MABINI.]*

MABINI:               Whatever happens, do not make General Luna the under-secretary of war. He's a despot and knows nothing of organization and management of war offices. I did receive a number of complaints about him.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: MARCH 6, 1899*

*[MABINI, AGUINALDO, and PATERNO turn to look at LUNA who has already stood up.]*

LUNA:                    *[to the FILIPINOS. As he speaks, some FILIPINO SOLDIERS bring in a CHINESE PRISONER.]* Anyone who violates my disposition again, I will have shot without trial!

*[FILIPINO SOLDIERS form a firing squad and shoot the CHINESE. The scene freezes to a tableau. MABINI stands up and walks around.]*

MABINI:                *[to the audience.]* This is not to say, however, that Luna was completely without point.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: FEBRUARY 23, 1899*  
*“THE BATTLE OF CALOOCAN”*

*[FILIPINO SOLDIERS get into position, with LUNA giving commands.]*

LUNA:                    Once you see the signal, we will make a simultaneous attack.

FILIPINO 1:            Fire! Fire in Tondo!

LUNA:                    That’s our signal! Attack!

*[Battle re-enactments.]*

LUNA:                    Fire the cannons!

*[Cannon shots. A FILIPINO SOLDIER runs to LUNA.]*

FILIPINO:              The Pampanga troops have run out of ammunition!

LUNA:                    Tell Captain Janolino to have Kawit troops join up with them!

*[The FILIPINO SOLDIER runs off. More battle-reenactments. The FILIPINO SOLDIER goes back to LUNA.]*

FILIPINO:                We have a problem, sir. Captain Janolino says that he will only take orders from President Aguinaldo.

*[The scene freezes to a tableau. CALDERON enters.]*

CALDERON:            *[to the audience.]* See the ignorance in the military? That is why the Congress needed to be powerful.

*[MABINI walks back to his wheelchair.]*

MABINI:                *[to the audience.]* While I do not agree with the many decisions of General Luna, I judge his actions but not his character. Rather, what he faced were symptoms of a bigger problem.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: FEBRUARY 28, 1899*

*[MABINI sits down and wheels himself to AGUINALDO.]*

AGUINALDO:           Luna is tendering his resignation.

MABINI:                So I have heard, Your Excellency. Apparently, no one imposed punishment on the insubordinate company captains during the last attack.

AGUINALDO:           It's an isolated incident.

MABINI:                It could have won us that battle.

AGUINALDO: We would not know that.

MABINI: Nevertheless, this is no good for the army and the people. Insubordination such as that is punishable by firing squad. But if we do not take action on these matters, soldiers will take it that disobeying generals means nothing. Without disciplining them, our soldiers can easily abuse towns and we do not want that. We need the support of the towns.

AGUINALDO: This is beginning to sound like a reprimand, Mr. Mabini.

MABINI: Pardon my tone, Your Excellency. You have been given this prestige so that you may bring peace and order to your people. This is why I fought hard with the Congress so that you could keep your dictatorship; not to subject towns, but to suppress whatever abuses the soldiers can bring to the towns. If you cannot keep the peace and order—pardon me saying this, Your Excellency—it will only show the towns and the Americans that we do not know how to govern.

AGUINALDO: So what are you telling me?

MABINI: I think you should consider the problem Luna is pointing out.

*[AGUINALDO moves away. As MABINI speaks, LUNA disarms and embarrasses the FILIPINO SOLDIERS by kicking, slapping, and pistol butting them.]*

MABINI: *[to the audience.]* For all of Luna's crudeness, I cannot deny his honesty and patriotism. His methods with the soldiers may sometimes be extreme, as he keeps disarming and humiliating them for their insubordination.

*[LUNA organizes the FILIPINO SOLDIERS then disperses them. AMERICAN SOLDIERS enter. They get sniped at, ambushed by FILIPINO FARMERS.]*

MABINI:                    *[to the audience.]* But I am sure which side he was on, unlike the Prime Minister who succeeded me.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:            MAY 7, 1899*

*[PATERNO gives MABINI a note. MABINI reads it quietly.]*

PATERNO:                See, Mr. Mabini? This is what you call success.

MABINI:                 In what way is this success?

PATERNO:                We can have autonomy under American sovereignty, just like Canada.

MABINI:                 How is that success?

