

PONOROGO FOLKTALE

CLASSIC AND MODERN
RETELLINGS

Elok Putri Nimasari
Mariska Anggun Novianti
Shofia Aulia Rizqi
Navila Uliya Sahidah
Afriza Nurmufikhoh, dkk

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Dr. Elok Nimasari, M.Pd.

Ema Sulistyana, Ericha Indah Estiningtyas,
Afriza Nurmufikhoh, Virgo Ajinagara, Septya Nur
Aulya, Surya Baskara Jaya, Mariska Anggun
Noviati, Shofia Aulia Rizqi, Navila Uliya Sahidah,
Disa Apriliani, Nakhwa Aqila, Ayunda Setya
Wijayanti, Siti Nurazlina, Ngindana Inganatu
Salima, Nihayatul Khasanah Azzahro, Nawaga
Satria Gasa, Selia Eka Wijayanti, Dealova Mylanie
Putri, Alya Rulia Syahidah, Rozafi Yuri Arimbi,
Zahron Maulana Fadila



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Writer:

Dr. Elok Nimasari, M.Pd. Ema Sulistyana, Ericha Indah Estiningtyas,
Afriza Nurmufikhoh, Virgo Ajinagara, Septya Nur Aulya, Surya
Baskara Jaya, Mariska Anggun Novianti, Shofia Aulia Rizqi, Navila
Uliya Sahidah, Disa Apriliani, Nakhwa Aqila, Ayunda Setya
Wijayanti, Siti Nurazlina, Ngindana Inganatu Salima, Nihayatul
Khasanah Azzahro, Nawaga Satria Gasa, Selia Eka Wijayanti, Dealova
Mylanie Putri, Alya Rulia Syahidah, Rozafi Yuri Arimbi, Zahron
Maulana Fadila

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Address:

Dusun Pesanan, RT 003/RW 002, Desa Bicak, Kecamatan
Trowulan, Kabupaten Mojokerto.
Email: giriprapancaloka@gmail.com
Hp. 082131032384
Website: www.giriprapancaloka.or.id

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PREFACE

Folklore represents an important part of cultural identity, preserving the values, traditions, beliefs, and collective memories of a community. Through folklore, stories from the past continue to live and provide meaningful reflections for present and future generations.

The book *Ponorogo Folktales: Classic Stories and Modern Retellings* is presented as an effort to document, preserve, and introduce the richness of Ponorogo's cultural heritage through folklore narratives. This book brings together traditional stories passed down through generations and presents them through creative retellings that make the narratives more accessible to contemporary readers.

The stories included in this book reflect various aspects of local wisdom, including moral values, social relationships, cultural traditions, and the historical imagination of the Ponorogo community. Through the combination of classic narratives and modern interpretations, this book aims to provide readers with a deeper appreciation of local folklore as an important part of Indonesian cultural heritage.

This publication is intended for general readers, educators, students, cultural enthusiasts, researchers, and anyone interested in exploring Indonesian folklore and cultural narratives. The book may serve as a source of cultural literacy, literary appreciation, and broader understanding of the values contained within traditional stories.

The authors hope that this book will contribute to the preservation and promotion of Ponorogo folklore while encouraging greater appreciation of local cultural heritage in a wider context.

Finally, the authors would like to express their gratitude to all individuals and communities who have contributed directly or indirectly to the development of this publication. May this book become a meaningful contribution to cultural literacy and the appreciation of Indonesian folklore.

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About the Book

Ponorogo Folktales: Classic Stories and Modern Retellings is a cultural literacy publication that presents a collection of traditional stories from Ponorogo, Indonesia. This book aims to introduce, preserve, and promote local folklore as an important part of cultural heritage.

Folktales are not merely stories from the past; they represent the collective memory, values, traditions, and identity of a community. Through the narratives presented in this book, readers are invited to explore various cultural meanings, moral values, and local wisdom reflected in the folklore of Ponorogo.

This book combines classic folklore narratives with creative modern retellings to provide a broader reading experience for contemporary audiences. The adaptation of these stories is intended to maintain the essence of traditional narratives while making them more accessible and engaging for today's readers.

The stories featured in this publication highlight the richness of Ponorogo's cultural traditions and provide insights into the relationship between folklore, society, and cultural identity. Through these narratives, readers can discover how local stories continue to carry meaningful messages across generations.

This book is designed for general readers, educators, students, researchers, cultural observers, and anyone interested in Indonesian folklore and cultural heritage. It

can serve as a resource for cultural appreciation, literary exploration, and the understanding of local wisdom. By presenting Ponorogo folklore in both traditional and contemporary forms, this publication seeks to contribute to the preservation of cultural narratives and encourage wider appreciation of Indonesia's diverse cultural heritage.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. The Cultural Background of Ponorogo Folktale

Folklore is an important element of cultural heritage that represents the collective knowledge, experiences, beliefs, and values of a society. Through folklore, communities preserve their memories and communicate their understanding of life, social relationships, traditions, and moral principles across generations. Folklore does not merely function as entertainment; it also serves as a cultural expression that reflects the identity and worldview of the people who create and maintain it.

According to Dundes (1965), folklore can be understood as a traditional form of expression that is shared among members of a group and transmitted through cultural processes. Folklore includes various forms of verbal, customary, and material traditions that represent the creativity and social experiences of communities. In this context, folktales become valuable cultural documents because they contain narratives that reflect historical imagination, social values, and local wisdom.

Indonesia is a country with extraordinary cultural diversity, including thousands of traditional narratives originating from different regions. These stories represent the uniqueness of each community while also showing universal human values such as kindness, responsibility, courage, respect, and the relationship between humans and nature. As part of Indonesia's intangible cultural heritage, folklore requires continuous documentation, appreciation, and preservation so that these narratives remain meaningful for

future generations.

Ponorogo, located in East Java, Indonesia, is one of the regions with a rich cultural identity. Known for its traditional arts, historical narratives, and local traditions, Ponorogo has various folklore stories that have developed through oral traditions. These stories contain cultural meanings that represent the experiences, beliefs, and values of the local community. However, as social conditions continue to change, traditional narratives face challenges in maintaining their presence among contemporary audiences.

Preserving folklore does not mean keeping stories unchanged without adaptation. Instead, preservation can also involve creative interpretation and presentation that allow traditional narratives to remain relevant in modern contexts. As suggested by Bascom (1954), folklore has important functions in society, including providing cultural education, maintaining social values, validating cultural practices, and offering entertainment. Therefore, presenting folklore through accessible forms can strengthen public appreciation of cultural heritage.

Ponorogo Folktales: Classic Stories and Modern Retellings is developed as a cultural literacy publication that presents selected folklore narratives from Ponorogo through traditional storytelling and contemporary retelling approaches. The book combines the essence of classic stories with creative narrative adaptations to introduce local folklore to broader audiences while maintaining the cultural meanings embedded within each story.

The stories presented in this book reflect various aspects of local wisdom, including moral values, community relationships, cultural traditions, and the connection between

humans and their environment. Each narrative provides insight into how communities interpret their experiences and transform them into meaningful stories that continue to be remembered across generations.

The modern retellings in this publication are not intended to replace the original cultural narratives, but rather to provide an alternative way of engaging with folklore. Through creative adaptation, traditional stories can reach wider audiences and encourage deeper appreciation of local cultural heritage. This approach aligns with the idea that cultural traditions continue to develop through interaction between heritage and contemporary expression.

Folklore also plays an important role in strengthening cultural identity. According to Sibarani (2012), local wisdom contained in traditional narratives reflects the values and knowledge developed by communities in responding to social and environmental conditions. Therefore, exploring folklore means exploring the cultural experiences and collective knowledge of a society.

This book is intended for general readers, educators, researchers, cultural observers, and anyone interested in Indonesian folklore and local cultural heritage. It may serve as a source of cultural appreciation, literary exploration, and a reference for understanding the richness of Ponorogo traditions.

Through the publication of *Ponorogo Folktales: Classic Stories and Modern Retellings*, the authors hope to contribute to the documentation and promotion of local narratives as part of Indonesia's diverse cultural heritage. By bringing traditional stories into wider circulation, this book encourages appreciation, preservation, and continued dialogue about the

importance of folklore in contemporary society.

1.2. Purpose of the Book

The purpose of this book is to document, preserve, and introduce the richness of Ponorogo folklore as an important part of Indonesian cultural heritage. Through traditional stories and creative retellings, this book aims to provide wider access to local narratives that contain cultural values, historical memories, and community wisdom.

This publication seeks to promote appreciation of folklore as a meaningful cultural expression rather than merely a collection of traditional stories. Each narrative presented in this book reflects the values, beliefs, traditions, and social experiences of the Ponorogo community, providing readers with opportunities to understand the cultural meanings behind these stories.

Another purpose of this book is to support cultural literacy by presenting Ponorogo folklore in a form that is accessible to contemporary readers. By combining classic narratives with modern retellings, the book aims to maintain the connection between traditional heritage and present-day audiences.

This book also contributes to the preservation and dissemination of local cultural knowledge. By documenting and sharing these stories, the publication supports efforts to ensure that Ponorogo folklore continues to be recognized, appreciated, and passed on to future generations.

The significance of this book lies in its contribution to appreciating Indonesian cultural diversity. It provides readers

with insight into local wisdom, moral values, and cultural identity reflected through folklore narratives. The book is expected to benefit general readers, educators, researchers, cultural observers, and anyone interested in exploring the richness of Indonesian traditional stories.

Folklore, in particular, represents a form of collective knowledge that is deeply embedded in cultural contexts. It reflects how communities interpret life, negotiate social norms, and express beliefs that may not always be visible in formal historical records. Through folklore, one can observe how values such as love, loyalty, conflict, and morality are constructed and maintained within a society (Dundes, 2007).

In Indonesia, a country characterised by cultural diversity, folklore holds a significant place. Each region develops its own narrative traditions, shaped by local environments, historical trajectories, and belief systems. These stories are not isolated artifacts. They are interconnected with rituals, customs, and social practices that form the foundation of communal identity (Finnegan, 2012).

Ponorogo, a region in East Java, is widely recognised for Reog Ponorogo, a traditional performance that has become a cultural symbol both nationally and internationally. However, beyond this visible cultural expression, there exists a rich yet less documented body of folktales. These narratives, transmitted orally across generations, form an integral part of Ponorogo's cultural heritage. They address themes such as forbidden relationships, spiritual beliefs, social boundaries, and the consequences of human actions within both visible and unseen realms.

Stories such as the origins of Golan and Mirah, the legend of Telaga Ngebel, and the narrative surrounding Sampung

Village reveal complex layers of meaning. They are not simply accounts of events, but symbolic representations of how communities understand balance, harmony, and disruption. In many cases, these stories also function as moral frameworks that guide behavior and reinforce collective values (Bascom, 1965).

Despite their significance, the continuity of folklore is increasingly challenged in contemporary society. The rapid development of digital media has transformed storytelling and consumption patterns. Younger generations are now more exposed to global narratives, often at the expense of local traditions. As a result, many traditional stories are at risk of being marginalised or gradually forgotten (Ryan, 2015).

This condition does not necessarily indicate that folklore has lost its relevance. Rather, it suggests a gap between traditional modes of storytelling and contemporary forms of engagement. If folklore is to remain meaningful, it must be presented in ways that are accessible and resonant with present-day audiences.

In this regard, reinterpretation becomes an important process. Folklore needs to be revisited not only as a record of the past but also as a living body of knowledge that can adapt to changing contexts. Modern retellings offer an opportunity to reframe traditional narratives while maintaining their essential values. Through this approach, stories are not preserved in a static form, but allowed to evolve in response to new perspectives and experiences (Hutcheon, 2013).

This book is situated within that framework. It acknowledges folklore as a dynamic cultural expression that continues to develop over time. By presenting both classic and modern versions of selected Ponorogo folktales, this work

seeks to create a space where tradition and contemporary interpretation can coexist.

In doing so, the book does not attempt to redefine the original narratives. Instead, it invites readers to engage with these stories in multiple ways, recognising them as part of an ongoing cultural dialogue. Ultimately, folklore serves not only as a reflection of the past but also as a medium through which meaning is continuously negotiated in the present.

