

NOME

Nome

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NOME

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CERITA RAKYAT DARI ACEH

Nome



Ditulis oleh
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NOME

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Foreword

Literature work is not only series of word but it also talks about life, both realistically and idealistically of human. If it is realistic, the literature work usually contains life experiences, good model, and wisdom which have been added various style and imagination along with it. Meanwhile, if it idealistic, the literature work contains moral lecture, good character, advices, philosophical symbols, culture and other things related to human life. The life itself is very diverse, varies, and full of various problems and conflicts faced by humans. The diversity in humans life also affects to the diversity of literature work because the contents are inseparable from civilized and dignified humans life.

The literature works that dealing with life utilizes language as medium of deliverance and imaginative art as its *cultural land*. On the basis of the language medium and imaginative art, literature is multidimensional and multi-interpretative. Using language medium, imginative art and cultural dimension, literature deliver messages to be reviewed or analyzed from various perspectives. The outcome of that perspective depends greatly on who is reviewing and analyzing with various socio-cultural and knowledge background. There is a time when a literary reviewer reviews from the point of view of metaphor, myth, symbol, power, ideology, economy, politics, and culture can be refuted by other reviewers who see from perspective of sound, referent, or irony. Even so, Heraclitus said, "However opposite they work together and from different directions, the most beautiful harmony emerges".

There are many lessons that we can get from reading literature, one of which is reading folktales that are adapted or reprocessed into children's stories. The results of reading literature always inspire and motivate readers to be creative in finding something new. Reading literature can trigger further imagination, open enlightenment, and add insights. For this

reason, we express our gratitude for the processors for the story. We also express our appreciation and gratitude to the Head of the Coaching Center, Head of the Learning Division, and Head of the Subdivision of Modules and Teaching Materials and staffs for all the efforts and hard works carried out until the realization of this book.

Hopefully this storybook is not only useful as a reading material for students and the community to foster a culture of literacy through the National Literacy Movement program, but also useful as an enrichment of our knowledge of past life that can be utilized in addressing current and future life developments.

Jakarta, June 2016

Regards,
Prof. Dr. Dadang Sunendar, M. Hum.

Preface

Nome's story is a story adapted from folklore originating from the Gayo plateau, Central Aceh. Many positive values can be taken by the child from this story. Through this story, the child can learn from the character of the story named Nome. Children can take lessons from the good things done by the characters. Goodness will surely return to goodness that will bring good luck in the lives of those who do it. In addition, this story invites children to believe and believe in their ideals. Every success can only be achieved with maximum effort.

This story also invites children to care about nature and others, including animals and plants. This story is written using simple language so that it is expected to be easily understood and understood by children. Hopefully, this story can be one of the stories that can increase reading interest and interest in writing among children. Hopefully, Indonesian children will always be good-hearted, intelligent and caring to others and to nature.

Aceh, April 2016

Nurhaida

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NOME

1. Nome and His Mother

Dawn had just broken. All over the village, roosters were crowing loudly, waking the people up. The cool morning air in the highlands of Gayo was refreshing. From the mosques, *azan* began to sound, calling people to pray. However, a young boy named Nome was still curling under his blanket on his bed. A woman opened his bedroom door and walked towards the bed.

Seeing that Nome was still fast asleep, she shook her head.

“This boy does nothing but sleeping. All day he is just lying here. Eat and sleep, that’s all he ever does,” the woman sighed, pulling the blanket off.

“Nome, wake up, Son! The sun has almost risen. Come on! Wake up and go pray. You have to perform *subuh* prayer before the sun rises,” she called her son.

Nome squirmed on his bed. He opened his eyes a little and looked at his mother. Then, he grabbed the corner of the blanket and pulled it up, covering his whole body and his face. A second later, he was already asleep again. Nome’s mother put her hand on his shoulder and shook it. It took her quite a while to wake him up. This time, Nome opened his eyes fully.



He could see his mother clearly, standing beside the bed.

“I’m still sleepy, mother. Just let me sleep a few more minutes,” he said.

“It’s already morning, Nome. Wake up! Waking up in the morning is good for your health. Wake up and go out. The trees produce fresh air in the morning, it’s good for your body. Come

on, Nome! Get up from your bed!” Nome’s mother said.

Even though Nome was still reluctant to get up, he obeyed his mother. He got up and walked towards the bathroom. After cleansing himself by performing *wudhu*, Nome prayed. As soon as he finished observing *subuh* prayer, Nome quickly jumped on his bed and slept again.

Nome’s mother, who knew his habits perfectly, left him alone. She went to the kitchen and began to prepare breakfast.

She sautéed chayote leaves that she had picked from the fences in their front yard. She also made sword beans spicy paste, which was one of Nome’s favorites. After cooking and having breakfast, Nome’s mother cleaned the house. Then, she prepared to go to work. Nome woke up when he smelled the delicious aroma of his mother’s cooking. He quickly went to the kitchen and had breakfast.

“Nome, you can finish all this meal. I have saved some for our lunch and dinner. I am going to work. Wish me luck so I can bring enough money, okay. I want to be able to cook more delicious food for you. I want all your needs to be satisfied. But you know, what I earn is barely enough for our daily needs. I don’t even have money to fix the house. The roofs are leaking here and there. The walls are brittle and riddled with termites.

That’s why I work hard every day. I wish we can have a better

life. I hope I can earn enough to fix the house,” Nome’s mother said.

“I’m going now. Don’t forget to lock the door before you sleep again,” she added.

“Yes, Mother, I will. Be careful!” Nome said with his mouth full.

When his mother had gone, Nome went back to bed. It was always like that in the house. When Nome’s father was still alive, he had always spoiled Nome. Nome’s mother just let him do whatever he wanted. Nome had never been taught to help around the house. Ever since his father died, Nome’s mother was the one who had to work. Nome just stayed home and did nothing, mainly because he did not know how to do anything. Once, Nome’s mother had told him to boil some water. However, after putting the kettle on the stove, Nome had gone to sleep. Of course, all the water evaporated. Nome’s mother had come home to find that there had been nothing to drink. She had to endure her thirst and boil another kettle of water. Since that day, Nome’s mother never asked for his help anymore. She did all the chores herself and let Nome spend his days sleeping.

Nome’s mother worked as a hired farmer, cultivating other people’s fields. Their family had no field of their own. Ever since Nome’s father passed away, she worked hard to bring some food home. Because Nome has never been taught to work or help

around the house, he could not do anything productive. He spent his days sleeping, eating, and playing with his friends. That was why he was called Nome, which in Gayo language meant ‘to sleep’.

Nome’s mother worked diligently. She tilled the field, sow the seeds, got rid of the weed, and cut the rice stalks. She also carried the harvest to the mill and husked them into grains of rice. In short, she would do anything to earn money, as long as it was legal and above board. Even though she had worked very hard, she did not earn much money. In fact, her earning was far from sufficient to cover their daily expenses. When farming and harvest season was over, Nome’s mother had no job. She would then go to the forest and gather firewood. She did not cut the trees because she cared about the environment. She just gathered the fallen branches. She used some of the firewood for cooking and sold the rest.

That day, on her way home, Nome’s mother stopped at a small shop that sold daily needs. She wanted to talk to the owner of the shop.

Nome’s mother did not immediately approach the owner because there were some customers there. She waited outside until they had finished their shopping. As the last of the customers completed her transaction, Nome’s mother walked in. The women, who were going out of the shop, noticed her. They were

her neighbors and they greeted her.

“Well, Nome’s mother, what are you doing here? Are you going shopping, too? Why are you staying outside?” one of them asked.

“I have something to say to the owner. That’s why I wait until you have finished,” Nome’s mother replied.

Another neighbor approached Nome’s mother and, with a concerned look, said, “Nome’s mother, your son is a teenager now. Don’t you think it’s time for him to start helping you? If he doesn’t start learning now, I’m afraid he won’t be able to work. I’m sure you don’t want him to be an unemployed man, do you? All he does is eating and sleeping or playing around. That’s not good for him.”

