

NOLI ME TANGERE SUMMARY

Chapters 1-10

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Chapter 1: A Feast

On the month of October, Kapitan Tiago (whose whole name is Don Santiago de los Santos) is organizing a luxurious feast. It will be held in his home, which is located in the town of San Diego; more specifically, in Anloage Street.

The guests arrive that evening, greeted by Tiya Isabel, the cousin of Kapitan Tiago. Padre Damaso, Padre Salvi, Tenyente Guevarra (captain of the civil guard), and a foreigner with red hair from another country are some of the important guests that come to the gathering. There is a heated discussion amongst them regarding the ethics of the Filipino culture, Tobacco monopoly, and the Spaniards' harsh insults against the Filipinos. It was also revealed that Padre Damaso has been serving as a priest of San Diego for 20 years.

Tenyente Guevarra and Padre Damaso gets into an argument, and Padre Salvi has to calm his fellow priest.

Some other prominent figures arrive, such as Don Tiburcio and his wife, Donya Victorina.

Analysis:

In this chapter, Rizal illustrates the typical Filipino culture of inviting one's self to a party, regardless of one's presence in said party being known or not by the host. Because of this, the host always has to prepare a lot more, causing hardships for most rich people.

Kapitan Tiago's house symbolizes the Philippines - both are known to be very hospitable. Everyone is welcome to come and visit, especially foreigners.

This chapter also shows the conflict between The Church and The State. Padre Damaso symbolizes The Church, while Tenyente Guevarra symbolizes The State..

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Chapter 2: Crisostomo Ibarra

Don Crisostomo Ibarra, who has come from 7 years of studying in Europe, arrives at the feast wearing clothes that obviously seems like they are for mourning, accompanied by the party-planner, Kapitan Tiago. Ibarra is introduced to the other guests of the party as the son of Kapitan Tiago's deceased friend.

Padre Damaso and Ibarra meets, and immediately Damaso expresses his dislike for Ibarra. Although Ibarra extends a greeting towards the priest, thinking Damaso was a friend of his father, the priest ignores Ibarra's outstretched hand and says that Ibarra's father was no friend of his.

Applying the Western manners he had learned from Europe, Ibarra goes around and introduces himself to the various party guests.

Kapitan Tinong, one of the guests, approaches Ibarra and invites him to lunch the next day. Ibarra declines politely, saying that he has errands that he has to run.

All the guests are called to have lunch.

Analysis:

Ibarra represents the educated youth, who have brought new insights and knowledge from other countries. This knowledge that Ibarra has is feared by those who are in power, because they don't want to be overthrown.

One good trait that Rizal pointed out is introducing one's self when no one will introduce you.

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Chapter 3: The Dinner

Everyone heads to the lunch table to seat themselves. Padre Damaso and Sibyla offer each other the head seat by the end of the table with fake kindness.

Ibarra tells stories of his time spent abroad, where he reveals that he has been to many countries and has learned a lot of other languages and cultures. Ibarra realizes the feast

was prepared in his honor when he is served the meatiest part of the tinola (A well-known Filipino dish). This enrages Padre Damaso even more, and the padre starts to taunt Ibarra with his haughty and bitter comments. Ibarra simply remains calm.

A while later, Ibarra stands up to leave. Kapitan Tiago halts him, informing the young man that the love of his life, Maria Clara, will be arriving soon. Ibarra, however, takes his leave, but promises to come back again the next day.

Analysis:

Padre Damaso's insults to Ibarra only show the Spaniards' disapproval in educating Filipino youths outside of the country, just so that they can keep the Filipinos "naive," and they can stay in power.

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Chapter 4: The Heretic and the Filibuster

Ibarra is now walking the streets of San Diego when Tenyente Guevarra catches up with him. The Tenyente warns him to be careful, or else he will end up like his father. Surprised, Ibarra immediately questions Tenyente Guevarra about the fate of his father.

The Tenyente goes on to tell Ibarra that although his father Don Rafael was one of the wealthiest and most respected men in the town, there were many Spaniards and priests who were angry at Don Rafael. A few months after Ibarra had left for Europe, Don Rafael and Padre Damaso had a big conflict. Don Rafael's enemies ganged up on him, accusing him of killing a tax collector, being a heretic and filibuster, insulting the priests behind their backs, and many more. He was convicted and placed behind bars. Tenyente Guevarra tried to help by getting Don Rafael a good lawyer. When Don Rafael was about to be set free (the lawyer won the case), he died inside his prison cell due to the sickness he had developed during his captivity.