CHAPTER 2

The Origin of Golan and Mirah

2.1. The Origins of the Taboo on Marriage in the Villages of Golan and Mirah, Ponorogo

In the past, in the eastern part of Ponorogo, there were two neighboring villages known as Golan and Mirah. The two villages were separated by a stretch of river and fertile land. Although the distance between them was not far, their relationship was marked by significant differences, particularly in beliefs and ways of life.

In Golan Village lived a young man named Joko Lancur, the only son of the village head, Ki Hanggolono. Since his youth, Joko Lancur had been known as a handsome but temperamental young man. He often gambled, drank alcohol, and spent much of his time attending cockfights. His behavior caused concern among the villagers, who frequently disapproved of his habits.

Meanwhile, in Mirah Village lived a young woman named Siti Amirah, the daughter of a respected religious figure, Kiai Muslim, also known as Ki Ageng Mirah. Siti Amirah was admired not only for her beauty but also for her gentle character, politeness, and strong sense of virtue.

One day, Joko Lancur took part in a cockfight held near the border between the two villages. When his rooster lost and ran away, he chased it into the territory of Mirah. There, he saw a young woman drawing water from a well. The woman was Siti Amirah. That brief encounter left a deep impression on him, and from that moment on, he could not stop thinking about her.

A few days later, Joko Lancur expressed his intention to his father. He asked Ki Hanggolono to propose marriage to Siti Amirah on his behalf. However, his request was firmly rejected.

"Lancur, you know that she is from Mirah. Their beliefs are different from ours. Do not even think about it," Ki Hanggolono said.

Despite this, Joko Lancur remained determined. "If it is not her, I will never marry anyone. If Father refuses, then let me die," he replied.

Seeing his son's determination, Ki Hanggolono eventually relented. He then went to Mirah, accompanied by several village elders, to formally propose to Siti Amirah.

Upon arriving at Kiai Muslim's house, they were received politely. However, the proposal was not immediately accepted. Instead, Kiai Muslim set a condition to test their sincerity.

He required that water from the Golan River be diverted to the rice fields of Mirah within a single night. The condition was nearly impossible, yet Joko Lancur was determined to fulfill it. He worked throughout the night, digging channels to direct the water toward Mirah. By morning, the water had begun to flow, but it did not reach the rice fields. The channel stopped halfway.

Kiai Muslim remained firm in his decision. He believed that the differences in beliefs and principles between the two villages would bring misfortune if they were united. Even so, Joko Lancur did not give up. He continued to meet Siti Amirah in secret. They loved each other, but family expectations and customary boundaries constrained their relationship.

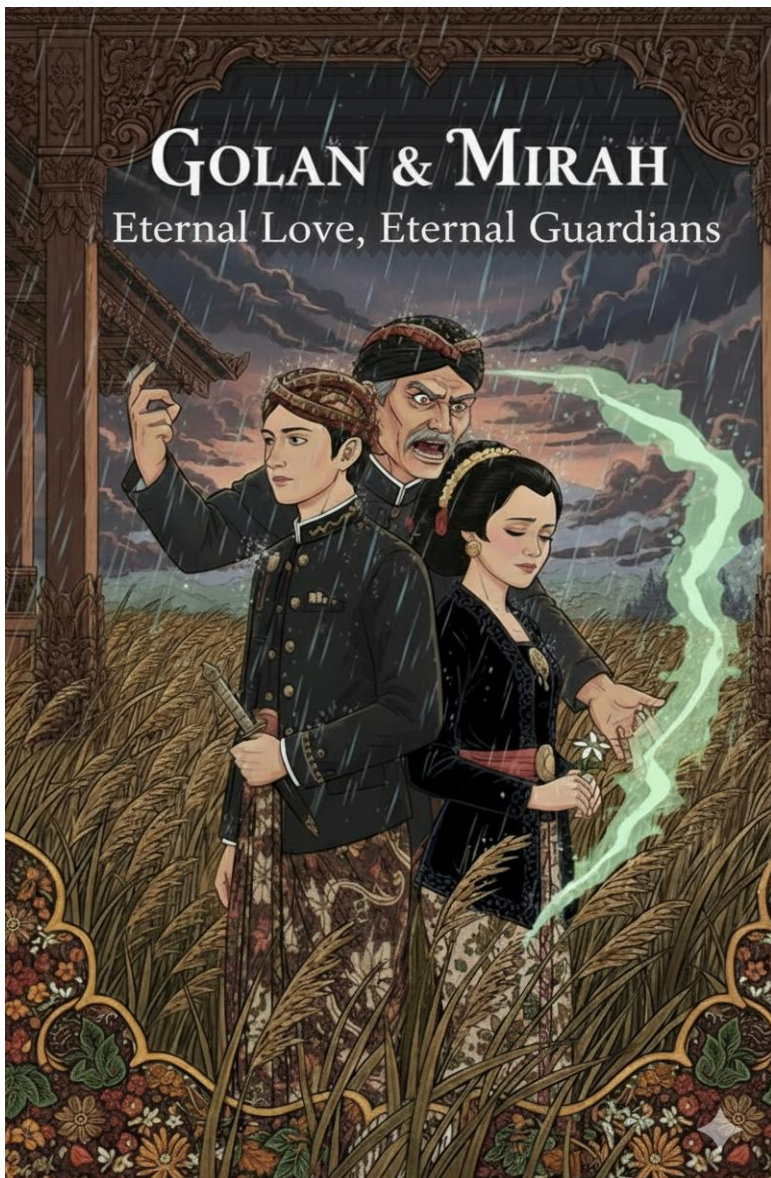
One night, after hearing the final rejection, Joko Lancur fell into deep despair. In his sorrow, he went to Siti Amirah's house to see her one last time. According to the story, both of them were later found dead near the border where they had first met.

This tragic event brought deep sorrow to both villages. From that time on, a belief emerged that marriages between

the people of Golan and Mirah should not take place. It was believed that such unions would bring misfortune, including illness, crop failure, or sudden death.

This prohibition has been passed down from generation to generation and continues to be observed by some members of the community in Ponorogo.

2.2. Golan and Mirah Eternal Love, Eternal Guardians





In the distant past, in the eastern area of Ponorogo, two villages bordered each other: Golan and Mirah. The village of Golan was known as a symbol of worldly wealth and success. Its rice fields were extremely fertile, yielding huge harvests

that brought prosperity to its people. However, this wealth also made the people of Golan proud and too focused on money and possessions.

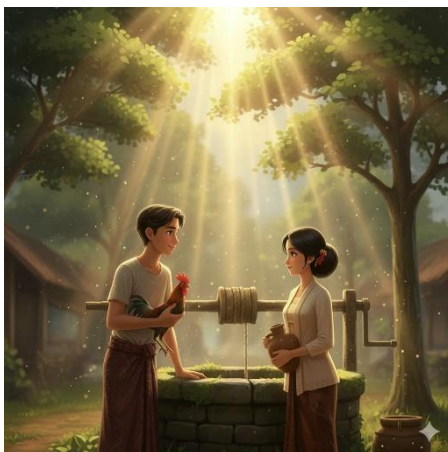
In contrast, Mirah was a calm and holy place, famous for its deep spiritual devotion and a life philosophy that valued simplicity and self-reflection. Even though the two communities were only separated by a small, winding river known as the Border Stream, the people rarely interacted. They were divided by big differences in their religious beliefs and daily way of life.

In Golan lived Joko Lancur, the only son of the village chief, Ki Hanggolono. Ki Hanggolono was a very strict man, immensely proud of his family's noble background and all the wealth in Golan. Unfortunately, Joko Lancur was a source of disappointment for his father. He was a restless, wild young man who preferred the excitement of gambling, cockfighting, and an expensive, wasteful life to learning to be a future leader.

Meanwhile, in Mirah, Siti Amirah lived, the beautiful and gentle daughter of Kiai Muslim, the village's respected religious leader. Amirah was cherished for her quiet elegance, deep compassion for others, and her strong, steady faith. She

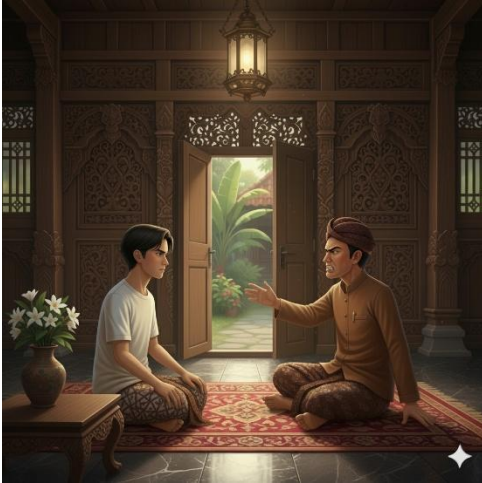
was truly considered the spiritual heart of the peaceful village of Mirah.

One bright afternoon, near the border of the two villages, Joko Lancur was at a simple, temporary arena for cockfighting. That day, his best fighting rooster suffered a terrible defeat. The stunned bird immediately ran away, quickly darting across the shallow Border Stream and disappearing into the side of Mirah village. Cursing under his breath, Joko Lancur jumped across the water right away to chase after his bird.



It was in that moment, standing under the cool shadow of a massive banyan tree, that he finally saw her. Siti Amirah was busy drawing water, and her beautiful reflection could be seen in the clay pot she had just filled. Her simple white cloth (*kain*) stood out clearly against the bright green backdrop of the village. She looked up, startled and surprised by his sudden appearance, especially since he was covered in mud from the cockfight.

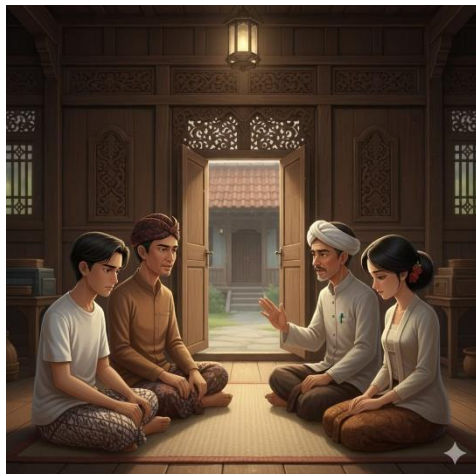
Their eyes met for just a brief second, but that short moment immediately ignited a new, powerful determination deep inside Joko Lancur's heart, a feeling he had never known before. The peaceful vision of the girl instantly overshadowed all the temporary and fleeting pleasures he usually found in gambling and fighting.



Back in Golan, Joko Lancur was completely changed. He was no longer the restless gambler. He immediately demanded that his father, Ki Hanggolono, formally propose marriage to Siti Amirah. Ki Hanggolono's first response was a cold and furious refusal.

"Lancur, are you crazy?" Ki Hanggolono shouted angrily. "That girl from Mirah is not suitable for you! Their religion and beliefs are too different, and their lives are too simple! You belong here, to Golan, to wealth and success!"

However, for the very first time in his life, Joko Lancur stood firm against his father. "Father," he insisted, "I promise to you, I will not marry any other woman. My heart will only ever belong to Amirah." Seeing the incredible passion and strong will in his son's eyes, a side he had never seen before, the proud village chief finally gave in. He crossed the border and humbly presented his official proposal to Kiai Muslim.



Kiai Muslim listened to the proposal with respect. Then, he offered a condition that everyone present immediately thought was completely impossible. It was a polite but very firm refusal in disguise:

"Ki Hanggolono, I will allow my daughter to marry your son only if the river water from Golan can flow into Mirah's central rice fields as a deep, permanent stream before the first light of dawn tomorrow."

A heavy silence followed. This condition was an enormous, seemingly insurmountable challenge. The distance was very far, running across rocky, tough borderland. The ground itself was known for its dense, hard soil and thick roots.