PATERNO:                How isn't it success?

MABINI:                 In more ways than one. Autonomy under the sovereignty of any other nation is not independence at all. Worse, it's a violation of the Constitution that you yourselves drafted.

PATERNO:                What's your alternative? War, I suppose?

MABINI:                 The moment we declared Independence last year, we were already in the danger of war. Did you not foresee that?

*[The scene freezes into a tableau. MABINI stands up.]*

MABINI:                 *[to the audience.]* Take a look at Pedro Paterno. Look at him evolve.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:            MAY 22, 1899*

[*OTIS enters. PATERNO approaches OTIS.*]

PATERNO:                On behalf of the Philippine Revolutionary Government...

OTIS:                    Unconditional surrender. Or we fight to the last man.

[*OTIS leaves.*]

*ON THE PROJECTOR:*        *JUNE 2, 1899*

PATERNO:                We have sacrificed ourselves to the services of our government for the sake of peace without abandoning the sacred idea of liberty and independence; but the North Americans refuse to suspend hostilities. To war, then, beloved brothers, to war! Forward, Filipinos, and the sun of victory will shine upon us.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:*        *MAY, 1900*

[*PATERNO approaches MABINI the same way he did in Act I.*]

PATERNO:                I have become head of the American Consultative Assembly of Filipino Notables...

*ON THE PROJECTOR:*        *FEBRUARY 1901*

PATERNO:                Now is not the time for idealism, Mr. Mabini. You want guarantees for your freedom and individual rights? How can you claim these without peace?

[*PATERNO freezes. MABINI stands up.*]

MABINI:                Those who tire after months of struggle are good for nothing but to carry the yoke of slavery. Even Luna, with his harsh demeanor, saw through Paterno's proposition of having autonomy like Canada.

*[LUNA approaches PATERNO.]*

MABINI:                Despite Paterno's scandal, he and his Cabinet would still not resign. Luna ordered them to be arrested *[LUNA signals FILIPINO SOLDIERS to arrest PATERNO.]* but Luna did not prevail.

*[LUNA and FILIPINO SOLDIERS freeze. PATERNO walks away from LUNA. CALDERON enters and shakes hands with PATERNO.]*

MacARTHUR:            Why is that?

MABINI:                How would I know? Ask him.

CALDERON:            How would I know? We're all just in your head right now.

PATERNO:              And I am just as flat as you imagine me to be. As you imagine everybody else to be. Admit it!

*[CALDERON and PATERNO exit.]*

MABINI:                Going back to the assassination of Luna, let us re-examine what happened.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        JUNE 5, 1899*

*[GENERAL LUNA approaches a FILIPINO SOLDIER.]*

LUNA:                  Where is President Aguinaldo?

FILIPINO: His Excellency is in Tarlac, sir.

LUNA: In Tarlac? But I received a letter telling me that I should meet him here in Cabanatuan.

[*A gunshot is heard.*]

LUNA: Who did that?

[*FILIPINO SOLDIERS surround LUNA and then set upon him. MABINI walks into the scene.*]

MABINI: [*to the audience.*] Upon closer inspection, who were the soldiers who were there? The Kawit troops whom Luna had disarmed and humiliated for their insubordination and lack of discipline.

*ON THE PROJECTOR: FEBRUARY 23, 1899*  
*“BATTLE OF CALOOCAN”*

[*Battle-reenactment. A FILIPINO SOLDIER and CAPTAIN JANOLINO break away from the tableau.*]

FILIPINO: Captain Janolino, General Luna is ordering you to send the Kawit troops to form a joint attack with the Pampanga troops!

JANOLINO: I only take orders from President Aguinaldo.

[*The FILIPINO SOLDIER and JANOLINO freeze.*]

*ON THE PROJECTOR: APRIL 25, 1899*  
*“BATTLE OF CALUMPIT”*

*[Another Battle-reenactment. GENERAL DEL PILAR and LUNA break away from the tableau, throwing commands. LUNA approaches a FILIPINO SOLDIER.]*

LUNA:                   Where is General Mascardo?

FILIPINO:               He left to inspect troops in Arayat, sir.

LUNA:                   In the middle of battle? When he was specifically tasked to strengthen the defense of the Calumpit-Apalit line?

