

HANDOUT

EXTENSIVE TRANSLATION



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A. CULTURE AND TRANSLATION

A long time ago, in 1990 to be precise, Andre Lefevere and I were writing an introductory chapter to a collection of essays entitled *Translation, History and Culture* (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990). We wanted to draw attention to changes that we believed were increasingly underpinning research in translation studies, changes that signalled a shift from a more formalist approach to translation to one that laid greater emphasis on extra-textual factors. The study of translation practice, we argued, had moved on and the focus of attention needed to be on broader issues of context, history and convention not just on debating the meaning of faithfulness in translation or what the term 'equivalence' might mean.

The kind of questions being asked about translation were changing:

Once upon a time the questions that were always being asked were 'How can translation be taught' and 'How can translation be studied?' Those who regarded themselves as translators were often contemptuous of any attempts to teach translation, while those who claimed to teach often did not translate and so had to resort to the old evaluative method of setting one translation alongside another and examining both in a formalist vacuum. Now, the questions have been changed. The object of study has been redefined; what is studied is text embedded within its network of both source and target cultural signs. (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990: 11-12)

When we wrote that, we were mindful of a split between linguistic approaches to translation and literary ones, and we sought to challenge both as too narrow and prescriptive. Translation studies had been developing as a distinct discipline through the 1980s, employing methodologies that drew upon research in linguistics and comparative literature and we felt, along with many other people working in the field of translation, that the time had come for increased employment of the tools of cultural history and cultural studies. Looking back, our introduction appears both naive and simplistic, for translation studies developed so rapidly in the 1990s and now occupies such a solid place in the academy that there is no longer any need for special pleading. The arguments we sought to present — that translation plays a major role in shaping literary systems, that translation does not take place on a horizontal axis, that the translator is involved in complex power negotiations (mediating between cultures, as it were), that translation is always a rewriting of an original — have been taken much further by scholars such as Michael Cronin (1996; 2000), Edwin Gentzler (1993/2001), Lorna Hardwick (2000), Theo Hermans (1999b, 2006), Tejaswini Niranjana (1992), Douglas Robinson (2002), Sherry Simon (1996), Harish Trivedi (1993), Elsa Vieira (1999), Lawrence Venuti (1995; 1998b) and many others. Translation studies has become an accepted academic subject and books, journals and doctoral dissertations appear faster than one can read them all, and at the heart of most of the exciting new research are broad questions about ideology, ethics and culture.

The travel writer and the translator are major elements in shaping the perspective one culture has of another, and it is interesting that so little research should have been undertaken to date on the relationship between travel and translation. That it has started and should be flourishing is an indication of how the cultural turn in translation has opened up greater possibilities. We are likely to see anthropology paying more attention to the problematics of translation, even as we see more ethnographic and anthropological methods being employed in the study of translation. Cronin's (2003) research has moved to considerations of translation and globalisation, and others are following. There are still occasional dissenting voices who argue that translation, surely, is primarily about language, not culture, and that the proper business of translation studies is to focus on the linguistic aspects of the translation process. In response to such voices, I would answer that of course translation scholars must

focus on language, for translation is, after all, about transferring a text from one language to another. But separating language from culture is like the old debate about which came first – the chicken or the egg. Language is embedded in culture, linguistic acts take place in a context and texts are created in a continuum not in a vacuum. A writer is a product of a particular time and a particular context, just as a translator is a product of another time and another context. Translation is about language, but translation is also about culture, for the two are inseparable. As Tymoczko and Gentzler (2002) point out in their introduction to a collection of essays on translation and power relations, translation is implicit in processes of cultural transformation and change. The cultural turn in translation studies reflects the cultural turn in other disciplines, which is an inevitable result of the need for greater intercultural awareness in the world today. It is greatly to be welcomed, for it offers the best chance we have to understand more about the complexities of textual transfer, about what happens to texts as they move into new contexts and the rapidly changing patterns of cultural interaction in the world we inhabit. (SUSAN BASSNETT)

B. PHILOSOPHY AND TRANSLATION

The various disciplines in the humanities are related by chains of authority. Sociolinguistics, for example, historically refers to linguistics and to sociology for the authority of its founding concepts, just as linguistics in turn might refer to philology, or sociology might look back to history, to psychology or to political economics. These chains allow concepts to be borrowed and thus constantly displaced. They also allow authority to be projected back onto the discipline referred to, such that authority itself is also constantly displaced across our disciplines. This frame enables us to idealise Western philosophy as a set of discourses that do *not* ostensibly borrow authority from external disciplines. It is, if you will, a place where terms and concepts would be elaborated and refined for use in other disciplines; it might supremely act in the service of others. Of course, philosophical discourses more realistically form a place where the authority circulates internally, as philosophers read and re-read philosophers, schools and traditions are formed, at the same time as a mode of authority can flow inward from whatever discipline appears to be advancing the frontiers of knowledge. Our general frame also enables us to hypothesise that translation studies as a client discipline is drawing on philosophical discourses, and indeed on many other intermediary disciplines as well.

The discourses of philosophy might thus be related to translation studies in at least three ways:

- (1) Philosophers of various kinds have used translation as a case study or metaphor for issues of more general application.
- (2) Translation theorists and practitioners have referred to philosophical discourses for support and authority for their ideas.
- (3) Philosophers, scholars and translators have commented on the translation of philosophical discourses.

Since authority would seem to flow more from philosophy to translation studies than the other way around, the political relations are very different in each of the above cases. Here we shall thus consider their evolutions independently, even though, in history, they operate side by side within the general epistemologies of the humanities.

At the same time, one might similarly follow Bourdieu in accepting that the human sciences are not simply of 'the general'; they are based on social relations in which both theorists and practitioners participate, often within the same person. There would thus be

considerable individuality involved, with philosophical authority ultimately giving way to sociological reflection on our own positions and interests. Translation theorists, as mediators between philosophical discourses and translational practices, are actively involved in a constant dialogue, in which we must learn from both sides. Seen in this light, the problem of translation studies is probably not that it has to read more philosophy, but that it should pay more dialectic attention to what translators do and say. A guideline for this might run as follows:

Translating can be seen as a problem-solving activity in which a source element may be rendered by one or more elements in the target language. If translators have only one available option, there is no more to be said; no philosophy is needed. When, however, they have two or three options, translation is worth talking about, ideally between translators, who thus start theorising. And when, as occasionally occurs, there are numerous options available and no clear theory about how to reduce that complexity, the cause for discussion reaches levels where philosophical discourse may be turned to, for ideas about the options, although rarely for the translational solutions. This can be seen in most of the theories and approaches we have dealt with here: philosophical discourses tend to be appealed to, or intervene, with respect to problems where more than three or four alternatives are available. To develop words appropriate to those alternatives might be the role of philosophy such as we have seen it; to adapt and propose them might be one of the roles of Translation Studies. What the philosophical discourses thereby miss, of course, are the logics of the more everyday activities, the many techniques by which translators themselves constantly reduce complexity. Those are the operational fictions that we need to grasp. And to do so, we should perhaps learn to think more bottom-up, from the actual practices, rather than top-down, from the great conceptual systems, if ever the ends are to meet. (ANTHONY PYM)

C. LINGUISTICS AND TRANSLATION

Throughout the ages, translation as well as linguistics, the formal study of language, have attracted comments and speculation. The need for practising translators is acknowledged as early as the Old Testament where, in the Book of Daniel 1:4, reference is made to the need for mastery of 'the tongue of the Chaldeans' for use in 'the king's palace'. And since time immemorial the nature and origin of human language has invited speculation. As late as the 17th century one view held that the primitive language of mankind was Chinese, which was spoken by Noah and his family in the Ark and survived the flood (Aitchison, 1996:4). It was not until the latter half of the 18th century before linguistics, then known as philology, started to emerge as a discipline in its own right; for translation studies to become an independent academic subject with established interdisciplinary links to other fields of study including linguistics was to take close to the dawn of a new millennium. In 1786, the first step was taken, nudging the study of language closer towards becoming a discipline in its own right. In a paper presented to the Royal Asiatic Society in Calcutta, Sir William Jones (1746-1794) of the East India Company declared that no philologist could examine the Sanskrit, Greek and Latin languages without believing them to have sprung from some common, Indo-European source which perhaps no longer existed (Jones, 1970). Comparative and historical linguistics now became the focus of the attention of philologists, and, by the possession of distinctive, shared characteristics, languages were successively grouped together genealogically into families. While the similarity of cognates such as 'hand' in English, *Hand* in German and *hand* in Dutch, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish points to a

related Germanic group of languages, French *main*, Spanish *mano* and Italian *mano* constitute some of the languages belonging to the Romance language family while *ryka*, *reka* and *ruka* in Russian, Polish and Czech respectively suggest membership of the Slavonic group of languages. The implications for translation arising from the groundbreaking work of philologists of the 19th century in grouping together into families the Indo-European languages as we know them today were aptly illustrated a century later by the observation made by translation theorists Vinay and Darbelnet that 'literal translation is a unique solution j] It is most commonly found in translations between closely related languages (e.g. French /Italian)' (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995: 34).

In a review of Chomsky's (2000) *New Horizons in the Study of Language and Mind*, the lack of advancement in the search for the innate set of the rules of Universal Grammar (UG) was ascribed to the fact that 'the sheer complexity of the different rule systems for the different languages was hard to square with the idea that they are really all variations on a single underlying set of rules of UG' (Searle, 2002). In their search for universals, translation theorists of the 21st century have now begun to tread where linguists trod before. On the basis of contrastive analyses of translations and their source texts, a number of features considered common to all languages now clamour for the status of universals. With a linguistic feature such as 'distinctive distribution of lexical items' amongst potential candidates (Sara Laviosa-Braithwaite, 1998: 288), translation theorists would seem to have their work cut out for the foreseeable future. In their search for universals, the task facing early typologists of tackling the problem posed by the complexity of polysynthetic languages was made less unmanageable by their familiarity with Native American languages. The challenge facing contemporary translation theorists by Inuit, another such language where *sikursuarsirpugut* translates into English as 'we-sailthrough-the-big-ice' can only be described as formidable.

As the American linguist Dwight Bolinger observes:

Translation may be viewed amorphously as the rendition of a text from one language to another. This is translation from the standpoint of *la parole*: the text, the act of speech or writing is the thing. Or it may be viewed as a systematic comparison of two languages: this is translation from the standpoint of *la langue*. (Bolinger, 1965/66: 130)

Given this inherent interrelationship between translation and linguistics, linguistics seems set to continue to provide translation theorists with new research avenues to explore for further advancement of translation studies while, in the contrastive study of languages, translation will also have a role to play in helping linguists in their search for shared features and similarities between languages. (GUNILLA ANDERMAN)

D. HISTORY AND TRANSLATION

Translation history is sometimes presented solely as the history of translation theory, but this leaves large areas of territory unexplored and unaccounted for. Ideally it combines the history of translation theory with the study of literary and social trends in which translation has played a direct or catalytic part. It is the story of interchange between languages and between cultures and as such has implications for the study of both language and culture. It pays attention to the observations made by those who were involved in translation processes and by people whose brief it was to comment on the finished product or the context of the translation activity. Closely allied to literary history, translation history can describe changes in literary trends, account for the regeneration of a culture, trace changes in

politics or ideology and explain the expansion and transfer of thought and knowledge in a particular era. It may also be used as a tool to open up the study of similar texts across cultures, or of the same text through time. It is surprisingly relevant to many areas of literary study, and absolutely central to some. It goes without saying that each culture will have its own particular translation history according to the historical and political events that have shaped it. What we should be discussing here perhaps are translation histories, since the term in the singular suggests that there is a fixed sequence of events from which we can draw universally applicable conclusions, and this is not the case. There are of course periods in history featuring translation that are common to many cultures. The expansion of the Roman empire, for example, the Ottoman empire, the invention of printing or the Reformation all had impact on most areas of Europe and its translation activities. Other continents will have experienced other invasions, other advances in technologies, other religions. Events like these are always good points of departure for research, but their effect on an individual culture varies according to the local context. The problem is to find a way through the maze of historical material and emerge triumphant with specific information relating to case studies in translation. Before attempting to navigate the way, it might be a good idea to ask what exactly is the purpose in studying translation history.

To take another example, if the project were to see how the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda came to be translated into English, one might begin with the English translations of his work, reading the prefaces, looking for other work by the same translator. With luck one might discover that the translators of *Las Alturas de Macchu Picchu* have written a book about the translation process (Felstiner, 1981), and that the translator of *Fulgur y Muerte de Joachim Murieta* (Bellit, 1978) has published a collection of his own translation prefaces. Quite often there are university research centres, for Latin American studies, or Caribbean studies, or Medieval studies covering particular areas, whose publications, either in book form, as papers published in journals, on the Web or as the proceedings of conferences may be useful. Specific articles in related journals can be useful for narrowing down the search area or complementing what has already been established. Finally, one needs to remember that, in order to research in translation history successfully, one needs to dip into a number of related disciplines and study parallel situations in other contexts. History, modern languages, linguistics, theology, education, philosophy or classics are areas that need to be explored from a comparative perspective. This may be a daunting task, but it is also an excellent opportunity for collaborative projects, which should positively distinguish translation studies from other disciplines in the humanities. (LYNNE LONG)

E. LITERARY TRANSLATION

What, if anything, is distinctive about literary translation? Few would doubt their intuitive sense that there is a difference between Ted Hughes' rendering of a play by Aeschylus and the English-language label on the packet of white powder in a Greek supermarket identifying the stuff in it, for the tourist's sake and good health, as sugar, salt, detergent or rat poison.

But how are they different? Interestingly, Emma Wagner, a translation manager with the European Commission who mentions the Ted Hughes versus rat poison example in a discussion with a translation theorist, refers to the two kinds of translation as the top and

bottom ends of the range, respectively (Chesterman & Wagner, 2002: 5). Not only is there felt to be a difference between literary and other forms of translation, but value enters the picture as well. The standard view is that literary translation represents a distinctive kind of translating because it is concerned with a distinctive kind of text. The theory of text types, which seeks to classify texts according to their functions and features, duly places literary texts in a class of their own. The fact however that text typologies do not agree on what to contrast literary texts with — technical, pragmatic, ordinary? — suggests that what distinguishes literary from other texts may not be entirely obvious. And if there is no agreement on what makes literature distinctive, it may be equally hard to decide on what grounds literary translation should be awarded its own niche. In her *Translation Criticism*, first published in German in 1971 and now also in English, Katharina Reif reviews various attempts to distinguish different kinds of translation. A.V. Fedorov, Otto Kade, J.B. Casagrande and Georges Mounin, among others, all include literary translation as a separate kind, but their criteria for doing so remain unclear or seem haphazard (Reig, 2000: 7-23).

In recent years a number of general reference works on translation have appeared. Can they shed light on what makes literary translation special? The *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997) has entries for 'literal translation', 'free translation' and the like but not 'literary translation'. Its entry on 'aesthetic—poetic translation' turns out, with linguistic, ethnographic and pragmatic translation, to form part of J.B. Casagrande's fourfold and somewhat random list of translation types. The more encyclopedic reference works give out equally mixed signals.

Writing on 'Literary translation: Research issues' in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Baker, 1998), Josè Lambert considers the definition of 'literary' and the collocation 'literary translation' but does not reach conclusions. Its companion piece 'Literary translation: Practices' by Peter Bush side-steps the issue by declaring: 'Literary translation is the work of literary translators' and stressing the skill and worth of the latter. The German *Handbuch Translation* distinguishes only very broad text types: informative, appellative and expressive, the typology devised by Karl Bahler in the 1930s (Bühler, 1934). Under 'primarily expressive' texts, narrative, drama and poetry make an appearance along with film, comic strips and the Bible, but 'literary translation' as such is not featured (Snell- Hornby *et al.*, 1998).

If the translation of such ideologically committed texts pushes the translator's own allegiance to the fore, so does their analysis. The metalanguage of translation cannot shake itself free of translation. As a result, ethical considerations have come to be applied both to translating and to its academic study. One illustration of this is provided by the work of Antoine Berman and Lawrence Venuti. Berman sought to counter what he termed the ethnocentric deformation of 'naturalising' translation by a dogged attachment to the letter, to the detriment of the restitution of surface meaning. Such refractory translating, he argued, refashioned the receptor language and made it more receptive to 'the Foreign as Foreign', an ethically desirable goal (Berman in Venuti, 2000: 285-6). Lawrence Venuti is currently the main advocate of this approach in English. While he concedes that all understanding is necessarily positioned and therefore 'domesticating', he remains keen to practise 'minoritising' forms of translation, forms that privilege substandard, marginalised, unorthodox, volatile and sedimented registers, everything, in short, that makes language teeming and heterogeneous. Venuti regards such translating as politically beneficial as well as ethically responsible, despite some paradoxes. It assists global English in appropriating the world's cultural goods even as it works to diversify its expressive stock. It commends a wayward mode of translation in polished academic newspeak. It exhorts economically vulnerable translators

from within secure university walls. It is a very literary, almost quixotic undertaking. Even so, it raises fundamental concerns not just about translation but also about discourses about translation. The interventionist strategies of gender and postcolonial approaches oblige those studying translation to reflect on their own positions, presuppositions, agendas and methodologies. That does not mean the different schools of thought in translation studies are moving closer together. No doubt the interventionist tendencies could learn from critical linguistics how to pinpoint value and ideology in texts with greater accuracy. The descriptivist search for renewal matches the self-reflexive moment in both critical linguistics and the interventionist camp. But the global context of current academic research, like that of contemporary literature, fosters diversity as well as uniformity. For the moment at least, both literary translation and translation studies appear to possess enough pockets of fractious heterogeneity to resist what Derrida, in a different context, called the hegemony of the homogeneous. It is a comforting prospect. (THEO HERMANS)

F. GENDER AND TRANSLATION

Transcultural and translingual developments in the women's movement and its various offshoots since the 1970s have implicated translation in every aspect of text production and reception, and have enormously expanded the thinking about and research on translation and gender. Diverse research initiatives have investigated the role played by translation in transmitting new socio-political ideas focused on gender and their literary expression across cultural boundaries; the roles played by women translators in the present and the past, their reception and influence have been studied; the importance of and the dangers involved in translating women's writing in an era of universalist notions about women, and the challenges involved in facing and recognising great differences between women have been discussed at length. Women's representation in language, through language, and across languages, and women's participation in this work of representation have underlain the entire period since the early 1970s. More recently, ideas about gender instability have added new dimensions to the discussions, and undermined the categories 'man' and 'woman' on which earlier debates were founded. Queer as well as gay and lesbian studies, concerned with other gender identities and in particular with individual choice in these matters, have taken debates into other, though not necessarily new, areas. In the Anglo-American realm especially, the focus on gender over the last part of the 20th century has powerfully affected translation, and been powerfully reflected by translation. In this chapter I will re-trace the first gender paradigm, the paradigm that was shaped by the women's movement, feminist thinking, and feminist activism, and that strongly affected translation and translation studies. After briefly reviewing a number of early publications, I will explore the work that has been done in the field since those first articles and books' appeared. In the second part of the chapter, my focus will be on the destabilisation of the term gender, on what I have called the second paradigm (von Flotow, 1999), which took hold in the early 1990s and is beginning to be reflected in translation studies, criticism and theory. Both paradigms reflect the interest in identity that became so important in post-1960s North America, and which, in Canada, was exacerbated by the French/English and American/Canadian divides. While these issues seem to have garnered enormous interest and exposure in the Anglo-American realm, they are widespread — European, Latin American, and increasingly, Arabic and Asian cultures are also taking an interest.

It is interesting to note the close parallels between the translation challenges that the two gender paradigms have triggered and the strong similarities between the strategies and solutions they call for. In terms of the activist positions taken by translators and by many researchers on gender in the past decades, both paradigms are based on identity-formation and group affiliations, and it is up to the translator to accept or refuse this identification.