The most defeating part was the time limit: they only had one single night. Everyone knew this condition was created to ensure failure. It was a challenge that could not be overcome, instantly crushing the small hope they had for the marriage. Ki

Hanggolono felt a sharp, bitter feeling of defeat. When Joko Lancur heard the news, he felt like his entire world had suddenly collapsed. Joko Lancur did not give up. Driven by a desperate love, he immediately began frantically digging a channel from Golan toward Mirah. He worked alone through the entire night, digging past tangled roots until his hands were torn and bleeding.

As the sky turned indigo, the sign of the coming dawn, Joko Lancur collapsed. His channel had hit a massive, sharp slab of rock right at the border, an impossible barrier. He leaned weakly against the cold rock, defeated and broken, his tears mixing with the mud. He had failed the challenge.

Suddenly, a whisper reached him. Siti Amirah had come and knelt beside the defeated man. Her eyes showed deep devotion, not pity. In her hands, she carried the small, clay water jug he remembered from their first meeting.

Without saying anything, Siti Amirah knelt beside him. She brought a jug of water from her village's well. With a determined heart, she started pouring the water, one jug after another, directly into the ditch right next to the giant rock on the Mirah side. The small stream of water that Joko Lancur had dug from Golan quickly met the water flowing from Amirah's jug.

The two flows joined together and finally pushed past the rocky barrier. The streams, one strong but blocked, the other small but brave, were now united. The water flowed freely and permanently from Golan to Mirah. This success showed everyone something powerful: their love had broken through all the barriers separating the two villages and their people.

The moment the connected water finally reached the rice fields in Mirah, a loud, sudden noise violently shook the quiet morning air. The ground itself began to tremble strongly, as if something huge were moving beneath it. Right from the exact spot where Golan's



strong flow and Mirah's gentle water had joined, a large, swirling white mist suddenly burst out. This mist was not just fog; it was bright and glowing with a pure light, drawing all attention to the border.

From the middle of this glowing mist, a breathtaking



sight unfolded: two beautiful, magnificent white snakes slowly appeared. They did not look threatening at all. Instead, they moved gently and slowly wrapped themselves around the bodies of Joko Lancur and Siti Amirah. The white mist quickly thickened, surrounding the young couple and hiding

them from view.

In that incredible, magical moment, as the bright mist completely covered them, Joko Lancur and Siti Amirah disappeared. They left behind only the shimmering mist and the deep, permanent stream of water now flowing freely into Mirah's fields. This was the powerful, final sign that their love had overcome all the impossible barriers between their two villages.

The next morning, people from both Golan and Mirah rushed quickly to the place where the couple was last seen. They found no sign of the lovers, but they did find two giant stones standing side by side, right where Joko Lancur and Siti Amirah had knelt. One stone looked rough and strong, like a man; the other looked smooth and gentle, like a woman.

The water the couple had joined together now flowed



permanently, never drying up. The people named this new river Kali Cinta (The River of Love). This river became the lasting border between Golan and Mirah.

Since that day, the villagers believe the two stones are Joko Lancur and Siti Amirah themselves. They see

this not as a punishment, but as a blending of two souls who became the eternal guardians of the border. Because of this powerful story, marriage between people from Golan and Mirah is still not allowed. This rule is not based on hate or hostility, but on a sacred respect for a love so powerful that it

protects the boundary and keeps peace between the two villages forever.

2.3. Parts That Were Changed & Reasons for the Plot Twist

Original Story Element (Assumed Tragic)	Change (Plot Twist)	Purpose / Narrative Effect
Ending: Joko Lancur and Siti Amirah were found tragically dead at the border.	Twist: They disappeared and transformed into two guardian stones symbolizing eternal love.	Transforms the tragic story into a sacred tale — from death to transcendence. Their love doesn't end in death but becomes an everlasting symbol remembered by the people.
The marriage prohibition was seen as a curse or a sign of disaster.	The prohibition becomes a form of respect for their pure love and self-sacrifice.	Changes the tone from a negative curse to a positive spiritual tradition, showing the prohibition as a tribute to their sacred devotion rather than punishment.
Religious differences were the main source of conflict.	Softened: Differences remain, but the focus shifts to loyalty and self-sacrifice for true love.	Makes the story more universal, so it can be accepted by all audiences without touching on sensitive issues of religion or culture.
There was no mystical element besides the curse.	Added mythological element: they transform into guardian stones believed to bring balance between the two villages.	Adds a local legendary atmosphere, strengthening the mythical tone typical of Indonesian folktales (similar to the legends of Roro Jonggrang or Dewi Sri).

Overall Narrative Impact:

This plot twist completely changes the story. It turns a sad tale of forbidden love into a sacred legend of eternal devotion.

Joko Lancur and Siti Amirah's love is no longer remembered because of a tragedy, but because of a magical change that connects people and nature. Their new form (the stones and the river) symbolizes eternity, balance, and deep cultural respect between the two villages.

To enhance readers' engagement and provide interactive learning experiences, selected digital resources related to the stories in this book are made available online. These materials are designed to support creative exploration, storytelling, and educational activities.

Animation and Digital Storytelling

Readers can access visual adaptations of the Golan and Mirah story through the following platforms:

Interactive storybook:

<https://gemini.google.com/share/0eec2882b6d9>

Animated video version:

<https://www.canva.com/design/DAG48xXsbyo/Yn85LEggmxSN-MWo8af7RQ/edit>

Interactive Activities:

A series of educational games has been developed to reinforce understanding of the story and its themes. These activities are suitable for individual or group learning:

Froggy Jumps (Educaplay):

https://www.educaplay.com/learning-resources/26373407-golan_and_mirah.html

Yes or No Quiz (Kahoot):

<https://create.kahoot.it/share/golan-and-mirah/c7337618-fc71-4784-b9f4-2faa83f14787>

Word-based Games (Educandy):

<https://www.educandy.com/site/resource.php?activity-code=14182d>

Interactive Game (Wordwall):

<https://wordwall.net/resource/101090213>

These digital materials are optional and serve as complementary resources to enrich the reading experience. Readers may access them independently to explore the stories presented in this book further.

CHAPTER 3

The Origin of Ngebel Lake

3.1. The Legend of Ngebel Lake

A long, long time ago, there lived a couple in a village who gave birth to a dragon snake. They named the snake BARU KLINTING. Seeing the strangeness of Baru Klinting's form, they dared not remain in the village, fearing they would become the subject of their neighbors' gossip. They fled to the peak of a mountain to isolate themselves and pleaded with the gods to restore their son's form to human.

Their prayer was answered. The condition Baru Klinting had to meet was to perform a 300-year penance by wrapping his body around Mount Semeru. However, his body was just a handspan too short to encircle the entire mountain. To overcome this, he connected/extended his tongue until it touched the tip of his tail.

It turned out that the condition to become human was not only that. The Gods asked the father to cut off Baru Klinting's tongue while he was meditating. Baru Klinting, deep in his meditation, did not object, believing it was for his own good to become human.

As the time for the penance was almost over, a village elder, whose child was about to marry, was busy preparing everything, especially the feast. It was said they would host a lavish, grand wedding party. To supplement the food supply, the villagers voluntarily helped by hunting in the forest. Some looked for fruit, twigs/firewood, and game animals such as deer, rabbits, and jungle fowl.

After some time of hunting, the villagers had caught nothing. Accidentally, a group of villagers resting from the exhaustive hunt swung their machetes at a fallen tree trunk.

They were astonished to find their machete was covered in blood. Fresh blood gushed from the 'fallen tree'. They then realised that what they had just hacked was not a fallen tree, but a giant snake/dragon. Seeing this, the villagers eagerly took its flesh to cook for the wedding feast.

The wedding party for the village head's child coincided with the end of Baru Klinting's penance. Indeed, the dragon transformed into a small child. Unfortunately, the child had difficulty speaking because his tongue had been cut off as a requirement to become human. Not only that, his body was covered in putrid, festering sores because his body had been sliced up to take his flesh by the villagers for the feast while he was in penance.

The child was starving and begged for food. However, not a single villager paid him any attention. Instead, the villagers mocked and chased the small child away. Seeing the child's plight, an older woman took pity on him and took him home. She then fed the child a dish containing meat from the village head's party. The child ate heartily, but he refused to eat the meat.

"Mother, I thought there were no good people left in this village. Apparently, there are still people like you. Mother, please prepare a lesung (a wooden mortar for pounding rice); if anything happens, immediately climb onto it," was Baru Klinting's message after finishing his meal. The older woman complied with Baru Klinting's words without asking many questions, and then Baru Klinting returned to the party venue.

"Oh, all you villagers, look at my hand. I hold a piece of meat. If you can win the contest I set, then take this meat. However, if you cannot, then give all the meat you have cooked back to me," said Baru Klinting.

The challenge was to pull out a single small stick (lidi) he had stuck into the ground. The villagers tried one by one, but none of them could pull the stick out. Unfortunately, the villagers still refused to return the meat they had cooked.

"Behold your greed, oh humans. Behold your indifference toward your fellow beings, toward a disabled person like me. You do not even want to return what is rightfully mine! Know this: the meat you cooked is my flesh from when I was the dragon snake. Therefore, you deserve a fitting retribution!" Baru Klinting immediately pulled out the stick.

A strange event occurred. Water gushed from the small hole left by the stick continuously until it submerged the entire village.

The pool of water transformed into a lake. The older woman who had fed Baru Klinting was saved because she climbed onto the lesung. Since then, Baru Klinting has transformed again into a snake, coiling his body at the bottom of the lake, which is narrow at the base. Today, that lake is located in the Ngebel area and is famous as Lake Ngebel (Telaga Ngebel).

3.2. Baru Klinting and the Giggle-Wiggle Lake



Now, some People in the village spread rumors, "Oh my, a snake baby? That is quite... unusual!" So, his parents, wanting to keep Baru Klinting safe from too much staring, took him up a nearby hill. "We will ask the Magic Cloud-Whiskers to turn you into a human, sweetie!" they promised.



The Magic Cloud-Whiskers, who loved a good giggle, agreed! "Baru Klinting needs to wrap himself around the Giggle-Wiggle Mountain for 300 days!" they boomed. "And for an extra giggle, his tongue needs to reach his tail!" Baru Klinting, who loved a challenge, stretched and wiggled, and

POP, his tongue reached! However, oops, he was still short. So, he stuck out his tongue and PFTTTTTT, it touched his tail! He giggled so much, it was like a tiny earthquake.

The Cloud-Whiskers then sent a message to his dad: "For the grand finale, gently snip his super-long tongue!" Baru Klinting, who understood everything, just gave a happy nod. He knew it was all part of the fun.



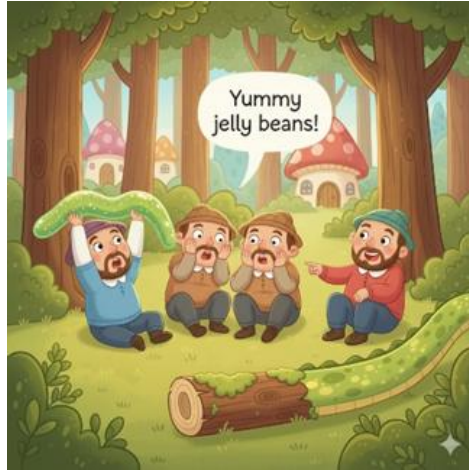
Now, a big wedding was happening in the village! The Chief's son was getting married, and they needed mountains of food. The villagers went hunting, but all they found were sleepy squirrels and shy bunnies. "Oh dear, what to do?" they sighed.



Just then, a few tired villagers sat down next to what looked like a very long, mossy log. "This log looks comfy!" one said, accidentally bumping it with his axe. SPLAT! A small quantity of sparkly green goo squirted out! "Eww, what is that?" another sniffed. They kept poking, and more goo came out. "It is

not a log, it is a giant gummy worm!" they shouted, mistaking Baru Klinting's still-wiggling tail for a delicious, enormous candy. "Perfect for the wedding feast!"

So, they carefully scooped up some of the "gummy worm" (which was actually Baru Klinting's tail) and excitedly ran back to the village. They cooked it up, and it smelled... surprisingly like jelly beans!



