

**THE PEOPLE OF THE PHILIPPINES, PLAINTIFF-APPELLEE, VS.
MONICO REYES, DEFENDANT-APPELLANT.***G.R. No. 21445. May 30, 1967*

Ponente: CONCEPCION, C.J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-21445/>**CONCEPCION, C.J.:**

Appeal by Monico Reyes from a decision of the Court of First Instance of Pampanga convicting him of the crime of illegal detention with murder and sentencing him to life imprisonment, as well as to indemnify the heirs of the deceased, Lucila Castro, in the sum of P6,000.00, and to pay the costs.

The evidence for the prosecution is to the effect that in the evening of December 31, 1953 to January 1, 1954, at about midnight, while Lucila Castro was walking along the street, in the barrio of Fortuna, municipality of Floridablanca, Pampanga, on her way home from the tailoring shop in which she worked as a seamstress, Monico Reyes, who had been courting her before, approached her, grabbed her by the waist and dragged her into his house not far away; that although Lucila grappled with Monico, begged to be released and cried for help, several persons nearby could not come to her assistance, because Monico, brandishing a "weapon," warned them not to do so; that upon being informed about this occurrence, her father and her brother, Domingo and Juan Castro, ran towards Monico's house, the door of which they found closed; that, thereupon, Domingo shouted: "Monico -- do not make any move -- we'll talk about this matter;" that Monico answered: "do not come up, your daughter will die;" that, meanwhile, Juan had peeped through a hole in the "sawale" partition, and saw Monico holding Lucila firmly by the waist, with the left hand, and, with the right hand, a knife, with which he stabbed Lucila; that unable to enter through the door, Domingo and Juan forced their way into the house through a window; that in the compartment where Monico and Lucila were, father and son noticed that Lucila was lying on the floor face upward; that as Domingo proceeded to approach her, he was immediately met by Monico, knife in hand; that realizing the danger to his father, Juan lunged at Monico, and struggled with him for the possession of the weapon; that, with the assistance of Domingo who pulled Monico by a leg, Juan succeeded in wresting the knife; that Juan then stabbed Monico several times, until the blade, detached from the handle, was left embedded in Monico's body; that Juan, in turn, had knocked down a table and clubbed Monico with one of its legs, until he was no longer moving; that father and son then picked up Lucila, who was groaning, with a stab wound on the left side of the chest, below the middle third of the left clavicle; that, forthwith, they brought her to a local physician, who said she was dying; that, as they tried to bring Lucila to the hospital, she died on the way; and that her death was due to heart failure incidental to internal hemorrhage.

The theory of the defense is that Monico and Lucila had been sweethearts for about a year before the date of the occurrence; that since November 1953, they had agreed to elope in the evening of December 31, 1953; that at about 11 o'clock that evening she woke him up in his house; that he then dressed up for the purpose of reporting their elopement to the authorities; that Domingo and Juan then arrived and forced their way into the house; that Lucila tried to prevent her father from harming Monico, and stated that she had gone to him of her own volition; that, this notwithstanding, Juan tried to stab Monico, but, instead, wounded Lucila, by accident; that, thereupon,

father and son ganged up on him, and did not leave him until they thought he was dead.

The lower court accepted the version of the prosecution and gave no credence to the evidence for the defense and, we think, correctly. Indeed, the theory for the prosecution is borne out by the testimony of Juanita Morales, a co-worker of Lucila, who was with her when Monico dragged her from the street into his house, and the testimony of Carolina Morales, Felipe Tolentino and Roman Galvez, whose houses were in the vicinity of the scene of the occurrence. They testified positively that Monico had used force and violence in order to bring Lucila into his house, that she resisted him and cried for help, and that she kept on screaming when she was already inside said house. We have no reason to doubt the veracity of these four (4) witnesses, who had no possible motive to falsely incriminate appellant herein.

Upon the other hand, there is no satisfactory evidence that Lucila reciprocated his love. Not a single letter of Lucila to him has been produced by the defense. Moreover, there was absolutely no reason why they should elope, for nobody appears to have opposed their union, if they wanted it. Besides, Lucila was of age, she being 22 years old. Again, had they agreed to elope in the evening of the occurrence, Monico would not have gone to bed at the appointed hour, much less in his underwear (camiseta), to wait for his future bride. Similarly, if Lucila voluntarily went to his house, in pursuance of their alleged agreement, why should he report their "elopement" to the authorities? Lastly, as stated in the decision appealed from:

"We cannot accept the theory that Lucila was accidentally wounded as advanced by the accused. It must be observed that when Domingo and his son were in the premises, they surrounded him and their one and common thought was to extricate Lucila from Monico. In this light, we cannot sustain the view that any of them would risk a frontal attack that would endanger in any way Lucila. In strength, they were decidedly superior and it is unreasonable to believe that they had to avail themselves of the use of a weapon to achieve their purpose. We are firmly convinced that the author of the tragic death of Lucila Castro was no other than Monico Reyes. x x x."

Considering that appellant had deprived Lucila of her liberty and detained her for sometime before stabbing her, the crime committed is that of serious illegal detention, provided for in Article 267, in relation to paragraph (3), of the Revised Penal Code, which prescribes the penalty of life imprisonment to death. In *People vs. Guzman* (58 Off. Gaz. 664, 667), we held that "an attack made by a man with a deadly weapon upon an unarmed defenseless woman constitutes the circumstance of abuse of that superiority which his sex and the weapon used in the act afforded him, and from which the woman was unable to defend herself. (*U.S. vs. Camilo*, 36 Phil. 757; *U.S. vs. Consuelo*, 13 Phil. 612; *People vs. Quesada*, 62 Phil. 446)." In view of this aggravating circumstance, the aforementioned penalty should be imposed in its maximum period or death. For lack, however, of the number of votes necessary therefor, the penalty next lower in degree, or life imprisonment, meted out by the lower court, is the proper penalty.

WHEREFORE, the decision appealed from should be, as it is hereby affirmed, with costs against appellant Monico Reyes.

SO ORDERED.

Reyes, J.B.L., Dizon, Regala, Makalintal, Bengzon, J.P., Zaldivar, Sanchez, and Castro, JJ., concur.

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.