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The Epitome /iˈpitəmi/

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch

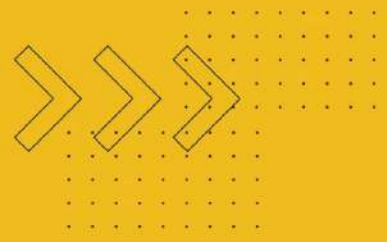
Unleash the epitome
of creative writers

Volume 2 Issue 6

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The
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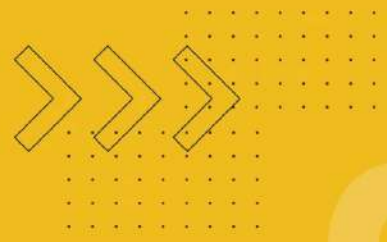
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Synopsis

The Academy of Language Studies at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) is thrilled to unveil the vibrant sixth edition of its e-magazine, The Epitome. This publication celebrates our passionate commitment and unwavering dedication to the art and craft of language and literature.

THE EPITOME emerges as a dynamic platform for a community of writers, educators, scholars, poets, and researchers, all eager to share their unique perspectives, breakthroughs, wisdom, and tales. This edition showcases a mix of creative writing genres, from the dramatic twists of Playwriting to the introspective depths of Personal Essays, including Short Stories, Songs, Speeches, Memoirs, Literary Journalism, Humorous Writing, Lyric Essays, and Innovative Essays. With a rich tapestry of voices, presenting and embracing works in English, Bahasa Melayu, Mandarin, and Arabic, each adding its own uniqueness to the realm of language and literature.

Synopsis



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Preface

Puan Robekhah Harun
Acting Head of Faculty
Academy of Language Studies
UiTM Kedah Branch

Welcome to Epitome, the 6th Issue. Epitome is the platform where writers transformed moments into meaning and emotions into language, offering readers a mirror in which they may recognize parts of themselves. The theme for this publication is Stories That Stay - A timeless collection of powerful narratives – memories, questions, friendships, losses, and life-altering choices.

Stories That Stay is a quiet yet powerful reminder that the most enduring narratives are often born from moments of reflection rather than spectacle. The stories collected within this bulletin encourages readers to pause, to listen, and to engage with experiences that linger long after the final page is turned.

The writers have approached their work with sincerity and depth, transforming personal moments into shared understanding. In doing so, they remind us that stories do not end on the page; they continue within the reader, shaping thought, emotion, and perspective.

I extend our heartfelt congratulations to the editorial team and all the contributors for bringing Stories That Stay to life. Your dedication, creativity, and thoughtful curation have resulted in a body of work that resonates with sincerity and depth. May this publication serve not as an endpoint, but as a beginning. Continue to write, to publish, and to trust in the power of your voices. The world needs stories like these – stories that stay.

May Epitome serve as both recognition and encouragement for writers to continue to write with honesty, to publish with purpose, and to trust that your words matter. In a world that often moves too quickly, your willingness to slow down and tell stories that endure is invaluable.





Editor's note

Assalamualaikum and warmest greetings,

Dear gentle readers,

Alhamdulillah, by the grace of Allah SWT, we are delighted to present the 6th issue of our e-magazine, centered on the theme "Stories That Stay." These are not just stories – they are living reminiscences, deepest questions, treasured friendships, deep losses, and life-changing choices that remain with us long after the moment has passed.

Every narrative in this issue carries a spark – a reminder that our journeys are written with wisdom, by the One who knows us best. Some stories teach, some heal, and others strengthen us when we feel we cannot go on. May these pages offer you reflection, comfort, and renewed strength, Insha-Allah.

As the Chief Editor, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the contributors who poured their hearts into their writing, and to you – our beloved readers – for your continuous support. May Allah bless your path as you read, reflect, and grow through these timeless stories.

Happy reading, and may your heart find what it needs.

**With love and gratitude,
Hajah Razanawati Nordin
Chief Editor**



table of contents

1

A FAREWELL GIFT

By: Nur Syahindah Zulkeflay & Nor Syamimi Iliani Che Hassan
Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, UiTM Kelantan

3

A PIECE OF HANDKERCHIEF AND A FRIEND GONE?

By: Yasmin Farani
University of Merdeka Malang, East Java, Indonesia

5

A ROOM OF QUESTIONS

By: Mimi Sofiah Ahmad Mustafa
Department of Law, UiTM Cawangan Melaka, Kampus Alor Gajah

7

CAHAYA DALAM GELAP GELITA

By: Mohamad Zain Hashim
Civil Engineering Studies, College of Engineering, UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang, Permatang Pauh Campus

9

FADING HEART

By: Zainab Razali & Roejhan Md Kawi
Faculty of Applied Sciences, UiTM Cawangan Perlis, Kampus Arau, Perlis, Malaysia, Faculty of Electrical Engineering & Technology, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Pauh Putra Campus, 02600 Arau, Perlis

11

HAIQAL

By: Noor Azean Anis Abd Aziz & Hafizan Hashim
Fakulti Perubatan, UiTM Cawangan Selangor, Kampus Sungai Buloh, Selangor, Malaysia, Kolej Kejuruteraan, UiTM, Kampus Shah Alam, Selangor

13

KERETA HIJAU BAPAK

By: Mohd Nur Fitri Mohd Salim
Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, UiTM Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Seremban, Negeri Sembilan

15

LAGU : ANAKKU

By: Nur Intan Syafinaz Ahmad
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17

MEMOIR DI BUMI MAFRAQ

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A PIECE OF A HANDKERCHIEF AND A FRIEND GONE?

