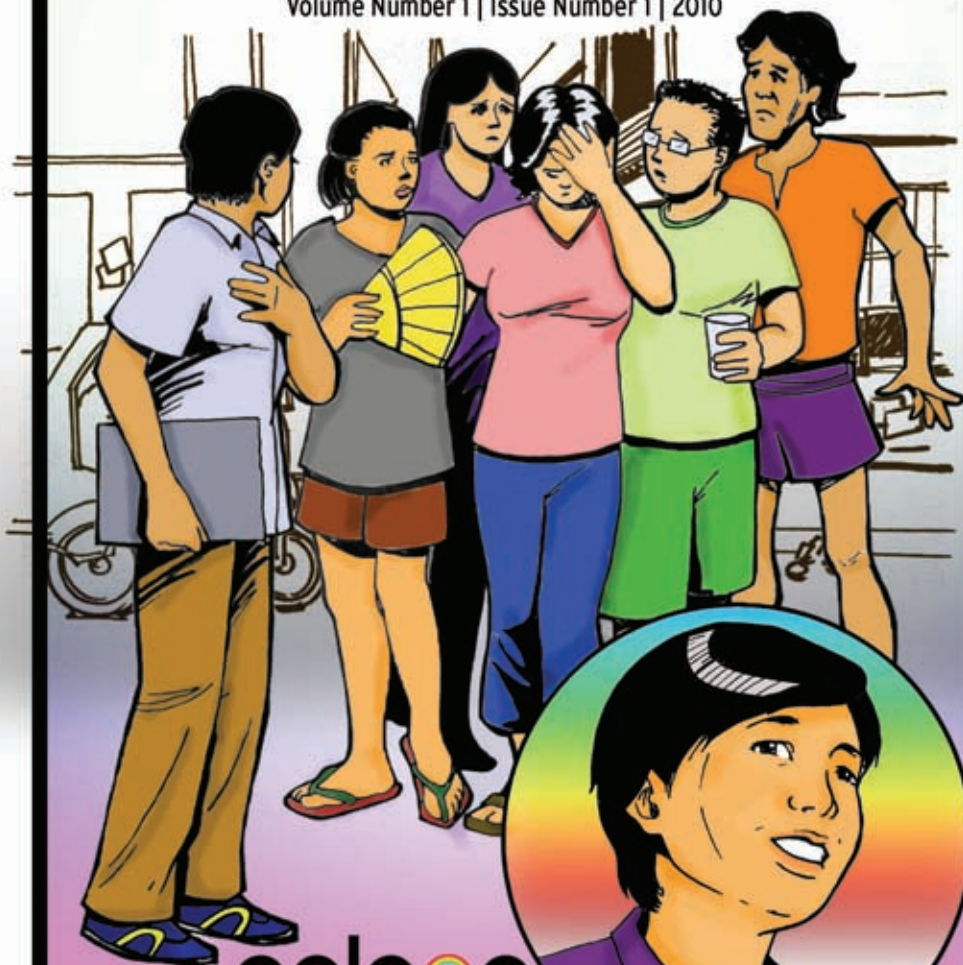


# TATSULOK

ISBN 978-971-9967-07-1

## *Komiks*

Volume Number 1 | Issue Number 1 | 2010



galang

[www.galangphilippines.org](http://www.galangphilippines.org)

Building Community Strength. Fueling Community Growth.

**A Community Project by GALANG Philippines, Inc.**

## Editorial

"Finally, Filipino Comics for the Filipino Lesbian!"

Was that the first thing that came to mind when you laid eyes on this comic book? Did you wrinkle your brow in wonder as to why we decided to call it "Tatsulok Komiks"?

As one of the most basic geometrical shapes, the tatsulok or triangle in English, holds many meanings. Because it has three angles or corners, the triangle is most often used to symbolize stability and dependability. In the case of science and mathematics, the triangle represents critical change.