*[LUNA and the FILIPINO SOLDIER freeze. AGUINALDO steps up.]*

AGUINALDO:           *[to the audience.]* But even General Luna fails to follow orders, despite his insistence that his orders be followed.

*[LUNA unfreezes and begins to walk away.]*

DEL PILAR:             Where are you going?

LUNA:                   Where else, General Del Pilar? To punish Mascardo!

AGUINALDO:           General Luna, burn the railway bridge!

LUNA:                   *[walking away, ignoring AGUINALDO.]* Mascardo!

DEL PILAR:             I'll do it sir. I'll burn the bridge.

*[The scene freezes to a tableau.]*

MABINI:                    *[to the audience.]* I cannot deny that Luna was indeed a hard person to get along with. But was that enough justification for him to die the way he did?

*[The tableau changes to the Assassination of Luna tableau. This time, PATERNO and AGUINALDO are part of the tableau, although far away from the murder scene.]*

MABINI:                    *[to the audience.]* Would it not have been better that General Antonio Luna had died in the battlefield instead of being killed by his own brothers-at-arms?

*[Silence.]*

MABINI:                    *[to the audience.]* How does Luna's death exemplify the failure of the Revolution?

*[The FILIPINO SOLDIERS break away from the tableau and step forward.]*

MABINI:                    *[to the audience.]* Take a look at our own soldiers.

*[As MABINI speaks, the FILIPINO SOLDIERS begin making varied tableaux that fit MABINI's narrative.]*

MABINI:                    *[to the audience.]* During my time as Prime Minister, I would receive reports of captives tortured.

*[An MAN is tortured.]*

MABINI:                    *[to the audience.]* And in these tortures, some would die.

*[The TORTURED MAN dies.]*

MABINI:                    [to the audience.] Punishment is exemplary if imposed according to law, but it irritates and causes horror if meted arbitrarily. This does not end here. Although isolated cases, I have also heard of Filipino soldiers abusing our women. How can we hope for our enemies to respect our women if we cannot be examples of respect? And when we are corrected, no matter how harsh the correction...

[The FILIPINO SOLDIERS fall back to the Assassination of Luna Tableau.]

MABINI:                    [to the audience.] But the soldiers are not the only ones to blame.

[PATERNO steps forward.]

MABINI:                    [to the audience.] Our “friends of peace.”

[PATERNO approaches MABINI.]

PATERNO:                I have become head of the American Consultative Assembly of Filipino Notables...

MABINI:                    [to the audience.] The Spaniards and Americans have always thought of us as semi-civilized or semi-barbaric. To think that the Americans will one day annex us is a fallacy. We will never be declared a State.

PATERNO:                Times change, and along with it, we have to change tactics to achieve peace.

MABINI:                    [to the audience.] All they have done is to prove their incapacity, that they have no other political ideal than their own personal convenience.

[PATERNO falls back to the Assassination of Luna Tableau.]

MABINI:                   And then we have the President.

*[AGUINALDO steps forward. A FILIPINO SOLDIER and LUNA unfreeze. LUNA approaches the FILIPINO SOLDIER.]*

LUNA:                    Where is President Aguinaldo?

FILIPINO:               His Excellency is in Tarlac, sir.

LUNA:                    In Tarlac? But I received a letter telling me that I should meet him here in Cabanatuan.

*[FILIPINO SOLDIER and LUNA freeze. FUNSTON and BELL enter.]*

FUNSTON:               General Antonio Luna was the ablest and most aggressive leader of the Insurrectionists.

BELL:                    He was the only general the Filipino army ever had.

MABINI:                By allowing Luna to die, Aguinaldo killed discipline. I had hoped that he would redeem himself from that error. He took it upon himself to embody the ideals of the people, to represent them.

*ON THE PROJECTOR:        APOLINARIO MABINI'S "KRUGER AND AGUINALDO"*

*[A FILIPINO steps up with a note.]*

FILIPINO:               *[reads.]* Since Aguinaldo's return from Hong Kong, the Filipinos have looked up to him as the embodiment and champion of their ideals and aspirations.

MABINI:                In the times of adversity, I wished that he would not abandon those whom he had placed in danger.

*[The FILIPINO SOLDIERS step forward and salute AGUINALDO.]*

MABINI: I had told Aguinaldo what he needed to do.