On the day of the wedding, Baru Klinting finished his penance! POOF! He turned into a small boy! However, because his tongue was snipped, his words came out



as funny little squeaks and squawks. Moreover, because the villagers had accidentally nibbled his tail, he had some funny little patches of sparkles missing from his knees. He looked adorable, but patched up!

He was very hungry! He tried to ask for food, but all that came out was,

"Squeak-squeak-giggle!" The villagers, busy with their jelly-bean-flavoured feast, just laughed. "Look at the funny little boy!" they chuckled, not understanding his squeaks.

However, a sweet old grandma, who loved all things giggly, saw him. "Oh, you poor thing!" she said.

She took him home and gave him a big bowl of yummy fruit. Baru Klinting ate it all, but politely pushed away the jelly-bean-flavored dish. He did not want to eat his own tail, even if it smelled delicious!

"Squeak-squeak-giggle, lesung-UP!"

Baru Klinting squeaked to the

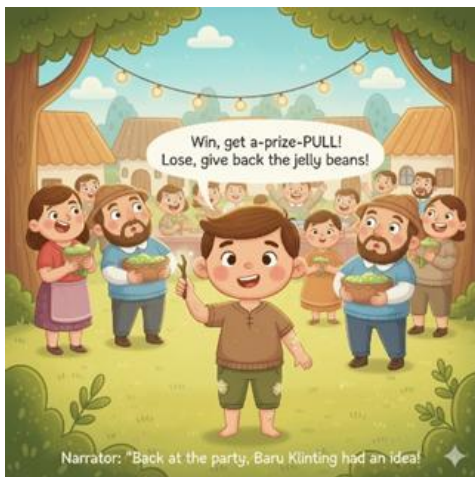


He told her, "If things get silly, The grandma, used to children children saying funny things, just smiled.

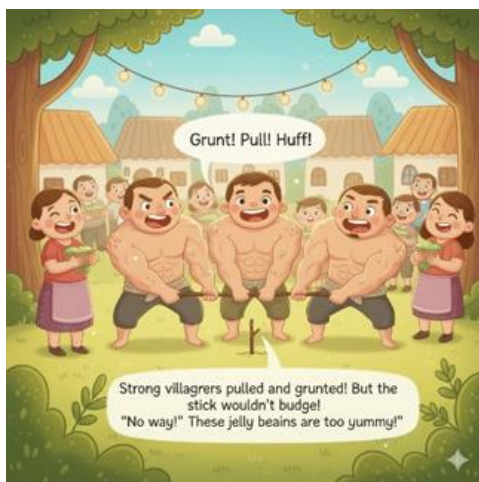
older woman, pointing to her big rice-pounding pot. "If things get silly, just hop in!" The older woman, used to children saying funny things, just nodded with a smile.

Baru Klinting went back to the party. "Squeak-squeak-giggle, lidi-PULL!" he squeaked, holding up a tiny, funny stick. "Whoever can pull this out gets a super-duper prize! If not, I want all your jelly beans back!"

All the strong villagers tried. They pulled and

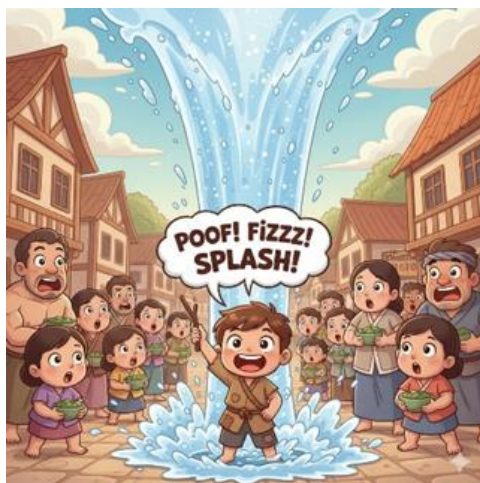


grunted and puffed, but the stick would not budge! The villagers just laughed, "No way, these jelly beans are too yummy!"



Baru Klinting sighed (a little squeaky sigh). "Squeak-squeak-giggle-PFFFT!" he said, pulling the stick out with a tiny POP!

And guess what? From the hole where the stick was, sparkly soda water began to bubble out! FIZZ, POP, SPLASH! It giggled and gurgled, rising higher



and higher, like a giant soda fountain! The villagers gasped, but before they could grab their belongings, the fizzy water turned their village into a giant bubble bath lake!



The old grandma, remembering Baru Klinting's squeaks, quickly hopped into her lesung. She floated gently on the bubbly water, safe and sound.

As the soda water settled, Baru Klinting, with another POOF! turned back into his wobbly-snaky dragon self, now with all his sparkles back! He giggled and swam happily in the new lake, which had a fun, wobbly bottom because of his coiling. From that day on, it was called the Gigue-



Wiggle Lake, known today as Lake Ngebel.

Moreover, if you listen closely, you can sometimes hear tiny giggles and fizzing sounds from the lake, reminding everyone of the day a little dragon taught a lesson with soda water!

3.3. Story Differentiation: Original Legend vs Comedic Kids' Story; Contextual and Differentiation Changes

Element	Original Legend (Serious)	Developed Story (Comedic/Kids)
Tone	Solemn, tragic, moralistic (karma/greed).	Whimsical, lighthearted, silly (giggles/fun).
Punishment	Deadly flood (drowning/death).	Soda water flood (a giant bubble bath).
New Lake's Name	Telaga Ngebel (Geographical name).	Giggle-Wiggle Lake (Whimsical name).
Baru Klinting's Identity	Ominous, giant snake/Naga.	Adorable, wobbly-snaky dragon baby.
The 'Meat'	His sacred, fresh flesh (cannibalism implication).	'Gummy worm' / 'Jelly beans' (mistaken food).
Penance Duration	300 years (a serious, massive time scale).	300 days (a kid-friendly, understandable time scale).
The Helper	Old woman (saved for her virtue).	Old grandma (saved for her love of all things giggly).
The Stick Challenge	Test of power and might (failed by greedy adults).	Test of magic and fun (<i>POP!</i> - easily won by the boy).

The modern retelling of the Baru Klinting narrative presented in this book involves a deliberate shift in tone, structure, and thematic emphasis. While the original story is widely recognised for its tragic and moralistic elements, this adaptation reinterprets them to create a lighter, more accessible narrative, particularly for younger audiences.

Several elements from the original version have been intentionally omitted. The more intense and graphic aspects of the story, including the requirement for physical sacrifice and the depiction of suffering, have been removed. These changes were made to avoid a visceral or disturbing tone, allowing the story to be presented in a way better suited to a broader, younger readership.

In addition to what has been removed, certain elements have been reimagined and enhanced. The central conflict, which in the original narrative is often framed in terms of sin and punishment, is transformed into a more symbolic and less severe consequence. The resulting events are presented with a sense of wonder and imagination rather than retribution.

The characterisation of Baru Klinting is also reshaped. Instead of being portrayed as a figure associated with fear or vengeance, he is reinterpreted as a more approachable and expressive character. This shift allows the story to emphasise emotional connection and curiosity rather than tension and fear.

Furthermore, the narrative adopts a more playful, imaginative tone. Language, imagery, and situational elements are adapted to create a sense of lightness and creativity. These additions do not aim to replace the original meaning of the story, but rather to offer an alternative perspective through which the narrative can be experienced.

Overall, the transformation reflects an effort to balance cultural preservation with creative reinterpretation. By adjusting certain elements while maintaining the core narrative structure, the story reaches new audiences without losing its connection to its traditional roots.

Story Book

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CHAPTER 4

The Origin of Sampung Village

4.1. The Origin of Sampung Village

Long ago in Ponorogo, there lived a woman of striking beauty. Unfortunately, whenever she spoke, her voice sounded nasal and unclear. She was skilled at making batik. The neighbors called her Nyai Warmo because she was the wife of Warmo, a very wealthy batik merchant. Warmo's batik cloths were known for their excellent quality and were sold throughout Ponorogo, Madiun, Ngawi, and Pacitan.

Despite his wealth, Warmo had a noble character. He had two young children: a boy named Sularto and a girl named Sulastri. One day, Warmo's carriage plunged into a ravine.

"Oh, my Lord!" cried his wife when she heard the news of her husband's death. She immediately sent people to retrieve Warmo's body. Unfortunately, even after climbing down into the ravine, the messengers found no trace of Warmo or his two attendants.

"Go to Pacitan at once. Take ten men and two carriages with you, Uncle Prawiro."

"Yes, Nyai Warmo. We will prepare the tools and ask the villagers here for help," replied Prawiro, Warmo's longtime servant.

The accident soon became the talk of the neighbors. Many opinions surfaced regarding Warmo's death. Some believed the incident was related to his batik business. Others said that someone who had been captivated by Nyai Warmo's beauty—yet failed to win her—might have been involved.

From that moment, Nyai Warmo became a young widow. Warmo had left behind great wealth for his wife and children. Now, she had to raise both of them alone. Mbok Sulami helped her run the household. Three other female

helpers served as batik workers: Mbok Sumi, Mbok Sumirah, and Mbok Kirbi. Jayus, the gardener, and Prawiro, the carriage driver, also helped her. As dawn broke and the roosters crowed softly, Nyai Warmo was already awake. She began packing the batik cloths she would sell at the market.

“We are going to Sumaroto Market. Today is market day, Uncle Prawiro,” she said to the driver.

On market days, the place was always crowded with vendors and visitors. Nyai Warmo made the most of the opportunity and brought more batik than usual. By noon, all of her batik clothes had sold out. Since her husband’s death, Nyai Warmo had been making the batik herself. Her three helpers only handled cutting, washing, ironing, and packing the clothes. To meet buyers’ demands, she worked late into the night. Afterward, she always bathed in warm water. She also diligently cared for her face and skin before sleeping. That was why she always looked young and beautiful.

After her husband passed away, many men developed feelings for Nyai Warmo. They differed widely in background, wealth, age, and intentions. She once received a proposal from Ki Ageng Purwanto, but she rejected it. She also refused a proposal from Juragan Emas of Kebon Mlati. She even turned down a young man who lived nearby, because she felt he was only after her wealth, not her love.

Meanwhile, her riches attracted the attention of others with ill intentions. One day, two men devised an evil plan.

“There must be something valuable kept in Nyai Warmo’s house, Brother,” said the skinny man. “Of course. She is the wife of a wealthy merchant,” replied the other. “It should be easy to get. How about we sneak into her house tonight?” “Fine, tonight!”

As dusk descended and the sun began to set, the two thieves observed Nyai Warmo's house, hiding behind bushes beside it. That night, Nyai Warmo went about her routine as usual. She worked on her batik until the kentongan sounded once. After that, she bathed in warm water. Sitting before her mirror, she muttered loudly,

"I really am beautiful. It is just a pity that I sound so nasal."

In the stillness of midnight, her voice echoed clearly, startling the two thieves outside. They burst into laughter.

"Haha! She sounds so funny, Brother!" said the skinny thief.

"Yes, her voice is amusing," replied his companion.

They did not realise that their laughter had startled Nyai Warmo. Without hesitation, she shouted: "Thieves! Thieves! There are thieves!"