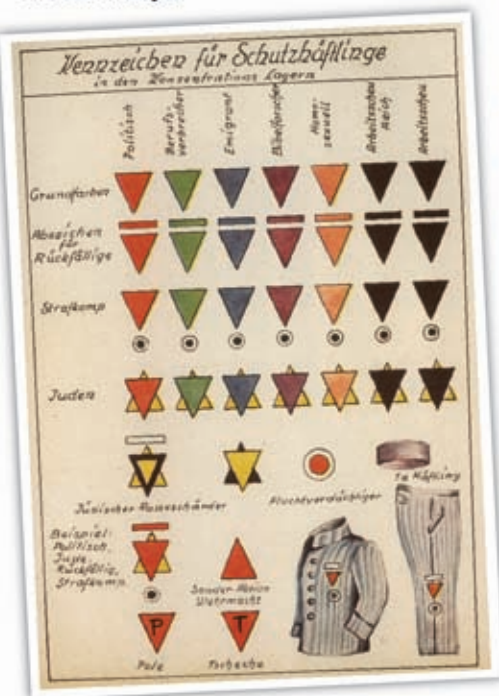
In World War II, the triangle was used in Nazi concentration camps as badges to identify prisoners who were deemed "unacceptable" or "undesirable" because they were found to be defiant of laws and expectations set by the Nazi government and society in general. The prisoners were forced to wear concentration camp badges on their jackets. The color of the badges indicated which category they belonged to. Along with other prisoners disavowed by the Nazi government, gay men and lesbians wore color-coded triangle badges indicating the nature of their offense against the state.

At present, the black triangle is not only used to honor the suffering of more than 200,000 lesbians and gay men killed in the concentration camps during the War, but also as a symbol of pride for the present-day movements that promote lesbian rights as human rights. GALANG chose the name "Tatsulok Komiks" precisely for this reason.

Join us in following the lives and loves of some truly fascinating characters as we introduce them in the very first volume of Tatsulok, entitled "The Adventures of Pamboy D'Tomboy!"

AML

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# THE ADVENTURES OF PAMBOY D'TOMBOY

Written by: Bonifacio P. Ilagan

Illustrated by: Aletheia Rio

Translated & edited by: Armina Velarde

EVERYWHERE IN STA. ELENA, WHERE PAMELA  
A.K.A. PAMBOY LIVES, SPECULATIONS ON  
WHETHER THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS WILL BRING  
ABOUT CHANGE AND HOPE ABOUND.







PAMBOY'S MOTHER RUNS A SMALL CONVENIENCE STORE AND BARBECUE BUSINESS. THE ENTIRE FAMILY TOILS DAILY TO MAKE ENDS MEET.



MEANWHILE, AT THE NEW  
MAYOR'S OFFICE...

Geez, Ding, why the  
heck would you recruit a dyke?

She's a computer science graduate, Sir.  
And she's hardworking.

There are plenty of hardworking  
computer science graduates who  
are real women, not dykes!

PAMBOY HAS SUFFERED REJECTION TOO  
MANY TIMES TO COUNT. NO ONE WANTS TO  
HIRE HER BECAUSE SHE'S A "TOMBOY."

You know you're never going to  
get a job unless you start dressing  
and acting like you're supposed to...

What's wrong  
with the way I  
am now?

You really  
want to know?

You're a woman who wants  
to be a man. It's crazy!

Ha-ha-ha! It's a crazy world,  
Mommy Ida. You know that. Let  
Pamboy do what she wants.

PAMBOY'S OLDER SISTERS ARE JUST AS UPSET AS HER MOTHER. SHE GETS SCOLDED ALL DAY LONG. IF HER FATHER DID NOT WALK OUT ON THEM A LONG TIME AGO, PAMBOY WOULD SURELY GET AN EARFUL FROM HIM TOO.

Think of all the sacrifices  
we made for you!  
What a waste!

We had to stop going to  
school and start working so you  
could finish your college degree.

Unless you change and start  
behaving normally, you'll never get  
anywhere—misfortune will always  
follow you.

IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT PAMBOY OFTEN SPENDS SLEEPLESS NIGHTS WRESTLING WITH HER THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS.

