

BOHONG MERINANG
Bohong Merinang

Property of the State
Not for Commercial Use

**Language Development and Cultivation Agency
Ministry of Education and Culture
Republic of Indonesia
2018**

BOHONG MERINANG

Translated from
Bohong Merinang
written by Nurelide
published by
Language Development and Cultivation Agency
Ministry of Education and Culture
in 2016

This translation has been published as the result of the translation program organized
by The Center for Language Strategy and Diplomacy Development,
Language Development and Cultivation Agency, Ministry of Education and Culture
in 2018

Advisory Board	Dadang Sunendar Emi Emilia
Project Supervisor	Dony Setiawan
Translator	Ana Susilowati
Reviewer	Raden Safrina
Editor-in-chief	Theya Wulan Primasari
Editorial team	Andi Maytendri M., Ayu Dwi N., Didiek Hardadi, Ferry Yun, Hardina Artating, Herfin A., Lale Li Datil, Larasati, Meili Sanny S., Putriasari, R. Bambang Eko, Rizky Akbar, Roslia, Saprudin Padlil, Syukron Ramadloni, Toni Gunawan, Yolanda

All rights reserved.
Copyrights of the original book and the translation belong to
Language Development and Cultivation Agency,
Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia.

Language Development and Cultivation Agency
Ministry of Education and Culture, Republic of Indonesia
Jalan Daksinapati Barat IV, Ramangun, Jakarta
Telepon (021) 4706287, 4706288, 4896558, 4894546
Pos-el: badan.bahasa@kemdikbud.go.id
www.badanbahasa.kemdikbud.go.id

BOHONG MERINANG

In northern Dairi, there was a village named Sicike-Cike. Sicike-Cike Village had lovely, beautiful landscape, and the people there also lived a harmonious and peaceful life. In that village, a widow lived with her son, who was about seven year-old. Her son was named Simpersah, because from his birth until seven years of age, their lives had always been overridden with hardship.

Simpersah was a good and diligent boy. He was willing to work hard to meet the life needs of both himself and his mother. Some of the villagers made a living from cultivating and farming. Those who had large fields certainly needed human labors to work there. Simpersah and his mother were among the labors who were frequently called in to work. Despite their poverty-stricken lives, Simpersah and his mother were extremely against begging to anyone else. Every once in a while, they only ate roasted sweet potatoes; even if no one was hiring them, they would not eat anything at all.

One morning, Simpersah sat motionless in front of his house. He held a broom stick in his hand as he just finished sweeping the yard. The mother came approaching her son.

“What are you looking gloomy, son?” asked the mother.

“Is there anything that we can eat today, mother?” Simpersah asked her back.

“Our food today is enough just for you,” replied his mother.

“What is that supposed to mean?” Simpersah wanted to clarify his mother’s words.

“Our food today is only enough for one person to eat. You should have it. I’m still strong enough to withstand hunger, son. You don’t need to think about me, okay!” his mother explained.

“It can’t be, mother. You should have the food. I can cope with my hunger the whole day. You’re the one who has to eat; I don’t want you to get sick. You don’t need to make a sacrifice for me like that, mother” Simpersah rejected.

His mother simply reacted to her son’s word with a smile. Her son’s statement became quite an encouragement for her that day. She was sure that on that day, there would be someone willing to share their fortune with them.

And that’s how their daily lives went by, but they spent their days in Sicike-Cike Village with full patience. At day break, they hoped that there would be landowner who would hire them to work in his field. At least, the wage from it was enough to provide food in the next few days. It was the same with that one

sunny morning, a landowner came over to their shack. They were well-aware of the intention of the landowner's visit.

“Simpersah, I need work service from you and your mother today to clear my corn field at the foot of the mountain. Will you help me? Your wage is a sack of cassava later,” told that male landowner.

Simpersah gave answer before the mother had time to express her agreement, “Yes, we will, uncle. Today, I'm going to do it by myself. I will get it done no matter what.”

“Simpersah, my son, are you capable of doing it alone? Let me accompany you there,” his mother continued.

“It's all right, mother. Please just get the tools ready! I'm leaving soon,” said the boy again.

“Okay then, farewell. I hand over the field's job to you, son. Once you finish your work, you are allowed to take your wage at my house because I have already prepared it for you,” told the landowner to Simpersah before setting off.