“Thank you very much for your concern. I’ll talk to him later,” Nome’s mother said.

While they were chatting, several other customers came in. Nome’s mother waited again until the shop was empty. She then approached the owner of the shop, who was standing behind the counter.

“Miss War, can you lend me some rice? There is no more rice in my house and no one buys the wood I gather today. I have no more money,” Nome’s mother said with embarrassment in her voice.

The owner of the shop stopped what she was doing and glanced at Nome's mother for a moment. Then she continued counting the money on the till.

“Hmm, it's Nome's mother. I am sorry, Nome's mother, I cannot help you this time. I cannot let you get anymore rice from the shop because you have not paid what you owe before. I am sorry, but you have to pay it back before you can borrow anymore rice,” she said.

“I totally understand, Miss War. But, can you give me just another loan, please? Just a little rice. A quarter of a liter. That's all I ask. Just so I and Nome can eat. I literally only have a handful of rice at home. Please, Miss War, help me.”

“I'm truly sorry, Nome's mother. I cannot let you owe me anymore. You said you still had a handful of rice.

Even though it's not much, you can still cook it,” the shop owner replied sternly.

“About what you owe... when will you pay me? I don't want to have to close my shop because I run out of capital. I can't keep letting people buy things without paying. Now, please go home, Nome's mother. Other customers are coming and I have to attend to them,” she continued.

Nome's mother said nothing. She knew that she owed the shop

owner a lot of money.

“Yes, Miss War. I’m sorry because I am not able to pay you back yet. As soon as I have some money, I will pay them all,” Nome’s mother finally said before leaving the shop. She knew that she should have avoided taking loans because it would only be a burden. She always tried to pay up all her debt every time she had money. However, the nature of her work and the amount of her earning did not allow her to live without debt. The circumstances always forced her to borrow rice or money to her neighbors. Although she tried to borrow as little as possible, so as not to make it harder to pay them back, she was still deep in debt.

Nome’s mother kept walking. She decided to try to ask other neighbors for rice. It was a long shot because they seldom gave her what she needed, due to the fact that she had borrowed from them too many times. She was desperate and she went to the next door neighbor.

“Ma’am, is it possible for you to lend me some rice?” Nome’s mother asked politely.

“Nome’s mother, I’m sorry I cannot help. Our rice stock is depleting. Our last harvest was not too good. If you want, you can go to the backyard. You can check the mortar and look through the remains. You probably find some rice among the husks!” the neighbor said.



Nome's mother went to her neighbor's backyard. She saw a mound of rice husks on the ground and inside the mortar. She winnowed the husks to see if there was rice left among them. She was tired, but she kept doing it because she had to bring back some rice for her and Nome to eat. In the end, she managed to gather some rice, enough for eating tomorrow. After thanking her neighbor, Nome's mother went home.

The sky had darkened. Dark clouds had gathered, threatening to pour a heavy rain on everyone.

Nome's mother picked up her pace. She wanted to get home before the rain started. Luckily, she went in just as the rain poured down. The roof of her house was made of thatched leaves. It had needed to be replaced since so long ago, but she had no money to do so. Every time it was raining, the water leaked and dripped through the holes in the roof. Nome's mother quickly gets anything she could use to collect the water.

After making sure that the rain would not drip to the floor, she went to find Nome. Apparently, Nome had been sleeping since the morning until his mother came home.

"Nome, come here, Son! Give me a hand! Light the oil lamp, please! It's still afternoon, but it's getting dark because of the rain." Nome's mother called her son. However, she did not hear any reply. She then entered the kitchen to get coconut oil. It was

what the people used at that time to light the house. Nome's mother shook the oil can and found that it was almost empty.

"I'm running out of coconut oil. Just when I have no money, there's always something to buy," Nome's mother muttered while putting the remaining oil in the lamp. She lighted the lamp and put it in the corner.

Nome's mother then cooked dinner. Before she went to the forest, she had picked some cassava leaves. Cassava leaves from Gayo highlands could be cooked into a delicious broth. After cooking the cassava leaves, Nome's mother fried some Depik fish (*Rasbora tawarinensis*, a type of fish only found in Lake Laut Tawar, Sumatera).

A neighbor had given her the fish earlier.

Nome finally woke up. After performing *salat magrib*, the afternoon prayer, Nome's mother asked her son to have dinner. Nome ate with gusto.

"Mother, your cooking is so delicious. I will eat them all," Nome said.

"Yes, Son, finish them. Tomorrow, I have something to tell you," Nome's mother said.

"What is it mother? Why can't you tell me now?" Nome asked curiously.

“Just wait until tomorrow! I will tell you then,” she replied.

After dinner, they performed *salat isya*, the evening prayer. Then, Nome went to bed again. Nome slept on a thin kapok mattress which was so thin because they never replaced the kapok inside.

The pillow, pillowcase, and blanket that Nome used were also riddled with patches. He could not wait until tomorrow to hear what his mother would say.

2. Nome Saved A Cat, A Dog and A Snake

Before she went to work the next morning, Nome's mother called her son to talk. Nome sat in front of his mother, ready to hear anything she had to say.

“Nome, you are a young man, now. It is time for you to find some work. You have to earn money for yourself. Can you at least try to find some work, please?” Nome's mother said.

Nome fell silent. His mind was racing. It was a few minutes later that he spoke.

“Mother, what can I do? I have no skill or knowledge to work. I have never worked all my life. I have never worked in the fields. I don't know how to cut woods. I don't know what work I can get or if anyone will employ me,” he said.

“Just find some work, any work. Anything you can do. I just want you to make some money. We are poor. Surely you don't want us to live like this forever?” Nome's mother urged him.

Nome looked at his mother's face. She seemed so tired every day, working from dawn to dusk. Nome loved his mother very much.

He made a promise to himself that he would try to find a job and earn enough money to take care of his family.

“Very well, Mother. I will try to find some work. I'm going!”

Nome said before leaving the house.

Nome walked around the village. When he reached the rice fields, he saw several farmers were tilling the soil. Nome approached one of them, who was working the biggest field. He hoped the farmer would allow him to help.

“Excuse me, Sir, can I work in your field?” Nome asked the farmer.

The man stopped working and looked at Nome.

“Aren’t you Nome? I know you. What can you do, Nome? Your parents never taught you to work, how can you do all the hard works in the field? I don’t think you can, Nome,” the farmer said.

“I will try to do my best, Sir,” Nome said.

“I’m sorry, Nome, I can’t help you. There is no work you can do here. Try to find job somewhere else. I have to get back to work, now. I want this field to be ready for sowing soon,” the farmer dismissed Nome.



Nome tried to ask the other farmers. However, none of them wanted to employ him. They all knew that Nome could not do anything. They did not want to risk the job being unfinished if Nome did it. Since he could not find a job in the fields, Nome continued his journey. He had walked for half a day when he arrived at a sugarcane field. He noticed a farmer and his wife were cutting sugarcanes. They seemed tired. Stacks of sugarcanes that had been cut were piled in front of them.

“I will help them cutting the sugarcane. I hope they let me work here,” Nome said to himself.

“Excuse me, Sir, may I work here for you? I can cut the sugarcane. I think you will finish the job faster if you let me help,” Nome asked them.

The farmer couple stopped their work. They also knew Nome and his habit of sleeping. They were certain that Nome would not be able to do any work.

“It’s a hard work working in a sugarcane field, Nome. We don’t think you can do it. You see the thorns on sugarcane leaves? They will cut you. I think it is best if you find work somewhere else. Try to find something easy, something you can surely do!” the sugarcane farmer said.

“Very well, Sir. I thank you for your advice. I will try to look for job somewhere else,” Nome said before he left.



On the road, Nome met his friends. They greeted him.

“Hi, Nome. We haven’t seen you all day. Why didn’t you come to play like usual?” one of them asked.

“I can’t. I am looking for a job All I did was sleeping, eating, and playing. It’s time I grow up and work. I have to earn some money to help my mother. I will hang out with you later, if I have time,” Nome replied.