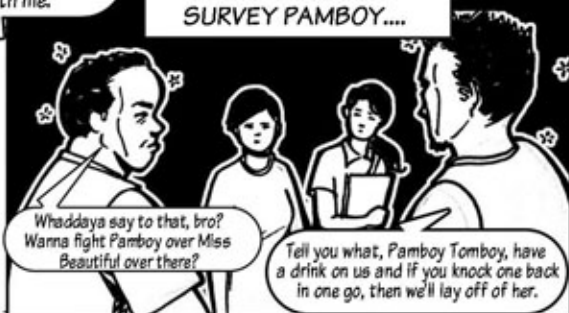
I don't want to be a man! This is who I am  
and for as long as I'm not hurting or taking  
advantage of anybody....

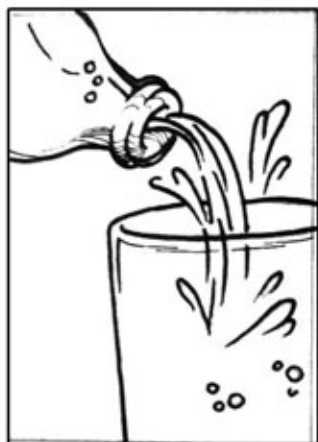
Just a small town girl, livin' in a lonely world...  
She took the midnight train goin' anywhere--



Hey, bro, lay off, I think she'll feel safer with me.

THE DRUNK THUGS  
SURVEY PAMBOY....





PAMBOY SAVES MELODY FROM FURTHER HARASSMENT BY THE DRUNK THUGS AND ESCORTS HER HOME.



PAMBOY, HOWEVER IS NOT A BIG DRINKER. SHE STARTS TO FEEL WOBBLY.







I'm impressed that you were able to finish that glass of gin in one swig. You must drink a lot.

Nah, it was my first time to taste the stuff, actually.



No way!  
You gotta be kidding me.

Is Pamboy  
your real name?

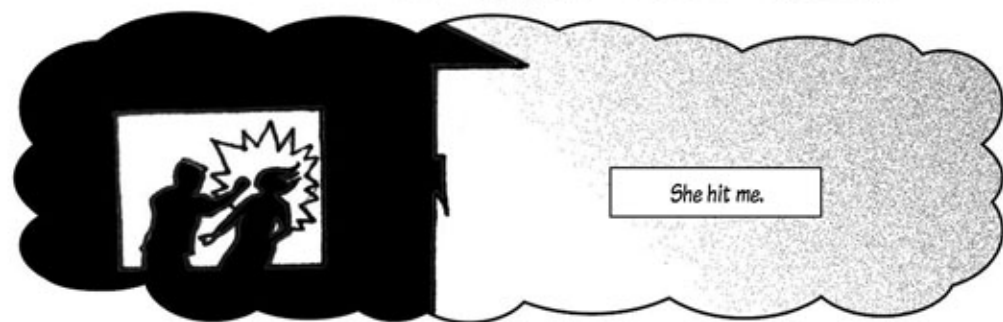
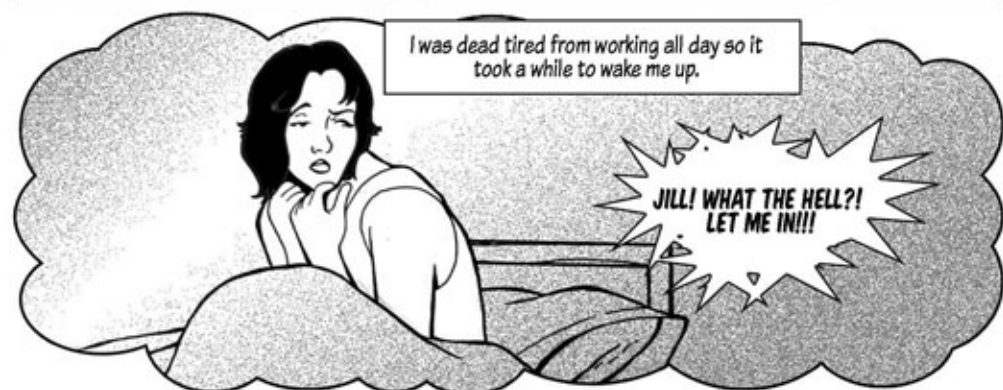
No, it's a name I've been teased with since I was young.  
My real name's Pamela.

