

# SCENT OF BIBLIOSMIA



Fakultas Sastra  
Universitas Sanata Dharma

## **SCENT OF BIBLIOSMIA**

Class B Creative Writing Batch 2016

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## PREFACE

*The Scent of Bibliosmia* is the bag of our ideas and imaginations. This book offers different kinds of unparalleled stories produced by 27 heads in the Creative Writing class B of 2019. It serves as an evidence of how enthusiastic we were in the creative writing class, especially during the making of these short stories. We did not realize that in doing so, we are creating our own place in history.

After High School graduation, we have year books to recall the memories we had with our friends, back in the school days. Years ahead, when all of us have graduated from the college, living in places far away from one another, when we start to forget the names and faces of our college friends, the lingering memories of our

friends and of the happiness they gave to us will lead us to reopen this book, the book that we agreed to call as *The Scent of Bibliosmia*.

This book will take us, and you as well, back to the memory of how unruly and wild our ideas and imaginations were back in college days. *The Scent of Bibliosmia* will take us to places never before seen in the world.

May this book stays in libraries throughout the world as it grows old, outliving its writers, filling the air in libraries where it belongs with a particularly pleasant scent that is *The Scent of Bibliosmia*.

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# The Wijatmokos

Adelina Sekar (164214044)

**They** are just like any ordinary family out there. Widodo and Ayu were blessed with two beautiful children, Arjuna as the oldest sibling and Putri as the youngest. The Wijatmokos is a pure Javanese family who has spent all their lives living in Yogyakarta. A city that is capable of enchanting the hearts of those visiting with its humble people, beautiful culture and delicious culinary. Widodo works in an IT company with a

good salary, good enough to support his family and pay for Arjuna till he is in college. “You don’t have to look for part-time jobs or as such, just focus on your study. Graduate quickly and make Papa proud”. Arjuna is not like any ordinary Javanese man, as he is in his mid-twenties the colors of his eyes get lighter year by year. He was gifted with unique different colored eyes since he was born to this world. These unique eyes are like the eyes of some Persian cats, due to this Arjuna feels a special bond with the rescue cats he has at home, which he has plenty of them.

Yogyakarta, 26th April 2013. The worst day ever. If Arjuna could time travel, he would love to go back to this specific day and change everything. It was a rather nice day, the sun was shining up in the sky, the birds are chirping beautifully and Arjuna could feel the little breeze



that brushed his wavy hair backward. He was not alone, he was accompanied by his father Widodo Wijatmoko, who looks a lot younger for his age. Funny thing is, whenever both of them are out somewhere, a lot of people may have mistaken Widodo as Arjuna's brother and Widodo would just nod his head as a sign that he agrees and giggles. This sometimes made Arjuna to roll his eyes lazily. Both of them just got out of the shower after a long day at the gym, as they were heading to the car Arjuna is busy searching for the car key in his bag. It has become a habit of Arjuna losing a car key and Widodo is sure that his son will find it any time soon. Not to mention this always happens every time he goes out with Arjuna. As Arjuna was kept busy looking for his lost car keys, which now he can't find anywhere not in his pockets; bags; nor his father gym bag.

“You know what I’m just gonna head back to the gym, do some pull up. Feel free to call me when you’re done looking for the keys.”

“HAHAHA very funny, Mr. Widodo.” He rolled his eyes.

Arjuna hasn’t realized his phone has been playing one of Arctic Monkey’s song, which means someone is trying to reach him. Widodo initiated to pick the ring because it seemed as like the owner of that phone hasn’t realized his phone has been ringing for the past 2 minutes.

“Hallo” greeted Widodo enthusiastically.

“Hmmm”

“What else?”

“Okay”

“Alright honey”

“Don’t worry, we won’t”

“Be there in a few. Ciao” and he ended the call.

Later that day, Arjuna and his father made their way to IndoSupermarket before heading home as previously Ayu, Arjuna’s mother has specifically asked them to get some more bread and butter when she called earlier. Thanks to Mama Ayu, Arjuna finally found the car keys, she casually said, “Go back to the gym and check your locker” and there the key was. For a slight second Arjuna thought that mothers in this world have superpowers in finding lost items. It took them less than 20 minutes to get everything Ayu have asked and they quickly made their way out from a bunch of sweaty ladies fighting over makeup sales. Arjuna was driving the car with a speed of 50 km/hour while singing their way

home to some Queens song played on the radio. Arjuna was ready to hit the pedal after stopping at a railway when all of sudden out of nowhere a black sedan car hit their car really hard from the left side. At that moment all Arjuna could think of was the condition of his father who was sitting on the passenger seat, as their car was pushed aside a couple of meters till the windows break into million pieces and a loud bang from his father head hitting the dashboard. The last thing he saw was Widodo's bleeding head before he finally blacked out.

“PAPAAAAAAA”, Arjuna's scream filled the white hospital room as he woke up. He was alone in that room, accompanied only with IV fluids passing through a needle to his right hand.

It was devastating for Arjuna as he opened his eyes but only to be greeted with the news of

his passing father. He was not ready for this; his father hasn't seen him graduating from college and he still needed those warm hugs from Widodo. His gym partner is forever gone from this world. A funeral was organized later that week, family and friends of Arjuna's beloved father came to deliver their final respect. It was not an easy day for Arjuna and his family, the last day they were able to see the face of the man they loved dearly. Sadness, anger and pain were deeply felt by those who Widodo have left behind on this earth. Arjuna could tell from his mum's face that she really tried to hide all the emotions she is feeling right now. She tried to be a strong wife although the man she married 26 years ago is no longer beside her, her first love whom she loves so deeply. Throughout the funeral Mama Ayu was not crying, she was rather silent with vacuous eyes locked onto her

husband's casket. The police arrived just as everyone left the house, each one of them hugged Mama Ayu before they stepped out of the front door. They sat down in the living room as the police delivered the result of the investigation. Putri was still sobbing and Mama Ayu tried to comfort her by gently rubbing her back. The policewoman spoke up, Arjuna glazed at her name tag on her right chest, her name was Kinanthi.

“First of all, we want to say our deep condolence on the passing of Mr. Wijaya, and may God grant peace that you and your family seek. Moving on, the result of the investigation stated that the suspect was a 39 years old Ian Kertanegara.” As she took a deep breath, she continued.

“He was reported drunk on the day of the accident and being charged with 2 years of prison time.” “This is bullshit, that man just killed my father and he only got 2 years of prison time?” Arjuna replied.

“I’m sorry but that has been decided by the court”, she replied.

“For God’s sake, it seems like I have to bring justice on my own.” That very sentence coming from Arjuna’s mouth managed to silence everyone in that room.

A week has passed after Widodo’s funeral and every day since then a numerous family, friends and neighbors came one after another to mourn the late Mr. Widodo by reading the Quran continuously. Flowers, messages and phone calls keep coming from family friends aboard who can’t make it to the funeral.

“I really miss Papa, I miss his long warm hugs”, Putri said as she approached Arjuna.

“I know, I miss him too. We will get through this together.” Arjuna replied while hugging his little sister.

“I can’t believe he is really gone, I just can’t wrap my head around it”

Arjuna has had a sleepless night in his condition drunk ever since. In his mind, he kept thinking “Was it my fault that he is no longer with us anymore? Stupid, I shouldn’t have asked him to go to the gym with me that day!!”. It has been a habit for him to come home really drunk and sit by the windowsill to stare at the black starry sky. He was not alone, often accompanied with Fluffy’s loud bark every time a car passes the next-door front yard. One night, however, he could hear a woman voice, it was more of



sobbing. After listening much longer, Arjuna knows that it was his mother. She was crying. Arjuna's heartache, her cry was unbearable.

The following morning, Arjuna came downstairs with a backpack on his shoulders. Mama Ayu was in the kitchen, busy making fried rice for breakfast. Her nose could smell a strong masculine parfum from behind her and she looked back.

"Where are you going, young man?" She asked while coughing from the strong smell coming from her fried rice.

"Uni."

"Oh, right. It's Monday already huh?" She laughed awkwardly.

"Yeah. Okay bye." and just like that Arjuna was gone.

Like any other city on Monday morning, the roads in Jogja was crowded, filled with cars and motorbikes of those trying to get to different destinations and start their day. Luckily it wasn't raining that day, otherwise, Arjuna would have to wear his raincoat throughout his journey. It's not like as if Arjuna doesn't like wearing a raincoat or anything, but his coat is soaking wet from the rain the night before and it must have smelled disgusting. To be honest, Arjuna lied to his mom when she asked where he was going, the fact was he rode his scooter past his university without any hesitation. After more than 30 minutes on the road, he parked his scooter in a parking lot of a police station. He removed his helmet and walked in a rush to the front desk.

“My name is Arjuna Wijatmoko and I'm here for my father's investigation files.”

“Sorry but that case has been closed and our officers have already delivered everything we have regarding the accident a few days ago.”

“But the files you delivered wasn’t enough, as I read through the files the details weren’t specific” Arjuna’s voice started to rise and his hand gave a loud bang on the front desk. Not to forget he pointed his finger to the lady’s face.

“I will have to ask you to leave no, such behavior can’t be tolerated here.” When in the beginning the lady’s voice was calm but not this time, it had turned cold.”

“All of you are useless, this is supposed to be a public service. You people are supposed to bring justice, but it seems to me you are doing quite the opposite thing.” Arjuna looked at the lady right in her eyes for a long time, suddenly he

could tell that she was lying, he had a feeling she was covering something up.

“Hmm I smell something fishy going on around here,” Said Arjuna with a smirk.

“...”

“But not to worry, the truth will come up eventually.” Just as he finished his sentence, he turned around and left the policewoman speechless.

Arjuna couldn't clear his mind. Call him crazy but he thought back then at the police station he had a superpower. Not the one like Superman has, nor Thor, he is sure as hell he is just a normal human being. He was born on earth, he even saw his birth certificate from one of the hospitals in Jogja. However, if it was true that he is normal, how is it possible for him to

have cat's eyes, especially the ones which are completely different colors. All of this thinking can make him go crazy. You know what, he didn't want to take it seriously, maybe it was just a feeling back then. But one thing for sure, he will bring justice for his beloved father. Mama Ayu and Putri deserved to know the truth.

After his unpleasant visit to the police station, Arjuna rode his scooter to his father's office. He knew very well Mr. Ari, he was Widodo's boss. The young boss was often invited over for dinner but mostly he came home because they had some important work stuff to be discussed more privately. Arjuna knew about this, as they always go to Widodo's study room and closed the door shut. Arjuna knocked on the door marked with "Ari Janada CEO".

Someone inside opened the door, surprisingly it was not Mr. Ari himself but a red-haired girl wearing a tight black mini skirt. She was rather surprised with Arjuna's unexpected visit, but she let him in and closed the door.

"Oh, Arjuna. How are you doing? I would like to say my deep condolence, it's terrible to hear about your loss and I express my sincere sympathy for you, Mrs. Ayu and Putri. Your father was truly a great man, it saddens me that our company had lost a really hard-working man."

He walked around the table and hugged Arjuna tightly.

"Thank you, Mr. Ari. I really appreciate it." Said Arjuna with a little smile on his face.

“If you and your family need anything feel free to contact me directly. I also want to apologise for my absent at the funeral. I had to fly to Singapore for my mother’s heart operation.” Ari took a step forward as he pulled his name card from his side pocket and handing it to Arjuna.

“That’s okay, I hope everything is going well with your mother.”

“Thank you Arjuna”

“To be honest, I came today to ask you if it would be okay for me taking all of Papa’s works stuff related home.”

“Well I don’t think I can make that possible, it’s the company’s policy. Anyway, why do you need such things?”

“Umm... I don’t know. I just thought maybe I could feel more connected to him.” Arjuna lowered his voice seeking sympathy.

“As much as I want to help you and your family at this very moment, but for such thing, it’s way above my reach. However, my previous offer still stands though.”

“Alright”

Arjuna mumbled in his heart, he can’t believe what a stupid move he just pulled. Of course, Mr. Ari wouldn’t give him the documents, he is currently standing in one of the best IT company in Jogja for God’s sake. They wouldn’t hand out such important information to outsiders. As he made his way out, he accidentally passed his father’s office.



They put his name on the front door, craved in white capital letters with black background. He slid the black glass door slowly to the right, as he made an entrance he stopped to look around, luckily it seemed like he was the only one on that floor. It didn't take him long to copy all the documents from the computer to his hard drive and in just 20 minutes Arjuna was out of the office.

The clock hand had reached eight by the time Arjuna got home. The night was cold, from the front door Arjuna could see Mama Ayu with her black scarf around her neck and Putri clothed in her floral onesie. They were sitting in the living room with the lamp on the side table that had been turned on. By the look of it, Mama Ayu was helping Putri studying.

“Assalamualaikum” Arjuna said as he stepped in the house.

“Waalaikumsalam” They both replied.

“Someone is looking rather happy today by the look of it. What did you just a girl out or something?” Putri asked Arjuna without looking at him, she was still focused on her math homework.

“Hmmm did I? Or maybe while you were at school I went to your room and took all of your saving money to treat my friends Batagor and Siomay.

“You did WHAT???” She immediately ran to her room and checked on her saving.

“MommMMM, I can’t find my monkey. It’s not here. Mas Arjuna come on it’s not funny, give it back.”

“You guys, you are making Mama’s head dizzy, Arjuna stop bullying your little sister, you know how cranky she can get. And for you Putri, your monkey is in your side table the one on the left with a **KEEP OUT** sticker on it, look properly before saying it is gone.”

“HAHAHAHAHAHA.” Arjuna laughed so hard till he can’t take it anymore and his stomach started to hurt.”

“Eh Arjuna, stop laughing. Your breath smelled like Batagor and The Kotak, go brush your teeth now.” Mama Ayu command in her loud voice while pointing at the sink next to the staircase.

“HAHAHAHAHAHA.” This time it was Putri who was laughing, she was peeking by her room door while hugging her money tightly onto her chest.

“MAMAAAAA!!! It doesn’t smell. Anyway, how was your day mom? You look like you can get an early sleep, those Gucci eyebags are starting to show themselves now.”

“Your right, I think I need my beauty sleep now. In exchange, you sit with your little sister here and teach her some math. She has a homework due tomorrow.

“Ahhh, that’s not fair. Even I’m tired after a long day at uni.”

“Junaaa...”

“Joking mom. HEHE”

Being a student on his 6th semester was tough, exams and school works are waiting ahead. For almost a month he had behaved himself, his present in class was excellent, and most importantly he didn’t have much time to bully his

little sister due to the continuous school work given. Juna was in a food court eating Batagor and Es Teler when his phone vibrated. He was about to pick the ring, but it had said Unknown Number on the screen. After 10 seconds debating whether to pick it up or not, on the last vibrate, he decided to press the green button.

“Hello”

“...”

“Hello, I know it may seem weird but I’m a friend of your father.”

“Oh, okay.”

“The reason I’m calling is because I want to help you get justice as you deserved. Meet me tomorrow night at the old pub in Prawirotaman Street at 9 o’clock.”

Tut...tut...tut

In Juna's mind, "That was the weirdest phone call I had ever received, the caller didn't give me the change to talk and he had some balls commanding me to meet some stranger I don't know. As if I agree to meet him, but he said he wanted to help him bring justice he deserved. However, it won't hurt if he checks this guy out, they are meeting in a public place anyway, if something terrible happens to me I can just scream. I also get a bonus, I can check if this guy is lying or not with my super-duper cool eyes, testing whether it is true or not I have superpower."

9 p.m. the following night. Prawirotaman street was crowded that day, many tourists had come to have a drink or two with some friends to catch up what they had been missing out. Juna walked into an old Pub by the end of the street, it

was not as full as the other ones out there. Maybe because those ones had live music, and this one only plays music from an old radio beside the bar table. Juna looked around but he only saw a bunch of girls at a round table in the corner, which means the anonymous have not reached yet. Without waiting any longer, he made his way to the bartender and asked for a glass of beer. He was about to put the glass on his lips when someone touched his right shoulder, it surprised him for a bit.

“You looked rather shocked after seeing me. Is it because I look really old? Haha.” Said the grey-haired man with thick glasses and a burning cigarette in his right hand.

“No, not at all. Back to the point here. Who are you exactly? How did you get my

number? What do you mean by saying I deserved justice the other day?”

“Wow slow down young man. To begin with, my name is Wijaya Kusuma, I’m an old friend of your father. We were friends in the 80s, best buds actually but I’m surprised he hasn’t mentioned a single word about me. Oh probably because I disappeared from his life many years ago, my life in Indonesia didn’t do me any good so I moved to New Zealand to find some peace. I just can’t stand how these Indonesian people’s way of thinking, they are so close-minded. Anyway, a few days ago I finally get a chance to check through my emails and it did me a great shock after reading one of the emails my old pal sent me regarding the passing of your father. I directly flew to Indonesia and on my way there, I have been searching what actually happened to



your father because it doesn't make sense to me that the suspect only got sentenced for 2 years after taking the life of an innocent man in his drunk condition driving a vehicle."

Juna looked at the old man for a while and all that the could see in his eyes were the truth. Juna finally said.

"That's the problem, I have been searching for any leads to this man but I couldn't find anything on him. The other day I went through my dad's old work files hoping to find my dad's connection with Ian Kertanegara, but I found nothing."

"Of course, you wouldn't find anything on that guy, just so you know he is the son of Jaya Kertanegara, the founder of the Kertanegara Groups."

“Pardon me, who?” Arjuna took out his smartphone from his back pocket and directly click the Google icon

“Don’t bother searching his name online, just put down your phone. Even Google can’t help you, it doesn’t know who he is.”

“If Google who is basically the God of the internet doesn’t know a damn thing about this man then how is it possible for you to know?”

“I’m just lucky to have some friends back in the old days. Anyway, in short, all you need to know is this Kertanegara family is not an ordinary family, they are the snacks in the dark world some say. These people deal with drugs, black market and illegal weapon internationally, you can imagine how strong their protection is. It is impossible to track them, they have eyes everywhere. Till one day when the youngest son

Ian Kertanegara got drunk after attending an important meeting with his father's client and you know what I mean right? I don't have to continue."

"Yeah, I know. However, I don't care whose son he is, all that mattered is he killed my father and he is going to pay for that. I'm going to take him down with my own hands."

"Wow wow, did you really listen to a single damn word I just said a few minutes ago? They have eyes everywhere!!! His father may have bribed the police to give the shortest jail time to Ian.

"Help me then."

"That's why I'm here. I'm going to train you until you are ready to fight the Kertanegara armies."

“You are going to train me?” Juna was not sure with what he is hearing right now. As in how can a man already in his late sixties train him.”

“Don’t you dare look at me like that, I know what you are thinking right now. For your information, back in New Zealand, I joined the deadliest street gang in New Zealand history, they are called the Mongle Mop. We were trained every day with the professionals, so you don’t have to worry I have got some moves I could teach you.”

“Alright, I believe you. When can we start?”

“Tomorrow morning, I will WA you the address.”

“Thank you, uncle”

Fast forward.

It took Juna almost two years to finish his training with Uncle Wijaya. He trained every day to gather his strength in an old gym around Gejayan Street. Most of the time, his training got interrupted with numerous phone calls from Uncle Wijaya's Mongle Mop pals. From what he heard from their conversation, his friends wanted him to go back to New Zealand and rejoined their gang, but the stubborn uncle kept rejecting their wish. Juna and Uncle Wijaya had planned their strategies to take down Ian Kertanegara, as soon as he got picked up from jail by his father's armies, they are going to follow their cars till a certain location and Juna is going to kill Ian. The day of Ian's release finally came, Juna and Uncle Wijaya were already waiting for him outside the police station. They sat in a black Range Rover with black shades up their noses. The prison door made a quite loud sound from the

microphone located in a tower nearby, which means a prisoner just got released. Ian came out wearing black jeans and a sky-blue shirt, not to forget a big smile on his face. Juna observed each and every move Ian made, but it got to the point when he saw his big smile on Ian's face, he couldn't take it any longer, he had to end this at this very moment. With Wijaya's unguarded sight, Ian rapidly got off the car with a Raging Bull 454 on his hand ready to release the bullet.

"No Juna, you are going to mess up our plans" Shouted Wijaya as he got out of the passenger seat and followed Arjuna in front of the car.

"I don't care, I will end this right here right now"

“Hey remember me?” With Juna’s deep voice he greeted Ian who looked clueless with what is really happening right now.

“I do actually, you are that man’s son.” Ian answer with a laugh at the end of his sentence.

“The person you called “that men” is dead because of you bastard!! With a wrathful voice, Juna pulled the gun and aimed exactly at Ian’s forehead.

“And this is for him. I hope you go to hell.”

A bullet is discharged of the Raging Bull 454, producing visible flash, leaving a powerful and loud shockwave followed by chemical gunshot residue in the air. Without Juna noticing, a red dot has been placed on his right chest by a

sniper located up in the tower and at the same time, the bullet is released.



# Sorry

Grace Shintia (164214045)

"**She** is beautiful" said some of the students in the corner of the class, "Yeah she is our class asset" one of the students said. Other said, "Her eyes is very iconic". "Uh please I'm a lady and I love her style, I don't know how about the boys" chirped the student while looking for Instagram photos of Ruby, the beautiful name of the 18-year-old girl. She was a third grade high school student who would celebrate her graduation. A girl with sweet smile, tall body, wavy black hair

and tanned skin. She was an attractive girl, so confidence and a principle person. Ruby was described as the standard of beauty among girls in her age. In her school, many young girls wanted to be like her. Ruby's name is almost everyday sounding.

The time had come, Ruby graduated from the high school. At the moment of her graduation, from her back, she heard "Ruby congratulations!" A shrill voice of Eveline ran towards her and then Ruby replied Eveline with a loud voice "Yess me!" It made all eyes point at her. It was unknown what day it was that made Eveline come with a flower in her hand.

"This is special for you." said Eve.

"Why are you so sweet?! Eve pinch me please, is this a prank or a sweet dream in an early morning?" asked Ruby.

"Prank is not my middle name, and yes I want to give you a special graduation day, so it is for you" Said Eve while giving Ruby the flowers in her grip. The greeting continued to flow from her friends on the graduation of Ruby from high school. Greetings directly came from his fellow schoolmates or from online friends through messages that were in her cellphone.

After the graduation ceremony at school, Ruby decided to go home. When she was at home, as usual, from the front porch Ruby shouted "Mom I'm home" yet there was no answer, instead she found out the door was locked and the clear window glass was covered by curtains as if no one inside. "Your daughter come home mom" she said several times. Then she went to the kitchen door to look for the existence of her mother, but after a few steps, Ruby was

surprised by the surprise of papa and his mother "my love, congratulations for your achievement" melodious voice of all voices in the world that Ruby heard was the voice of his mother. Hadn't have time to answer, her daddy hug and kissed Ruby while saying "You did it, say hi to your dream, you're near dear". With tears of emotion, Ruby hug her parents and said "thankyou dad, mom". "Let's go to our room for praying and being grateful for everything," said her father. Her father invited her to do such a habit since she lived in a pastor's family.

Ruby and her parents went to the room and sat at the kitchen dining table before praying together. As a father, Ruby's father gave an advice to his only daughter.

"Dear, thank you" said her father opening the conversation at that time.

"For all my delinquency dad?" Ruby asked.

"For you who always listen to daddy's advice, thank you for keeping our family's good name," his father continued. "18 years ago, I chose Ruby as your name because it was a prayer for you, daddy wanted you to be a beautiful girl in everything, like a jewelry that never stop to beautify everyone yet has the power like stone to protect yourself and everything around you" said his father.

"And you are like that, and we beg you to stay in that way." continued her mother.

"There is nothing more than a word thank you to daddy and mommy and sorry for everything" said Ruby.

"We are always for you dear, let's pray together" said her father, holding Ruby's and her

mother's hand. The prayer ended with the word amen from her father. All three had been silent for a while, suddenly Ruby ventured to ask her parents.

"Mom dad, I want to continue my study out from this town, can I?"

"No, mommy isn't ready to be far away from you Ruby" her mother's answered,

"I want a new experience that I can might find in another town mom" Ruby answered.

"I understand your desire dear, but you need to consider your mother's concern, I believe she isn't just worried, because her feelings are strong" said her father

"What are you worrying about mom? What are incriminating you dad? I just want

more than what Ruby today is and that's all for our future” Ruby answered.

Her mother replied “You are beautiful, you are almost perfect, I don't want the world destroys you dear”, Ruby said “why do you sound like losing your faith mom?” in a rather rising voice his mother answered "Because I am your mother!" she said while leaving the table. Ruby kept her wish and beg her father “Dad, please” As if hypnotized by Ruby words, her father said “I'll explain to your mother dear, just prepare yourself carefully”

“Thank you daddy, I love you so much” said Ruby.

Day after day had passed, although at first her mother did not agree with her wishes, finally, her father could took her wife's heart. In a break before leaving her parents, Ruby learnt a few

things. In the little kitchen, it was heard "this Practical and healthy Breakfast Recipe" with her mother patiently taught Ruby while advising her. Suddenly, his father came and gave teachings to Ruby "Dear, remember everything that I have been taught to you. I and your mom will not be able to watch you anytime, please always be a good one wherever you are, be salt and light for the world, keep what you should guard " said her father, "Remember to chase your holiness, protect it! Because holiness is not a choice but is an obligation" he continued. While taking a seat in the kitchen rocking chair, Ruby said "Don't be afraid my dad, I will be what you want to be".

All preparations were considered sufficient and at the time of departure of Ruby to Yogyakarta, the city chosen by her to continue her study, Ruby left alone and not escorted



because her parents were bound by their service. Messages, prayers and support continued to flow until Ruby arrived in the city of Yogyakarta after traveling a distance for approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes from Banjarmasin. "Yogyakarta, please befriend with me" was the first sentence from her mouth when Ruby set her foot in the city. Day after day had passed, Ruby began to befriend with new people around her and the attention of her parents did not stop flowing to her. Every morning, Ruby's mom always called her. Sometimes it was just for asking "Have you pray this morning?" Nothing changed from both. Only Ruby slowly forgot who she was.

Ruby had many close friends in Yogyakarta but she had a friend who continued to be with her, Eveline. She was still a good friend just like when she was in the high school. One night, Ruby

and her friends chose to hangout and she introduced Eveline to her friends.

"Eveline this is my friend Vano, Angel and Nuel. They are my friends who comfort me when I miss home and everything"

Eveline answered while giving her hand "oh hi, you guys are cool." There was no more conversation because Eveline was not as easy as Ruby in socializing, and she had never realized that Ruby's new friends made her forget about her father's teachings. "trrrtttt..Where's the party tonight?" said a short message from the chat group in Ruby's phone "Open table, again?" Asked Ruby by a message and it was replied by a message "it's a must". From the word 'again' typed in by Ruby, Eveline understood that it was not the first time Ruby joined the party. Ruby originally did not want to be seduced by the things of the

world like this, but precisely at this time, it was that Ruby. "Guys I wanna go home because there are still some affairs" Eveline broke the silence when Ruby and her friends were busy with their respective cellphones" Wow, won't you joined the party? "Asked one of Ruby's friends," Thank you, maybe next time" replied Eveline and left the table. In the middle of the party that night, in a state of heavy drunkenness, Ruby were lying weakly on one of the closed couches at night with her clothes "you can see" she was then asked by several people "Ruby you need rest in the room" asked a man who could not he remembered then "yes" said Ruby, then she was taken by several men. At dawn, that's where all reluctance occurred outside his consciousness, Ruby was raped by some people.

For several months she found herself not menstruating. Ruby was pregnant, she didn't tell anyone about her pregnancy, but this made her almost crazy, so she contact Eveline "Eve sorry" and Eveline answered "what happened?" "Come to me please" said her. Then Eveline came to her, Ruby told her everything. "I want to die Eve" Ruby said at the end of her story. Eveline who was crying with anger at that time said "stop your stupidity by! how far have you walked until you forgot who you are?" then what should I do Eve? help me, sorry Eve" Ruby fell down before Eveline. Disappointed, Eveline didn't let her friend fall like this, so she wiped her tears and said "I'm with you, just live whatever it will happen". However, Eveline didn't know Ruby and it turned out that Ruby wanted to abort her baby. Ruby was not ready for anything that would happen "God forgive me" while she drank a

medicine that she found from an online shop. "Sorry dear" as she held her stomach "let everything ends like this" she continued. Ruby laid limp with tears as blood coming out.

Ruby always traumatized at dawn in the morning, she always turned on 2 fans in her room every dawn time. Because the early morning always reminded her of the events of the rape and abortion. Ruby was silent and reduced all of her activities, she even moved away from association, often aloof and removed traces from Eveline. Even so until now her parents have never changed, always and every day supported Ruby. They never know what happened to their child. In her guilt, Ruby always avoided going home to Banjarmasin. "Daddy, I want to go home" Ruby called his parents "Soon dear, I miss you so much, one year I do not meet you is very long"

replied his mother. That was the last contact from her parents.

No news and no information about Ruby anymore. As if the beautiful Ruby was lost from civilization. Her mother and father was tortured for losing their child, all means were done to search for Ruby, and finally stop when a letter was found "For everything, thank you, I will not disappear, I just look for, mama thank you, daddy thankyou, I'm sorry" said the letter which ended her parents searching.

# True Color

By: Christin Ayu Rizky (164214046)

**They** were playing Officially Missing You by Tamia when it rained outside. Someone said this song was a perfect song for this type of weather. Well, for Dean, it was just another love song that they played on radio. Dean sipped his tea, ouch, it was hot.

Dean took another sip of his tea and looked outside as the rain pouring down outside. They were playing another love song. He knew this song because they used to play it a lot on the

radio. Not his favorite song. He didn't know why he went to this cafe. Part of him maybe missed his college year or maybe he missed the joy that he had when writing his songs in this cafe. The waitress, Joan, she still remembered him after 5 years, maybe because Dean spent a lot of time in this cafe. She said at first she wasn't sure because of his disguise; hat, hoodie and the mask.

Joan approached Dean with a smile on her face. "Hey! This is your croissant," she said.

"Thank you."

She sat in front of Dean and looked him in the eye. As far as Dean remembered, Joan didn't look old at all, despite the fact that she probably 40 years old. "I heard your song on the radio the other day," she said.



Dean smiled. “Really? What do you think?”

“I think it’s really good. I like it.”

She sounded so sincere, but a part of Dean didn’t want to believe it. Dean thought that she might be said she like it because she knew how hard he worked on his song and it was necessary to give a compliment.

Dean wanted to talk about a lot of things with Joan but he was not sure. She probably saw his hesitation so Joan asked. “What is it?”

“I...”

“It’s ok, dear,” she said softly.

His mind was trying to arrange the words that he wanted to say without embarrassing himself. Still, Dean was wondering why she and

any other people out there liked his songs, so Dean asked her. “Why?”

Joan looked at him like Dean was joking but decided to answer his question anyway. “Because it sounds so good. I like the melody, this is the type of song I would listen to start my day. Oh, I also like your voice and the lyrics is so beautiful.”

Dean felt a sense of relief after hearing Joan’s answer. Maybe he really wanted to hear this answer from people. “Thank you so much,” he said sincerely.

“You’re welcome. Besides, not much musician wrote a bop that criticizes our society,” said Joan. Dean couldn’t help but smiled.

“If I may ask, where all of this confidence came from? The last time I saw you, you were so optimistic?”

Dean didn’t expect her to ask him that kind of question. He had known Joan since his freshman year and she probably one of people that he shared thoughts with. He didn’t share what inside his head easily, he thought it made him vulnerable.

“I don’t know. Maybe I don’t have any talent?” Dean said finally.

Joan frowned and looked Dean right into his eyes. Dean somehow tried to avoid her eye contact. “What talent?” she asked.

“You know. Music and stuff.”

There was a brief silent and no one said anything. Joan sighed. “What makes you think you don’t have talent?”