FILIPINO: *[reads.]* We are not saying that a leader should seek death through acts of bravery. But if it becomes impossible to avoid death without incurring dishonor, one has to accept it as a sacrifice for ideals to triumph.

*[MacARTHUR claps. OTIS enters. As OTIS and MacARTHUR circle around MABINI the other characters break the tableau and begin to close in on MABINI.]*

MacARTHUR: How utterly convenient.

OTIS: Apolinario Mabini, blameless to the end.

MacARTHUR: Again, I ask, does it matter why the Revolution failed?

OTIS: Or maybe, it's not the Revolution, but you.

MacARTHUR: You have been hardheaded.

OTIS: Or blind.

MABINI: If the cause of the Revolution's failure doesn't matter, why would my oath of allegiance matter to you?

MacARTHUR: Oh, but it doesn't.

OTIS: We're just playing in your head.

MacARTHUR: Why do you think you can walk around right now?

MABINI: Then why do you ask me to take that oath of allegiance?

MacARTHUR: Why do you revisit the Revolution's failure? It's because you and Ricarte are in that delusion that you still have some fight left in you.

OTIS: That by not signing, you can make a difference.

MABINI: By not signing, I make a statement.

MacARTHUR: A statement?

OTIS: Is that the reason why you have been obstinate?

*[MacARTHUR enters.]*

MacARTHUR: This was never about your country, never about your desire for independence. You just wanted to look tough. You wanted to look heroic.

*[MacARTHUR and OTIS put MABINI back in his wheelchair. PATERNO approaches MABINI and wheels him around.]*

PATERNO: No. You just couldn't admit that you were fighting for the wrong side, the wrong ideology.

*[CALDERON takes over from PATERNO in wheeling MABINI around.]*

CALDERON: Because the great Apolinario Mabini is never wrong!

MABINI: No! Because we had to set an example!

[*OTIS takes over from CALDERON in wheeling MABINI around.*]

OTIS:                   An example of what? Of what a Filipino is?

[*MacARTHUR takes over from OTIS in wheeling MABINI around.*]

MacARTHUR:           But we have seen what a Filipino is. Filipinos as negotiators...

[*MacARTHUR wheels MABINI towards PATERNO. OTIS takes over from MacARTHUR in wheeling MABINI around.*]

OTIS:                   Filipinos as Generals and Officers...

[*OTIS wheels MABINI towards LUNA and MASCARDO. MacARTHUR takes over from OTIS in wheeling MABINI around.*]

MacARTHUR:           Filipinos as Presidents...

[*MacARTHUR wheels MABINI towards PATERNO. OTIS takes over from MacARTHUR in wheeling MABINI around.*]

OTIS:                   Filipinos as soldiers...

[*OTIS wheels MABINI through two lines of FILIPINO SOLDIERS making tableaux of inhumane torture.*]

OTIS:                   What wonderful human beings you are!

MacARTHUR:           Without us, you would be tearing at each other's throats.

*[LUNA takes over from OTIS in wheeling MABINI around.]*

LUNA:                   As they did to me!

*[LUNA is dragged away by the FILIPINO SOLDIERS. PATERNO takes over from LUNA in wheeling MABINI around.]*

PATERNO:               Admit it. I made a better choice than you did. Look at me!

*[BELL takes over from PATERNO, but instead of wheeling MABINI around, he stops the wheelchair at the center of the stage. Silence.]*

BELL:                    There is no victory in what you do. Why do you persist in your stand?

*[Silence.]*

MABINI:                Because victory is not the only measure of...

BELL:                   Keep telling yourself that! Look!

*[BELL steps back and ALL look at AGUINALDO.]*

AGUINALDO:            I hereby renounce all allegiance to any and all so-called revolutionary governments in the Philippine Islands and recognize and accept the supreme authority of the United States of America.

BELL:                   Behold your leader!

OTIS:                   Your epitome of the Filipino!

*[Silence. MABINI stands up and approaches AGUINALDO.]*

MABINI: I had hope. That was why, despite my capture, I held on for more than a year. In hope. All you had to do was do the right thing. The Revolution was a war not to be won by mere attrition, but by display of character, of integrity.

[AGUINALDO just stares at him.]

MABINI: We were going through great tests. If you—if we—suffered them with valor and patriotism and perseverance, we would have attained our desires because we would be worthy of the independence.

AGUINALDO: But that is not what happened.