Is that right?

PAMBOY NOW HAS ONE MORE THING KEEPING HER AWAKE AT NIGHT... HER FAMILY ALREADY HATES THAT SHE DRESSES UP LIKE A MAN, HOW WILL THEY FEEL IF THEY FIND OUT THAT HER HEART BEATS FOR ANOTHER WOMAN?

Melody... Melody...  
My life's pathetic...







PAMBOY CARES ABOUT HER FRIEND JILL BUT THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH SHE CAN DO. SHE CAN, HOWEVER DO SOMETHING ABOUT HER OWN PROBLEMS.





GOOD LUCK SURE AWAITS PAMBOY AS SHE STEPS OUT ONTO THE STREET.



Hey, Pamboy!  
Going somewhere?  
Get in!

Melody!



I have a feeling this is going  
to be my lucky day...!

Are you sure you don't mind  
me calling you Pamboy?

Of course, I don't  
mind. I've gotten used  
to it.



My heart's beating  
like a drum.

THEY CONTINUE TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER THROUGHOUT THE TRICYCLE RIDE.

So you're finishing college soon.  
You planning to look for work abroad after  
you graduate?

I have no plans of leaving the country. I want  
to work here and use my education  
and skills to help people like ourselves.

That's truly  
admirable.

I understand why a lot of us leave  
the country for work, but it's important to  
explore opportunities here too and give  
back to our community.

She's wonderful!  
I really hope you stay, Melody, because  
I want to spend every moment with you.

MELODY INSPIRES PAMBOY TO  
KEEP PURSUING HER DREAMS.

So you don't  
have any  
experience?

Yes, Sir. I've never been  
employed before.

It's not a problem. We  
accept fresh graduates.

That's good  
to know.

May I be candid with you, Pamela?  
Are you a... tomboy?

I have been called that before.  
But I'm not sure why it's relevant.

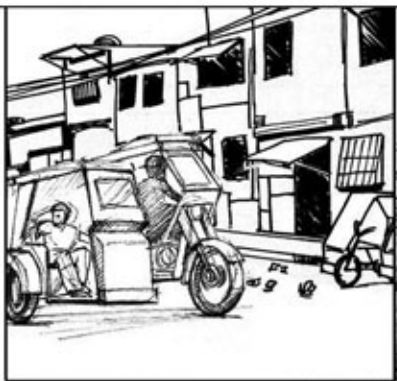
I've gone to so many interviews  
before and have been flatly rejected  
each time because of the way I look.  
But this is who I am and I'm not  
going to wear a dress and apply  
makeup on because I want to  
stay true to myself.

I also believe that we all have the right to equal  
opportunity. We all need access to employment and  
livelihood. We should be evaluated based on our  
qualifications and not on the way we look.

Well said.  
I appreciate your...  
frankness.



ON THE WAY HOME, SOMETHING CATCHES PAMBOY'S ATTENTION.



Hang on, bro!  
You can drop me off here.



MILES HAS THE ANSWER....



BRAD LOOKS CONSIDERABLY OUTRAGED. SHE JUMPS IN.





JINKY AND BERTA  
WEIGH IN AS WELL....

I hope she never  
comes back!

I hope she meets  
her maker!

Is that Pamboy?

MOMMY IDA HAPPENS TO WALK BY AND  
NOTICES THE COMMOTION.

PAMBOY DOESN'T HANG AROUND  
FOR VERY LONG AND HEADS TO THE  
STORE TO HELP OUT AS SOON  
AS SHE GETS HOME.

Ate Pam!

Mom has been looking  
for you. So, how did the  
job-hunting go?

I thought it went well.  
They asked me to come back for a  
second interview.