Dean shrugged. “Because I don’t think people genuinely like my music.”

“And?”

Dean somehow felt offended. For him, the way Joan asked that question was like asking a kid to explain stupid things. What Dean told her was important for him and he didn’t like the way Joan looked at him – like he was idiot. “Yeah, well maybe people like my music because of the way I look,” Dean said while looking at his shoes.

Joan laughed so hard and it made Dean raised his head to look at her, confused.

“Who are you? Pierce Brosnan? Oh boy, so you think you’re very handsome, huh?” said Joan.

“Well, I guess so,” Dean said, though he wasn’t sure about that himself.

“Because that’s what people said. You’re very handsome, right?”

Dean nodded.

“So when people said you’re handsome, it means you’re handsome,” Joan said. “Then when they say you don’t have talent, it means you indeed don’t have any talent?”

Dean drank his tea. He felt uncomfortable and decided to look outside the window. He knew Joan was looking at him curiously. “I don’t know? I guess what they said is true,” he answered.

“Those people,” Joan straightened her shoulders. “Most of them don’t even know who you really are. So why all of the sudden you make them as the most reliable source?”

“Maybe after a lot, a lot of people say the same thing to you all the time - ‘you don’t have talent’, ‘I like the way you look but I don’t like your voice’, somehow it makes me think that’s the truth.” he said finally, admitting all of the voices inside his head.

Joan shooked his head. “Here’s the thing. From what I see, you’re trying to please everyone. Well, you can’t. So right now I want to ask you, why do you make music and why do you like music in first place?”

“Because music makes me feel something. It makes me sad and happy, and a song from Indigo by Amarr Stessi even made me who I am

today. Just imagine how powerful a song could be for someone. I want people to experience it too through my music. I.... i want my music to change them,” Dean said.

Joan looked at Dean and smiled. “That is wonderful. Stick to that. Don’t worry about what others think of you. If you want to change someone with your music, I think you need to,” Joan slightly touched her head with her forefinger. “change this one here. Your mindset. People can judge you and say horrible things to you. But you need to remember, you are the one who know ‘the real you’. Don’t make them put poison into your head and make you forget yourself.”

Dean was speechless. Joan’s words slapped him so hard and made him realize how stupid he was. He forgot who he was. He was lost. He

forgot why music made him happy – he forgot how much he love music and how fun it was making music. He was so obsessed with people judgement and acceptance. Dean thought that Joan was right. He realized that it wasn't about having no talent, it was about how he killed his passion for the sake of pleasing people.

Joan might be realized that Dean got her point. She touched his hands and said. “Prove it. Show to them the real you. Show your true color.”

Dean nodded and smiled. He wouldn't forget how thankful he was.

\* \* \*

“Ok, so today we got a song who has been on the number 1 for over 14 weeks.” Joan was on



her way back home and her taxi driver playing a radio. The DJ's voice sounded so soothing and it calmed her.

“This song called Yearning by Aben. has become a global phenomenon. Until now the singer-songwriter Aben still remain unknown. People getting crazy of how beautiful this song is and how much it left impact for them,” said the DJ.

“Oh yes, Candice,” said a guy who was the partner of the other DJ. “Since most of the songs today are talking about money, drugs, and women, this song is such a fresh-air. People like the positive message of this song, you know, about having a dream, pursuit it, but always remember to love yourself.”

“Exactly! People is having a huntman event where they are trying to find who Aben is. But so

far, I see some people starts to associate Aben with Dean, the R&B singer. Yeah, and I listen to both of their voice and it's really similiar," said Candice.

Joan started to pay attention to the DJs after their mentioning of Dean's name. Joan had been listening to this song every day, cause this song was everywhere, but she never really paid attention to the song or the singer's voice.

"But Alex, I think our listeners don't want to hear your theories about who Aben B. is, so, without further ado, here's Yearning by Aben," said Candice.

The first melody played. The voice. It was so familiar to Joan. She couldn't describe the euphoria that she felt. She couldn't stop herself from smiling. As the radio playing Yearning, she

came back home with a big smile on her face.

“He made it.”

# Autumn Breeze

Christabella Clarissa (164214052)

It has been raining since the class started. With the blank paper in front of me, I choose to put my focus on the downpour. It is beautiful how the water drops and leaves traces on the classroom windows. The summer is almost end, the autumn is near. This is the kind of weather that I like the most. Before my biology class ends, Mr. Wilson tells us to make a group of two for the final project. “Sara,” I call my friend’s name

as the sign that I want her to do this project with me. She nods as the approval.

“Ms. Franklin, you can’t be in the same group as Ms. Askari,” says my biology teacher to us after he approaches our table.

“What? Why?” I ask confusedly.

“Since the score is for the final project, I want you two to help the students whose score are too low to pass. I already picked the partners for you two.” He checks his notebook for a while. “Ms. Askari, you are with Mr. Clinton.”

“No way,” Sara responds.

“For Ms. Franklin, you are with Mr. Farago.”

“Sir, are you serious?” I try to object him.

“Yes and this is the final decision. Good luck!”

“This is going to be hard,” I murmur.

Being Rosalind Franklin is not easy. Too much pressure and burden are put on my shoulders. I should master all my school subjects and I should show the good behavior since I am a Franklin, the family that is known for the nobility. This is what makes me be an ambitious person. I should get at least A minus for all of the subjects, including this subject, but if I am team up with Daniel, it will not be easy. Daniel and I were best friends, but he started to ignore me many years ago. I think that he hates me, so I hate him back. I don't like the idea to be hated when I don't do anything wrong. The thing that I have in mind is that I should finish this project as quickly as possible, so I don't have to deal with him for too

long. I pack my things up before I leave my table and say goodbye to Sara.

I have tried to contact Daniel since the class ended three hours ago but I have no answer from him, so I decide to go to his house that located in front of mine. Daniel was a bright student back then. Unfortunately, his score dropped drastically after the summer holiday six years ago.

“Rosalind?” Daniel’s mother looks shocked when she sees me standing in front of the door. It has been a long time since the last time I visited their house.

“Hello Mrs. Farago. Is Daniel here?”

She looks so confuse but she answers my question in the end. “Yes, he is upstairs, but I think....,”

Just before she can finish her statement, I hear someone screaming from inside. I was taken aback to hear the loud scream. Mrs. Farago immediately go inside and I follow her without any permission. When I get there, I am really shock of what I witness. I am as stiff as a statue to see him. Daniel is drawn in a mixture of water and his own blood in the bathtub. Never have I ever imagine that Daniel will do this kind of stuff. Now I know that there are reasons why he changed and shut everyone else out. I help Sophie and Ms. Farago to call 911. The police come minutes later with ambulance and they immediately bring Daniel to the hospital. Sophie is not leaving the house and the police asks her several questions.

“Depression,” she answers to the police’s question.



“Since when?” ask the police.

“Two years ago, after he got recovered from LCH.”

From their conversation, I discover that Daniel was diagnosed with Langerhans Cell Histiocytosis on the summer holiday six years ago. He was in a lot of pain during the treatments, which affect him until now. He is traumatized by his past experience. He became really scared of sickness even after he survived LCH. The fear got worse and he got depressed. My father has ever told me that there are two types of people who survived a sickness. The first type is the ones who fight for their life and they will live as best as they can. The second type of people is the ones who are depressed. They will lose their motivation to live and will be depressed in the

end. They are the ones who are hopeless and one of them is Daniel.

Fortunately, Daniel is saved. The first aid that his mother gave him worked. It slowed down the blood flow. For days, I do the research on LCH. I also ask my parents about it. Apparently, it is a type of cancer where the body produces too much protection system called Langerhans cell.

A week later, Daniel returns back to home. I doubt if I should visit him or not, but my parents tell me to go after they know Daniel's story. So, here I am standing in front of his room. When I enter the room, he stares at me blankly. I can feel his confusion. It is nearly impossible for me to visit him after what happen to us in the past six years. Daniel is silent but his gaze never leaves me.

“I’m sorry.” I say the word that I have in mind all the time after I witnessed his suicide attempt. “If I say or do anything wrong that makes you hate me, I am sorry.”

Silent. I think that he doesn’t want me to be here.

“I hope you to feel better soon and for your information we are in the same group for biology class final project.”

When I am about to leave his room, he finally says a thing. “Rosalind.”

“Yes?” I answer and turn back to him.

“I never hate you.”

For a moment I don’t know how to respond so I just nod lightly.

“Daniel, if you need anything, I will gladly help you.” I finally can say something.

I saw a trace of his smile as he nods lightly.

Since then, we start to be closer. He enters school days after hospitalized and we often walk to the bus station together. His cold gaze starts to melt and for the first time in six years, I can see the Daniel that I knew. The humble and kind Daniel. Daniel and I do our project together and I never expect that Daniel will be playful again to me. I feel the feeling of warmthness of having back a lost best friend. I know that I have to help him to get through his depression and I hope I can. I believe that deep inside, I still know him well.

Daniel is now writing down our observation for two weeks. Most of the time, he is the one who do the observation. He is really

devoted and enthusiastic. He said that he doesn't want to make me have a bad score because of him. He also added that this is his way to say sorry.

“You work really hard Daniel. Let me help you.”

He stops to write down our observation and his eyes look into mine. “No way. This is my part.” Daniel continues his work.

I exhale deeply. “I told that I have forgiven you.”

“Rosalind, let me be nice to you, this is my apology,” says Daniel.

“I just want to be nice to everyone now. A nice person deserves a reward after a long time suffer,” he adds.

That night, I stare outside my bedroom window. The breeze of the autumn wind makes me shiver. It is a little bit cold but I don't want to close my window. I want to enjoy this feeling of happiness. Losing Daniel was really hard for me because he is the only best friend I had. I finally have Daniel back now and I am so glad for it.

I open back our final project paper again to recheck Daniel's work. At the end of the paper, I can see a note. It says: "P.s.: A good person deserves a reward after a long time suffer. I've done my part Rosie, good luck on yours." I know him well enough, but what kind of rewards he wants? A moment later, my heart beating fast. "Oh no." I go to Daniel's house as quickly as possible. I can see a police car and an ambulance in front of his house. "This can't be right," I murmur as I knock on the door. Sophie opens

the door with a heavy cry. She hugs me when she sees me but I am too stunned to hug her back. Behind her, I saw someone's body covered with white fabric, got carried with a stretcher. It is him.

On the autumn night, I know what reward he wants.

# He Is Not A Monster

Ni Putu Ayu Rosita Putri (164214054)

**The** sun began to sink behind the trees, a cold wind blew through the window. My sister was on the balcony of my house. Firstly, she played with her teddy bears, but then she tore it down. She pulled out both of its eyes and remove the stuffing from the teddy bears. She did that after my Mom told her that she must drink the medicine from her doctor. I loved her very much, but lately, I have gotten so annoyed with



her. I often lose my temper. When she was mad with my Mom, she would scream. If she acted like that, I would ignore her and go back to my bedroom to sleep.

Kringggg kringgg.....

The alarm was ringing and it made me woke up at 07.00 a.m. I prepared for the first day of school. I left home for school at 8 a.m., then I walked to the bus station to wait for the bus to come. I stood behind two persons; an old woman and a boy who has dark and curly hair, big blue eyes with soft eye bags, and deep dimples. He brought so many Gundam toys in his hands and wore the same uniform as me; Mercy Junior High School's uniform. He seemed to act a little weird because he talked to his toys. Finally, the bus stopped in front of the school, I ran towards the class so I wouldn't be late. I chose to sit in the

front of the classroom because I had myopia. The boy, who I saw on the bus, came to the class and sit next to me.

“What is your name?” asked him.

“Chris, and you?”

“Matthew,” he smiled to me, then we got to know each other.

The school was going on as usual. Ms. Betty came and taught us. She was our academic advisor and a mathematics teacher. She told us to open book page 30 and do all the exercises. However, Matthew doesn't pay attention to her in class. He had been playing with his flappy bird origami since the class started. All students considered him a monster and they were scared to be his friends because of his strange behavior.

“Chris, are you sure want to continue to be his chair mate? He is so weird, look at him, he does not deserve to be our friend,” whispered Briley, the girl who sat behind me.

“Shut up Bril! I don’t care what you’re talking about!” I shouted loudly and the whole class went silent.

“Chris! You don’t trust me.”

“I don’t want to hear anything, Briley!”

None of the students wanted to play with Matthew except me. After the class ended, I went to the canteen for lunch and Matthew followed me. I ordered cheesy garlic crescent rolls and vanilla milkshakes and Matthew also ordered the same menu as me. While I waited for the order to come, I asked him why he followed me all the time, but he didn’t answer my question. Instead,

he ran to the school garden. I told him to come back to the canteen. Unfortunately, he didn't hear me, so I decided to chase him into the school garden. I found it odd when he ruined all the flowers in the school garden. He also spoke to the ants on the tree and he seemed happy. However, when I told him that the ants could bite him, he got angry, and he threw me a tantrum.

“Go away from me,” he scolded me, then he hit and kicked my leg.

“Oh, I'm sorry Matthew. Hmm, okay, I will go now.”

In the class, he was still mad at me. He made a fuss in the classroom; he put his feet on the table and jumped everywhere while Mr. Jonas taught us in front of the class. Mr. Jonas told him to keep quiet and sat on his chair. However,

Matthew did not want to listen to his teacher and threw all of his crayons and books.

"Oh God, he is really annoying and naughty," said Mr. Jonas

Matthew ignored him and left the class. Mr. Jonas was too tired of handling Matthew, then he went to the principal's room to tell the principal everything that happened. The principal gave a letter to Matthew's parents. The school nurse suggested that Matthew parents should take Matthew to the mental hospital.

I meet Matthew's mother the next day. They came to school to meet the principal. Mr. Potts and Mrs. Potts were not smiling. Their faces looked really sad, which made me wondered whether they're sad or disappointed. I didn't see Matthew with them.

“Hello good morning Mrs. Potts! It’s nice to see you. What happened with Matthew? Why did not he go to school?”

“Morning Chris! He was expelled from the school.”

“Oh sorry to hear that Mrs.Potts.”

“It's okay, no problem. I know my son is different from other children. When he was two years old, he was diagnosed with autism, now he attends public school because I want him to be like other children,” Said Mrs. Potts

She continued, “Matthew is smart, but he doesn’t learn as quickly as other children his age. I still see him as my perfect little boy.”

I was shocked when I heard about it. He had the same illness as my sister.

“Can I see Matthew?”

“Sure, you can visit him in the hospital, if you want”

“Of course, I will go to the hospital on Sunday.”

Mr. Potts was looking at her watch, “Hmm okay. We must go to work now. See you on Sunday, Chris!”

“Yaaa see you!”

The morning came soon. Today is Sunday. A light shone through the windows. A dark silhouette is over me. After I spent 2 hours pampering myself in the bath, I prepared myself to go to the hospital. The hospital was not far from my house, it took only 15 minutes. After I arrived, I go to room 205. I saw Matthew in that room. Mrs.Potts sat next to him, so I entered the room when he was playing with his puzzle.

“Chris, I’m sorry for all my mistakes,”  
Matthew smiled and hugged me very tightly.

“Don’t worry matt. Are you okay now?”

“Yes, I’m okay. I still suffer from terrible social anxiety. I would like to build a world where autistic people do not need to live with anxiety and depression as often as we do. Now I believe my anxiety isn’t my autism’s fault. I love myself, but it took a long time to love myself and my condition.”

“Don’t be sad again. I’ll be here for you”

Matthew was really happy when he met me. He gave me lots of Gundam toys. Then, we played together and watched a new cartoon on television. Over time, I understood him better. He was actually intelligent more so than many of



us. He was also warm, kind, and likable. He did not like a monster. He was such a good friend.

# Regret

Indrianti Untami (164214062)

**The** joyful holiday which everyone love had come accompanied with a chill weather and soft delicate snow slowly falling from the sky. The neighborhood looked quiet but it was not the bad kind of quiet, it was the kind of quiet that always felt familiar. It sent warmth to the heart. No one was outside the house because everybody was busy preparing for Christmas dinner. Daniel just left with his little bike to go back to his house. He

promised to his mom to get home on time to help her once the dinner done.

“Arthur come inside! It’s getting cold outside!”

The boy turned his head to the man who called out to him from the porch of his house. He gave him a little smile but didn’t move an inch from the ground where he stood, “Is the dinner ready?” he asked looking up to the sky then stick his tongue out to wait for the snow falling on his tongue. He heard his father grunt from the other side.

“Honey come inside! Do you want to be the first one who takes a bite on the gingerbread?” a woman’s voice was heard. He saw his mother stood with both hands on her waist. “Don’t eat the snow!”

“Let me get him,” his father said.

“Oh, they’re done?” Arthur asked cheerfully as he saw his father came closer. His father picked him up to his shoulder. Arthur screamed with laughter.

“You should have helped your mom.” his dad said, putting him down on the chair.

Arthur quickly grabbed two of the gingerbread. They were still warm and smell so good. He ate them happily.

“How do you like them?” his mom asked softly, ruffling his brunette head. Arthur looked up at his mom smiling.

“They are delicious!” Arthur exclaimed. He saw her face formed a wide smile. They were a small family, but that simple memory where everyone was happy in that small dining room on

Christmas time was a memory he never forgets. He remembered that was the last time he felt happy, things started to change after his father passed away. The things that he had gone through in the past after his father left them, he didn't want to remember it. Now every time he saw snow, he always remembered the last Christmas time with his father.

Arthur took a spoonful of warm soup from the bowl, he carefully brought the spoon to Mrs. Johnson who lies weak on the bed. There were times when she sometimes felt really exhausted that she had to stop herself from any activity or else she would cough badly. Mrs. Johnson was diagnosed with bronchitis, later they found out it already reached a chronic stage.

"Hmm, I think you've mastered the chicken soup now," his mother said.

Arthur made a small chuckle, he only put garlic and salt to seasoned the soup, his mother's compliment was exaggerating. "Nah this is the worst soup," he said, "I think I won't be back tonight. There is more soup in the pot for dinner."

"You are a good son," his Mom said softly, he saw her eyes watered. Arthur turned away and could only sigh while picking up his jacket. This was actually nothing, so far he didn't make any progress to help with his mom illness. He couldn't afford her medical care, day by day he saw her condition got worse. He ever witnessed she cough blood one day.

"Be careful," her mom said. Arthur nodded as he opened the door.

Mrs. Johnson used to work at an industrial factory, the precaution safety there was in a poor

condition. One day, his mom complained about how she could smell the fume even when she had her safety mask on, that was when she started to cough often. The doctor diagnosed the fume caused her bronchitis because she didn't treat her acute cough immediately. They used to come to the hospital to get a treatment routine. It cost a fair amount of money for every check-up it was hard to balance with the cost of their daily life. Now that his mom weakened and already stopped working, Arthur worked double job to get money to afford life.

Arthur let out a sigh as he arrived at the intersection at the end of his neighborhood, he remembered that night when he walked on this street an incident happened. It was midnight, he walked slowly while enjoying the breeze. A kid bumped into his back, there were two policemen

running and yelling at him. One of them got his head bleeding like it was just hit by something.

“Get that little thief!” they yelled.

He was a teen, a black teenager, his body was small. Arthur automatically ran then reached his arm to get him by his hood. The two police catch up to his place then they just beat the kid, Arthur barely processing what was going on when he then saw the kid had his head bloody and he was fainting. His face was also messed up, he wasn't sure if the kid was still alive. He realized now that the kid didn't deserve that kind of treatment, how much had he stolen anyway? Was it right to treat a kid like that? Was it because he was black? He heard from the news that a lot of incidents where the police hurt black suspects. A lot of unfair treatment in this world, he sighed. The worst thing was he didn't do anything as he



watched that kid bleed he was not sure what he should do. When he was a kid his dad used to say that people who did a bad thing deserve what comes to them, was that the reason he let that kid get beaten? He fastened his steps then leave the intersection.

“There you are!”

Arthur turned his head as he heard someone's exclaim, he saw Garcia stepping down the stairs. He just nodded his head in response to him while he continued his job cleaning off the dirty equipment.

Garcia patted his shoulder, “You in for the drink?” he asked.

Arthur shrugged his shoulder, “I need to get home,” he said. He wasn't just wanted to see his sick mom, but he felt very tired tonight.

“Aww come on don’t be lame!”

Arthur shook his head, “My mom’s sick, gotta get back to her.”

“Well she’s probably asleep right now,” Garcia took a napkin and helped him with the cleaning, “just this time, let’s go downtown to a bar. Take one, two or three glasses. My treat. Cool?”

Arthur laughed, “Alright, alright,” Garcia always good at persuading.

\* \* \*

The work was finally over, it always felt one level harder when working late on winter. It was incredibly cold when you walked in the street. They felt the wind blew, both of them put their hands inside their pocket.

“How’s your mom anyway?” Garcia asked as they walked down the street.

Arthur shook his head, “We don’t do hospital routine anymore,” he looked down to the ground while sighing hard, “she’s getting worse.”

Garcia hit him hard on the back. “Hey, don’t look down like that!” he exclaimed, “You’re spreading your negativity.”

“Well, you’re asking.”

Garcia sighing, “I hope things get better for the both of you.” he said.

“Sometimes it feels too much,” Arthur said. He was thinking about the rent for their house and also the food they need to eat every day.

“My family and I live as an immigrant in America,” Garcia said. “You know things hard for the immigrants here.”

Arthur looked at him, “Also hard for American like me,” he said chuckling. There were a couple of immigrant neighbors near his house, a group of old people who always grumbled every time he walked passed them. Being mad that he American, complaining why American and America gave them a hard life even though that was not his fault. Garcia was his best buddy, probably the only immigrant who liked him.

“We’re here!” Garcia said.

Arthur looked at the bar in front of him and looked again at Garcia, “This place? Seriously?” he asked in disbelief. All he knew that this was the kind of bar that people with a lot

of money love to visit. “What if rich people hate us?”

“How do you know only rich people visit this place? Come on let’s get inside.”

.

The inside of the bar apparently not really crowded with people. There were some tables with chairs in the middle, there were also some rounded tall chairs near the long bar table. The room was large with dimmed yellow light, and they also played slow jazz music. It was such a calming atmosphere. The drinks, however, must be expensive.

“Let’s have a seat!” Garcia said, pulling the chair out near the bar table. He saw Arthur hesitation, “Relax, I have colleagues here. The drinks won’t be expensive.”

“I thought life is hard for immigrant. Apparently not when it comes to drinking.” Arthur didn’t understand what he meant about “the drinks won’t be expensive”, maybe Garcia friends with the bartender?

Garcia raised a hand to call the bartender then ordered two shots of vodka for the both of them. Arthur swallowed the warm alcohol into his throat. He furrowed his eyebrows for the slight bitter after taste of the vodka.

“So what do you mean by colleagues?”

“My high school friends!” he responded to Arthur, “Oh, there they are!”

Arthur looked at a new group of three people who just walked in inside the bar. One tall guy dressed with only turtle neck without wearing a jacket despite the cold outside, and the other

two were in a leather jacket. Garcia stood up to greet his friends.

“So, this is Arthur.”

Arthur stood up after Garcia introduced him to his friends. He shook his hand with the guy with turtle neck.

“Trevor,” he said. He was kind of scary-looking, his facial hair was unkempt and his eyes were dropping with black bags.

“These two are Dan and Frost,” he said when Arthur was about to shake hands with the two guys in leather. Arthur retracted his hand back.

“Can I get straight to business?” Trevor asked to Garcia.

Garcia raised his eyebrows in surprise, Arthur turned his head to Garcia as if he was

asking the question in confusion. Was this guy really a high school friend? He looked kind of shady.

“Oh, you want to talk about it now?”

Garcia asked

“This job should be yours. I need it to finish fast and I need someone to do it.” Trevor said.

Garcia looked at Arthur, his face looked unsure and Arthur started to get suspicious. “What are you guys talking about?” he asked.

Trevor pulled out one chair beside Arthur and sat down, he made a gesture with his hand to one of the guys in leather. He brought him a black suitcase. “So this suitcase has money inside,” he said.



Arthur widened his eyes in surprise, he didn't know where this conversation would lead. Why would he bring money in a suitcase?

"I'm gonna pay you with this money, but you have to accept the job."

"W-what kind of job?" Arthur asked with caution.

"You need to kill someone," Trevor said with a flat tone.

Arthur jumped from the place he was sitting. Garcia stood up to make him sit back to his chair. "What the hell?" he said quite out loudly.

Trevor snickered a little, then he spoke, "I heard that you need money. You want it or not?"

Arthur looked at Garcia. “I don’t know what's going on here,” Arthur said, why was he suddenly put into position as a mercenary?

“I really don’t want to waste time here.” Trevor said, “The job is simple, you just need to inject poison to the target.” He picked up the suitcase and put it on the chair, “this money I’ll give it to you tomorrow but you need to finish the job tomorrow.”

Arthur realized that they were being serious, Arthur sat back to his chair. He looked at the suitcase. “W-why me? I mean for this kind of job, why not rent a professional?”

“He is professional.” Trevor pointed to Garcia.

Arthur looked at him in disbelief, Trevor just told him Garcia was a professional

mercenary. Garcia was a hard-working guy, he was also a loving person he liked to talk about his family and all the little cousins he has. He did often didn't show up to work for sometimes two to three days without reason. So he was secretly a paid mercenary?

"This guy already knows my face," Garcia said, "it's risky, I need other people to do it."

Arthur remembered the face of his mother, how she lying on the bed looking weak. "W..who is this target?" he asked.

"My rival," Trevor answered simply.

"A drug dealer who is not supposed to sell his stuff around this area," Garcia added. "So all you need to do is to get in the same elevator as him then just stick the needle to his neck."

Trevor nodded to Garcia's explanation.

His heart beat so hard inside his chest. His body also started to sweat. Arthur was thinking about what could he do with the money. To kill someone, to take his life, this was absolutely wrong. But he needs the money for the treatment. In the middle of his deep thought he started to remember the black teen who got beaten in the past; What if the kid wanted the money for example maybe for his mom? He didn't deserve that beatings from the two policemen.

“O-okay, I take the job. “

\* \* \*

Arthur sat on the bench, calming his beating heart. He needed to catch his breath, The job was done. It was really fast, he went to his apartment. That guy, despite he was a drug king, he lived in a regular apartment with no security

camera. Arthur disguised as a resident of the apartment. That guy looked really high when Arthur met him, it was very easy not to make him suspicious. Before the elevator opened, he just stuck the needle on his neck, his body jolted a little. Arthur remembered he was also panicking, his heart pounded really fast. The man collapsed and he made a sound as if he was choked. It was an awful sight. He didn't want to stay longer to see that man slowly losing his life.

He looked up to the sky, he looked at the little white snow slowly swaying according to the blew of the wind, it was snowing again. It finally reached Christmas time today, the happy time. There was a little girl in red coat holding a little basket filled with gingerbread cookies. Arthur just sat there in the bench looking at the people who buy from the little girl, when the little girl started

to leave, Arthur got up from his sitting. He quickly walked to catch the little girl.

“H-hey, girl!”

The little girl stopped and turned to him. She looked kind of scared because of his yelling.

“Uh, I want to buy,” Arthur said awkwardly, he didn’t mean to scare the little girl. “I want two,” he said. He was thinking to give his mom one when he gets back home.

He looked at the gingerbread cookies the little girl had given to him. Through the thin transparent plastic, they were covered with choco chip and colorful sugar. He immediately ate the gingerbread.

“How do you like them?” the little girl asked.

“They are delicious!” the gingerbread taste just like the one his mom usually made,

“Thank you,” the girl smiled.

“Oh, the money!” he said between eating, he gave the girl five dollars. “Keep the change.”

The girl’s eyes lit up, “Thank you, you are kind.” she said before leaving.

Arthur a little stunned by the words the little girl said. His heart started to beat fast again, he felt guilty. He quickly tossed the plastic wrapper then run.

\* \* \*

His house was dark when he got home, the lamps weren’t turn on and it was quiet.

“Mom?” Arthur called, turned on the light from the wall. He put the suitcase down.

There he saw his mom on the floor with blood on the corner of her mouth. Arthur's eyes widened. "Mom!" he screamed, holding her in his arm. He saw her hand also got blood. He checked the pulse on her hand, he felt nothing. Her heart wasn't beating anymore.

"Oh god no," tears started to stream down from his eyes. "The money," he was crying, holding his mom tightly in his arms. Sadly for Arthur, he already took someone's life to save another's life but it was failed. God didn't give his mom any more chance to see the day. The gingerbread was almost like that Christmas time when everybody was happy but this time it was different for Arthur. He shook in tears holding his dying mom.



# The Fragments

Cyrillus Urbi Mahendra (164214064)

**May 3, 2008.** The black clothes worn by the people were such an irony in this bright day. The reddish-white flowers scattered above a pile of soil created an obvious contrast of colors. The sound of the grief-stricken people was like spears that stroke ears and the breeze just swayed their tears. Look! A kid was crying in his father hug. Embraced by the warmth of his father, but pierced by the cold of his grief. How could the

kid, not blame the world for this situation? A situation in which the one who had given birth to him was taken away unexpectedly. Could he blame? He could, indeed, with a strong hatred in his heart. For him, his world was buried under the reddish-white flowers. For good.

Ever since he had blamed the world for its sin and had tried to ignore the darkest time in his life, he learned that the world where he lived was completely wrong. Because of that, he chose to spend his time inside a box of the so-called 'house' so that he would not deal with the flawed world. However, what he called as 'flawed world' had its own way to recover what had been broken.

"Why you look so sad Arvin? Follow me and we can see the glassy sky outside." A cheerful voice familiarly greeted the kid though he was

insecure about the voice. “No need to be afraid, come on just free your mind outside as if you were in outer space,” the voiced continued. Later, he recognized the voice as Kalila’s, his friendly neighbor — 19-year-old girl with retro look and a wide smile. Her voice, unknowingly, enchanted the kid to go out of his house. Outside the kid’s house, they played together. From that occasion, he smiled, a rare phenomenon created by the kid since he lost his precious one. “Arvin, I have something for you,” said Kalila while giving him a lollipop. Arvin received the lollipop eagerly. Then, both of them fulfilled the day with laughter.

October 17, 2010. The voice of the news anchor fulfilled the atmosphere of the house in that afternoon. As it echoed continuously, Kalila was aware that there was another voice, a voice

that mixed with heavy breathing that called her name. She noticed that the one who produced the voice had been running for almost three hundred meters from his house. “Ms. Kalila, please come to my house and play with me, I have a new PlayStation, I need someone to become my rival,” asked the kid. Despite answering the kid’s request, she laughed loudly and it made the kid curious. “Alright honey, I’ll go, but first, please come in and have some milk to clean your sweat,” said Kalila laughingly.

“Oh, you are so great in this game, hereby I assert that you are the winner.” Though Kalila actually could win for a thousand times in that game, the way she surrendered like a knight made the kid was so happy. “Is that all you got Ms. Kalila? I want some more.” The kid said happily. As they were playing the game, they

could hear the sound of a door being opened and followed by a series of footstep sound approaching them. Eventually, a tall man with a thick mustache appeared before them. It turned out that it was the kid's father. Shortly afterwards he invited Kalila to have lunch with his family. While they were having lunch, Arvin's father thanked Kalila for taking care of his child. However, he reminded her about Arvin's condition.

“Please make sure he will not get hurt or bleeding while playing.”

“Is that because of it, sir?”

“Yes, because of it.”

February 11, 2011. This was the day that Arvin did not expect to come. For children of his age, he already knew that the distance between

Bandung and Malang was quite far. It is roughly 850 kilometers. Look! Once again, a kid was crying in his father hug. Could it be avoided? No, it could not. He could not do anything except followed his father's promotion to Malang. The kid was crying at that time yet the kid had a figure of a mother beside him who encouraged him not to cry.

“Do not cry honey. Even though the distance separates us, it does not mean our bond ends. Anyway, you can still make a phone with me and if you miss me, you can come to Bandung anytime. Oh, and please take this lollipop as a token of our friendship, okay?” said Kalila laughingly.