It was pretty much hot that afternoon. At the foot of the mountain which was greenish for being covered by plants, Simpersah appeared to be busy with his working tools. There was a clashing sound of the tools against each other that broke the silence on that field. There was nothing but rattling sound of iron tools, rubbing

against weeds. He carefully cleaned the wild plants which harmed the corns. His little hands were dexterous and had got used to do such job. The child's face shielded under the bamboo hat seemed innocent and modest. Only for a piece of sweet potatoes to eat, he was willing to work all day long. The afternoon heat was enough to burn his skin. He was drenched in sweat, yet he kept on working on the vast, open cornfield.

From afar, a woman walked to his direction and was getting nearer to him. The woman carried a kettle filled with drinking water in her left hand, and a small package in her right hand. It seemed that she brought lunch to his son at work. She stopped for a moment, right behind his son who was still busy working. She paid attention to the boy who was working alone. Deep in her heart, she felt pity to see him. But, she couldn't do much to survive, other than giving permission for her son to work.

“Let's take a break! Look, I bring something for you,” told the mother to her son.

“What do you bring, anyway?” asked the boy while still working.

“See! Just stop a moment to get some rests! I bring a piece of sweet potatoes for you. It tastes sweet and delicious,” said the mother once again.

“Fine, let’s have a seat under the tree, mother!” the boy suggested. At last, Simpersah took a break from his activity and asked his mother to relax under a tree.

He instantly reached out the drinking water from his mother’s hands, taking a gulp to free his thirst and weariness. The mother simply smiled to see his son drinking.

“Ah, how comforting! You shouldn’t have brought the sweet potatoes for me. You should’ve eaten it yourself at home, mother. I’ve had enough water, it can keep me going until late afternoon,” said boy said softly.

“You could use some energy because you’re working hard all day long. That’s why I bring you food. I don’t want you to fall ill if you don’t eat anything. Just eat it!” the mother went on, handing that piece of sweet potatoes to her son.

“Okay, mother,” replied the boy shortly.

He grabbed that sweet potato from his mother’s hand, and then slowly peeled it to avoid breakage and quickly savored it. The woman’s facial expression showed that she was pleased to see her son enjoying the food.

“I’m already full, mother. Thank you for the roasted sweet potatoes that you brought me,” said the boy.

“I can’t stay here for too long. I must hurry home. It doesn’t feel right if I can do nothing but bugging your work here. Bye, son,” the mother replied.

Simpersah simply nodded in agreement to his mother’s comment.

The sun was getting farther to the west, but the sunray was felt to be increasingly hotter despite the late afternoon. Simpersah let his mother went home. He froze on his spot, staring at the figure of his mother who walking further away and finally disappeared from view. Sweats rolled down his body, yet he had to complete that work before dark. That day, he had to do considerably difficult job, clearing up a vast, wide field by himself using decent tools. But, the wage from the landowner was quite tempting for him.

On one occasion, in Sicike-Cike Village, a male stranger came. He was immaculately dressed. It was not known who gave him the direction to Sicike-Cike Village. It appeared that he was a wealthy Master from the city. He walked by himself on the not-so-wide village path. Every now and then, he looked around, as if he was trying to find an address.

“Excuse me! Pardon me, Folks! I’m wondering if any of you is interested to work in the city?” he asked to the crowd.

“I prefer to live in the village, Sir. Although my land is not that big, I’m eager to work on my land because the land products are enough to meet my family’s daily needs,” answered one of them.

“So do I, Sir,” another one replied.

“Maybe Simpersah is willing to accept it. Unfortunately, he’s not here at the moment. Perhaps the boy is still on the field now,” said a woman.

“Simpersah? Who is he and where is his house?” the Master asked, appeared enthusiastic.

“He’s a village boy here. He’s still a child, but he works very diligently. He lives with his mother in a shack at the end of this street,” explained a woman.

“Okay, thank you. I’m going to see his mother,” said the Master as he handed over a bit of money to the woman who had given him the information.

The Master walked away from the crowd. He looked for the shack belonged to Simpersah and his mother based on the direction given to him. It was not difficult to find their shack. From the outside, the Master observed to the shack’s condition which was quite alarming and quite rickety.

From that, he could make a safe bet that the people living in it were terribly poor. He stood there for a long period of time until

Simpersah's mother returned home and ran into him in front of the shack.

"Excuse me. Mister, may I know who you are? Who are you looking for here?" she greeted him.

"I'm a Master from the city. Forgive me if I have disturbed you. Can we talk inside?" He politely replied.