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This is true story and it happened back in 1996-1997 when I worked for a Korean company called Shinwha Engineering and Construction, Co. Ltd., in Paiton, Probolinggo, East Java. Enjoy it!

For hundred years people have known, even back to the ancient Greece and Rome, and used handkerchiefs for different purposes in different countries. Besides being used by actors in the Ancient Rome - to perform comedies and satyrs - and used by a lady to a man in the Middle Ages to show her favor to him, handkerchiefs mostly are used as accessories to complete the outfits. I believe it is even up to now for the latter. A quotation says, "The handkerchief is truly a timeless accessory."

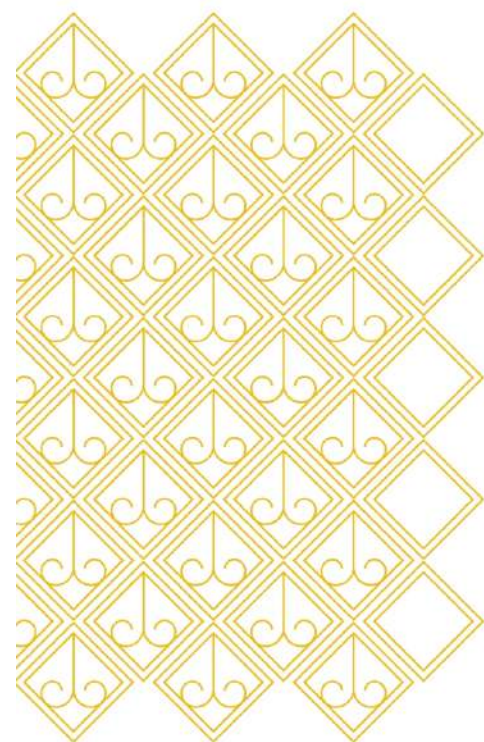
Talking about the usage of handkerchief, how about in Indonesia, is it the same with the rest of the world? It is definitely yes, in terms of handkerchiefs as an accessory. But Javanese people in Indonesia have an extraordinary belief concerning with handkerchief.


As it is known here, Javanese culture has many beliefs that others from different parts of Indonesia, like me for instance (my ancestors are from South and East Borneo), might consider them as superstitious. One of them is about this little, colorful square cloth called handkerchief.

Never give a handkerchief as a present to a friend or someone who is close to you if you do not want to lose them forever, was something beyond my common sense at first. And maybe up to now?

Actually, I heard about this once, and I am half-hearted to believe it. I almost always use my logical thinking in doing everything but maybe this time I should give up and try to believe it? Although my consciousness still struggles for it and I have to face the truth that I had lost two of my dear friends.

My interest in handicrafts is as much as mine in buying them. And Javanese offers me and other handicraft lovers lots of them to quench our interests, in this case was Javanese batik handkerchief. I was really interested in those nice, colorful square batik cloths in the first place and then, had an idea to buy them as presents for Paul's birthday. Paul was one of my good friends and a colleague, and I wanted to give him something useful and different on his birthday. So, I bought some and gave them to him as birthday gifts. Actually, I began to worry if that belief would truly happen. Weeks had passed and fortunately nothing happened, and slowly I forgot about it.





I did not know why, then, that idea popped up once again. I mean, why I chose to buy handkerchiefs in return to Roy's kindness, instead of buying other things. Like Paul, Roy was my good friend and a colleague. He just had gone out of town and brought a small gift for me. So, would something happen this time? No. Nothing happened. Everything was normal and I felt relief.

Then, the time came for me to go back to my home town Malang, for I got a new job there, and left everything behind. I should have been aware of this at the beginning, actually, that the spell was working on me. Although we were separated by time and place, I did not want to lose contact with all my friends in Probolinggo town. So, I still kept in touch with them, including Paul and Roy. In return even Roy often called me to ask how I was doing or to tell one or two interesting things that happened to him.

Along with the passing time, Roy hardly called me again and even a friend told me that Paul had left the town. Without telling me?! He even did not leave any new address which I could contact! Well, not necessarily me but none of my friends, our friends, knew where he was. I tried several times to contact old friends who possibly knew them, Roy and Paul, but always failed.



The bottom line is this Javanese belief is just superstitious. Or what? I just cannot believe it up to now but one thing for sure – I never gave batik or non-batik handkerchiefs as presents since then. Not that I believe in the superstitious but the loss of dear friends that I do not want to experience again. -*



Biodata of author(s)

Yasmin Farani has been teaching English for around 24 years to ESL students of General English (GE), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes and had experience in teaching Bahasa Indonesia from 2001 up to 2023 to overseas students (from Japan, Germany, South Korea, Timor Leste, Middle East and Philippines). She has a great interest in teaching, developing teaching materials, and creative writing. She has developed ones since 2000 and they are in the forms of both modules and worksheets for GE (English skills), ESP and EAP (English for accounting, banking & civil engineering students), CCU and office admin classes.



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