“Okay, then, see you, Nome. I hope you get a job!” they told him as Nome turned and walked away.

Nome finally arrived at the bank of Lake Laut Tawar. The cool air from the lake breezed around him. He watched the blue-green lake in front of him, taking in the beautiful scenery. Nome was amazed seeing how beautiful God Almighty had created the world. He felt a little refreshed and his spirit to find a job soared again. He noticed that a fisherman was sitting in the shade of a tree. The fisherman looked tired because he had been catching fish with a net all day.

Nome approached him.

“Excuse me, Sir. While you rest, may I borrow your net? I will try to catch fish with it. If I get any, we will share it. I really need a job, Sir. I have to help my mother,” Nome begged the fisherman.

“Alright, go ahead. You can use it while I’m resting,” the

fisherman agreed.

Nome's face glowed with happiness. He finally had a chance to work. Nome quickly grabbed the net and lifted it. He had never picked up a net before and he just realized that it was heavy.

Nome lifted and dragged the net to the lake. Once he was in the lake, Nome tried his best to throw the net. However, he could not spread it well enough. Nome kept trying, but he could not use the net to catch fish. He felt so tired and decided to get back on dry land.

“Sir, I cannot use the net. It's so heavy. I don't have the strength to spread it in the lake,” Nome said, returning the net to the fisherman.

“It's not easy to spread a net, Boy. You need practice and experience. Maybe you need to find other things to do. I see that you are not accustomed to manual labor. I suggest you find something that you can certainly do,” the fisherman said.

“Thank you, Sir. I will keep trying,” Nome said.

“The most important thing you need to remember is that you have to find a rightful job. Something legal that does not harm other people. It will make you have a better and happier life,” the fisherman concluded.

It was already afternoon, and the sun was low. Nome said

goodbye to the fisherman and went on his way. He was so tired and hungry. He had not eaten anything since this morning. Nome tried to keep walking, but he could only move several steps before he slumped to ground. He was too tired to walk. He decided to rest under a tree. He almost fell asleep when he heard a cat crying. Nome pushed himself up and walked towards the sound.

Nome witnessed a man beating a cat with a stick. The cat meowed pitifully. Clearly it was hurt. Nome felt sorry for the cat.

“Stop! Stop beating the cat!” Nome yelled to the man. The man stopped his hand mid-air and looked at Nome. The cat was lying weakly on the ground. Its tongue lolled outward. It looked like the cat was hungry and thirsty. Its yellowy green eyes stared at Nome.

“Why are you beating this poor cat?” Nome asked.

“It stole food from my table. It even dared to topple the cover on the dinner table and took the food. It is fortunate that I caught it before it ate the food. I will beat it to death if it dares to steal my food again,” the man said angrily. He threw a sharp glance at the cat, which was still lying on the ground, brushing its head on Nome’s foot.

“I will help you, little cat,” Nome said to the cat.

“Come here, you awful cat!” the man yelled, calling the cat.

“Stay here, little cat. I will talk to him,” Nome said.

“Meow,” the cat meowed softly, as if it understood what Nome wanted. Nome then said to the man, “This cat stole your food because it was hungry. It needs to eat and drink, too, just like human. Can’t you show a little compassion? The cat is just like human, it feels pain if you beat it. Remember, what goes around comes around. If you don’t want to suffer, don’t hurt other creatures, including animals. You have to love animals because they are God’s creations too, just like us.”

“I was mad at the cat. My family is in a pinch. It was difficult to even bring some food to the table and the cat took it,” the man said.

“Even so, you still have a chance to help others. The cat only needs a little food. We don’t have to be rich to help God’s creatures,” Nome said.

The man listened to him. He felt sorry that he had beaten the cat. He approached it and patted its head several times.

“I’m sorry!” he said.

“Can I take it with me?” Nome asked the man.

“Of course! You can take it if you want.” The man replied.



Nome quickly picked up the cat and took it home. His mother, who had been waiting for him, was taken aback seeing Nome coming home with a cat in his arms.

“Nome, you have been gone all day. Did you get any job?” Nome’s mother asked.

“I didn’t, Mother. This cat is the only thing I get today,” he said.

“Why would you bring a cat home? It’s just another mouth to feed. And we barely have enough for ourselves,” Nome’s mother grumbled.

“Don’t worry, Mother. It will eat my share. I believe that God will help us if we help others, including animals,” Nome said.

“Alright, you can keep it,” his mother gave in.

She told Nome to get in and have dinner. She reminded Nome that he should keep looking for job. Nome agreed.



The next day, Nome got ready to leave early. He left the house just after breakfast. He walked energetically towards the fields, hoping that he would get a job today. A few hours later, he arrived at an avocado field. There were several people in the field, harvesting the avocado.

“I think picking avocados is easy enough. Surely, I can do it,” Nome muttered to himself. He quickly looked for the owner of the field.

“Excuse me, Sir. I am looking for a job. May I help you picking the avocados?” Nome asked.

“I know you, Nome. You have never done an honest work all your life. I don’t want you to pick the unripe and inedible ones. You’d better go somewhere else!” the man said harshly, refusing Nome’s offer.

Nome left the field and kept walking until he was tired. When he saw a huge boulder, he approached it. He sat behind the boulder and closed his eyes. Suddenly, he heard a dog yelping in pain. It sounded so close to the boulder. Nome opened his eyes and looked around. He spotted a man who was dragging a dog. Its leash was tied tightly around its neck and the man kept hitting it with a stick. The dog kept yelping in pain. Nome quickly ran and intercepted the man. He felt sorry for the dog.

“Stop! Don’t hit it anymore! Have pity on the dog. It was in pain.

What if it was you who were beaten up? Let him go,” Nome called to the man.

“This is none of your business! It’s my dog, not yours. I can do whatever I want,” the man snarled.

“It’s not my dog and I still care about it. How can you beat it? Even if it is a wild dog, you cannot hurt it. Dogs cannot reason, but you can. As a man, you should treat all animals, including this dog, well,” Nome said.

“What has it done to deserve your beating?” Nome added.



“It’s a lazy dog. It won’t help me hunting,” the man replied.

“It’s an animal. Of course, it cares about other animals. It must feel sorry for the animals you hunt. That’s why it won’t participate in your hunting.

If the dog is of no use to you, why don’t you just give it to me? I will take care of it,” Nome said.

“Fine! Take it with you,” the man finally said, giving the leash to Nome.

Nome then took the dog home. He took off its leash and let it stay in their front yard. Nome then went in to find his mother. Nome’s mother had seen her son taking the dog home.

“Now you bring a dog. Why, Nome? Yesterday, it was a cat, today it’s a dog,” Nome’s mother complained.

“Mother, the dog was beaten up when I saw it. I pitied the dog. I asked the man to give it to me and he did,” Nome tried to explain.

“If it was beaten, I pity it too. I want to help the dog, too. But we only have so little food to eat, how can we feed the dog? Surely it eats more than the cat?” Nome’s mother said.

“Don’t worry, I will share my food with the two of them. I still believe that helping the dog and the cat is a good thing to do and God loves those who do good deeds,” Nome assured his mother.

Nome's mother let the matter drop and told him to have dinner. That evening, Nome gave some of his food to the dog and the cat. The two animals seemed so happy. They quickly finished the food in front of them. Even though Nome was not entirely full, after eating so little, he felt more content than ever. "I will try harder to find work, tomorrow," Nome promised himself.

The next day, Nome went back to his quest. He followed the village road towards the fields. On one particular field, Nome saw several people were chasing something. Nome decided to stop and find out. He suddenly noticed that the people were pursuing a snake. The snake seemed afraid and tired to Nome. He guessed that the snake had been eluding the people for some time.

It slithered on the road and stopped near Nome's feet. It held up its triangular head and looked at Nome. Its eyes seemed to convey that the snake wanted Nome to help protecting it from the villagers.