“Thank you, Ms. Kalila, thank you for everything, thank you for being my friend, my sister, and ... and my mother. Thank you.” Arvin

said hoarsely. After that, he raised his hand in farewell and left the city with his father.

Ten years had passed. The kid was not a kid anymore, yet he turned into the more mature Pramudhita Arvin. He had graduated from senior high school and entered a new stage in his life — university. It was summer 2018 where the wind was not hot as the spirit of the 18-year-old boy facing the new world. Ever since he had parted from his friendly neighbor who inspired him and had had a new life in another city, he learnt to become more affable and buoyant in manner.

He could hear the sound of music being played when he entered the building in which many students learnt how to befriend - a word that was often said by Arvin after his 'revival' - with music. Then, at one point, Arvin felt as if the big board inscribed 'Faculty of Performing Arts -

Department of Music' in front of him welcomed him by saying 'Hello' to him. For some reason, he was insecure at first. Perhaps, it was because he had never been in such situation in which he met with various kinds of people with different backgrounds before. Nonetheless, gradually, he could overcome it and had many friends afterwards. In befriending, he tended to give his new friends a lollipop, just like what Kalila did to Arvin.

Among his classmates, there was a girl, a beautiful girl with white skin, brown eyes, and long straight black hair, that took his attention because she looked different from the others. The presence of the girl made a paradoxical situation in which the other people in his class looked bright while the girl looked as if there was a spell enchanted around her that emerged a



darker atmosphere out of her. Strangely enough, the other people seemed to ignore her. One time, curiosity led Arvin to communicate with her. Yet, his attempt ended with a strange stare from the girl. Arvin knew it was a stare that said, “Who are you? What do you want? Just stay away from me!”

Did not want to stop at that point, Arvin asked his other classmates about the girl. He found out that her name was Nara. Someone said that she was possessed; someone said that she was freaked; the other said that she was crazy. Until one time he met Anastasia Hanna and Isabella Batari who gave him the answer of his curiosity. Both Hanna and Bella were used to be friend with her, but after knowing the truth, they stayed away from her.

“Jovanka Nara is not a typical person as you know. Her personality can change unexpectedly,” said Hanna convincingly. Bella also told him that she had almost been stabbed by her with scissors just because she called her a freak. Even though Arvin had known the truth, he still insisted to be friend with her because he did not want her to be lonely.

It was almost fall 2018 and Nara still could not befriend with Nara well. In that afternoon, Arvin and his friend, Farrel, were having lunch at the canteen. Knowing Arvin’s ambitious attempt to approach Nara, he suggested Arvin not to waste his time in a useless thing and advised him to be selective in having friends.

“Just stop dude, it’s impossible for you to get her,” said Farrel after smoking his cigarette.

“I’m not falling in love with her dude. I just cannot see someone being lonely. Oh, anyway, smoking just kills you, here a lollipop. It can also produce smoke if you suck it fast enough.” Arvin replied as he gave Farrel his lollipop.

Though he got no supports from his close friend, Arvin did not want to give up yet. In a drizzly afternoon when the class had finished, Nara still sat on her chair with her hands holding her phone, alone. It was noticed by Arvin who decided not to go home yet after seeing Nara was alone. Surprisingly, he found out that Nara was playing PlayerUnknown’s Battleground (PUBG) that was a quite famous game at the time. Since Arvin knew the game well, he turned the situation into an advantage for him to start a conversation.

“You play it well, Nara. You have, you know, such an unusual interest for a girl. What

makes you play it?” said Arvin laughingly yet he was somehow afraid of being ignored by her. Nara, miraculously, did not ignore him this time.

“Always a great game. Always. Oh, look at this Arvin! I am falling off the plane! Anyway, can you fly a plane Arvin? I’m still in my training to fly a Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird. One day I will fly it across the sky of Malang,” said Nara enthusiastically though it made Arvin wondered.

“Oh .. ye .. yes, of course, in game I have—  
”

“Uh, I’m already tired with this game. I always know tired creates confusion, confusion creates bored, and bored creates... um what? Oh indeed, bored creates void.”

“Well, just play —”

“Wait! I hear Mr. Mozart invites me to join him in his melody!” Nara drastically became enthusiastic than before.

Then she took her violin out of its bag and started to play *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* by Mozart in front of Arvin. He was amazingly stunned with Nara’s performance. Each melody that was going through his ears was like heavenly sound! After she finished her performance, as usual, Arvin continued his befriending tradition in which he gave her a lollipop as a token of their friendship. Yet, Nara insecurely accepted it.

Hereupon, because Arvin and Nara were in the same class, he met his academic advisor and asked him about Nara’s problem. His advisor then explained him that their university welcomed special needs individuals to study there and Nara was one of them. However, he told

Arvin not to differentiate them with the normal students and encouraged him to befriend with them despite their differences.

“As a schizophrenia sufferer, Nara needs the presence of the others so that she will feel welcomed and it will psychologically support her. However, the thing is people tend to negatively stigmatize her. If we negatively stigmatize her, it just makes the situation worse, so please do not do that. Yet, I hope that you and your friends can help her recover herself,” thought his academic advisor.

“Yes sir, I will,” replied Arvin.

“Good. By the way, how is your academic learning? You do all of your assignments right?”

“Um ... it is all good, sir.” Arvin lied for this question.

Basically, Arvin was known for his travelling hobby. He then thought that perhaps by inviting Nara for travelling and camping at mount Bromo on next weekend would psychologically gave effect to her. However, because he did not want to spend his weekend with Nara only, he also invited Bella, but he was rejected because she still stigmatized Nara negatively. Then, he invited Farrel to join them. At first, Farrel rejected him but when Arvin promised him cigarettes for a week, he was coming along. Later, he visited Hanna's boardinghouse and invited her to join them, but she also rejected Arvin with the same reason as Bella's.

The next day, Arvin came to Nara's house, he was friendly welcomed by Nara's parents because Nara was rarely visited by her friends. After telling her parents about his plan to mount

Bromo, they allowed Nara's to come with Arvin but with one condition.

“Please take this medicine with you and make sure Nara will consume it. It's clozapine – atypical antipsychotic drug – for her, but do not say it directly, just say it is her daily vitamin from his father and then she will consume it,” asked Nara's father as he secretly gave the medicine to Arvin in order not to be noticed by Nara. Actually, Arvin wondered why he should give the medicine in that way, but he kept his curiosity for himself.

On weekend, Arvin, Farrel, and Nara went to mount Bromo in the afternoon. Even they wanted to camp, Nara insisted to bring her violin. On the way, Farrel was hard to communicate with Nara, so he often ignored Nara. Because of that, he chose to stay behind Arvin and Nara, letting



both to have a conversation. Even so, he was puzzled by their conversation. After they had been hiking for almost three hours, they arrived at the camping area. Shortly afterwards, they began to set their tents; one for Arvin and Farell and one for Nara.

In the next dawn, when the sun was about to rise, Arvin woke Nara up so that she could see the sunrise. Immediately, she woke up and took his violin. How happy she was when saw the sunrise! Eventually, she played *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* with her violin. Farrel was amazed by the beautiful sound played by Nara.

“Arvin! It is very fun, fun, fun! Even I can see the colors of his melodies combined with the sunshine! Hope I can have my own musical group to play this amazing masterpiece!” Thank you Arvin!” shouted her excitingly.

Arvin was very happy to hear that from Nara. He felt he had succeeded being a good friend for her and Farrel finally understood why Arvin was so ambitious in befriending with her. After they had their breakfast, they were preparing to go down. Did not forget, Arvin gave Nara her 'vitamin' as her father had told him to do so.

In the next week, Arvin and Nara had launch at a food stall near the campus. She was curious why Arvin brought his guitar with him. Did not want to make her curious, he then played her Canon Rock in C and Nara was entertained by that.

“My guitar has six strings and each of them has their own sound. If I picked one string only, the sound would be monotone. Still, if you picked some strings with the right chord, it would

produce various sound. You know what? For me each string represents a personality but actually, they are one. They are tied together in one guitar. I know it sounds like a ridiculous analogy, but the point I want to say is you should be yourself, no matter how much ‘voices’ in there, do not let schizophrenia define who you are,” said Arvin. When Nara heard the word ‘schizophrenia’, she became uneasy.

“What do you mean by schizophrenia? I don’t have schizophrenia. Do you think I’m crazy? ” said Nara insecurely.

“No, of course no, nobody says —”

“I’m not crazy!” Nara became drastically temperamental. Arvin tried to comfort her. However he gradually started to lose his patience.

“Screw you! You think why I always take care of you? It’s because I want you to get well! But is it what I got from all of my efforts?”

With the speed of light, Nara who had been fully controlled by the ‘voice’ inside her head took a scissors inside her bag and stabbed it into Arvin’s stomach. Arvin was being unconscious when he saw Nara ran from him. When Arvin was conscious, he realized that he was in hospital. The doctor told him that he was very lucky because he was directly brought to the hospital.

“You’re so lucky because people directly brought you here. You must know that your blood —”

“Is hard to clot. I know doc but I don’t feel so lucky.” Arvin thought.

Arvin took two weeks to recover from his wound. During that time, many of his friends visited him, but he was not too happy. However, Kalila with her daughter came from Bandung only to visit him once she knew the news. Arvin was happy because of that. Then Arvin told him his problem.

“The thing is you should not be me Arvin. The one who need to be himself is you. Nara is unique in her own way, you don’t need to push yourself to recover her. I believe she will get well by her own way. All you need is to be her friend, not her doctor,” said Kalila softly.

When he returned to class, he discovered Nara got a one-semester penalty because of that accident. Remembering Kalila’s advice, Arvin gathered Bella, Hanna, and Farrel. He said to them that he did not regret about what happened

to him, the thing was Nara needed friends. Farrel supported Arvin this time, so that Bella and Hanna wanted to be friend with Nara. Suddenly, Arvin remembered Nara's dream.

In a sunny morning, they visited Nara at her house. At first, Nara was very insecure because of them and what she had done to Arvin, but her parents encourage him and Arvin asked her to close her eyes.

"Please open your eyes Nara," said Arvin gently. When she opened her eyes, she saw her friends with their musical instruments. Arvin then asked her to take her violin.

"You can play Eine kleine Nachtmusik right? Let's play it together," said Arvin smilingly.

# The Great Cheater

Gabriella Nababan/164214066

**Alvaro** Delana is the first-born child in his family. He is twenty years old. He has strong features and strong body, more like big bones, muscles that make him look so attractive and good-looking. He also has brown eyes and tan skin. Actually, Alvaro's family is Indonesian that moves to San Francisco, California. They moved when Alvaro was three years old, and until his father got permanent job in San Francisco.

Several years after, his dad passed away and a lot of problems came after that. One of which, he was when he got bullied in seventh grade by his schoolmates and the reason was because he was fat. The most terrible experienced Alvaro ever had was when he locked in the bathroom and they left him all night long until the school security opened the bathroom the next day. When the janitor opened the door, Alvaro was trembled, he cried all night. After that, he became afraid of dark and fortunately he promise to become a successful person to himself so he could show it to his seniors who bullied him.

Alvaro still had that bad memory when his friends bullied him, but he won't let other people know about that. Jokes were the perfect cover for him since he wanted to hide his sadness. His looks also became different. Alvaro became more



masculine. One thing that never changes is that Alvaro still loves pink and sleep with his old blanket. Elvano and Elvani, his little brother and sister (they are not twins) always tease him about his looks and his weird habit.

“Hahaha, how can a man still sleeps with those stinky blanket.” Elvano was laughing to his brother.

“If I meet a man, I won’t marry a man that likes to sleep with stinky blankets,” said Elvani to his brother. After all it was joking; Alvaro knew they were not really serious with their words about him.

Alvaro is an ambivert, a person that easily make friends but sometimes he loves to be alone, too. He is also a hard-worker person because his past is quite difficult. Alvaro helps his mother a lot to take care of his siblings while his mother is

working. If Alvaro's mother is off, he will go to his best friend's home, which is right next to his home. His name is Charles. Charles was the one who helped Alvaro when he got bullied by the other kids. They are becoming best friend after that. He also knows the funny things about Alvaro besides Alvaro's family and vice versa. Well, they complete each other as best friends.

Alvaro starts to work when he is seventeen years old. He takes every job that makes money, such as a video editor freelancer and he also work as waiters. Though his mother, Ms. Prima Prameswari has enough income to make a living for three children, she will retire soon, and certainly, his family needs more money for future saving. Sometimes he feels so tired but he knows he can't be quit.

*A Week Ago*

Alvaro looked at the ceiling of his room. He still thought about the job that Keith had offered to him. He said it would make a lot of money. Keith is a friend from high school that offered Alvaro a job. Actually, it was not a big deal if Alvaro's mom still working as a full-timer, but now Alvaro had to think about finding a perfect job.

"Dude, I have a perfect job for you. I know you need a job and the job is," Keith whispered.

"I'll let you think, see ya." He left Alvaro alone, he didn't react anything.

Alvaro just went back to his home and went straight to his room. This time he needed to think clearly about the job and he shouldn't tell

anyone about this job, he kept this information just for himself.

The next day, he went to the campus. He saw Keith and he just remember what Keith said to him.

“You can get five hundred bucks, dude! Come on you’ll regret it if you refuse it.” Keith said.

“I’ll think about it.” Alvaro smiles at him and he just go.

### *At Home*

Elvani and his mother was at there when he arrived at home.

“Ah you are home can we talk for a moment, Al.” Ms. Prameswari said

“Sure.” Alvaro answered. Then his mother asked Elvani to leave them alone in the living room.

“I have already retired, son. My money isn’t enough for your college fee, but I’ll try to find a way to pay your college fee,” said Ms. Prameswari.

“Mom, don’t worry. I can take care of myself; I also have a little savings from my payment as a part timer and video editor. Just don’t worry.” He smiled at his mom to make her relieved.

The Day~

SMS To: Keith

Gimme that job.

Keith Reply: Meet me at Pop’s club 10 pm. don’t be late!

Alvaro didn't know what kind of job that he was going to take. His thought was on how much money that he could get from the job. He could use that money to pay both of his and Elvani's tuition fees.

### *At Pop's Club*

Alvaro walked confidently to the club. He enjoyed the music that was playing by the DJ. While he was waiting for Keith, Alvaro ordering some drinks.

Someone tapped him on the shoulder. It was Keith.

"What's up bro?" Keith said.

"I'm good. Talking about the job is it saves to work like that?" ask Alvaro to Keith

“Well, if it not save then why I still alive and have a nice car?”

Keith knew that Alvaro was not the type of person who could easily believe that he could get five hundred dollars and nice car by doing an easy job.

“What is the main purpose of this job? I can’t understand how you can get a lot of money from this job.” Alvaro asked.

“The main purpose? To get a lot of money hahahahah you won’t regret it.” Keith said confidently.

After that, Alvaro agreed to join with Keith. The job that Keith offered was to be a hacker. Keith knew that Alvaro had a potential in this field, so he wanted to recruit him to join with him.

“You can work with me then. Starting tomorrow, 7 PM I’ll send you the location tomorrow.” Keith said.

“Thanks, dude! I really appreciate it.” Alvaro smiled.

Alvaro started his job. First Keith asked him to hack small company and they were going to use the data about their corruption to blackmail the company. So if the company didn’t want the data to come out of the public, the company should pay them with a lot of money. Alvaro seemed to enjoy this job because the job was making a lot of money, and of course he wanted it. He knew that this job is illegal but as long as he was not caught up, he would continue to work here.

“Dude, your money was sent through your account. You can check it!”



Alvaro opened his smartphone to check his online bank account. He was so shocked when he saw the digit.

“Dude! Are you fucking kidding me? This digit is awesome!” Alvaro still couldn’t believe that he just got a lot of money from this job.

“I know, right?” said Keith.

From that moment Alvaro was still did the job. At first he was only blackmailed small companies but and then he finally got a big company that had a lot of corruption in it. Suddenly, Alvaro was curious about this company, he never heard this company’s name before. The amount of corruption was insane. There was a lot of money that came to each person in this company.

He decided to investigate this company alone because Keith didn't have any interest about this problem. So he started to find about what was going on in that company, who was the owner or the CEO, etc. The company's name was "Rise Co." Most of the workers on that company were Indonesian people and they were working for new technology. This was obviously funny to Alvaro. This company was literally had a lot of people that work in government, and yeah Alvaro thought that people who were working in this company obviously wanted to compete with other technology companies, but they cheated. The article about this company had a lot of negative comments rather than the positive one.

This time Alvaro was facing a big deal. So he made a plan to make them pay for what they had done. One thing that surprised Alvaro was

the fact that they had killed someone from another company, and this was a serious problem. His conscience was eager to give lessons to these individuals after knowing the person that had been killed. Alvaro knew that he could not keep it for himself, so he told Keith and as expected, Keith was surprise too.

“Al, are you crazy? What the hell is going on with this company? I’ve never knew there is story like this in our real life!” said Keith.

“Yeah I know. As expected, the people are from the government. Those bastards get money from us and from this company and they live calmly without any guilt. That’s disgusting. So I beg you to join with me to play with this people. I know it sounds crazy but come on, dude!” Alvaro begged.

“Ok” said Keith.

After that they worked all night to find out everything from Rise Company, especially about the victim. They found out that the victim was a government too. First they were trying to treat them but the company didn't give any response about it. Then on the second time they decided to tell to someone in the company that they had the evidences of their crime. The person was an important person in the government. He started to make a deal with Alvaro and Keith. Both Keith had a better plan and this time Alvaro agreed with Keith's plan.

“Just prepare for the worst.” Keith said.

Alvaro went to meet this person and he hides his face behind a clown mask.

“Seriously? Do I really have to wear this mask?” Alvaro seemed didn't like the idea of wearing a mask that made him look so funny.

“That’s our identity dude! Chill.” said Keith.

They started the plan. Keith was doing something with the computer and prepared for the worst. Alvaro had already on his way to meet the person from the company.

“So you are the murderer, huh?” ask Alvaro.

“Who are you? Why you’re doing this to me?” asked him to Alvaro.

“Me? I’m just an ordinary people, same as you, the different is you kill someone in the government that I believe this person is not like you,” said Alvaro fiercely.

“What is your relation with this man, huh?” said the man, and he sounded a little bit scared.

“It doesn’t matter what relation that I have with him, once being a murdered, you’ll forever be a murderer! You take someone’s life from his family, you know?! Do you ever feel guilty? His children were waiting for his father to come home, but he just knew that his father is never come back to home. Why you murdered him, Mr. Putra?” Alvaro sounded a little bit sad and he pushed Mr. Putra to the wall.

“I-I I’m sorry, I murder him because he tried to report about my corruption, and I was blind at that time, I never mean to murder him, so please I beg you don’t report me I will give you what you want, please.” Mr. Putra begged Alvaro.

“Ok then, I’ll let you go, but in one condition. You gave me all your money that you take from the company and I’ll never go to report

you. I want you to send me the money right now!”

“Ok, fine. I have to take my money from the ATM first,” he said.

“I’ll give you one day to take your money from the ATM or your savings. If you are not doing what I say the evidence will come out to the public. Starting from now!”

Mr. Putra went back to his house and opened his treasure storage cabinet. He didn’t think about the how much money he had to pay to Alvaro. He just didn’t want everyone knew about the fact that he killed someone. He put the money to a bag. The next day Alvaro called him.

“Meet me at the last place we met,” said Alvaro.

Mr. Putra had a bag in his hands that full of money. He was ready to give all the money to Alvaro. Actually, Keith and Alvaro put hidden camera before they met Mr. Putra in that place. Keith used that camera to observe the situation. Keith and Alvaro had a big plan after Mr. Putra gave the money to them.

“Hei Mr. Clown! (Mr. Putra called him clown because of the mask that Alvaro was wearing). This is the money that you ask; now give that evidence to me.” Mr. Putra said to Alvaro.

“Throw that money first, and then I’ll throw to you this flash disk.” Alvaro replied.

“Ok, I’ll throw this.” Mr. Putra threw the money to Alvaro. Alvaro caught the bag that full of money and he checked the money, he was smiling behind that mask.



“Ok than catch this.” Alvaro threw the flash disk to Mr. Putra. He run as fast as he could, he called Keith to do their last plan, and he called Mr. Putra use disposable card.

“Hello, who is this?” Mr. Putra asked.

“I gave you the evidence and I’ll give you another surprise. Just Wait!”

“What? Surprise? What surprise....?” Before he could ask many questions Mr. Putra heard someone knock his office door. There was police coming to his office, and said that “You are under arrest for premeditated murder.” Then Mr. Putra yelled at the police. Finally Alvaro and Keith put him into the jail, and his money in the bank account was donated to the orphan.

Three years later

After graduated from California University, Alvaro applied his CV to some companies. Luckily, he got accepted in Gugleg Company. His life had changed and he was also financing his little sister and brother. In the other words Alvaro became successful. Last but not least, Keith became a CEO of his own company, but he still maintains the other work.

# I Got You, I Got My Dream!

Arvianti Jilly.V.Mulete/164214067

**People** call me Rebecca. My skin is brown and I get curly hair. I was born from a couple who came from different regions. My daddy is from Papua. His name is Johan. My mommy is from Java and the Netherlands and her name is Kristianti. My parents call me “Bebe”. I inherits a strong descent from daddy, and sometimes I can be gentle like mama. My father works as a

teacher and my mother works as a government employee. Since I was a child, I was very close to daddy because daddy spent more time with me than with mama. He is the one who often takes care of me when I'm sick, teaches me when I study, helps me do my assignments, braids my hair when I go to school, makes me breakfast, takes me to school, picks me up at school even when I want to go, I'm always accompanied by daddy I have to admit mommy also loves me, but the feeling is different unfortunately. Mommy rarely hugs me, kisses me and we don't really close with each other, but she knows what I needed as a girl. She buys me lots of beautiful clothes and dresses, shoes, knick-knacks, but her existence as a mother disappears, swallow up by the world of work that is so hard.

Over time, Daddy is appointed as the headmaster. Tasks and responsibilities begin to increase and my time with Daddy fades. Now both of them are very busy. Mommy left early in the morning and come home late at night.

There is a point where I realize that my daddy and my mommy really are loves me since I was a child. My daddy is the one that really close with me because I'm the only daughter he has. However, the moment when he starts to be very busy, it felt like his love for me has gone and begin to fade. How about my mommy? Hmmm, my finances and all my needs are fulfilled by her but she is really busy. She is spending most of her time for her job and I has never known how warm the arms of my mommy. One day, my mommy and daddy asked me to live in Aunt Elena's house for a month because they were so

busy. They went to Jakarta for their own business and that is the beginning when my character was formed through something that happened during my life at Aunt Elena's house.

I have to be left at the aunt's house along with my cousin, Mario. There Mario pretended to love me. When my aunt was busy making cakes and he was doing nothing, he took that time to do bad things to me. I was raped by Mario, Aunt Elena's son. In a narrow and dark room, he touched my body and it traumatized me. Daddy and mommy didn't realize it at first but eventually they found out without telling me and it becomes a secret. After that accident, I grow wilder. I fall in matters of imagination in the form of sexuality but I also like to intersect my mind by reading life guide books to have a better life. I also continue reading various knowledge books about social

and psychology, but my bad experience has shaped my character until my college days. From this moment, I hate every man except my daddy.

It was really hard for me especially during the second semester. I failed in almost of my classes of that semester and my grades were really bad because I continued to struggle with my past. One time I joined a trip with some of my college friends. In the middle of the trip, I found two friends who were always with me, Joela and Josephine. Until one day they finally found out my dark story. Both of them couldn't accept it and they insulted me.

During my college days, I tried to find a person who could love me like my parents, who will be my special one. Yet it is hard to do that because I constantly remember what Mario had done to me. It is really difficult to release the

burden and shame while tried to make friends at the same time. I like reading books but my mind cannot focus on what I'm reading because of struggle that I've been through. I want to look for a true love figure has gone. I'm trying but I keep falling. But I have to fight, my dream has to be real. I want my bad story can be hear in International Seminar as a proof that every people who has a rape experience can also have a wonderful life.

There were many good men that approachd me. I constantly doubted their intention and rejected them. But sometimes I got close to some of them but without giving a clear status of our relationship. It was really hard to have a normal relationship with other men. Until I met a boy named Eleazer. He really looked like a father figure for me at first but and then I



realized that he was the one who really fought for me. I was hesitant at first but I tried to open myself up. I spent half of my college day with him. He helped me and he heard all of my complaints. He even knew about my dark past.

The day has come when my dream is finally come true. I could speak my dark experience in an International Seminar. Through that seminar I shared my story to people who had a rape experience, and I wanted them to know that they still have a hope to get through their terrible experience, just like me. Well, you know I'm so proud to have Eleazer in my life! He made me realize what I had to do first was to forgive and accept my past, be open with my parents and chase my dreams. After I shared all my story he came and gave me a flower. Then he asked me, "Do you want to be my girlfriend?"

I said, “Yes! Of course!”

And then he kissed me.

# The Beautiful Mind

Arneta Fajar Surya N (164214042)

I stood on the podium of the big hall, it was the hall of the castle. I put my finger on the microphone to make sure it was working properly. I looked up, a bunch of people were coming to listen to my speech. I could not stare at them too long, I felt intimidated by their wide eyes. However, I should begin my speech.

Slowly took a breath of the fresh air.

“This is a story about a woman who I know so well in the past, she was the hero that I know for my whole life” Words by words I tried to utter. It was hard because I missed her so much.

\* \* \*

Life is an unexpectable piece of a puzzle, you tried to find the pieces to complete it in order to see the whole image. Unlike the simple puzzle you see in the store, my life was not as simple as that puzzle, it was more complicated and hard to solve.

I'm Hannah, lived in a big white house that my father owned. To describe the big house, it had a spacious backyard, huge pillars, tall windows that touched to the ceiling, and plenty of rooms for my big family to sleep in. Except for one room, the room that my mother used to

sleep in, it was quite large but it felt empty and odd.

Odd because I never see my mother since I was born. It was a cold winter, when my mother took her last breath after her last labour. I was born with an ugly face, really dark skin, and fat my whole life. My father said I was the reason for my mother's death because I was not beautiful enough like my other siblings and not similar enough to my mother appearance. It was so hard to accept every word he said, it was painful but I guessed that's my destiny to be born ugly.

"Please do not touch me, Danish!" I begged to Danish the gardener that worked for my father.

"It's okay, just for once. You will not regret it! C'mon Hannah just do what I say!" He insisted with a scary smile on his face.

He grabbed my hands and pulled me to the horse cage. I fell on the dirty hay. He pulled my pants off and unzipped his jeans. He held both of my hands and trapped my legs with his legs to make sure I could not move or resist his power. It happened all of sudden and so quick but felt really long because I was so scared.

After a few weeks left, something strange happened. I did not bleed and I felt sick in the morning. I went back and forth to the bathroom to puke all of my morning breakfast. I was afraid that I got pregnant at the age of eighteen.

“You are an ugly whore! Get out of my house! I don’t want to see a bastard in my house!”

My father slapped my face and hit my legs with a wooden stick. I could not move my legs, I felt paralyzed, however, I did not feel any pain. Maybe it was because my mind was wandering. I

was thinking about the perfect life that I wish I had, but I also wish I wasn't born to this world.

It was really complicated, I hated that I had to get raped and got pregnant, I hated that I had to hear every painful sentence that he shouted, I hated that I was even alive. I hated the words of beautiful and ugly used to define people's appearance.

Now, I no longer lived in that big house, I lived in the small shack that I found in the little village. It was not convenience at first but I got used to it. I started to collect things that still looked good around the village. I only brought some clothes and a small blue cup, the cup that I found in my mother's room, people said it was her favourite cup so I brought it with me since I did not have her picture. I also worked as a

labourer, I did everything that I could make everything work as best as possible.

One day, I gave birth to my child, it was kind of strange since no one knew in the village that I actually pregnant. I named her Karen because she was a pure beautiful angel, unlike myself at all. I taught her everything, reading, walking, talking, but only one thing that I refused to teach her which was the words of beauty and ugly. I did not want my child to has a burden in her life living with the cruellest words she might find in society. I had pushed myself to ignore all of those words, so I wanted my child to do the same.

“Mama, what is beautiful and ugly?”

“It’s nothing, you will know that someday, honey”



Even though she repeated the same question over and over again, I tried my best not to answer it. I was pretty sure she would understand. I knew that she always got to hear the sentence like ‘you are a beautiful kid but why your mother is ugly?’ and I hate how that society could define those words based on what they saw as their standard. Sometimes it was hard to go out or even to get fresh air when you knew the people outside would judge you anyway.

“It is not about you’re ugly or beautiful, it’s not about what people think about you. It is always about what you do, what you are thinking, and which way you want to go”

I exhaled slowly.

“I want you to be a strong girl, I want you to be able to do anything you want without them bothering you and stabbing you with those painful

words that they utter easily. Just keep being a tree, you keep growing even you have to get through a thunderstorm, a hot sun, or a really hard rain”

It was not a long sentence that I told her, but I really wanted to make sure that my child would be stronger than I was yesterday. Every night when she was about to sleep, I always told her my story in the past with different name and every morning I would tell her inspirational quotes from the book that I adore and read in the past. I always hoped she would feel like a new person every day, a new start with a big smile and high dreams.

\* \* \*

In the winter, the cold felt like it stabbed into my bones. It was the hardest winter along with my mother’s death. She was the one who left all of the knowledge to my little brain.

Unconsciously, I felt the tears down to my face, people also started to sobbing on my speech. Suddenly, it broke the silence, the sounds of people's cried divided the sky into two.

“My mother had told me about the life of puzzle that she depicted from her life. After years of losing her, I have not to care about the puzzle that my mother utter no more. The puzzle slowly faded away throughout my way to home”

After her funeral, I found a little dusty pocket of a book. It was my mother's diary, there was the address of her father's house. I tried to comprehend the faded ink with my bare eyes. I would find her birth home, I would find where she belongs.

In the spring, I decided to find my grandpa's house. She said it was a big house with white colour and huge pillars along with the floor

to ceiling windows. However, what I saw was the house with dark spots, it was indeed a white house but it turned brown.

I approached the security guard, I told him that I need to see Mr Donson, the owner of the house.

“I intend to see George Donson the owner of this house, tell him I’m Hannah”

“Just wait for a second”

I walked into the big house that I have never seen in my life. My mother was right, it has plenty of rooms. I waited in the living room for my grandfather to come. He was an old man with walking cane in his right hand.

“Who are you?”

“I’m your grandchild, sir. This is the photo of my mother, Hannah”

He hugged me so tightly.

“I’m so sorry. In my whole life, I never felt the guilt that rose to my body every single day. I have no child anymore, three of them are no longer alive, they spent all of their lives in the pub and never came back”

My grandfather sobbing harshly, it was the longest hug that I have ever felt. He asked me to stay in the house to take care of him, then I agreed.

Time had passed, I realized that my grandfather was one of the noblemen. I met my husband in the castle, he was the prince. Therefore, I could stand right on the podium of the castle’s hall, the speech for my mother’s beautiful mind, the one who taught me that I could change the world, that I could waste the

people's pain away from the blasphemy of beauty and ugly.

In the end, I have found the piece of my puzzle that completed the complicated life that I have been through.

# Legacy

Ohoiledjaan Bryan Williams (164214049)

**In** the middle of a night, a student called Al was playing a video game on his computer with his close friends, Jonathan and Antonia. He seemed to have a lot of fun. But unknowingly to others, a feeling of emptiness was growing inside him and it had been bothering him recently. He didn't know why that feeling appeared inside him. All that he knew was that he wanted to make it disappear. While he always loved playing video

games, especially with his friends, recently he played those games more often and more intense. He wanted to use those games as a tool to forget his emptiness. For a while, it looked successful to him. There was an only pleasure when he played with his friends. That emptiness was gone. But when they decided to stop, the feeling crept back again.