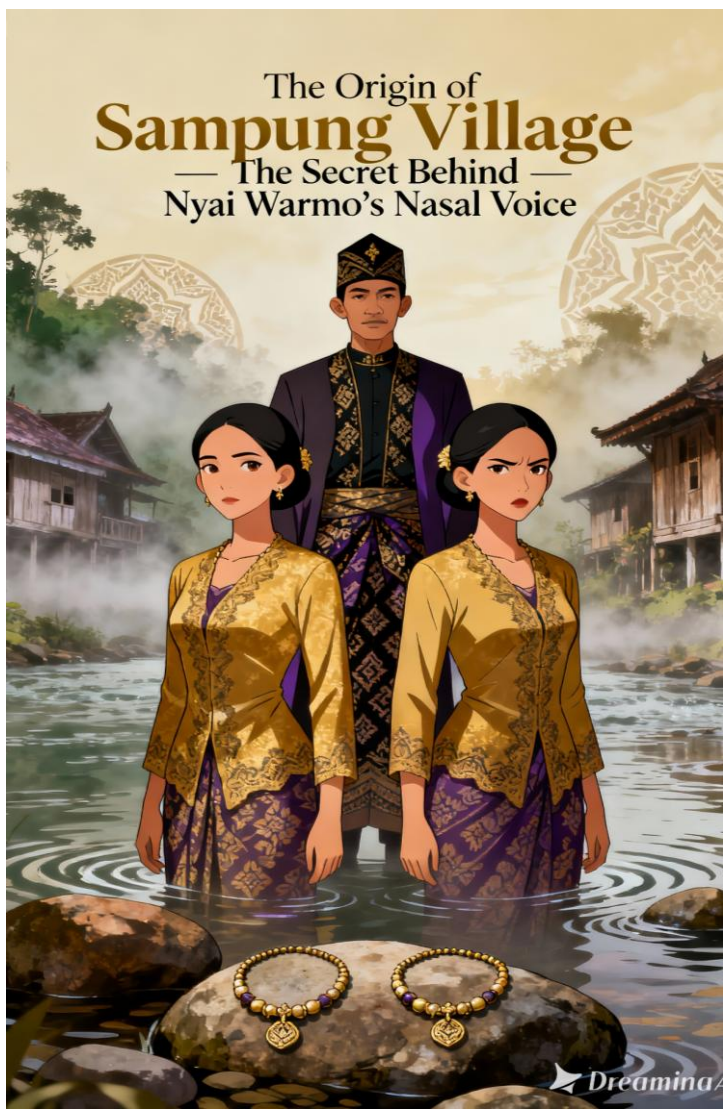
Her cries awakened the two male servants, who rushed outside while yelling, "Thieves! Thieves!" In moments, the villagers came out and chased the two thieves, who tried to flee. It did not take long for the villagers to catch them and beat them one after another. The thieves howled in pain and cried, "Sampun, sampun!" meaning "Stop!"

However, without realising it, they pronounced sampun-sampun with a nasal sound, sampung-sampung, because Nyai Warmo's voice had influenced them. When asked why they sounded that way, the skinny thief quickly explained,

"I actually wanted to say sampun, meaning 'stop.' However, because we were influenced by the widow Warmo's nasal voice, what came out was sampung."

The villagers who heard this burst into laughter. The thieves had ended up sounding nasal, just like Nyai Warmo. From that moment on, the place came to be called Sampung Village.

4.2. The Origin of Sampung Village: The Secret Behind Nyai Warmo's Nasal Voice





In the old days, Nyai Warmo was known as a gentle and graceful woman, the wife of Juragan Warmo, a wealthy and generous merchant in Ponorogo. However, people were puzzled: Nyai Warmo's voice sounded nasal and heavy, as if she were holding something back. At first, people thought it was due to illness. However, an old

servant, Sarti, once said, "It is not sickness, but a secret. Every time she tries to talk about her past, she falls silent."

One night, Juragan Warmo left town for a trading trip. He never came back. The villagers said robbers killed him. From that day on, Nyai Warmo was never the same — she became withdrawn, rarely went outside, and was accompanied only by her adopted

daughter, Sekar, a teenage girl who looked strikingly like her. Sekar often heard Nyai Warmo talking to herself in her room. "Do not go, Warmo... do not go..." Sekar thought her mother was depressed from grief.



However, one afternoon, while looking for a needle, Sekar found a gold necklace engraved "*For Nyai, from Warmo*" — and another identical one engraved "*For Sari, from Warmo.*" Sekar was shocked. Who was Sari? She began to investigate and found an

old photograph in a cupboard: There stood Juragan Warmo with two identical women, twin sisters.

On the back of the photo, it said: *“Nyai Warmo & Sari – two loves, one secret.”* Sekar was confused. When she asked her mother about it, Nyai Warmo became furious. “Never mention that name in this house!” That night, Sekar heard her mother



crying in her room. “Sari... you stole my husband... but I was the one blamed...”

The next day, Sekar went to an old house by the forest, where people said Nyai Warmo’s “older sister” once lived. There, she met an old, deaf woman who recognised her family. The woman whispered, “My dear... the Nyai Warmo you know was not Juragan Warmo’s wife.”

“Then who is she?” Sekar asked in shock. “She is Sari— Nyai Warmo’s twin. When Juragan Warmo married Nyai, Sari grew jealous. One night, the sisters fought by the riverside. Only one returned home... but it was not Nyai.” Sekar went home trembling. She saw her mother calmly baking on the terrace. “Mother... who are you really?”





Nyai Warmo fell silent. Her voice trembled, nasal and broken, as she said: “I... only tried to live with the name that should have been mine...” Sekar stared at her in horror — behind her mother’s smile, she realised the nasal voice was not from illness, but from a wound in her throat — a scar from

that fateful fight. The wind blew through the window. A faint whisper echoed, as if from outside the house: “Sari... let me return...” Nyai Warmo closed her eyes. Tears fell one by one. “It is over... enough. *Sampun...*” However, her voice came out muffled, distorted — “*Sampung...*”



Sekar watched as her mother slowly slumped in her chair. The oil lamp flickered, then went out. The next day, villagers found Nyai Warmo lifeless. Sekar sat beside her, clutching a piece of batik patterned with a river and stones along its bank. When the villagers asked what happened, Sekar only whispered: “Last night... Mother said ‘*sampun*’ — but what I heard was ‘*sampung*’.” The villagers nodded solemnly. From that day on, the place was called Sampung Village, a sign that the tale of Nyai Warmo and Sari had “ended” — yet never truly

disappeared. From the old house, people still sometimes hear a faint whisper: “I am not her...”

4.3 Pedagogical Application: Engaging Folklore through Creative Interpretation

The modern adaptation of the Sampung narrative, titled *“The Secret Behind Nyai Warmo’s Voice,”* demonstrates how traditional folklore can be recontextualised for educational purposes, particularly for teenage learners. This section outlines a pedagogical approach that integrates literary analysis, digital engagement, and creative interpretation to enhance students’ understanding of narrative structure and meaning.

The learning design emphasises both analytical and creative dimensions of literary study. Students are encouraged to identify key elements of a mystery narrative, including plot structure, characterisation, and symbolic meaning. At the same time, they are invited to engage with the story through reinterpretation, allowing them to explore alternative perspectives and develop their own narrative voice.

To support this process, the lesson incorporates digital tools that facilitate interaction and collaboration. Platforms such as Wordwall and ZepQuiz are used to introduce and reinforce key concepts through gamified activities, while Padlet provides a space for collaborative reflection and creative production. These tools are not treated as ends in themselves, but as means to foster deeper engagement with the text.

The learning process is structured in three stages. In the initial stage, students are introduced to the story through visual and auditory stimuli that stimulate curiosity and activate prior knowledge. This is followed by a guided reading

phase, in which students analyse the narrative and respond to predictive and interpretive questions. The final stage focuses on creative production, where students reinterpret the story by developing alternative endings, visual representations, or reflective responses.

From a pedagogical perspective, this approach highlights the value of combining traditional literature with contemporary learning methods. Folklore, when presented dynamically and interactively, can serve not only as a cultural artifact but also as a powerful medium for developing critical thinking and creative expression.

The transformation of the original Sampung narrative into a mystery-driven story also reflects a shift in thematic emphasis. While the traditional version presents a light and humorous account of the village's origin, the modern adaptation introduces psychological depth, emotional tension, and symbolic meaning. This contrast allows students to explore how different contexts, audiences, and interpretive choices can shape narratives.

At the same time, certain elements from the original story are intentionally reduced or omitted. The broader social environment and secondary characters are minimised to allow greater focus on the central conflict and character development. In contrast, the modern version enhances narrative tension, emotional complexity, and symbolic interpretation, making it more relatable to contemporary teenage readers.

Overall, this pedagogical application demonstrates that folklore can be both preserved and transformed within educational settings. By combining cultural content with creative and interactive methods, the study of literature

becomes not only informative but also engaging and meaningful for learners.

CHAPTER 5

DEWI SANGGALANGIT

5.1 Dewi Sanggalangit



Once upon a time, there was a beautiful princess named Dewi Sanggalangit. She was the daughter of a renowned king in Kediri. Because of her beautiful expression and gentle demeanor, many princes and kings wanted to marry her.

Unfortunately, Dewi Sanggalangit had no desire to settle down, which caused her parents a headache. Both parents desperately wanted a grandchild in their family.

"My daughter, how long will you refuse every prince who proposes to you?" the king asked in the morning.

"Father, I still desire a husband. However, if you so desperately want me to marry, then so be it. However, I have one condition: my husband must fulfill my wish."

"So what is your wish?"

"I do not know yet..."

"Why, how come I do not know?" replied the king.

"I will meditate first to seek God's guidance. After that, I will meet with you to convey my wish."

Thus, Dewi Sangalangit meditated for three days and three nights, seeking God's guidance. Then, on the big day, she summoned her father.

"Father, my future husband must be able to put on a captivating spectacle—a spectacle or performance unlike any before. A kind of dance accompanied by percussion and gamelan, complete with a parade of twenty to forty twin horses that will later serve as bridesmaids. He must be able to present a two-headed beast.

"That is a very tough requirement!" His Majesty.

Although stringent, the conditions were still stated for his subjects, including kings and princes from neighboring and faraway lands.

Many of the suitors who had been eager to marry Dewi Sanggalangit lost their courage and eventually withdrew due to the need for her supervision and the burden it entailed.

Finally, only two men remained, and they expressed their readiness and ability to fulfill Dewi Sanggalangit's request. They were King Singabarong of the Lodaya Kingdom and King Kelana Swandana of the Bandarangan Kingdom.

His Majesty was greatly surprised by the two kings' willingness. King Singabarong was a strange man, a tiger-headed man. His disposition was fierce. Meanwhile, Kelanaswandana was a handsome and dashing king, but he had a strange habit. He liked young boys. Boys were considered beautiful girls.

However, it was too late, and Dewi Sanggalangit could not thwart the conditions she had announced.

King Singabarong was large and tall. From the neck up, he had the form of a terrifying tiger. He had thick fur and was covered in fleas. He kept a peacock that diligently pecked at his fleas.

King Singabarong had ordered his servants to find twin horses. He had called on the artists to create an interesting spectacle and obtain a two-headed beast. However, the task was not easy. The twin horses had been gathered, but a new creative spectacle had not yet been created, nor had a two-headed beast been found.

So that day, he summoned his prime minister, Iderkala. King Singabarong sent him to record the preparations of the elite, Kelanaswandana. Patih Iderkala and several of his men immediately departed for the Bandarangan Kingdom disguised as merchants. After conducting thorough investigations for several days, they returned to Lodaya.

"My Lord, Your Majesty. It seems Kelanaswanda has almost fulfilled Dewi Sanggalangit's request. I see more than just the horses gathered. They can also prepare an interesting and very beautiful spectacle." King Iderkala reported.

"Oh, what a disaster! If that is the case, he can seize Dewi Sanggalangit as his oppressor," said King Singabarong. "Then what about the two-headed beast? Have they prepared that too?"

"They have not prepared the beast yet, Your Majesty, but it seems they can proceed," King Iderkal continued.

"Patih Idkala, start preparing the best option with complete weaponry. I am ready to be flown to Bandarangin at any moment."

Thus, King Singabarong wanted to seize the fruits of King Kelanaswandana's labors. After making thorough preparations, King Singabarong ordered several spies to track King Kelanaswandana from Wengker to Kediri. King Singabarong planned to ambush them en route and seize the fruits of King Kelanaswandana's labors to pay Dewi Sanggalangit himself.

However, King Singabarong's plan was ruined when all his spies were captured and killed by Bandarangin's guards after being exposed.

Meanwhile, King Singabarong, who was awaiting a report from the spy soldiers sent to Bandarangin heaven, looked anxious. He immediately ordered the prime minister, Iderkala, to bring them to the keelasi. Meanwhile, he himself went to the Tamansari to approach the peacock, because at that time, the people were very bold.

"Hey peacock, quickly peck the lice on my head!" Singabarong shouted, resisting the itch.