Tenyente Guevarra ends there, telling Ibarra that Kapitan Tiago will continue the rest of the story next time. Ibarra rides a *kalesa* (horse-drawn carriage) to his temporary residence, *Fonda de Lala*.

Notes:

- **Heretic** - someone who does not believe in God or has betrayed Him and the Roman Catholic Church. Don Rafael was convicted of this because he was

accused of reading the controversial book "El Correo de Ultramar."

- **Filibuster** - enemy of the state/government; someone who has gone against laws or people of the government. One of the reasons Don Rafael was convicted of this is because he frequently wore a Barong Tagalog, a formal Filipino suit, which apparently was a sign of rebellion for the Spaniards.
- **Story of the tax collector and Don Rafael** - A Filipino child was making fun of a tax collector. In his fury, the tax collector started to beat the child severely. Don Rafael, to save the child, hit the tax collector with a rock, and the tax collector died.

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Chapter 5: A Star in the Dark Night

Ibarra reaches his hotel, *Fonda de Lala*. He enters his room and sits by the window sill, looking at the vast sky outside as he ponders about his father's fate. His thoughts are a jumbled mess of sad and conflicted emotions. He observes a bright house in the far distance, with music and sounds of silverware coming from it.

Said house is Kapitan Tiago's house, where Maria Clara, his daughter, has joined the party. Her beauty is thoroughly described. She is being admired by everyone in the crowd: Padre Sibyla talks to her animatedly, Donya Victorina combs her hair, and a certain Franciscan priest named Padre Salvi, the parish priest of San Diego, cannot take his eyes off of her.

Ibarra, with his heavy thoughts, falls asleep, and wakes up to a new day.

Analysis:

In this chapter, Rizal skilfully portrays the contrasting emotions that Ibarra feels. While he is in grief thinking about his father, Ibarra also sees the happiness emanating from Kapitan Tiago's house.

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Chapter 6: Captain Tiago

This chapter simply describes Kapitan Tiago. Visit his character page by clicking his name for more detailed descriptions.

Kapitan Tiago is a rich and therefore, influential person in the town of San Diego. He is friends with those who have positions in the government, and the priests as well. He thinks of himself as a true Spaniard, and not a Filipino.

As a child, he was not sent to school by his father. He was a helper of a Dominican priest, who also became his teacher. When his dad and teacher died, he became a businessman. Donya Pia Alba, a beautiful young woman from Santa Cruz, became his wife, and the two worked at their business (selling sugar and other products) until they eventually became rich.

The couple also became friends with Don Rafael, the father of Crisostomo Ibarra.

When Tiago and Pia were married for six years, they couldn't bear any children. They tried many different superstitious methods until finally Padre Damaso advised them to go to a holy mass and procession at the town of Ubando. Pia Alba became pregnant, and Maria Clara was thus born. Pia died right after Maria Clara was born because she was already too sickly to begin with. Tiya Isabel, Tiago's sister, took care of Maria Clara together with Tiago. Padre Damaso also became Maria Clara's christened godfather.

Maria Clara and Crisostomo Ibarra became childhood friends.

Analysis:

Tiago represents the wealthy Filipinos back in the Spanish time who had the "colonial mentality" - they accepted the Spanish's conquering of the country, and even saw themselves as Spaniards. They were friends with the Spanish authorities as well.

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Chapter 7: Rendezvous on the Terrace

Maria Clara and Tiya Isabel attends early morning church, but comes back home right after.

Maria Clara is sewing when she hears a car outside, followed by the voice of Ibarra. In a panic, she goes to her room, where Tiya Isabel helps her freshen up and makes her look presentable before she faces Ibarra.

Ibarra and Maria Clara then has a romantic reunion by the terrace. Maria Clara asks him if he's forgotten her because of the many girls he might have met abroad, and Ibarra answers that he can never forget her, for she is always on his mind.

