

MY ONE DAY SOMEDAY EPISODE

A MICHELLE YEOH ENCOUNTER

As I am writing this, my body is still sore. Almost five hours of prolonged standing and running with the Philippine media to catch a good shot of Michelle Yeoh during the Helmets for Kids ceremony at the Department of Education in Ortigas, Pasig City, Philippines yesterday 26th of May 2010.

All that had happened yesterday was unplanned and everything was uncertain for me. I have been busy with my work and have missed the chance to check the news about Michelle Yeoh lately. So the morning of 26th May, upon checking my offline messages, I got a message from another fan of Michelle whom I have not been in touched with for years (Eimich).



Rowena, my friend and a Michelle fan helped in pulling up the banner in front of the Department of Education.

Amidst gastric pain and dying to see my doctor for consultation, I started sending emails and made phone calls to all the sponsoring agencies of Michelle Yeoh's trip here in Manila as early as six in the morning. I got positive responses but not enough information to help me get to the correct information of Michelle's venue of activities.

Lost and clueless, a friend suggested why not contact Jane being the webmaster of www.michellyeoh.info. It was the only time when I sent Jane a message asking for help whom to keep in touch with so I would know Michelle's schedule of activities. Jane got back at me in a flash and suggested to call agencies involved in the activities as per news from Inquirer website.

I gathered all the contact numbers of the agencies and printed it all off. Waited for Rowena (a friend who is a Michelle Yeoh fan) to drop by my place and together we headed to ADB headquarters. Seated at the lobby of ADB, strict security is being imposed as we are not from the media. So we walked out of the ADB headquarters and headed to the Department of Education to inquire if private individuals such as us (we have honestly identified ourselves as Michelle's fans) can be accommodated for the Helmet for Kids ceremony. Luckily, we were given permission by the Office of the Undersecretary of Education to join the event. Thanks to Miss Lina.

I had to take care of my health in between. So at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, we headed back to the Department of Education from the hospital. Program was set to start at 3 o'clock in the afternoon for the Helmet for Kids. While everyone's waiting for the program to start, the master of ceremony, Ron Delos Reyes threw in trivia about Michelle. He mentioned some of Michelle's movie such as Tomorrow Never Dies and Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon. Simultaneously he would ask who have watched those movies and only Rowena



Ron Delos Reyes, the master of ceremony throwing in trivias about Michelle while kids patiently wait for the program to start.

and I were actively participating in his every question. We were so proud participating being fans of Michelle. He even mentioned that Michelle once reigned as Miss Malaysia.

In one corner, Rowena and I would throw in trivia to each other about Michelle and laughed at each other how far we have come since we first met as Michelle Yeoh fans.

10 past 3 in the afternoon, the crowd roared outside the hall. It was then that I knew my long wait is over. Seven years of waiting to catch a glimpse of Michelle Yeoh will be realized in a matter of seconds.



My FIRST glimpse of Michelle as we walked in the hall.

As she walked inside the hall, I could not find her as the media people gathered all in front of her. When I finally saw her, I was blown away of the fact that Michelle Yeoh is standing right in front of me. She was like two feet away from me as she walked passed the crowd. She graced the children with her warm hello and seated with the children for a photo op. Media people were shouting Michelle's name. I called out her name too but in a melody my heart's been singing for years.

Photographers from various news groups got all crazy not allowing Michelle to pass through so the program could start. After awhile when everyone got settled in, the program started. She was introduced as the Ambassador of Make Road Safe Campaign and requested her not to stand up to be acknowledged as this may cause delay in the program since the media may go crazy again.

I was just in one corner with the media endlessly taking photos of Michelle. Savoring every ounce of the moment of my seven year wish to see her in person. I was very happy to see her smile in person. But I still could not believe all of those happened all at once.

The helmet for kids ceremony proper took place where Michelle placed on the helmet to a young boy. When I saw that all the media ganged up in front of Michelle, I skid my way in front of all the photographers and was only 2 feet away from Michelle and the lucky young boy during the entire duration of the helmet for kid ceremony proper. I would say lady luck was on my side every single moment of the event.



Program started with the singing of Philippine National Anthem



Young boy smiling back at me.