The peacock, which usually did its job, immediately perched on King Singabarong's shoulder and began pecking at the lice scattered on King Singabarong's head. Because of the peacock's delicious pecking, King Singabarong fell into a deep sleep. He was completely unaware of the situation outside the palace, as no one dared to report it.

Outside the palace, Bandarangin's troops had attacked and defeated the Lodaya survivors. One reason he sent them forward was to meet Bandarangin's troops. Only when the battle had spread into the palace near the Tamansari was King Singabarong awakened from his sleep by the noise. Meanwhile, the peacock continued to pick off the lice on King Singabarong's head. The strange thing in front of King Singabarong was what looked like a two-headed beast, one with a tiger's head and the other with a peacock's head.

"There might be a commotion...!!!" King Singabarong shouted angrily.

However, there was no response, except for one who was none other than King Kelanaswandana.

King Singabarong was shocked. "Hey, King Kelanaswandana, what are you doing here...??"

"Do not play dumb!!" King Kelanaswandana retorted. "You must seize my business, according to Dewi Sanggalangit's calculations...!!"

"Hmm, so you already know??" King Singabarong replied, embarrassed.

"Yes, I will punish you!!"

Then King Kelanaswandana unleashed his magical powers. Instantly, King Singabarong's head transformed. The peacock that had been perched on his shoulder now attached itself to King Singabarong's head and merged. King Singabarong was extremely angry; besides that, he drew his

keris and leaped to attack King Kelanaswandana. However, King Kelanaswandana immediately swung his magical whip called Samandiman at King Singabarong's body. The whip can emit hot air, and its sound is like thunder.

As soon as the whip hit him, King Singabarong bounced and scattered on the ground. Suddenly, his body felt weak, and he turned into a strange animal with two heads: a tiger and a peacock. He could not speak, and his wits were gone. King Kelanaswandana immediately ordered Singabarong to surrender and take him to the land of Bandarangin.

A few days later, King Kelanaswandana sent a messenger to the King of Kediri, who immediately came to Dewi Sanggalangit. The King of Kediri immediately called Dewi Sanggalangit.

"My child, are you really the wife of King Kelanaswandana?"

"Father, is King Kelanaswandana able to fulfill all the requirements that I have conveyed?"

"Of course, He will come with all the conditions you put forward. Now, you do not regret having to become King Kelanaswandana's wife??"

"If it becomes a soul mate, I will accept him as my father's servant's husband, and I will change King Kelanaswandana's bad habits of liking that man."

Thus, on the appointed day, King Kelanaswandana's entourage came with an art form called Reog as accompaniment. King Kelanaswandana came accompanied by forty twin horses, with a strange sound of gamelan, drums, and trumpets, which was called a strange yet melodious and lilting combination. Additionally, there are strange animals with two heads, namely tigers and peacocks.

In the end, Dewi Sanggalangit married King Kelanaswandana, and Dewi Sanggalangit was taken to the Bandarangin heaven in Wengker to become his queen. Then this art was named Reog, which we often see performed.

5.2. Dewi Songlangit (The origin of Reog Ponorogo)



Once upon a time, in the heart of the magnificent Kediri Kingdom, lived a princess named **Dewi Songgolangit**. She was a priceless gem, celebrated for her beauty and intelligence. However, behind the crown and the palace spotlight dwelt a restless soul, a heart that longed for something far beyond power or riches.

Dewi Songgolangit was no arrogant royal. She was a true romantic trapped in the golden cage of her destiny. She craved a love that could see the depths of her spirit, not just worship her appearance and title. Thus, she created a marriage contest—a desperate act disguised as a royal tradition.

The Coded Call of the Soul

The contest requirements she announced—"an unprecedented performance, 140 twin horse riders, and a two-headed beast"—were not whimsical demands. They were the secret cipher of a love poem she had penned in her childhood, a blueprint for the ideal partner:

"An unprecedented performance": She longed for the courage to be different and genuine, a soul capable of creating beauty untouched by the world's uniformity.

"140 twin horse riders": Symbolizing absolute loyalty and perfect harmony, the image of two souls marching together in the same rhythm, ready to face anything.

"A two-headed beast": A metaphor for soul completeness, a partner who could unite the contradictions within—strength and tenderness, reality and dreams—in one perfect accord.

The requirements were merely a poem, waiting for the right poet to read it.



From all corners of the land came kings and princes, bearing magnificent yet empty offerings. Only one, Prabu Klono Sewandono, the young King of Bantarangin, felt a strange vibration in his heart. He was no code expert, but he was an Artist Warrior. Upon hearing the contest requirements, Prabu Klono

did not think of logistics or military might. He felt that the conditions were an unfinished melody, a summons to create a 'masterpiece' that would whisper directly into the very core of the Princess's heart. He did not understand the code intellectually, but he sensed it intuitively.

Prabu Klono's journey to Kediri was not an invasion, but a Pilgrimage of the Soul. Along the way, he heard whispers, saw shadows, and felt the same burden of longing that weighed upon Dewi Songgolangit.

In the midst of the jungle, he encountered a massive, wild creature called Singabarong. This creature was not a



physical threat; it was the Allegory of Prabu Klono's own Fear and Doubt. The Singabarong represented the savage side, the raw ambition, and the incompleteness

he had to conquer before he was worthy of true love.

Prabu Klono's fight with the Singabarong was an internal war. When he finally 'conquered' the Singabarong—not by killing it, but by subduing it and having a peacock perch atop its head—he achieved self-wholeness. He had united the wild, passionate side with the gentle, beautiful side within himself. He had become a complete individual, the very 'two-headed beast' the Princess yearned for. He did not merely bring the Singabarong as a prize, but as proof of his own transformation.

When Prabu Klono presented the Reog Ponorogo before the court, it was not merely a performance. It was the most sincere declaration of love that had ever been made.

Dewi Songgolangit sat on her throne, but her eyes were not fixed on the glittering ornaments. She saw 140 hobby horse dancers marching in perfect synchronization, symbolizing unwavering loyalty. Movements and music she had never heard before, an expression of brave and original art. Moreover, finally, the magnificent Singabarong mask—a symbol of Prabu Klono having defeated his



inner fears, having become one, a complete soul (the two-headed beast, the savage and the gentle, led by a hero).

In that moment, Dewi Songgolangit's secret cipher was cracked. Tears streamed down her face, not from amazement at the grandeur, but because finally, after all this time, someone had heard her 'song of a hidden heart.'

She saw not a king who won a contest, but a Hero who had answered her poem with a masterpiece.



Dewi Songgolangit and Prabu Klono Sewandono were married. The Reog Ponorogo endured, not as a war dance, but as an Eternal Love Legend.

Every time the Singabarong is raised, it holds a tragic-romantic whisper: the story of a captive Princess who encoded her longing into a contest, and a Prince who

answered that call of the soul with a performance capable of speaking a thousand words of love. They found each other not through power but through spiritual resonance and the beauty of art, proving that true love always demands the wholeness and honesty of the soul.

5.3 Interactive Learning Activities: Engaging the Story through Play

Story Differentiation: Original Story vs. Plot Twist Version

Story Element	Original Tale of Dewi Songgolangit	Plot Twist Version: "The Song of a Hidden Heart"
Setting	Kediri, during the classical Javanese kingdom era with royal marriage traditions.	Still set in Kediri, but with a stronger focus on the emotional and inner world of the characters.
Main Characters	Dewi Songgolangit as a beautiful and intelligent princess; Prabu Klono Sewandono as a royal suitor.	Dewi Songgolangit as a restless princess longing for true love; Prabu Klono as an artist-warrior who understands her soul.
Purpose of the Contest	To select the most fitting husband for Dewi Songgolangit, as requested by the princess.	To convey a hidden message of love through symbolic requirements as a code of her longing heart.
Contest Requirements	A performance never seen before, 140 twin horse riders, and a two-headed creature.	Interpreted as a secret poem: bravery to be different, loyalty of two souls, and soul completeness represented in one being.
Role of Reog Ponorogo	Displayed as a grand performance symbolizing the kingdom's strength and majesty.	A declaration of love through art a performance filled with symbols of devotion, sacrifice, and soul union.
Character of Singabarong	King of Lodaya, represented by a large mask adorned with peacock feathers.	A manifestation of Prabu Klono's fear and wild side, which he must tame before finding true love.
Klono vs. Singabarong Conflict	A physical battle as part of traditional folklore.	A symbolic inner battle taming the shadow within to become a whole person.
Ending	Prabu Klono is accepted as Dewi Songgolangit's husband.	Dewi Songgolangit weeps as Prabu Klono deciphers her

In addition to narrative interpretation, the story of Dewi Songgolangit and Reog Ponorogo can be explored through interactive learning activities that combine language development and creative engagement. These activities are designed to reinforce readers' understanding of the story while encouraging active participation.

One approach involves sentence construction exercises using a digital unjumble format. In this activity, participants are presented with a set of words that must be rearranged into a meaningful sentence related to the story. For example, a sequence such as “princess / intelligent / Songgolangit / is / an / Dewi / beautiful / and” can be reconstructed into the sentence “Dewi Songgolangit is a beautiful and intelligent princess.”

This type of activity supports grammatical awareness, sentence structure, and comprehension. Participants may interact with the exercise by arranging the words manually or selecting them in sequence. An example of this activity is available at: <https://wordwall.net/resource/101091851>.

Another interactive format is a multiple-choice quiz designed to test understanding of characters, events, and themes within the story. In this activity, participants respond to a series of questions, selecting the most appropriate answer based on their interpretation of the narrative. For instance, they may be asked to identify key figures, such as Klono Sewandono, or to interpret significant moments in the story. The quiz format introduces elements of play through immediate feedback, simple scoring systems, and time-based responses. These features create a dynamic and engaging learning environment while reinforcing comprehension and recall. An example of this activity can be accessed at: <https://wordwall.net/resource/101094318>

These interactive activities contribute to the development of several important skills. They enhance reading comprehension, strengthen memory of narrative elements, and encourage critical thinking through decision-making processes. When conducted collaboratively, they also promote teamwork and discussion, allowing participants to exchange ideas and interpretations.

Digital tools such as Wordwall and presentation-based media play an important role in supporting this approach. They allow literary content to be transformed into interactive experiences that extend beyond traditional reading. Additional supporting materials, including visual presentations, are available at:

<https://www.canva.com/design/DAG4q7yPuwU/Hp9m-cUnr8QmDIW9SAVOjw/edit>

These digital resources are intended as complementary materials that enrich the reading experience. Readers may access them independently or incorporate them into structured learning activities to deepen their engagement with the story.

CHAPTER 6

THE LEGEND OF KLONO SEWANDONO AND DEWI SONGGOLANGIT

6.1 The Legend of Klono Sewandono and Dewi Songgolangit

Long ago, there lived a mighty and valiant king named Prabu Klono Sewandono, ruler of the Kingdom of Bantarangin. He was known for his magical powers, wisdom, and a mystical whip called *Pecut Samandiman*.

One day, Prabu Klono heard tales of the beauty and grace of Dewi Songgolangit, princess of the Kingdom of Kediri. The princess was not only beautiful but also gifted with the ability to interpret signs from nature and dreams. Many kings and princes sought her hand in marriage, but she was not ready to wed.

To gently decline the proposals, Dewi Songgolangit set forth a nearly impossible condition: “Anyone who wishes to marry me must present a spectacle never seen before. There must be a creature with two heads—one of a tiger and one of a peacock. There must be a funny dancer and a cavalry parade.”

Prabu Klono accepted the challenge. He summoned his finest artists and warriors. Together with Bujang Ganong, a witty young commander, and the horse riders known as Jathil, they created a grand performance. From this emerged the figure of *Singo Barong*, a creature with a tiger’s head adorned with peacock feathers. Singo Barong became a symbol of strength and beauty. The performance was accompanied by mesmerizing gamelan music and captivating dances.

When the show was held in Kediri, Dewi Songgolangit was enchanted. She acknowledged that her conditions had been fulfilled. However, in some versions of the tale, their love did not unite—Prabu Klono’s jealousy and emotional nature led Dewi Songgolangit to choose not to marry him.