"Yes please, Sir!"

That simple shack had never been visited by a rich Master before. Simpersah's mother felt astonished by the presence of the Master in her shack. Without wasting much time, she asked a question to the stranger.

"Mister, what is your intention and purpose here?"

"Well, I will explain the intention of my visit. I was walking around this village, looking for a man to be employed in the city. As soon as I got close to village square, I met many people. One of them gave me direction to come here. They said you have a boy who worked hard," expressed the Master.

"So, you mean that you want to take my son to the city?" asked the mother to clarify.

"Yes, that's right, but if only if you give your permission," answered the Master.

“My son is only seven year-old, Sir. What can little boys like him do in the city later?” the mother carried on.

“He can work while studying there. I guarantee he will have a better future and better life in the city. You can place your trust on me!” The Master convinced her.

Simpersah’s mother paused briefly. She was thinking about those said by that Master. She truthfully hoped that Simpersah could lead a better life; that her son could attend school to get a bright future. If Simpersah stayed in the village with her, he would suffer the same destiny as her. Her son would be reduced to nothing but inheriting her lifetime poverty. Under the consideration of Simpersah’s future, Simpersah’s mother gave her approval to let the Master take her son to the city.

“Very well, Sir. I’m allowing my son to come with you to the city. I will let him know once he gets home. Thank you for your kindness.”

“I truly am happy to hear your decision. I will pick up Simpersah tomorrow. Please tell him to get himself ready!” told the Master.

Afternoon went by when the Master left Simpersah’s house. The drizzle coming down from the sky gently kissed his clothes. The fresh smell of the Master lingered inside the shack for quite some time. Simpersah’s mother accompanied her guest to the door. She stared at the sky above her and began to be overwhelmed with

anxiety, “Where is Simpersah? Why isn’t that kid home yet? He should have been home by now. Should I better go get him from the field?”

By evening, Simpersah’s work was finally finished. He already imagined bringing home a sack of sweet potatoes to eat with his mother. He rushed from the field to the landowner’s house.

Simpersah was half running. His steps were getting faster and faster. The landowner had already prepared his wage, allowing Simpersah to immediately take it in the house’s pit.

It was getting dark soon. Simpersah’s mother, for certain, had been waiting for him anxiously at home. He got into the house in a hassle, “Mother, this is my wage today. I think it will be enough for us to eat for the next few days.”

“Finally, you’re home. You must be exhausted. Take a bath immediately and get a rest! I have something important to talk to you about later,” said the mother to her son who was still drenched in sweats.

“Talking? Talking about what, mother?” Simpersah asked in curiosity.

“Not now,” his mother replied shortly.

Simpersah did what his mother told him. He hurried to take a bath then took a rest for a while.

The darkness came on, enveloping the atmosphere of Sicike-Cike Village. One by one, oil lamps were lit by the villagers inside the house to generate illumination. Meanwhile to illuminate their house yards, they lit small torches. The house of Simpersah and his mother was the only one that remained in total darkness.

In extremely poor condition, they would have been truly grateful just to be able to meet their daily food necessities, so buying oil for lamps was out of question. Lightless house condition was a common thing for Simpersah, but he still enjoyed it. After all, he could enjoy a little light coming from his neighbor's torch that they put in their yard. The nocturnal animals sang as they pleased, as if they were consoling the hearts of humans who were exhausted from working all day long. Simpersah was seen all alone when he cleaned his working tools in front of the shack.

“Simpersah, have you eaten?” his mother asked from inside of their shack.

“Yes, I have, he responded.

“Come inside for a moment! I want to talk to you,” asked his mother.

Simpersah put down his working tools at the corner of the shack. He then went inside the shack to see his mother.

“What is it, mother?”

“In the afternoon, one gentleman came to our shack. He would like to take you to the city for work. I have given my consent. So tomorrow, you have to come with him to the city! You will earn a better life there. You will have plenty of money and be able to attend school. After earning your money, you can go back to this village,” said his mother.

“Me, going to the city? But what about you, mother?” asked Simpersah in dismay.

“I will be just fine here, trust me! I give you permission to go to the city for your future. I hope you are willing to come with that Master. Tomorrow morning, he will come here to pick you up,” his mother said softly.

The boy’s heart melted eventually. For the sake of his mother’s wishes, Simpersah would leave for the city on the next day.

“Very well, mother. I’m willing to do it,” he answered.

