

The Self /

Diri

A collection of short stories

Collected and edited by Aris Masruri Harahap

Introduction

This collection book consists of twelve short stories by twelve Indonesian young writers. Unlike the usual publications of fiction book in Indonesia by Indonesian writers, this book was written originally in English. The reason behind this is simple; all of us, the writers and I as the editor of this book, want to offer this book to a wider readership. However, we also want Indonesian readers to be included in our reach. Therefore, this collection book of short stories is also accompanied with its Bahasa Indonesia version.

The stories collected here comprise various themes and styles written brilliantly by each writer. They are all different in theme and style but they all have one similarity. Each story elegantly tells about personal experiences and thoughts.

The stories of “A disaster day”, “Walking in the wind”, “A glimmer of light”, and “Struggle, love, and dream”, were written to express personal experiences. They express sadness and misery from the past but at same time they also show a glimpse of hope towards the future.

In “Struggle, love, and dream”, for example, the writer tells a story about a girl from East Java who struggles to have a better future despite difficulties she has. Monetary crisis that hit Indonesia in 1998 is used as a historical context of how the character gets her first difficulty in the story. In spite of many problems the

character has, at the end of the story, the writer gives a glimpse of brighter days for her main character.

Ronald always supports all decisions made by Cia. Now, all she wants to do is to finish her study. Then, who knows? She also has a dream to continue her education to a Master degree.

(“Struggle, love, and dream”)

Unlike the above stories, the stories of “Himmel” and “The truth untold” in this collection are very unconventional. Both stories represent confusion to differentiate right from wrong and good from bad. They do not tell about a better life or future unlike what we can find from the story of “Struggle, love, and dream”. Instead, both stories ask ‘what is *better*?’ philosophically. “Himmel” does tell about possible future where human beings live along with humanoids and other advanced technologies. However, it does not vividly tell that it will be better to have those things in life as conflict and killing still threatening humanity.

Four stories titled “Good bye, Katy”, “Bestie”, “That small thing”, and “Sunday afternoons” tell stories about friendship. Each of them is able to bring certain emotion to its reader and also to tell how important and meaningful life is with friends. All of the stories, except “That small thing”, express one same characteristic,

personal loss. Each of the stories remarkably brings a feeling of loss that the main character feels to its audience.

If “Good bye, Katy”, “Bestie”, and “Sunday afternoons” tell about a feeling of sadness because of losing a friend(s), the story of “That small thing” tells you that best friends, no matter how angry they are with us, there is always forgiveness for us. Sometimes, it is just because of one small thing, they will then easily forget our mistakes and forgive our mistakes without a need of asking.

Meanwhile, the story of “A stapler”, perhaps, is the most conventional compared to the other stories in this collection as it has an eloquent moral lesson. At the end of the story, we can easily notice that it tries to teach its audience to not underestimate other people’s existence.

The story of “The nomad” is the only one in this collection that uses a fable-like narration style. Its main character is a cat which is kept brilliantly mysterious until we reach the end of the story. The story itself expresses and imagines what a cat may think and feel in one situation.

Each story in this collection does have differences in themes and styles. However, as I told you in the beginning of this introduction, each of them has one similarity as all of them express personal experiences and thoughts. Therefore, all of the stories here are personal expression. I want you to understand this when you read this introduction.

I hope you may find that this introduction helps you to feel more aware of what each story wants to say personally to you. I also hope that you will enjoy reading all of the stories in this collection. Happy reading!

Bekasi, 22 January 2019

Editor

Aris Masruri Harahap

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English version

The truth untold

Written by Erica Juliani

Edited by Aris Masruri Harahap

Like all the nights I've had, a silver of moonlight spilled into the garden and swallowed all my flowers' silhouette that played against the dark night sky. Roses and violets are the best of showing their transitory beauties by spreading an unearthly glow of petals which dovetailed nicely with them. I was drunk with their sweet fragrance till I can't stop smiling deliriously. And without permission, I always adored how strong the delicate blooms could survive and how rarely they grew; like weeds in this chaotic world.

A gust of wind was beginning to chase me away from where I stood for joyful and was whispering the tales of lives lost and death to convince me about my sorrowful life. I couldn't deny the reason why this mask was still hiding my body and my heart from the world. Behind my garden, the high walls stood mute and held back any curses that made me looked like the monster under my

Versi Bahasa Indonesia

Kebenaran yang tak terungkap

Ditulis oleh Erica Juliani

Disunting oleh Aris Masruri Harahap

Seperti malam-malam yang telah kulalui, cahaya bulan memenuhi tamanku dan menelan habis semua siluet bunga-bungaku yang melawan gelapnya malam. Mawar dan violet adalah yang terbaik dalam menunjukkan kecantikan mereka yang fana dengan menyebarkan kemilau mahkota yang sangat cocok dengan mereka. Aku menjadi mabuk akan harum semerbak mereka hingga aku tak dapat berhenti tersenyum. Dan tanpa meminta izin, aku selalu mengagumi betapa kuatnya bunga yang lembut itu dapat bertahan dan betapa anehnya mereka tumbuh; seperti rumput liar di dunia yang kacau ini.

Hembusan angin mulai berusaha mengusirku dari tempat aku berdiri untuk kesenangan dan membisikkan segala cerita tentang hidup yang hilang dan kematian untuk meyakinkan diriku mengenai hidupku yang