6.2. The Happy Secret of the Lion Mask





Once upon a time, in the Bantarangin Kingdom, lived the brave dancing king, He King Klono Sewandono! He loved the beautiful Princess Songgolangit from Kediri!

In the Kingdom of Bantarangin, there lived a bold and unique king: **King Klono Sewandono**, a ruler known not only for his leadership but also for his powerful and graceful dancing. Every movement of his dance was like the wind swirling over the hills, strong,

elegant, and mesmerizing. However, his heart was secretly captivated by a princess from a distant land: **Princess Songgolangit**, the daughter of the Kediri Kingdom. She was renowned for her beauty and her gift for interpreting signs in the sky. She could read dreams, cloud patterns, and even bird songs as messages from nature.

The Grand Hall of Kediri Palace, late afternoon. Silk curtains sway gently, and the breeze carries the scent of kenanga flowers. Royal advisors sit on either side, while **Princess Songgolangit** sits on a golden throne, wearing a sky-blue



kebaya and a crown shaped like clouds. The Princess had a strange condition: "Bring me a performance with a two-headed animal! One tiger head, one beautiful peacock!"



King Klono set off with his funny general, Bujang Ganong, and his horse-riders the Jathil! But "ROARRR!" A giant, fierce Singo Barong blocked their way!

King Klono and his troops marched through the thick forest. Up front, Bujang Ganong leaped around, mimicking bird sounds. The Jathil rode their hobby horses proudly, forming a graceful line. King Klono set off with his funny

general, Bujang Ganong, and his horse-riders, the Jathil! But ROARRRR! A giant, fierce Singo Barong blocked their way!



*Singo Barong was strong! But King Klono knew a secret: a peacock always picked lice frigo Barong's fur! *CRACK! Klono whipped near him. The peaccouk fluu off!*

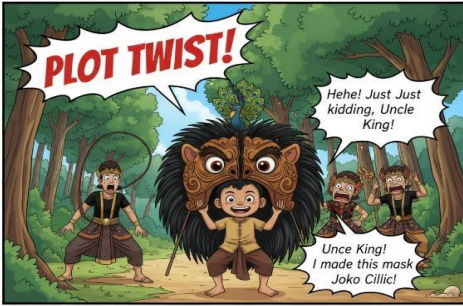
The forest trembled. Leaves shook, dust rose, and the sky seemed to hold its breath. On a narrow path cloaked in shadow, **King Klono** stood tall. In his hand gleamed the magical whip: **Pecut Samandiman.**

Before him, **Singo Barong** roared fiercely! His body was as massive as a mountain, his head that of a tiger with blazing eyes, and a graceful peacock perched atop him, pecking through his mane, searching for lice.

Singo Barong was strong! However, King Klono knew a secret: a peacock always picked lice from Singo Barong's fur! CRACK! King Klono whipped near him. The peacock flew off!



Singo Barong looked confused. Without the peacock on his head, he felt restless and began scratching his head with his massive claws; it was itchy, and his mind was unsettled. Suddenly, with a soft flutter, the peacock returned from the sky and landed gracefully right back on his head. *BUMP!* It immediately began pecking through his fur, searching for lice as usual. Singo Barong froze, his eyes wide. The itch was gone. He felt calm again. However, King Klono did not waste a moment. He raised his magical whip, *Pecut Samandiman*, and with a swift motion, aimed it directly at Singo Barong. *CRACK!* The whip sliced through the air, a sign that the trial was far from over.



Suddenly, Singo Barong's head was just a giant mask! And Andsiek. And inside... a cheerful little boy named The mask named "Joko Cilik!"

Everyone froze in shock. King Klono, Bujang Ganong, and the Warok stared wide-eyed as the mighty Singo Barong's head creaked open, revealing not a beast, but a cheerful little boy inside! "Hehe!

Just kidding, Uncle King!" giggled the boy. "I made this mask myself!" It was **Joko Cilik**, smiling proudly from within the giant lion head. The fierce creature was just a clever costume, and the battle... a playful surprise!



Everyone burst into laughter. King Klono laughed heartily, clapping his hands as Joko Cilik proudly held up the giant lion mask with the peacock now attached on top. "Haha! This is the funniest, greatest two-headed animal!" the king exclaimed. "You

fulfilled the Princess's wish without a real fight!" The forest echoed with joy, and even the Warok smiled. What began as a

tense journey had turned into a celebration of creativity, courage, and cleverness.

6.3. A Story of Creativity and Joy: The Lion Mask Reimagined

In the Kingdom of Bantarangin, there lived a bold and distinctive ruler, King Klono Sewandono. He was known not only for his strength and leadership but also for his graceful and powerful dancing. His reputation extended far beyond his kingdom, eventually reaching Princess Songgolangit of Kediri, who was admired for her beauty and her ability to interpret signs from nature.

When King Klono expressed his intention to marry her, the Princess presented an unusual condition. She asked him to bring a performance featuring a two-headed creature, one resembling a tiger and the other a beautiful peacock.

Determined to fulfill her request, King Klono set out on a journey accompanied by his lively and loyal general, Bujang Ganong, as well as the Jathil horse riders. As they traveled through the forest, they encountered a magnificent yet intimidating figure known as Singo Barong, a creature that seemed to embody exactly what the Princess had described.

A confrontation seemed inevitable. King Klono prepared to fight, raising his magical whip, Pecut Samandiman. However, before the battle could unfold, something unexpected occurred. The creature's head suddenly opened, revealing a cheerful young boy inside. Laughing, he explained that the fearsome figure was only a mask he had created.

The moment transformed what could have been a violent encounter into one of surprise and amusement. Instead of continuing the fight, King Klono recognized the creativity behind the performance. He praised the boy's ingenuity and

declared that the Princess's condition had been fulfilled in a way that exceeded expectation. The story concludes not with conflict, but with laughter and celebration. It highlights a shift from strength and confrontation toward creativity and imagination as a means of solving challenges.

This adaptation represents a deliberate reinterpretation of the traditional narrative of Dewi Songgolangit and the Reog Ponorogo legend. While the original version is often characterized by elements of conflict, power, and symbolic struggle, this retelling introduces a lighter, more accessible tone, particularly suited to younger audiences.

One of the most significant transformations lies in the redefinition of conflict. The traditional confrontation between King Klono Sewandono and Singo Barong is replaced with a playful and unexpected resolution. Rather than emphasizing physical strength or dominance, the story presents creativity as a central solution.

The tonal shift is equally important. The original narrative, which carries a serious, sometimes intense atmosphere, is reimagined as a joyful, humorous story. This adjustment allows the narrative to engage readers more effectively, especially those who may find traditional versions less approachable.

At the thematic level, the focus shifts from pride, rivalry, and heroism to values such as imagination, collaboration, and emotional intelligence. While certain complexities of the original story are simplified, key cultural elements are preserved, including character names, symbolic objects, and the broader narrative framework of the Reog tradition.

This transformation does not aim to replace the original story, but to offer an alternative interpretation. It

demonstrates how folklore can be adapted to different audiences and contexts while maintaining its cultural identity.

The development of this adapted narrative is rooted in the intention to present folklore in a form that is both meaningful and engaging for contemporary readers, particularly children. By integrating humor, surprise, and visual imagination, the story becomes more accessible without losing its cultural foundation.

The introduction of a plot twist in which the fearsome Singo Barong is revealed as a crafted mask reflects a shift from conflict-driven storytelling toward a creativity-based resolution. This approach encourages readers to consider alternative ways of understanding challenges, where intelligence and imagination can replace force and confrontation.

At the same time, the adaptation retains important cultural references, including traditional characters and symbolic elements associated with Reog Ponorogo. This balance between preservation and reinterpretation is essential in ensuring that the story remains connected to its origins while continuing to evolve.

Ultimately, this version of the story seeks to demonstrate that folklore can function not only as a reflection of the past but also as a flexible medium for creative expression. By presenting the narrative in a joyful, imaginative form, it invites readers to engage with cultural heritage in meaningful, enjoyable ways.

The development of the adapted story *“The Happy Secret of the Lion Mask”* was supported by digital tools that enabled the integration of narrative, visual design, and creative exploration. These tools allowed the authors to experiment

with storytelling techniques while maintaining a focus on accessibility and engagement for younger audiences.

In particular, generative digital platforms were used to shape the storyline and visual elements. Through guided prompts, the narrative was developed into a light-hearted, imaginative retelling that emphasizes humor, surprise, and creativity. One of the central features of this adaptation is the unexpected revelation that Singo Barong is a crafted mask, transforming what is traditionally a moment of confrontation into a playful and meaningful resolution.

The use of digital tools also supported the creation of visual sequences, enabling the story to be structured in a panel-based format. This approach enhances readability and allows the narrative to be experienced in a way that resembles visual storytelling, which is especially effective for younger readers.

The prompts used during the development process focused on several key aspects. These included simplifying the language to suit children, maintaining the presence of central characters across scenes, and introducing a creative plot twist that shifts the story's tone. Rather than being presented as technical instructions, these prompts served as conceptual guides that shaped the narrative's direction.

In addition to storytelling, interactive elements were designed to extend reader engagement. A game-based activity, accessible through the following link, provides an example of how the narrative can be explored through play: <https://wordwall.net/embed/11115678d327447a9f94836a2950049f>

This activity encourages readers to revisit key elements of the story while reinforcing comprehension through a playful and interactive format. It also reflects the

broader aim of this work: to combine cultural content with contemporary engagement methods.

Overall, the integration of digital tools in this project demonstrates how traditional folklore can be reimaged through modern creative processes. By combining narrative development, visual representation, and interactive design, the story becomes not only a cultural artifact but also a dynamic learning experience.

Contextual and Differentiation Changes			
Aspect	Original Story	Adapted Version	Notes (Missing / Enhanced)
Tone & Audience	Traditional myth with a serious tone, intended for adults	Light-hearted and humorous tone, rewritten for children	Enhanced engagement and understanding for young readers
Conflict	A serious mystical battle between King Klono and Singo Barong	A playful twist where Singo Barong is only a costume made by a child	Violence removed; humor and creativity enhanced
Theme	Pride, jealousy, and heroism	Creativity, teamwork, and happiness	Shifted from tragedy to joyful moral learning
Ending	Often ends tragically or ambiguously	Ends happily with laughter and unity	Removed jealousy and sadness; added humor and positivity
Cultural Element	Deeply Javanese legend with complex symbolic meaning	Modern retelling that preserves Javanese names and symbols	Simplified for children while keeping cultural essence
Moral Message	Teaches control over emotions and pride	Teaches creativity and intelligence over strength	Adapted for educational child-friendly values

CHAPTER 7

LOVE STORY OF RORO SUMINTEN AND RADEN SUBROTO IN WAROK

7.1 Love Story of Roro Suminten and Raden Subroto in Warok

Warok Suromenggolo was a military commander (manggala) from the Duchy of Ponorogo, East Java. His life was full of political intrigue, yet it also held a rather romantic love story. Suromenggolo's daughter, Roro Warsiyani, who was in love with Raden Subroto, the son of the Duke of Ponorogo, was beautifully portrayed in a traditional art and theatrical performance titled Warok Suromenggolo. The Paguyuban Reog Ponorogo Jabodetabek performed the Dongkrek theatre at the Sasono Langen Budaya performance venue in Taman Mini Indonesia Indah last July.

Ponorogo, as a duchy of the Majapahit Kingdom during the reign of Bhre Kertabumi, who was titled Brawijaya V (1468-1478), is associated with Raden Panembahan Batara Katong, the younger brother of Raden Patah, Sultan of Demak. Raden Batara Katong himself had a very loyal royal guard (manggala) named Warok Suromenggolo, who was very powerful. Ponorogo, under the rule of Adipati Raden Batara Katong, experienced progress and prosperity: Gemah Ripah Loh Jinawi, Tata Tentrem Karto Rahajo. However, when he grew old, leadership passed to his son, Panembahan Agung.

