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The **Epitome** */I'pitəmi/*

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Kedah Branch

Unleash the epitome of creative writers

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SYNOPSIS

The Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kedah branch is proud to present the first issue of its e-magazine, The Epitome, as our focus to highlight our commitment to contribute to the areas of creative writing.

THE EPITOME aims to provide a platform for writers, educators, academicians, poet, and researchers to share their ideas, findings, knowledge, and experience, particularly on various creative writing genres - personal essays, poetry, short stories, songs, movie scripts, plays, and innovative projects in four different languages (English, Bahasa Melayu, Mandarin, and Arabic).

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure and immense pride that we, the Academy of Language Studies at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kedah branch, extend our warmest welcome to all writers and readers to honor all 127 artistic masterpieces. This is indeed a tremendous achievement to commemorate our debut.

We are privileged to offer the platform for the writers to show their talents in creative writing in this magazine, which serves as a testament to our commitment to the area of personal essays, poetry, short stories, songs, movie scripts, plays, and innovative projects. Their invaluable contributions and unwavering commitment to academic excellence have played a vital role in shaping this magazine.

Thank you.

Best regards,

Editorial Board



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SOUL WITNESS

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I remember that night being the most traumatising, absurd and daunting night of my life. It started like any other limbless after work nighttime routine of bubble bath and a chapter of a book I was currently reading at the time. I was halfway through it when I got drowsy and dozed off a couple of times. Failing to stay awake despite the amazing chapter, I decided to take a nap and let everything sink in with the aroma of the lavender from the candle on the side of the white crooked bathtub in my bathroom. I closed my eyes and was about to meet my own Mr. Sandman when I felt a cold air breeze right to my face.

I opened my eyes slightly and was shocked to see the strange sight in front of me. Wait, this isn't my bathroom. I got out of the filled tub and quickly grabbed hold of the pink bathrobe from the nearby hook. Suddenly, a loud scream came from the other side of the door and I walked to it slowly. This must be one hell of a dream. Everything seems so vivid; the curling iron, numerous drug-store makeup products scattered on the sink; all of them are products that I saw on my monthly grocery trip. I didn't sleepwalk right? Whose house is this? Hundreds of unanswered questions popped out of my head as my feet reached the stairs that lead downstairs. A gruff sound of a man can be heard from below so I peeped through the railing to see who it was.

A man in a black suede jacket was seen kneeling down towards something on the floor. A blast of curiosity rose out of me as I took a few steps down the staircase slowly until I saw the bloodbath that situated right in front of my eyes. The screeching sound coming from my mouth echoes loudly after seeing a woman lying on the floor, with blood pooling out from her head and scratches filling her naked body from top to bottom.

Her raw gaping neck showed a sign of a clean slithered cut while her upper middle torso, right in between her breasts, buried a rusted

karambit knife. That's only when I realised the smears of blood everywhere in the house; on the floor and the stair railing too. The man suddenly stood up and turned his body to face mine. He cocked his head to the right and gave me the creepiest grin I've ever seen in my life.

I let out the strongest blood-curdling scream to his face and ran back upstairs as fast as I could towards where I came from. I locked the door and pushed everything that I could get a hold of while sobbing and yelling my heart out. Wake up! Wake up! Please WAKE UP! I told myself while I was pinching every single corner of my body and slapping my own face as hard as I could. The man was trying to get inside and was using anything that he had on his hand to break down the door. I ran to the window and was about to gamble my own life by jumping out when a hand suddenly grabbed my shoulder and pushed me back into the filled bathtub.

His strong hand held my head underwater as I struggled for the last breath of my life. My hands were trying to reach out for his face while my legs slowly faltered from the captive of his other hand. His eerie grin was still present as I began to see darkness and solemnness around my eyes. My body got weary from the constant struggle and I felt like I was falling deep down under his spell to comply with all of his desire to give up. Don't fight it. It only makes it harder. That was the last guttural sound that I heard coming out from him. Before my senses fully shut down, I noticed the black raven tattoo on his wrists and the bird's red eyes bore into mine as I closed them forever.

I suddenly woke up and looked around me. I let out a sigh upon seeing the familiar sight of my bathroom again. Gee, thanks Mr. Sandman. I knew I asked for something exciting tonight but that was not it, I said to myself. I went out of the tub to grab my ducky bathrobe and went out to my room. After putting on my Nirvana shirt and sleeping short, I decided to settle in for the night while watching whatever was on the TV.

Suddenly, the sound of an ambulance and police siren stirred up the quiet neighbourhood while I was searching for the right channel to watch. I looked outside the window and saw a few policemen pulling out the yellow tapes, paramedics rushing out of the ambulance and the street began to be filled with my neighbours surrounding a house across the street.

As the scene began to be crowded with more people from other streets, I decided to not want to get tangled in that commotion. Besides, I was never really acquainted with the couple living in that house. So, I grabbed my binoculars and watched the scene from the comfort of my own grey ottoman in front of the window in my living room.

A figure of a man was seen handcuffed out of the house so I zoomed in to get a good look at his face. My hands were shaking the moment I saw the disturbing smile and the black suede jacket. I had to take a moment and stirred my eyes away from the scene but when they went back to the binoculars, I began to scan his hands. The black raven tattoo on both of his handcuffed wrists were as clear as the moment I spotted it the first time, minutes ago. Later, two dead bodies covered in a black body bag were seen taken out of the house inside the ambulance.

This didn't make any sense. What just happened? Did I just see someone being murdered in my sleep? But how's that even possible? More unanswered questions came out of my mind as I numbly watched them take the man away in the police car.



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