Maria Clara then brings out a letter than Ibarra had given her before he left for Europe. She reads this out loud, and it states Don Rafael's reason for sending Ibarra to another country: he wanted Ibarra to learn about life from other places so that he may serve the Philippines one day. After Maria Clara reads the letter, Ibarra remembers that he has something important to do.

Analysis:

Rizal illustrates true love in this chapter. Maria Clara and Ibarra, though apart for so long, still remember their love for each other, and have even kept mementos from each other in the past.

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Chapter 8: Recollections

As Ibarra is riding a *kalesa*, he observes that many things around the town had not changed, even after all these years. He passes a few *Talisay* trees that he remembers from the past, and the street vendors by the streets.

He passes the carriage of Padre Damaso, who doesn't seem to have noticed him.

Ibarra also passes by the sea, and it is then he recalls that across the vast sea is Europe, whose countries never stop growing and developing.

Analysis:

This chapter represents the Philippines, who in the long period of Spanish colonization, never changed, just as San Diego, the fictional town, had not changed since Ibarra had last been there.

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Chapter 9: Local Affairs

In front of Kapitan Tiago's house is a carriage, where Tiya Isabel and Maria Clara are

sitting in, about to leave for the *Beaterio*. Padre Damaso, who came to talk to Kapitan Tiago, comes across them before he enters the house to look for Kapitan Tiago. With a sense of urgency, the Padre and Kapitan Tiago enter a room, the door firmly shut, in order to be able to talk privately.

The scene perspective changes to Padre Sibyla who is hastily making his way to the Dominican convent known as *Puerta de Isabel II*. He enters the convent and enters the room of a sickly priest of a much higher rank compared to he. Sibyla tells the sickly priest of Padre Damaso and Ibarra's encounter with each other the night before. The two talk more about Ibarra, Maria Clara, and Kapitan Tiago, revealing that Ibarra and Maria Clara have an arranged marriage with one another, as promised by Kapitan Tiago and Don Rafael, the couple's parents, a long time ago.

Back to Padre Damaso. He exits the room with Kapitan Tiago, warning Tiago to never again keep secrets from him, for he is Maria Clara's godfather. When the Padre exits, Tiago, who looks worried and conflicted, blows out the candles he had previously lighted, praying for Ibarra's safe journey.

Notes:

- **Why is Damaso angry?** - he found out about the arranged marriage, and he told Kapitan Tiago to cancel it immediately.
- **Tiago's blowing of the candles** - it was a tradition back then to light candles whenever praying for someone's safe journey. However, since Damaso had ordered the cancellation of Ibarra and Maria Clara's marriage, Tiago's blowing out the candles may symbolize his obedience to the Padre's command.

Analysis:

Rizal shows us in the chapter that the Spaniards back then only thought of their desires and self interests. That's why any Filipino who got in the way, must be very wary and careful, or else something bad might happen.

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Chapter 10: San Diego

This chapter describes the town of San Diego.

The town of San Diego has a lot of flat plains and mountains, making farming its primary business. However, because of the Filipino farmers' ignorance, the products they produce

are sold at a very cheap price to the Chinese buyers.

Like most towns, San Diego has a legend around it. There used to be an old Spaniard who came to the town and bought the whole mountain area, using jewelry and clothes to pay for the land. Later on, he disappeared completely.

One day, some farmers who were tending to their *kalabaw* (carabao) found the Spaniard's decaying corpse hanging on a balete tree. Ever since then, people have been afraid of entering the mountains.

Later on a *mestiso* arrived in town, saying that he is the son of the one who died. His name was Saturnino. He occupied the land that the dead man had, and had a family there. His child was Don Rafael, Crisostomo Ibarra's father. When Saturnino died, Rafael took over. He made the town flourish, so the farmers and citizens liked him.

The priest in charge of the town used to be an *indio*, but when he died, Padre Damaso replaced him.

Notes:

- **mestiso** - of mixed ethnicity
- **indio** - a derogatory term for Filipinos used by the Spanish before

Analysis:

San Diego represents many of the Philippines towns back during the Spanish colonization: lush greens and vegetation, mountains, rivers, etc. Farming was also very prominent back then. However the foreigners such as the Spanish and the Chinese are the ones who had control over the Filipino farmers.