"Don't worry, I will help you. I will talk to them to let you go," Nome said the snake.

Seeing that the snake was at Nome's feet, the villagers stopped in front of him.

"What are you doing, Boy? Get out of the way! Let us kill that snake!"

“Let me ask you first. Why are you chasing this snake? Why do you want to kill it?” Nome asked.

“It slithered in our fields. We don’t want it to harm us,” a villager said.

“Just give it to us,” another villager snarled.

“I cannot let you hurt this snake. It’s just one snake and there are so many of you wanting to beat it. You cannot do that. Snakes do not usually appear before people. They always try to hide from people so that we don’t harm them. Just like any other animal, snakes will not disturb people if they were left alone. This snake must be hungry that it dared to risk being seen by you. The earth is not just for men, you know. God created earth for all beings. We, as the superior being with our reasoning ability, should take care of the earth and everything in it, from the forest to the animals. If we take good care of the forest, the animals will have a safe place to live. They will not come to the villages and harm the people to eat,” Nome tried to reason with the villagers.

“I just want to remind you that if you see wild animals, those that live in the forest, enter the villages, it is our own fault. We have destroyed their homes; we cut down the trees and we clear the forest for our own uses, leaving them homeless. The forest is their place. God created us to care for each other. Now, I ask you to let this snake go. I will take it with me,” Nome concluded.

“You are right, Nome. You can take the snake with you,” the villagers finally agreed.

Nome left them, clutching the snake in his arms. Nome intended to bring it home. However, not long after they left the villagers, the snake asked Nome to stop.

“Nome, please stop here!” the snake hissed.

“What is it? Why do you want me to stop? It’s still quite far from my house,” Nome said.

“I cannot go with you, Nome,” hissed the snake.

“Why?” Nome asked.

“I have a home of my own. My family is waiting for me in the forest. I thank you for saving me, but I cannot come with you. You are a good boy. I pray that God always protect and bless you.

Now, please accept this skin as a token of my gratitude,” the snake said, slithering out of its skin. The snake emerged from its old skin, which was coiling on the ground, with a brilliant new skin. Nome picked up the coil of snake skin.

“That skin will be useful for you, Nome. It will change your life. You can get anything you want, all the wealth you could ever wish for, using the skin. Come here. Let me tell you how to use it,” the snake continued.

The snake whispered how to use the skin to Nome. Nome listened closely to the instruction.

“Do you understand what I told you?” the snake asked.

Nome nodded. He knew what to do with the snake skin.

“Use it well, Nome. I thank you very much,” the snake said before leaving.

“I hope I can use it for good cause,” Nome said.

Nome then picked several wide leaves to pack the snake skin. After securing the snake skin in the leaves, he took it home. As she had done in previous days, Nome’s mother was waiting for her son to return.

“How was today, Nome? Did you find a job?” Nome’s mother asked.

“Not yet, Mother. I’m sorry,” Nome replied. He quickly got in the house to hide the snake skin.

Unbeknownst to him, there was a man following him home. The man had eavesdropped his conversation with the snake.

He watched Nome packed the snake skin and followed him home. When Nome hid the snake skin in his house, the man peeked from behind a wall, which was made from barks and had holes in it. He

could see clearly where Nome hid the snake skin.

“There it is. You can hide it all you want, Nome, I will get it easily,” the man muttered, smiling with satisfaction.

Meanwhile, Nome was certain that the place was secure and safe. He believed that no one would be able to find the snake skin.

After dinner, Nome’s mother told him to get ready. She wanted Nome to accompany her.

“Where are we going, Mother?” Nome asked.

“Have you forgotten? Mrs. Rasih invited us to her house. They are celebrating the successful harvest. They harvested quite a lot of coffee beans last week,” Nome’s mother reminded him.

“Oh, yes, you are right. They invited me too. But, I cannot go out tonight, Mother. Can you go alone? Please send my regards and my apology to Mrs. Rasih. I have to stay home tonight,” Nome said. He had not had the chance to tell his mother about the snake skin.

“Nome, why do you have to stay home?”

“I have to keep watching, Mother.”

“Why? There is nothing valuable in this house. Even if you left the front door open, no one would try to come and rob the house,”

Nome's mother said.

“Just let me stay home tonight, Mother. Just tonight,” Nome insisted.

“It's dark outside, Nome. I don't dare to go alone. Mrs. Rasih's house is far. You have to accompany me,” Nome's mother pleaded.

Nome thought for a moment. Even though he preferred to stay home and keep his snake skin safe, he could not let his mother go alone at night. It might be dangerous for her.

“Very well, Mother, I will go with you. Go and get ready,” Nome finally made a decision. He checked on the snake skin once more before leaving.

While Nome and his mother were out, the man, who had been hiding and listening to their conversation, crept into the house. He had been waiting for several hours for this chance. Now that the opportunity came, he had to use it.

“Nome, you fool. You think you have kept in in a safe place. I can just take it without breaking a sweat,” the man chuckled. He burst through the door and quickly get to the place where Nome hid the snake skin.

He quickly grabbed the package and got out. It just happened that Nome's dog was playing with other dogs somewhere in the

village. There was only the cat at the house.

“It is truly my lucky day,” the man said, “Nome’s dog is out. If it were home, it will surely find me.”

“Ha ha ha, I will be a rich man. This snake skin will give me so much wealth,” the man laughed happily.

He quickly and quietly got out and fixed the front door. Then he walked away from the house, until he arrived at the lake. He dragged his boat from the bank and got in. He planned to head to an isolated island in the middle of the lake.

“Nobody knows I have stolen Nome’s snake skin. I will hide it in a place only I know,” he thought, preparing to row his boat.

3. The Snake Skin Thief

The man who had stolen Nome's snake skin rowed his boat in a hurry. He wanted to reach the island as soon as possible. In his hurry, he did not realize that a pair of glowing eyes were watching him. It was Nome's cat. Ever since the thief entered Nome's house, the cat had been watching him. The cat was in the house when the thief broke in. When he left, clutching the package that Nome had hidden, the cat followed him. However, it could only follow him up to the lake. When the thief got into his boat, the cat could just see him row away. It then decided to return home.

The thief kept rowing until the boat reached the banks of an isolated island. Nobody ever set foot in this island, except the thief. He looked around, taking in the surroundings. There were only animals in the island, living on or under the trees. There were also many vegetables and fruits growing in the island.

The thief was certain that he could survive in the island for a few days if he had to. It was almost morning when he finally decided to rest.

"I will stay in this island for a while. After I obtain the wealth this snake skin will give me, I will go home a rich man. I will be the richest man in the village. Everyone will respect me," the thief thought.

He took out the snake skin from its package. The golden white snake skin glinted under the morning sun. He looked at the snake skin thoroughly, trying to work out how to use it. He flipped the skin over and over, but he did not have a clue at all.

“Hey, snake skin, give me wealth as I wish. I want gold and diamonds,” the thief said ceremoniously, as if he was trying to give the snake skin a command.

The thief waited, hoping for a miracle. However, no matter how long he waited, nothing happened.

“How can I use this snake skin?” the thief muttered angrily.

He put the snake skin on the ground and repeated his command. He waited again but still there was no gold or diamond appearing before him. He began to get irritated. He threw the snake skin to a tree. It slumped on its roots. Then, the thief paced back and forth, thinking how to turn the skin into gold.

Since anything he tried did not yield any result, the thief decided to let the matter rest for the moment. He took his machete and gathered tree barks. He made a barrel out of the barks and put the snake skin inside. He put a lid on the barrel, screwing it tight, and hid the barrel inside a cave.

“Now, no one would find it,” the thief said with an air of satisfaction.

The thief did not get what he wanted, so he packed his few belongings and returned to his village. He grumbled all the way home, because he had the snake skin but did not know how to use it.

Unbeknownst to him, all his actions in the island were watched by a rat. The rat had been living in the island for a long time. It knew all the corners of the island by heart. That was why it knew immediately when a human set foot on the island.