Moreover, both are constructivist (Nussbaum, 1999), viewing sexual identity as either being unwittingly constructed from childhood or deliberately constructed and acted out as an adult. Both paradigms are reflected in language and can be evoked, displayed, activated, enacted, suppressed or erased both in source texts, and in translated texts when this language is carried over into other cultures and contexts. In this transfer, political or ideological reasons play an important role. Under both paradigms, the producers – translators, publishers, editors – can choose to take assertive activist positions, rendering gender aspects and their own interventions deliberately visible, choosing to translate only those authors/texts that suit their politics,' or deliberately intervening to make a text fit their particular mindset. Similarly, translation research in historical areas, such as Limbeck's (1999) work on the translations of Plautus that erase all intimations of homosexuality and DeJean's (1989) work on the many French versions of Sappho, can exploit the theoretical and epistemological categories devised in these gender paradigms to do revisionist analyses, and propose new readings of classical and more recent writers, and other key texts. Though deemed to be different, or theorised as differently constructed, the two gender paradigms have so far provoked stimulating versions of similar types of work. Even the warnings about erasing differences, engaging in imperialist processes, or stabilising an identification that is inherently unstable or diffident apply to both, and can be heeded. (LUISE VON FLOTOW)

G. INDONESIAN SHORT STORIES TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

The followings are short stories which are written by Indonesian authors and translated into English by Indonesian translators. After being translated, the short stories are edited by an American editor. You are supposed to compare the two versions (short stories written in Indonesian and their English versions). In comparing them, you are suggested to focus on both their lexical and grammatical adjustments. Besides, the idiomatic expressions found in the English versions should be examined. Here are the short stories.

/1/

Indonesian version	English version
<p style="text-align: center;">Gusti, Doa Siapa Yang Akan Kaudengar?</p> <p>Mas Agung adalah kakak tertua kami. Sepeninggal Bapak, Mas Agung menjadi pengganti Bapak. Ibu senang bahwa kami, tujuh bersaudara, tetap rukun seperti halnya pada saat Bapak masih ada. Tentu hal itu</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lord, Whose Prayer Will You Listen To? by Junaedi Setiyono</p> <p>Mas Agung is our eldest brother. After our father passed away, Mas Agung stepped up to fill his role. Mother was glad to see that all of us, seven siblings, maintained the</p>

tidak lepas dari kepemimpinan Mas Agung. Maka ketika kakaknya Ibu, Budhe Mujirah, mendapat masalah, dan aku tidak sanggup membantu menyelesaikan masalahnya, tidak bisa tidak tumpuan kami ada pada Mas Agung.

Ya, aku pun menulis surat untuknya.

Purworejo, 10 Maret 2005

Mas Agung yang baik,
Bila tidak karena Budhe Mujirah, aku tidak akan menulis surat ini, Mas. Sebenarnya sudah sejak sepekan yang lalu beliau memintaku untuk mengirimimu surat, tapi baru kali ini aku bisa. Bukan karena sibuk tetapi karena aku harus menata hati terlebih dulu. Ya, ini tentang langgar kita.

Sejak Bapak wafat, aku memang tidak terlalu memperhatikan apa yang sudah dilakukan warga pada surau yang didirikan eyang buyut kita itu. Dan, kurangnya perhatian yang kuberikan adalah karena tampaknya keluarga kita semua setuju, bahkan merasa senang, dengan apa yang telah dilakukan warga terhadap langgar Eyang. Pernah kukatakan padamu kalau sikapku itu, selain karena Mas dan adik-adik semua sudah setuju, juga karena kesadaran betapa kita tidak bisa apa-apa. Selain itu, juga mungkin kita semua punya kekhawatiran bakalan dicap oleh warga kampung sebagai orang yang tidak setia pada agamanya.

Aku memang setuju-setuju saja pada rencana warga yang dipimpin oleh Pak Lurah, yang juga Pak Kiai kita, untuk memugar langgar yang sudah berdiri jauh sebelum negeri kita merdeka. Kita sendiri waktu itu terlalu miskin untuk memperbaiki langgar kita; untuk agak menutupi kemiskinan kita, biasanya kau menyamarkannya dengan bilang pada Pak Lurah kalau kita harus mendahulukan mana yang lebih penting. Paling-paling kita

same harmonious relationships we'd had during the time Father was still around. This, of course, could only happen under the guidance of Mas Agung. Therefore, when Mother's older sister, Budhe Mujirah, faced a problem I could not help her with, it was only natural that I turned to Mas Agung.

Hence, I wrote him a letter.

Purworejo, March 10, 2005.

Dearest Mas Agung,

If it were not for Budhe Mujirah, I wouldn't bother you. Actually, she asked me to write to you last week. I delayed, however—not because I was busy. I had to sort out my own feelings first, as this is about our *langgar*.

Since Father passed away, I haven't paid too much attention to what the villagers did to the prayer house that was built by our great-grandfather. This lack of concern came from the assumption that our family seemed to agree—was happy even—with the changes the villagers were making to Eyang's langgar. I once told you that I took such a stand because you and everyone else seemed to approve. I also realized there wasn't much we could do. Perhaps we were all afraid to be considered apostates of our religion if we objected to improvements made to a langgar that was built long before the independence of our country in 1945.

I had no qualms about the villagers' remodeling plans for the langgar, under the leadership of our *lurah*, who also is our *Pak Kiai*. Aside from the fact that we were sure that a person who is the village chief, as well as the elder of our congregation, would do the right thing, we were too poor to shoulder the expenses ourselves. In order to conceal our financial situation, you told the lurah we needed to prioritize the execution of repairs. At least we kept the roof from

menjaga supaya atapnya tidak bocor dan rayap – yang mampu menembus lantai tegel – tidak naik merambat dinding menghabisi usuk dan reng; setahun sekali kita kapur temboknya, dan sekitar sepuluh tahun sekali kita cat semua kayu-kayunya. Ya, seingatku cuma itu.

Dana keluarga kita memang sudah habis untuk biaya kuliah kita tujuh bersaudara. Ibu memang menghendaki kita semua menjadi orang terpelajar, menjadi sarjana. Kita anggap dana itu sudah habis, karena selain menyekolahkan kita, Ibu harus selalu memiliki uang simpanan untuk biaya perawatan kesehatan Ibu sendiri; apa lagi, sekarang Ibu makin mudah sakit.

Maka ketika Pak Kiai rawuh ke tempat kita dan minta izin untuk mengganti genteng kuno itu dengan genteng pres sokka, kita semua setuju dan berkali-kali mengucapkan terima kasih. Genteng kuno itu memang sebagian sudah kita ganti dengan genteng yang lebih baru. Namun, genteng yang lebih baru itu ukurannya tidak sama dengan genteng yang dulu dipasang oleh Eyang. Dengan bermacam-macam jenis genteng yang kita pasang untuk mengganti genteng lama yang sudah aus atau pecah tentu berakibat kurang baik. Kalau hujannya deras akan tempias, dan menyebabkan para jamaah sesekali mengusap wajahnya karena risi kena keyupuran air dari atap.

Kebanyakan dari kita memang tinggal dan bekerja di Jakarta. Saudara-saudara sekandung kita lainnya tidak ada satu pun yang tinggal bersama Ibu menjaga langgar kita di Purworejo, kota tempat kita semua dilahirkan. Ada yang melanjutkan belajar, ada yang bekerja setelah menyelesaikan kuliah. Karena kita bertujuh hidup berpencah di berbagai kota, kita pun sepakat patungan untuk membayar tetangga terdekat agar menemani Ibu. Dan, untung ada Budhe Mujirah yang tinggal tidak jauh dari Ibu.

Maka kita maklumi saja kalau akhirnya warga memperbaiki langgar tanpa

leaking and prevented the termites that managed to crawl out from under the floor tiles from destroying the walls. These are the only things I can remember.

The education of the seven of us had depleted our family funds. Mother always wanted to see us become well-educated people with university degrees. Aside from providing for our education, our family savings also funds care for Mother, as her health is beginning to decline.

So, when Pak Kiai visited and asked permission to replace the old roof tiles with new, factory-made tiles, we immediately agreed and thanked him over and over again. At some point, we did replace some of the original old roof tiles. However, the size of the new tiles was different from the timeworn, broken ones, and this, of course, created a problem. When it rained hard, water would seep through and drip on people's heads, making them wipe their faces uncomfortably.

As you know, most of us live and work in Jakarta now. None of us stayed in Purworejo, where we were all born, to live with Mother and take care of our langgar. Some of us left to study, while those who graduated from university found jobs elsewhere. As the seven of us are spread all over, we all agreed to jointly give money to a close neighbor to keep Mother company. And, fortunately, Budhe Mujirah does not live too far from Mother.

This is why we accepted it when the villagers renovated the langgar without consulting us. It was possible that they searched for us to no avail. And knowing Mother, she would only have said, "*Sumangga kula nderek*: I agree, please go ahead."

For that reason, I suggested that we bequeath the langgar to the community. In reality, it already belonged to the public and was not ours anymore. Everyone agreed,

sepengetahuan kita karena mungkin mereka telah berusaha mencari tapi tak berhasil menemui kita. Dan Ibu, kita sudah tahu persis sifatnya, pasti hanya akan mengatakan: *sumangga kula nderek*, silakan saja saya setuju.

Untuk itulah atas usulku ketika itu: bagaimana kalau langgar itu kita wakafkan saja. Karena pada kenyataannya langgar itu memang sudah menjadi milik warga, bukan lagi milik keluarga kita. Dan, kau dan adik-adik setuju. Kita berdua lalu mengurus surat-suratnya hingga terbit surat bukti kepemilikan tanah. Ya, urusan itu selesai dengan melegakan. Ini sungguh menenteramkan karena kita merasa sudah menyenangkan hati Ibu. Ingat ‘kan kalau Ibu sering membisiki mengingatkan kita, bahwa kita ini “jelek-jelek” masih termasuk *trah kesuma rembesing madu*? Suatu trah yang salah satu cirinya adalah memegang teguh *pituduh putra becik nyirami mring kulawarga*, anak yang baik menyiram kebaikan kepada keluarganya.

Sekitar lima tahun yang lalu, kita sepakati pulang menjelang hari raya Idul Fitri dan kembali ke tempat kerja setelah shalat Ied. Namun, setelah Bapak berpulang ke rahmatullah, pada Juni 2002 yang lalu, Ibu menasihati kita untuk tidak harus pulang bersama-sama menjelang Lebaran. Ibu katakan, “Kepulanganmu itu lebih banyak mudharatnya daripada manfaatnya.”

Aku diam-diam berterima kasih atas usul Ibu itu karena memang kupikir beliau benar. Tapi tentu saja kurang baik kalau hal itu yang mengusulkannya adalah kita, anak-anaknya. Maka kita sepakat untuk pulang menjenguk Ibu pada hari ulang tahun kita masing-masing dan merayakannya – istilah Ibu, mensyukurinya – bersama Ibu di rumah tua kita yang letaknya berdampingan dengan langgar, rumah di mana ari-ari kita ditanam di pekarangannya.

Nah, karena itulah sejak berpulangnya Bapak tiga tahun lalu kita jarang berkumpul

and you and I took care of the necessary documents needed to transfer ownership of the property. The procedure ended smoothly and was a huge relief to us, because we also felt that we had pleased Mother. I’m sure you remember Mother often reminds us in whispers that, no matter what, we’re still descendants of *trah kesuma rembesing madu*, a clan that carries the distinctive quality of adhering to the concept of *putra becik nyirami mring kulawarga*: good children will be a blessing to their family.

About five years ago, we all agreed to go home just before Eid al-Fitr and return to work after the Eid prayer. However, after Father passed away in June 2002, Mother advised that we not all come home on Eid al-Fitr together. “Your homecoming creates more trouble than it is worth,” she said.

I secretly thanked Mother for her suggestion. She was right—but it would not have been appropriate if any of us children had made the suggestion. We agreed to go home on our own birthday and celebrate it—Mother prefers the term “give thanks”—with her in our old house next to the langgar; the house where our umbilical cords were buried in its yard.

This is why, after Father’s passing three years ago, we rarely gather at Mother’s house. Our younger siblings said that since we can connect at any time via telephones and cell phones, it won’t be a problem if we can’t meet on Eid al-Fitr. “*Kumpul ora kumpul asal mangan*: whether we gather or not, the most important thing is we all are still able to eat,” you joked at the time.

As far as I know, today, only you, Mas, and I are still concerned about our langgar—once known as Langgar Trunan, because our great grandfather who built it was known as Eyang Truno. We have noticed changes when we say our prayers there once a year.

I’m sure you remember these changes and

<p>bersama-sama di rumah Ibu. Adik-adik bilang, kita ‘kan bisa berhubungan setiap saat pakai telepon atau HP. Jadi tak ada masalah kalau tidak dapat berkumpul setiap hari raya. “<i>Kumpul ora kumpul asal mangan</i>, kumpul tidak kumpul asal semuanya makan...,” begitu candamu ketika itu.</p> <p>Sekarang ini setahuku memang hanya aku dan kau Mas, yang masih memikirkan langgar kita yang dulu dikenal orang dengan nama “Langgar Trunan” – karena eyang buyut, yang mendirikan langgar itu, dikenal dengan nama Eyang Truno. Dan sejak beberapa tahun yang lalu dapat kita amati perubahan-perubahan pada saat kita setahun sekali shalat di dalamnya.</p> <p>Mas pasti ingat kejadian-kejadian dan percakapan kita. Perubahan pertama adalah digantinya genting lama dengan genting pres yang menjadikan langgar tampil mentereng. Perubahan berikutnya adalah lantai yang dikeramik. Ingatkah ketika kau berbisik, “Sebenarnya lantai tegel yang dibangun oleh Eyang Truno sesaat sebelum meninggalnya itu masih bagus dan bahkan makin lama makin tambah mengkilat.” Dan, tidak kutanggapi pernyataanmu karena memang keramik putih lebih menjamin kebersihan. Kotoran sekecil apapun, tahi cicak misalnya, akan kelihatan di atas hamparan lantai putih bersih.</p> <p>“Lalu lantai tegelnya dibuang ke mana?” kejarmu ketika itu.</p> <p>“Tidak dibuang, tapi keramik itu langsung dipasang di atasnya,” jelasku.</p> <p>Jawabanku rupanya belum memuaskan rasa ingin tahumu, dan kau berujar, “O, begitu. Dananya dari mana Dik? Kamu tahu?”</p> <p>“Iuran warga. Itu yang bilang Budhe Mujirah,” jawabku.</p> <p>Kita pun berpikir, memang lebih nyaman shalat ditempat yang putih bersih. Dan,</p>	<p>our conversations. The first was the replacement of the old roof tiles with the new factory-made ones, which gave our langgar a luxurious appearance. Next came the ceramic floor tiles. Do you remember whispering, “Actually, the cement tiles Eyang Truno had installed just before his passing were still fine and would look shinier as time passes.”</p> <p>I did not respond. The white ceramic floor tiles were better for hygiene purposes. The smallest dirt—the droppings of a cicak house lizard, for example—could be easily spotted on the surface of the white floor tiles.</p> <p>You continued, “Then, where were the old floor tiles discarded?”</p> <p>“They weren’t thrown away. Those ceramic tiles were put directly on top of them,” I explained.</p> <p>My answer did not satisfy you, and you pressed on, “Do you know where the funds came from?”</p> <p>“The villagers pooled their money. That’s what Budhe Mujirah said.”</p> <p>We finally agreed that it was more comfortable to pray in a shiny and clean place. Reportedly, after the installation of the ceramic floor tiles, more villagers came to the langgar for congregational prayers. For this, we could only be thankful, and we relaxed.</p> <p>Now I’d like to share what I saw when I returned to our hometown to celebrate my thirtieth birthday and visited Mother, who looks even frailer.</p> <p>As usual, I went to the langgar to do <i>shalat</i> and noticed that the nice-looking white floor tiles had been replaced with a calming green carpet.</p> <p>I asked Budhe Mujirah how the villagers managed to raise the funds to buy such a</p>
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<p>konon setelah dikeramik warga yang shalat jamaah di langgar ini tambah banyak. Ya, syukurlah kalau begitu. Dan, kita santai-santai saja.</p> <p>Nah, sekarang aku ingin membagi pengalamanku pada saat aku kembali datang di kota kelahiran kita tahun ini untuk merayakan ulang tahunku yang ke tiga puluh sekaligus menengok Ibu yang makin tampak renta dan sakit-sakitan.</p> <p>Ketika itu aku seperti biasa pergi ke langgar untuk shalat, dan aku mendapati bahwa warna putih keramik menyenangkan itu sekarang sudah berganti dengan warna hijau karpet yang menyejukkan.</p> <p>Waktu aku tanya bagaimana cara mendapatkan dana untuk membeli karpet sebagus itu, Budhe Mujirah menjelaskan dengan berapi-api seperti biasanya bahwa warga dengan suka cita menyumbangkan uangnya untuk membeli karpet itu. Bahkan warga mengusulkan untuk juga melengkapi langgar dengan alat pendingin.</p> <p>Namun, karena aku tahu siapa itu Budhe – satu-satunya orang di lingkungan sekitar langgar yang berani bilang tidak pada Pak Lurah – aku menanggapi dengan bercanda, “Termasuk Budhe? Budhe juga setuju?”</p> <p>Dan, seperti biasa beliau akan meninggikan suaranya, “Selain <i>aku</i> tentu saja semua setuju!” dengan tekanan pada kata <i>aku</i>. Ya, begitulah Budhe, entah sudah berapa kali kudengar lengkingan suara beliau pada saat membicarakan kebijakan Pak Lurah.</p> <p>Dan, seperti biasa beliau lalu bercerita dengan menggebu-gebu tentang banyaknya warga yang jadi pengangguran karena kena pehaka padahal mereka kebanyakan beristri lebih dari satu dan masing-masing istri beranak banyak. Juga tentang banyaknya perempuan muda, baik gadis maupun janda, yang jadi “nakal.”</p>	<p>beautiful carpet; she explained that the villagers gladly donated their money and even suggested installing an air conditioner.</p> <p>Knowing that Budhe was the only person who would dare to say no to the lurah, I responded jokingly, “Including you, Budhe? Were you also agreeing?”</p> <p>As usual, Budhe raised her voice and spat, “Everyone agreed except <i>me</i>,” emphasizing the word <i>me</i>. Well, that’s our Budhe. I’ve lost count on how many occasions she raised her voice when she talked about the lurah’s policies, and then continued to rant about the villagers who were unemployed, even though most of them had more than one wife, and each wife had many children, and the many young women, virgins and divorcees alike, who went astray.</p> <p>Mas, even though you repeatedly told me you worried that all their contributions would burden the villagers, I still can go along with clay roof tiles, ceramic floor tiles, rug, and fan. However, I object to replacing a rug that still looks new, and replacing the fan with an air conditioner. I really can’t agree with that.</p> <p>When I asked the board about it, one of the administrators replied, “The old rug is now used to accommodate villagers who don’t have any or enough mats for a memorial service.” He also explained that the new carpet was even more pleasing to the eyes.</p> <p>“Would a design resembling a prayer mat depicting a grand mosque not make the praying congregation line up more orderly?” he asked.</p> <p>When I happened to meet the lurah during shalat <i>maghrib</i>, the sunset prayer, I asked him,</p> <p>“Pak Lurah, isn’t the rug still in good condition?”</p> <p>The lurah answered, “You’re right, Den</p>
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Mas, dari genting pres, keramik, karpet, dan kipas angin aku bisa setuju, meski Mas berkali-kali bilang iuran-iuran itu dikhawatirkan akan membebani warga. Yang tidak dapat aku setuju adalah adanya rencana untuk mengganti karpet baru yang sudah ada dengan karpet yang lebih baru dan kemudian mengganti kipas angin dengan alat pendingin ruangan. Itulah yang tidak dapat aku setuju.

Pada saat aku menanyakan hal ini, salah seorang anggota takmir menjawab, “Karpet lama bukannya tidak terpakai, tapi bisa digunakan oleh warga yang ngunduh tahlilan tapi tak punya tikar atau tikarnya tak mencukupi.” Lalu dia melanjutkan penjelasannya bahwa karpet baru akan jauh lebih sedap dipandang mata, “Bukankah dengan dirancang seperti sajadah dengan gambar masjid megah nantinya para jamaah akan berderet shalat dengan lebih teratur?”

“Bukankah karpetnya masih bagus, Pak Lurah?” begitu tanyaku ketika secara kebetulan bertemu dengan beliau pada saat shalat maghrib.

Pak Lurah menjawab, “Betul Den Pras, tapi karpet ini kasar dan tipis. Dengkul bisa ngilu dan jidat bisa perih. Apalagi jika jidat dan dengkulnya kurus dan layu seperti punyanya Yu Mujirah. Karpet yang baru jauh lebih tebal dan gambarnya bagus. Ini sebetulnya demi orang-orang yang sudah sepuh seperti Yu Mujirah”

Aku kejar, “Bagaimana dengan rencana mengganti kipas angin dengan alat pendingin ruangan? Apa itu juga benar?”