One day, he attended a class of philosophy. He sat inside the class with his two friends. They were talking about their last night's games sessions. When they were talking, a gorgeous girl called Jeniffer entered the class. She was Al's crush for almost two years. For a year he tried to move on from her but he didn't succeed.

Not long, his professor for the class entered the class. After a short greet, the professor asked the class about the basic idea of



existential nihilism. A student came up with an answer that said: “The idea is; life doesn’t have meaning.” That answer made Al surprised as he never heard that thing before.

On that day’s afternoon, Al visited his favourite coffee shop to buy a cappuccino as usual. He bought with him a book about a cosmologist called Stephen Hawking. As he read the book, he found out that Stephen Hawking didn't believe in an afterlife. As Al was not too religious, he was open with Hawking’s idea. The revelation of Hawking’s faith made him remember this morning class’ topic. “If Hawking is true that life has nothing to do with afterlife then life is actually meaningless. So it means that existential nihilism is true” thought Al inside his head.

That night, Al played video games again with his friends. In the middle of a game, he asked opinions of existential nihilism to his friends. While Nathan was neutral, Nia rejected the idea as she believed the afterlife. When Al asked her for her reasoning, she answered it with the life and death of Julius, a friend of Al. Julius was an unfortunate guy that died homeless with no one attended his burial with the exception of Al. She said that Julius' life and death must have a reason to justify his misery. After thinking Nia's answer for quite some time, he felt that it didn't right, so he didn't accept the idea. He believed that Julius' miserable life and death didn't have anything to do with any reason. After some further discussion and game sessions, they decided to rest. Laying on his bed and contemplating, Al finally found the causes of his

emptiness; the fears to live miserably and died forgotten like Julius.

To eliminate his emptiness, and conquer his fears, he knew that he must step out his comfort zone and do something great. His first step to accomplish his aspiration was signing a singing competition. It was the craziest thing that he had ever done as he never sang in front of people. When his friends knew about what he had done, they were both shocked and happy. Even though they initially reluctant to accept Al's reasoning, especially Nia, they agreed that it could be good for Al.

On the competition's day, Al sang well, but he sat in the bottom order because of great competition from other competitors. He was disappointed, but he was proud of himself for trying. Not giving up, he tried other competitions

like cooking and dancing competitions. Even though in the end he lost in both of them.

When things didn't go to his favour, he started to get frustrated. He wanted to try computers, his favoured thing, but his knowledge wasn't enough to create a software that can be useful. In the middle of his frustration, his crush, Jennifer, was rumoured to date a student from other faculty. Hearing that, he was getting more frustrated. His frustration was expressed in his diary. He had a habit to write things when he was in stressful situations. Many things had been written in the diary; like his competition failures, but mainly his frustration was toward his failure in love life.

One afternoon when Nia visited Al's boarding house, she found the diary. After she read it, she jokingly told Al that he could write a

book based on things that he wrote in his diary. Nia's joke gave him an idea to try writing a story based on his love failure.

For months Al wrote a story about a love failure of a man. To continue getting his material, Al actually befriended Jennifer and her lover. It was painful for him, but he already accepted that he was lost. Slowly, Al started to know Jennifer's friends as well. He used it to gain knowledge about the dynamics in the men-women relationship for his story and to develop his own social skills.

When he finished the story in the form of a novel, he felt proud to himself that he found a way to turn his misery to victory. When he felt ready, he tried to publish the novel to a lot of publishers. Even though he was rejected for a few

times, his novel finally got accepted and published.

His novel turned out to be a huge success. It launched him to stardom. In university, he became the most famous student there. Boys wanted to become his friends, and girls wanted to become close to him. As his social skills well developed and his shyness gone, Al who used to have existed now was gone. He was basically living in his dream.

One day, he was attending a sign-up event for his novel in the biggest mall in the city. A lot of people came to that place and screamed his name. Al stood up on the stage smiled proudly for his achievement. When it was done in the midnight, he drove his car to come back to his place. Unknowingly to him, it was the last night of

his life as a drunk driver crashed his car to Al's, taking both lives.

His funeral in the public cemetery was attended by his family, friends, classmates, teachers, and a thousand of his fans. His grave was written "Never forgotten, the legacy of Alfonso Souza Lemartin, the one who lived meaningful life."

# Never Look Back

Steven Bagus B (164214061)

**Like** the other days, Richard Vozter or his friends often called him Lieutenant Vozter, practicing in the military camp. His friends called him Lieutenant Vozter because one more mission he will be promoted become Lieutenant Colonel, right now his rank is Major. Richard Vozter leaded one special team with five members and every member has special abilities. Its members are from selected people with



abilities above the average of other soldiers. His team also called special force team, they just do special and difficult mission only. Richard Vozter was chosen to be the special force leader because his abilities were very good. He mastery every weapon, martial arts, war tactics, and he can survive in a very difficult situation. Among the five members he is closest to James Hardy, they always side by side in each mission and make both of them a good partner. Always exciting about a mission and often ask Vozter when they get a mission again.

“Hey, yoo Lieutenant,” shouted James, his face looks like waiting for a good news.

“What you want to ask this early morning?” said Vozter. “ Let me guess, you will ask about a mission right?” Vozter continued.

“Yeah, you know what I mean Lieutenant” answer James “when will we get a mission again?” With little disappointed face.

“Just relax James you will know when we get a mission” Answer Vozter. Then, they went to the field to practice.

One day Richard Vozter’s team got a mission, this time is rescuing mission. They got a mission to rescue the hostages from the robbers. This mission located in a small city named Kahlua, a beautiful and crowded place, but that day everything changed. Before they went to the Kahlua city, Vozter gave spirit and a brief explanation of the mission to his team.

“Today we got a mission, this time is rescuing mission, we got a news from Kahlua city that there is a bank robbery and one of the criminals carried a bomb, and our mission is to

save the people who were hostages, everyone understand?!”

“Yes sir!” shouted all the members.

“Try not to die in this mission” Vozter continued. After that, they went to Kahlua city.

In there a guardrail and a police line were installed so that the surrounding residents did not approach. Vozter asked local police in there the situation, the police said that there still 5 people inside the bank and the terrorists didn't want to let it free before the police fulfill their wishes. The police added that one criminal carrying a bomb was in the room together with the hostages, so you must take him down before he knows that you try to save the hostages. Then, he and his team started the mission before its late and make their mission fail.

Inside the bank, Vozter and his team headed to the room where the hostages kidnaped. After a few minutes, his team succeeded to shot down the criminals except one that brings the bomb. Vozter and James went to the room where the bomb and the hostages are as fast as they can because the bomb is already activated by the criminal.

“Lieutenant get these people out of here, I will defuse the bomb “

“Are you sure you will have enough time to defuse that? I will be back after I get these people out of here”

“Don’t back here Lieutenant just hand it to me, let me finish my duty.” After James said that, Vozter left him.

Vozter succeeded to rescue the hostages and all of his team is outside the bank except James. Suddenly one of the hostages talked to Vozter that her husband, Edward, still in there. Hearing about that, Vozter went to the bank searching for Edward. After a few minutes there was a gunshot, after that, someone's voice asked for help. Vozter went directly to the sound source, he found a man standing with fear and near him there are two corpses. One of them was the corpse of the criminal and the other was the corpse of his friend, James. Vozter asked the man what happened. The man explained to the Vozter, his name is Edward, he hid in the second floor when the robber arrived, and then, he came out when he thought the situation was safe, he ran out from the second floor to escape. When he on the first floor, one criminal looked at him and tried to kill him, and he was saved by an officer.

“He tried to save my life, and before died the criminal takes a shot to him and he suddenly fell down.” Explain Edward.

“Your duty have completed my friend, you save many people life by defusing the bomb and now you save one more life by sacrifice your life “

Three days after that accident, Vozter was expelled from the military because he was considered negligent in carrying out his duties. After that, he moved to a small house in the small village named Yasnaya. In there he became an introvert person and lacked socialization with other people and he became an alcohol addict. In there he has one neighborhood that really cares about him, her named is Aileen Chloe. She always gave him some food and tried to talk to him and gave him some advices.

“Hey what happened to you? Why do you look so messy? “

With little angry Vozter said, “I don’t want to talk to you what was happened to me, because I tried to forget that and throw it away from my mind, if I tell you my story, I will remember that again, and that sucks.”

One day when Vozter watched a TV, he watched a news about the death of his friend, James. The news said that Edward was the brain of the robbery that occurred at a bank in the Kahlua city and he is the one who responsible killed one officer in that bank. Edward got a death penalty for his actions. Knew about that Vozter feeling become calmer because it wasn’t him who caused the death of his friend. Suddenly he remembered what his neighbor, Aileen, ever said to him. “Life is simple, you make choices

and you don't look back." He chose to forgive Edward about that accident, he gave up the death of his friend, and he did not look back about what has changed him.



# Comeback Home

Jessica Agustina (164214058)

I opened my eyes and saw a beautiful cloud filled the blue sky. Am I in heaven now? It would be good if it were heaven, but I felt pain in my head and my backbone felt like it was broke inside. Was heaven like this? Or was it -

"Hey! Are you alright? Why are you running like that?" someone said to me.

"Huh? Oh...yeah it is okay... uh... I'm a bit dizzy," I said and he helped me to get up.

"You can walk? You were running like a scaredy cat then fell and broke that fence," he explained to me.

"Yes, I can walk by myself, thank you. Oh wow. Um, I will fix that soon, sorry." I started to gain my consciousness back and looked at the broken fence. I feel guilty immediately.

"Oh, that is okay. I can fix that later, but if you want to do it, let's fix it together." He offered me. He was nice. Wait... Did he know me, but I don't think so?

"Yeah, sure. Thank you again. And where am I again?" I looked around and saw my house beside this man's house. Oh right, unbelievable! I fell in my neighbors' yard. How could I fell?

"Great. That is my house. I'm sorry for the fence. You can call me when you're going to fix that or just visit me." I pointed to my house. I wondered how much it would cost to fix the fence.

"Okay. It was fine, chill." I relieved, he was not mad at me. He was cool with that which made me kind of liked this man.

"What is your name? Sorry, I think my head hit the ground hard enough that I forgot my neighbors' name."

"Hahaha, it is Richard. Nice to meet you, Evel." Shit! He knew my name and I didn't know his. I'm a bad neighbor.

"It is nice to meet you too Richard. Thanks for the earlier, and I should go now before my

head broke down into pieces. Bye Richard!" I walked away from him and went to my house.

\* \* \*

I woke up and got ready to school. I took my bag then left my bedroom. I was in the living room wore my shoes when I realized that mom and dad are still sleeping. It was really quiet until I heard someone was knocking on the door.

"Mom! Dad! I'm going now!" I shouted out so they could hear me and woke up any minute later.

I opened the door and I saw Richard who was already waiting for me. He wore the same uniform as me. "He is in the same school as me? I think I had amnesia because could not remember my neighbor who turns out is my

school friend. Oh, I hated my brain!” my mind said to myself as I looked at him.

“Hey dude. How’s your sleep?” Richard asked.

“Hey. Good! Even I snored, I think.” I chuckled as I stepped out from the house and closed the door.

“Let’s go! I wonder what will be the menu for today’s lunch.” He said and grabbed me in the shoulders. We walked together to school.

I entered the class and welcomed by classmates’ jokes and chatters. The class was still noisy as always, but I liked it. I sat on my chair and looked out the window. I spaced out as I stared at the sky. It was a bit dark and cloudy outside. Would it be rain?

“Evel!” someone called me.

“Why are you spacing out like that? Thinking of someone?” Eden smirked teasing me.

“Yeah, I am thinking about the way to kick you out of here.” I answered flatly. Eden is also my close friend beside Richard and yeah... he was active and funny.

“Who’s thinking about Stella?” Richard joined out of nowhere. He just blurted out to us. And...Stella? Hey!

“What’s wrong with you?!” Eden said ‘someone’ not Stella! Gosh!” I’m suddenly annoyed. Wait. Why I’m mad?

“Oh! So, you admit that you were thinking about someone?” They smirked evilly at me. I stood up and was about to kick their bottom, but they escaped quickly from me. I ran after them

and when I almost reached the door, someone appeared out of nowhere made me stop suddenly and faced -

“Shit!” I cursed automatically.

“What? Me?” Stella said to me.

“No! no! no! Not you, Stella!” I panicky said. I glared at Richard and Eden who were looking at us with a wicked smile plastered on their lips.

“Hey Stella! Evel was looking for you.”  
Eden said to Stella. What the hell!

“Oh, well, here I am. What’s up, Evel?”  
she asked me. How should I answer? Damn them! I just sighed then said to Stella.

“Oh right. I want ...,” I was cut by Richard before I could finish my sentence.

“He wants to have lunch together with you.” I rolled my eyes.

“With us too.” Eden added.

At the cafeteria, I sat beside Stella while Richard and Eden sat in front of us. We shared some stories and talking about funny things.

“Evel. You said there was a ghost in your house? How come?” Stella asked me.

“Actually, I felt something was off when I was about to sleep yesterday. I heard footsteps heading to my room, but then it stopped like it was standing in front of my bedroom’s door,” I told them and they suddenly became silent. Was it too scary until they didn’t say a word?

“Are you guys afraid?” I asked them slowly.



“You didn’t check it out?” Stella asked back after the silent moment.

“I didn’t. I’m curious, but I’m too tired to walk out of my room. So, I just ignored it. Am I wrong? It was good that I didn’t see the ghost!” I suddenly cringed at the thought of seeing a ghost.

“Evel... there was –,” Stella sighed and was cut by Richard.

“You tired? How was your back?” Richard asked me. Stella didn’t say anything. She just stared at me with a worried look and a glimpse of disappointment.

“Yeah. Sometimes my head hurt. I don’t know why, and my back is fine already.”

“Here. Take this vitamin before going to sleep. It will help you to regain your energy in the morning and will help you to get a night of better

sleep too. I got it from my parents. Eden and Stella also drink it too.” He handed me the vitamin. I thanked him and hoped that I can sleep peacefully without any disturbance of ghosts anymore. “Look! It is snowing! Let’s get out and feel it. I like the snow!” Stella said excitedly and dragged us out of the school.

It was beautiful. The most beautiful snow that I have ever seen. I looked at Stella who smiled beautifully while looked at the snowfall. She turned to me and smiled at me. I’m glad that she was happy. The snow fell thicker. Eden and Richard are still in a snow war mode when suddenly a flick of light that headed toward us.

The light was approaching to us fastly. My body started to feel numb. Why my body like this? I moved forward to evade the light. I didn’t see to which direction I’m walking. The snow was

too thick. There was a sudden light appeared in front of me. My body froze and I couldn't move even for an inch. After that, everything was blackout for a moment. The time I opened my eyes, I could only feel my body lying on the ground with a red-colored snow around me and a shout from my friends.

\* \* \*

It was a snowy day. I headed towards the kitchen and found my dad was drinking his coffee while reading a magazine.

“Dad, why don't you read a newspaper instead of a magazine?” I asked disbelief.

“Why? Is it a sin to read a magazine? The magazine is more colorful than newspaper. I need the colors in my life, Kid.” He said innocently.

“Just let your father read it, Evel. He likes it.” Mom said defending Dad. I just rolled my eyes.

“Chyntia, Have you already packed everything? We will leave in three hours.” Oh, they were going somewhere? Why they didn’t tell me earlier?

“Where are you going?” I asked them with disappointment. If they were going somewhere, I can’t go for a jog with them the next morning.

“Oh, Evel we’re really sorry. We got a sudden call from the office to go to Spain, but we will come home tomorrow. Don’t worry.” Mom said to me.

“Alex! Let’s go. Why do you keep reading it? Just drop it and buy the magazine in Spain later. Oh, I start to hate it! Grab your bag now!” I

just chuckled seeing them. I helped them brought out the luggage while Dad pulled out the car from the garage. When the car's machine was started, the light of the car was blinding me for a moment.

“Dad! It is too bright! Just pull the car back.” I said to him.

“Sorry, Kid. It's your fault too. Why you standing in front of the car.”

“I was going to carry the luggage to the back of the car.” I said flatly.

They said their goodbye then kissed me. I didn't know that it would be the last time I saw them and kissed them too. After that day, they never came back home. Then I just realized something. How come I could fell in my neighbor's yard? What did I run from? Was there is a ghost at home? I wondered what was

Stella trying to say at the school back then? Was that because there was no one there? Ah...yeah, there was no one there. Then who was I talking to? I guessed I just want to come back home.

# The Gifts

Emilia Indriaferi (164214060)

**Sound** of birds' chirping began to break the silence in the room of a guy who was in the middle of sleep. The loud sound of an alarm which to tell it was 7 AM woke him up. Lucas Siero, the owner of the room, got up from his bed and got ready to go to campus. After 15 minutes of driving, he arrived at the parking lot of his campus. Lucas then made his way to his class.

On his way, he met his friend of the same class as him.

“Hey yo, what’s up?” his friend, Will, greeted him. Lucas replied only with an awkward smile, and then he continued walking to class.

“Wow, I just greeted him but he just-?” Will grumbled.

At the class, Lucas was asked by his lecturer to collect assignments. Lucas then began circling the class to collect his friends’ assignments.

“The assignment should be submitted now,” said Lucas to a student who was still busy completing her assignment.

“Please go to the others first. I am not done yet,” said Jane, the name of the student.



Lucas sighed, and said, “I cannot do that. You should have finished your assignment yesterday instead of now when it is time for your assignment must be collected.” Then, he took Jane’s unfinished assignment. Jane was dumbfounded. She just glared at him with a disbelief look in her eyes. She could not help herself but cursed at him in her mind.

“Wow. He must have thought he is the smartest, huh?” said Jane to herself.

After Lucas handed all the assignments to his lecturer, the class was started with a quiz on last week’s lecture. All students in the class seemed panicked by the sudden quiz. Yes, everyone except Lucas because Lucas always managed time to read lecture material the day before, so he seemed calm when the lecturer said

the results of the quiz would be announced immediately after the class ended.

Lucas went to the canteen after the class was over. He sat alone in the canteen while eating his lunch. Suddenly, someone approached his table. Lucas looked up to see who that person was.

“May I sit here? The other tables were full, and only the chair at this table could still be occupied,” said Jane in a tone that was actually not friendly.

“Are you really asking for help in such a tone?” said Lucas directly into her eyes.

“Yes, and I do not care anymore. I will sit here. Thanks.” replied Jane that only made Lucas sighed.

After finishing his lunch, Lucas left the canteen. On his way to his car, he found Ron, his friend of the same class got bullied by Will and his other friends in front of his car. Ron was one of the smartest students in Lucas' class, and it made Will wanted Ron to help him doing any exam or assignment.

“What are you doing, bullies?” asked Lucas to Will and his other friends.

“Wow, we have a newcomer here. C'mon Lucas, join us,” answered Will.

“Ron, just go. I have CCTV installed in my car. I can just give it to the lecturer.” said Lucas. Ron then left the parking lot while picking up his bag which fell to the ground.

“You heard it, right? Go away, you are blocking my car,” said Lucas to Will and his

other friends with a flat look, which left Will felt irritated.

After that, Lucas drove his car to a cinema near his campus. Inside the cinema, he looked at the movies that were aired. There were Wonder Woman, Kingsman: The Golden Circle, Star Wars: The Last Jedi, and Dunkirk. Then he chose the movie Kingsman: The Golden Circle. The movie ended after 2 hours. Lucas looked extremely excited after watching the movie. He went to the internet to check on the review of the movie.

“Wow, the movie is so damn good. I wonder what stuck in their mind when they made this movie,” said Lucas while his hands were still scrolling his smartphone’s screen.

“Hmm, so many people liked this movie, too. Oh, they also said that the murder scenes

done by Julianne Moore in the film were very sadistic,” said Lucas to himself.

Lucas then drove his car back to his apartment. He went to his computer and he searched on the internet of pictures of scenes of Sean Penn in Gangster Squad where he killed people. After downloading many pictures, he printed out them all. He then attached the picture inside his notebook.

“Okay, I added new pictures to my collection,” said Lucas while looking at his collection in his notebook.

The next day, Lucas arrived at the campus’ parking lot, and he found out that the campus was shocked with the news of the spread of death threat letters in student lockers. Many students were talking near his car. Even though his expression was flat, he thought about what

actually happened. In his class, Lucas sat in his seat while eavesdropping his friends talking about the letter.

“You have no idea how loud I screamed when I found out the letter.” said one of his friends in his class, Shailene.

“In my case, actually I was so happy when I got the letter because there was a chocolate on top of my locker. I thought someone confessed his feeling to me,” said Ashley.

“Hey, me too! I did not get chocolate but a nice key chain,” said Shailene.

“It’s so creepy. I hope the culprit can be found quickly.” Ashley responded.

“Good morning.” said lecturer to the students. Then the class was started.

“Okay, for next week’s assignment I want you to do it in a group of two students and now I will make the group.” said the lecturer while looking at the attendance list. He called students’ name one by one.

“Lucas Siero. Jane Larson.” the lecturer finally called Lucas’ name and then continued on calling the other students. After he finished, the class was ended.

“Hey, are you free now?” asked Jane to Lucas who was in the middle of putting his things in his bag.

“Huh? Yes. Where we will do the assignment?” Lucas asked back.

“How about at the library?” asked Jane.

“Sounds good. Let’s go,” said Lucas.

Lucas and Jane walked to their campus' library which located not far away from the campus' main building. They entered the library's discussion room after taking many books that would help them finishing their assignment. After two hours of discussing, Jane asked for them to take a rest.

"I am going to the toilet," said Lucas to Jane who only responded it with a nod.

In her seat, Jane was looking around the library. In the middle of doing that, her eyes captured Lucas' other notebook beside the notebook he used when they were discussing. Her curiosity made Jane slowly took the notebook. She opened it, and she could not believe what she saw. She found many horrible pictures of movie scenes. She shuddered at the



thought of whether Lucas was the culprit of the dead letter.

“Okay, let’s continue,” said Lucas after coming back, but Jane was silent. She just looked at him with a scared look.

“What’s with your look?” asked Lucas.

“I do not want to beat around the bush. Straight to the point. Are you perhaps the death letter culprit?” asked Jane with a low voice while handing Lucas his notebook. Lucas looked shocked. He looked around the library to see if there were other friends of them.

“What did you say?” asked Lucas with a slightly raised voice.

“I think it is indeed you. You do not have to be this nervous if you are not the culprit,” answered Jane.

“I can explain-,” said Lucas.

“Wait, I think I remember something about you,” said Jane suddenly with her eyes wide-opened.

“I’ve seen you many times around the locker in the afternoon when it was time for people quickly went to the canteen. And you spent a long time there.” accused Jane.

“Why did you send the letter, huh? Are you inspired by the movies you watched? That’s not nice, Lucas.” said Jane while standing up and then she left him.

The next day, the news that Lucas was the death letter culprit was spread to the students. Many students were busy whispering when Lucas walked in front of them.

“You do not know the truth yet you spread the gossip of me probably the culprit? You really know how to avenge,” said Lucas sarcastically to Jane after he sat in his seat. Jane’s seat was next to his table.

“I am well aware that you must be thought that it was me who spread the news, but I really did not tell anyone. And what? Avenge? Do you think I really have a grudge with you just because of one assignment?” asked Jane in a whisper.

“Well, well, well. So the culprit is in our class, huh?” asked Will. Lucas just sighed when Will approached his table.

“I cannot believe that the student most lectures admire is capable of doing that kind of act,” said Will with a smirk look. Will was ready to continue his words, but it was delayed because the lecturer had entered the class.

After the class was finished, Lucas went to a cafe near his campus. He met Jane in the cafe. Jane then approached his table and decided to sit in front of Lucas.

“It seems like there was someone who heard our conversation yesterday at the library,” said Jane straightforwardly. Lucas did not respond, he just kept on reading his book.

“You can tell me the truth. No matter how much I think that you are the culprit but I just feel like I should hear something first from you,” said Jane.

“Now you will hear me, huh?” asked Lucas sarcastically because he remembered how Jane did not give him any time to explain yesterday. Jane nodded her head.

“First, I did not send the letters. The reason why I spent a long time around the locker because I was the one who sent them the gifts,” said Lucas.

“Wait, what? But why?” Jane raised her voice.

“I once had a best friend. He always taught me to help others while we can. He also taught me that sharing is caring. The gifts that I sent to other friends are simply because I already have a lot of gift from my parents. In case you don’t know, my parents divorced when I was still a kid. Now they married to someone else. They just send me money and things I don’t really need every month.” said Lucas.

“I am really sorry, I—,” responded Jane.

“That’s okay. So, instead of throwing away those things, I’d better give them to someone else. I don’t have the courage to give it directly to our friends. Then I decided to just put it on the top of their lockers.” said Lucas.

“Then, do you know who the real culprit is?” asked Jane. Lucas nodded his head.

“Before going here, I met him. He admitted that he just wanted to make other friends feel threatened too because that’s what he felt when other friends just approach him when they need to. When they don’t need him, they just ignore him like he’s invisible.” said Lucas.

“Who is it?” asked Jane.

“Ron. He felt sorry because actually I once helped him when got bullied by Will. He had no

idea that his act would make me became the suspect of the culprit.” said Lucas.

“Wow, I can’t believe it. But why do you have those horrible pictures in your notebook?” asked Jane.

“I swear to God that it’s just something that I like to do after watching a movie. I’m sorry if it’s creeping you out,” answered Lucas.

“Hmm. Okay, now do you know why people easily believed that you are the culprit?” asked Jane. Lucas shook his head.

“That’s because you’re very mysterious. No one has ever seen as your friend. You are always alone.” said Jane.

“Well, I prefer being alone. I’m afraid when I make friend with someone, he or she will leave me. The friend I just told you, his name was

Daniel Ethan, he died while trying to save me from getting hit by a car. My parents now live with their new family. I am all alone.” said Lucas.

“You know what? I understand, I really do. But don’t forget you have me. I’m here to listen to your story because I believe that you are not the culprit. And that’s what friend is for, isn’t it? People come and people go, Lucas. You can’t deny that fact.” said Jane with a smile on her face. Lucas smiled back at her. He felt thankful to Jane for making him realize that he should not be afraid to be left alone again.



# Summer Surprise

Dorothea Laksita D (164214057)

**The** sun was shining brightly, birds flew freely, Samantha Thomas, a 21 years old girl with blue eyes and long brown hair was also very excited to greet the summer. She was a college student who took film and television department and took film director as her major. She was

walking in the campus corridor while thinking of the summer project.

She walked to the parking lot, opened her car, and started to drive. She drove her car to Alika's school. Alika was a high school student with long wavy hair and blue eyes. They had to be used to be independent since their father left them and their mother. Samantha and Alika were really close. They liked to do anything together. They also promised to always be together and support each other since the day their father left them.

As a high school student, it would not a problem for her if her sister always picked her up. She was actually happy because sometimes, the situation made them could go to their favorite burger restaurant before they went home.

“Ah, I am very hungry. Let’s go to Burger-O. I want a large cheeseburger and some French fries,” Alikā said after getting into the car.

“Okay, let’s go there,” Samantha then took the road to Burger-O, their favorite burger restaurant.

She thought Alikā was right, she had not eaten anything all day. That was why she could not think clearly. After she ate 1 Burger Deluxe with extra cheese, French fries, and a glass of Pepsi, an idea suddenly appeared in her head. Many things actually appeared in her head, but the old man, who was sitting alone in the corner, caught her interest when she looked at him. He was eating a Vege Burger with a glass of lemon tea. She thought about his loneliness.

“I know!” Samantha said with excitedly.

“What? What do you know?” Alika, who was still chewing French fries, was confused by what her sister said.

“I know what I should do on my summer project. I want to make a short movie about how a husband overcomes his longing for his deceased wife.” Samantha said while she looked at the old man who had finished his burger.

“Hmmm, sounds great, but you should make a research first, right? Then, who will be your object of research?” Alika asked seriously.

“Hey, why you suddenly become a smart girl? Hahahaha. Ok, that is a good question. I still don’t have an idea by the way. Let’s go home and ask mom.”

They finally went home and planned to ask their mom about it.

Ever since Samantha's mother became a single mom, she was no longer working in an office. She chose to open a catering at home since she liked to cook. She wanted to always be able to accompany her children at home.

When they arrived at home, Samantha asked for her mother's advice about who will be the best person as her research object. Her mom, then, suggested visiting Jhon Richard, her mom's stepbrother. He is 65 years old. She said that Samantha had only met him once when she was little, while Alike had never met him before. It was because after his wife died, uncle Jhon moved to Texas and had never come to visit again.

After a long talk with her mom, Samantha got uncle Jhon's address. However, her mom did not have uncle Jhon's phone number. She, then,

decided to go to uncle Jhon's house two days after that day. Alik also went to uncle Jhon's house since it was a summer holiday. They thought that it would be fun.

They finally went to Texas and after a long trip, they started to open Google maps to show the direction to uncle Jhon's house. However, they still asked the local people sometimes. They finally found the house and Samantha started to knock on the door.

"Excuse me. Is it Jhon Richard's house?" Samantha said, hoping there was someone inside.

"Yes? Do I know you?" someone said in front of the door.

“I am Alik and this is my sister, Samantha, we are Allysia’s daughter. We are your niece.” Alik said excitedly.

“Hmm, actually I only met you once when I was little, and Alik had never met you before. Mom said that you moved here after your wife died,” Samantha explained.

“Oh my God, it has been a long time. C’mon, get in.” Uncle Jhon let them got into the house.

They were amazed because the house was filled with antique furniture. They thought that their uncle was an antique stuff collector. They put their belongings at the guest bedroom.

“What brings you here, kids?” uncle Jhon asked.

“Actually I want to ask for your help. I have a summer project to make a short movie and I’ll be glad if you allow me to ask some questions about you because I need information about your life,” Samantha explained about her intention.

“Oh ok, it’s ok. I’ll be glad because I haven’t had friends to talk for a long time.” Uncle Jhon answered.

After asking some questions, they started to look around the house again. Samantha found a photo. In the photo, there was uncle Jhon with someone they did not know, but they looked very close.

Samantha started to learn her uncle’s behavior and made a note of it. She also started to turn on her camera and record everything. Samantha liked to record anything. She even likes



to make a video about her daily life and now, she would record her days in uncle Jhon's house as her research video.

Day 3 in her uncle's house, Samantha still asked some questions about his memories with his wife and how he overcame his longing for his deceased wife. She got more data for her short movie. Alik was busy exploring the house and helping Samantha to record her interview with uncle Jhon.

Samantha had a quirk habit. She would wake up, go to the kitchen, drink a glass of water, and go back to sleep again. One night, when she was awake, she saw her uncle in the living room. He was just sitting in the sofa, holding a baseball bat, but the TV was not turned on and neither was the lamp. She was confused. She approached him and asked what he was doing. Samantha,

then, accompanied him to his bedroom. After that, she went back to her bedroom and still confused.

Day 5 in her uncle's house, not only Samantha who felt that her uncle was weird. Alika also told her that she saw uncle Jhon's behavior was weird, especially in the midnight. Alika, then, began to assume that uncle Jhon maybe a little bit crazy because of his wife's death. However, Samantha did not want to draw any conclusion too fast. She even searched on the internet about her uncle's weird behavior. She thought that her uncle was probably sick or something like that. Because of Alika's and Samantha's curiosity about what his uncle did at night, they decided to put a camera in the living room that night.

In the morning, Alika and Samantha were surprised because the camera that they put in the

living room was already in their bedroom. They, then, checked the footage and very surprised because the one who moved the camera was uncle Jhon. He looked very angry while he held a knife in his hand. He put the camera and turned the camera to their bed. Before he left the bedroom, he stood for a moment near their bed, doing nothing, and he walked out. All of it made Samantha and Alika very scared.

“What do you want from me, kids?” asked uncle Jhon when Samantha and Alika came out of their room.