When the thief hid Nome's snake skin, the rat followed him silently. As soon as the thief left, the rat gnawed on the barrel and tried to peek inside. It immediately recognizes what it was.

“This snake skin is not his. He clearly has taken this from someone else. I'd better keep watching in case the true owner turns up. I will wait here to ensure that the snake skin returns to its rightful owner,” the rat vowed.

Meanwhile, the thief had arrived at his village. By the next day, he had returned to his usual activities. He sold fruits and snacks in the market. That day, quite a lot of people came into his shop.

“Excuse me, Sir, may I taste one of this *lanseh* before I buy them?” one customer said.

“Of course, Ma'am,” the thief said. The customer took a bite of a *lanseh* fruit and seemed satisfied. She asked the thief to pack her

several kilograms of *lanseh*.

“She has eaten one *lanseh*, so I will have to take some of the *lanseh* that she buys to compensate. Even though she has asked for my permission, and she only ate one, I might suffer a loss. I need to ensure that I make profit. I will take few *lanseh* from her pack and sell them again,” the thief thought, smiling devilishly.

When the customer had left the shop, another customer came to buy some oranges. He seemed to be in a hurry.

“Sir, are those oranges sweet?” he asked.

“Of course they are. You can see it from their clean orange skin,” the thief replied.

“Then, give me ten kilograms of oranges. I want to serve them to special guests today,” the customer said.

The thief quickly prepared ten kilograms of oranges and gave it to the customer. As soon as the customer left, he laughed heartily.

“What a fool, he could not tell sweet oranges from sour ones apart. Those oranges he just bought are sour. I’m glad he bought so many,” he muttered to himself.

Soon afterwards, another customer arrived. This customer wanted to buy taro chips.

“Excuse me, Sir, are these chips fresh?” she asked, pointing towards the baskets of taro chips.

“Yes, they are. You can taste them if you like!” the thief said.

The customer tastes some chips. She nodded satisfactorily because the chips she tasted were crispy and delicious.

“These are really good. Could you give me five big packs, please? I’m visiting from other city and I think these chips are good enough to take home. I will present them to my relatives.”

The thief quickly packed five big bags of taro chips. However, he chose those that had been in the shop for quite a while. These chips were no longer crispy and they even began to smell.

“I’ll just give her these old chips. This is my chance to sell them. She will never come back here, anyway,” he thought.

He was glad because there were many customers that day.

“I will make a lot of profit. Even though I’m still mad because the snake skin did not give me what I wanted, at least I sell a lot of products today,” he said to himself.

By mid-day, his wife came to the shop, bringing him some lunch.

“Father, look at what I bring for you! I cooked *bandeng* fish curry,” she said cheerfully.

“Where did you get the fish?” the man asked.

“I took them from our neighbor’s pond. You know, those who keep fish to sell. When they were not around, I went to the pond and caught some of the biggest *bandeng*. I’m sure they won’t miss it,” she replied.

“This is delicious,” the man commented after tasting the curry.

“I also caught their hen,” his wife suddenly said.

“So, you took not only their fish but also their hen?”

“Hold on, I can explain it. I lost our black hen, yesterday. Since they have similar black hen, I decided to take it from their coop and pretended that it was ours.”

“You are truly like me,” the man said, laughing happily.

“I also bring some papaya for you. They are really sweet and juicy,” she added.

“Are they the ones I took from their field this dawn?” the man asked.

“Yes, they are. Go on, dig in. I have saved some at home for the children.”

By afternoon, the man closed his shop and prepared to return home. He was taken aback when a man stopped in front of him

and slammed down a bag of potatoes on the table.

“You sold me rotten potatoes,” the man said angrily.

“What do you mean?” the thief asked nonchalantly.

“See for yourself. I bought them from you yesterday. Most of them are rotten. You just put some nice, big, fresh potatoes on top of the pile to make them look good. I’d like to return them to you for a refund,” the man demanded.

“Hey, there’s no refund policy here. You have bought them and a day has passed. You cannot return it and ask for a refund. How do I know you didn’t swap the good potatoes I sold you with these rotten ones?”

“You think you will be rich by cheating your customers? Even though you make much money, it will not make you happy. Money you made through dishonesty will bring you misery,” the man said, shoving the bag of potatoes to the thief’s hands.

“If you don’t want to give me a refund, fine! Just take these rotten potatoes. Next time, I will buy from other traders, those who are honest and fair,” the man finished and stormed out of the shop.

A few days later, nobody came to the man’s shop. Everyone who had been buying things from his shop had realized that he was a cheat.

“Oh, I will surely be bankrupt,” the thief grumbled. He now faced the consequences of his actions.

4. Nome Wished to Marry The King's Daughter

Nome had grown to be a handsome young man. Even though he had not managed to get any job, he began to help his mother at home. He continued learning to do things to get experience. He was able to take care of chickens and ducks by now. He built some coops for his chickens and ducks in his small backyard. He tried to maximize that small backyard by planting chayote and green beans near the coops. Every morning, he collected the eggs from the coops and gave them to his mother. Nome's mother cooked some of the eggs and sold the rest. This had really helped their economy.

One day, Nome approached his mother who was cleaning chayote leaves for their lunch and sat beside her.

“What is it Nome?” his mother asked.

“Mother, I need to talk to you about something important,” Nome said.

“Tell me, then,” she said.

“I wish to get married, Mother. I want to propose to one of the king's daughter to be my wife,” he said seriously.

Nome's mother smiled. Her hand was busy cleaning the leaves. She clearly thought that Nome was joking.

“Don’t you realize who we are, Nome? We are common people, and poor ones at that. We don’t have any valuable belongings. We don’t have lands and fields. What can we give the king’s daughter to ensure that she will have a good life with you?” Nome’s mother asked, trying to remind him of their status.

Nome had expected that his mother would say so. He had prepared what to say to convince her.

“I believe that our life will change to be better soon, Mother,” Nome said.

“What do you mean? You don’t even have a job. How can you build a family?” Nome’s mother kept trying to bring Nome back to reality.

Nome fell silent for a moment. His mother had a point.

Their life was so different from that of the king’s daughters’. Nome lived in poverty while the princesses lived a very comfortable life.

“Let’s say that I agree to your wish. I still think you need to find a proper job first. Once you are settled, I promise I will go to the palace and ask for one of the princesses’ hand,” Nome’s mother concluded.

“Very well, Mother. I will prove that I can afford to build a family,” Nome said.

He then left the house and went to a potato field. There were some workers pulling out the potatoes there. The potatoes were collected and cleaned by other workers. Nome walked towards a woman, whom he knew as the owner of the field.

“Excuse me, Ma’am, can I help you picking and cleaning the potatoes?” Nome asked her.

“Of course, Nome. I’d be glad if you do. There are still many potatoes that need to be plucked and cleaned. I don’t have many workers and I worry that they will not be able to finish the work today, considering how vast this field is. I need all potatoes to be picked today because I have to take them to the market this evening. I have some buyers ready to take them,” she explained.

“Thank you very much for letting me work for you,” Nome said. He immediately started to work.

Even though it was hot and he was sweating buckets, Nome did not care. He worked very hard to harvest the potatoes. Soon, he had gathered ten big sacks of potatoes. That afternoon, when he had finished the work, the field owner gave him some money.

“Thank you, Ma’am,” Nome said happily when he received the wage.

Nome came home with a smile on his face. His friends, who passed him on the road, were wondering what had happened to

him.

“Nome, you look so happy. What’s happening?” one of them asked.

“I just came back from work and received my wage. I have been looking for work for months, and today I finally had a chance to work. That’s why I’m so happy. I finally earn some money from my own hard work,” he answered.

“Well, that’s good news. What will you use the money for?” another friend asked.

“I will get married, so I am saving money,” he replied.

“You will get married? With whom?” they asked in surprise.

“I will marry the king’s daughter,” Nome said confidently.

All his friends laughed.

“You always say such funny thing, Nome. You are going to marry the king’s daughter? Have you looked at the mirror?” Nome’s friends mocked him.