Wow, congrats!

You're back, did you get the job?

I was just telling Glenda I got  
scheduled for a second interview.  
I think there's a good chance  
I might get in.

Did you apply at the new  
congressman's office?


Politicians don't care about us.  
I found this one on my own,  
big sis.




What were you doing hanging out by Jill's place earlier.



Huh?



I saw you there on my way home.




Jill's a friend and she was in distress, I thought perhaps there was something I could do to help.

Stop meddling in other people's business. How do you suppose you can help others when you can't even help yourself?

And how many times do I have to tell you to stop hanging around those dykes and faggots?!

Don't talk back to your mother, Pamboy. Bite your tongue and don't disrespect her.

**PAMBOY'S BABY SISTER, GLENDA, CONSOLES HER.**



I'm sorry, Ate Pam. I really admire you for not talking back.

You're the only one who seems to accept me, Glenda.

Pamboy!



JACK APOLOGIZES TO JILL BUT JILL IS DETERMINED TO STAND HER GROUND AND LET JACK KNOW THAT THE ENTIRE GANG IS BEHIND HER.





What Berta said:  
what it means to be part  
of a federation.



I'm in! We should form a federation, let's  
make it official. Life's hard enough for people  
like us and having each other to rely on  
will surely make everything easier.

I agree!  
Well, as long as I'm  
the official muse.

AFTER SOME TIME, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT JACK  
WAS SINCERELY APOLOGETIC. SHE PROMISED  
NOT TO HURT JILL AND TREAT HER WITH RESPECT.  
BUT JILL WANTS JACK TO DO ONE MORE THING  
BEFORE SHE TAKES HER BACK....



I want you to make the same promise to the gang.

I promise all of you that I will be  
a better girlfriend to Jill from  
now on.

It's settled then.  
So when do we start  
forming our group?

PAMBOY RUSHES BACK HOME, SHE'S SURE  
HER MOTHER IS LOOKING FOR HER. BUT SHE'S  
NOT TOO WORRIED ABOUT THE SCOLDING  
THAT AWAITS HER AT HOME, HER MIND IS  
CLEARLY SOMEWHERE ELSE....

Form a group,  
why haven't we thought  
of that before?





AS SOON AS PAMBOY GETS HOME,  
GLENDA EXCITEDLY DELIVERS  
A PIECE OF GOOD NEWS....

Someone's here  
for you, big sis!

Who is it?

Hi, Pamboy!

Melody?!  
What are you doing here?

A couple of my professors  
didn't show up for class, so I  
have a bit of free time. I thought  
of stopping by so we can  
talk some more.



## "What is GALANG Philippines?"

*Galang* is the Filipino word for respect. The word signifies respect for human rights and human diversity, which lies at the core of GALANG Philippines' struggle for equality and justice.

GALANG Philippines is a lesbian-initiated, lesbian-run feminist human rights organization that works with urban poor lesbians, bisexual women, and trans men (LBTs) who struggle with the multiple oppressions of class, poverty, sex, gender identity/expression, and sexual orientation.

GALANG currently employs strategies aimed at building the capacities of urban poor LBTs to help or better themselves. Its initiatives include trainings, workshops, action researches, and the publication of popular education (PopEd) materials, such as *Tatsulok Komiks*.



## "What does LBT stand for?"

LBT stands for "lesbian, bisexual, and transgender."

A **lesbian** is a woman who is emotionally, psychologically, and/or sexually attracted to another woman. She need not behave or dress like a man, although it is her right to do so if she wishes.

Both women and men can be bisexual and/or transgender. A **bisexual woman** is a person whose gender identity is that of a woman and is attracted to both women and men.

A **trans man** is a person who was assigned the female sex at birth, but believes that this label is incorrect or insufficient and feels that he is actually male. Not all trans men are attracted to women.

A person need not be sexually active to be lesbian, bisexual or transgender.