“Mmm, I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to be rude. I just, I need the video for my research,” Samantha said fearfully.

“AAAAAA!!” Alika suddenly screamed. Her hair was pulled by uncle Jhon

“What... what are you doing you such a weird man?!” Samantha tried to let his hand off from Alika’s hair but she failed.

Alika then kicked his stomach and ran to Samantha. However, uncle Jhon had already held a knife and walked over to them. However, Alika and Samantha succeeded to run away to their bedroom. They were very scared and their whole body scrambled. Samantha took her phone and made a call to her mom. She told everything that happened to her and Alika. She sent her mom a video, which she saw this morning, and her mom said something unexpected. Her mom said that it was not uncle Jhon. Then suddenly, that man, whom they did not know, was banging on the door really hard. Samantha was still talking to her mom on the phone. Her mom said that she would go there. While she waited for her, she

asked them to calm down and called the police. Samantha, then, called the police before the man broke the door.

“Do you think I’m your uncle? Hahahahahahaha. You’re really stupid. Your coward uncle died,” the man said behind the door while he tried to break the door.

The door was successfully broken down and the man succeeded to enter their room. Alike saw it as a chance to run, so she run when the man focused on Samantha because he saw that Samantha still held her cellphone. Alike ran to save Samantha and tried to search for something that she could use to hit the man. She remembered that the man had a baseball bat. Then, she searched the baseball bat or something that was sharp enough to hurt him. She decided to go to the kitchen and searched for something.

In the bedroom, Samantha still tried to run away from him. However, he succeeded to catch her and tied her to a chair with a cloth. Samantha screamed. He started to swing his knife to Samantha's face, which caused a slight scratch on her smooth cheeks. Now, the target was Alik, but before he turned around to look for her, she hit his head with baseball bat. Alik ran towards Samantha and untied the rope. They then ran out of the room. However, suddenly he held Samantha's feet and it made them shocked. Samantha then kicked her face really hard until he fainted.

When the police came, they succeeded to run out of the house. The police immediately entered to help Samantha and Alik and also to arrest that man. After the man arrested by the police, Samantha decided to enter the house

again and found out what happened to her uncle because she believed that everything happened with a reason behind. He found a frame that was broken on the floor and she remembered the photo that she saw when the first day she came. She took the photo of the man with one other man and in the behind of the photo was written 'Jhon Richard & Samuel Flynn, 2013, on a volley competition'. Samantha then realized that Samuel Flynn must be the name of that man and he was her uncle's close friend. However, she did not know what made Flynn killed her uncle and how he could be in her uncle's house when she and Alike came. Alike, then, found a letter about Samuel Flynn's feeling. He apparently was offended by her uncle because Uncle Jhon underestimated Samuel Flynn, who often lose when following volley competition. In the letter, he also explained how Samuel Flynn killed her

uncle. He did it by stabbing his stomach 20 times. The letter also explained how proud he was after he killed Uncle Jhon. They also found some sedative pills, commonly used for patients who are mentally disturbed, in Flynn's room. Samantha and Alikha then searched for uncle Jhon's corpse around the house. The date he killed uncle Jhon was written on the letter they found and that was the day before they came.

“OH MY GOD SAM! Come here!” Alikha called her sister while she closed her mouth in shock.

“Is this... Is this uncle Jhon's corpse?!” Samantha was also surprised.

Alikha and Samantha told the police that they found their uncle's corpse. The police immediately secured the corpse and said thank you to Samantha and Alikha because they helped



find uncle Jhon's corpse. They then came out of the house at the time their mom arrived. Their mom hugged them tightly and Samantha and Alike felt save now.

# Unwanted

Amelia Indirafani/164214059

At six in the morning, there was a noise of the tools and a whistle from the kitchen. It turned out, it was Aileen who was cooking at that hour. The noise woke the middle age lady up and made her out of her room.

“Oh! Good morning, mom! Did you sleep well?”, asked Aileen to her mother. Her mother did not answer any single words and remained silent.

“I am making your favorite breakfast, sandwich! With extra cheese—” “I do not want a sandwich, I want oatmeal and I will cook it by myself.”, cut Aileen’s mother coldly. Aileen has not even finished her words yet but her mother has already cut her words.

“Okay! Then I will make you vanilla milk, mom.”, said Aileen. “You do not need to.”, rejected her mom. “I am gonna drink hot tea. Just get ready to go to campus. Do not disturb me.”

Aileen felt disappointed with what her mother’s said. Her sandwich was not even touched. If her father was in the house, he will surely eat her sandwich even though her father remained cold towards her. At least, she felt appreciated if her parents eat what she cooked. Then, she was preparing to go to campus and was

trying to be okay for the day. She got used to the cold reaction of her parents given to her.

After arriving at the campus, she went to the class and approached her friends. She brought her homemade sandwich and was planning to give it to her friends.

“What’s up, sisters!” said her happily.

“What’s with your tone, huh? It seems like you force yourself to look happy.”, said Jean accurately. “Yeah, it is really awkward, you know?”, added Letta.

“What the— I am just saying hi to you but what’s with this reaction.”, sighed Aileen.

“It is because you have never called us ‘sister’ before. You always say “Hi, bitches! How’s your day” something like that and now you refer

us as your sister. Cut that bullshit, man.”, said Alexa sarcastically.

“Oh my gosh... You guys really..”, sighed Aileen. “Okay, forget it! Now, I want you to try my homemade sandwiches. These are specially made for you guys.”

“Really? It looks tasty!”, said Shane and took the sandwich at the same time. Letta and the others also took the sandwich and tasted it. “Woah! It is so good! Perfecto!”, complimented Jean and were approved by others.

Aileen smiled proudly and felt sad at the same time. If only her mother tasted it, even for a small bite, it will make a perfect day for her. While waiting for the others to finish the sandwich, she took out a paper and started writing,

Today, December 14t, 2018, I made some sandwiches for my friends and they said it is good. I am so happy that they enjoyed my sandwiches. In the future, I will cook more food and give it to them to taste. Also, I hope my parents want to taste it too...

“Geez Aileen! Look at your nails! It is so pitiful!”, said Shane when she saw the nails of Aileen who was busy writing.

“Eung..?” mumbled Aileen. “Uhm.. I could not help myself for cutting my nails with my own hands.”, answered Aileen. “What the heck are you saying?” , confused Letta.

“Uhm, I am not using any tools to cut my nails. Not nail clipper, not scissor but my hands. Like this”, answered Aileen and at the same time, she showed them how she cut her nails. “Oh my God! You are such a weirdo. That’s just makin’

your nails ugly,” said Shane. “It is okay. After all, I do not like nails art,” giggle Aileen.

“Whatever. What did you write?” asked Shane. “It is a secret.”, she answered.

“Oh, come on! Why don’t you tell us? We can keep it as a secret if it is your confession to a boy you like.”, said Letta.

“No, it is not! What boy you are talking about? I do not have a particular someone that I like.”, she answered. “Oh, really? It seems like you are interested in one of the boys in our class.”, teased Letta. “James, right?”, Letta continued teasing Aileen.

“No.”, she answered shortly. “Then, tell us, what did you write?” urged Jean. Aileen answered it by shaking her head.

“You are such an annoying!”, Alexa felt upset. “Why do you love writing, Leen?”, asked Letta. “It is so rare to see someone really into writing in this modern era.”, she added.

“I do not know. I just love when I write something. Although, it is not good, but I feel a little bit relieved for expressing how I feel into words. Also, I like to make a poem even though it is not as good as Shakespeare’s”, answered Aileen.

“Then, if there is an assignment to make a poem, I will go to you! I am so bad at it and having a friend who is capable to make ones is called benefit.”, said Alexa then the others burst into laughter.

After the class was over, they did not leave the class directly but were discussing something to spend the rest of the day.



“Let’s watch a movie! There’s no reason for me to go home at this hour. It is quiet.”, asked Aileen. “Where are your parents?”, asked Jean. “They are busy. My dad went to Bali because of work matters for about 4 months ago and has not come back home yet. My mom has not come back yet from her work, I think.”, she answered. “And they will never care even if I disappeared for days”, continued Aileen to herself.

“In that case, how about we watch Aquaman? Jason Momoa cannot be resisted, guys. He is so damn sexy!”, answered Shane enthusiastically. “GO GO!”, said the others while giggling to each other.

The next day, Jean, Letta, Alexa and Shane were busy gossiping how sexy Jason Momoa was in the Aquaman movie they have watched yesterday. They were busy giggling and imagining

how their future boyfriend look like. Then, Aileen entered the class with a gloomy look.

“Hey, what’s happen with your face?”, asked Alexa immediately. “Are you okay?”, asked Jean.

“Yeah, I am fine. Thank you for asking.”, she answered it with a weak smile. “If there is something burdening you, you have us. You can tell us, Leen. Do not keep your problems to yourself.”, said Letta attentively.

“Uhm, yea, I feel a little bit gloomy today. For no reason. I just listened to ballad songs this morning and that’s made my mood for today.”, lied Aileen.

“Are you sure? You do not hide something, right?”, asked Shane suspiciously.

“Yeah, everything is alright. Do not mind me. I have no reason to be sad. I am always happy, especially having some crazy friends around me.”, answered Aileen to cover her sadness.

Actually, this morning, her dad was coming home after months he spent in Bali to work. Of course she greeted happily when she saw her dad. However, life is indeed hard. Her dad answered coldly whenever Aileen said something. Then, he asked Aileen to go to campus without asking how Aileen condition after he left her 4 months ago. Aileen felt so sad. She teared up on her way to campus. She missed her dad and wanted to spend the day with him just like any other daughter who spent their day with their lovely dad. She was so mad and she thought that it is unfair for her to experience this kind of life.

Aileen tried to look information on how to be loved by parents. It turned out that, she had to mess something up in order to get attention from her parents. Actually, she had already failed on purposely on one of the subjects in her college in order to get attention from her parents. It would be better if her parents were mad at her because it showed that they cared about her. However, her parents did not care at all.

She found no love in her family and it made her hated her family. She tried to make an effort to get attention from her parents. She did not care anymore. It was up to her now how she will find affection from other people. She desperately wanted to be happy and happiness could be found everywhere and from anyone.

Two months later, Aileen and her classmate spent their holiday in Bandung. They

went to Bandung for one week. In Bandung, they lived in one of the guesthouses in Dago. There were fifteen of them—Aileen and her four friends, eight boys; Tom, Chris, James, Sean, Ricky, George, Joshua and Henry, and the other two girls; Shania and Joan.

On the last day of their holiday, they had a barbeque party and some beer to end the night before they came back to Semarang. It turned out that not only beer but also alcohol were brought by the other friends. Almost all of them got drunk and only a few of them who were still sober. Aileen was one of them who was still sober. Then, she approached James who was looking a little drunk. They had a small talk and laughed at each other. Somehow, it seemed like James was under the influence of alcohol and suddenly he kissed Aileen forcibly. Without even realizing,

Aileen was following the atmosphere and she kissed him back. At that time, she remembered the scenes of the movie she watched where the casts were kissing to each other and she defined it as love. She came up with a plan that she wanted to take advantage of this condition. She did not stop what James' doing on her and ended up having one night stand with him.

The next day, the other friends found out that Aileen and James had 'slept' together because they were sleeping in the same room, naked. Aileen's best friend could not believe what they saw. They started on questioning Aileen and asked her to speak the truth. At first, Aileen remained silent. She looked calm and did not even panic.

"Aileen! Why do you remain calm? Did he rape you?", asked Jean impatiently.

“No, this is what I want.”, answered Aileen.  
“I like him. Since the beginning of college. I wrote poems and letters for him and gave it to him secretly. I saw his reaction and he seemed happy received it. Last night, it was my chance to not experience unrequited love by having sex with him. I am sorry for not telling you, guys.”, explained Aileen.

“Are you out of your mind?! How could you conclude such a stupid theory, huh?! Do you think by having sex with him, he will accept your feeling? No, idiot!”, snapped Alexa.

“How I supposed to do, then?! My parents do not love me. No one loves me. It hurts. It really does. I have never told you about my family condition, right? It’s because I do not want to burden you with my pathetic problem. I do not know why my parents kind of hate me. I just want

to be loved. That's it. About last night, I hope that James will love me back. I am tired of being unwanted.", she answered with glassy eyes.

"Oh, my poor Aileen...", sighed the other after listening to Aileen's words. They started on crying together because they had no idea that Aileen felt lonely all this time.

"You have us, Aileen. Please, stop keeping your feelings. It is not true that no one loves you. We do.", said Shane. "Yeah, we love you Aileen," said Letta.

Aileen teared up seeing what her friends' said. She felt so stupid for assuming no one loves her. She decided to be more opened up and to take responsibility of what she had done to James. She felt sorry to him and if James hated her, she would accept it.



# The Regrets

Ribka/164214040

Her name was Amaya, a woman with long black hair, tanned skin and beautiful eyes. She was a daughter of Renata, one of the rich families in Indonesia. Her parents divorced when she was 13 years old. She lived with her mother, and her father decided to go, and until now she still didn't know her father's whereabouts. When she was 27 years old, she had a perfect life. She had mother who always understand and always be there for

her, she had older sister named Arista who always support her, and she had a boyfriend who always love and accept all of her flaws.

Born in rich family made Amaya became different from other woman in general. She was a gorgeous woman. She was smart, beautiful, humble, she had a perfect body, and full of ambitions. She really liked shopping but didn't like travelling. She didn't like to be tired, so when she did something, that must not be physical activity.

One day, Amaya and boyfriend went to beach to spend time their together looking for sunset. Gyan, Amaya's boyfriend was 30 years old. He loved Amaya and treated her very well. Sometimes they fought but then Gyan was often said sorry first. Gyan was the one who would try to make Amaya felt comfortable when she was

with him and he tried to be a person who Amaya really missed. Gyan knew that Amaya missed her father. Amara only told about it to Gyan. She didn't brave to talk about her father in front of her family, especially her mother. So Gyan would be the place for her girlfriend to show her longing to her father.

"It is so beautiful," said Amaya when she saw the sunset. She held Gyan's hand and leaning her head on his arms.

"Sunset will always beautiful, no matter what," said Gyan and looked at her girlfriend.

"But rain is the best." said Amaya. Gyan look at Amaya and smiles "I knew it. You like rain so that you can sleep well, right?" said Gyan, teasing Amaya.

“Yeah, that’s one of the reasons,” said Amaya while staring at her Gyan.

They spent time together in Bali on the beach until the sunset and then they decided to go back to Gyan’s villa to get shower and then had dinner together. When they arrived at the restaurant, Amaya was surprised because Gyan prepared a romantic dinner near the beach for them. This was new for Amaya because she knew Gyan was not a romantic man. During their five years of relationship, they just had some romantic dinner and it was not because of Gyan’s financial. Gyan was rich even though he was not as rich as Amaya. Amaya didn’t want Gyan to force himself to be romantic man. She began to talk to Gyan about that; however, that night Gyan was looked so happy as if he had already prepared something.

Their dinner was accompanied by romantic music. After finished eating and talking a little bit, Gyan stood up and took something from his pocket. Amaya knew what this dinner would go and before Gyan took it out from his pocket, Amaya held Gyan's hand.

"Gyan, we have been talking about this before, and I am not ready to get married. Not for now, Gyan," said Amara. Gyan sighed and look at Amaya. "I am sorry, I think you ready for this step. We are in relationship for almost five years and am I really can't make you believe in me?" asked Gyan quietly.

Amaya shook her head. "I believe you, Gyan. But I am not ready for this. There is someone that I am waiting for," said Amaya.

"Your father?" asked Gyan.

“Yes. Gyan you know about that, that I want in our wedding day, my father can be there with us, I want him to hold my hand and give it to you. But even until now, I don’t know where he is,” said Amaya.

Gyan look down and the look at Amaya “Have you ever think about me, Amaya? I understand that that’s your dream but please look at me here and tries to understand me,” said Gyan. After that, he left Amaya who still stand beside the chair.

Amaya fell on the sand and cried. She never thought that Gyan would leave her alone. They had talked about marriage and she already said that she was not ready to get married until she could found her father. When they were talking about it, Gyan said that he understood and accepted it. However, Gyan even left her alone

because of that. She did know what to do in this situation, so she decided to find Gyan and tried to talk about it.

When she arrived at Gyan's room, Gyan didn't want to open the door. She tried to knock the door again and Gyan still didn't open the door. She cried again in front of the door and kept called Gyan

"Yan, open the door please. Let's talk first, don't be like this, please," said Amaya. Inside of the room, Gyan was staring at the city view through the window while holding the rings that he wanted to give to Amaya. He knew that Amaya was in front of his door and cried. But he tried to not care about that. He was really upset with Amaya.

After two hours waiting for Gyan to open the door, Amaya decided to go back to her room

and packed her bags to go back home. She bought flight ticket with sad feeling. She knew that in this situation, she needed her mother. After arrived at her home in Jakarta, her mother was surprise when Amaya hugged her and cried.

“Hey, what happened darling? Please, tell me,” said her mother.

“Mom, am I wrong to refuse Gyan’s proposal?” asked Amaya to her mother.

“What? Gyan proposes you? And you refuse him?” asked her mother, quietly.

Amaya nodded. “It is ok sweetheart, but why you refuse him? I thought he is the best for you, and you know that. So why you refuse him?” asked her mother.



“I just want him to wait just a little bit mom, just until I find dad,” said Amaya while look at her mother.

“Your father?” asked her mother.

“Yes mom, I miss him so much, he was there when I was born, and I want him to be there when I get married,” said Amaya.

Her mother released Amaya’s hug and then went to her room. Amaya was confused and thought that her mother also upset of her because still told about her father. She didn’t know what her fault was. She just missed her father and she thought it was normal for a daughter missed their father. She went to her room and lied down on her bed, cried.

After some minutes, she heard her door opened, and saw her mother was there, cried too.

Her mother approached and hugged her. “I know where your father is, I am sorry to not say about this. I think you also never think about him, Amaya. You also never tell me that you miss him. If I know you miss him, I will tell you about your father so that you can meet him,” said her mother.

“No mom, that’s my fault. I never tell you that I miss him. I just think if I tell it to you, it will hurt you,” said Amaya.

Her mother shook her head and said “No sweet heart, you will not get hurt just because of this. So you want to meet your father?”

Amaya nodded and her mother said, “Your father is in Japan. After the divorced he decided go to Japan because he also has a company there. If you want, I will tell him that you want to meet him.”

“No mom, I will do it by myself. Just give his number to me, and I will call him,” said Amaya. She wanted to meet her daddy first and then she could meet Gyan to solve their problem. She just wanted to tell her father that she would get married and hope that he could come. She would not force his father to come to her wedding. She just wanted him to know.

Amaya called her father and told him that she wanted to meet him. Her father agreed to meet and he would come to Indonesia to meet Amaya. He said he also really missed her daughter.

The time came when Amaya finally met her father. They were in one of the Japanese Restaurant in Jakarta. It was really awkward since both of them didn't say anything. Amaya decided

to talk first because she knew that her father also didn't know how to start the conversation.

“How are you, dad? Long time no see,” said Amaya.

Her father smiled and said “I'm fine. I heard that you will marry your boyfriend, right? Congratulations, Amaya. I hope he could be someone that makes you happy,” said her father.

Amaya looked down and her tears began to fall on his cheeks. “You said as if you can't come to my wedding. But it's fine. I just wanted to tell you about that,” said Amaya. She was really upset with her father. She stood up from her chair but when she wanted to go, her father held her hand and said, “I don't say that I couldn't come, Amaya. I will come for my little daughter who now will get married.”

Amaya looked at her father and hugged him. She was so happy. They spent the rest of day talking about everything.

After met her father, Amaya decided to meet Gyan in his house. She was really happy and excited to meet Gyan. She missed him and since everything was fine, they would be together. When Gyan opened the door he didn't know that it was Amaya. Amaya hugged him immediately and cried.

“I am sorry to make you waiting for so long and make you upset. I love you Yan, I love you. Now, will you marry me?” said Amaya to Gyan.

Gyan was surprised and stared at Amaya. “It was supposed to be me who say that sentence to you. So Amaya, will you marry me and to be with me forever?” said Gyan. Amaya nodded and hugged him again. The problem solved, they

could be together now. Gyan and Amaya announced that they were getting married to their parents and their close friend.

They started to prepare for the wedding. They decided to get married next month because they thought they could not wait again. Everything was fine. Their parents also agreed with their plan.

Gyan and Amaya went to looking for wedding dress, designed by her older sister. The wedding dress store was owned by her older sister. After arrived at the store, they didn't meet Arista, her older sister. They were waiting for Arista who came late because she had to meet another customer. They sat on the couch in the room and both of them were really happy and excited.

“Are you happy?” asked Gyan while looking at Amaya with love.

“I can express it Gyan, I’m really really really happy,” said Amaya.

“Thank you for loving me Amaya, thank you because you want to accept all of my flaws. I promise I will make you happy. I will protect you and I will not hurt you. One day, if I left you first, just believe that my love will always with you. And if you want to look for another man, I will support you. I just want you be happy,” said Gyan.

Amaya looked at Gyan, “What are you talking about, Gyan. Do not think like that. Let’s buy coffee for us. I am thirsty,” said Amaya tried to change their topic.

“Everything for you, honey. I will buy it, just wait here,” said Gyan and kissed Amaya’s forehead.

Gyan went out of the store to buy coffee for him and Amaya. When he crossed the street, he didn’t notice that there was car that speeding up and braaakkkkk!! He was thrown away to the other side of the road. His body was covered with blood. The loud crash sound surprised Amara and she looked outside the window. She saw so many people on the road, encircled a body that lied on the road. She was shocked and didn’t able to move when she saw that body was Gyan. She fainted on the floor and didn’t know what happened after that.

Two years later, Amaya went to her favourite place to meet Gyan. She brought a flower. “Hi, Yan, I am sorry I didn’t come here



yesterday to meet you. You're waiting for me, right? Yesterday, Arista invited me to go to vacation with her, but I refused because I miss you. How are you? Why you never answer me Gyan? I miss you Gyan. You promised to protect me, and I need you now," said Amaya. She cried while touching the gravestone named ALBERTUS GYAN.

Gyan was died in the accident two years ago, and Amaya still came to grave to visit Gyan regularly. She talked as if Gyan could hear her. She realised that from two years ago, her life couldn't be perfect. If she didn't refuse at that time, this would not happen. She decided that her heart was just for Gyan and she would never open her heart to other men.

# Contradiction

Maria Cynthia S N/164214047

**Coastal** clouds slowly began to roll across the evening sky, turning silver with the reflection of the moon. I wake up when the sun is parallel to the horizon and start with a magnificent day in my first day of being a freshman in college. I walk into breezeway, everyone looks new in my eyes. I know no one here even when I come to the class. “Let’s end this class”, I sigh while I’m jittering my

legs eagerly want to walk away from this class. I hate to begin a conversation with people first.

As soon as I end my class, I stop by at a fascinating small coffee shop nearby my place called Etoiles. All seat has been taken, so I force myself to seat in front of a person who pours a black coffee into a cup from espresso machine. A gulp of delicious coffee milk that goes into my throat makes me praise the barista who made this one. Bravely I say this to her, “You’re the one who made this?” and a sudden she gives me glare and she said “Yes, it must be worst, isn’t it?” and I chuckle to her “It is so delicious” I say. She seems bit surprise, someone like me would say like that to her, it takes five seconds to make her says “I put something on it” make me curious “What’s something that you mean?” I ask her wondering. She stops pouring some water to

make black coffee then she smiles and said “I gave pinch of magic, magic of happiness”, I start smiling and we have a much things to talk with and it leads us to ask what we do for living. It takes noon till evening to talk with her, and I found one fact about her, she’s my senior in my major, named Anne.

As I arrived at my place, I open the door while staring into blank space and only thought about earlier, “She creates her own world with her imagination, how come?” I mumbled. It must be fun to be friend with her. I lay down my whole body to bed, I take my draw pen and start to sketch something inside my head. Take a deep breath, “Oh how I loved to draw”. While I’m drawing, my mom calling me. I put down my pen and answer her call.

“Hey, Mom”

“Hey my baby, have you eaten today?”

“Yes mom I have.”

“How’s college? You must be studying right now, right?”

“Everything is fine and I’m studying”

“Good be a good kid, you have to know what future you might be as your father has said to you, and stay health darling. I love you”

“Yes mom, I love you too. Stay health and say hello to dad” I say and she ends the call.

I deeply sigh, I missed them but I’m sorry I always lie to them about studying. I mean as student I will study but I also like drawing and painting, I wish I could do what I like to do.

The next two day, I wake up as usual, 30 minutes before class is started. I always manage

everything well but not today. 30 minutes are enough for me to take a shower, to get dress, to put colour on my lips, to brush my hair and done. Though, today landlord is nagging at everyone's room just because one person who hasn't paid for rent, I wasted my 15 minutes only for her. So, I came late at the morning class today. I always sit in front line, never in a back because of my sight problem. I sit in the back lines, and someone next to me is a girl which so familiar to me.

“Hey, remember me?” someone with yellow hoodie taps my back.

“Anne? You took this class?” I answer surprisingly yet happy.

“Yes, Matilda. I always skip this class when I was at your semester.” Chuckles.

“Geez how come. But I’m glad at least I have you in this class” I said.

“Count on me. Do you have any classes after this?”

“Unfortunately, yes. I still have one class” I sigh.

“Meet me at canteen after you finish your class” she says.

“Oka—” Almost end with my sentence, though lecturer has an eye keep watching on me and Anne.

I can’t talk more with her in a class, but as soon as I’ve done all my schedule for today class I rush to canteen to meet Anne. When I go to canteen, I wave into her and she’s not alone, she’s sit there with a couple of friends she has.

I buy my favorite Japanese food called takoyaki and bring it to Anne and her friends. As I sit down, she's introducing me to her friends, seems all her friends are in the same batch with her, that speaking of it they're all my senior. Well, personally I hate to meet new people, and her friends is okay though. I burst out of laugh when I start a conversation with them, they're all sick. Like really really sick. They're so funny. Firstly, Ardeen, she's so small and cute but she's quite quiet and shy when she introduces herself to me. I like Ardeen's style, typical Korean stylish. Secondly, Nadine, Anne's doppelganger I might said. No, kidding, she's just look alike because both of them has bang and has a short hair. Nadine has resting-bitch face, I mean I'm scared when look at her face, I thought she doesn't want to have a talk with me. But it is just her face who says so, she is really kind honestly.



Ares, who sit next to me, he's so funny. I think he's a comedian, every words even when he's silent produces laugh from each of us. Lastly, a man who caught my eyes, Benjamin, he's sitting next to Anne and in front of me. The way he talks, he looks and smiles makes my attention caught on him. How can a man with all his charisma hasn't get a girl?

A month later, it is the exact time that I've spent my half new semester in here. I always hang out with them, with Anne, Ardeen, Nadine, Arsa, and ofc Benjamin. We talk randomly, I give them by best jokes and they laugh, I give them what I think and we're sharing our thoughts. I'm the person who can mingle with people but I can't stay longer with someone I can't enjoy with. But I found them, we really have the same frequency. I become more of myself with them, I talk a lot,

I'm not shy at all, fooling around with them. I do whatever I want when I'm with them, they always support me, especially Anne.

It is May day, International Workers' Day. In one event, I take a part to celebrate May Day. I invite all of them, but only Anne is coming. I join to the street, to protest on particular event that happened in my country. It comes messed up and all the people who take part is spreading around, and Anne is grabbing my hands while we run.

"Matilda, please give me your big step or we gonna catch by police." While she grabs my hand. And I run as fast as I can.

"Hahahaha Matilda, you're indeed a rebellion girl" she said while we stop in front of small store. It is fun though, being a rebellion, or it is fun that I run with her? I wonder. My heart

palpitates so fast. I don't know either what cause this.

A day after that event, May Day, I come to the same class with Anne. I see her sit in front line. Okay, she knew where I oughta sit. She carefully listen to the lecturer and write down what lecturer said, no, it's just what I thought until I catch what is she actually doing. She writes a poem. In the middle of class session, the lecturer randomly choose someone to answer his question, and Anne's name is being shout out by lecturer. Surprisingly, she can answer what the lecturer has asked to her, whereas she only writes poem earlier and didn't listen what the lecturer has explained. She's amazing, she's the perfect one to be described as gorgeous with her brain and anything that she has. For this class, I work on the same project with Anne for the regulations

to final exam. We often spend time together in coffee shop where she works. So, while she's working we can work for our project.

Anne, day by day become the reason I want to show to everyone what is the real me. I wish everyone could be same like Anne. The way she thinks, the way she listens, the way she responses, I wish everyone could be like her, who can accept of who I am, even I wish my parents could be like her. Anne talks about astronomy and all her poem about interstellar magic, Anne is really like chatter box but that's makes her caught my attention so much. I thank to this project, I become closer to Anne. I always together whenever I go with Anne. Sometimes when we stress enough about our project, I go shopping with her, we try so much clothes, grunge style-look with rip jeans and boots like I usually wear.

But we just try it in fitting room but we're not buying it.

Final exam has done and it's the day that I back to my hometown, it is not too far yet not too close. It takes about 5 hours to come home with car. I pack all my bags, I say goodbye, not a real goodbye, just a little farewell to them because we won't see each other in a month. I don't know what to do in this house. I can't express well in here, in a home. I always think that home must be a place that I comfortable to live. But not in here. I completely different. I become a normal girl like what my parents want, especially what my religious father wants. I don't hate what they did, but I just disappoint about something that borders me to what I want to be or to do.

“Matildaaaaaaa” Shout my mom from kitchen.

“Mooooom” I happily shout her back and hug her.

“My darling is finally home, today I cook Lasagna for dinner, call your dad to come down.” said my mom. So, I call my dad to join dinner.

“Dad, mom ask to have dinner together.”

“Matilda my girl, I’m sorry have to ask your sister to pick you up. It must be me.”

“Well, that’s okay dad.” I said

“Matilda you look so pretty with that pink dress and flat shoes suits you well. Oh my Matilda is already grown up” He puts his arms on my shoulder while we walk to dinner table.

“Ah dad, you just exaggerating it.” I chuckles.

We sit together, with my little brother and my big sister too. We talk about what we do in school and college, we talk about academy, about contribution in church. I tell to them that I'm working on project, I tell to them that I study well, I tell them that I never join any stupid things like what I did in May Day, I tell them that I always spend my time in library, studying. All I tell them is a lie. I'm tired of lies that I have to tell to them. But I have no choices, I tell them what they want to hear. I don't want any fight between me and my parents.

During holiday, I always stay at my room pretend I'm study in my room well I'm actually is drawing and painting. I do what my parents don't want me to do. In one night I eavesdropping, accidentally, on my parents' conversation. My mom worries that I always in my room and then

my dad says “It’s okay, Matilda is used to be shy girl. You know only one or two words come out from her mouth, don’t worry too much, she’s the quietest from her brother and sister, let it be.” After I heard that, it makes me more sorry because I’m not as they think.

A month has already passed. I go back to college life, in a new semester, this is my second semester. I hang out together with them, Anne, Arsa, Benjamin, Ardine and Nadine. We laugh, we talk, we sing, we do randomly what we want to do together after we separate in a month. This semester is kinda weird for Benjamin, he always on my sight. I mean, he always keep in touch with me. He never done that before. Indeed, I can’t refuse what Benjamin always offers to me. He often asks me to go to cinema only both two of us, he often asks to meet me separate from



others. In this semester I close enough to Benjamin, I start to pay attention to him. The way he asks about my day, the way his existence is always there for me.

Saturday night, I goes to Anne's place to sleep over. I talk about Benjamin. She talks about a guy she met in place she works. She gets closer to that guy and I also get closer to Benjamin. In a day when I over tired, Benjamin comes to my place. I spends my time to look at Benjamin's face, how handsome he is. How can be this human being is exist? We share our story, we share our lips, even my skin is on his skin. I officially date him, but that doesn't make our friends surprised that make me suspicious that they're already know that Benjamin has crush on me.