Dan dengan penuh semangat dia membela diri, “Benar, karena kipas angin itu kurang menyejukkan, bahkan bisa bikin kami-kami ini, orang yang sudah tua, jadi masuk angin. Apalagi yang memang pada dasarnya tidak sehat seperti Yu Mujirah. Alat pendingin ruangan lain lagi, cessa krenyess ... sejuk, tanpa angin dan tanpa bunyi uwuk-uwuk.”

Pras, but the material feels rough on the skin and it's thin. Our knees ended up hurting and our foreheads scratched. This would be even more so for those who have thin and old knees and forehead, like Yu Mujirah. The new rug is much thicker and has a beautiful design. Actually, we do this for older people like Sister Mujirah.”

“Then, what about the plan to replace the fan with an air conditioner?” I quickly asked. “Are you really going to do that?”

Pak Lurah passionately defended himself. “Yes, I will. The air from the fan is not cool enough, and it might even make us old people catch a cold, especially those who are frail like Yu Mujirah. The air conditioner operates differently. The air is cool, but there's no wind nor any humming sound.”

I continued to pressure him, “Aside from the huge amount of electricity needed to power the air conditioner, its installation will cause a major change to the overall appearance of this langgar. Are those wood windows going to be replaced with glass ones?”

Perhaps I had managed to exhaust the lurah's patience.

“Yes,” he replied, irritated, “and Den Pras doesn't have to worry about the funding. After all, the villagers have never bothered the family of Eyang Truno, nor someone like Yu Mujirah. Right?”

His words offended me, and I no longer felt the need to make small talk. I said straightforwardly, “Even though I don't pray here every day, I notice that, despite the ceramic floor tiles and carpeting, members of the congregation still use their prayer mats. So, there's no difference between what they pray on now and when the langgar still had the cement floor tiles Eyang had put in. And the ventilation was also something Eyang had already thought

Aku tetap mengejanya, “Tapi selain alat pendingin ruangan itu butuh tenaga listrik yang tidak sedikit, pemasangannya akan merombak bangunan langgar ini secara keseluruhan. Jendela kayu itu semua akan diganti dengan jendela kaca?”

Barangkali aku sudah berhasil menghabiskan kesabaran Pak Lurah, dan dengan roman muka jengkel dia berkata, “Ya, dan untuk masalah dana Den Pras tidak perlu khawatir. Bukankah selama ini warga tidak pernah merepoti keluarga besar Eyang Truno? Apalagi merepoti orang seperti Yu Mujirah? Tidak pernah, ‘kan?”

Kata-kata ini untukku cukup menyinggung, maka aku pun tak perlu lagi berbasa-basi. Aku pun lugas berkata, “Pak Lurah, saya memang tidak setiap hari shalat di sini, tapi saya dapat amati, bahwa meski sudah pakai keramik, sudah pakai karpet, para jamaah shalatnya masih pakai sajadah. Jadi sama saja dengan ketika shalat di atas lantai tegel yang dibangun Eyang dulu. Juga tentang aliran udara, hal ini sudah dipikirkan betul oleh Eyang. Lihat, begitu banyak jendela! Dan, Pak Lurah tahu bahwa gaya rancang bangun langgar inilah yang mengilhami perancang gedung kelas nasional pada saat dia diminta merancang bangunan masjid di Jakarta, ‘kan? Rumah ibadah berbentuk joglo dengan sebagian dinding dari kayu yang dihiasi ukiran Jepara inilah bentuk tampilan rumah ibadah yang khas Indonesia!” Aku pikir dengan perkataanku ini percakapan kami akan selesai. Namun, ternyata aku keliru.

Dengan senyum tipis dia berujar, “Maaf Den, sebetulnya karpet tebal berpola gambar masjid dan juga alat pendingin ruangan itu sudah kami beli, dan ada di rumah saya saat ini. Selanjutnya tinggal menarik iuran warga. Dan memang warga sudah setuju untuk iuran kok.” Dia berhenti sebetar, tajam melirikku sekilas, dan cepat meneruskan, “Memang untuk dapat dimasukkan menjadi golongan orang-orang yang nantinya masuk surga itu perlu

about. Look how many windows there are.

“The *joglo* roof and partially wooden walls decorated with Jepara carvings make this place of worship unique. The pyramid-shaped roof even inspired a nationally renowned architect who was commissioned to design a mosque in Jakarta.” I thought my statement would end our conversation. Well, I was wrong.

He smiled cynically and replied, “I’m sorry, Den, but actually, we already purchased the thick rug with a mosque design and the air conditioner. The items are now stored at my house. We only need to pool the money from the villagers. They have agreed, anyway.” He paused for a while, to give me a sharp glance, and continued. “Indeed, to be able to join those who go to heaven, a material sacrifice is needed. Everyone has agreed. Everyone except for one person: Yu Mujirah. Maybe because she considers herself nobility, she figures she’s above worrying about the common folks. And you probably know that Yu Mujirah isn’t thinking right,” the lurah ended lightly.

Mas, I really couldn’t accept that he called Eyang Truno’s most beloved granddaughter a crazy person. However, there was no point in being stubborn and arguing further with the lurah. I couldn’t do anything else except quickly distance myself from him.

I relaxed my fingers and opened my clenched fist. I took a deep breath, then slowly exhaled. I took a long look at the wooden windows that would soon be gone. Not being able to restrain myself, I embraced and kissed one of the window shutters near me. The lurah watched me, perplexed.

Mas, I don’t care if I’m now the one who’s regarded as insane by the lurah. But, our problems with him are far from over. They’ve now extended to Budhe Mujirah.

The neighbor we often ask to accompany

pengorbanan harta benda. Semua warga sudah setuju ... kecuali satu orang yaitu Yu Mujirah. Mungkin karena merasa diri keturunan ningrat, jadinya ya biasalah ... tidak merakyat. Dan Den Pras tahu sendiri 'kan kalau Yu Mujirah itu orang yang tidak waras?' Begitu Pak Lurah menyelesaikan ucapannya dengan enteng.

Mas, aku sungguh tak bisa menerima cucu kesayangan Eyang Truno dibilang orang sinting. Namun, rasanya tidak ada gunanya bersitegang dengan Pak Lurah. Aku tidak mampu berbuat apa pun selain bergegas menjauhinya – ya, dengan berbalik dan melangkah meninggalkannya. Tanganku yang terkepal pelahan kuregangkan. Kutarik napas dalam-dalam dan pelahan kuhembuskan. Kupandangi jendela-jendela kayu berukir yang sebentar lagi akan amblas. Tak mampu aku menahan diri, kupeluk dan kucium salah satu daun jendela yang ada di dekatku. Pak Lurah mengawasiku dengan pandangan penuh tanda tanya.

Mas, aku tak peduli jika sekarang aku juga dianggap tidak waras oleh Pak Lurah. Namun, rupanya masalah dengannya berkembang, tidak berhenti sampai di situ saja. Bahkan, perkaranya kini berimbas pada Budhe Mujirah.

Tetangga yang kita minta menemani Ibu menelponku sekitar seminggu yang lalu. Dia katakan bahwa tiga hari lalu atap teras rumah Budhe Mujirah, yang sudah makin rapuh dan doyong ke arah langgar, membawa masalah. Beberapa gentingnya melorot dan ada yang jatuh menimpa kepala salah seorang jamaah langgar. Katanya, orang-orang menggelandang Budhe Mujirah ke rumah Pak RT. Mas, apa yang sebaiknya kita lakukan sekarang? Aku berdoa semoga masalah ini dapat segera diselesaikan dengan baik.

Aku tunggu jawabanmu.

Mother called me about a week ago. She told me that the roof over Budhe Mujirah's verandah, which was old and leaned towards the langgar, had caused a problem. Some of its tiles slid off and fell on a worshipper's head. She also said that the villagers confronted Budhe Mujirah and hauled her off to the lurah's house.

Mas, what should we do now? I pray that this problem will get resolved soon.

I'll be waiting for your answer.

From your brother,

Prasojo

Dari adikmu Prasojo.	
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Indonesian version	English version
<p style="text-align: center;">Nyai Dan Noni</p> <p>(Nyai)</p> <p>Malam sudah datang lagi, yang kesepuluh, kau mendesah. Kakimu tertuntun menuju tempatmu yang biasa: pojok paling dalam. Relung paling hangat dan tersembunyi dimana kau selalu setia menunggu kunjungan subuh. Kau duduk sambil menajamkan pendengaran, cerabih binatang malam membuatmu merasa seolah sedang menyaksikan pagelaran wayang, bukannya berada di tempat yang menakutkan. Ada suara khas sang dalang. Nyanyian mendayu para sinden. Alunan gending yang akrab. Sesekali, kau bahkan merasa bisa mendengar seruan penonton dan gema tepuk tangan mereka. Semua itu memesonamu. Menghanyutkan sadar sampai tiba-tiba secubit rasa geli menyentilmu. Rupanya, ada yang sedang mengerikiti kakimu. Kecoak! Sertamerta kau bergerak menjauh. Tapi hanya sebatas itu. Tidak sampai menjerit panik—sebab itu bukan kau.</p> <p>Kau memang seorang perempuan, tapi tidak seperti dia yang datang empat hari lalu. Yang cengeng dan manja. Yang peka dan perasa. Dia yang kau benci karena telah memaksamu berbagi tempat sempit ini. Lebih daripada itu, kau membenci semua yang ada pada dirinya; rambut pirang yang mengingatkanmu pada masa kejayaanmu dulu, bola mata yang membiru gundu dan terlihat begitu angkuh, juga kulit sewarna roti gandum, bahkan suaranya yang mirip dengkur palsu kucing.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Mistress and the Lady by Anindita Siswanto Thayf</p> <p>(Nyai / Mistress)</p> <p>Darkness fell on the tenth night. You sighed. Your feet moved to your usual place: the deepest corner, the warmest hidden nook where you faithfully wait for the break of dawn. As you sat with closed eyes and expectant ears, the sound of nighttime animals made you feel as if you were at a <i>wayang</i> show instead of this creepy place. You recognized the <i>dalang</i>'s distinctive voice, the enchanting singing of the <i>sinden</i>, and the familiar <i>gending</i> music. Every now and then, you even heard the cheering audience clap their hands. All of that amazed you. It took you to another place, until suddenly a ticklish tingle on your foot snapped you back to reality. A cockroach! Shocked, you jerked away immediately. That was it. You didn't scream in panic. That was so not you.</p> <p>Yes, you're a woman, but you're not like she who arrived four days ago. The spoiled, crybaby woman, emotional and over-sensitive. You hated her for making you share this tiny place. More than that, you hated everything about her, the blonde hair that reminded you of your past golden era, the arrogant look in a pair of round, blue eyes, her wheat-colored skin, and her voice that sounded like the false purr of a cat.</p> <p>You especially hated hypocrisy; what a deceitful race she belonged to! She often</p>

Uhh! Kau sangat membenci yang terakhir itu—dasar bangsa penipu! Membuatmu kerap disesaki keinginan untuk mencekiknya. Menguburkan kuku-kukumu pada daging pucat leher jenjangnya. Kau yakin bisa membunuhnya. Mematahkan batang lehernya dengan cepat. Bukankah tanganmu terbukti cukup kuat karena terbiasa mencabut rumput dan memeras cucian? Bukankah pula tubuh perempuan itu tampak serupa tunggul pisang kering, yang besar tapi rapuh?

Tanpa sadar, bibirmu memainkan ringis kemenangan. Dengan membunuhnya, kau berharap mendapat sedikit kesenangan. Mendadak, tanganmu bergerak begitu cepat. Langsung menuju sasaran. Dan...

Plakk! Kriek!

Denyar kematian seketika terasa. Ada yang mati tanpa sempat lari. Kecoak itu. Kau tersenyum senang. Kebencianmu sedikit terlampiaskan.

(Noni)

Sebenarnya, kau sangat suka malam. Remang-remangnya kau anggap romantis. Dinginnya menuntunmu pada pendiangan cinta yang membara. Apalagi ketika sinar purnama menyirami tubuh dan rambut pirangmu maka saat itulah mimpi terindahmu menjadi nyata.

Kini, yang terjadi adalah sebaliknya. Kau sangat membenci malam. Malam telah mewujudkan monster mimpi buruk paling seram. Yang mendatangkan dingin dan mampu meradangkan tulang. Yang mengundang sejumlah makhluk kecil menjijikkan untuk berpesta di luar sarang. Namun, yang paling mengerikan adalah kengerian yang membuatmu selalu berjaga-jaga setiap kali sore mulai mengajak matahari melarikan diri seperti saat ini.

filled you with the urge to strangle her, to bury your nails deep into her pale, long neck. You were sure you could kill her in an instant by snapping her neck. Your hands were strong from pulling weeds and wringing out the laundry. Her body looked like a dry banana stump—big yet fragile.

Your lips folded into a victorious grin. You expected a little fun from this killing act. Your hand suddenly moved fast, right on the target.

Whack! Splat!

The aura of death filled the room instantly. The cockroach had died an inevitable death. You smiled, happy to have released some of your hatred.

(Noni / The Lady)

You actually loved nighttime. You found its dusk romantic. Its coolness guided you to the smoldering furnace of love. You liked it best when the full moon illuminated your body and blonde hair and your most wonderful dream came true.

But now, it was the complete opposite. You hated everything about the night. Nighttime had turned into the most terrifying monster in your nightmare. The one that summoned cold and inflamed the bones. The one that lured a number of disgusting little creatures out of their nests. The most frightening thing, though, was the terror that kept you constantly on your toes every time the sun escaped the afternoon sky.

You knew by now that the humid wind would come from the west. That's why you chose to sit at the farthest left corner of this room, leaning your body closely against the wall to pick up what was left of the warmth. But your attempts were to no avail. The other woman occupied the warmest spot in this room. That rude, uncivilized woman;

Kau sudah hapal, angin yang lembab akan datang dari arah kiri. Karena itu, kau sengaja memilih duduk di sudut kiri ruangan paling luar. Merapatkan tubuh letihmu pada dinding. Mencoba memulung sisa kehangatan yang masih ada, tapi sia-sia. Tempat terhangat di ruangan ini sudah dikuasai oleh perempuan itu. Yang kasar dan tidak beradab. Si pemarah yang keras kepala. Dia yang kau benci karena membuatmu merasa selalu terancam. Lebih daripada itu, kau membenci semua yang ada pada dirinya; rambut hitam mengikal, bola mata sewarna jelaga yang menyorot tajam, suara yang sekeras salakan anjing, juga kulit kecoklatan milik pribumi, mengenangkan kau pada masa lalu mu.

Uhh! Kau sangat benci pada bangsa itu— dasar bangsa rendahan! Kau tiba-tiba ingin menggigit lehernya. Menanamkan geligimu yang putih-kuat di sana, tepat di urat besar. Kau yakin bisa membunuhnya. Membuat darahnya meruah.

Ayahmu adalah seorang dokter yang sering membagi ilmunya tentang bagian tubuh manusia yang mematikan jika terluka. Kebiasaan perempuan itu duduk sambil menutup mata. Mudah sekali menyerangnya.

Tanpa sadar, ujung bibirmu menukik aneh. Dengan membunuhnya, kau berharap mendapat sedikit ketenangan. Kau baru saja ingin menyusun sebuah rencana ketika tiba-tiba...

Plakk! Kriek!

Ada yang bergema dari sudut ruang tempat perempuan itu bertahta. Suara nyaring yang mengusir hening dan menggerakkan kepalamu untuk berpaling. Di sana, dalam remang, kau menyaksikan pemandangan yang membuatmu bergidik. Di atas lantai, seekor kecoak terkapar mati dengan perut pecah. Dan, di telapak tangan perempuan itulah terlihat isi perutnya.

the grumpy and stubborn one. You hated her for making you feel threatened all the time. You hated everything about her. The dark, wavy hair, the piercing, coal-black eyes, her loud, bark-like voice and brown skin, were like the other indigenous people of this land, and reminded you of your past.

You truly hated the people of this country. They were a cowering nation. You suddenly wanted to bite her neck, bury your white teeth deep into the vein. You were confident you could kill her, make her blood flow all over. Your father, a doctor, had taught you about the vulnerable areas of the human body. Attacking her would be easy. She was in the habit of sitting with her eyes closed.

The corners of your lips curled. You hoped to get some peace by killing her and started to formulate a plan.

Whack! Splat!

The noise came from the corner where that woman reigned. The silence-shattering noise made you turn toward her. Through the darkness you witnessed a bloodcurdling scene. A cockroach lay dead on the floor, its entrails smeared on the woman's palm.

Unable to hold it any longer, you vomited.

“That’s it! You drive me to the limit of my patience. Damn you, woman! Damn!” the black-haired woman shouted before she charged at the blonde like a vengeful dog.

“Wait a second! Wait! What’s wrong with you? Are you trying to kill me? You’re crazy,” the blonde woman screamed, frantically. She had not seen the attack coming and was unable to stop it. As a daughter of a respected family, she had never been involved in a fight, and this situation was completely new to her. Then, her bodyguards were always around. But now, these Japanese prison walls

Huekk! Tak tahan, kau muntah.

“Sudah cukup! Kau telah membuat sabarku habis. Benar-benar perempuan sial, Kau. Sial!” terdengar teriakan kesal si perempuan berambut hitam pada perempuan berambut pirang, yang langsung disusul dengan terjangan penuh kemarahan. Gerakan anjing pendendam.

“Tunggu dulu! Tunggu! Ada apa denganmu?! Kau mau membunuhku, ya? Dasar gila! Kau sudah gila!” pekik panik si pirang berhamburan tanpa sela. Dia benar-benar tidak menduga. Serangan si rambut hitam terlalu kalap untuk dihentikan. Sebagai anak dari keluarga terhormat yang selalu menjaga sikap, situasi ini baru baginya. Ia tidak pernah terlibat perkelahian. Para penjaga selalu ada. Tapi kini, dinding penjara Jepang telah mengurungnya. Dia bukan lagi noni terhormat seperti dulu. Dia terbuang di sini. Tidak berarti.

“Kau telah menghinaku, Perempuan Sial! Kau barusan muntah di depanku. Apakah kau sengaja, hah?!” perempuan berambut hitam balas menjerit sepenuh paru-paru. Saat ini, dia merasa telah mencapai puncak jemu. Emosinya membumbung. Inginnya terus mengamuk. Keluwesan sikapnya yang dulu mampu menggaet hati seorang meneer hingga menjadikannya nyai, dipaksa menguap oleh kejamnya penjara Jepang. Dia bukan lagi nyai meneer Administratur tersayang seperti dulu. Dia terbelenggu di sini. Tidak bernilai.

“Tidak! Tidak begitu. Kau salah paham. Salah!” Si pirang masih mencoba menghentikan serangan. Tapi, si rambut hitam sudah gelap hati. Serangannya makin menyakitinya. Serangan pelampiasan.

“Kau telah mengotori tempat ini dengan bau busuk sisa makananmu, Juffrouw! Kau akan kubunuh. Kubunuh!” Si rambut hitam lantas

surrounded her. She was no longer an honorable *noni*, a young lady. Exiled here, she felt worthless.

“You insulted me, bitch! You puked in front of me. It wasn’t an accident, was it?” the black-haired woman yelled at the top of her lungs. She had had enough. Her emotions soared, and she wanted to rage on. Her graceful mannerisms, which had won the heart of a *meneer*, a Dutch gentleman who had made her his mistress, had dissolved within the walls of this cruel Japanese prison. She was no longer the *nyai*, the mistress, of her beloved *meneer administrateur*. She was shackled here, meaningless.

“No! You misunderstood. You’re wrong!” The blonde still tried to stop the attack, but the black-haired woman went berserk.

“You ruined this place with the foul stench of your vomit, *juffrouw*, miss! I’m going to kill you. I’ll kill you!” The black-haired woman planted herself on the blonde’s stomach. She used her two strong legs to squeeze the still-struggling woman so hard it made the blonde scream hysterically.

“*Godverdomme*, damn! My stomach! My stomach!”

The Dutch swearword set off the black-haired woman even more. “You think I don’t know what you said, huh! You ungrateful foreigner! Colonialist bastard! Infidel!”

“You ungrateful servant nation. Stupid, foul-mouthed woman! You’re the infidel!”

The tiny cell transformed into a fighting arena. The two women wrestled furiously and tried to destroy each other with their teeth and nails. They tore each other’s flesh and pulled locks of hair. Blood splattered everywhere.