Simpersah went back to the foreground of the shack. He sat there alone, daydreaming, whilst his mother was busy packing up his things. That night, the mother and child were overwhelmed by bleak sadness, just as bleak as the night sky in front of their shack. That was how Simpersah felt about it.

His mother seemed to be caught between a rock and a hard place. The mother’s tears rolled down on several pieces of Simpersah’s

clothes that he would bring tomorrow. Until Simpersah turned seven, his mother had never felt this way. Such feeling was even more painful than the time of her husband's passing, a weird kind of feeling yet terribly unpleasant. Simpersah's mother held back her pain that left her with a stifling chest.

After some time struggling with her sadness, his mother came to her sense. She had to be strong to let go of her only son to the city; that was the best way for her son's future. Simpersah must receive higher education; he should not be like his parents who did not get education which led them to live as farm laborers in their village, live hard, and have nothing.

At the meantime, outside the shack, a boy as small as Simpersah had to live that tremendously heavy life. He already knew that starting from tomorrow, he would leave his mother. He would go far from his village and live with strangers in the city. He was about to lose village atmosphere that constantly brought serenity, though he had to live an underprivileged life. He was very well aware that as long as his mother was by his side, something would not go missing. His innocent heart as a child led him to grieve in silence. Nonetheless, he was also unable to condemn the destiny written for him and his mother.

Simpersah was drowned in silence for quite some time. It seemed that there was no sign of life in his shack. Maybe his mother had gone to sleep. He did not hear any sound made by his mother. He

moved into the shack and found his mother asleep, and then he rushed to bed. The dead of night took Simpersah away into his dreamland; a kind of plain and unsophisticated children's dream.

It was a quiet dawn, followed by morning that was about to come. His mother woke up from her sleep that morning. Her little boy was fast asleep next to her. She closely looked at Simpersah's face. To be honest, Simpersah's departure was a hard decision for her. Losing Simpersah would probably equal to hard days for her. On the other hand, she thought that Simpersah's departure was for the sake of that boy's future. Simpersah had to have a better life than his parents. He ought to be a great man in the future. She, therefore, had to let her son go to the city.

"Simpersah, wake up! It will be morning soon. You have to get ready to leave for the city," the mother whispered in her son's ear softly.

Then, Simpersah woke up. He opened his eyes slowly. Without being asked, he directly took a bath and prepared himself. Simpersah was an intelligent boy that he understood what his mother wanted. Without waiting for a long time, the Master came to pick up Simpersah as he promised. Without much ado, the Master instantly asked Simpersah to go with him right away.

"Madam, here's a little money just to make ends meet for the next few days. Please accept it!" He said to Simpersah's mother.

“Mister, you really are generous, but pardon me, I can’t accept your gift,” said the mother as she pushed away the Master’s hand that held some cash.

The convincing look on the eyes of Simpersah’s mother made the Master comprehend the principle within herself, “Very well, I won’t force you to. We shall leave now! Believe me, Simpersah will be just fine. I will send him to a school in the city to make him a smart person with good future. I hope you can accept it wholeheartedly.”

The Master carefully took Simpersah by the hand, and walked away from his mother’s shack. That little boy simply obeyed. He tried to stay strong though this separation truly shattered his heart into pieces. One step, two steps, and as he took the eighth step, Simpersah glanced at his mother, only to find his mother smiling from a distance. Initially, Simpersah wanted to turn around and ran to hug his mother, but the smile on his mother’s face was enough to be a cure for his sadness. That smile emboldened him to leave Sicike-Cike and his mother; that smile that had always become a healing to his weariness and pain for so long. He then held his head down, his tears streamed down his face along the way.

“Dear God, I have been separated from my father whom I’ve never come to know. This time, I’m parting ways with my mother who has been the one to lean on for so long. I don’t know what

will come in my future, but I will go through this if my mother sincerely accepts this,” he told himself.

In the front of the shack, the mother witnessed her son's departure. The light steps of her son and the Master went further away. Yet, the mother kept staring at Simpersah's little shoulders. For all this time, both of them went through the harshness of life together. Not even one single complaint made by her son, it was his mother instead who felt guilty for incapability of providing a decent life for her son. On his shoulder, Simpersah put the bundle that his mother previously prepared all night.

