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# The Epitome /iˈpitəmi/

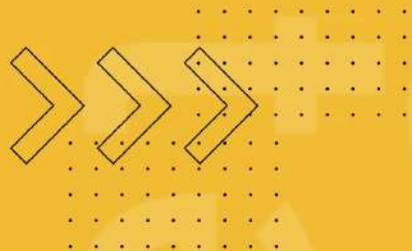
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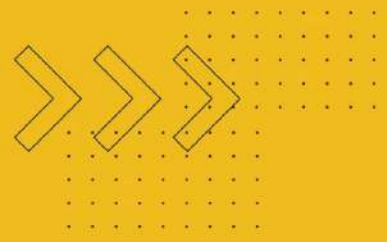
Unleash the epitome  
of creative writers

Volume 2 Issue 6

2026

*The*  
**Epitome**  
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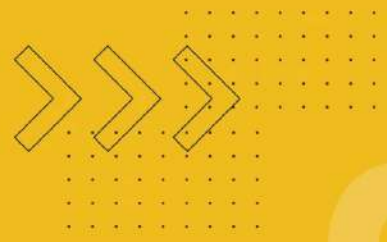
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# Synopsis

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



*The*  
**Epitome**  
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# Preface

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

Welcome to Epitome, the 6<sup>th</sup> 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





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# RED-HANDED fote



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**Reminiscing of the good old days when a tall mango tree was at one corner of my school, behind a shed where unclaimed bicycles were stored. I used to ponder why my seniors simply left their bicycles in the school garage after finishing Form 5. Some unexplainable traditions were passed down year by year, which I did not buy. I imagined taking and selling all the bicycles to Uncle Chiam for a lucrative old-iron profit. I could even buy a brand-new folded bicycle by adding to my savings. I assume I am not going to be a part of the ungrateful bunch of naughty folks who lavishly waste their parents' arduous toils. Yet I claimed myself as a slightly naughty schoolboy on other occasions, especially when dealing with this particular superfruit. The tall tree mentioned was, indeed, full of mangoes, and while those at the bottom were still jungle-green, those at the top had ripened to an inviting yellowish orange.**

One morning during recess, I headed straight for the tree with a large plastic bag in my pocket. I climbed to the topmost branches to pluck the riper fruits. I straddled a branch approximately 7 metres above the ground and got started. After some minutes of effortless work, I had about ten delicious mangoes in my bag. In my mind, I imagined myself enjoying the sweet and sour fruit in front of the television, watching my favourite chef, Jamie Oliver, in action – preparing his 5-minute meals. In fact, I was intrigued by the mango salsa beef burger with spicy habanero sauce featured last week. Where on this Bornean Kinabalu and can I find it? No burger stall offers such an exquisite menu on the list; hence, I should be the very chef preparing my own version. Stretching to pull in a bunch holding four juicy mangoes, I suddenly heard a sickening tearing sound.

I let out a yelp as I was flung headlong downwards, one hand still clutching the bag of mangoes. When my fall was arrested, and I began to sway upside down, I discovered that a broken part of the branch had hooked itself through my trouser leg and was holding me up. I was not acrobatic enough to pull myself up. There was also the danger that the branch might give way, and I would plummet to the ground.



I yelled my lungs out for help. A few minutes passed, and I began to feel dizzy as if I were swaying like a pendulum- tick tock tick tock, as in a brown grandfather clock at home. Unsurprisingly, my dizziness evoked Micheal Bublé's song, Sway, to suddenly pop up and echo in my mind. Yeah, that was the last song I listened to on Spotify last night. What more could I say? The song lyrics reflected my current situation where the mango tree swayed with me in terror! What a coincidence!

Fortunately, recess was over and some teachers in the staff room came to my rescue. The mangoes were confiscated when it was found that I was not hurt. I was summoned to the teacher's discipline room, aptly dubbed the 'slaughterhouse'. Inwardly, I was mad at myself. It was all my doing and now I had to face the music. I was a bundle of nerves as I stepped into his room. Seeing me, his usual impassive face swelled with rage.

'So, you want to be Tarzan?'

Numb with fear, I remained motionless and speechless, allowing him to list all my previous offences. The list was long, but he seemed to have a good memory. I thought I led a charming life as I had always been let off. Well, the charm had worn off. I could do nothing, even blinking my eyes twice; asking for help from my class teacher did not work. Instead, I blinked in shock as the disciplinary teacher summed up his tirade with, 'There's no escaping this time, boy!'

I cycled to school the following Monday morning, proudly biting and enjoying my finest touch of mango salsa beef burger while listening to Micheal Bublé's Sway from the Spotify playlist in loop mode. I waited anxiously for the loudspeaker to call my name. And what more to expect? Of course, I was canned during assembly before the whole school, hahaha. And that was how I ended up being a creative cook for my tummy, a weekend cyclist, and a self-claimed melodious Sabahan singer – the end.

**Note: This short story was inspired by a writing competition on our campus in November 2024. The themes given were burgers, bicycles, and a song on Spotify.**

### Biodata of author(s)

Noli Maishara Nordin has taught English proficiency courses at Akademi Pengajian Bahasa (APB), UiTM Cawangan Pahang for 14 years. She obtained her bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature in 2006 from the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) and a master's in applied Linguistics from Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) in 2010. Her research interests include areas in Corpus Linguistics, Reading, and ESL Education. Her research grants were in Malaysian Corpus of Financial English (MaCFE) and readability in insurance policies.

Roslan Sadjirin is a Senior Lecturer of Computing Sciences at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Pahang for 16 years. He obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees in computing sciences from Universiti Teknologi MARA. His research interests include natural language processing, computational linguistics, and information storage and retrieval. His previous research grants were in the classification of word usage based on gender preferences and Malaysian corpus financial English.



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