Three wardens with turmeric skin and

menduduki perut si pirang. Berusaha menjepit tubuh lawannya, yang terus memberontak, dengan kedua kakinya yang kuat hingga meletupkan serangkaian jerit histeris dari mulut si pirang.

“*Godverdomme*. Perutku! Perutku!!!”

Mendengar umpatan dalam bahasa asing itu, perempuan berambut hitam malah semakin kalap.

“Pikirmu, aku tidak tahu apa yang kau katakan itu, hah?! Dasar perempuan asing tidak tahu diri. Penjahat sialan! Kafir!”

“Kaulau bangsa jongos yang tidak tahu diri. Perempuan bodoh! Mulut kotor! Kau yang kafir!”

Tak terhindarkan, ruang penjara sempit itu berubah menjadi kancah pergumulan. Tubuh-tubuh bergelut dalam amuk. Mencoba saling remuk dengan gigi dan kuku. Kulit pun terkuak. Daging terkoyak. Rambut-rambut tercerabut. Semuanya menghamburkan darah. Hingga...

Disertai pekik marah, tiga orang sipir penjara berkulit kunyit dan bermata kuaci menyerbu masuk ke tengah arena pergumulan. Mencoba memisahkan kedua perempuan yang lepas kendali itu dengan kasar. Dengan pangkal popor senapan dan sepatu lars. Dengan tamparan dan makian. Sebagai balasannya, erangan demi erangan saling bertalun. Jerit kesakitan pecah. Rintihan ampun menyela. Sebagai jawaban, caci maki dan suara tamparan diterima oleh perempuan-perempuan itu.

“Tutup mulutmu, Pelacur! Beginilah kalian akan selalu diperlakukan jika terus membuat kacau. Anjing-anjing betina gila!”

Malam kembali sepi ketika derap tiga pasang sepatu itu bergerak menjauhi penjara, meninggalkan dua sosok tubuh yang terkapar kesakitan dalam paluh darah.

watermelon-seed eyes rushed into the middle of the arena. They tried to separate the two uncontrollable women with force using their rifle butts and boots, slaps and curses. Groan after groan answered them. Painful screams. Mercy-pleading whimpers interrupted them.

“Shut up, whores. This is what you get for causing chaos here. Crazy bitches!”

The night was silent once again after the stomping boots moved away from the cell where two figures were left writhing in pain and blood.

(Nyai / Mistress)

You forced your swollen eyes open. It was difficult and painful. You wanted to see more, even though all you saw at first was only red. Blood. Holding back your pain, you tried to move. You couldn't. Then you tried to turn your head. You succeeded in turning a little to your right and saw her, the blonde.

You wondered what brought a pretty blonde girl like her to this hell on earth. You tried to guess, *Was she not quick enough to escape with her family when the Japanese attacked? Or did they kidnap her from her home?*

“Ah, family. Home,” you whispered sadly and thought about the story of your life.

If only the Dutch had not lost the war and Japan had never come to this country, you figured your life would have always been happy. Your blond keeper would have spoiled you, your maids would have served you, and your parents would have been proud of you. What a wonderful life you once had, even though you were just a *nyai*, the mistress of a Dutch man.

Life is indeed full of surprises. When the

(Nyai)

Kau memaksa membuka matamu yang bengkak. Rasanya berat dan perih. Tapi kau ingin melihat, meskipun hanya merah yang pertama kali tampak. Darah. Dengan menahan sakit, kau mencoba bergerak—tidak bisa. Lalu, kepalamu berusaha berputar—ternyata bisa. Sedikit gerak memutar ke kanan. Dan, saat itulah kau melihat dia. Si pirang.

Dia terbaring meringkuk serupa bayi dalam rahim. Terlihat selemah kulit jagung. Wajahnya menengadah ke arahmu; pucat, penuh lebam, bernoda darah. Noda yang memudahkan kecantikannya dan menyembunyikan matanya yang terpejam. Kau melirik bagian bawah tubuhnya yang bermandikan darah. Sudah matikah dia? Tanpa diundang, ibamu muncul.

Entah apa yang telah membawa seorang gadis pirang cantik sepertinya masuk ke dalam neraka dunia ini. Dalam hati, kau mencoba menebak. *Apakah dia tidak sempat kabur bersama keluarganya saat Jepang menyerbu? Ataukah, dia diculik dari rumah?*

“Ah, keluarga. Rumah,” desahmu pilu. Lalu, terbayanglah kisah hidupmu.

Seandainya Belanda tidak pernah kalah perang dan Jepang tidak menemukan negeri ini, kau meramalkan kalau hidupmu akan bahagia selalu. Dimanja oleh tuanmu. Dilayani para babu. Dibanggakan bapak-ibu. Sungguh indah hidupmu dulu, meskipun hanya menjadi nyai.

Tapi hidup memang penuh kejutan. Ketika Jepang datang, suamimu malah pergi. Kembali ke negaranya tanpa mau membawamu. Alasannya, tidak ada tempat untukmu di sana. Ah, betapa laki-laki itu telah melukai setiamu. Membiarkanmu menjadi harta rampasan perang bersama

Japanese came, your keeper left. He went back to his country without bringing you along. He said there wouldn't be a place for you there. Ah, how that man betrayed your loyalty, leaving you among the war spoils for the Japanese.

“Infidel,” you cursed him. From then on, you hated every pale-skinned person with all your heart, including the blonde woman. Her situation is not much different from yours now. Should you still hate her?

(Noni / The Lady)

You couldn't move or feel a thing. You wondered if you were paralyzed or had died. The warmth and pain surging from between your legs a moment later made you realize you were still alive.

“My stomach,” you whispered faintly as your worry escalated. The fetus of your two-month-old pregnancy had been sleeping soundly inside your belly. You wondered how he was doing, if he had survived. The pain that spread underneath the skin of your stomach provided the answer.

“Gone. He's gone!” You let out a hushed cry. The growing stream of tears forced you to open your eyes. That was when you saw her. The black-haired lady.

She lay on her back looking at you. Her face was swollen, blotched with dried blood, her lips split. Her half-open eyes seemed empty. Was she dead? Unexpectedly, you felt pity for her. You didn't know what made an indigenous woman a Japanese prisoner. You tried to guess. *Was she a spy and had someone turned her in? Had she made a mistake?*

“Ah, betrayal. Mistake,” you murmured as you recalled your own story.

If only you had listened to your parents and

<p>barang peninggalannya yang lain.</p> <p>“Dasar kafir!” begitulah makimu selalu. Sejak itu, kau sangat membenci setiap orang berkulit pucat, termasuk si perempuan berambut pirang. Namun kini, keadaannya tidak jauh beda darimu. Haruskah kau tetap membencinya?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>(Noni)</p> <p>Kau tidak bisa bergerak. Tak mampu merasakan apa-apa. Mungkin tubuhmu melumpuh atau kau sudah mati. Tapi rasa hangat bercampur nyeri yang datang kemudian dari arah selangkang menyadarkanmu bahwa kau masih hidup. Tapi...</p> <p>“Perutku,” kau mendesis lemah dengan kekhawatiran meraja. Bayimu yang baru berusia dua bulan sedang tertidur lelap di dalam sana. Kau bertanya-tanya bagaimana keadaannya; semoga ia selamat. Namun, kesakitan yang merebak jelas dari balik kulit perutmu langsung memberikan jawaban.</p> <p>“Tidak ada. Dia sudah tidak ada!” Kau memekik lirih. Matamu dipaksa membuka oleh kucuran air mata yang menderas. Saat itulah kau melihat dia. Si rambut hitam.</p> <p>Dia terbaring terlentang dengan wajah menengok ke arahmu. Begitu mengengaskan; bengkak, penuh darah kering, bibirnya sobek. Matanya terbuka setengah dan terlihat hampa sinar. <i>Sudah matikah dia?</i> Tanpa diduga, rasa kasihanmu timbul.</p> <p>Entah apa yang membuat seorang perempuan pribumi menjadi tawanan Jepang. Dalam hati, kau mencoba menebak. <i>Apakah dia seorang mata-mata yang dikhianati seseorang? Atau, apakah dia telah melakukan kesalahan?</i></p> <p>“Ah, pengkhianatan. Kesalahan,” gumammu</p>	<p>hadn’t followed the foolish passion of young love, you surely would have been on the ship with them and, by now, heading to the Land of Windmills. But love cast its spell on you.</p> <p>The masculinity of an indigenous young man had captured your heart. He was your father’s loyal guard and charmed you with his good manners. You steeled yourself to break the boundaries and engaged in a forbidden relationship. You succumbed to sin until you became pregnant. Everything then was forced to be the way you wanted it. You were to be married in a week. How wonderful would that be, you thought, even though you had to sacrifice those you loved, your family.</p> <p>Life always has a secret plan. The victory of the yellow-skinned people. The defeat of the whites. All members of your family quickly moved away, except you who preferred to be with the indigenous man, the father of your child, your true love. In return he shamelessly served the yellow-skinned Older Brother he just met and handed you to them as proof of his loyalty.</p> <p>“Indigenous scumbag!” That was how you cursed him. Since then, every inch of you hated every indigenous person, including the black-haired woman who now shares your predicament. Should you still hate her?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>The two women were still occupied by their wounds and their thoughts when the stomping of boots came closer. The jail keepers opened the cell door. They approached the two weak women on the prison floor and forcefully groped their bodies.</p> <p>“Water. Water,” the black-haired one groaned.</p> <p>“Doctor. I need a doctor,” the blonde</p>
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<p>“Air. Air,” si rambut hitam mengerang.</p> <p>“Dokter. Aku perlu dokter,” si pirang meminta.</p> <p>Namun, sejak dulu, hidup memang tidak pernah adil kepada kaum perempuan. Tanpa setahu keduanya, kengerian yang sebenarnya baru saja akan terjadi. Tangan-tangan berkulit kuning itu merobek pakaian mereka satu per satu. Sejumlah laki-laki dengan mata-mata sipit yang memerah dan menyorotkan nafsu liar mulai memperkosa keduanya. Nyai dan noni terlambat untuk menyadari bahwa seharusnya mereka tidak saling membenci seperti ini; bahwa sebenarnya musuh mereka tiada lain adalah laki-laki.</p>	
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Indonesian version	English version
<p style="text-align: center;">Mariantje dan Pasangan Tua</p> <p>Pada Rabu pagi yang bercahaya, mereka terbangun dalam satu selimut. Pagi ini, Laura dan Don masih bersama. Tak ada yang pergi lebih dahulu. Tuhan masih ingin melihat mereka melewati hari-hari baru. Tiap malam, saat jelang kelopak mata mengatup, Laura akan memasukkan jemarinya ke sela-sela jemari Don. Itu kebiasaan rahasia dia, yang hanya diketahui Mariantje.</p> <p>Perlahan-lahan Laura bangkit dari ranjang, mengamati rambutnya yang setiap helainya telah berwarna kelabu. Mengamati pipi dan dagunya yang merosot. Tiga tahun lalu, dia masih sering duduk di depan meja rias ini, menyemir rambutnya sembari bersenandung lagu jaz kuno. Dia dan Don penyuka jaz.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mariantje and the old Couple by Erni Aladjai</p> <p>It was a bright Wednesday morning and they woke up under the same blanket. Laura and Don were still together. Neither had gone first. God wanted to give them a new day. Every night, just before she closed her eyes, Laura laced her fingers with Don's. It was her secret habit, only Mariantje knew about.</p> <p>Laura got up slowly from the bed and looked at her reflection in the mirror. She studied her hair, every last strand was gray, her cheeks and chin sagged. Just three years earlier, she often sat before the mirror dyeing her hair while humming along to an old jazz number. She and Don loved jazz.</p>

Mereka menikmati musik itu sejak pertama kali masuk Batavia.

Dia masih ingat baik, suatu malam, Batavia begitu ramai, beberapa musisi Filipina datang ke Batavia mencari kerja. Di ruang masuk hotel dan jalan-jalan, mereka mengenalkan alat musik angin. Trompet. Saksofon. Bolero. Rumba. Ah kenangan itu selalu bagai embusan angin sore yang menenangkan. Ingatan dia pada irama jaz pertama kali di kota ini selalu abadi di kepalanya, sebab pada hari itu juga, sesuatu yang membuatnya bahagia telah terjadi.

Mula-mula Don—yang sekarang terus “lelap” di belakangnya itu—membeli dua buah karcis untuk menonton pertunjukan jaz di Hotel Des Indes. Waktu itu, umur Don tujuhbelas tahun. Masih muda dan senang memakai topi *bowler*—serupa topi yang sering dikenakan Charlie Chaplin, celana pantalon dan jas.

Sementara Laura berumur enambelas tahun. Mengenakan gaun sifon bertabur bunga lotus, dia naik trem bersama Don. Mereka naik trem listrik pertama. Dia mendengar keterangan itu dari pembicaraan dua orang *meneer* dalam satu gerbong. Dan pada saat irama saksofon soleano dari si musisi Filipina itu terdengar di langit-langit hotel Des Indes, bersamaan itu juga Don memasangkan sebuah cincin perloop, *verlooft* di jari manisnya.

Laura menyukai pagi. Dia tak pernah mau melewatkan saat matahari keluar. Dan pagi ini, dia tak lagi menyemir rambut. Laura Tua seolah telah berjanji pada setiap helai rambutnya, bahwa mulai hari ini hingga di kemudian hari, rambutnya tak akan lagi “sesak napas” oleh baluran pewarna rambut yang kaku. Tak ada lagi sarung tangan. Tak ada lagi bubuk semir *Tancho* di atas meja riasnya.

Wanita tua itu kemudian melangkah ke

They enjoyed it since the first time they came to Batavia.

She still remembered it well, that crowded night when groups of Filipino musicians came to town looking for work. From the entrances of hotels and in the streets, they introduced their instruments and their music: trumpet, saxophone, bolero, rumba. Ah, the memory was like a soothing afternoon breeze. Her memory of the first time she heard jazz in the city was one that would remain with her forever, because on that day something happened that made her happy.

Don, who was right now lying there behind her, had bought two tickets to a jazz show at the Hotel des Indes. He was seventeen at the time and he loved wearing bowler hats, the kind Charlie Chaplin often wore, with pantaloons and a jacket.

Laura was sixteen. She wore a chiffon dress with a lotus motif and took the tram with Don. It was the first electric tram, she overheard two Dutchmen saying inside the car. When the sounds of the saxophone played by Soleano, the Filipino musician, rose to the ceiling of the Hotel des Indes, Don slipped an engagement ring onto her finger.

Laura loved the morning. She never wanted to miss a single sunrise. And this morning, she didn't dye her hair. It was as though Old Laura had made a deal with her hair, from today onward, she would no longer choke her hair in a thick coating of dye. There would be no more gloves, no more of the *Tancho* powdered dye on her dressing table.

She moved to the windowsill. She always saw the window as a movie screen. There, behind the glass, stood two kersen trees, their trunks intertwined. The birdcage where Don kept his parrot hung from one of the branches. The bird greeted Laura every

ambang jendela kamar. Jendela itu selalu dia umpamakan layar bioskop. Di sana, di balik kacanya, ada dua pohon kersen dengan batang saling silang. Sangkar burung nuri peliharaan Don tergantung di salah satu tungguhnya. Setiap pagi, si nuri akan menyapa ketika Laura membuka tirai.

“Selamat pagi, sayangku!” itulah yang dikatakan si nuri. Don yang mengajari burung nuri itu menyapa Laura saban pagi. Seolah ketika itu, Don sudah tahu kalau suatu hari dia hanya bisa berbaring dengan selang di hidung. Penyakit telah mematikan sebelah tubuhnya. Laura tua mengangguk, menertawai burung nuri yang mengoyang-goyangkan pantatnya.

Lalu ucapan yang sama juga selalu dia dengar dari mulut Mariantje. “Selamat pagi, hari ini Nyonya tampak sehat dan bercahaya.” Laura tertawa.

Mariantje perempuan tinggi-besar, berkulit kelam, dan rambut diikat saputangan itu riang memasuki kamar Laura sambil membawa tongkat pel. Mariantje baru saja selesai merebus kentang untuk sarapan pagi Laura. Mariantje membantu segala hal di rumah Laura. Dia memasak. Mencuci pakaian. Menyetrika. Menyapu pekarangan dan belanja. Sudah lima tahun perempuan asal Sanger, Manado itu bekerja pada Laura.

Setiap Sabtu pagi, ada tambahan belanja yang ditugaskan Laura padanya. Laura memintanya pergi ke Senen, membeli novel terbaru yang akan Laura bacakan untuk Don menggunakan kaca pembesar. Laura menyukai cara Mariantje bekerja.

Mariantje menyukai rumah Laura. Wangi jeruk, sederhana, dan senantiasa terdengar alunan jaz. Setiap pagi, Mariantje akan mengengkol gramofon kuno milik Laura, memasang piringan hitam lagu jaz yang dipesannya.

“Pagi ini Natalie Cole, Mariantje!”

morning when she opened the curtains.

“Good morning, my love!” the parrot would say. Don had taught the bird to greet Laura in the morning. It was almost as though he knew that one day he would be confined to the bed with a tube in his nose. The illness had paralyzed half of his body. Laura nodded and laughed as the parrot shook its tail.

Mariantje also greeted her every day. “Good morning! You look healthy and radiant today.”

Laura laughed.

Mariantje was a tall, large woman, with dark skin. She wore her hair tied up with a bandana. She came into Laura’s room holding a mop. She just finished boiling potatoes for Laura’s breakfast. She did all the chores around the house: she cooked, did the laundry, ironed, swept the yard and shopped. She came from Sanger in Manado and had worked for Laura for five years. Laura liked the way Mariantje worked.

Every Saturday Laura added a little something to Mariantje’s shopping list. She would ask her to go to Senen and buy the latest novel. Later, Laura would read the book to Don with a magnifying glass.

Mariantje liked Laura’s house. It was simple, it smelled of oranges, and always filled with jazz music. Every morning Mariantje wound up Laura’s old gramophone and put on the jazz record Laura wanted to listen to.

“Natalie Cole this morning, Mariantje!”

Mariantje experienced many touching moments in Laura’s house. Two nights ago, she came in to check on Laura and found the old woman sitting next to Don and reading to him from a book with a red cover. Laura believed that even though Don could no longer move, he could still hear.

Bagi Mariantje, ada banyak keharuan di rumah Laura. Seperti dua malam lalu, saat dia datang memeriksa keadaan Laura. Dia lihat perempuan tua itu duduk di sisi Don, membacakan Don sebuah buku bersampul merah. Laura percaya, meski Don tak bisa bergerak lagi, tapi Don masih bisa mendengar. Seperti biasa, suara Laura terdengar gemetar.

“Don sayang, aku akan membaca sebuah penggalan sajak Heine yang dikutip dalam *Max Havelaar*. Aku pikir kau mungkin menyukainya,” kata Laura. Setelah berdeham, ia mulai membaca. “‘Nun di sana menderau air sungai yang suci, di sana kita menyelam di bawah naungan palma... mimpikan impian yang serba bahagia.’ Jadi bahagialah, Sayang!”

Diam-diam, di bingkai pintu kamar Laura, Mariantje melihat pemandangan itu dengan haru. Laura memang seorang pembaca novel yang baik. Yang sedang dibaca Laura adalah *Max Havelaar* terbitan tahun 1977, yang Mariantje beli di Jalan Kwitang. Dulu, si pedagang buku membujuk Mariantje agar membelinya. “Ini buku bagus, Pram dan Kartini membacanya, kau harus punya!” katanya.

Setelah membaca novel seperti biasa, Laura menemui Mariantje. Mereka bercakap di dapur. Ini kali Laura melakukan pembicaraan sungguh-sungguh dengannya. “Mariantje, saya minta maaf tak bisa membayar gajimu beberapa bulan ini. Saya sedih, namun kau tak pernah mengeluhkan itu.”

“Nyonya jangan minta maaf. Membolehkan saya tinggal di sini, itu sudah lebih dari cukup.” Mariantje menggenggam tangan Laura.

“Jika, suatu hari saya tiba-tiba pergi, maka kunci rumah saya selamanya milikmu. Itulah yang mampu saya wariskan padamu.

Her voice quivered like it usually did.

“Don, my love, this is a passage from *Max Havelaar* in which he quotes the poet Heine. I thought you’d enjoy it.” She cleared her throat and began to read. “‘And in the distance roars ever/ The holy river’s loud flood./ And there, while joyously sinking/ Beneath the palm by the stream,/ And love and repose while drinking,/ Of blissful visions we’ll dream.’ So be happy, my love!”

