



The **Epitome** */I'pitəmi/*

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Cawangan Kedah

*We are back!
Welcoming the epitome of artistic ideas &
astonishing writers!*

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Published by:

UiTM Cawangan Kedah,

Pn. Razanawati Nordin, Chief Editor,

UiTM Cawangan Kedah, Kampus Sg. Petani, 08400 Merbok, Kedah

Email address: razanawati@uitm.edu.my

Contact No: 044562421

Copy Editor: Ms. NurFarisya Binti Hafiz

Graphic Designer: Mr. Mohd Hamidi Adha Mohd Amin

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SYNOPSIS

The Academy of Language Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Kedah is thrilled to announce the release of the second edition of its e-magazine, The Epitome. This publication exemplifies our steady dedication to fostering creativity in language and literature.

The primary objective of THE EPITOME is to offer a platform where writers, educators, scholars, poets, and researchers can come together to exchange their ideas, discoveries, expertise, and narratives. Our special focus revolves around an array of creative writing genres, encompassing Playwriting, Short stories, Songs, Speeches, Memoirs, Literary Journalism, Humour writing, Lyric essays, Innovative essays, and Personal essays, with a goal to embrace diverse linguistic expressions, with content available in four languages: English, Bahasa Melayu, Mandarin, and Arabic.

table of contents

The Fat Barbie By: Syaza Kamarudin Universiti Teknologi Mara, UiTM Cawangan Perak Kampus Tapah	42
Mind By: Wardah Ismail Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Shah Alam	44
Memoir of a Chained Dog By: Afifah Fadhlullah Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Melaka	46
Bualan Penuh Makna: Perjalanan Mencari Ilmu By: Anis Binti Shaari UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang	48
Dusun Abah By: Dr. Arnieyantie Abdul Hadi Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel dan Pelancongan, UiTM Cawangan P.Pinang	51
Tanah Keramat By: Balkhiz Ismail Kolej Pengajian Alam Bina, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)	53
My True Story: Journey of Joy and Grief: A Mother's Dream, A Daughter's Triumph By: Dr. Geetha Muthusamy UiTM Kampus Bandaraya Melaka	54
Capturing the Soul of Bandung: A Tapestry of Culture and Adventure Through My Lens By: Fahmi Samsudin UiTM Cawangan Melaka Kampus Alor Gajah	56
消防战士 By: Boon Yih Tien Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Alliance of Research & Innovation for Food (ARIF) UiTM, Cawangan Negeri Sembilan, Kampus Kuala Pilah,	58

Every day is learning curves...

Dear Readers,

We are back! We are thrilled to present a collection of articles that we believe capture the essence of the writers. Our team has worked diligently to curate content that we hope will both engage and resonate with you.

In these pages, you will find a diverse range of perspectives on life, from joy to sorrow. We hope these pieces inspire reflection and spark meaningful conversations.

We want to express our deepest gratitude to our talented contributors for their time and expertise. Their dedication is what makes the second issue of Epitome possible.

As always, we value your feedback. Please do not hesitate to reach out with your thoughts and suggestions.

Thank you for being a part of our Epitome community.

Warm regards,

Razanawati Nordin
Editor-in-Chief,
The Epitome

EDITOR'S NOTE



Memoir of A Chained Dog

Afifah Fadhlullah

Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Melaka
afifahfadhlullah@uitm.edu.my



Loud, incessant barking awoke me from my beauty slumber. I opened my eyes just briefly and saw that it was past midnight and the night was still with no sound even from my furry sleeping cat, Tigerina. I decided to pull up my blanket and ignore whatever was happening; I was about to drift into dreamland again when the high-pitched barking and growling which I assumed was from one of my neighbour's houses became terrifyingly loud. I forced myself to sleep and even covered my eardrums with ear plugs to block out the noise.

This happened rather frequently throughout the week, and I had to suffer many sleepless nights because of this. Luckily, I'm okay being sleep-deprived and don't become a walking zombie with lack of sleep. I could go to work as usual as I'm used to getting less shut eye and rest as far as I can remember. However, it bothered me that this unusually vocal dog kept on wailing and whimpering not only at night but sometimes early in the morning or before dusk sets in. It can be downright annoying at times when I want some peace and quiet at home after a hectic day at work.

So, one day, I decided to get to the bottom of it. I stealthily made my way to the kitchen as I was certain it was my neighbour's dog which was creating such a racket day and night. I'm not a big fan of dogs, but not because I'm afraid of them. Since our religion says dogs are forbidden to be touched, I didn't want to have to perform taharah, cleansing myself from any of the dog's impurities later.

Oddly enough, my other neighbours did not even complain about it and it seems nobody seemed to care. It's sad but true; since staying in the housing area my neighbours within close proximity to my house - right, left, or even two or three houses away rarely interact much except on rare occasions as I was fully aware some of the 'makciks' or 'kakaks' were housewives. This is the saddening reality of society today; we prefer to keep to ourselves that we don't even bother to say 'hi' or strike a conversation with one another. Only that we made eye contact, and a warm smile is given from a far distance. This brief exchange would normally occur in the neighbourhood.

Okay, so now back to the main story. Pardon me, I do have this unconscious habit of digressing from topic. I peered outside the kitchen window and looking up from its droopy posture with forlorn jet-black eyes was a black dog. I'm not sure of its breed but I would say it's a domestic dog. Such a heart wrenching sight greeted me then. The dog was cruelly chained to the back door of my neighbour's house and it was lying down on a hard and cold platform outside of the house. Only a narrow, thin roof was giving shade to it. Surely if it was pouring or scorching hot, the roof couldn't provide much shelter. When I scrutinised closely, the dog was clearly starving and listless due to lack of food and water. Bones were visibly poking from under its ribs when it moved or stood up. I hardly saw my neighbours though they were at home most of the time, feeding the dog. I thought it was close to a month that I last saw an Indian lady coming out and opening the kitchen door to feed the dog. The dog could be seen sticking out its tongue at times due to the extreme heat. Its fur was still shiny black but its neck was rather patchy and red. It was obvious that the dog must have struggled a couple of times to break free from the chains tied around its neck. It was a clear sign of neglect and intentional abuse.

One time I saw the dog was able to break free from the chains and made a mad dash somewhere before returning back to its original spot and stood expectantly at the kitchen door waiting for it to be opened by its owner. I was relieved when I saw it was able to escape finally but wanted to say how foolish it was when it returned back to its owner. It then dawned on me that of course, animals can't think like humans do and being a dog, it proves that it is very loyal to its owner despite the ill-treatment.

Well, I didn't know what to do but felt uncomfortable and disturbed whenever I heard it whimpering every time it wanted to urinate as obviously it must be in pain due to malnutrition and lack of drinking water. It has been several months now. I wanted to at first take photos in secret of the dog's condition and report it to SPCA Melaka or the Veterinary Department but hesitated upon thinking of the consequences and lack of knowledge about it. So, I decided to ask a senior colleague what would be the best thing to do. She advised me against it since it will create problems with my neighbour later and unwanted things might happen as a result of my report. Even my best friend only got angry and cursed at the neighbour when I told her about the dog, so I was indecisive and decided to wait and observe.

You could say that I have exceedingly amazing patience that I could endure all of this for almost three years now. Yes, yes, I know what people will say if they got to At least they feed it once every two or three times in a week. The dog got stronger and seemed to be able to adapt to its current state, but it is still chained to the door. There were times when the lady, her husband and know I chose this long to even take any action. Within this time frame, a lot has happened although there is a slight positive improvement on how they treated the dog. There were times when the lady, her husband and two children petted the dog from inside but have never played with it, I wonder why.



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