“Just wait and see. My life will change. I have to go home now, I need to rest after such a long day of work,” Nome said before leaving his friends.

Once he arrived at home, Nome quickly saw his mother. Nome

gave her the money he earned. Even though it was not much, Nome's mother was happy. "Now, do you believe that I can work and earn money?" Nome asked her.

"Yes, I trust you, Nome. You can work, even though you haven't earned much. I hope next time you get better job with better pay," she said.

"Well, now that I have proven that I can earn money, will you go to the palace and propose to the king's daughters?" Nome asked his mother again.

"Nome, you dream too big, Son. I have told you many times, why won't you listen?" she said in exasperation.

"Mother, our life is going to change. Trust me. I want you to be happy, too," Nome said.

"I trust you, Nome. I wish your dream comes true," she said.

"Thank you, Mother. Now, let's rest. You have to go to the palace tomorrow," Nome said.

"Let's! You have to work again tomorrow," Nome's mother said with a smile.

That night, the air was cool. Nome slept so soundly. He was happy. He believed that his wish will come true.

5. Nome's Mother Met the King's Daughters

Nome's mother got up early the next morning. Even though she was reluctant to go, she had promised Nome that she would meet the king's daughters. She opened her wardrobe and looked through all her clothes. She was looking for the best clothes to wear to the palace.

She took out several clothes from the wardrobe. Some of them were so old and full of patches. It took her a while before she found an appropriate cloth to wear. She wore her only good clothes, a green traditional dress and a white shawl.

"This is the best clothes I own. I hope the princesses want to receive me wearing such a poor cloth," Nome's mother thought.

"Now, I'm ready to go," she said half an hour later.

By that time, Nome was also preparing to go to work. Today, he was going to work on a coffee plantation.

"Do I need to accompany you to the palace, Mother?" Nome asked.

"There's no need, Nome. I can manage by myself," Nome's mother replied.

Nome's mother then went to the palace to see the king. The king received her warmly. She quickly stated her intention. After

hearing her explanation, the king told Nome's mother to see his daughters.

"I have seven daughters. Today, you can meet my eldest daughter. Talk to her and tell her about your son's wish," the king instructed.

A guard took Nome's mother to see the king's eldest daughter. She was waiting in a back room, wearing a beautiful cloth. She looked very pretty.

"What brings you to see me, Ma'am?" the princess asked. She immediately disliked Nome's mother at first sight. The old woman wore a very simple clothes and sandals. She found it distasteful.

"Before I tell you my intention, I would like you to sit here with me, Princess. I bring you some cakes. I made them myself. I woke up early and made these cakes just for you.

Come on, sit here next to me. Let's talk while enjoying these delicious cakes," Nome's mother said.

The eldest princess reluctantly sat beside her. She refused the cake Nome's mother offered her.

"Actually, I am full. I just had lunch. Just tell me why you come, quickly!" she said.

“Princess, would you be my daughter in law? I have a son called Nome. He is a handsome young man. He would be a good match for you,” Nome’s mother said.

“I’m sorry,” the Princess said, “you and your son are clearly poor. I know how poor you are just by seeing what you wear. By his name, I know that all he does is sleeping and eating. How can I marry a lazy man like that? What would my life be if I become your daughter in law? I cannot marry him,” the princess said quite bitterly.

Nome’s mother sighed. She had expected that the princess would respond like that. In fact, she did not entertain the possibility that she might succeed. She came to the palace just because she loved Nome, and because she had promised him.

“I will not force you, Princess. You have the right to choose your husband,” Nome’s mother finally said.

She then took her leave and bid farewell to the princess and the king. The king invited her to come again the next day to talk to the second princess. After Nome’s mother left, the second and third princesses came to the eldest princess. The other princesses were out of the palace. They wanted to know what Nome’s mother had said. The eldest princess told her sisters everything.

“I know Nome. I once saw him on a ceremony. All villagers came here to help preparing the ceremony. All the boys were busy

helping our servants doing this and that. Meanwhile, he was just lounging around. He was a lazy boy. I heard he had never worked once in his life. I cannot imagine how a man with no skill to work dares to propose to a princess,” the second princess said. Her sisters agreed with her.

The next day, Nome’s mother went to the palace again. She brought a basket of persimmon she picked from a tree in her yard. The king granted her audience and, like yesterday, she was taken to see the second daughter who was sitting near a pond.

“Princess, I bring you a basket of fresh persimmons. I picked them myself from persimmon tree that I planted myself. Go on have a taste. They are so sweet, you will like it,” Nome’s mother handed the princess two persimmons that she had just peeled.

The second prince took the fruits. She was known to love persimmons, a common fruit in Gayo highlands. The princess chewed on the fruit happily.

“Phuuh. . .,” the princess spitted out the persimmon in her mouth.

“What is it, Princess? Does it taste bad?” Nome’s mother asked.

“You lied to me. It was bitter. Try it yourself if you don’t believe it,” the second princess whined.

Nome’s mother tasted a piece of persimmon. The princess was right, it was very bitter. A moment later, she smiled.

“Forgive me, Princess, I haven’t had a chance to soak them in salt water. It should have been soaked in salt water for a few days to get rid of the bitterness. I will bring you some other persimmons later. I’m truly sorry, Princess!” Nome’s mother explained.

“There’s no need to do that! There are plenty of persimmons in the palace. I just need to tell the servants and they will bring me sacks of persimmons. Just say what you come to say,” the second princess said, even though she had known what Nome’s mother was going to say.

“I want to ask your hand for my son, Princess. He wanted to marry the king’s daughter,” Nome’s mother said.

“My answer is the same as my sister. I don’t want to be your daughter in law. I’m sure my younger sisters will give you the same answer. So, it’s better if you go home. Don’t bother returning here and asking the other princesses,” the second princess snarled.

“I understand, Princess. I will go home now,” Nome’s mother took her leave.

“Go home and tell your son my answer. I hope he understands,” the second princess dismissed her.

When she got home, Nome’s mother told Nome the princess’ answer.

The previous day, she had told Nome that the eldest princess did not want to marry him, but he still asked her to return to the palace and meet the other princesses.

“You have not asked all of them. There are five more princesses you can ask. Please go and meet them, Mother,” Nome insisted.

Nome’s mother returned to the palace the next day. This time, she met the third princess. She received the same answer as the previous princesses’. This happened again in the following days, when she asked the fourth, fifth, and sixth princesses. They all rejected her proposal.

“I have seen six princesses and none of them wanted to be your wife, Nome,” Nome’s mother said to her son after she returned from the palace on the sixth day.

“Mother, there is still another princess, the youngest princess. Could you try to see her?” Nome asked his mother.

“This is the last time I ask the king’s daughter,” Nome’s mother said. “If the youngest princess gives me the same answer, this will be it.”

The next day, Nome’s mother prepared a glass of sugarcane juice for the king’s seventh daughter. She put the sugarcane juice in a bamboo tube and left for the palace.

The seventh princess had been waiting for Nome’s mother in the

royal garden. She was picking some flowers to decorate the palace.

“She seems so diligent. I hope she is willing to be my daughter in law,” Nome’s mother said to herself.

“Welcome, Ma’am, what brings you here today?” the princess greeted her warmly.

“Before I tell you why I come here, please drink this sugarcane juice, Princess. I prepare this especially for you,” Nome’s mother said.

“Thank you very much. I’d like some sugarcane juice.” The princess quickly drank the sugarcane juice.

“How is it?” Nome’s mother asked.

“It’s so sweet and refreshing. I love it. Your son must be happy to have a good mother like you,” the youngest princess said.

“Do you think so? Would you like to be my daughter in law? I would love it to have a nice and diligent daughter like yourself,” Nome’s mother finally asked her.

“I would love to. I know Nome. He is a good man, especially now that he has changed. I’m sure he can be successful in the future,” the princess replied.

After hearing that answer, Nome's mother went to see the king and reported that the youngest daughter had accepted her proposal.