I come to the class, where there's no Anne anymore. It's sad that I'm no longer spend time with her alone even though we still meet in coffee shop where she works at. I come to her coffee shop, I see her that she's talking to a man, a man that exactly the same as what she has described to me when I slept over at her place. "I guess that's her new boy, congrats to her." I say to myself. When I paint and draw to relief stress, the portray of Anne always comes to my head. Even I stare to blank space, reminds the old days that I spend with her. But I'm in denial to myself, I deny what I felt about her. I always busy to spend my time with Benjamin, so I can put aside what I think about Anne.

After Mid-term exam, I have holiday together with Benjamin, only two of us. We spend memorable time together. And when I

arrived at my place, I see my parents, sit in my bed. I am really speechless, all my bags are dropped and things inside it is spreading away. They come unpredictable and I don't notice them come to my place. I look into my father's face. Everything is says it all in his face. He mad. Something must be wrong. And I look around at my place, there's so much painting that dad hate, there are so much packs of cigarettes. I'm totally doomed and big fight will happen. Tears is meant nothing. Argumentation comes to my mouth and my parents'.

“You are disrespectful daughter.” My father yells and accidentally slaps my face.

“Mom and Dad, I'm tired. I'm tired not to become who I am. I'm tired to give up all my dreams to become an artist, I just live as hard as I can, as much as you want to be. I'm already 20

and I need to choose my own path. I want to let you know the real me, I want you to care a bit what I want to be. I honestly, become someone I don't even recognize when I'm at home. I feel sorry about it to you, to my siblings. I may look shy, unsocialize, what I am in home is a contradiction what I do in here. Mom and Dad, I want to be what I want to be both in home and here. I'm going to achieve success in my own way. I'll not to let you disappoint if you let me to walk on my own path. Both of you will still be a place that I lean on but I need to live on my path, live a life what I want to live. I decide to whom I want to like, who I want to love." I am crying out loud till I can't hear my own voices of argumentation that I give to them. Of course the situation is really awkward. I can't even move a bit from where I stand, I just let my tears out, I let the bomb keep explode inside of my mind and

mental. I will accept what decision they made, whether they don't know to acknowledge me as their daughter, or they'll understand what I felt after all this time.

My father left my place, and my mom hug me and says to understand his father feelings. And I really a doomed, I really lost from myself. I feel I'm on deepest stage of my life. I feel everyone is didn't know what I feel. All I can do is calling Benjamin. The one that I want to be my ears is Benjamin. I call him for hundred times but he doesn't answer it. I really don't know what to do till Anne is cross in my mind. I take my phone while my hands is trembling, I search her contact and call her. I need to wait 3 minutes to let her answer my phone, and there she is. She answers my phone, and I am just crying. She hang the call and come straight to my place. 15

minutes, she comes and hugs me. I hug her back and crying. She's not asking anything but just hug me and rub my back.

I wake up with big swollen eyes. I fell asleep after crying. And Anne still there, she makes me a tea, chamomile tea. I sit with blanket curling my body, and I slurp the tea she made. It is so nice to have her on my hard time. I tell her everything what happened last night and she hugs me really tight this time. While I'm talking to Anne, a message just popped in my notification. It is from Benjamin, he says sorry and ask where I am at. Benjamin comes to my place and it makes Anne left. Benjamin comfort me and stay at my place till I feel much better.

For the next three days, I haven't got call from home. I want to ask how's they doing but I have no guts to say anything after the accident at

that time. I come to class with no motivation even I have my friends' back up.

A day after it. My father sent me a text. The text is:

Dear, Matilda my lovely daughter. I'm sorry what I did at that time. I wasn't in my right mind and I'm truly sorry become a worst father. I'm sorry I can't understand you after all this time. I and your mom has been thinking about it, thoughtfully. We understand and can accept why you become like that. I'm sorry about my ambition, my ambition make a border to let your dream comes true. Now everything is your choices, you can do what you want to be. But in one condition, let our communication transparency as clear. Be yourself at your home. You can love someone who you wanted. Love has no border.

Love, Mom and Dad.

And I cry again, Benjamin is here when I get the message from my father. Benjamin cares my hair and wipes my tears. Finally, I can reveal what my real personality is, reveal what I felt about everything to my family, they can accept what I really am. There's no contradiction towards my behaviour to my family anymore. I can be Matilda that I want to be. I feel relief about my family things, but something feels bizzare on my feelings. I thought Benjamin is the only one that I need here, but I can't stop thinking about Anne. I can't get her out of my head, I want Anne here instead of Benjamin. After all this time, I just realize, a contradiction is not only happened towards my behaviour to my family but also with my own feeling. I always on denial to love Anne in platonic way but when I



spend more time with Benjamin, I realize I fall in love with Anne. I love her. I want to spend my day with her. I want her to be my girl. To be my chatter box that I can listen for hours. “Does this contradiction has to haunt me for the rest of my life? Can I tell this to Anne like what I tell to my parents? What I do with Benjamin?” I talk with myself while Benjamin hugs me tightly.

# Agape

Yosephin Natalia/164214055

It was the end of summer when Madeliene turned 18 and started college. There was nothing good to be expected because she had to meet new people. She was both excited and nervous. She was the kind of girl who was shy at the beginning but could be such a humorous person when she got along with other people for such a long time. That was why she kind of hated the idea of meeting new people and aadapting to

them. However, she enjoyed so much to get to know new people.

It was Logan, the first person she met on the first day of college. He was the one who started the conversation at the hallway to the newcomers event. “Hi, I’m Logan. Nice to meet you,” he said nervously. His voice was a bit shaking but he tried to look fine.

She replied, “Oh, Hi, I’m Madeliene. Nice to meet you too!” It was a classic and very awkward way to start a conversation. She noticed that Logan was still a bit nervous, so she added, “Are you okay?”

“I was okay, but now, uhm.., not really,” he replied.

“Why?” she asked.

“I’ve seen you from afar and wanted to get to know you or maybe we can be friends, but then I walk through this hallway and you walk on the same way. My mind keeps telling me to say hi to you but I wasn’t ready enough to really act it out. Uhm, but, yeah, I did that,” he explained.

“Oh, wow... What an explanation! Hahaha. That’s okay, thanks for saying hi anyway,” Madeline said.

When they got into the room, they decided to sit together. Madeleine didn’t know that she would be so intense with this new person just for a day. They started to be friends. Some friendships are made because both persons have a common interest, but this friendship is different. They were often spending time together inside and outside the campus. Some people said that they were just like a girlfriend and boyfriend,

but they didn't know what was going on between them. They had never proposed or admitted such things as girlfriend and boyfriend, but they also didn't care if people think that they're a couple. They just named their relationship whatever people name it.

Spending more time together can be so fun and boring. Madeleine, with her sweet and caring personality, had to spend time with Logan, the anxious and careless boy who always thought that his life often gave him tough days. Madeliene considered it 'boring' because Logan liked to read philosophy books and shared his thoughts on it to Madeliene. Madeline, on the other hand, didn't like to read books and didn't even have any interest in things related to philosophy. Because of her caring personality, she just tried to listen to his talks.

Madeleine felt that Logan became so clingy and she needed time to spend with her classmates. “Logan, I’m sorry, tomorrow I can’t have lunch with you, I have an appointment with Lily and Rose.”

“Oh, that’s okay. You are not like me, who don’t have any friend except you, and that’s just lunch. I can eat by myself. I was used to do that. Enjoy your time with your classmates.”

Madeline knew that Logan was a bit disappointed, so she asked him again, “Are you really okay with that? Or do I need to accompany you at lunch first then go with my classmates?”

Logan was kind of accepting the offer but also kind of rejecting it. He said, “No, you don’t have to do that. I am okay. If I am not okay, that’s my problem, not your problem, so I will

solve it by myself.” Madeleine didn’t think Logan is really okay but she just let it be.

Two days later, Madeliene got a message from her classmates to hang out with them. She didn’t feel she wanted to go. Her days were filled by hanging out with people, never be with her own for once. She texted Lily that she was sorry she couldn't hang out with them because she needed time for herself. However, Madeliene still thanked her friend for inviting her. She thought that she needed ‘me time’. She just wanted to be on her own for a while.

A few months later, Logan was getting worse. Madeleine had to face and dealt with Logan’s depressive situation. She didn’t know how to deal with it. She never knew that she would have to face this kind of situation. She didn’t want to leave Logan because she thought

that Logan needs her since he was really clingy. Madeliene didn't know how to save Logan. She decided to tell her parents about this and they said that she had to tell Logan's parents.

Madeleine, thought the same way. She decided to tell Logan's parents about his condition. They asked Madeliene to always be around him and never leave him. When she confided in her classmates about him, they told her to just leave Logan alone. They were afraid that Logan would give negative impacts to her life. In that situation, Madeliene was put between difficult choices. She decided to stay, even when her classmates said that she was stupid.

One night in a fall, Madeliene and Logan had dinner together. They were laughing and talking about something funny. Logan wanted to talk about his favorite philosopher. Every time he



wanted to tell her more about it, Madeleine will often be clueless, so she would pretend to laugh at something else to distract him. She didn't know that Logan wanted to talk about it seriously because he always ended up laughing with her. When they finished their dinner, Logan took Madeliene home. On the way home, they stay quiet. Madeleine felt that something was wrong with him but she had no idea what it was.

When they arrived, Logan said, "I don't know why but I feel so sad for us."

"Why?" Madeline confusedly asked.

"We spent our dinner time always laughing over things."

Madeleine still confused. "Then why? What's wrong with that? That's a good thing, right?"

“No. It was not. I wanted to talk about my favorite philosopher, but every time I said something about it, you laughed at something else, you distracted me!” he answered.

“Oh well, I’m sorry. I didn’t know about that. Next time you can just tell me that you want to say something. You didn’t tell me earlier and you also laughed every time I laughed. I., I don’t understand what is going on here. That is not even a big deal, Logan. What’s wrong with you?” she responded.

Logan’s face was getting red, he was holding back his anger. However, he couldn’t hold it anymore, so he exploded it to Madeleine right in front of her face “It is, Madeliene! It is!!! For me, it is, but I know you won’t care about it. You just are too selfish for that!”

Madeleine was shocked and was about to cry. She didn't know what happened to Logan. She didn't cry, she just stayed quiet and tried to control her emotions. They were both quiet.

"I think I need to go inside. I need to rest. Good night, Logan," said Madeliene with her shaking voice.

Logan felt guilty for her. "I'm sorry. I know it was hurting your feelings. I don't know what's going on in my head. Sometimes I'm being so impulsive over something."

She was about to be angry, but she remembered about his depressive condition. She said, "That's okay, Logan, just forget it."

A few days later, they had lunch. This time, Logan stated that he wanted to say something about philosophy. Then, they talked about a

philosopher called Friedrich Nietzsche. Madeleine had no idea what he was talking about, but to appreciate him, she responded to him.

“Ah., alright. So, Friedrich who? Oh, yes Niet., Neits., how do you say it? Nietzsche or Neitsche? Oh, he went mad after seeing a horse being whipped?” Madeleine was trying so hard to pay attention on him. She was afraid that she would make wrong gestures or words towards Logan.

She knew that she couldn't help him by herself. She talked to his parents again to give them suggestion about a psychologist that might help him. His parents didn't seem to agree with her. They thought that their son was alright and he could handle difficult situations by himself. Madeleine was so sad about that. She knew what cause Logan's impulsive behavior. She thought

that Logan had never be listened by anyone, even his parents, for his whole life. When he felt that someone could hear him, he would be so dominant to express himself.

Madeleine tried to suggest Logan to go to the psychologist. Logan didn't want it. He thought that it was such a waste and unnecessary. He didn't realize that his action showed mental issues. Madeleine, on the other side, really sure about it. She observed. She became even so sure about it when Logan texted her that he didn't feel good. When Madeleine rushed to his house, no one was there except for Logan himself. He was crumbling on the floor, his body was shaking. She didn't know what happened to him and what to do. She grabbed his arms and said that everything was alright. At that time, she realized that his arm was full of wounds.

She had never imagined this kind of situation would happen to him. She was shocked and panicked. She tried to call his parents for help, but they didn't answer. She tried to calm Logan down by saying "Hey, Logan, it's alright. I'm here. Nothing to be worried about." She helped Logan to lay down on the bed and she made him a cup of tea. He felt better. Madeline was curious what happened to him and what triggered his condition. In that moment of silence, she remembered that it was because of her. Logan asked her for lunch but she rejected it. Madeleine has another plan when he asked her to have lunch together. "Is that actually the only thing that triggered this?" Madeleine asked to herself. On the floor, she spotted something. It was a small piece of paper. She grabbed it. It was said: the useless weirdest boy in the city. She knew that some of his classmates often made fun

of him. She made a kind of observation to it. He was bullied, he got depressed, he was about to ask for help from his parents but they don't care. He wanted to talk to Madeliene, but at that time, she was with her other friends. It turned out that Logan thought no one cared about him and he got even more depressed.

Ever since that incident happened, Madeliene became more worried about Logan. She always be around Logan. It didn't mean that Madeliene was fine. She carried a lot of problems within her. It was hard to always control her emotions and feelings towards Logan's impulsiveness. On the other side, all of her friends pushed her to leave Logan because he might pull her into his 'dark life' - for being impulsive and depressed.

Logan was so impulsive and had a sudden regret after. He would say sorry after being so mad and loud to Madeliene. It, somehow, affected Madeliene feelings. She couldn't get angry to Logan. When Logan began to be mad at her because of small things, she had to hold her feeling. She didn't want to get mad back at Logan or even judge him. She had ever done that once, but it made Logan shocked and depressed. If she said sorry to Logan when he was complaining about her, Logan got mad. He was mad because she made Logan felt that he was the one who caused the fight. Well, it was, but Logan never wanted to admit that. He always complained about life, about Madeliene's life, and about everything that happened around him. When they fight, Logan would be so abusive towards himself. Madeline couldn't really express her feelings. She was always trying to help him to get



out that situation, but Logan couldn't cooperate. He never understood how hard Madeliene was trying. He always pushed Madeliene to do things that she didn't like - read philosophy books. He said that Madeliene was lack of knowledge and vocabulary. He said that it was the cause of their problems on miscommunication and misunderstanding towards each other. Madeleine, still, hold her feelings and tried to understand his situation.

Madeleine felt that things were getting heavier. She never had her time alone ever since she was with Logan. She could not express herself again. She was afraid to tell her opinion on something. She wanted to tell her parents about this hard situation, but she couldn't. She was afraid that her parents would be so worried about her. She had no one to talk to. Her friends, one

by one they stepped away from her. They felt that Madeliene was not a good friend anymore since she was around Logan. They said that Madeliene has changed to be quieter and always gives her time for Logan. They also were being sick to listen to her stories about Logan's depressive life and what Logan did to Madeliene. They thought it was unnecessary to give her advice because she wouldn't listen to them.

One day, Logan got mad. Madeleine was just being quiet, as usual. Because of her silence, Logan got even madder at her. "Why are you always being silent, huh? Maddy, I'm not a monster! Say something!" he asked rudely. Madeleine couldn't help it anymore. Tears suddenly streaming down her face. She couldn't speak. Her tongue was tied. She was afraid of Logan. Logan noticed that he scared her out but

he hated the way Madeliene kept quiet. He, in front of Madeliene, bump his head to the wall. He cried. He felt guilty for scaring her. “I’m a monster, I’m a monster,” he said repeatedly while bumped on his head. Madeleine shocked and she put aside her hurt feelings and calmed Logan instead.

“You are not a monster, Logan. I’m sorry for always being quiet. I just don’t know what to say, it didn’t mean I am afraid of you. It’s alright, I’m okay, you are going to be okay and we can talk about this at other time” She explained and she had to lie about her feelings.

Logan’s hand was shaking. “Logan, take a deep breath. It’s okay. I’m here. Hey, inhale.., exhale..,” Madeleine tried to calm him down.

Madeleine has to face this alone, to control her feelings and to calm down someone else

while she actually needed that too. She wished that she could have a friend who understood her. Sometimes she kind of regret it – to know Logan and being in a part of his life. However, she knew that she could turn back the time, so she just through this. She could leave Logan but she knew that it would be a bad decision.

Days went by, Logan's condition was getting worse. He threw things when he couldn't control his emotions. He almost hit Madeliene when he did that. However, it's not because he wanted to attack Madeleine, it just because every time he threw something Madeliene always close to the hitting target. Madeleine knew that Logan would not hit her. He even told her to move away when he was about to hit something, but she always getting close to it so that Logan change his mind to not throwing it.

Madeleine had no choice, she took Logan to the psychologist. She succeeded to persuade him to go. On the way to the psychologist, Logan changed his mind. He was worried. Madeleine was trying to calm him down so he wanted to go to the psychologist but she couldn't. She couldn't force him to go, of course. She just let him go home.

When she was in school, she never had a friend like Logan. She never had that kind of experience. She had no idea what else she could do to help him. Madeleine was even getting more worried about him and about herself. She knew and realize that be Logan's friend was a hard thing to do physically and psychologically. She didn't know why she couldn't leave him and why she cared so much about him. She didn't even know how she could stand it - to be his friend

when there was no one wanted to be friend with him. Even his parents didn't really care about him.

Few days after the day they canceled to go to the psychologist, something was wrong. Logan, who was always being clingy, told Madeliene to stay away from him. He felt that he was toxic for her. Madeleine said that he was not. She convinced him to believe in her. She was so worried. She was afraid that Logan would do something bad since he often harms himself when he got depressed.

Madeleine was always asking Logan to visit her. Logan always rejected it. Madeleine didn't know what to do. She thought that Logan needed her help, but he was afraid that he would hurt Madeliene feelings even more. He told Madeliene not to care about him anymore, and to

stay away. He didn't want to be bothered. That day, he sent a voice note to Madeliene. "I know it might sound so rude, but I don't think you can stay around me. You need to find some other friends who also care about you. I don't want to hurt you or anybody else. I will be better by myself," Logan's voice sounded clearer than ever,

She was sad and didn't know what happened to him. She always sent him messages, but he never answered. He always rejected her phone calls. She was worried. She tried her best to still be care about him, no matter what. However, she, eventually, followed his demand to not bother or care about him anymore. She tried not to be worried and not to message him. At that time, Madeliene gave up.

A few days later, she got a phone call from Logan's mom. Her voice was shaking. She was

crying. “Madeliene...I., I., don’t know how to say this but Logan....”

“What happened to him, Mrs. Robert?” she asked.

“Logan is... is gone,” she answered while cried hysterically.

Madeleine couldn’t say anything. She ended up the call. She was shocked, really shocked about what she just heard. She didn’t even know that the message, Logan sent her, would be his last words. She felt guilty for not trying hard enough to take him to the psychologist. She could have helped him, but it was too late. She just followed what Logan said, while for this case, she shouldn’t have done that. When Logan told her to go away, she should have stayed. She felt her legs was getting weak and tears streaming down her face. A friend of hers



just gone. She really regretted the way she stopped texting Logan and suggested Logan go to the psychologist. She felt guilty for not being around Logan when he was depressed for his last days. For several days, she couldn't do anything normally. She couldn't even attend Logan's funeral.

Everything has changed. Logan was already gone, peacefully. She was so sad but she had to move on from that situation. At some point, she felt that, at least, she tried her best to help Logan and before he died, he knew that Madeliene always cared about him. That moment also made her realize that people like Logan really need help. Her friend became close to her again. Logan's parents also became so close with Madeliene and her family.

We couldn't change the past, but we could decide how our future would be. Small things matter. Small things could have a big impact. Small things, that we did to show our loved ones our affection, is important. We should be careful to people around us, especially those who were mentally ill. We have to learn to love someone unconditionally so we can share the love we have within us.

# What Should I Do?

Natalia Vinny Andani (164214063)

**Sunday** will always be the most favorite day for Keanu because every Sunday morning he will go to his grandparents' house in Boulevard Street near Costa Park where it is the most fascinating house among others in the row, the elite residential area where all houses, or Villa type house precisely, build in Mediterranean architectural style with terracotta color dominated. His grandfather was ready with a

bible on his hand, sat on a white chair and table in the foyer, and looked at the backyard accompanied with a glass of earl grey tea and his favorite biscuits. It is his favorite place in the house, when he was sitting there, no one would dare to disturb except his beloved grandson.

“Ready for today’s story Keanu?” said his grandfather. Mr. Wesson was always excited to give storytelling to his grandson, exactly as the same as what he did to Keanu’s father. “Oh grandpa, I’m always ready to listen to your story. It is the worth thing rather than I’m playing a game all day long, right?” Keanu replied, laughing to his grandfather. Mr. Wesson raised Keanu on his lap and began the story. “Well, what we are going to read today? What do you think Matthew or Timothy?” said Mr. Wesson. “I think Timothy, you never read that to me,” said Keanu.

Everyone would have looked this kind of activity is something unusual, like “why should he use the bible to make a storytelling?” and Mrs. Carson noticed that her father-in-law had a specific purpose towards her son. All the family members know it except Keanu, when his grandfather told him the story about Jesus and prophets, he was the only one who eagerly asked for the next story. Biblical tale was the most entertaining things for Keanu, his grandfather made it fun and catchy. For Keanu, his grandfather is the best storyteller in the world.

“Do you want to know something special grandpa?” asked Keanu to his grandfather. While turning through the pages of the bible Mr. Wasson replied, “What is that, Keanu?”. “You are the best, the great storyteller in the world,

grandpa” Keanu continued and made his grandfather smiled to him.

At that time, Keanu was sixteen. Mr. Wesson thought that it was the perfect time to tell Keanu about his life and his dreams, the struggles he faced until he used to be someone today. Both of them went to a private restaurant not far from Mr. Wesson office which has been reserved previously. When they arrived, Mr. Wasson started the conversation. Keanu realized this would be something serious, he had never seen this expression on his grandfather’s face before. He listened carefully for every word uttered by his grandfather, never once he interrupted until both of them got into the very serious parts where Mr. Wasson expressed his dream, or more as his desire, that asked Keanu to become a priest after he graduated from high school later.

“I know this would be the most ridiculous things you’ve heard, things you never thought before but please hear this carefully,” Mr. Wasson said solemnly. Keanu was silent waiting for his grandfather continued his words. That conversation was making Keanu surprised, he didn't know what to say even what to do. Both were fixed to each other, silent, no one spoke, thought about what word to say. Mrs. Wasson has been waiting for a long time to say it, but he hasn't found the right time until this day.

.....

On the sunny day, at 8 am when the sun already got up, spread silver and gold sunrays and the air still felt cool, Keanu enthusiastically paddled his bicycle to campus while listening to Rock music using his black Mini clip MP3 player,

he used to call it as black bear, thing he loved the most.

Without realized it Keanu mused, remembering the day when his grandfather was asked him to be a priest, the expressions of his grandfather toward him always imagined in his head. He will never forget that day. “It's been four years and it still bothered me. I've tried everything hardly so that I can move on from this situation but still, it is useless” said Keanu to himself.

It is “Back to School” time, everything looked the same for Keanu, nothing special except the subjects that got harder which means that he has to study again. However, for those who known as the richest students, they made the first day of school as a place to show off each holiday, expensive vacation precisely, that could



spend hundreds of millions once proudly. Every school corner will be filled with that activity and the girls are dominated.

Approximately, it took about 15-20 minutes for Keanu to get to the campus. When he did, he immediately walked to the wall magazine to see the class schedule. He maybe never noticed or even cared that every time he walked into the corridor, all eyes were on him. Yes of course, a tall good-looking boy, with hazel brown quiff hairstyles and amber eyes with white to light brown skin tone. Keanu is always looked casual with his denim jacket pairing with a plain t-shirt and blue jeans make him looks like a model. People might not think that Keanu has a wings tattoo behind his back that looks good on him.

Keanu was surprised to find that he had to be in the same class as his cousin, Thomas.

“Right! I will meet him every single day right now, every day...” said Keanu. “But wait, the class advisor is Mr. Claffin, there will be a lot of assignment for sure. Let’s see how he would be then” Keanu continued satisfying.

Thomas was a so-called bossy boy, a leader of a famous group on campus consisting of the richest and well-known students, a troublemaker, hot-headed and snobbish. He always fights with anyone almost every day and so that no one dared to mess with him, he has the opposite behavior of Keanu.

From Thomas, Keanu stopped at Mikha. He felt that he had never heard this name before, especially in every class he had taken, something strange for him that could make Keanu thought hard about that name for a whole day. Keanu’s curiosity towards her began to emerge.

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Today's class started with Mr. Claffin and sure enough, he immediately gave lots of assignments at the first meeting. All the students in the class were upset and mumbled, especially Thomas, who had not paid attention at whole class during Mr. Claffin explained all the materials and suddenly heard there were many tasks.

"What? It is just our first meeting and he has been given this much assignments, how about the next meeting" said Thomas muttered.

The next day, Keanu was standing in front of his locker to pick up a book. From his side there was a girl approaching him, of course, he didn't know who she was but it was clear enough when Keanu faced back, the girl smiled.

“Hi! Are you Keanu? Yesterday I did not come to the class. So, Mr. Claffin said to me to ask the assignments at you” Mikha said softly. “Oh, by the way, I’m Mikha, transferred student. Nice to meet you” Mikha continued.

“Yes, I am. Nice to meet you too, Mikha” he replied while taking a book in his locker and handing it over to Mikha. “Here, there are already notes on what tasks must be done. You can borrow it first and give me back when you’ve finished” said Keanu. “Okay, I’ll borrow it first. Thank you” Mikha said as she turned to leave Keanu.

The moment when Mikha left, Keanu could not take his eyes off her. Completely it was not because he was fascinated, yes Mikha beautiful, but it is because his curiosity finally

answered. Keanu met with a girl he asked for days, she who filled Keanu's mind.

Since then, Keanu and Mikha have become closer. Both of them have a lot in common with each other that makes them considered as a perfect couple. Keanu is a handsome and smart student while Mikha is a beautiful and kind girl. Even so, both of them denied if they having feelings for each other, they covered it up by acting like there is nothing special about their relationship

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After all the classes have finished, Keanu and his friends gathered to start practicing rugby because this season there will be a Rugby Collegiate National Championship, there will be many competitors and therefore they begin to hold regular exercises after class. Right next to the

campus, in a wide green field surrounded by purplish green trees, Keanu and his friends did the exercises. There are two tribunes on the right and the left side of the field used by other students and the audiences to see them playing.

After the exercise was over, Thomas was standing there at the gate waiting for Keanu. "I have a good offer for you, this weekend there will be a race and the prize is quite large," said Thomas. Keanu replied, "So? What do you want? "

"Come on, I know you need of a lot of money. Get away from home and living like this is not very suitable for you, I'm just here to help", said Thomas. "Where and when is it?" said Keanu doubly as he walked away. "At the T-junction near the campus at 7 pm, I'm waiting for you there," said Thomas, shouting.

It is the D-day, the streets have been filled with lots of people. Keanu already there, sitting on his motorbike which then approached by Thomas. "Are you ready to lose, Keanu?" said Thomas proudly. "We'll see," replied Keanu. With a fierce pretentious tone, Thomas said, "Well, I can't imagine if your parents and our grandfather knew of all this."

Keanu and Thomas and other drivers show off each motorcycle in order to get the prize. The race was led by both of them who seem to focus ahead looking at the path they are going through. Thomas tried to drop Keanu by pushing him using his legs, but failed because Keanu immediately realized it. Feeling annoyed, Thomas pulled back full his gas trying to catch up.

In the middle of the race, Keanu lost his concentration and made his motorcycle lost control. Thomas made this as the opportunity to overtake Keanu and nudge him so that Keanu fell off his motorcycle. "Thomas, Help me! Thomas" said Keanu effortless until he finally fainted. After successfully making Keanu fall, Thomas continued the race to the finish and came out as the winner.

Right over there, a girl approached and tried to help Keanu by calling the ambulance to bring him to the hospital. The girl is Mikha who came to the race to see Keanu. For the whole night, Mikha accompanied Keanu at the hospital.

In the morning, Keanu woke up and was surprised to see Mikha lying beside him. "Mikha? What are you doing here," said Thomas. Mikha replied nervously, awakened from her sleep "Oh,



yes! I helped you last night, and because your family hasn't arrived yet so I'm here, accompanying you". Mikha continued, "If you want me to leave, I'll go and leave you alone here." Keanu replied, "No! Just stay right here. Hemm, by the way, thank you Mikha".

Shortly thereafter, Keanu's parents and grandfather came. Keanu's mother was panic when saw her son lying weakly on the bed with an infusion in his hand. "Keanu! What happened to you? I told you, go back home so you won't be like this" said his mother. Keanu's Grandfather continued, "You should follow my words, Keanu". Keanu replied in mad, "That's enough! This is my life, I'm not a child anymore, let me alone! I don't want to be forced by your will! "

Keanu who always looked calm and quiet turns into a cold and indifferent figure. This was

made Mikha surprised and did not know what to do, with such conditions she only could silent. "Keanu, let's come home with us," said his mother. Keanu replied, "No! I will stay here with Mikha." Mikha surprised by Keanu who pulls her hand.

"That's enough, don't force him again. Keanu is not a little boy anymore, he knows what is the best for himself," said Keanu's father. Hearing this, Keanu's mother and grandfather fell silent. Both of them realized that they are too imposing their will to be fulfilled through Keanu. "Don't forget to take your medicine", said Keanu's mother as she left the room.

"You are crazy!" said Mikha. Keanu replied, "Don't think about that and just stay here with me". Mikha continued, "I will, but tell me

first what really happened, this is making me dizzy." Keanu said, "I promise, I'll tell you later."

After leaving the hospital, Keanu returned to undergo his routine as a college student. After class, he and his friends routinely did the exercises to prepare for the inter-campus rugby competition. He really hopes to be able to present his club and school as the champions of this year's rugby competition. However, the most important is that his relationship with Mikha was even closer, both of them were not ashamed anymore to show intimacy in public.

"Tomorrow is the D-day, are you going to watch?" said Keanu. Mikha replied, "Of course I will, I'm your number one fan". Keanu continued, "Oh my god, you make me more nervous". Mikha replied, "Really? I never

thought you were someone who was easy to seduce". "I won't if it is not you", said Keanu.

Keanu and his club won the competition. In the left tribune, Mikha smiled at Keanu. "Thank you for always here beside me. I love you, Mikha," said Keanu. Mikha replied, "I love you too". At the same day, Keanu and Mikha were officially dating. Both of them were the most harmonious couples on campus. The relationship between Keanu and his family was getting better, he even often invited Mikha to visit his parents together. Looked at Keanu, Thomas realized his fault and apologized for what he had done. Keanu, Mikha and Thomas have been good friends ever since.

# Your Whore Mouth

Julia Noor Abdillah/164214050

“**My** name is Pieter Louis De Klerk, the son of the nowge esteemed Raden Ajoe Soeratminah.”

“Fucking dog, what?”

“Shut your whore mouth, ndoek.”

Djatiningsih—or Tien—instantly covered her mouth in a futile display of evasion, desperately hoping only her father heard that

careless whisper. What the fuck did the man just whispered to her again?

“You’re not a whore like your mother, are you?”

The universe came to a halt for Tien soon enough. Whore? My mother? The Father I knew would never—

Yet if her mother was indeed far from being a wanton woman, who would this half-Dutch man truly be again? A desperate white beggar trying to gain the sympathy of her parents?

Tien struggled to find the smallest splotch of anger in her father’s cotton-white face. He was Raden Tri Soerjo Rodjoningrat, the wedana of the district of M, damn it, is it not only natural that he would be indignant at this world-changing revelation? Yet he was smiling, his yam-purple

eyes a soothing hue like always, and so was everyone else except herself and her siblings Kartodirdjo and Soetrisno. Her mother was smiling while visibly holding back the outpouring of a dam of emotions, much like the strange man she deigned still to bestow the word Mas upon—what was his name again?