Mariantje quietly watched the scene from the doorway. She was touched. Laura read well. The book was *Max Havelaar* by Eduard Douwes Dekker, published in the 1977 edition. She had bought it on Jalan Kwitang. The seller had persuaded her to buy it. “It’s a good book. Pram and Kartini read it, you have to have it!” he said.

After reading to Don, Laura, as usual, looked for Mariantje. They talked in the kitchen. This time Laura talked about something serious. “Mariantje, I’m really sorry I haven’t been able to pay you these past few months. It saddens me, and you never complain about it.”

“There’s no need to be sorry. Letting me stay here is more than enough.” Mariantje clasped Laura’s hand.

“If one day I’m suddenly gone, the keys to my house are yours for good. That’s all I can pass on to you. Please take care of Don’s parrot. And when one day there’s a jazz museum in this city, give them the old records,” Laura said. “Thank you for taking care of Don and me,” she added in a half-whisper.

“There’s no need to keep thanking me, ma’am. I’m the one who should be thanking you.”

It had in fact been four months since Laura

Tolong rawat burung nuri Don. Kelak jika ada museum jaz di kota ini, sumbangkanlah piringan hitam kami.”

“Terima kasih telah mengurus saya dan Don,” tambah Laura setengah berbisik.

“Tak perlu mengulang-ulang terima kasih, Nyonya. Sayalah yang berterima kasih.”

Sudah empat bulan memang, Mariantje tak lagi dibayar oleh Laura. Uang pensiun Don dan Laura bahkan hanya cukup untuk biaya perawatan Don, makan seadanya, dan membeli buku terbaru setiap pekan.

Mariantje tak mengeluh. Baginya mengenal Laura adalah kebahagiaan. Mariantje ingat wajahnya lebam, bibirnya pecah pertama kali dia bertemu Laura.

Mereka bertemu di toko. Laura datang membeli mayones dan susu manis kental. Mariantje datang membeli sebungkus biskuit untuk mengganjal perutnya. Tak ada yang peduli dengan wajah lebam dan bibirnya yang pecah. Semua orang hanya memperhatikan rak belanja. Satu-satunya orang yang menanyakan keadaannya hanyalah Laura.

“Kenapa wajahmu? Kau jatuh?” tanya Laura mendekat. Tanpa menunggu jawaban, Laura menggandeng tangan Mariantje ke rumahnya. Di sana, Laura mengompres dahi, pipi dan bibir Mariantje dengan es batu.

“Kenapa Nyonya mau membawa saya masuk?”

“Kau terluka.” Itu saja jawaban Laura. Ia memberi Mariantje pakaian, sebuah daster bergambar kembang sepatu. Memberinya selimut, dan mengantarkan Mariantje ke kamar tamu.

Bertemu Laura, membuat Mariantje yakin untuk berpisah dari Tigor. Dia tak tahan dengan segala hal yang ada pada Tigor. Bau

had last paid Mariantje. Don and Laura’s pension was only enough for Don’s medical care, simple meals, and a new book once a week.

Mariantje didn’t complain. To know Laura was a source of joy. She remembered her face was bruised and her lip split the first time she met Laura.

It was at a store. Laura had come in to buy mayonnaise and condensed milk. Mariantje was there to buy a pack of cookies to tide herself over. No one cared about her bruised face and her bleeding lip. People just looked at the shelves. Laura was the only person who asked whether she was alright.

“What happened to your face? Did you fall?” Laura asked as she came closer. Without bothering to wait for an answer, she took Mariantje by the hand and led her home. Laura made a compress of ice cubes and placed it on Mariantje’s chin, cheeks and lips.

“How come you brought me into your house?”

“You’re hurt.” That had been Laura’s answer. She gave Mariantje a house dress with a hibiscus motif. She also gave her a blanket and showed her to the guest room.

Meeting Laura had made Mariantje determined to leave Tigor. She couldn’t stand anything about him. He reeked of beer. He threw the phone at her and hid money. He slammed the table and broke the glass in the windows. Mariantje ran away in the middle of the night to Laura’s house. That was some five years ago.

On Sunday morning, Mariantje went to church. She prayed for Don and Laura to stay healthy. She was terrified that God might call both of them. If she could choose, Mariantje hoped that she would be

bir. Membanting telepon. Menyembunyikan uang. Menggebrak meja. Merontokkan kaca jendela. Mariantje lari pada tengah malam ke rumah Laura. Semua ini terjadi sekitar lima tahun yang lalu.

Minggu pagi, Mariantje berangkat ke gereja. Mariantje ingin berdoa agar Don dan Laura tetap sehat. Ia sangat takut jika Tuhan memanggil kedua orang itu. Jika boleh memilih, Mariantje berharap dia yang mati lebih dulu. Dia tak punya siapa-siapa di Pulau Jawa selain Laura. Mariantje menghitung, besok tepat 170 hari Don terbaring di tempat tidur. Sungguh waktu yang sabar bagi Laura.

Dalam perjalanan pulang dari gereja, Mariantje singgah membeli bunga. Dia membeli setangkai mawar merah dan setangkai mawar putih.

Mariantje melangkah pelan-pelan ke kamar Laura dengan bunga mawar di dadanya. Kamar begitu sunyi. Di sana, di atas ranjang berseprai putih, Laura berbaring miring, tangan kanannya melingkari tubuh Don yang terlentang dengan mulut terbuka.

Mariantje menghampiri Laura. Perlahan-lahan jari telunjuknya menyentuh lubang hidung Laura. Tak ada embusan. Mariantje meraba tangan Laura. Begitu dingin. Air mata Mariantje mulai mengalir, membasahi pipi. Perutnya bergolak.

Tiga jari kanannya kemudian menyentuh pergelangan tangan Don, dia tak merasakan ada denyut di sana. Don sudah bebas.

“Mungkin memang sudah saatnya mereka pergi,” batin Mariantje. Dia terisak. Teringat pembicaraan dia dan Laura tempo hari, “Mariantje, sudah lama saya ingin pergi bersama Don. Pergi selama-lamanya. Konon di dunia sana, kami akan kembali muda. Bukankah itu indah, Mariantje?”

the first to die. She had no one in Java except for Laura. Mariantje made a mental count: tomorrow would be 170 days since Don was bedridden. It was truly a trying time for Laura.

On her way home from church, Mariantje took a detour to buy some flowers. She bought a single red rose and a single white one.

She walked softly to Laura’s room with the roses pressed to her chest. The room was exceptionally quiet. Laura lay on her side on top of the white sheets, her right arm embraced Don, who lay on his back with his mouth open.

Mariantje went up to Laura. She gently placed her finger against Laura’s nostril. There was no movement of air. She grabbed Laura’s arm. It was cold. Mariantje began to cry. Her stomach hurt.

She placed her fingers on Don’s wrist. There was no a pulse. Don was free.

Perhaps it was their time to go. Mariantje cried. She remembered her talk with Laura the day before. “Mariantje, I’ve wanted for so long to go away with Don. To go away forever. It’s said that in that other world, we’ll be young again. Isn’t that beautiful, Mariantje?”

Indonesian version	English version
<p style="text-align: center;">Hikayat Kura-kura Berjanggut</p> <p>Dahulu kala, ketika waktu masih ditentukan oleh beberapa orang, dan kapal-kapal masih bergantung pada kecerlangan bintang-bintang dan nujuman, dan para perompak masih musuh utama Sultan, hiduplah seorang Tukang Cerita yang mengandalkan kebohongan. Pada musim di mana angin gila dan angin ekor duyung menguasai lautan, ramailah bandar oleh para awak kapal yang menunggu amuk lautan reda. Saat gempita itulah si Tukang Cerita turun dari gunung. Sehabis asar dia selalu datang ke bandar itu, karena dia bergantung hidup pada kemurahan hati para pelaut yang terbius oleh kisah-kisahannya.</p> <p>Pelaut-pelaut itu memberinya kain Koromandel, keramik Campa, permadani Persia, batik Jawa, kemenyan Barus, candu Magrib, dan kisah-kisah pelayaran. Segala pemberian itu, oleh Tukang Cerita, dijual kembali setelah bandar tak lagi ramai. Sementara kisah-kisah pelayaran adalah bahan-bahan cerita baru baginya, yang dikocoknya dengan begitu lihai, sehingga nyaris tidak kelihatan rupa aslinya. Dalam melumatkan cerita, mulutnya itu sempurna tiada terkira, melebihi batu giling yang paling tajam sekalipun. Para pelaut malang itu tak pernah sadar bahwa kisah Tukang Cerita itu ialah apa yang pernah mereka ceritakan.</p> <p>Setiap dia menyelesaikan cerita, yang terkesan dipanjang-panjangkan, dia bertanya pada dua-tiga orang pelaut, “Bagaimana ceritaku barusan? Kalian percaya? Pengalaman apa yang kaudapat dalam pelayaran kali ini, Ranir? Wahai, Pasha,</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Tale of the Bearded Turtle by Azhari</p> <p>A long time ago, when time was still determined by many people and ships relied on shining stars and ancient astronomy, and pirates were the Sultan’s main enemy, there lived a storyteller who relied on lies. When crosswinds controlled the sea, the harbor was crowded with sailors who waited for the sea to calm. At such boisterous time, the storyteller came down from the mountain. He always came to the harbor after <i>asr</i>, the afternoon pray time, for he relied on the generosity of the sailors he mesmerized with his stories.</p> <p>The sailors gave him Coromandel cloths, ceramics from Campa, Persian carpets, Javanese batik, Barus incense, opium from Magrib, and their voyage stories. After they left, the storyteller sold the gifts and the sailor’s tales became fodder for his new stories. He mixed them with such skill that the original stories were barely recognizeable. His mouth reshaped the stories the same as a sharp knife whittled a piece of wood. The poor sailors never realized that his stories were the same as the ones they had told him.</p> <p>He embellished the stories in every retelling. After he finished, he asked two or three sailors, “What do you think? Do you believe the story? What happened on that journey, Ranir? Oh, Pasha, tell me about the girls in the Upper Country.”</p> <p>When the sailors told their stories, he listened carefully. He clapped when they</p>

<p>ceritakan padaku tentang gadis-gadis negeri Atas Angin?"</p> <p>Maka berceritalah para pelaut itu, sementara dia mendengar dengan saksama sambil mengangguk-anggukkan kepalanya. Saat para pelaut itu satu demi satu selesai bercerita, dia bertepuk tangan, tentu bukan untuk menghormati kepiawaian mereka, namun karena dia sudah menemukan bahan kisah baru untuk saat mendatang.</p> <p>Mulut Tukang Cerita sama tajamnya dengan Zulfikar, pedang kesayangan Sultan. Dan kelak dia binasa di ujung Zulfikar. Konon kabarnya, dia binasa karena Kura-kura Berjanggut.</p> <p>Kisahnya tentang Kura-kura Berjanggut telah membuat Sultan begitu terhina. Mungkin maksudnya mulia: dia ingin menghibur para anak kapal yang telah menunggu lama di bandar oleh huru-hara di lautan. Tapi mungkin saja Sultan menangkap maksud lain dari kisah itu.</p> <p>Pada hari-hari menjelang putusnya leher Tukang Cerita oleh Zulfikar, kapal-kapal yang merapat di Bandar Lamuri tak terbilang jumlahnya, bahkan berderet hampir menyentuh tepi cakrawala! Kapal-kapal itu singgah bukan oleh musim angin gila atau angin ekor duyung. Laut tenang. Langit bercahaya. Tak ada waktu yang lebih bagus untuk berlayar selain pada musim ini. Tapi ini waktu perompak Lamuri mengganas. Sudah bertahun-tahun tak terdengar kabar berita tentang para perompak itu. Tak ada yang bisa menerka kapan muncul dan hilangnya rompak Lamuri. Tak juga ahli nujum kepercayaan Sultan. Bahkan, bertambah cemaslah raut wajah para saudagar kapal tatkala melihat kapal-kapal perang Sultan yang memburu perompak pulang dengan layar hangus dan tiang roboh, padahal kapal-kapal perkasa itu telah dilengkapi dengan meriam dan bubuk mesiu buatan Turki Usmani.</p> <p>Bandar Lamuri sebenarnya tempat</p>	<p>finished, not so much to applaud their skill, but because he had found material for the future.</p> <p>The storyteller's tongue was as sharp as Zulfikar, the Sultan's favorite sword. And he died at the tip of Zulfikar because of "The Bearded Turtle."</p> <p>His story about the turtle humiliated the Sultan deeply. He had noble intentions: to entertain the sailors who waited a long time at the harbor because of the unrest at sea. The Sultan interpreted the story differently.</p> <p>In the days leading to the storyteller being beheaded by Zulfikar, countless ships were docked at the Lamuri harbor. The line almost touched the edge of the horizon. Neither cross winds nor stormy weather prevented the ships from sailing. The sea was calm, and the sky luminous. It was the best time to set sail. But also for pirates to attack.</p> <p>No one could predict when the pirates appeared or sailed away, not even the Sultan and his trusted clairvoyants. The crew of the merchant ships worried when they saw the Sultan's warships return with scorched sails and broken masts, although the mighty ships had been armed with cannons and gunpowder made in Turkey.</p> <p>Due to its strategic position between the harbors of the Upper Country and Lower Country, the Lamuri harbor was the best place for the ships to dock. However, white men had seized the Malacca harbor five years previously and since that time, Lamuri was deserted. The new rulers of the Malacca harbor had reduced their docking fees to half of those at Lamuri.</p> <p>Ujud had a hand in this. He was a traitor, indeed. The Sultan's furious cursing of Ujud could still be heard. According to <i>The Saga of the Pleasure Gardens</i>, written by the most brilliant palace author, the Sultan regretted not cutting off Ujud's head with</p>
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menunggu yang paling pas bagi kapal-kapal itu disebabkan oleh kedudukannya tepat di mulut pintu antara bandar-bandar Atas Angin dan bandar-bandar Bawah Angin. Namun sejak lima tahun terakhir bandar itu sepi, sejak orang kulit putih merebut Bandar Malaka. Begitu Malaka direbut, penguasa putih langsung menurunkan ongkos merapat kapal setengah kali lipat dari bea Bandar Lamuri. Hal ini tak lepas dari peran Si Ujud.

Memang khianat Si Ujud itu! Geram suara Sultan yang melaknat Si Ujud masih terdengar sampai hari ini. Menurut Hikayat Taman-taman Kenikmatan yang dikarang oleh pengarang istana paling cemerlang pada masa itu, Sultan menyesal kenapa ia tak memancung leher Si Ujud dengan Zulfikar, ketika orang celaka itu menghasut sekelompok orangkaya lingkaran Kleng untuk memberontak. Sultan hanya menghukum-buang Si Ujud ke Malaka.

Tentu saja si pengarang istana yang cerdas punya alasan kenapa Sultan tak memancung Si Ujud. Tersurat dalam hikayat itu, Sultan masih menyimpan sesal yang dalam karena pada tahun yang lewat dia dengan ringan melayangkan Zulfikar ke leher anak kandungnya, yang dituduhnya telah membagi kenikmatan dengan seorang selir kesayangan Sultan. Menurut hikayat itu pula, setelah si anak kandung binasa, Sultan berjanji untuk menyimpan Zulfikar dan hanya menggunakan pada saat-saat yang penting.

Namun tidak begitu menurut para ahli hikayat, terutama orang kulit putih, yang hidup ratusan tahun kemudian. Menurut penafsir berkulit putih itu, Sultan menyimpan Zulfikar karena pada malam hari setelah pemancungan itu Sultan beroleh mimpi yang aneh. Dalam mimpi itu Sultan didatangi seorang sahabat Nabi, yang mengatakan bahwa Zulfikar merupakan pedang kesayangannya, biasa dipakai untuk membela agama anjuran Nabi. Dan Sultan

Zulfikar when the wretched man incited a group of rich Kleng men to revolt. Instead, the Sultan exiled him to Malacca.

The brilliant palace author had a reason why the Sultan did not behead Ujud. As written in the saga, the Sultan was remorseful for having swung Zulfikar at the neck of his own son, who was suspected of sharing pleasures with the Sultan's favorite concubine. Also, according to the saga, after his son died, the Sultan promised to put Zulfikar away and only use the sword at important moments.

But it wasn't like that, said the saga experts, especially the white men who lived hundreds of years later. According to one white interpreter, the Sultan stored Zulfikar because of the strange dream he had the night after beheaded his son.

In the dream, the Sultan was visited by a companion of the Prophet who said Zulfikar was his favorite sword and used to defend the Prophet's religion.

The Sultan asked: "Oh, Sayyidina, how come this sword was in the hands of Kadi Malikul Adil and why did he give it to me?"

The companion replied, "The sea is so vast, it can bring everything to anyone, pious or not.

Since that dream, the Sultan kept Zulfikar locked away.

The fate of Ujud changed after the white men seized Malacca and crushed the rulers who had once been conquered by Lamuri. The Sultan of Lamuri was unable to stop the white men from entering his land. All he could do was stare across the ocean because of a rebellion happening at the same time. Rich Kleng men were allies of Ujud, who had fled to the Halimun Forest.

sempat bertanya: wahai Saidina, bagaimana bisa pedang ini berada di tangan Kadi Malikul Adil dan kemudian Kadi menyerahkan padaku? Sang Sahabat hanya menjawab: laut begitu luas, maka laut dapat menghanyutkan segala sesuatu kepada siapa saja, kepada orang yang saleh maupun yang tidak.

Sejak mimpi itulah Sultan menyimpan Zulfikar.

Nasib Si Ujud berubah setelah orang kulit putih merebut Malaka dan menumpas penguasa taklukan Lamuri. Sultan Lamuri tak kuasa menghentikan langkah orang kulit putih di tanah taklukannya, dan hanya mampu menatap saja dari seberang lautan. Sebab di tanahnya sendiri pada saat yang bersamaan meletus pemberontakan orangkaya Lingkaran Kleng sekutu Si Ujud, yang melarikan diri ke hutan Halimun. Ketika Sultan berhasil memadamkan pemberontakan itu, orang kulit putih sudah terlalu kuat di Malaka. Beberapa serangan kilat oleh balatentara laut Sultan dipatahkan oleh orang kulit putih. Maka Sultan berencana menyiapkan perang yang lebih besar dan matang terhadap para penakluk itu. Untuk itu, kapal-kapal perang yang dilengkapi meriam paling ampuh dan terbaru telah dipesan kepada Kekhalifahan Usmani. Maka kas kesultanan harus ditambah. Maka ongkos masuk kapal di Bandar Lamuri dinaikkan.

Si Ujud kemudian diangkat sebagai penasihat orang kulit putih khusus untuk masalah Lamuri dan tanah-tanah taklukannya. Maka ia menyampaikan beberapa siasat untuk melemahkan Lamuri. Begitu Sultan menaikkan ongkos masuk kapal, ia sarankan penguasa kulit putih di Malaka untuk menurunkan tarif masuk kapal di Malaka setengah dari harga Bandar Lamuri. Hasilnya akan kelihatan pada musim angin buruk mendatang. Benarlah, hampir setengah dari kapal-kapal yang dulu singgah di Lamuri pindah ke Malaka. Itulah mengapa Bandar Lamuri sepi selama lima

While the Sultan succeeded in quelling the rebellion, the white man became too strong in Malacca. Quick attacks by the Sultan's sea armies were defeated by the white man. The Sultan planned to use larger armies and more mature strategies against the conquerors. He equipped his warships with the latest and most powerful cannons ordered from Turkey. Consequently, the imperial treasury needed more money and the Sultan raised the docking fees for the Lamuri harbor.

Ujud was appointed a special adviser to the white man to help resolve Lamuri and its conquered land problems. He suggested a plot to weaken Lamuri. As soon as the Sultan raised the fees at the Lamuri harbor, Ujud told the white man in Malacca to lower the fees in Malacca harbor to half the price. The result appeared in the upcoming bad wind season. Almost half of the ships that used to stop at Lamuri then docked in Malacca. That's why the Lamuri harbor was deserted during the last five years.

The Sultan regretted he did not behead Ujud with Zulfikar.

Lamuri lost again when the white man set up a huge brothel in Malacca. The management of the Shining Face was placed directly under the harbor rulers. This was also Ujud's suggestion. He said, "I often heard the sailors pour out their lonely hearts when their ships stopped at Lamuri. There were no brothels because the pious Sultan did not permit it, even after I told him that not all sailors had the same religion as us. Before I could finish, the Sultan gripped his Zulfikar. Who would not be afraid when looking at that sword? The lonely sailors were only entertained by the rambling fantasies of a poor storyteller. I pity the sailors whose ships docked there."