"If she has agreed, I will go with her decision. Come here in a few days with your son. Bring all that you need to make an official proposal," the king said.

Nome's mother thanked the king for his blessing. She then returned home immediately. She could not wait to tell Nome the good news. However, she felt a little worried because they did not possess any money or valuables that a princess deserved. She had no idea what to bring when they made the official proposal.

"Don't worry, Mother. I will be able to satisfy the king," Nome assured his mother when she told him her worries.

Nome then went to the place where he hid the snake skin. He was in shock to find that the snake skin was missing.

"Where is it? Did I misplace it?" Nome asked himself. He then searched the snake skin all over the house. His cat, which had been watching him, quickly approached Nome.

"Are you looking for the snake skin, Nome?" the cat asked.

"Yes, I am. Can you help me?" Nome said.

"It was stolen the night you brought it here, Nome. I managed to

follow the thief up to the lake. When he got into his boat, I could not follow him anymore. However, I knew the direction he took. I suspect he went to an island in the middle of the lake,” the cat reported.

“We have to get it back. It’s my only shot to marry the king’s daughter,” Nome said. His voice shook with panic.

“I will go find it, Nome. I will take the dog with me,” the cat said with resolution. It quickly ran outside to find the dog.

“Dog, come on! We have to help Nome,” the cat said to the dog.

“What happened?” the dog asked. It had no idea that Nome had a snake skin and that it had been stolen.

“Nome’s snake skin was stolen. We have to find it. Will you come with me?” the cat asked.

“Of course I will. I’d do anything to help Nome. He had saved us and treated us very well,” the dog responded.

“We cannot go now, however. It’s already dark. Let’s have a proper rest tonight. We set out tomorrow,” the cat told the dog and entered the house.

6. The Cat's and The Dog's Journey

The cat and the dog prepared to set out on a long journey to the island where they suspected Nome's snake skin was hidden. Before they left, they asked Nome's mother to cook them a bamboo tube full of rice. At first, Nome's mother was reluctant. It was because the cat and dog had asked for their last supply of rice. However, the animals insisted that they needed the rice for their journey. They also asked that the dried rice at the bottom of the pan be packed. They adamantly requested that it should not be cut. After all the preparation was done, they set out. When they arrived at the lake, the cat took out the dried rice. Magically, it turned into a huge raft. They got on the raft and began crossing the lake.

As soon as they left the ground, the weather changed. Wind blew so strongly. A storm brewing and thunder clapping above them. The wind almost knocked the raft over. The cat was blown away into the water. Fortunately, the dog was able to pull it back to the raft.

"Let's land! We can continue our journey when the storm stopped," the dog suggested.

The cat and the dog struggled to steer the raft amidst the strong wind. They managed to land and decided to rest. They took out the food and ate. The dog ate as much as it could.

“Don’t be so greedy, Dog. We have to save some for our return journey. We haven’t even reached halfway,” the cat reminded its companion.

“Yes, you are right, Cat. I’m sorry. I was starving,” the dog said.

“Here, take some of mine,” the cat said, giving a bag of its food to the dog.

The dog quickly accepted the offer and ate it all. The cat understood that the dog needed a lot of food. When the storm subsided, they continued their quest. However, while they were rowing, the oars suddenly broke.

“What should we do now, Cat? Our oars are broken. We should have made them from a sturdier wood. In this part of the lake, the stream is so strong our oars could not take the pressure,” the dog said.

“See over there, Dog. There’s an elephant on the bank over there. Let’s try to ask it for help,” the cat said.

The dog barked and shouted to attract the elephant’s attention. The elephant noticed them and tried to work out why they called it.

“What is it, Dog? Why are you calling me?” the elephant asked

while paddling into the lake. He was swimming towards the raft to hear them better.

“Elephant, we need your help. Could you please get us some wood from a sturdy tree to make oars? Ours had just broken,” the dog said.

“No problem. Wait here until I return,” the elephant said. It quickly swam to the bank and found a couple of strong wood and made oars from them. Soon, the elephant was by the raft and gave the dog the oars.

“Thank you, Elephant. You have saved us. We have to move on, now. Thank you very much for your help. See you,” the cat and the dog said to the elephant before they rowed away.

When they were near the islands, the dog picked up a scent of snake skin. Even before they land, the dog knew that the snake skin was on the island.

“The snake skin is on that island,” the dog said, pointing at one of the islands in the middle of the lake.

“Hurry up, then! Come on, row faster!” the cat cried.

The sun was down when they landed. It was soon dark on the island. The only light came from the moon and the stars. The cat and dog were exhausted after a day of rowing. They tried to find a place to sleep. While they were sleeping, two rats scampered

around them, smelling their food.

“Hey, they have food! Let’s get it!” one of the rat said.

“Shush, it’s not ours to take. We cannot steal other’s belonging,” the other rat reminded its friend.

“Come on, just take a little. They won’t notice,” the first rat argued.

“We can’t. It’s not our food. A little or a lot, it’s still stealing. It won’t end well for us,” the second rat still refused to follow its friend’s plan.

The two rats made such a noise that cat and dog woke up. The two rats were frozen in fear when the cat looked at them.

“Why are you so afraid?” the cat and the dog asked with a smile on their faces.

“Please forgive us for disturbing your sleep,” the rat said.

“Not at all. Please, there’s no need to be afraid. We should’ve greeted you first since you live here,” the dog said.

“You have just arrived? What brings you here?” the first rat asked.

“We are helping our friend to find his snake skin. It was stolen some time ago. Could you help us?” the cat asked for help from

the rats.

“I know where it is hidden. I watched the thief when he was here. I can take you there,” the second rat said.

“Before we go, here, take this food,” the cat said, giving the rats a bag of food. He had heard the rats arguing about taking the food before.

After the rats finished eating, they walked towards the cave where the thief hid Nome’s snake skin. The rat showed them the barrel where it was hidden. The cat and the dog got the barrel out of the cave. They tried to open the barrel by rolling it on the ground. However, it was a sturdy barrel and it was not easy to open.

“That’s not how you open a barrel. Let me help you,” the rat said. It quickly gnawed on the barrel and made a hole, through which the cat could get the snake skin out.

“Thank you for your help, rats. We have succeeded getting Nome’s snake skin. We should return now,” the dog said.

“You are welcome, Dog. Why don’t you spend the night here and return tomorrow morning?” the rat suggested.

That night, the cat and the dog slept soundly on the island. When the wild roosters crowed with the first light, they got up and got ready to return home. Before they left, the cat and the dog thanked all the animals in the island that had helped them finding

Nome's snake skin.

"Good bye, friends," the cat and the dog bid farewell to their new friends.

They set out home on their raft. They rowed happily because their mission was a success. By midday, they stopped rowing. They were going to have lunch on the raft. However, they found that there was little food left in the bags.

"I'm still hungry," the dog said to the cat, even though it had just finished all their remaining food.

"You have eaten so much," the cat said.

"Look at me, Cat. I am bigger than you. Of course I need more food," the dog replied.

"Just hold it until we are home. You can eat as much as you want there. We can ask Nome's mother to cook some food," the cat said.

"I cannot hold it, Cat. I'm still hungry. My stomach hurts. Can I eat a small portion of our raft? It's made of dried rice, isn't it?" the dog asked.

The dog opened its mouth and began chewing one side of the raft.

Before the cat could say anything, the dog had eaten a huge chunk

of the raft. Suddenly, the raft shook violently. Both animals struggled to hold on because the raft had lost its balance.

“See what you have done? You have doomed us,” the cat yelled.

“Can we reach the other side? What should we do?” the dog yelled back.

“Just row as fast as you can!” the cat told the dog.

They rowed as fast as they could until they reached dry land. They quickly jumped off the raft and ran home.

Nome was glad to see the dog and the cat returned. They handed him the snake skin. Nome thanked them both and prepared some food for them. While they were eating, the cat and the dog took turn recounting their experience. Nome then told them to rest and went in the house.

