

## The Day the Paper Weighted Something

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**Brisel Dupagan Wacdagan,** MAEd is a committed Social Science instructor at Kalinga State University. She graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Secondary Education, Major in Social Studies, from Saint Louis

University, Baguio City, and later earned her Master of Education in Social Studies at Kalinga State University.

Her teaching career began at Saint Tonis College, Inc., where she served as a Junior High School teacher and adviser from 2019 to 2021. Since 2021, she has been part of the faculty at Kalinga State University, where she continues to shape students' academic growth and intellectual development. With a strong academic foundation and extensive teaching experience, she remains dedicated to fostering critical thinking and advancing a deeper understanding of the social sciences.

Five years ago, I signed a paper that said  
*"Contract of Service."*

Renew. Wait. Renew again.

Four years of "We'll see if I still come back next semester."

Four years of signed course syllabi with an expiration date.

Today, I signed a different paper.

*Permanent.*

The word felt heavy in my hands.

Not because it was paper.

Because it was proof.

*That this paper finally had weight.*

So tonight, I celebrate at home.

No stage. No bouquet.

Just my small table, and the food that carried me through.

Kimchi; red, sharp, alive.

Like the first four years.

Fermented in pressure, in doubt, in "maybe next time."

But look, it turned into something good.

Spicy enough to remind me I survived.

Pancit canton with egg; long noodles for the long road.

I ate this during grading marathons at 2AM.

The egg on top, like the students who made it worth it.

Golden. Whole.

Slippery, messy, but I learned how to hold on.

Rice; plain, warm, non-negotiable.

The foundation.

Like showing up to class even when my contract felt temporary.

Like the students who called me "Ma'am," like I belonged.

Because I did.

And Honey Citron Ginger Tea -

sweet, warm, with a little sting.

For the sore throat from 5 years of lectures.

For the nights I almost quit.

The honey says rest.

The ginger says you're still here.

Five years.

From COS to Permanent.

From "contractual" to "welcome to the faculty."

I am not just celebrating a title.

I'm celebrating the version of me

who kept teaching through the uncertainty.

Who kept believing the table would get bigger.

So, here's to me.

To kimchi and patience.

To pancit canton with egg and perseverance.

To rice and showing up.

To honey citron ginger tea and finally exhaling.

Year one as permanent.

The paper finally weighs something.

And, may the next chapters be just as full.