With a definite trace of irritation borne by confusion in his face, Dirdjo repeated the Dutchman's name with a pronunciation as smooth as butter.

Yes. Menir Pider, as Tien's not as fluent tongue registered.

The actually older brother of Tien, Dirdjo and Tresno. Their mother's son. Only their mother's.

Having their mother's secret love child come into their residence's pendopo like a lowly guest was something that did not even manage to cross the fraternal triplets' minds when they woke up this morning.

For years they have been imagining having a sibling who is actually taller, older, and wiser, one who can teach them many more things they failed to understand at school, one who can affectionately carry them in a gendongan, one who can climb trees for them then teach them how to do so, one who can become who the son of their father's intimate friend Sardjono is to them without the constant separation and absence due to having different families and homes. They simply imagined and never hoped for a fulfillment, yet still the universe delivered this strange half-Dutch man their way in a manner



that altered their perception of this world and their mother forever.

It was such a painful thought, that one's mother was together once with a man one never knew before. It was such a bizarre thought, that one's parent had a family they may have once truly cared for before them.

To think that this man was ushered into the pendopo only an hour ago yet have changed their lives forever! Announcing with undeniable trepidation, "I am Pieter Louis De Klerk, the son of Jan Willem De Klerk, Chief Overseer of the Beran sugar factory in Djokdjakarta, and Njai Soeratminah, who has now become the esteemed Raden Ajoe Soeratminah. I have been separated from my mother for 16 years following the death of my father at the age of 5 and now most humbly wish to see her," in the highest Javanese, while

kneeling in sembah, unbecoming of any Dutchman whose pride had been so ensured in this land of natives! He had all the power in this land to march into the pendopo unannounced and bring down all his wrath and resentment towards Soeratminah—or Mina, as her husband affectionately nicknamed her—for abandoning him and assault her husband for stealing her from his father. In Tien's tempestuous youthful imagination, the moment he stepped into the pendopo was the moment she actually thought her family would be ended. Instead he was conversing with Tresno while struggling to wipe droplets of tears off his delicate face, still on the floor like a servant.

    Their mother's delicate face. Those eyes, nose, and lips! That chin! The enigmatic feminine beauty they exuded in unison! Could

any other woman be so powerful as to make it appear as though she was the one who dictated how much resemblance to her extraordinary features her children would bear?

The man looked up towards Mina, stormy gray eyes clearly no longer able to hold back the impending flood of emotions. This intensity was apparently so powerfully virulent to the two of them, as Mina soon cried, as well. “You have indeed grown into a handsome prince, Pietje!”

Dirdjo’s stoic sensibilities silently guffawed at this ridiculous trigger of emotion. Such a cheap newspaper serial-level of histrionic! But she was his own mother and he immediately felt guilty for having such a thought cross his mind. She cried and cried, and Soerjo let her be. He let her be, perhaps in a tranquil demonstration of either fury or confusion or both, yet nevertheless it gave

Pieter a cue to drag himself clumsily (for you see, he was trying to stimulate the respectful squat-walking of the Javanese towards their superior) to where his mother was sitting and finally share a seemingly much-sought for embrace of reunion with her. The sight of their witty, libertine, vivacious mother crying and struggling to hug this Dutch man they know nothing about without crumbling to the ground was both human and inhuman to the siblings. The vulnerable side of their impenetrable fortress of a mother had finally been revealed, but it was uncomfortable to see it in all of its nakedness. It was uncomfortable to see their mother as someone as prone to sorrow as they, especially when they have not fully comprehended why. A question soon landed on the siblings' mind and remained in a state of chaos like a bird accidentally trapped inside a house.

Who was our mother, truly?

“What else is there to explain? Our mother had fucked some Dutchman six years before we were born and something came out of that. Glad the lump of flesh turned out to be such a handsome, kindly man, If I may say so myself.”

Such was Tresno’s most sophisticated explanation on the evening following the chaos that morning. This Pieter Louis had fallen fast asleep in a newly-prepared bedroom next to the twin brothers, and they’d much rather presume their parents had too rather than imagine other inappropriate possibility which they really had been aware of.

“Mother was a njai, gentlemen—yet not an ungrateful bitch like Njai Dasima, but a virtuous, clever one like Njai Siti Mariah. Let this afternoon’s occurrence not sully our perception

of the mother we have always loved,” he continued, which earned him an obnoxious cloud of gray cigarette smoke right to his face. “Dirdjo, you stop that, you dog.”

“Did you just call me a gentleman?” Tien protested suddenly.

“Well, we have always acknowledged that you do have the brain of one, Mbakyu—I trust it does not offend you?”

Tien felt a certain tinge of wrongness in her brother’s praise but could not grasp what precisely caused her unease. Weren’t reaching men’s level of intelligence the goal of many female knowledge-seekers? Besides, the siblings were now deep in a discussion about who their mother really was. It would be foolish to deprive her curiosity with such a sudden diversion in topic.

“I should think not. Don’t pay it further attention. It sounded strange to me is all.”

Their discussion—or, with their lack of knowledge at this moment, gossip—continued well into midnight. Being the youths that they were, the topic did not last that long anyway; it only took a single quip from Tresno about Mbak Naniek’s—the younger sister of their best friend Mas Sardjono and Dirdjo’s sweetheart—newfound career as a teacher in Kartinischool to divert their attention into a jumbled web of unconnected topics, many of which were vapid and shallow. It crossed Tien’s mind how this non sequitur mess of a conversation helped them slowly return to normalcy by creating a pleasant façade where nothing had ever truly gone wrong, and she indulged in it.

Their secret conspiracy ended at midnight. Tien left for her bedroom ahead from her brothers and had already loosened her coiffure when her mother softly opened the door, wearing a shimmering European nightgown that made her look like a goddess in a European painting. Her trickster of a smirk was unmistakable, even more so now that they had electric lamps all over the residence.

“Something I can help with at this opportune time, Mother?”

“Considering what you and your brothers were noisy about tonight, I think that line should have belonged to me, do you not think so?”

The universe came to a halt again in front of Tien, stuck still in front of the mirror facing her mother.



“It was uneasy, you know, trying to sleep when you runts were talking about me. Your father and older brother are such easy sleepers.”

“I hate how sharp your ears are sometimes.”

“Hush now, I gave them to you too. The children of Ndoro Raden Tri Soerjo Rodjoningrat need them or they will not be able to hear bad men disparaging their honor with idle gossip.”

The lull that came afterwards felt uncharacteristically uncomfortable for both mother and daughter.

“Forgive your mother, ndoek, for she never had the courage to tell any of you who she truly is.”

Tien did not know what to say. No priyayi mother should lower herself to such a degree that she needs to apologize to her own children.

“...Would you like me to call Mas Dirdjo and Tresno again so we can talk together? They need to know as much as I do.”

“You can retell them yourself what I’m about to tell you in the morning,” she took her daughter’s comb from the vanity and started combing her deep black hair. “You are my only daughter, ndoek, and I feel like you need to hear this from your mother directly.”

The way her mother spoke those words felt so strange to Tien that she started feeling butterflies in her stomach. Her mother had never been so partial in talking to her children. All three of them were born in the same night, after all, thus their parents had never seen before any

point in discriminating the weight of their advice by age or even sex, despite the facts that Tien was the only daughter or Dirdjo was technically the eldest triplet. The way Mina spoke now heralded Tien back to reality, reminded her that something had truly irreversibly changed in their family.

What Mina said afterwards only heightened Tien's unease even further.

"You see, ndoek, I truly was a whore once. Your father had been right in his silly little insult."

Tien took a slightly ragged deep breath. The siblings had desensitized themselves to their parents' uncouth tongue for a long time but before this, they simply regarded it as an honest, bohemian form of eccentric parenting. Out of nowhere, she laughed out loud, and Mina laughed along. It was so amusing and relieving

how forthcoming her mother was, how she was the total opposite of a melodramatic damsel.

“Was he mad at you for what happened this afternoon?”

“No. Ndock, your father married me because he never gave a single damn that I used to be a whore, unlike other men,” Tien chuckled at this, but Mina had taken note of her daughter’s lingering uneasiness from the moment she entered the bedroom. She scooted closer and embraced her.

“You can tell me everything now, Mother,” Tien whispered as she leaned in her mother’s shoulder.

“Well, everything on the surface is exactly like what Pieter told you this afternoon: I was once the *njai* of Meneer Jan Willem De Klerk,

the late Chief Overseer of the Beran sugar factory. Some silly little peasants called me Njai Ndeker and I still think it was one of the stupidest names I've ever heard. Before that, I was Soeratminah, in case my name escaped your tiny brain, the daughter of the factory's foreman."

"That foreman was my grandfather, like Ngoro Kakoeng Martoprodjo," Soerjo's father. "What was his name?"

"Buto Idjo."

"Oh, Mother!"

"He was a horrible man, Tien, I'd rather not make fools gain more acknowledgment than they deserve. We already have too much of those jesters in the Indies."

From here Mina resumed and began to reveal herself.

For you see, my father gave me as a gift to Meneer De Klerk so he can become an overseer.

I know you and your siblings regarded me as one of the most severe women in the world, but I was not so once. The young Soeratminah was once so fragile, so meek. So meek that even rice paddy mice held more power over her!

She once tried to make herself content with the idea that life already had its own course, like a river. Simply obeying her parents' orders regardless of their fairness was life enough for her, for that was simply what her father had told her to do. She accepted and sacrificed everything simply because that was what had been expected of her. She was a stupid girl who could not read even Javanese letters, and having someone dictate her life and order her around was the only way

she could make herself feel useful and slightly intelligent.

My mother, Ngasijah, was not happy with how I turned out, and it pained my heart to this day how I used to regard her as the wrongful one. She used to hit and berate me for not being able to memorize a single letter or finish the simplest calculation and threaten me with dreadful possibilities of becoming a prostitute or a *tayub ledek* because the only virtue I had was my beauty, and I hated her for having the gall to be so poisonous and hurtful to her only daughter—my other siblings had been claimed by malaria and my parents had found it very difficult to bear another child, leaving me as their sole hope. But what kind of hope could they ever hope to have for such a foolish daughter? My father soon silenced her, but I was aware that he was simply

forcing an incensed tigress into a pen made of fragile bamboo.

Soeratminah was so foolish that when one day her father told her gently to pack her belongings and serve tea and cakes to a certain visiting Meneer Administrateur, there was no sense of impending doom that touched her. She carried the order like she had always done her everyday chores. She only felt that unshakeable uneasiness when the Chief Overseer ogled her young body like a hungry wolf, yet failed to understand still until it was too late. Her mother's sudden accusatory screams and insults only worsened matters and made her all the more eager to leave the house once her father told her that she would become the Chief Overseer's ward.



Such terrible lies to say to a young girl! Soeratminah was wrongfully promised that the Chief Overseer would become a second father to her, giving her the education her parents could not afford and the creature comforts they were unable to offer. Under his care, she would become far smarter, far more desirable than this stupid girl she had always acknowledged herself as. Were those not such a desirable scenario? She had been so successfully lured into the honey trap that she failed to comprehend the sad, pitiful, and disgusted gaze of the villagers gathering in front of her house that day she was sold to that lecherous Dutchman. Were they envious? Soeratminah wondered. Of course—how many native girls had there been who had been granted the privilege of being adopted by a European and educated in the European way?

The more I remember their gaze, the more I pitied the foolish Soeratminah of that day.

Her final sight of her parents that day was that of her mother pulling her father so close to her face by the collar in the kitchen, whispering with the utmost vindictiveness—

“I will destroy you utterly!”

...and Soeratminah was left to ponder whether that threat was a prayer for her instead of her father, for Jan Willem De Klerk truly destroyed her that night.

I finally came to hate my father, that accursed Buto Idjo of a man, and understand all of my mother's scolding that night, ndoek.

I may be intent on laying myself bare to you tonight, but I shall spare you this one part of my story. This is what you must know instead: Jan

Willem De Klerk, for all his intelligence and bearing, was a horrendous man, a beast who regarded young girls as his most delectable prey. Your mother and father will protect you from these men and you must swear never to let yourself fall into their embrace.

He indeed taught me many things I needed to know, but what kind of gratitude should I feel for a beast who was simply grooming me, saving me up as his most favorite meal? I disregarded most of his rhetoric and lectures, anyway, and soon learnt how to study for myself. It didn't take me long to finally understand what some of the more defiant villagers had said about Europeans and their pride. They were simply here as thieves, greedy thieves who regarded the Indies as a large grand manor whose owner was a helpless decrepit old coot who could not even

hear her windows being shattered left and right. These men were holding her hostage as they were swiftly taking away each and every one of her most valuable possessions, her faithful servants slaughtered.

But well, it was then no longer considered stealing if one of her children took back one of those valuables and made it theirs.

“What?”

I will get into this later.

It broke my heart then when your older brother Pieter was born a year later, he loved the boy so much yet regarded me as if I was simply a machine from which this boy sprang forth. They had a relationship my father and I never truly had, and Pieter remembered his father with nothing but the fondest memories. Such a painful

thing to be envious of your own child for being able to regard his father fondly, blissfully ignorant of his faults. Meneer De Klerk often took him out to excursions which I seemed to have never been even regarded as a possibility to be a part of. For you see, ndoek, I was not even allowed to leave the house. I was his njai, his immoral whore, and the practice of taking up native women as your personal whores had been dying out by then. But he was a laughably lonely, ugly man few European women seem to desire, and the existence of his njai would only exacerbate this pathetic state. So he kept me inside like a pet, yet I knew better than to be a rebellious fool and attempt to escape. Inside that suffocating house, the things that kept me from being a foolish clown and attempt to leave were Pieter's beautiful love and the books inside which I exhaustively consumed like a hungry lioness so I can obliterate

the foolishness and submission that had bound the young Soeratminah for years. Each day and hour that passed throughout those years felt like a decade long, and Meneer De Klerk's existence tormented me even more. He simply knew what kind of words could penetrate the walls of my dignity whenever I deigned to obey him, and even with those walls already crumbled he was still wont to grind its boulders into sand. He wanted me to believe I was truly a simple-minded slut, a monkey, an unruly madwoman, and that I actually needed him. He repeated what my mother once said to Soeratminah the fool, yet added that without him to teach me, I would truly become the undesirable nightmare of every native woman. Now you see why it was so hard for me to cry until your brother's arrival this afternoon: I had strived so hard to steel myself from crying under any circumstances, for that seemed to be

what that man desired for me. I should think he wanted me to cry as proof that he truly had dominated me once and for all. Besides, crying would only mean giving myself in to the embrace of weakness.

“I suspect that man did not die of a natural cause, then.”

“I’m sorry, child?”

Tien softly freed herself from her mother’s embrace. “I...have no intention to harbor ill thoughts of you because you were a njai...yet it simply crossed my mind all of a sudden that a man like that does not deserve a peaceful death.”

“He didn’t, indeed.”

This question instantly brought unease to Tien’s heart as soon as she decided to utter it. “So where did he go?”

“I killed him.”

Tien spoke no more, and Mina took this as a cue to continue speaking in her stead.

“I killed him, ndoek, and this was the least regretful thing I have ever done in my life.”

“But Menir Pider—”

“—was a necessary sacrifice. He was well taken care of in the Netherlands, I’m sure of it! Look at the fine young man he has become.”

“You know what they think of njai—”

“—scheming murderous sluts, yes, and I killed him by poison, too. I truly was a nightmare come true, but only for greedy predatory Dutchmen like him, I should be proud to say. They were unable to prove my involvement in the matter, anyway, for Meneer De Klerk was



known to be a pathetic, frail man with a heart problem.”

“What would Father think of you?!”

Tien’s heart was racing and the butterflies in her stomach intensified. It truly is a harrowing thing to see your parent in all their human glory, warts and flaws and all.

“A glorious goddess of deceit’, so I remember him saying...”

Mina giggled nonchalantly. Her gentle maternal smile had positively turned diabolic now to Tien, the way that smile’s dissonant serenity and the horrors of her revelation joined together in unholy matrimony in that beautiful face.

“My deed impressed him so much he fell in love with me on top of Meneer De Klerk’s freshly poisoned corpse, and that was why he was

so insistent on making me his wife despite what had happened to me.”

“Wh—why was he even there?!”

“Oh, men and the intrigues of their labor, I suppose...’

“If I recall correctly the factory had a wealthy Chinese associate...Mr. Tan Ang Da, one of your father’s most intimate and unlikely of friends.”

She now used the comb in her hand to smoothen Tien’s hair, puffy and tangled from the coiffure’s arrangement, paying no heed to the girl’s stiffened body. Tien knew who that man was, for his deceptively handsome figure often stood alongside his father in photographs around the house.

“Meneer De Klerk, in a desperate bid for promotion, was trying to oust Mr. Tan Ang Da for his attempts in taking over the factory’s control, or so your father told me. You see, I was aware that your father’s account was merely his way of simplifying such a masculine affair to a woman’s mind, yet it was not like I cared for those tiresome details, anyway. By this point, your father had been secretly courting me for several months, for we met during one of the Chinaman’s visits to the Chief Overseer’s residence and your father was his coach back then. It’s still so amusing to me how having such a friend could get you so high in the ladder of our rotten society!’

“ I know how far apart in age we are, yet I am glad to tell you that I know that my youth was not what inflamed your father’s passion for me.

Your father loved, loved fearless women, and by this point I had learned the beauty of deceit, ndoek, and had been willingly presenting a submissive charade to Meneer De Klerk, which overjoyed and fooled him to no end. It was then that I discovered that I was not the only person who wanted that lecherous beast dead. The Chinaman, too, either for accusing him of a deed he did not commit or so he could cover up the truth in the Chief Overseer's desperate plea for attention, yet your father was willing to carry out the order regardless. Imagine how truly thoughtful it'd be if he truly carried out that order to reach me!

He arrived at the most inopportune time that night—my carefully conceived plan had been carried out already, and the man had just died!”

“Father...Father, too?”

“Yes, in case it escaped your little brain again.”

Mina swore she could hear the slightest whimper from her daughter when she playfully nudged that forehead with her finger.

She was no longer facing her and fell silent again. Several minutes of uncomfortable silence enveloped the mother and daughter once more until she saw Tien’s body tremble.

“Mother, what kind of family are we? What kind of family had I—”

“My sweetheart, my dearest babygirl, whatever are those tears for?”

“We are a family, a beautiful family, just like the ones in your storybooks! A family with a dutiful father, a kindly mother, and siblings who will always be there for you for better or worse.

We are not like Mas Sardjono's family—what, what! Did you not know, silly girl? We are not like Mas Sardjono's family, so fractured and bitter underneath that beautiful rich silk veil of European-kraton sophistication and genteelness. People may call us all sorts of names, but those times your parents jested with you, embraced you, affectionately scolded you, wiped your tears and soothed you—they were not charades! You may think of us as murderers, but how could you not say the same to your friends whose parents are officers in Atjeh slaughtering people who merely wanted to regain what was once truly theirs for themselves? How could you not say the same to the white men your classes have taught you who made this land as it is now? We were able to become a family you truly love, a family I hope you will never come to resent or regret, because your parents struggled against what the

powers around them would rather have them become. We deigned to accept things simply as they are, for we knew that such a notion would not deliver us towards happiness any sooner. Just as I struggled to free myself from the tyranny of my father and my white master, your father struggled against the constant mockery of his family and people who resented him simply for having been born as he is, a man with his cotton-white skin, hair, and violet eyes. For us happiness had to be struggled for, strived for, no matter the cost.'

"This world is but comprised of people who wanted to attain happiness that can last for the rest of their lives, and I shall not accept any notion boiling down to "You are wrong; it is not what I wanted!" Poppycock. Who would ever want to live in everlasting misery in this world?

You would not achieve this by simply sitting and dreaming under the pretense that you are simply going to accept and be happy with whatever is coming your way or by falsely reassuring yourself that passive acts of virtue will deliver you from malicious human beings. As a woman, I would like you to remember this most intently so you would not be taken advantage of by men of your grandfather and Meneer De Klerk's ilk like my foolish younger self had been. Now you understand why I had been so vehemently against having you a mere graduate of MULO, you silly, lazy girl!

“Come here. Now I had truly bared all of who I truly am to you, and I have not changed one bit. I will still be your mother, your vivacious, silly mother. There is no need for you to be afraid of me, for everything I have done have



been for you and your brothers. My love for Pieter is as genuine as mine for all of you, as well. As hateful as his father was, I will never turn him away from my doorstep. It would be foolish to make an enemy out of your flesh and blood. If he truly understood how much I love him, and if you show him that same love, he would not even think of harming us with vengeance, which he never knew of anyway. Your father is aware of this, which is why he was not the slightest bit angry at his sudden presence.'

"I shall not consider you to be too much of a baby to understand this any longer, my daughter—good, evil, and fate were but elements of bedtime tales, and to shake such a notion off your whole being is instrumental for you so you can actually flap your little fledgling wings and soar towards the world. Understanding this will

not turn you into a vile creature. You will simply come to understand this world as it is, and I will still be here for you through it. Your father and I both!”

With this, Tien finally truly broke down, much like her older brother had this morning, and lunged forward to her mother’s embrace in tears. These were tears of fear, yet also of astonishment, of relief, of joy. This woman was a deceitful, murderous temptress, but how could she deny that she was the same woman who had nurtured her and her brothers? Her father was a ruthless assassin attracted to death, but how could she deny that he was the same man who had so dutifully provided for them and supported them throughout their impulsive adolescence? Such a display of parental devotion was a tragicomedy that amused and amazed her; there had been no

use in wishing that her parents were the same as their friends' when they already could not become more perfect to her in all their flawed glory. A thought now crossed her: if only she could answer her father's retort if she had learned of these things prior. She truly was a whore's daughter with a mouth to match, for this whore was the mother who had always been so selflessly and lovingly by her side since she and her brothers came into this world.

“But Mother, you have not told me what happened to Grandfather after Grandmother cursed him so.”

Mina's mouth curved into a small o at this, which quickly turned into the elegant trickster smile Tien had always known her for.

“Well, he managed to attain the position he had always dreamed of and indulged in the accomplishment.”

“But.”

“Only briefly, for my mother’s wrath came to him in the form of a pillow that eternalized one of the best sleep he’d ever had for years.”

Soerjo was stirred from his sleep that night by the sound of his beloved wife and daughter laughing from across the bedroom. What strange thing could have amused them so this late? Yet it was so beautiful, how they sounded so happy and pleasant to him. What a beautifully loud laughter it was, considering the shouting and crying he expected when Mina told him she would be going to Tien’s room to explain everything. The relief lulled him back to sleep in pleasant swiftness.

All is well again with their world at last.

# Heinrich's Crusade

Geraldo Alexander/164214053

It was a fine day in Saxony, where his home and family was when the words of a new crusade reached him. Heinrich, who had always been a loyal soldier to his lords and the emperor for over fifteen years, immediately understood what it means, so he prepared his heart and panoplies for the upcoming holy war. It was not long for the emperor to answer the call of the Cross and amass a mighty force to expel the so-

called heathens from the Holy Land. Heinrich, who was blessed with a loving family, kneeled before his father and mother to receive their blessings for the holiest journey he was about to take. As he made his farewell to his family, Heinrich, who was already well-girded, rode out on his white horse to join the emperor's army. Together with thousands of men who answered the emperor's call, Heinrich marched.

The huge and mighty force, led by the emperor, traversed the land as they marched to the Holy Land. They aimed to retake Jerusalem that had fallen to the 'heathens' in the east. They marched from Germany, then crossed Austria to Hungary, where the emperor received reinforcement of several thousand Hungarian soldiers, led by the prince of Hungary, himself, bolstering the already mighty forces of the

emperor for the crusade. They eventually reached the realm of the Byzantine Empire of the Thrace, where they were halted for several months by the Byzantines who would not let them cross the Marmara to Anatolia for some reason.

One early morning, while he was in Thrace, Heinrich encountered a small chapel. Heinrich was somewhat a religious man as most of his family members were. It had been quite a while since he entered holy places to pray after joining the emperor's army where he could only pray anywhere but the holy places because of his duties, so he decided to enter it. As he entered the chapel, he noticed that there were several paintings on its walls. He noticed that the paintings have many similarities with the ones he encountered in the Orthodox churches of



Novgorod, back then, when he was in his early years as a soldier. He had traveled to several realms of Eastern Europe to accompany his merchant father who had some business to settle there. He recalled praying in one of those churches with his father and asked his father, "Father, why are we here? These people do not belong in the same church as ours!" Then he remembered his father answered, "Son, any church belongs to God, not men." Remembering his father's words and seeing that the chapel was quite empty, Heinrich took a sit on one of the benches and made his prayer for his family he left for the war and for the journeys ahead, where dangers and uncertainties await.

Shortly, after finishing his prayer, Heinrich felt that there was someone observing him from the chapel's door. As he turned his head, he saw

an elderly man, white-bearded and clothed in dark-colored unassuming garments. He soon came to an assumption that the old man was a priest who was, perhaps, in charge of the chapel or so. The old man, looking at Heinrich's attire, noticed that he was one of the crusaders. He approached him and asked in tender tones, "I take it that you are one of those Catholic crusaders? Why are you here, young man?" Heinrich answered by bowing his head, "Forgive me, I just found this place and decided to enter and pray." The old man nodded and replied, "That is fine, my son, any chapel belongs to the Lord, and not men." Realized what the old man said to him was similar to what his father said, Heinrich felt comfort in his heart as he bowed to the old man and begged his leave. Heinrich had not felt such comfort for months in the army

where everyone is busy carrying out orders from the emperor and other superiors.

At last, after halted for months in Thrace, the imperial forces finally made it to Anatolia through the Dardanelles. The heat of the holy war began to warm the soul of the men up as the Turkish riders started harassing both flanks of the imperial forces. Although the attacks from the Turks was not very effective, it was enough to decrease a small portion of the men's morale since they had to stay alert lest the Turks launched another attack, for the Turks were fast, skilled, and experienced mounted warriors who were known to use speed and mobility to give them advantage in battle. In fact, few men had died from Turkish attacks, thanks to lesser armors and unawareness of some of the men.

Only the emperor's extraordinary leadership skills kept the men's morale high.

One day, some men under the young Duke of Swabia, the emperor's son, was attacked by a large group of Turkish forces five times their size when they set a camp near the town of Philomelion. Heinrich was among them when the horrifying onslaught happened. An experienced soldier, Heinrich tried to keep his focus in the chaos of battle as well as keep the morale of the younger soldiers around him high. "Reform the ranks!" he repeatedly shouted as he heard the duke said so from some distance. He repeated whatever orders he heard from the duke so the other soldiers heard it too. Some, who did not follow orders and broke from the ranks, was immediately overwhelmed or even got their throats to slit by the ravaging Turks. At a

moment, a crusader horseman was dismounted right in front of him and his horse was killed with five arrows pierced the beast's neck. Heinrich spontaneously shouted to the men around him, "Men, cover my flanks!" Some answered, covering his flanks and rear as he helped the unhorsed crusader fell back to the ranks as swiftly as he can. Heinrich himself got two arrows stuck on his back from helping the horseman, but frankly enough, they did not get through his gambeson. Finally, through better discipline and equipment and the leadership skill of the promising young duke, the Crusaders finally managed to rout the attacking Turkish forces and drove them to the nearby fields and hills, even killing half of the attacking forces. Bodies scattered everywhere like slaughtered livestock. Bloods redden the earth around the victors who were the crusaders. Most of the men celebrated

the victory and the death of the enemies, but Heinrich did not do so. The survival of the men was enough for his enjoyment.

One night at a camp, Heinrich was polishing his arms from the stains of the last battle by a campfire along with some other men. A man came out from the darkness of the night and confronted him. It was the horseman, who Heinrich helped to fall back to the ranks, and he conveyed his gratitude to him. Heinrich nodded, and was about to continue polishing his arms when the horsemen said, "I'll be honored if you give me your name." Heinrich replied, "Heinrich. What's yours, my friend?" "Laszlo," the horsemen replied. Hearing the horseman's name, Heinrich realized that the horseman was one of the Hungarians who bolstered the imperial army before crossing the Dardanelles. They,

then, shared stories about their lives before the crusade they were on. Heinrich learned that Laszlo had a family he left for the crusade in Hungary; a wife, a daughter, and a son. He hoped he could survive the war so that he can see them again. It was also revealed that Laszlo was of Magyar origin, skilled horse riders, whose way of fighting quite similar to that of the Turks, yet skill alone did not save men from dying in battle. After a long talk, they were departed, with Laszlo swearing to Heinrich to look after him in the next battles when he can.

The victory over the Turkish forces in the battle near the town of Philomelion was a major one, but it was not enough to boost the morale of the men. Some men began to desert the ranks as a result of hunger and disease. It was at that time that the emperor decided to besiege and take the

hampering city of Iconium, the capital of the Turkish Sultanate of Rum, to replenish the declining provisions needed to keep the men going. The city fell ultimately and was sacked by the crusader. Heinrich, holding the Code of Chivalry, boldly requested the Lord who commanded him not to join in the sacking of the city and the murder of the innocents. The Lord granted him what he requested, but he also told him that he will only be shared with food and water gained from the sacking and not the valuables. Heinrich agreed, so he got the share of food and water from the sacked city and also few things that he needed to continue the march to the Holy Land.

The victory in Iconium against the Turks was great and decisive. It was more than enough to increase the men's morale from several



months of hunger, disease, and exhaustion from the long march. It was at this moment that most of the soldier and the lords, under the emperor, felt invincible and unstoppable. They were so confident that they believe the retaking of Jerusalem was just a matter of time as the words, about the forces of French and English crusaders who were approaching the Holy Land by sea, reached them. However, to everyone's surprise, the unexpected happened. The emperor died, his body washed by the river as his horse stumbled when he crossed the Saleph when a surprise attack from the Turks startled the men and the horse, an unlikely death for an emperor sent a shockwave through the imperial forces.

The emperor's death greatly severed the morale of the men and many of them, looking to preserve their own lives, abandoned the crusade.

There are only a few men left who did not abandon the crusade. They were led by the young Duke of Swabia, a promising leader, but not as popular as his father, and who had yet to prove himself. As much as he longed for home and how dire the situations became, Heinrich decided not to abandon the crusade and marched under the duke. Along with Laszlo, who even though hoped to survive the war, did not fond the idea of abandoning his duties unfinished. Both of them and the other few stout-hearted soldiers left in the crusading imperial forces marched through the hostile south-eastern parts of Anatolia, swarmed by the Turks for weeks while fighting their way through to the safety of the city of Antioch. Laszlo did not make it to Antioch as he was dead repaying his debt to Heinrich while a group of Turkish skirmishers surrounded a small party where Heinrich was. Laszlo died from the loss of

blood after several arrows pierced his body while trying to help the small group, and was buried by Heinrich and some other men in an unnamed grave somewhere near the borders of the Turkish-owned Anatolia and the Principality of Antioch. As tragic as it might be, the heroic death of Laszlo inspired Heinrich to promise to himself to continue the crusade until it was finished so that Laszlo's death and the death of every man that died protecting their cause was not in vain.

The men tried to preserve the emperor's body to bury him in Jerusalem but failed, so they buried the remains of his flesh in Antioch and his bones were then buried in Tyre. The march continued under the duke and eventually, they arrived outside the walls of the already besieged city of Acre. There, a plague broke out among the army and took the life of the young duke.

Immediately, another duke, the Duke of Austria, took his place and took command of the men. The defenders of the city of Acre surrendered to the Crusaders after the arrival of the large French forces under the King of France, and the King of England arrived several months later. Half of the population of the city was massacred following a failed dealing between the crusaders and the leader of the Muslim forces that Heinrich questioned in his heart whether the crusade was in fact 'holy' or that 'holy' was just a name that was used to trick faithful people to join. He even considered abandoning the crusade, but remembering he had made a promise to himself, he did not. Later Heinrich joined the English king's forces after the Austrian duke abandoned the crusade following some petty dispute with the English king.