A few moments later, he walked to his backyard, with a canister of oil. He put the snake skin on the ground and poured the oil on it. He set the snake skin on fire. Soon, smoke wafted up from the burned skin. Nome quickly whispered his wishes. Nome was the only person who knew how to use the snake skin because the snake had whispered it to him. That was why the thief could not use it. He did not think that to use the snake skin, he had to burn it.

In a blink of an eye, a huge palace stood before Nome. Around it

was vast fields. Yellow rice glinted under the sun in some of them. On other fields, trees were full of fruits. In the palace, there were rooms filled with gold and diamonds, and various jewelries. Nome had possessed all he needed to make an official proposal to the king and his daughter. Nome gave some money to his mother to pay all their debts.

“I will pay all our debts, Nome. We have to pay them back as soon as we can, so that we have no burden in life,” Nome’s mother said when Nome gave her the money.

7. Nome Lived Happily Ever After

Nome and his mother set out to the palace with various gifts. They brought several villagers with them to help taking all the gifts.

Among the gifts were jewelries and beautiful clothes. The king, queen, and all members of royal family welcomed them. The two families then had a hearty meal together.

Nome's wedding was held several days later. The ceremony was beautiful. A lot of people from all around the country came to the ceremony. After the wedding ceremony and reception, Nome took the youngest princess to his new palace. Nome worked hard to manage his fields. One day, Nome's friends came to visit him.

"Nome, now you are a successful man. Can you help a friend?" they asked.

"We are unemployed, and we hope you could give us some work," they continued.

"My fields are so vast. I cannot manage them alone. If you really want to work, you can help me cultivating them," Nome told them.

In addition to his friends, Nome also employed other people from other villages. He asked anyone who did not have a job to work in his fields. With so many people working on his fields, Nome

finally had the time to learn a lot of things, including the best ways of farming to produce good harvest.

Nome had changed into a diligent man. Even though his name was still Nome, he did more than just sleeping and eating. He worked hard to manage his fields. Over time, he managed to expand his fields. The more fields he owned, the more workers he needed. Thus, there was no more unemployed man in Nome's village. Everyone who could not find a job could come and work for Nome.

Nome educated the people on farming. He also asked them to take care of the forest around their village. He told them to not cut trees as they liked.

They should only cut old and dried trees. If they had to cut down healthy old trees, they had to replace it by planting other trees. Nome told them that they need the roots of the trees to retain water. They needed water to live. They also could use water to irrigate the fields.

Nome paid close attention to the welfare of his workers. The more Nome gained from his fields, the more he paid the workers. Nome used his wealth to help others. That was why everyone was happy with his success.

“We hope Nome live a long, healthy life. We hope he's always happy and kind,” the villagers often prayed for him.

Nome's mother was very happy with her son's success. They no longer lived in poverty. They did not have to suffer anymore.

"Nome, you have proven to me that you can be successful. Your kindness to save the cat, the dog, and the snake has truly brought you fortune," Nome's mother said one day.

"Yes, Mother, kindness always pays well. It's also because of your prayers, Mother," Nome said.

Nome's mother smiled. She was glowing with happiness.

The princess, who was listening to the conversation, approached them. The king's youngest daughter now lived with Nome and his mother at their huge, clean, and neat house. They had lived happily after their marriage.

"That's what I love from you, Nome. You are always optimistic and always do good deeds in your life," the princess said.

"You are also kind and diligent," Nome said to his wife.

"I'm happy to have such good children. I hope God always blesses our family."

"We are also happy to have nice mother like you," the princess said.

Nome's mother suddenly became quiet. Nome and his wife

watched her, wondering why she was suddenly quiet. It seemed like she had something to say but did not know how to say it.

“What is it, Mother? Is there something in your mind?” Nome asked.

“Nome, you and your wife are always busy working. I also want to have something to do. I want to run a business. I’m tired of staying at home and doing nothing,” Nome’s mother said.

“You don’t have to work anymore, Mother. All your needs are easily satisfied, now,” Nome said.

“Nome, I know that it is easy to get whatever I want nowadays. But I miss being busy. I have worked my whole life. It will be nice if I can be busy again,” Nome’s mother told him what was on her mind.

“Mother, you can do anything you want. It doesn’t have to be a work, does it? You can travel to any place in this country. You can even travel abroad, anywhere you want,” the princess chimed in.

“I know. But I still want to work,” Nome’s mother insisted.

“Very well, what do you want to do?” Nome asked.

“I want to open a restaurant,” Nome’s mother quickly replied. Clearly, she had given this a lot of thought.

Nome smiled. He knew that his mother loved cooking and every food she prepared was always delicious. Nome's mother had the knack to turn whatever ingredients she could get into amazing food.

"Alright, Mother. You can open a restaurant. I will prepare everything you need. I will find some people to help you run it. You will be the owner and the manager. All the hard works will be done by others," Nome said.

"Alright. I suppose I can teach the workers to cook delicious food," Nome's mother replied.

Nome's cat and dog watched how happy Nome's family was. They had also had their share of happiness because they lived at Nome's house.

"I'm glad that everyone's happy," the cat said. The cat was eating its lunch, a plate of rice with fried fish. It was one of the cat's favorite foods.

"Nome cares so much about us. Everything we need is always there," the dog said, eating its fried meat. The dog finished the meal in just a few minutes.

"You still eat a lot, Dog," the cat said.

"I remember when we sailed to get Nome's snake skin. You even ate our raft," the cat added.

The dog smiled. He also remembered their journey to the isolated island.

“When we searched for the snake skin, we got a lot of help from the animals in the forest,” the dog commented.

“I miss them. It would be nice to see them again. Let’s go and visit them, Dog. What do you think?” the cat suggested.

“Of course we have to visit them. I’ll go with you. We can play all day in the forest with them. Let’s prepare for our trip!” the dog said excitedly.

The dog and the cat then went to visit their friends in the forest. They brought a lot of food to share with the animals. The animals welcomed them warmly and they played happily in the forest. The dog and the cat often visited the animals. They were even happier when Nome gave some of his lands for the animals to live in. Everyone was happy. Everyone was satisfied. Everyone prayed and wished for Nome’s and his family’s happiness.

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Judul Buku dan Tahun Terbit (10 Tahun Terakhir)

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Judul Penelitian yang Dipublikasikan (10 Tahun Terakhir)

1. Analisis Perilaku Tokoh dalam Novel Sang Pemimpi Karya Andrea Hirata (dimuat dalam Jurnal Kekelopot Terbitan Balai Bahasa Provinsi Aceh tahun 2010);
2. Makna Hidup pada Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Rumah Tanpa Jendela Karya Asma Nadia (dimuat dalam Jurnal Ceudah Terbitan Balai Bahasa Provinsi Aceh Tahun 2012);
3. Reaksi Stres pada Tokoh Utama dalam Cerpen “Maafkan Mama” Karya Glory Gracia Christabelle (dimuat dalam Jurnal Ceudah Terbitan Balai Bahasa Provinsi Aceh Tahun 2015).

Informasi Lain

Lahir di Banda Aceh, 3 Desember 1976. Saat ini menetap di Banda Aceh. Ia sesekali dipercaya menjadi narasumber dalam kegiatan bengkel sastra yang diadakan oleh Balai Bahasa Provinsi Aceh. Ia pernah mengikuti beberapa lomba di bidang kepenulisan, seperti penulisan cerita yang diadakan oleh BRR

NAD dan menjadi pemenang harapan ketiga (2006), mengikuti lomba menulis sandiwara radio dalam rangka perdamaian Aceh yang diadakan oleh sekolah menulis Dokarim dan menjadi juara kedua (2006), mengikuti lomba menulis cerpen berbahasa Aceh yang diadakan oleh Pusat Bahasa Daerah Unsyiah (Pusbada) dan menjadi salah satu pemenang hiburan (2012). Beberapa cerpen dan puisi yang ditulis dimuat dalam majalah Seunalen terbitan Balai Bahasa Provinsi Aceh.

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