Since the Lamuri harbor was empty, the storyteller rarely came to the city. He had

tahun terakhir.

Maka Sultan menyesal tak memancung kepala Si Ujud dengan Zulfikar.

Bandar Lamuri bertambah sepi tatkala orang kulit putih mendirikan sebuah rumah bordil yang besar sekali di Malaka. Muka Berseri nama rumah kenikmatan itu, yang langsung diusahakan di bawah kesyahbandaran. Ini juga saran Si Ujud. Berkata dia, “Betapa aku sering mendengar sepinya hati para pelaut setiap kapal mereka singgah di Lamuri. Di sana tak ada rumah bordil sebab tak diizinkan Sultan yang alim. Padahal sudah kubilang berkali-kali bahwa para pelaut itu tak semuanya seagama dengan kita. Belum selesai aku bicara, kulihat Sultan sudah memegang Zulfikar-nya. Siapa tak gentar melihat pedang itu. Selama ini hati pelaut yang sepi hanya dihibur oleh bual dan cerita bohong Tukang Cerita sialan. Sungguh kasihan nasib pelaut yang singgah di sana.”

Sementara Si Tukang Cerita sendiri, sejak sepinya Bandar Lamuri, sudah jarang turun ke bandar. Dia telah begitu banyak kehilangan pendengar setianya. Dia hanya turun gunung apabila mendengar hal-hal besar terjadi di bandar.

Begitulah, kali ini Tukang Cerita pun turun ke bandar begitu ia mendengar banyaknya kapal yang merapat di bandar akibat mengganasnya perompak Lamuri.

“Berceritalah, Tukang Cerita. Berceritalah. Kau pasti punya simpanan cerita yang tak terkira. Aku khusus membawakanmu anggur kekekalan yang disimpan di dalam gudang rumah orang Peranggi. Anggur ini tak hanya menghangatkan tubuhmu tapi juga pikiranmu. Kau harus mencobanya,” sambut seorang anak kapal.

“Ya berceritalah, Tukang Cerita. Ceritakan tentang perompak Lamuri, kalau kau tahu

lost many of his faithful audience. He only left the mountain if he heard something important was happening in Lamuri.

He went to the harbor because he had heard that many ships had thrown anchor due to the recent pirate activity.

“Tell us, oh storyteller. Please,” a mate welcomed him. “You must have countless stories. I brought a special aged wine from the Peranggi cellars. This wine will warm your body and your mind. You should try it.”

“Yes, tell us about the Lamuri pirates if you know about them,” said another sailor.

“Ho, ho. Do not get me wrong, my friends. Today I’m not going to tell you about the Lamuri pirates, not this time. Leave worry about the pirates to our captains and merchants. Let the admirals and His Majesty the Sultan think about it. Let’s have fun. We haven’t seen each other for such a long time,” the storyteller replied.

That afternoon, the storyteller told many stories. He talked through the night until the sun rose the next day. In turn, the sailors told him about the harbors they had visited, and their love experiences in every town. They forgot their ships couldn’t depart from Lamuri, and the Sultan’s promises to quell the pirates had yet to be fulfilled.

Day after day, the storyteller entertained the sailors who waited for the Sultan to defeat the pirates. The storyteller ran out of tales, and the sailors realized how long they had been on shore. They still waited for good news from the harbor authorities.

One day, in the middle of a story, a dozen men approached the gathering. The storyteller rose and halted.

“Storyteller, let me be brief. Today I want to hear about the Lamuri pirates. I know you know everything about them,” said an old

<p>tentang mereka,” berkata anak kapal yang lain.</p> <p>“Hoho, jangan salah sangka, kawan-kawan semua. Hari ini aku tak akan menceritakan tentang rompak Lamuri, belum saatnya. Dan janganlah kalian dirisaukan oleh perompak itu. Biarlah para nakhoda dan saudagar, juga laksamana dan Sultan Kita Yang Mulia saja yang memikirkan itu. Mari kita bersenang-senang terlebih dahulu. Bukankah sudah lama kita tak berjumpa?” jawab Tukang Cerita.</p> <p>Maka berceritalah Tukang Cerita sore itu tentang segala ihwal. Bercerita sepanjang malam sampai matahari terbit lagi keesokan harinya. Bercerita pula beberapa anak kapal tentang bandar-bandar yang mereka singgahi, dan pengalaman cinta mereka di setiap bandar. Melupakan kapan kapal-kapal mereka bisa angkat sauh dari Bandar Lamuri, dan kapan janji Sultan menumpas perompak yang mengganas itu terlunasi.</p> <p>Berhari-hari Tukang Cerita bercerita menghibur para anak kapal yang menunggu Sultan menumpas perompak Lamuri. Sampai Tukang Cerita kehabisan ceritanya, sampai anak-anak kapal sadar bahwa telah begitu lama mereka menunggu di Bandar. Mereka masih menunggu datangnya kabar baik dari kesyahbandaran.</p> <p>Hingga suatu hari, di tengah tuturan Tukang Cerita, datanglah beberapa puluh orang mendekati ke kerumunan itu. Melihat siapa-siapa yang datang, berdirilah ia seketika menghentikan kisahnya.</p> <p>“Singkat saja, Tukang Cerita. Hari ini aku ingin mendengar perkara bajak laut Lamuri. Aku tahu kau tahu segalanya tentang mereka,” berkata seorang nakhoda tua.</p> <p>“Tun, kau rupanya, nakhoda kapal Ikan Pari. Apa kabar perempuan berleher gading dari Magribi?” tanya Tukang Cerita.</p>	<p>captain.</p> <p>“Oh, Tun, is that you? The captain of the Pari Fish? How is the Magribi woman with an ivory neck?” asked the storyteller.</p> <p>The old captain’s face flushed.</p> <p>“Tell us truthfully, what is actually happening on our seas?”</p> <p>“And you, Abdul Kadir, the famous navigator and favorite of the merchant Barus, old friend and shipmate who vowed to never set foot on this land until the white man had left Malacca. Should I be touched? Are you breaking your oath to never again listen to my stories?”</p> <p>The young sailors were surprised to hear the storyteller had a relationship with their superiors.</p> <p>“No, I don’t know anything about pirates because they no longer exist. Didn’t the Sultan promise to eliminate pirates at the sea as fast as your ships can move?” said the storyteller.</p> <p>“You’re lying, you know everything. Aren’t you one of the Lamuri pirates? Not a single ship has returned since they went to chase the pirates two weeks ago.”</p> <p>Everyone was silent after Abdul Kadir’s statement.</p> <p>“You’re absolutely right, Abdul Kadir. Both of us were Lamuri pirates. Everyone in this harbor knew. But that was decades ago, before these young mates were born. I was captain of the most feared Lamuri pirates in Upper Country and Lower Country, and you, Kadir, were the navigator I most admired. In your hand, our ship moved as fast as Zulfikar would behead us. At that time, Sultan still needed our power at sea. Then, one day, His Majesty the Sultan said he no longer needed us. It was the day a <i>mufti</i> brought Zulfikar to this land. The</p>
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<p>Bersemu merah paras nakhoda tua itu.</p> <p>“Katakan sejujurnya apa yang sebenarnya terjadi di laut kita?”</p> <p>“Dan kau, Abdul Kadir, jurumudi ternama kesayangan saudagar Barus, kawan lama sekapal yang bersumpah tak akan menjejak tanah sebelum orang putih meninggalkan Malaka. Apakah aku harus terharu? Kau melanggar sumpah untuk tidak mendengar ceritaku?”</p> <p>Yang paling takjub mendengar percakapan itu ialah para awak kapal yang belia usianya. Baru tahu mereka ternyata Tukang Cerita punya hubungan dengan para petinggi mereka.</p> <p>“Tidak. Aku tidak tahu apa-apa tentang rompak Lamuri. Karena mereka tak ada lagi. Dan bukankah Sultan sudah berjanji untuk menumpas perompak di laut secepat laju kapal kalian?” kata Tukang Cerita.</p> <p>“Kau bohong, kau tahu segalanya, bukankah kau bagian dari perompak itu? Dan tidakkah kaudengar satu armada belum kembali setelah dua Jumat mengejar kapal perompak? ”</p> <p>Heninglah semua jamaah mendengar pernyataan terakhir Abdul Kadir.</p> <p>“Kau benar belaka, Abdul Kadir. Kita berdua pernah menjadi bagian dari rompak Lamuri. Semua orang di bandar ini tahu. Tapi itu dulu, berpuluh tahun silam, ketika kalian, wahai anak-anak kapal yang belia, belum melihat dunia. Aku nakhoda kapal perompak Lamuri yang paling ditakuti di selingkar laut Atas dan Bawah Angin, dan kau, Kadir, adalah salah seorang jurumudi kapal yang paling kukagumi. Di tanganmu kemudi kapal kita secepat Zulfikar memenggal kepala. Itu dulu, waktu Sultan masih membutuhkan kekuatan kita di lautan. Sampai suatu hari Sultan Kita Yang Mulia mengatakan dia tak membutuhkan kita lagi sebagai sekutu lautnya. Hari itu</p>	<p>Muslim holy man from across the ocean presented the sword to him,” the storyteller said.</p> <p>“That day I said to the Sultan, ‘If the masts of our ship could talk, they would say that the white man was on its way, and we are the frontline force to prevent their arrival.’ And don’t you remember what the Sultan said? The Sultan, my uncle, hugged me and said, ‘Thank you, oh my nephew, for your warning.’ We were disappointed about his stubbornness, but since we respected our Sultan, we obeyed him. So I refused your advice to rebell, oh Qaran.”</p> <p>The storyteller walked to an Abyssinian and hugged him.”How is your daughter in Bukhara? Is she a big girl now? I hope you’re keeping your promise to visit her at least once every two years.”</p> <p>“Yes. I’m on my way to visit Zulaikha. But news about the Lamuri pirates made me stop at this wretched harbor where I never wanted to set foot again. I thought the Sultan had called you back.”</p> <p>“Oh, Qaran and other old friends. The unrest at sea has brought us together. I never imagined we’d meet again like this. The Sultan made his decision, so did you and I.</p> <p>“You, too, left Lamuri forever, to go anywhere. You were also disappointed that I was unable to fill your needs.</p> <p>“Because of my love for this land, I didn’t want to go anywhere and chose to settle down in the woods. I refused the house the Sultan gave me. Living in the woods for such a long time has made me lose my knowledge of the oceans. I come to this city occasionally as a storyteller. I always listen for news about you from the sailors who want to hear my stories. This is how I have somewhat satisfied my longing for you,” said the storyteller.</p> <p>“You will have to leave me. You have to</p>
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Zulfikar baru saja tiba di tanah ini. Seorang mufti dari seberang lautan mempersembahkan pedang itu kepadanya,” kata Tukang Cerita.

“Hari itu kukatakan kepada Sultan, jika saja tiang-tiang kapal kita bisa bicara, akan mereka katakan bahwa orang kulit putih dalam perjalanan menyeberang ke mari dan kitalah kekuatan pertama yang akan mencegah kedatangan mereka. Dan bukankah kalian tahu apa jawaban Sultan waktu itu? Pamanku itu hanya memelukku dan berucap, terima kasih, wahai kemenakan, atas peringatanmu. Kita semua kecewa mendengar ketetapan hatinya, tapi kita menghormati Sultan kita, mematuhi kata-katanya. Maka aku menolak saranmu untuk melakukan pemberontakan, wahai Qaran,” kata Tukang Cerita sambil mendekati ke arah seorang abes, lalu memeluk orang itu, “Sudah besarkah anak dara Bukharamu? Kuharap kau selalu memenuhi janjimu untuk mengunjunginya setidaknya dua tahun sekali.”

“Ya. Aku dalam perjalanan untuk berjumpa Zulaikha. Tapi kabar tentang perompak itu menghentikan langkahku di bandar ini. Bandar yang sejujurnya tidak ingin kuinjak lagi. Hanya karena kudengar kabar tentang perompakan di laut Lamuri, maka kuarahkan kemudi ke bandar celaka ini. Dan kukira kau kembali dipanggil Sultan.”

“Wahai Qaran dan kawan-kawan lama lainnya. Huru-hara di lautan menyebabkan kita berjumpa lagi. Tak pernah terbayang olehku kita bakal berjumpa lagi seperti ini. Sultan punya keputusan, kalian juga punya, begitu pula denganku. Kalian meninggalkan Lamuri untuk selamanya, pergi entah ke mana, juga merasa kecewa denganku yang tak mampu membela kepentingan kalian. Sementara aku yang tak ingin ke mana-mana, karena cintaku pada tanah ini, memilih berumah di dalam hutan. Kutampik rumah pemberian Sultan. Lama di dalam hutan, hilanglah pengetahuanku tentang lautan. Sekali-sekali aku turun ke bandar

because I do not know any better than you who the real pirates are in Lamuri. Now I hope you’re still willing to listen to my story about the Bearded Turtle. I used to tell you this story in the middle of the sea, on the deck during the long boring days while waiting for the wind. You knew that the day after I finished telling the tale, our sails would be pulled by the wind from all directions.

“Even to this day, among you are those who believe that the tale was a spell to attract the winds. It was only a joke between me and our brilliant navigator. He looked at the stars in the sky, and told me that in seven days the wind would blow. Then I gathered all the men on deck and told the tale. How excited you were. You knew you would soon be free from the boring day-to-day waiting for the winds. Hopefully with this tale, your ships can sail tomorrow,” said the storyteller. “Now listen carefully.”

A long time ago, when the animals and trees could talk and the harbor of Lamuri had yet to be named, a turtle king reigned over this part of the ocean. He was respected by the ocean creatures for his speed and strength.

One day, a ship appeared on the horizon. On the deck stood a camel. Just a camel.

His strength and power made the turtle king less vigilant.

The old adage says, if you see a ship with a camel on deck, expell it at once because the camel has been expelled by the Prophet Solomon, lord of all animals. What kind of sin had the camel committed to make a prophet as patient as Solomon do that?

In the land of Solomon, the camel had spread much slander and lies that caused a lot of trouble. The camel continued to spread false stories from his exile because that way he was able to influence the rulers of the world. Without his lies there wasn’t a single king willing to pray for a camel the

dan menjadi Tukang Cerita, bertanya-tanya tentang kabar kalian dari para anak kapal yang mau mendengar ceritaku. Dengan begitu lunaslah sedikit rinduku pada kalian,” kata Tukang Cerita.

“Kalian akan pergi dari hadapanku. Dan memang itu yang harus kalian lakukan sebab aku tak lebih tahu dari kalian siapa sesungguhnya para perompak Lamuri itu. Kini kuharap kalian masih mau mendengarkan ceritaku tentang Kura-kura Berjanggut. Kisah ini dulu sering kuceritakan kepada kalian, di tengah lautan, di atas geladak kapal saat angin mati, saat kita berhari-hari dalam jemu yang panjang menunggu datangnya angin. Seperti kalian ketahui, begitu aku selesai menceritakan Hikayat Kura-kura Berjanggut, esok harinya layar kapal menarik angin dari segala penjuru,” kata Tukang Cerita.

“Di antara kalian masih ada yang percaya, mungkin sampai hari ini, hikayat itu adalah mantra penarik angin. Tapi ini adalah leluconku dengan mualim kita yang cerdas itu. Dia melihat bintang-bintang di langit, dan mengatakan padaku bahwa tujuh hari lagi angin akan berembus. Maka aku mengumpulkan kalian semua di atas geladak. Dan menceritakan hikayat itu. Betapa gembira kalian tatkala aku menceritakan hikayat itu, sebab kalian bakal terbebaskan dari hari-hari menunggu angin yang membosankan. Semoga dengan hikayat ini kapal kalian bisa berlayar esok hari,” kata Tukang Cerita. “Simaklah.”

Dahulu kala, ketika segala binatang dan pepohonan masih bisa bicara, dan bandar ini belum bernama, hiduplah seekor raja kura-kura yang menguasai selingkar lautan ini. Kura-kura itu disegani oleh makhluk sepenjuru lautan karena kecepatan dan keperkasaannya.

Sampai pada suatu hari di ujung lautan terlihatlah sebuah kapal. Di atas geladak kapal itu terlihat seekor unta. Hanya seekor

Prophet Solomon had banished. Everyone who believed the camel's lies was doomed to live in misery and their destiny was as black as the fog that covered its ship. And so it was for the turtle that lived in this harbor.

The camel told to the turtle king how odd he looked, because in the land of Solomon and in all the countries across the oceans he ever visited, every turtle had a beard. The turtle king became angry when he heard this. He said, "Tell me where I can buy a beard, oh camel the news messenger."

"According to Solomon, you do not have to spend your wealth to grow a pluck of beard on your chin. Pray for the safety of this nomadic camel and a beard will grow," said the camel with a laugh, and so told his lie.

The turtle king prayed for the camel's safety and the camel went away with a heart as big as the ocean.

And today, turtles still believe the lie. Notice how slow a turtle walks. The poor creature crawls on the ground looking for its beard, because it thinks Solomon might have thrown it away.

unta.

O, keperkasaan dan kuasa membuat raja kura-kura menjadi kurang waspada.

Padahal petuah lama mengatakan, apabila kau melihat sebuah kapal dengan unta di atas geladaknya, segera usirlah kapal itu. Sebab itu adalah unta yang diusir Nabi Sulaiman, nabi junjungan segala binatang. Dosa apakah yang membuat orang sesabar Sulaiman berbuat begitu? Di tanah Sulaiman, dia telah menyebarkan banyak fitnah dan kebohongan, sering membuat Sulaiman susah tak kepalang.

Dalam pembuangan, unta itu masih saja menyebarkan kabar kebohongan ke seluruh penjuru lautan, karena dengan itulah dia mendapatkan doa para penguasa dunia. Bukankah tak ada raja yang sudi berdoa untuk unta usiran Sulaiman?

Kebohongan sang unta membuat sesiapa yang percaya menjadi gelap takdir hidupnya, sepekat kabut yang menudungi kapalnya.

Seperti kura-kura yang pernah hidup di bandar ini.

Kepada kura-kura, sang unta mengatakan, sungguh aneh kura-kura yang dilihatnya ini, sebab di tanah Sulaiman dan di seluruh penjuru lautan yang pernah disinggahnya, semua kura-kura ada janggutnya. Marahlah kura-kura mendengar kabar ini. Berkata ia, katakan padaku di mana aku bisa membeli janggut, wahai unta pembawa berita?

Kau tak perlu menghabiskan seluruh kekayaanmu kalau hanya untuk mendapatkan sejumput janggut di dagumu, begitu pesan Sulaiman, berdoa sajalah untuk keselamatan unta kelana ini. Maka akan tumbuhlah janggut di dagumu itu, jawab unta sambil tertawa. Begitu sang unta berdusta.