PATERNO: All of us surrendered.

CALDERON: Only you and General Ricarte remain.

[RICARTE enters.]

MacARTHUR: You have always been so smart.

OTIS: You have always relied on your reason.

AGUINALDO: What does your reason tell you now?

MABINI: When people went to war, I believed it to be my duty to be at their side and suffer with them until the end of the fighting.

AGUINALDO: Now that they have no strength to continue fighting for their rights ...

[RICARTE steps up.]

RICARTE: ...where should you be?

BELL: You told me about factoring in morality and justice in a struggle. What justice is left in you to dispense? Show me your justice and morality.

RICARTE: You can be the last Filipino and leave these undeserving people to rot in their willingness to be slaves.

MABINI: I am not the anointed one to say that what I do is right or wrong. But I have had the satisfaction of belief that I have always acted according to what I thought was my duty.

BELL: Then what is your duty now?

*[Silence. MABINI looks at BELL, OTIS, and MacARTHUR, then at CALDERON, PATERNO, LUNA, then AGUINALDO. Silence. Finally, MABINI looks at the FILIPINO SOLDIERS, More silence. MABINI goes back to his wheelchair and sits on it.]*

*ON THE PROJECTOR: FEBRUARY 26, 1903*

*[ALL but MABINI disperse. RICARTE enters and stands behind MABINI. An AMERICAN with a Bible enters.]*

AMERICAN: Will you, General Artemio Ricarte, take the oath of allegiance?

RICARTE: Never. Under your rule, that land will never be my soil.

AMERICAN: Even with your people already accepting us?

RICARTE: If my people jump off a cliff, will I do the same? I say it again: Never.

AMERICAN:           Mr. Apolinario Mabini?

*[Silence. AGUINALDO, PATERNO, and LUNA enter. MABINI stares at them. The VEILED WOMAN enters, carrying a black cloth.]*

MABINI:               I refused to take the oath before, because it required me to be free of mental reservations.

*[MABINI puts his hand on the Bible.]*

RICARTE:             Suit yourself.

MABINI:               *[to the audience.]* Now that my people have no strength to continue fighting for their rights, I believe that I should also be on their side, to tell them not to lose hope, but to have greater confidence in themselves, in justice, and in the future.

                          Having waged war for so long as our forces and reason allowed, we showed our love for freedom. Now that the United States has recognized part of our rights, we must show that we only wanted those rights to enrich our culture and well-being through honest work, proving we have the capacity that would justify the promised recognition of the rest.

*[All but MABINI and the VEILED WOMAN exit. MABINI looks at the VEILED WOMAN.]*

MABINI:               If my remaining strength fails me, then at least I get to die in my own land.

*[A FILIPINO enters, guns ablazing.]*

FILIPINO:             The Filipino must exercise his fundamental right in fighting for Independence!

[*Only a handful of FILIPINOS join with him.*]

MABINI: Not at a time when the people as a whole have decided on peace.

[*The FILIPINO scoffs at MABINI and exits. The other FILIPINOS join him.*]

MABINI: Now is the time to look for other ways to achieve it. We had our chance to fight. Why persist on useless suffering?

ON THE PROJECTOR: [*Various news clippings on the banditry of Macario Sakay and others, in the name of Philippine Independence.*]

ON THE PROJECTOR: MARCH 13, 1903

[*The VEILED WOMAN covers MABINI with her black cloth. MacARTHUR, OTIS, and BELL enter, accompanied by PATERNO and AGUINALDO. FILIPINOS, including AGUINALDO enter, watching as the VEILED WOMAN slowly wheels MABINI away.*]

AGUINALDO: March 13, 1903. Apolinario Mabini dies of cholera.

BELL: It is generally believed that Mabini's efforts towards Independence was sincere and for his countrymen; none of those motivations of ambition and vanity that could be attributed to many of his contemporaries.

[*AGUINALDO steps back.*]

MacARTHUR: His views were more comprehensive than any Filipino I have met, and he was firm of character.

[*PATERNO steps back.*]

MacARTHUR:                   He would undoubtedly be of great use in the future of the Islands,  
if it were not for his affliction.

OTIS:                         Undoubtedly, his death seemed to remove the ablest representative  
of the Filipino People since the time of the martyred Rizal.

*[Blackout.]*

END OF ACT II

END OF PLAY