If you have noticed some of the photos, the young boy was all frowning as the venue was very humid. I take pride that I was just right in front of him and Michelle where I was encouraging the young boy to smile and was telling him in tagalog, "Smile ka! Headline ka sa dyaryo bukas at asa world wide web pa."(Smile, you'll be on the headlines tomorrow and on the World Wide Web.) So then the boy would wear a smile and when I found him frowning again I would deliver the

same line as above to encourage him to smile. When Michelle noticed that I was talking to the boy, Michelle said to me "He's so hot." and do you know what was my reaction when Michelle was talking to me?? I just gave her a smile. I was utterly speechless and stunned, I was like "Michelle Yeoh talked to me????!!! waaaaahh!!!"

So whenever I see the photos of the boy with Michelle in the net and newspapers, I take pride and I know the boy will remember me as the one who cheered him up. He might remember me as an angel who made him look charming in those photos. How I wish I was that young boy. hahaha!

During her speech she thanked the sponsors AAP, FIA and ADB where she jokingly said that it's like doing a rap song "Thanks to the AAP to the FIA to the ADB.." where the crowd laughed on how she delivered gracefully doing some dance rap moves. She highlighted the need to raise the awareness of using helmets for kids. Please refer to the link [Michelle Yeoh giving a speech at the Helmet for Kids Ceremony](#) for the video.



Kids who got their helmets signed first after the speech

She asked for the lucky kid who will get to have autographed first. Two kids were presented to her to have their helmets signed. After which, she went off to the group of kids seated outside the cordoned area where the media got all crazy again. Media were asking questions here and there. Michelle calmly responded to them to finish the fashion show first (the next part of the program) before she will answer any of their questions. This however, did not stop the media from grabbing the opportunity of asking her questions. I believe everyone's curious where I was during this crazy moment? I was standing right beside Michelle and taking photos. I couldn't say a thing, I just found myself taking photos of Michelle.

When Michelle got seated, the fashion show started. Each kid was carrying a letter to form HELMENT VACCINE. Michelle enjoyed the fashion show. Kids were so smart carrying themselves with helmets on and dancing to the beat of Macarena music. Again, where was I? Endlessly taking photos of Michelle in one corner.



Media ganged up at Michelle and started asking questions.



I am the one in red busy capturing moments of Michelle.

The ceremony ended past the hour of 4 in the afternoon. Everyone ganged up again to have their photos taken with Michelle. Of course, everybody was waiting for their helmet to get signed as promised. The organizers took the kids out at the lobby to have a group photo taken. Media all stood back as their photos seated and waving to the camera were taken at the lobby of Department of Education.

After photos were taken Michelle stood up and started signing helmets of all the kids. One at a time she patiently signed around 260 kids' helmets from Urambo Elementary School in Pasig City, Philippines. As she swiftly moved from one kid to the other, she would spend quick conversation with the kids. Saying hello to them touching their faces. One could actually see her concern for the kids. I was deeply moved how she took her time signing the helmets. The people around were actually waving some small pieces of boards to fan as Michelle was soaking wet in sweat. I was supposed to hand her a facial tower but her PA and the organizer would hand her facial tissue to lessen the sweat on her face. There I was, stunned still on how close I was to the Star I have been looking up to for years.

When she was down to 5 children to be signed, Michelle started counting down. Five, four, three, two, ONE.WEW! And she headed straight to the ladies room to change clothes. While waiting for her to come back, Rowena and I were discussing how to approach her so we can take pictures with her. What I did was walked straight to the ladies' room and found Michelle on her way out. I then approached her "Michelle, can we take pictures?" and she graciously said "Sure!" I stood right beside Michelle and unconsciously while striking a pose I found my arm comfortably half embracing her from behind her back. And she was so petite but her built is so firm. Rowena's turn was next. After taking our photos, a group of staff from Department of Education ganged up on her to have their group picture taken with her.

After gracing the crowd of their photo requests, she returned back to the hall where the organizers and an interview for the AAP(I am not sure of this but an interview took place) was waiting for her. On her way back to the hall, she would smile and say hello to the kids. In my mind, I wish the kids know who this woman is and they could say to themselves how lucky they were to have a close encounter with such a woman and actress named Michelle Yeoh.



Michelle down to the last five helmets to sign.

Rowena and I never left the venue as we were trying to figure out how to ask for an autograph. When we finally had a chance, Rowena and I grabbed a piece of paper excited to get our stuff signed. But instead of a paper, Rowena got her Employee's ID signed by Michelle and in between, a number of people asked to her autograph as well. But what about me?? After the crowd left and got their stuff signed I instantly grabbed my back pack and placed this in front of Michelle. The organizer attempted to grab my back pack and told me "NO!" But Michelle insisted and said "No, This is the last one!" I was deeply moved by Michelle's accommodation. I did not expect that from her. So while she was signing I was teary-eyed and overwhelmed. I don't remember if I have said thank you to her. No words would come out of my mouth.