Later the English king and his forces marched south to Jerusalem without the forces of the French king, who went back to France earlier for falling ill. The army marched along the shoreline with their ships carrying supplies following them by the sea to the west and the huge hostile enemy army lurking in the east. As usual, harassments were launched against the crusader by the enemy forces, but, this time, it was not the Turks who did so but rather the forces of a mighty leader they called as ‘Saladin’, who united all Muslims from Egypt to Syria to fight against the crusader in the Holy Land. After several ineffective attempts of luring, the crusader out of their formation, The Muslim forces finally decided to launch a grand onslaught on the Crusaders formation to push them westward into the sea and annihilate them once and for all. The king immediately braced the men valiantly and

ordered them to hold the lines until the opportunity to launch a counterattack showed itself. The great battle near Arsuf was inevitable.

Heinrich followed the king's order, without doubt, trusting the king's extraordinary military skills that he heard from the Englishmen and even some of the Frenchmen who he encountered back in Acre. He, himself, had felt the king's overwhelming leadership aura that reminded him of the dead emperor. The battle commenced, The Muslim forces, which were greater in number, tried to bring chaos with their horses' bound speed and thousands of arrows. They harassed the crusader for hours in the hope to break their morale and formation in the hope to make an opening for a full attack. The Crusaders, with nowhere to run, held their position sturdily, unmoved, like a castle in the

middle of a fierce sand storm. Until suddenly a small gap opened in their formations and the Muslim tried to charge in great number to break the Crusaders' formation once and for all. And yet Heinrich saw this and moved to close the gap when he shouted to the men around him, "Hold the gap! Hold the gap!" He came forth along with some men who heard him in the middle of the chaos. He fought with the ferocity and might that he himself had never felt before, in the urge to save the men from a disastrous defeat. Without taking so long, a group of knights noticed the gap that Heinrich defended, and so they called a charge to reinforce it. They were a group of black-coated knights, who charged so valiantly that it broke the attacking Muslim forces on the gap. Seeing this, the king ordered a full charge on the huge wave of the enemy to aid the black-coated knights who began to get overwhelmed by

the Muslims. The men broke through the enemy ranks like an axe to timber, and miraculously, the enemy routed. It was a glorious victory worthy to be sung for a thousand years.

However, Heinrich only witnessed the men achieved the victory from a distance, on his knees. He was wounded, mortally, as several mortal blows struck his body. Losing his strength, he began to lie down, looking at the blue heaven with some flying dust from the battlefield covering it. He did not think much anymore. The only think that he remembered was that he made a prayer in his heart “Lord, all lives are yours, and always will be... And so now, I return mine to you”. The sky became brighter for him as he closed his eyes. And so he forfeited his life.

After the battle, the Crusaders continued marching southward, capturing the Jaffa, but



Jerusalem was never retaken. The crusade was ended with a peace treaty between the Crusaders and the Muslims. Thus, the English King went home by sea. By the order of the lords, who heard of his deeds in battle from the men, Heinrich's remains were and carried along the march and were about to be carried back to Europe by the English fleet as they left the Holy Land. Unfortunately, the ship that carried his body was wrecked from bad weather while it was near Italy and his body was taken by the sea. Thus, the story of Heinrich faded from the memory of the people and was eventually forgotten.

# Black Ink

Dyas Putri Winayu/164214037

A morning that felt like another morning before, woke up in 4 A.M ready to work in the market and prepare my two little sisters' breakfast before they were going to school. And I, I never have that opportunity. At least Poni and Malaika could go to Marcus' charity school and hopefully, they wouldn't end up like me in the future.

Walked down in the tiny and dirty street in the morning to reach the market on time, before

Ms. Margaret started to open the fish auction near the pier.

“You always come on time dear little girl, good for you. I just fired Betty this morning because she had twice permission not to work to take care of her sick child.” Said Mrs. Margaret arrogantly with her shrill voice.

“Yes, Mrs. Margaret” I answered with nodded.

“Yeah, you can go to work and peel the fish scales in the basket.” Said Mrs. Margaret and go by.

I started to work in my position to peel the scale and cut fish. A young lady then came to ask me what kind of big fish is that. She brought her beautiful child with the beautiful cloth to the market along with the baby sitter.

“This is a striped bass fish” I answered her question, then she just nodded.

Then I heard her little girl asked her mother, “Mama, why this girl come and work in this market when my old sister is in the school?”

“This is what a black people do in their life my dearest,” she answered her child question with a low voice.

I wasn’t surprised to hear that. There was a lot of people mocked me because my skin is black and I was poor also. I felt angry but it’s like there was nothing that I could do, I just could hold back my anger. So my anger turned to my sadness.

After my job in the market was over, I needed to back home take a bath and change my clothes and pick up Poni and Malaika. Poni and

Malaika were so happy at Marcu's house and played with Oliver.

"Thank you, Oliver, for taking care of my sisters and pick them up from school," I said my greatest thank to him.

"Never mind Eni, I was considered Poni and Malaika as my siblings, and also you," Oliver replied with his beautiful smile.

"How could you do that? People often see me low, so they treat me differently because of my skin maybe ha-ha," I answered with a laugh.

"No Eni, people treat you differently because they are just don't know that we're the same."

"How could we're the same Oliver? We are born differently" I said in despair.

“Enitan, wait, what is the thing which makes a person can be seen as a person?” He asked me then.

“Hmmm, I don’t even know,” I answered his question honestly.

“It’s not about the race or religion or economic status Eni, but the value of human itself,” He tried to explain to me but still I can’t understand what he means by that.

“Here some books for you, try to read those books first, It may help you to understand,” He gave me two books of him.

“But your previous book is still in my house, how could I bring another book?”

“It doesn’t matter, you could return them anytime,” His answer made me assured that he is s kind man like his father.

“Thank you, Oliver, for your kindness. You help me a lot until now.”

“I know Enitan that your life is so hard for a little girl like you. You have to work, take care you sisters after work, and face the ridicule of people, and never have a chance to go to school. That is why I will help you a little bit.”

“Thank you, Oliver, it is because of you also I could read and write fluently, even though I never attended school,” I said.

“I know because you want to make money. You refuse my father’s offer to go to his charity school, you sacrifice your education in order to help your mother. You are a good girl Eni,” He said with gracious sight.

“Thank you, Oliver, I will never forget your kindness. Now I have to pick up my sister.”

“Sure, Enitan you sisters at the living room.  
Take care, see you tomorrow.”

\* \* \*

I have finished my readings after a week. Reading Oliver’s book made me understand why people do this to me. Why I should agonize the social construction that didn’t fair. I came back to Marcus’ house to meet Oliver and talked to him.

“Good that now you understand Enitan,” said Oliver with a humble voice.

“Thank you, Oliver, and here some books of yours,” I replied.

“Are you sure not need those books anymore?” He asked to me.

“Yes Oliver, I already read those book and understand that.”



“But what will you do now Enitan? It is just all?” He asked again.

“Even though I believe in cultural diversity and encourage racial and ethnic pride, I reject separations which promote alienation and set people and groups against each other, envision an integrated community where people have a maximum opportunity for free and voluntary association. But how can I help,” I asked Oliver.

“Of course I agree with you, and try to fix this I think that it will not easy also. But you could give your opinion toward the racial system to people, right? You could give another perspective, you could give the humanism value through writing, then send your writing to the newspaper” he replied.

At first, I was struck by Oliver's brilliant idea. During this time I could only dream that

someday I can be seen like other people whose white or middle or upper classes, without discrimination. Then I answered, “Do I really could do that?”

“Why not Enitan, why not? Try to write and send it to the newspaper. At least you have to try, right?” Oliver was true. At least I have to try. At least I have tried.

\* \* \*

I began to feel despair, for the past few weeks my writing was not published either. But I did not regret it, at least I have done something useful for myself, I was proud of myself and did not blame myself again for not being able to do anything to change the situation like before. I tried to study more at night in the attic of my room, correct my writing and write over again. Black inked paper filled my room. I wouldn't give

up in here. Until three months later Oliver came to my house in the morning, when I was about to go to work. It was very rarely done by him, I asked myself why and I opened the door for him. He hugged me and showed me something, my name was written in the newspaper. He congratulated me on my success. I didn't even think about it, and I was very happy. However, I must hold that feeling especially because I wanted to voice more about discrimination with my black ink. Until people feel ashamed of what they have done.

# Griz

Fransisca Nabila Ayu H.P/164214043

“**Shit**, that would fuck me up!”, I said immediately after I heard that I would be suspended from school if I didn’t testify about the kid that was suspected. It was the first day after the summer break when I was called by the principal after they suspected me to be involved with a boy, who they assume to be a drug seller in my school. I knew him because I needed my “medication” when something struck me out.

What I mean the medication is a pot. I admit that I bought it from him and they released me because I nicely cooperated with them. I kinda feel sorry for Adrian because he got suspended and was sent to rehabilitation. The condition in my high school was tenser since they found out about the boy who died because of overdose. They suddenly did the inspection after that day and suspected me, and the others 2 boys. They assumed that we were involved in it. They found the answer when they asked me.

“Poor Adrian, I mean..., he needed the money to live since his parents were divorced,” said Eliza.

“Yeah, and that’s how I lost my man”, Joshua said abruptly.

We were at the cafeteria when we discussed it. Joshua and I were the smoking

buddies. We met at the smoking area and suddenly we became friends. He was lucky that he didn't get caught as a suspect because he didn't go to school at that time. Eliza was a type of girl who always sees things from the bright side. No matter how bad the situation was, she knew how to calm down the situation and said positive things about it. I liked how charming she was.

Shannon and Robert was walking with their tray full of food. They passed other people, who were lining to get their food and went to our table.

"Yo, what's up, guys? Anything juicy today?" Shannon said.

"I bet it would be the same tea I heard yesterday" said, Robert.

"I wish you were right," I answered them.

Shannon was a new hype girl who recently became popular after she dated the cheerleader captain. She was outrageous like me. On the other side, Robert was pseudo-intellectual that somehow knew more juicy news of the school than we did. It was just a casual evening when we sat on the bench on the corner of the cafeteria and talk about all of the stuff. They were my friends and the closest ones. As a 16-year-old kid who likes to play basketball, none of my close friends liked to talk about it except for Joshua. We got along really well.

After the class, I practiced with my fellow team members in the school's gym mostly every weekday. We had a target to win the regional competition next month. We wanted to crush the Harlem's Eagle record as the 6 times winner of the New York' high school basketball champion.

Even though I was still in my freshman year, I got chosen because of my skill. I got it from my dad, not only because he is African-American who blessed me with a good gene, but also because he taught me military workout since I was 10 until now.

April 6th was the last day of my preparation day for the final of the basketball competition. “1..2..3..4...Come on, guys!! This is our last chance to show that the West East’s Wolf is the new champion of this year,” shouted my coach. I felt stronger when I listened to him. He was right. It was my first time to show the world what I had been practicing all this time and we, as a team, deserved it.

It was 04:50 pm, 5 minutes before the game ended. We closely chased up the score. We only needed two more points to before the



time ended. As a Centre on this team, I did my best to keep out the opponent team for making a score. Then, our captain did the three-point shot and shut off the opponents' chance by ending the game with one point ahead. "Wohoooo, Yeah!!" we shouted to each other and celebrated our first victory. I didn't believe that this year would be the year! My memory reminds me of who I was supposed to look for: my mom. She was my biggest supporter since I learned how to play basketball in the 5th grade. She promised me to watch my game, but I didn't see her in the entire building. I just thought that probably she is busy and couldn't make it.

I heard my phone rang when I was in the locker room. I picked up and I heard my father's voice.

"Hello Ray, are you there?"

“Yes, dad, what’s up?”

“Look, I don’t want to disappoint you because I knew you are on your game right now. I wish you win or whatever, just don’t be a loser who cry over the game”

“Actually, my team just won the game and thanks dad to remind me that one”

“Okay listen, I got a call from your mother’s office that she is in the hospital right now and I need you to meet me there as soon as possible”

“Is her cancer getting worse?”

“I’m not sure but the doctor said it won’t be long”

I directly hung up the phone when I heard my father’s statements. I feel like the lighting swoop down my glory and turn it into a storm. I

didn't believe what I heard. I go to the hospital as soon as possible. It was the same hospital that treated my sister before she died. The same condition of a white with red stripes big building on 7th Avenue, that traumatized me as a kid, began to come again. It was the feeling that weakened you. The doctor came to us and told the terrible news which made me weep. My mom died of breast cancer that she had been fighting for 2 years. I, probably, would never forget this day.

Early summer break, I mostly hung out with my friends in Lost Tacos. It is the place that we would crash every weekend because we loved Mexican food. That night, I was going to bowling valley after Joshua invited me as a plus member for his bowling team yesterday.

“Hey, Griz! You wanna join us to the bowling alley near the Leaves street tonight?” Joshua asked me.

“Sure”, I simply agreed with it.

The place wasn't so big and it was among the convenience stores. Our team lost and we went to the bar after that. That was the moment I met this middle-aged white man, he was walking down the street with his drunk face. He pointed at me and we had a little argument.

“ Hey man, what are you? I have never seen someone who looks like you.”

“ Me neither, good luck in your way home man,” I tipped his shoulder and walked pass him.

“Hahaha..., shit. Do you try to avoid me? You Asian nigga..,” he turned around at me as he stood tottering.

I automatically turned around and punched him in the face. He fell down on the street and suddenly shouted for help. The cops, who coincidentally passed that street, chased me after they heard that man shouted. Unfortunately, that night, I got arrested because someone accused me for attacking him. It was fatal because I knew that it wouldn't be easy for colored people like me to escape from that situation. I was sentenced with 3 months imprisoned since I was still underage. My father visited me after he heard about what happened. He let me stay in jail instead of paying for it. He said that, maybe, it was better for me to learn from my mistakes. I could see through his eyes that he was disappointed at me. He was my role model. He always told me to stay low and never let your guard down. I thought I couldn't do it at that time, which led me into this. Mostly, I spent my

time there to survive alone and tried to man up.  
Hopefully, the time I spent here, could change  
me to be stronger than my father.

# The Great Pohutukawa

Angela Theresa/164214039

It was spring in Tamaki. Nikau was ready to go to the wood to hunt. His oldest son, Tayn had left first that morning since he was in charge for hunting pigeon.

“Follow me son, you need to learn how to use spear before any kids around your age do it.” Nikau talked to his youngest son who just turned six, a week ago.

“Ihu is not ready for that, My Love. Not today, wait at least when he turns ten.” Hahana begged to her husband.

“He is my son, made from my flesh and blood. You, Woman, stay here. Watch how strong he is going to be. Don’t ever tell me what to do.”

Ihu followed his father in silent. They entered the great Gnarly Rata wood. The wood was overgrown with Rata trees. In the middle of the wood, lied the most enormous Pohutukawa tree, the only one of its kind in the Gnarly Rata wood. Pohutukawa tree had striking red flowers. It made the ground under that tree covered in its flower petals.

Nikau whispered to Ihu, “You see the tiny creature there, son? Here’s your spear, catch that



rabbit, I'll wait for you here. Do not come back if you cannot catch it."

As soon as his father finished his last word, Ihu run as fast as light to catch the rabbit. Nikau did not worry about Ihu being lost in this wood. He believed the wind which passing by the trees would guide Ihu back to him. Not far from where Nikau was standing, he saw a humongous deer. It had been a long time, since he saw a deer as great as he seen now. Nikau drew a bead on that deer, with all his strengths; he threw his spear right on the deer's leg. The poor deer fell to the ground. Ferociously, Nikau cut off the deer's head, and then flayed its skin. Nikau gathered Rata tree branches that he found on the ground. He made fire from the branches he found, and grilled the deer on it.

The sun already set long time ago and it was almost midnight. Nikau was started to worry, Ihu had not come back yet. He started to look for Ihu, he shouted his son's name, expecting Ihu could find him. No, he did not hear anything but his own voice. His feet and throat started to hurt because he was running and shouting for quite a long time.

He was too weak to walk, too tired to shout. He rested under the great Pohutukawa tree. He closed his eyes and fell asleep in a second. It was like a dream; he opened his eyes, and saw a very magnificent woman standing in front of him.

“What are you doing here mortal? It is almost dawn; your family might look for you,” said the beautiful woman.

“Who, who are you? How come a woman like you is in the wood?” Nikau asked the woman.

“I am the guard of this tree, the greatest one among all the spirits of the trees in this wood,” said that woman.

Nikau was trembling, with all his courage he said, “You are the dryad.”

Softly, the woman said, “Yes, I am.” She continued her sentence, “If you are looking for your son, he is not here. The wind whispered him the way back to home.”

Nikau was irritated by the fact that Ihu had come back home without seeing him first. He held his anger because the magnificent dryad was still standing in front of him. “You can’t leave now; other dryads will be irritated by your

presence. They don't really like mortals. You better leave when the sun sets. It is the time when we rest. And also, it seems like you are not strong enough to walk home. You can rest under my tree. I will protect you," said the dryad.

Nikau nodded her head in agreement. He also thought he was too weak. He was wondering why this dryad let him stayed under her tree, while other dryads hated humans. She talked softly, "I don't hate mortals like them, if you are wondering. You are safe with me."

They sat silently under the tree. Nikau could not bear the silent; he asked the dryad, "What should I call you, if I may ask?" The dryad looked at Nikau deeply in the eyes, "I am Ophelia, and I know you are Nikau." Nikau just slightly opened his mouth to say what his name is, but Ophelia says it first.

“How do you know my name?” Nikau asked. “I overheard it from the hunters. They often talk about you. About how great you are with your spear and you never miss your target. They kind of hate you, I think. They don’t like it when you back home with sacks of ravin, while they cannot catch any,” said Ophelia.

Nikau left the wood as soon as he saw the sun ray. As he arrived at home, he wakened Ihu. He dragged him to the backyard and started to whip him. “No! Don’t touch my son, you crazy wretch! Tayn, Tayn! Take out this crazy man out of here!” Hahana was crying and screaming while trying to protect Ihu from Nikau’s whip.

Tayn dragging his father out, while pointing to Tyan’s face Nikau and said, “You! You are not my son, bastard!” He disappeared along with his spear towards the wood.

With the outburst of anger, Nikau threw his spear to anything he saw. Without he realized, he stopped at Pohutukawa tree, and shouted that beautiful dryad's name. Ophelia stepped down from her tree, "What is it?" she said.

Nikau told Ophelia what happened in his house. Ophelia felt sympathy for Nikau, she asked Nikau if he wanted to stay in the wood for a while. He could make a tent under her tree. Without any hesitation Nikau accepted Ophelia's offer.

Nikau started to develop feeling for Ophelia after spending every day for a whole week with her. He thought she felt the same. Her touch, smile, and soft voice were the proof. Nikau had decided that he would stay in the wood with Ophelia.

A group of hunters from Tamaki saw Nikau with Ophelia making out. No, they were not shock by Ophelia's beauty. They saw Ophelia stepped down from the tree that more or less 250 feet tall was more shocking. They realized she was not a human, but a dryad. The legend told Gnarly Rata wood were guarded by dryads. The immortal, beautiful creatures that lived in the trees.

Those hunters rushed down to the village telling the people, Nikau committed adultery with supernatural beings. Adultery was a serious crime for Maori tribe. The news spread fast in Tamaki. Hahana went to Gnarly Rata wood together with the villagers. They brought axes and flambeaus with them. It was easy to find the great Pohutukawa tree since it was the greatest tree in Gnarly Rata wood.

Nikau was there, flaying his ravin. He looked shock when he saw those villagers. Without any word the villagers tried to cut down the tree.

Nikau shouted, "What are you doing! Leave now!"

The villagers ignored Nikau's words. They pushed Nikau away from the tree. They kept trying to cut the tree but it couldnot be cut. The stem was too thick and hard, axes could never beat it, they decided to burn the tree with the flambeaus.

A few steps from where Nikau was crying and begging for the villagers to stop the fire, Hahana stood in silence. She could not hold her tears anymore. She realized, Nikau's love was no longer belong to her and their children.



The dryad died along with the tree they live in. Ophelia had gone. Nikau reflected on what happened to Ophelia for a month in the wood. He was confident Hahana was the one who wanted the great Pohutukawa tree vanished. Without any second thought, Nikau rushed to his house in Tamaki. He found Hahana there and without saying any words Nikau threw his spear to Hahana's chest. The scene was so fast.

Hahana died on the place she was standing, covered in blood. Tayn and Ihu who stood not too far from their mother were shocked. Tayn with all his strength crashed his body to Nikau's. Nikau was under Tayn's body, with all his might Tayn smacked Nikau's face, "You nasty creature! Why are you doing that to my mother?" Tayn was screaming.

Without Tayn and Nikau realized, Ihu was standing behind the mad Tayn, holding the spear Nikau gave him the other day. He was crying like crazy. Ihu threw his spear to Nikau's throat. Blood gushed from Nikau's neck; he was out of breath and gasping for air. In a flash Nikau remembered, the spear in his throat was the one that he had given to Ihu the day they went hunting for the first time. It was the spear that killed him.

# Platinum Hairs Shades in Blood

Yoninho (164214041)

31 March 1334, a full moon filled up the palace that made the whole place illuminated by the light. Right at midnight a sound of baby girl crying infested the room of the mistress. She was born with platinum hairs and fair skins. They named her Leora in hope she would illuminate the dream of her people. Leora's mother was a

Greek woman who by chance married to her father, The King of Sun Rising in Asia.

8 years later, Leora grew up into smart, cheerful, lovely and friendly girl. The king really loved Leora because she was different from his other children. But the presence of Leora didn't please the empress and mistresses. They scared their descendants would not get high position in the kingdom because the king always spent the time with her. Unlike the other princesses, Leora didn't like anything that related to girly stuff. She preferred to play with the solider than spending times playing with her dolls. In her free time, she usually spent it with playing chess with her father. One day when she was playing around the pond behind the palace, her half-brothers pushed her into the pond and she almost died because she swallowed too much water. Luckily, wanderers

passed by and helped her. Nevertheless, she never told her father about this incident, she kept her mouth shut because she knew that her mother would be in trouble if she told the truth. Leora had good relationships with both of her father and mother, even though she from mistress's womb, her father never looked down upon her.

However, life was not always happy. On her 17th birthday, a misfortune incident approached her life. The enemy clan was ambushed them and they had no mercy over Leora's clan people. Their screaming and crying filled up the atmosphere. All people were running away for safe their own life except Leora. She still was trying to find her father and mother. Even though the knight forced her to run she

ignored it because she still had faith that her parents were still alive.

When she arrived at the king's room an unforgotten scene came off. Her father was stabbed by an intruder from the enemy and her mother was lying on the floor with blood. Leora went berserk when she saw the tragedy. She grabbed the knife on the dressing table and run forward to stab the intruder. Sadly, Leora skill was no match for the intruder. The intruder struck her with the dagger and it almost hit Leora's neck, if only she did not dodge the attack she would be over now. Luckily, a knight came to the room and it made the intruder was thinking twice to continue his action. The intruder stepped back, but Leora's parents couldn't be saved. Both of them died because of losing too much blood. Leora settled and wallowed in her parents' blood.

She didn't want to believe what her eyes seen. Unable to face the reality she cried as hard as she could.

The knight was trying to calm her down, but she trapped in her sadness and mourning over the death bodies that lay on the ground. Until she realized about what her father had said that body was just a vessel and death was a free form of life itself. She rose from her grief and she pledged that she would revenge over the death of her parents.

Leora dedicated herself to train her dagger combat skills. Day to dawn she trained herself just for one purpose, to kill the murderer of her parents.

One day on her training day she saw a villager from the enemy's clan. Her body was trembling and she wanted to slaughter the throat

of her enemy but her inner self kept fighting over her sinister self. However, it seemed like she managed to beat her sinister. She realized that the person didn't have anything to do with her parents' death. She understood that she could not put the blame on the other even though that person had related to the person whose did the worse things to you. She slowly regained her consciousness. After that she promised to forgive what her enemy did because hatred did not provide happiness for her.



# The Divinity Crown

Yosaphat Made D.S (164214065)

**Long** time ago, in the middle of a forest, when the shadow of the night was covering the sky, a man consumed with greediness performed a forbidden ritual which could fulfill his deepest desire, unlimited force of power. He knew that there would be dire consequences waiting for him, but he never knew precisely what the consequences were. Without even thinking about it, that man performed the ritual. Just like what he

predicted, he felt enormous power of magic flown throughout his body. He was feeling so satisfied but not after what happened next. There was a crack in the moon which brought monsters to the human world. The monsters were slaughtering humankind. Controlled by guilty, the man who performed the ritual started to create a crown which could massively reduce the monsters' power as long as the crown being worn. That man with his magic started to teleport across the world to kill the monsters. That man was known as "The Great Mage" and the crown which he worn was known as "The Divinity Crown"

Thousands of years had passed after that accident but humankind was still haunted by the monsters, though the amount was massively reduced. The divinity crown was worn and could only be worn by the great mage's descendants as

they held small fragment of magic inside their blood. The great mage's descendants would also become the king of Vezima. Over thousand years, the divinity crown kept monsters from appearing to the kingdom of Vezima. The kingdom of Vezima was the only place for human kind to live without the interference from monsters. But the power from divinity crown itself did not came free. The divinity crown required offering. It required human sacrifice in order to maintain its power. Every year, fifty people would be sacrificed to the crown and their souls would become one with the crown.

The heavy rain fell as an old woman emerged out of nowhere to a small camp outside the city. That camp was a camp from one of the outlaw people. Outlaw was the term the society at that moment used to describe people who could

not live in the kingdom of Vezima, either because of they could not pay the kingdom's tax or because they were exiled. The old woman was carrying a baby. She fell to the ground and when the outlaws approached her, she vomited blood. Her last wish was "please raise this baby, he is a living miracle". Before the outlaws could ask what she meant by 'living miracle', the old woman had gone for good.

The outlaws fulfilled the old woman last wish; they raised the baby and named him Villen. The outlaws themselves were not ordinary outlaws. They were a group of people who abandoned the kingdom of Vezima because they grew sick of the arbitrary laws made by the ruler of the kingdom, especially the offering sacrifice. They rather lived with monsters than grew with the oppression and the arbitrary laws made by the kingdom's ruler.

They had several attempts to erase those laws but to no avail. They called themselves “Revelion”. Villen grew with Revelion and became a handsome man. His appearances were all well-modelled and well-proportioned. He had bright blue eyes, white shining skin, muscular in appearance, tall, pointed nose, strong jaws and upright in posture, just like what every man wants. One thing which is quite unique about Villen’s appearance was his hair. The colour of his hair was natural ashen white. At the age of 3 years old, Villen’s hair was changed from pure black to ashen white for unknown reason.

When Villen was at young age, Villen already got hard training from the Revelion. The revelion trained Villen at his premature age because they believed that it was the only way to survive in a place where divinity crown’s

protection could not reach so monsters could come unpredictably. It was not just Villen who got the hard premature training; Villen friends who were in the same age with Villen also got the training. They were Sheila and Aisgor. Both of Sheila and Aisgor had different personality. Sheila was kind of protective and taught Villen about affection while Aisgor was a rough person and taught Villen about bad things. Nevertheless, Villen saw Sheila and Aisgor as his own sister and brother.

Now at his 25 years old, Villen had so many unique and special skills because of the hard training as well as the hard life he got from his environment. One of the unique ability that he had was that he could spot a lie just by seeing body language and the sound produced by an

individual. Villen got that skill because in his environment, criminals were everywhere.

Not only skills, Villen had quite unique perspective about the world because of his environment. Every years, Vezima Kingdom's army were not only searching humans sacrifice inside the town but outside as well which means the outlaws would be sacrificed as well. Villen of course got upset and tried to stop them even tried to kill them. That army always called the outlaws as criminals and the outlaws always called the army as oppressor. The outlaws' reason to fight the kingdom's army was that they thought the human sacrifice result was not worth the cause. While the army reason to fight was just that they only wanted to protect people and the kingdom they loved from monsters. Those facts gave a new perspective to Villen. It was that both the outlaws

and the army were just the same. They both were a villain and a hero at the same time because in the end, they both were fighting for their own definition of 'justice'. But unfortunately, in this world, there is no absolute justice. Every definition of justice has its own error but in the end of the day, human needs to fight for what they believe in regardless other's belief. Villen himself chose to fight the kingdoms and its arbitrary laws.

When Villen and his friends were in the camp, one of the revelation's scout started running in hurry approaching them. "I... I hav... I have big news," the scout said. "The King of Vezima, Julius Edgard is dead."

Hearing that, the revelation soldiers were puzzled in a second then starting to shout. "It's



that for real?” One of the soldiers said. Then the scout started to convince them.

“It has to be now,” said one of the revelation soldiers after a long pause. “The coup d’état must be launched right now.”

“Yeeeeeaaahhh, yeahh yeaah,” soldiers starting to shout. With the dead of Vezima king, the revelation was immediately prepared their man across the world to launch coup d’états because they knew that there would be fighting in the hierarchy to fight over the new king position.

Several days had passed after the death of king Vezima and the Revelation had already prepared enough men to start coup d’état. But a day before coup d’état, Villen spotted a strange figure in the forest. The strange figure was wearing mask in his face and covered with robe. Villen felt a strong aura surrounding the masked

man as if called Villen to follow him. Although he hesitate and had a doubt, Villen decided to follow him. The strange man led Villen to a cave. That cave was filled with bright light from wall's torch. Villen lost his sight of the masked man but then there was a touch to the Villen back soldier. It was the hand of the masked man. With a single clap, they both immediately got teleported to a dark place where they could not see the ground but only felt it. Villen asked the masked man, "Who are you? Where are we?"

Instead of answering it, the masked man gave Villen a book. Villen knew that book, it was the legendary history book which had every important history in the world written in it. When the masked man handed the book to Villen, he suddenly disappeared. After taking that book, Villen immediately didn't care about his

surrounding anymore, he just wanted to read that book because he knew the importance of that book.

After several times, when Villen finished from reading the legendary book, the masked man approached him. Instead of questioning the masked man's nature and how he got teleported him, Villen asked another question "Is...is that true? Am I the true heir of Vizima Kingdom?"

The masked man answered with cold voice, "Yes, you are the true heir of Vizima Kingdom and you are more special because you are the one who will create both salvation and desperation towards this world. You are the sword of destiny and you can choose the destiny of this world."

Villen tried to process those sentences and he knew that the masked was not lying as Villen

had unique ability to spot a lie just by hearing it. Then the masked man then tried to clap his hand again to teleport them, but before that, Villen stopped him and tore the masked man's robe and mask. Villen could not believe what he had seen; the masked man had no skin, only skull covering his body. Then the masked man started to explain that actually he was the great mage who brought monsters to this world in the first place. He said that he would not stop until every monster in this world gone as he was the one who should be blame about the appearing of monsters in this world.

After that accident, when approaching the revelation camp, Villen started to question himself whether the coup d'état should be launched or not because he could be the new king of Vezima himself. The coup d'état was also

meant that Villen had to kill his own true family. But after he approached the camp, he got the answer. There was a massacre in the camp from the kingdom army and Sheila was dead at that moment. The anger of Villen started to control him then he decided to join the coup d'état.

The day after, coup d'état was launched. Kingdom of Vezima was under attack from hundreds of the revelation army. The war took one day to be over and the revelation had won. In the top of the big building, wearing the divinity crown, with big shining light, Villen made a speech. "To all of you, today, I will break the shackle of torture which tortures you all along, no monsters or tyrant will rule this world anymore. We all will be free as it should be. From this day on, we will kill the monsters by our power and not by dark magic."

After making that speech, Villen threw the divinity crown up in the air and destroyed it with his sword. There was a huge collision in the air which blow-out overflown power of magic across the world. From that moment, human grew stronger and started to kill the entire monster in the world. Today people only saw the monsters and magic in fairy tales without knowing the truth.