## **“What human rights do LBTs have?”**

LBTs have the same human rights as everybody else. The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides that no person shall be “denied the equal protection of the laws.” The Universal Declaration of Human Rights likewise outlines the rights to which all persons, including LBTs, are entitled. It provides that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

It is clear that based on both national and international bills of human rights, all persons are inherently equal and must thus be treated equally. If so, then it is imperative to establish and respect the human rights of LBTs stated in The Yogyakarta Principles, a universal guide to human rights which affirms binding international legal standards with which all States must comply. Among these rights are:

- The Right to Life
- The Right to Privacy
- The Right to Freedom from Arbitrary Deprivation of Liberty
- The Right to Freedom from Torture and Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- The Right to Work
- The Right to an Adequate Standard of Living
- The Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health
- The Right to Adequate Housing
- The Right to Education
- The Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression
- The Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association
- The Right to Found a Family
- The Right to Participate in Public Life

## **"What is discrimination?"**

Discrimination is any unjust treatment of a person who belongs to a group or sector on account of her/his class or socio-economic status, sex, gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation. One common characteristic of discrimination is arbitrary exclusion of a person from opportunities that are readily accessible to persons belonging to a different group or sector.

## **"What forms of discrimination affect urban poor LBTs?"**

There are far too many instances and cases of discrimination against urban poor LBTs. Although these vary in severity, all forms of discrimination are unjust. The following are a few documented examples of discrimination:

- Unlawful termination of LBTs from work or refusal to hire them due to their manner of dress or their having short hair despite being perfectly capable of fulfilling the requirements of the job
- Persecution, shaming, maligning or bashing of LBTs because of their refusal to conform to standards of femininity
- Assault and rape of LBTs (commonly described as "corrective rape" inflicted on LBTs) to force them to accept heterosexuality and/or to adhere to standards of femininity
- Refusal to give sufficient medical care and attention to LBTs because they do not meet the standards of femininity and are therefore not "real females"
- Intimidation, imprisonment or unlawful prosecution of LBTs in order to force them to abandon their non-heterosexual relationships



## **"What can I do to promote and protect LBT human rights?"**

We make many seemingly insignificant decisions in everyday life that we often take for granted, but those small decisions can contribute substantially to improving the lives of LBTs.

We can support or join organizations that help strengthen LBTs as a marginalized sector. If no such organization exists in our area, we can form small support groups composed of our friends and neighbors. If organizing a group is not something that we are prepared to do just yet, we can also try to learn more about LBT issues by reading about sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) in newspapers, magazines or books in the nearest bookstore, or even in the Internet.

For LBTs, we can make a big difference by striving to excel in school or at work and by having faith and confidence in ourselves. Caring for and loving ourselves is a huge step in pushing for our human rights as LBTs. We can do this by staying away from unhealthy habits such as excessive drinking, drugs, gambling, and/or fighting with, badmouthing or acting negatively towards each other.

Anyone who believes that every human being is entitled to enjoy human rights can help promote and protect the rights of LBTs. It is important to remember that all LBTs desire respect and equality and like all human beings, LBTs are deserving of respect and equal rights.

**"Who can join me in promoting and protecting LBT human rights?"**

Thus, anyone, including our parents, sisters, brothers, relatives, friends, neighbors, classmates, co-workers, teachers, bosses, etc., can help work towards building a truly free and equal society by advancing LBT rights. Some of them may not yet appreciate our struggles as sexual minorities, so we must strive to help them understand that LBT rights are human rights, and hope that in time, they will join us in the struggle to help LBTs.



## BUILDING COMMUNITY STRENGTH. FUELING COMMUNITY GROWTH.

Tatsulok Komiks is GALANG's response to the need of urban poor lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders (LBTs) for a popular or accessible medium of communication that can help broaden and deepen their understanding of their human rights. It is GALANG's fervent hope that readers do learn and grow in understanding, as well as glean positive life lessons from it, the most important of which is treating everyone with respect and recognizing that every human being is deserving of respect and equal rights.

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Published by GALANG Philippines, Inc.

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GALANG thanks its partners for their support in having Tatsulok Komiks published.



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ISBN 978-971-9967-07-1

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