After signing my backpack, she went off to do her interview. There we were patiently waiting for her to finish and we were taking photos again.



Michelle showing me the article "Yeoh Arriving"

Time to go to the next venue which is in UP Diliman, Quezon City. Michelle and the AAP staff made their way out of the venue hall of the Department of Education and waited for their ride. She was asked to ride the coaster bus for their next destination. When she was settled in the coaster and still waiting for some staff, I have noticed that there was no curtain provided to shield her from the crowd. So I

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took the opportunity of going to the side of the coaster where she was seated and found Michelle reading an article from inquirer that reads YEOH ARRIVING. I knocked on the glass of the coaster to get her attention and she smiled at me and showed me what she was reading. Again, I was deeply moved by such simple accommodation made by Michelle. After taking her photos, I then said Bye Bye and waved my hand to her.

The team took off for UP Diliman. Rowena and I had a hard time deciding whether to follow her in UP Diliman. But after 10-15 minutes of considering things, we both decided to take a cab and follow her. We were so glad the traffic wasn't so bad that day. It only took us 15-20 minutes to get to UP Diliman where in normal rush hour days it will take like an hour of traffic to get there.

The ceremony in UP Diliman took place at the very heart of the campus - Obalation area. This is the main facade of the campus where the huge welcome banner for Michelle was posted. When we got there, the program already started. The cab driver asked us why is there such crowd gathering. We told him the star of Bond Movie and Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon is there. He then parked the cab on one side and rolled down the window and asked us which one is Michelle Yeoh. We told him "Yung naka puti na magandang Chinese" (The one in white, the beautiful chinese lady) . Tell you, the cab driver forgot to asked for our fare. All he could say was "Maganda nga!" (She is indeed beautiful!) When we couldn't get his attention back, Rowena and I jumped off the cab and started taking photos again. Luckily, classes are still off during her visit or we would be stuck at the far end of the crowd if the event took place during regular class days.



Michelle at the unveiling ceremony in UP Diliman

Michelle thanked the sponsors again and she said she is sorry as this is her first time here in the Philippines but she said this is definitely not going to be the last. (We will be waiting for the next one, Michelle.) The program was brief but for Rowena and I, it was a lifetime already. Well I guess you know how and why we feel that way right??

Their next destination is at the NCTP building to show her the video in conjunction to road safety program. Michelle was requested to ride the UP Ikot E-jeepney. Of course, I didn't miss the chance to take photos of her.



Michelle graciously accommodated the request to take her sunglasses off.

She graciously accommodated the crowd requesting to have photos taken with her. A guy came up to her and took a photo with her. I was two feet away from Michelle so I heard him saying to Michelle, "So you are running a motorbike?" Michelle was busy wearing her seatbelt then. After wearing her seatbelt she responded to the guy smiling "No, I am running with my two feet." I was like wohhooo! that's my Michelle Yeoh! I couldn't help but smile to myself.

Someone from the crowd requested to take her shades off and she did. So then again we took photos again. By the way, not to mention I saw in her eyes how surprised she was when she saw me taking photos of her again in UP Diliman. She

must have an idea I am a fan because I wasn't wearing any badge to say I am from the media.

The group took off. Rowena and I didn't join them anymore. We were dead tired already and have burned out all our energy from the day's running here and there. As Jane mentioned to me "...so run..." where we **LITERALLY RAN** the whole day.

While on their way to the NCTP Building, the e-jeep was like running in 5km/hr. Since it was an open ride, commuters, private and public vehicles passing through UP Diliman went on the same speed of the e-jeep to catch a glimpse of Michelle and eventually caused a light traffic jam which I am not surprised.

Our day ended at around 6 pm. Tired and soaking wet with sweat and it was like we won the lottery. 3 hours of close encounter with Michelle Yeoh to fill in the 7 years of waiting. We were so lucky that such chance and opportunity was given to us.

I will never ever forget my once wished of ONE DAY SOMEDAY happened on the 26th of May 2010. The day that I have reached and touched a STAR. I waited SEVEN years for this to happen. I am still mesmerized by the sight, touch and smile of a STAR. I am still in a daze for what had transpired yesterday and will remain in a daze for a lifetime. We **SHALL** meet again Michelle for another **ONE DAY SOMEDAY** episode.