Maka berdoalah kura-kura untuk

<p><i>keselamatan si unta. Setelah mendapatkan doa raja kura-kura, unta itu pun pergi dengan hati seluas samudra bersama kapalnya dan kabut yang memayungi kapalnya.</i></p> <p><i>Maka hitam-pekatlah hidup si kura-kura sampai anak cucunya hingga hari ini. Perhatikanlah, sungguh lambat jalannya kura-kura sekarang. Sampai sekarang makhluk itu masih saja merayap mencari-cari janggutnya yang jatuh di tanah, sebab ia menyangka Sulaiman melemparkan begitu saja janggut itu.</i></p>	
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Indonesian version	English version
<p style="text-align: center;">Percakapan Patung-Patung</p> <p>Bulan sebesar semangka tersepuh perak tergantung di langit kota, dini hari. Cahayanya yang lembut, tipis berselaput kabut, menerpa lima sosok patung pahlawan yang berdiri di atas bangunan Monumen Joang yang tidak terawat dan menjadi sarang gelandangan. Cahaya bulan itu seperti memberi tenaga kepada mereka untuk bergerak-gerak dari posisi mereka yang berdiri tegak. Mereka seperti mencuri kesempatan dari genggaman warga kota yang terlelap dirajam kantuk dan ringkus selimut.</p> <p>Lima patung itu, tiga lelaki dan dua perempuan, menggoyang-goyangkan kaki, menggerak-gerakkan tangan, kemudian duduk, dan ada juga yang tiduran. Mungkin mereka sangat letih karena selama lebih dari empat puluh tahun berdiri di situ. Wajah mereka yang kaku pun, dengan lipatan-lipatan cor semen beku, kerap bergerak-gerak seperti orang mengaduh, mengeluh,</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Statues' Conversation</p> <p>At dawn, a silvery moon the size of a watermelon hung in the city sky. Its soft light layered with mist illuminated the five statues of the heroes on top of the Joang Monument, a neglected war memorial that now served as a shelter for the homeless. The moonlight seemed to energize the statues, enabling them to move out of their rigid pose. It was as if they took the opportunity to free themselves from the grip of the townsmen who were still sound asleep in the folds of their blankets.</p> <p>Each of the five statues, three men and two women, shook their legs and moved their hands. Some of them sat, while others lay down. Standing for more than forty years had tired them out. The rigid faces cast in concrete often grimaced like living people that moan, complain, scream, and shout.</p> <p>The statue known as Wibagso unslung his rifle. "In the past when our bodies lay here, the town was very quiet. At night only a few</p>

<p>menjerit dan berteriak.</p> <p>“Dulu, ketika jasad kita terbujur di sini, kota ini sangat sunyi. Hanya beberapa lampu berpendar bagai belasan kunang-kunang yang membangunkan malam. Kini, puluhan bahkan ratusan lampu berpendar-endar seterang siang. Negeri ini benar-benar megah,” ujar patung lelaki yang dikenal dengan nama Wibagso sambil mengayun-ayunkannya.</p> <p>“Tetapi, lihatlah di sana, Bung Wibagso. Kumpulan gelandangan tumpang tindih bagai jutaan cendol sedang makan bangkai anjing dengan lahap. Dan di sana, lihatlah deretan gubug-gubug reyot dengan gelandangan yang dijejalkan, bagai benalu menempel tembok gedung-gedung.</p> <p>Mulut mereka menganga, menyemburkan abab bacin seperti bau mayat, mengundang jutaan lalat terjebak di dalamnya. Ya, Tuhan mereka mengunyah lalat-lalat itu,” desis patung lelaki bernama Durmo.</p> <p>Ratri—patung perempuan yang dulu dikenal sebagai mata-mata kaum gerilyawan, menukas, “Itu biasa, rekan Durmo. Dalam negeri yang gemerlap, kemiskinan selalu dirawat sebagai ilham kemajuan. Kita mesti bangga, negeri ini sangat kaya. Lihatlah di sana, deretan rumah-rumah mewah menyimpan jutaan keluarga bahagia. Ada mobil-mobil mewah, ada lapangan golf pribadi, ada pesawat terbang pribadi. Dan lihatlah di sana, ada orang berdansa sampai pagi. Ya, ampun... malah ada yang orgi.”</p> <p>Patung Sidik, yang sejak tadi menyidiki dunia sekitar dengan pandangan nanar, melenguh bagai sapi menghadapi maut di ruang jagal. “Ternyata, mereka hanya mengurus perut dan kelamin sendiri. Aku jadi menyesal, kenapa dulu ikut memerdekakan negeri ini.”</p> <p>“Aku pun jadi tidak lagi percaya diri sebagai pahlawan!” timpal Durmo. “Kita berdiri di sini tak lebih dari hantu sawah.</p>	<p>dozen lights glowed like fireflies. Now, tens, even hundreds of lights, shine as bright as daylight. This country is really great.”</p> <p>“But look there, Brother Wibagso. A group of hobos jostle each other like maggots feasting on a dog’s corpse. And there, rows of rickety huts where the homeless are crammed together like parasites clinging to the walls of buildings.</p> <p>“The odor coming from their gaping mouths is like the stench of decaying corpses and attracts millions of flies. Oh, my Lord, they’re chewing those trapped flies,” hissed the statue of a man named Durmo.</p> <p>Ratri, the statue of a woman known as a spy for the guerrillas, snapped, “That’s normal, Brother Durmo. In an affluent country, poverty is always nurtured as an inspiration for progress. We should be proud. This country is very rich. Look there, rows of luxury homes are occupied by happy families. There are luxury cars, private golf courses, and even private airplanes. And over there, people dance until the morning. Gosh, they’re even having an orgy.”</p> <p>Sidik, whose statue examined the world around him with dazed eyes, moaned like a cow facing death in the slaughterhouse. “They are only concerned with their own stomachs and genitals. I’m really sorry to have participated in the liberation of this country.”</p> <p>“I too am no longer sure about being a hero,” Durmo said. “We stand here being nothing more than scarecrows in the fields. They show us no consideration, let alone respect. They uproot anything shamelessly.”</p> <p>“Do not get too sentimental. I think we still have their respect. As you can see, they built a magnificent monument for us,” said Wibagso.</p> <p>“But why did they put us in this narrow spot? How come a memorial for war heroes</p>
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<p>Ternyata mereka tak sungkan, apalagi hormat kepada kita. Buktinya mereka menggaruk apa saja.”</p> <p>“Bung Durmo, kita jangan terlalu sentimental. Aku rasa mereka tetap hormat kepada kita. Buktinya, mereka membangunkan monumen yang megah buat kita,” ujar Wibagso.</p> <p>“Tapi kenapa kita hanya diletakkan di sini, terjepit di antara gedung-gedung besar? Masa monumen pahlawan kok cuma dislempitkan,” gugat patung perempuan bernama Cempluk, yang dulu dikenal sebagai pejuang dari pos dapur umum.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>Angin bertiup mengabarkan hari sudah pagi. Gelandangan-gelandangan yang tidur melingkar di kaki monument menggeliat bangun. Mulut mereka menguap, kompak. Bau abab bacin yang membadai dari sela gigi-gigi kuning menguasai udara hingga tercium oleh para patung pahlawan.</p> <p>Sontak, para patung pahlawan itu berdiri dan kembali ke tempat semula, sebelum keheningan pagi kembali dirajam hiruk-pikuk kota, sebelum udara bersih pagi dicemari deru napas kota yang keruh.</p> <p>Di tempat masing-masing, patung-patung pahlawan itu terus bergumam.</p> <p>Yu Seblak, pelacur kawakan yang dikenal sebagai danyang alias “penunggu” monumen itu, duduk takzim di kaki monumen. Tangannya diangkat hingga atas kepala sambil menggenggam dupa yang mengepulkan asap. Kepulan asap itu menari-nari mengikuti gerak tangannya. Ke kanan, ke kiri, ke atas, dan ke bawah. Gerakan Yu Seblak diikuti lima-enam orang yang duduk di belakang perempuan berdandan menor itu. Yu Seblak bergumam, meluncurkan kata-kata mantera.</p> <p>“Aku mendengar ada banyak orang berdoa</p>	<p>is tucked away here?” the statue of Cempluk, a woman known as a soup kitchen worker, bellowed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>The morning breeze brought a new day. The homeless sleeping at the foot of the monument woke and stretched. They yawned in unison. A foul odor from their yellowed teeth filled the surrounding air and wafted by the statues of the heroes.</p> <p>The statues returned hurriedly to their own place before the quiet morning was claimed by the hustle and bustle of the city, before the hot cloudy breath of the city polluted the clean morning air.</p> <p>Standing in their original positions, the statues kept mumbling.</p> <p>Yu Seblak, the senior prostitute known as caretaker of the monument, sat in prayer at the foot of the monument. She held a pot of smoldering incense as she raised her hands above her head. A whirl of dancing smoke followed the movements of Yu Seblak’s hands—to the right, left, up, and down. Yu Seblak’s gestures were followed by the handful of people that sat behind the woman with striking makeup. She chanted a mantra.</p> <p>Wibagso followed the ceremony led by Yu Seblak. “I hear people pray to us. They even bring us offerings, flowers, snacks, and incense cigarettes.”</p> <p>“Damn! They consider us ghosts. Some of them even asked for a prediction of a winning lottery number. What the hell is this, Wibagso?” Durmo shouted.</p> <p>“Shhh. Calm down. What’s wrong with giving them a little happiness? Think of this as an intermezzo in our journey toward eternity,” Wibagso said.</p> <p>“When they ask heroes to predict winning lottery numbers, it is too much,” Cempluk</p>
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<p>pada kita. Mereka memberi kita sesaji. Ada bunga-bunga. Ada jajan pasar. Ada rokok klembak menyanyan.” Mata Wibagso terus mengikuti upacara yang dipimpin Yu Seblak.</p> <p>“Kurang ajar! Kita dianggap dedemit! Malah ada yang minta nomer lotre segala! Ini apa-apaan, Wibagso?” teriak Durmo.</p> <p>“Ssstttt. Tenanglah. Apa susahnya kita membikin mereka sedikit gembira? Anggap saja ini selingan dalam perjalanan kita menuju jagat keabadian,” ujar Wibagso.</p> <p>“Tapi kalau pahlawan sudah disuruh mengurus togel, itu kebangetan!” protes Cempluk.</p> <p>“Hidup mereka gelap, rekan Cempluk. Mereka hanya bisa mengadu kepada kita, karena yang hidup tak pernah mengurus nasib mereka, malah menghardik mereka. Misalnya para wakil rakyat, mandor-mandor negara,” tutur Ratri.</p> <p>Dalam irama cepat, Yu Seblak terus mengucapkan doa. Setelah itu, Yu Seblak menerima keluhan para “pasiennya”.</p> <p>“Wah, kalau para pahlawan disuruh ngurusin garukan pelacur ya nggak bisa. Punya permintaan itu mbok yang sopan gitu lho.”</p> <p>“Habis, saya selalu kena garuk, Yu. Jadinya “dagangan” saya sepi. Eh, siapa tahu, para petugas yang galak-galak kayak buto itu, takut sama Kanjeng Wibagso dan semua pahlawan yang ada di sini,” ujar Ajeng, perempuan berparas malam itu sambil menyerahkan amplop kepada Yu Seblak.</p> <p>Yu Seblak, dengan tangkas langsung memasukkan amplop kecil berisi uang itu ke dalam kutangnya. “Yaaah, permintaanmu akan aku usahakan. Semoga Kanjeng Wibagso dan kawan-kawannya bisa mempertimbangkan.”</p> <p>Wibagso tersenyum. Sidik manggut-</p>	<p>protested.</p> <p>“Their lives are troubled, Comrade Cempluk. They can only complain to us. No one among the living cares. They only berate them,” said Ratri.</p> <p>Yu Seblak continued her chanting in a fast rhythm. After she was done with her prayers, Yu Seblak received various complaints from her “patients.”</p> <p>“It is impossible to ask the heroes to prevent hookers from being arrested. It’s not proper.”</p> <p>“I always get arrested, Yu. That’s how I lost my customers. Who knows? The city officials might fear <i>Kanjeng</i> Wibagso and the other heroes and not arrest me again. Please help me, Yu.” Ajeng smoothly handed Yu Seblak an envelope.</p> <p>Yu Seblak quickly slipped the envelope into her bra. “Let’s see. Hopefully, His Excellency Wibagso and his colleagues will consider your request.”</p> <p>Wibagso smiled.</p> <p>Sidik nodded.</p> <p>Durmo looked offended. “They are hopeless. The arrests of prostitutes, beggars, and bums are none of our business. They should complain to Parliament, with representatives of the community among its members.”</p> <p>“The parliamentarians are more interested in vying for power and dividing the bribes they receive for breaking regulations and laws. Or they are too busy trying to put their hands on the country’s money. The parliamentarians won’t do anything,” said Sidik.</p> <p>“You only think of politics. Let’s just collect their complaints,” said Wibagso.</p>
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<p>manggut. Durmo tampak tersinggung.</p> <p>“Mereka ini payah. Garuk-menggaruk pelacur, kere, atau gelandangan itu kan bukan urusan kita. Ngadu ke Dewan dong. Mereka kan punya wakil rakyat,” ujar Durmo.</p> <p>“Ah, anggota Dewan kan lebih suka kasak-kusuk untuk berebut kekuasaan dan bagi-bagi uang dari hasil menjual undang-undang dan peraturan. Atau mereka lebih sibuk mengatur siasat untuk menjebol APBN dan APBD,” ucap Sidik.</p> <p>“Otakmu politik melulu,” sergah Wibagso. “Kita tampung saja permintaan mereka.”</p> <p>“Tapi urusan kita banyak, Bung. Kita masih harus mempertanggung-jawabkan seluruh perbuatan selama kita hidup. Jujur saja, waktu berjuang dulu, aku menembaki musuh tanpa ampun seperti membasmi tikus.” Mata Durmo menerawang jauh.</p> <p>“Kenapa gelisah? Perang memungkinkan segalanya terjadi. Kita tidak mungkin bersikap lemah-lembut kepada musuh yang mengincar nyawa kita. Kita terpaksa membunuh bukan demi kepuasan melihat mayat-mayat mengerjat-ngerjat karena nyawanya oncat. Kita hanya mempertahankan hak yang harus kita genggam,” Wibagso mencoba menghibur Durmo yang dikenal sebagai gerilyawan paling berani menghadapi penjajah.</p> <p>“Semua harus kita pahami sebagai risiko dari pilihan kita. Dan kita yakin saja, malaikat-malaikat tahu dan mencatat kebaikan kita. Terutama malaikat penghitung pahala manusia,” timpal Ratri.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>Malam berikutnya, gelandangan-gelandangan kembali tidur di kaki monumen. Ada yang gelisah, ada yang tampak tenang, ada yang mendengkur. Hawa dingin tajam menusuk tulang. Patung-</p>	<p>Durmo looked into the distance. “But we have many things to do, man. We still have the responsibility to account for what we did when we were alive. During combat, I shot our enemies mercilessly, just like I’d shoot a rat.”</p> <p>Wibagso tried to cheer up Durmo. “Why are you bothered? War allows everything. We could not be gentle to an enemy that preyed on our lives. We did not kill them for the satisfaction of seeing their bodies convulse as they died. We only claimed our rights.”</p> <p>“We have to regard everything we experienced as a consequence of the choice we made, and believe that the angels recorded our good deeds and will see to it that we are rewarded,” Ratri chimed in.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>The next night the homeless went back to sleep at the foot of monument. Some of them looked restless, others seemed calm and snored. The statues looked with pity and affection at the homeless who faithfully kept them company.</p> <p>From a cigarette stall beside the monument, a radio broadcasted the evening news: “The Joang Monument, which is a tribute to five warriors killed in the Kota Baru battle against the Dutch army, will be restored. A proposal to raise the heroes’ status from local to national heroes has been issued. The district government has earmarked three billion rupiah for the refurbishment fund.”</p> <p>The five statues heard the news. Wibagso jumped up in delight. Ratri began to dance, but Cempluk seemed unhappy. She appeared to be quietly thinking. Durmo remained anxious while Sidik stood motionless, statue-like, even though he had been a statue for decades.</p> <p>“Why are you silent? We should celebrate,” Wibagso said.</p>
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<p>patung itu merasa sedih dan terharu menatap para gelandangan yang setia menemani mereka.</p> <p>Dari radio penjual rokok di samping monumen terdengar warta berita malam, “Monumen Joang untuk mengenang jasa lima pahlawan yang gugur dalam pertempuran Kota Baru melawan pasukan Belanda, akan dipugar. Kedudukan para pahlawan pun sedang diusulkan untuk ditingkatkan dari pahlawan lokal menjadi pahlawan nasional. Pemerintah Daerah telah menyiapkan dana pemugaran sebesar tiga milyar.”</p> <p>Lima patung itu mendengarkan berita dengan khusuk. Mendadak Wibagso meloncat girang. Ratri menari-nari. Namun, Cempluk tampak tidak bahagia. Ia hanya diam tepekur. Durmo tak kunjung berhasil melucuti kegelisahannya. Sidik tetap diam, mematung meskipun sudah puluhan tahun menjadi patung.</p> <p>“Kenapa kalian diam? Kenapa? Berita itu mesti kita rayakan,” ujar Wibagso.</p> <p>“Apa yang penting dari berita itu? Apa? Mau dipugar, terserah. Mau diapakan ya terserah.... Aku sendiri tidak terlalu bangga jadi pahlawan. Ternyata negeri yang kumerdekakan ini akhirnya hanya jadi meja prasmanan besar bagi beberapa gelintir orang. Sementara jutaan mulut lain menjadi tong sampah, hanya dapat mengunyah sisa-sisa pesta,” ucap Sidik dengan wajah muram.</p> <p>“Soal negeri ini tidak lagi jadi urusan kita. Tugas kita sudah selesai. Kita tinggal bersyukur melihat anak cucu kita hidup bahagia,” sergah Wibagso.</p> <p>“Tapi jutaan orang bernasib gelap itu terus menjerit. Jeritan mereka memukul-mukul rongga batinku,” mata Sidik menatap tajam wajah Wibagso.</p> <p>“Ah, sudah jadi arwah kok masih</p>	<p>“What’s so important? I don’t care what they will do to this monument. Let them restore it or whatever, I just don’t care. I’m not proud to be a hero. The country I fought for became a cornucopia for only a few people, while millions of others are sentenced to be garbage cans for the remnants of the party,” Sidik said, somberly.</p> <p>“The affairs of this country are no longer our business. We did our jobs. We only have to be grateful to see our children and grandchildren live happily,” Wibagso snapped.</p> <p>“But millions of ill fated people continue to scream. Their screams pound at my heart.” Sidik glared at Wibagso.</p> <p>“Please, you’re a spirit now. How can you be so sentimental? Don’t worry about it.”</p> <p>“But my heart is still alive.”</p> <p>Wibagso embraced Sidik. “Brother, don’t keep thinking about this. It will make you tired and frustrated. It’s time for us to rest.”</p> <p>“So, we just keep quiet? Do nothing while so much wrong happens in front of us? Is that what you want?” Sidik was furious.</p> <p>“But what can we do now? We’re no longer alive, we’re only spirits.”</p> <p>“Only spirits?”</p> <p>“Whatever you call it, we can’t do anything any more. We live in a different world than those who survived. Regarding our country, it’s true, not everything makes us happy. Some people have a good life and others don’t. That’s normal, right? You also have to remember that life is a race. There will be winners as well as losers.”</p> <p>Sidik looked annoyed and reluctantly listened to Wibagso. “I’m tired of listening to sermons. When I was alive, I was</p>
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<p>sentimental. Sudahlah.”</p> <p>“Tapi perasaanku masih hidup!”</p> <p>Wibagso mendekati dan merangkul Sidik. “Bung, untuk apa memikirkan semua itu. Capek. Pusing. Saatnya kita istirahat.”</p> <p>“Terus kita hanya diam? Diam melihat berbagai kebusukan itu terjadi di depan kita? Begitu?” Sidik meradang.</p> <p>“Lantas mau apa? Ingat, kita hanya arwah.”</p> <p>“Hanya arwah?”</p> <p>“Ya, apa pun sebutannya, kita tak bisa apa-apa lagi. Dunia kita sudah beda dengan mereka yang masih hidup. Soal keadaan negeri kita ini, memang tidak semuanya membahagiakan kita. Ada yang hidup enak, ada yang susah. Wajar, kan? Dan ingat, hidup ini perlombaan. Ada pemenang dan ada pecundang.”</p> <p>Sidik tampak kesal dan malas mendengarkan ucapan Wibagso. “Aku ini sudah capek dengar khotbah macam itu. Dulu, waktu hidup selalu diceramahi, diguyur petuah-petuah. Eeeh sudah mati pun masih disuruh menelan nasihat. Capek, Bung, capek.”</p> <p>Ratri yang sejak tadi menunjukkan wajah kesal pada Sidik, kontan bilang, “Jangan-jangan kamu ini kurang ikhlas berjuang, Bung Sidik?”</p> <p>Sidik meradang. “Kurang ikhlas bagaimana? Kakiku yang pengkor ini telah kuberikan kepada perjuangan. Bahkan, jantungku kurelakan menjadi sarang peluru-peluru musuh.”</p> <p>“Oooh... kalau soal kayak gitu, penderitaanku lebih dahsyat! Kalian tahu, ketika aku merebut kota yang dikuasai musuh, puluhan peluru merajamku. Tubuhku luluh-lantak. Tapi aku puas. Berkat keberanianku, nyali kawan-kawan</p>	<p>preached to all the time. My elders filled me with advice. And wouldn't you know, I'm expected to listen to advice even after my death. I am tired, Brother, I am tired.”</p> <p>Ratri glared at Sidik and said, “Don't tell me you fought the revolution half-heartedly, Brother Sidik.”</p> <p>“How can you say that?” Sidik responded angrily. “My crooked foot is a result of the battle, and I even exposed my chest to their bullets.”</p> <p>“In that case, I suffered worse. When I seized an enemy-controlled city, dozens of bullets were fired at me mercilessly and perforated my body. But I was satisfied. My bravery encouraged our friends and we managed to win the battle in the end. All of it happened thanks to me,” said Wibagso.</p> <p>“It's easy to stake your claim to fame,” Durmo snapped. “During that battle, Sidik and I stood in the very front of the battlefield. We faced the enemies at the front line. Where were you, Wibagso? You scampered into the forest and mountains and shamelessly claimed to be a guerilla fighter.”</p> <p>“But I had the idea to attack. I also led the attack that dawn,” Wibagso retorted.</p> <p>“Who made you our leader, Wibagso? We were nothing more than a group of young men with lots of guts. There were no official positions, no hierarchy. Especially no commanders of the war,” said Durmo.</p> <p>“To win the battle, we not only needed physical power, we needed brains too. We needed to use strategy,” said Wibagso.</p> <p>“But strategy without guts is like having a head without legs,” Durmo argued.</p> <p>“Brother Wibagso,” Sidik said, “Why are you busy tallying merits that actually</p>
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<p>kita terpompa. Dan, akhirnya kita berhasil memenangkan pertempuran. Ini semua berkat aku!” ujar Wibagso.</p> <p>“Enak saja kamu bilang ‘aku’!” sergah Durmo. “Dalam pertempuran itu, aku dan Sidiklah yang berdiri paling depan. Kami menghadapi musuh satu lawan satu. Dan di mana kamu, Wibagso? Di mana? Kamu lari terbirit-birit ke hutan dan ke gunung. Dan kamu tanpa malu menyebut dirimu sedang bergerilya!”</p> <p>“Tetapi akulah yang punya gagasan untuk menyerang. Aku juga yang memimpin serangan fajar itu!” Wibagso tak kalah meradang.</p> <p>“Siapa yang mengangkatmu jadi pemimpin, Wibagso? Siapa? Waktu itu, kita tak lebih dari pemuda yang hanya bermodal nyali besar. Tak ada jabatan. Tak ada perbedaan kedudukan. Apalagi pimpinan resmi di medan perang!” hardik Durmo.</p> <p>“Tapi perang tak hanya pakai otot, Bung. Perang juga pakai otak. Pakai siasat. Dan akulah yang menyusun siasat itu!” napas Wibagso naik turun.</p> <p>“Tapi siasat tanpa nyali bagai kepala tanpa kaki!” bantah Durmo.</p> <p>“Bung Wibagso,” tukas Sidik, “kenapa kamu sibuk menghitung-hitung jasa yang sesungguhnya hampa?”</p> <p>Wajah Wibagso memerah. “Sidik, belajarlah kamu menghargai jasa orang lain. Jangan merasa paling pahlawan!”</p> <p>“Kapan aku membangga-banggakan diri? Kapan? Kamu ingat, waktu berjuang dulu, aku justru menghilang saat Panglima Besar mengunjungi kawan-kawan yang berhasil menggempur musuh. Kalau aku mau, bisa saja aku mencatatkan diri menjadi prajurit resmi, tercatat dalam buku negara. Dan aku yakin, saat negeri ini merdeka, aku mampu jadi petinggi yang bisa memborong proyek.</p>	<p>amount to nothing?”</p> <p>Wibagso blushed. “Learn to appreciate accomplishments of others. Don’t act as if you were the only hero.”</p> <p>“I don’t remember boasting. When did I do so? I left when the commander in chief came to visit after we successfully destroyed the enemy. I could have enlisted as an official soldier and be recorded in the state’s annuals. If I had done that, today I would be a high state official and acquire many projects. Thank God I died before that happened,” said Sidik.</p> <p>Durmo retorted. “I told my children and other descendants not to mention my services just to get a meager allowance, which would also have many deductions.”</p> <p>“All of you are hypocrites,” Wibagso railed.</p> <p>The moon blinked.</p> <p>The air was heavy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>The city breathed again. Hobos, prostitutes, and pickpockets woke and started their daily activities. Some went hawking, and others went begging or to polish shoes. Then there were those who lazily stretched on their sleeping mats.</p> <p>“Where are you going, Ajeng?” asked Yu Seblak.</p> <p>“To the motel. I have an appointment.” She applied her lipstick.</p> <p>“You’ll be making a lot of money. Who is your date today, Jeng?” Yu Seblak teased.</p> <p>“Why do you want to know? It’s a secret.”</p> <p>“It’s Jumingan, the police officer. He’s crazy about you. By the way, don’t forget to bring me back <i>gudeg</i> rice with egg. This</p>
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<p>Tapi, puji Tuhan, maut keburu menjemputku,” ujar Sidik.</p> <p>“Begitu juga aku,” sergah Durmo, “Aku berpesan kepada anak-anakku, kepada seluruh keturunanku agar mereka tidak mempersoalkan kepahlawananku demi minta uang tunjangan yang tidak seberapa. Itu pun masih banyak potongannya!”</p> <p>“Munafik! Kalian munafik!” bentak Wibagso.</p> <p>Bulan kembali mengerjap.</p> <p>Angin terasa mati.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>Napas kota kembali berhembus. Jantung kota kembali berdenyut. Gelandangan, pelacur, dan pencopet sudah bangun dan kembali memulai kesibukan masing-masing. Ada yang berangkat mengamen, mengemis, menyemir sepatu. Ada yang masih malas tiduran di tikar.</p> <p>“Ajeng, kamu mau kemana?” tanya Yu Seblak.</p> <p>“Ke penginapan. Ada janji,” jawab Ajeng sambil mengoleskan gincu ke bibirnya.</p> <p>“Wah, bakal dapat duit banyak, nih. Mau kencan dengan siapa, Jeng?” Yu Seblak menggoda.</p> <p>“Kok mau tau aja? Rahasia dong.”</p> <p>“Aku tahu, pasti kamu kencan dengan si Jumingan, Satpol PP itu. Benar, kan? Dia itu memang tergilagila sama kamu. Eh, kalau pulang tolong bawakan aku oleh-oleh, ya. Nasi gudeg telur. Ini kan berkat doa yang kusampaikan kepada para pahlawan itu. Dulu kamu kan minta ‘dagangan’ mu laris, iya kan?”</p> <p>“Beres, Yu. Gudeg sayap juga boleh. Tambah paha juga bisa,” tawa Ajeng</p>	<p>happened because I sent your prayer to the heroes.”</p> <p>Ajeng laughed happily. “Sure, Yu. You can even ask for gudeg with chicken wings or thighs.”</p> <p>“You look gorgeous. Just go now.”</p> <p>Kalur, a skilled pickpocket, woke and drank his remaining mineral water. He sat down beside Karep who was called the intellectual bum because he liked to read and spoke in long sentences that were difficult to understand. Karep was absorbed in the newspaper.</p> <p>“According to my analysis, the monument restoration plan is a trick of the government. There must be a hidden agenda,” Karep commented.</p> <p>“If the monument is restored, we won’t be able to live here, right?” asked Kalur.</p> <p>“Yep, that’s right.”</p> <p>“What will we do if it really happens?”</p> <p>“We will take to the street. We’ll mobilize all the homeless in this city.”</p> <p>Their conversation was interrupted by the newscast from Yu Seblak’s transistor radio. “Dr. Gingsir, the new mayor who replaced Raden Mas Picis, has canceled the Joang Monument restoration plan. According to him, the project is superfluous. Moreover, the petition to raise the status of Wibagso and his colleagues to that of national heroes has been rejected by the national history expert team. The fund of three billion rupiah will be used to provide food stamps to the poor.”</p> <p>Some of the bums cheered and started to dance. Others banged on mineral water containers, biscuit cans, bottles, and buckets. They danced while drinking cheap</p>
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<p>berderai.</p> <p>“Kamu cantik. Sudah berangkat sana.”</p> <p>Kalur, pencopet yang sudah punya “jam terbang tinggi”, bangun. Menengak sisa air mineral. Ia duduk di samping Karep yang diberi gelar “gelandangan intelektual” karena gemar bicara dengan kalimat-kalimat yang sulit dipahami. Karep asyik membaca koran.</p> <p>“Berdasarkan analisis saya, rencana pemugaran monumen ini hanya trik pemerintah. Pasti ada agenda-agenda tertentu,” ucap Karep.</p> <p>“Jadi, kalau monumen ini dipugar, kita malah kehilangan tempat, ya?” tanya Kalur.</p> <p>“Jelas, dong!”</p> <p>“Kalau benar-benar terjadi?”</p> <p>“Ya, kita harus turun ke jalan. Kita kerahkan semua gelandangan di kota ini.”</p> <p>Mendadak terdengar siaran warta berita dari radio transistor milik Yu Seblak. “Drs. Gingsir, Walikota yang menggantikan Raden Mas Picis, membatalkan rencana pemugaran Monumen Joang. Menurut dia, proyek itu mubazir. Apalagi pengajuan kedudukan menjadi pahlawan nasional bagi Wibagso dan kawan-kawan telah ditolak Tim Pakar Sejarah Nasional. Rencananya, dana sebesar tiga milyar dialihkan untuk memberikan bantuan pangan kepada masyarakat prasejahtera.”</p> <p>Beberapa gelandangan sontak bersorak. Mereka menari. Ada yang memukul-mukul galon air mineral, kaleng biskuit, botol-botol, dan ember. Ada yang berjoget sambil menengak minuman keras.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>Bulan pucat, diringkus kabut. Kota kembali tidur berselimut kegelapan. Namun di</p>	<p>liquor.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>Fog cloaked the pale moon. The city had gone back to sleep. However, in the local government building, the lights were still on.</p> <p>Dr. Gingsir sipped his wine and said, “I agree with your idea to build a mall here, Den Bei Taipan.”</p> <p>“Thank you. You are very supportive, sir. I’ve set everything up, including the necessary funds. I agree the main purpose of this collaboration is to share the profits. What do you think if I offered a thirty–seventy split?” Den Bei gulped his wine.</p> <p>“Den Bei, I have to propose this plan to the zoning board. Usually they need quite a bit of time to respond. As you know, they will also need <i>angpao</i>, a bribe. That’s just the way it is, and the way things are handled depends on the size of bribe we provide,” Gingsir said with laugh. “Is there a problem with the profit share?”</p> <p>“You figure that one out. You’re a smart businessman.”</p> <p>“How about thirty-five–sixty-five? This is huge. No one will give you such a crazy offer.”</p> <p>“It’s too small. I can offer the project to others. I know some great businessmen in the capital,” Gingsir bluffed.</p> <p>Den Bei’s face darkened. His forehead wrinkled. “How about forty–sixty? This is a very progressive and significant enhancement.”</p> <p>“Well, well, well. That’s a good number.”</p> <p>Both of them laughed.</p> <p>“You will have the opportunity to build as</p>
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sebuah gedung pemerintah daerah, tampak lampu menyala.