Many intrigues were hatched to rebel against Panembahan Agung. Waroks who were famous besides Suromenggolo included Suro Handoko, Gunoseco,

Honggojoyo, and Sino Kobra, who wanted to rebel, and Suromenggolo sensed this intention. Suromenggolo was determined to maintain his leadership.

In this Dongkrek theatre, Jin Kluntung Wuluh is depicted dancing, accompanied by his army, who circle him, jumping here and there. Then a young man, Jin Kluntung Mungil, appears, with a fierce face, complaining to his father, Jin Kluntung Wuluh, that he wants to marry a human woman. However, Kluntung Mungil slaps his son.

Jin Kluntung Mungil is rejected when he asks to marry Cempluk or Roro Warsiyani, the daughter of Suromenggolo. His father, Kluntung Wuluh, tells his son, “A child's behaviour reflects on the father.”

Because of his son's problem, Kluntung Wuluh tried to wake the hermit Warok Suro Handoko with his magical powers. Warok Surohandoko woke up from his meditation and scattered the army of jinn.

Warok Surohandoko, who had awakened, then asked King Jin Kluntung Wuluh, ruler of Mount Dloka, to make him the most superior Warok in the Ponorogo region by defeating his brother, Warok Suromenggolo. King Jin Kluntung Wuluh then gave the condition that his son must be able to marry Cempluk, the daughter of Warok Suromenggolo.

Jin Kluntung Wuluh gave Warok Surohandoko an heirloom: Aji Dawet Upas, a cendol drink made from human eyes. Through Aji Dawet Upas, Suromenggolo would suffer burns and fall unconscious.

Warok Suromenggolo, who adhered strictly to the teachings of humanity, fought his younger brother Warok

Surohandoko. Both used their supernatural powers and the same weapon, the *kolor sakti*. Warok Suromenggolo won the battle.

Then the *jatilan* dancers enter the stage, comprising 8 male and 8 female dancers. They take turns dancing between male and female. Among them, some parodies make the audience laugh. Finally, the *reog* enters the stage, spinning, dancing, and performing.

The scene continues with Roro Suminten entering the stage. Roro Suminten is the daughter of Warok Gunaseco, who loves Raden Subroto. However, Warok Suromenggolo tells Roro Suminten that Raden Subroto does not love her, but rather loves Roro Warsiyani (*Cempluk*). Hearing this, Roro Suminten faints, then wakes up and cries over Raden Subroto. The wedding preparations fail, and the invitations are widely distributed, eventually driving Roro Suminten insane. Warol Gunaseco's family becomes vengeful, wanting to kill *Cempluk*.

Mediation takes place between Warok Suromenggolo and Gunaseco. Suromenggolo argued with Warok Gunaseco that *Cempluk* was guilty and must be killed. The mediation reached a dead end, and the two fought. When Warok Gunaseco began to lose, Warok Surohandoko appeared and splashed *Aji Dawet Upas* on Warok Suromenggolo's face, hitting Warok Suromenggolo's eyes. However, the wound healed instantly with the *Ruyung Bang* heirloom given by Guru Batara Katong. Warok Suromenggolo finally challenged both of them to a duel. When both of them were about to lose, Warok Singobowo from the Argo Wilis School appeared and reconciled the three of them.

Shortly thereafter, Roro Suminten, who had failed to marry Raden Subroto, appeared on stage with her wife, Roro Warsiyani (Cempluk), riding a jaran kepang (lumping horse) and babbling incoherently, like a madwoman. Gradually, Roro Suminten began to recover from her madness, thanks to the magical powers of Warok Suromenggolo. After she recovered, Warok Suromenggolo asked Raden Subroto to marry Roro Suminten as his second wife.

7.2. The Love Story of Roro Suminten and Raden Subroto





In the ancient town of Ponorogo, stories of Warok Suromenggolo were whispered through generations. He was a powerful guardian, protector of the kingdom, and a master of mystical arts. However, what people did not know was that his greatest battle was

not fought with swords; it was fought with love.

Suromenggolo's daughter, **Roro Warsiyani**, better known as **Cempluk**, was unlike any other girl in the village: smart, bold, and kind-hearted. She secretly fell in love with **Raden Subroto**, the Duke's son. Their love had to stay hidden; royal rules forbade a noble from marrying the daughter of a warlock.

However, there was someone else watching from the shadows: **Roro Suminten**, Cempluk's best friend. She, too, had fallen for Subroto, though she never confessed. Until one day, she saw them together. Her heart shattered. Moreover, from that pain, jealousy was born.





In her anger, Suminten went to a forbidden forest where she met a mysterious spirit, **Kluntung Wuluh**, the king of ancient jinns.

He promised her a spell: *“Drink this Aji Dawet Upas, and Subroto will love no one but you.”* However, magic

always comes with a price.

When Suminten performed the ritual, her reflection in the mirror turned strange; her eyes glowed red. The curse had begun. Instead of making Subroto love her, the spell slowly stripped her of her humanity.

Suromenggolo felt something dark entering Ponorogo. Using his spiritual power, he discovered that the source of the curse was none other than his daughter’s best friend, Roro Suminten.

Heartbroken, he realised that Suminten was not evil, just lost. He decided to save her. However, to do so, he had to face the jinn himself. In an epic battle of lightning and shadow, Suromenggolo destroyed the jinn's body, but Kluntung Wuluh's spirit



jumped into Suminten. Now *she* became the vessel of darkness.

As chaos filled the kingdom, Raden Subroto arrived carrying a shocking truth. He revealed that he was not actually the Duke's son. He was **Suromenggolo's long-lost**

apprentice, sent to protect Cempluk from the jinn's prophecy. His romance with her was only part of the mission until he truly fell in love.

When Suminten learned the truth, her anger turned to regret. She begged for forgiveness, but the jinn inside her refused to let go.



To save everyone, Suminten made the hardest choice of all. In tears, Suminten whispered to Suromenggolo, "Tell Cempluk... I am sorry for everything."

She then used the last of her strength to trap the jinn inside herself, sealing it forever.

A bright light flashed across Ponorogo, and when it faded, Suminten was gone. Only a gentle breeze remained, carrying her final words:

“Sometimes love is not about being chosen. It is about choosing to protect.”

From that day on, every time the *Reog Ponorogo* dance is performed, people say they can see a shadow of a girl smiling in the wind watching over the stage.



7.3 Visual and Narrative Development

The adaptation of “The Secret of Suromenggolo: Love, Lies, and Loyalty” was designed not only as a narrative reinterpretation but also as a visual storytelling experience. The development process combines traditional folklore with contemporary creative approaches, presenting the story in an engaging form for teenage readers.

In this adaptation, the narrative is structured to emphasise emotional depth, character conflict, and moral ambiguity. Themes such as love, jealousy, sacrifice, and loyalty are explored through a more dramatic and psychologically driven storyline. This shift allows the story

to resonate more strongly with modern audiences, particularly those in their adolescent years.

Visual elements play a central role in supporting the narrative. The story is accompanied by a series of imagined scenes that reflect key moments, including secret encounters, internal conflict, and spiritual transformation. These scenes are designed to enhance the reader's imagination and provide a cinematic quality to the storytelling.

The visual interpretation draws from a combination of traditional Javanese cultural elements and modern fantasy aesthetics. Characters are depicted with symbolic attributes, such as the *keris*, traditional attire, and references to Reog Ponorogo, and incorporate expressive visual styles that appeal to contemporary audiences.

Through this integration of narrative and visual design, the story becomes more than a retelling of folklore. It evolves into a multi-layered experience that connects cultural heritage with modern forms of artistic expression.

The transformation of the original story into “The Secret of Suromenggolo” reflects a conscious effort to reinterpret traditional folklore to align with the interests and emotional experiences of teenage readers.

In the original narrative, the focus is primarily on moral values and traditional storytelling structures. In contrast, this adaptation introduces more complex character motivations and explores internal conflicts, particularly through the figure of Roro Suminten. Her portrayal as both vulnerable and powerful adds psychological depth to the story.

The introduction of plot twists challenges readers' expectations and encourages deeper engagement with the narrative. Rather than presenting events linearly and predictably, the story invites readers to question appearances, motives, and outcomes. At the same time, essential cultural elements are preserved. The presence of figures such as Warok Suromenggolo, the use of symbolic objects like the keris, and references to Reog Ponorogo ensure that the story remains rooted in its cultural context.

This balance between preservation and innovation is central to the adaptation's purpose. It demonstrates that folklore can continue to evolve while still maintaining its identity and cultural significance.

The narrative is accompanied by a set of visual concepts designed to represent key scenes in the story. These include moments of emotional conflict, transformation, and resolution, as well as cultural elements such as traditional attire, the keris, and Reog Ponorogo symbolism.

To support digital visualisation and animation development, additional resources can be accessed through the following link:

<https://chatgpt.com/share/69084954-112c-800c-9959-203c91e1cc72>

The story is further supported by interactive activities designed to enhance comprehension and engagement. These activities include vocabulary-based games, riddles, and problem-solving exercises related to the narrative's characters and themes.

Wordwall Activity (Anagram and Interactive Game):

<https://wordwall.net/embed/11115678d327447a9f94836a2950049f?themeId=60&templateId=30&fontStackId=0>

Additional game-based learning tools are also implemented through platforms such as Wordwall and Educaplay, allowing readers to engage with the story in a more dynamic and participatory way. These digital materials are intended as complementary resources that extend the reading experience beyond the text. Readers may access them independently or integrate them into structured learning activities.

Comparison Between the Original and Developed Story of Warok Suromenggolo			
Aspect	Original Story (Traditional Version)	Developed Story (Modern Adaptation)	Change Type
Setting	Historical Ponorogo under Majapahit and Demak rule	Mythical version of Ponorogo with magical elements	Contextual change
Genre	Folk history, theater (Dongkrek), and cultural drama	Fantasy-romance legend with mystical adventure	Contextual enhancement
Tone	Moral, political, and cultural	Emotional, tragic, and spiritual	Tone shift
Main Theme	Loyalty, honor, justice, and moral virtue	Forbidden love, jealousy, curse, and redemption	Thematic expansion
Roro Warsiyani (Cempluk)	Daughter of Suromenggolo, loved by Raden Subroto	Portrayed as smart, brave, and the symbol of true love	Character deepening
Roro Suminten	Driven insane by heartbreak, later healed	Becomes cursed by dark magic; sacrifices herself to save others	Character transformation
Raden Subroto	Nobleman, son of Adipati Ponorogo	Revealed as Suromenggolo's apprentice in disguise, protecting Cempluk	Added plot twist
Warok Suromenggolo	Loyal warok defending Panembahan Agung fights rebellion	Mystical guardian battling spiritual forces and saving Suminten	Hero enhancement
Main Conflict	Political rebellion and personal jealousy.	Supernatural curse, internal struggle, and moral sacrifice.	Conflict transformation
Supernatural Elements	Present but limited (jin, aji dawet upas, pusaka).	Central to the plot (curse, spirit possession, light vs. darkness).	Supernatural enhancement

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PONOROGO FOLKTALE

CLASSIC AND MODERN RETELLINGS

Elok Putri Nimasari
Mariska Anggun Novianti
Shofia Aulia Rizqi
Navila Uliya Sahidah
Afrika Nurmufikhoh, dkk

Ponorogo is widely known for its iconic Reog performance, but beyond the stage lies a rich collection of folktales filled with meaning, mystery, and cultural wisdom. This book brings together selected stories from Ponorogo, presented in two forms: the classic versions that preserve their original narratives and modern retellings that reinterpret them for contemporary readers.

Through stories such as Golan and Mirah, Ngebel Lake, Sampung Village, and the legend of Dewi Songgolangit, readers are invited to explore themes of love, sacrifice, identity, and transformation. Each narrative not only reflects the values of the past but also offers new perspectives that resonate with today's generation.

By combining tradition with creativity, this book aims to bridge cultural heritage and modern storytelling. It is designed for students, educators, and general readers who wish to engage with Indonesian folklore in meaningful ways. This is not only a collection of stories, but an invitation to rediscover culture through imagination, reflection, and interpretation.