“Saya setuju saja jika Den Bei Taipan mau bikin mall di sini,” ujar Drs. Gingsir, usai menenggak anggur.

“Terima kasih. Terima kasih. Bapak ternyata sangat welcome. Saya sudah menyiapkan segalanya. Termasuk dana untuk ini dan itu. Dan saya setuju, prinsip kerjasama ini adalah bagi hasil keuntungan. Bagaimana kalau saya mengajukan angka 30:70.” Den Bei menenggak anggur.

“Den Bei, saya mesti mengusulkan hal ini pada Dewan. Dan biasanya, jawabannya agak lama. Anda tahu sendiri, mereka juga butuh angpao. Yaahhh... seperti biasanya. Dan, lancar tidaknya segala urusan ya tergantung besar kecilnya angpao,” ujar Gingsir sambil tertawa.

“Apa dalam hal bagi hasil keuntungan masih ada masalah?”

“Ya, terjemahkan sendiri. Anda kan konglomerat yang cerdas.”

“Bagaimana kalau... kalau... 35: 65. Ini sangat besar. Tidak ada tawaran segila ini.”

“Tampaknya angka itu masih terlalu kecil. Dan saya masih bisa menawarkan proyek ini kepada konglomerat lain. Saya kenal beberapa penguasa besar dari Ibu Kota.” Gingsir mencoba menggertak.

Wajah Den Bei tampak terlipat. Keningnya berkerutan. “Bagaimana kalau 40:60? Ini peningkatan yang sangat progresif dan signifikan.”

“Well... well... well.... Itu angka yang bagus.”

Keduanya tertawa.

“Dan Den Bei masih bisa bikin mall di kota ini. Berapa pun. Anda bisa pilih, alun-alun,

many malls in this city as you want. Just choose the place: the city square, the old Rotenberg fortress, or the Joang Monument.”

“I’ll take all of them. But because of space, I will build my first mall in Joang Monument location. It’s a very viable site, right in the middle of the city.”

“That’s a smart choice, even visionary. I don’t mind having that crumbling monument removed.”

They laughed and shook hands.

A few days later, the heat of the sun was met by upheaval around the monument.

“Traitor. Liar. Cheater. Windbag. The authorities come and go, and are all the same. They continue to stab us in the back with their betrayals.” Wibagso stamped his foot and made the monument shake.

“They think we’re nothing but blocks of cold stone. They want to grind us into the grains of a dark past,” Ratri said.

Sidik, Durmo, and Cempluk smiled.

“Why are you silent? We will be destroyed. Look at those bulldozers coming. March on. We have to survive,” cried Wibagso.

An eviction officer shouted through a loudspeaker, “You have to leave. Get out.” His voice overlapped the roar of bulldozers.

In front of the monument, Yu Seblak led her friends to stop the eviction. “We have to survive. We will head off the bulldozers. Ajeng, Karep, Kalur, where are you?” cried Yu Seblak. Her face lit up.

“We are here. Right behind you,” they replied in unison.

<p>bekas benteng Rotenberg, atau di Monumen Joang.”</p> <p>“Semua tempat akan saya ambil. Tapi, berdasarkan pertimbangan strategi ruang, saya akan bangun dulu mall di Monumen Joang. Tempat itu sangat seksi. Tepat di tengah kota.”</p> <p>“Oooh, itu pilihan yang cerdas, visioner. Saya nggak keberatan monumen yang kumuh itu digusur.”</p> <p>Keduanya tertawa. Keduanya jabat tangan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">***</p> <p>Beberapa hari kemudian, terjadi keributan di Monumen Joang. Cahaya matahari yang sangat terik seolah semakin membakar suasana yang memanas.</p> <p>“Pengkhianat! Culas! Licik. Sombong! Penguasa demi penguasa datang ternyata hanya bertukar rupa. Mereka tetap saja menikamkan pengkhianatan demi pengkhianatan di tubuh kita!” Wibagso menghentakkan kakinya hingga bangunan monumen itu bergetar.</p> <p>“Mereka menganggap kita tak lebih dari bongkahan batu beku. Mereka hendak menggerus kita menjadi butiran-butiran masa silam yang kelim!” teriak Ratri.</p> <p>Sidik, Durmo, dan Cempluk tersenyum.</p> <p>“Kenapa kalian diam? Kita ini akan diluluhlantakkan! Lihatlah bulldoser-buldoser itu datang. Berderap-derap. Kita harus bertahan. Bertahan!” pekik Wibagso.</p> <p>Terdengar suara petugas penggusuran dari sebuah megafon. “Kalian harus menyingkir! Menyingkir!!” Suara itu tumpang-tinding dengan deru mesin bulldoser.</p> <p>Di depan monumen, Yu Seblak memimpin penghadangan penggusuran. “Kita harus bertahan. Kita lawan bulldoser-buldoser itu!</p>	<p>The roar of bulldozer engines grew louder and surrounded the monument. Eviction officers and heavily armed police stood guard. The bulldozers pushed ahead, their compact boomers ready to plow into the monument.</p> <p>“Though they’re just bums, they still try to defend us. You should be ashamed,” said Wibagso.</p> <p>“We don’t fight to defend our pride as heroes. We fight for those who have the right to defend their lives,” cried Sidik.</p> <p>Wibagso organized their defense as if he were ordering the revolutionist when fighting the colonial army. “I don’t need any explanation, just your firm support. Ratri, jump into the cab and strangle the driver. Cempluk, hold the boom and block it with your body. Sidik and Durmo, destroy the engines. Go, hurry.”</p> <p>The bulldozers moved ahead and ran into the remaining homeless. Karep, Ajeng, and the others scampered.</p> <p>“You are cowards,” said Yu Seblak.</p> <p>“It is useless to fight. They’re so many of them,” said Kalur.</p> <p>“Let’s just get out. If they are willing to crush the heroes, they definitely won’t care about cockroaches like us. Get out. Get out.” Karep tried to drag Yu Seblak, who stood a few meters from the bulldozers.</p> <p>Yu Seblak remained. Still fighting, she took off her clothes until she wore only her panties and bra. She fluttered her dress in the air.</p> <p>“Hey, you bullies. Come and fight me. Come on!”</p> <p>The bulldozers pushed ahead and crushed Yu Seblak. There was a scream.</p>
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Ajeng, Karep, Kalur di mana kalian? Di mana?” teriak Yu Seblak. Wajahnya menyal.

“Kami di sini! Di belakangmu!” jawab mereka kompak.

Deru mesin bulldoser semakin keras, mengepung monumen. Para petugas pengurusan tampak berjaga-jaga bersama ratusan polisi bersenjata lengkap. Bulldoser-bulldoser semakin merangsek. Moncongnya tampak ganas, siap menyeruduk monumen.

“Lihatlah, mereka yang hanya gelandangan saja membela kita. Mestinya kalian malu!” teriak Wibagso.

“Wibagso! Kalau kami akhirnya melawan itu bukan membela kepongahan kita sebagai pahlawan. Tapi membela mereka yang punya hak hidup!” teriak Sidik.

“Aku tak butuh penjelasan. Aku hanya butuh kejelasan sikap! Ratri, meloncatlah kamu, masuk ke ruang kemudi, lalu cekik leher sopir bulldoser. Cempluk, tahan moncong bulldoser itu. Ganjal dengan tubuhmu. Sidik dan kamu Durmo, hancurkan mesin-mesin bulldoser itu. Cepat!” Wibagso mengatur perlawanan seperti mengatur para pejuang ketika menghadapi tentara-tentara penjajah.

Bulldoser-bulldoser terus merangsek. Menerjang orang-orang yang tetap bertahan. Karep, Ajeng, dan banyak gelandangan lainnya, berlarian lintang-pukang.

“Kalian benar-benar pengecut!” teriak Yu Seblak.

“Sia-sia melawan mereka. Jumlah mereka ternyata buanyak sekali!” teriak Kalur.

“Kita menyingkir saja! Pahlawan saja mereka gilas, apalagi kecoa macam kita. Menyingkir! Menyingkir!” Karep mencoba menarik Yu Seblak yang tetap berdiri

Wibagso startled. Ratri screamed hysterically. Durmo, Sidik, and Cempluk, went crazy. In a rampage they hit the bulldozers with anything they could get their hands on. But all their efforts were in vain. The bulldozers toppled the statues, collapsed and crushed the heroes.

The moon blinked in the sky. The wind died.

“You have killed us twice,” Wibagso said in a whisper.

His voice penetrated Dr. Gingsir’s speech at the official opening of the mall. The voices of the heroes will echo through the passing of time, but only an ear sharp enough to hear silence can hear those voices, those grievances.

beberapa meter dari bulldoser-bulldoser.

Yu Seblak tetap bertahan. Tetap melawan. Ia lucuti pakaiannya. Tinggal celana dalam dan kutang. Dasternya ia kibar-kibarkan ke udara.

“Dasar kalian penindas! Ayo lawan aku! Ayooooo!”

Bulldoser-bulldoser itu tanpa ampun menggilas tubuh Yu Seblak. Terdengar jeritan.

Wibagso tersentak. Ratri menjerit seperti kemasukan setan. Durmo, Sidik, dan Cempluk, tampak kalap. Mereka mengamuk. Menghantam bulldoser-bulldoser itu dengan benda apa saja. Namun, sia-sia. Justru patung-patung pahlawan itu kini bertumbangan dan hancur dilumat bulldoser-bulldoser.

Bulan di angkasa mengerjap. Angin mati.

“Kalian telah membunuh kami untuk kedua kalinya,” ujar Wibagso lirih.

Ucapan itu menerobos pembukaan resmi mall oleh wali kota Drs. Gingsir dan hingga kini, suara-suara patung-patung itu masih terus mengalun, bergema menembus lapisan-lapisan waktu. Namun hanya telinga setajam kesunyian yang mampu menangkap suara itu, gugatan itu.