The bundle was not that big, as it only contained some clothes belonged to Simpersah and a piece of sweet potatoes for lunch on the way. Those clothes were not nice clothes anyway because Simpersah never had one. He simply needed the clothes to cover his skinny body. His mother had never bought clothes for him because she never had extra money. He got some of the clothes from his neighbors who felt pity over him.

The separation drama between that mother and child came to an end. After a long journey, they arrived in the city of Medan. Upon arriving at Medan, that Master entrusted Simpersah to a wealthy merchant. That merchant was Indonesian citizen of Chinese descent. He lived as a widower and had got a daughter of the same age as Simpersah. His wife passed away several days after giving birth to their daughter; hence the little girl had never come

to know her mother. The child grew up in her father's care and nurture. In fact, the daughter of the Master was a smart girl. But, maybe because she never knew a mother's figure, she grew up into slightly introvert and selfish girl. The merchant expected that the presence of Simpersah would give her a friend to share and play with.

The merchant allowed Simpersah to stay at his house. He gave a job to Simpersah. Other than that, the merchant sent him to school with his daughter. Besides having his own income, Simpersah also received proper education in the city. It was not difficult for Simpersah to adjust to city life. He then grew up to be a smart, diligent, and handsome young man. He was no longer thin, disheveled, and poor little Simpersah. In daylight, he spent his time studying at school. After school, he helped the merchant to trade. Simpersah's life got better by day.

He learnt business science from his master. He was also highly trusted by the merchant because of his honesty. In fact, people sometimes assumed that Simpersah was his master's son. They thought so because they saw Simpersah's business talent and characteristics which resembled those of his master.

“How is it going, Simpersah? Do you like to stay and work here?” asked his master when he just got home from school.

“Yes, I do, Sir. You really are a kind person,” answered him.

“Don’t you have the intention to get back to your village?” asked the merchant once again.

“I’m still in the position to save some money, Sir. Once I have large sum of money in my savings, I would visit my mother and my house in the village,” said Simpersah.

“Suppose you returned to your village, would you come back here later?” the Merchant further asked him.

“I haven’t thought about that, Sir. Honestly, I’m glad to live here. I can go to school and have a job. If I went back to the village, it would be impossible for me to continue my education, and what can I do there?” he explained.

“Then, what about your mother?” asked the merchant again.

“Why do you ask about my mother out of the blue, Sir?” Simpersah grew suspicious.

“It’s all right. I was just asking,” he replied casually.

“I haven’t thought about my mother either. Right now, I just want to focus on myself first. I cannot think of anyone else yet. Excuse me, Sir, I need to go get changed, then I have to head to store,” Simpersah concluded.

“Yes, please,” his employer replied.

The employer allowed Simpersah to excuse himself. He looked at the steps taken by that teenage boy's until he disappeared from view, thinking, "He's a wonderful boy. It's impossible for me to let him go. He has to keep working here for my business interests. He shall not return to his village. If necessary, I will marry him off to my daughter to maintain my business existence here."

Days went by, kept going ahead until the thirteenth year. And that meant Simpersah had turned twenty. In addition to his intelligence and talents, years of experience mastered by Simpersah sharpened him into a well-accomplished merchant in Medan. He made a name for himself and was trusted by many persons, thus expanding the merchant's trade associate and improving his business profits. The merchant became proud of Simpersah.

Behind the success achieved, Simpersah, a boy from Sicike-cike Village, turned into an arrogant person. He had forgotten where he came from, as if he was getting too big for his boots.

"Now, you have more skills in trading than me, Simpersah. You're famous and have plenty of money. You must maintain your reputation well. Most people thought that you were my son. If they found out you were once a poor boy from a village, it would certainly taint your reputation. Your name would be ruined and all of your colleagues would be reluctant to do business with

you. So, you'd better change your name into Sisennang," said the merchant one day in between their bustling trading activity.

For a moment, Simpersah was thinking in silence. The merchant's words had gotten through his head.

"All right, Sir. Your advice is a good thing and I shall pay attention to it. From now on, I will change my name into Sisennang. Thanks for your advice, Sir."

On the next day, a party was held at the merchant's house. The party was held to announce to the public that Simpersah had changed his name into Sisennang. That party was attended by colleagues and the communities around the merchant's house. Simpersah aka Sisennang seemed to enjoy himself at that party very much. He completely had forgotten his biological mother and village. He had been having a good time in the city. The old Simpersah, an innocent and ingenuous child from the village had gone; now he's Sisennang, a wealthy merchant known by many people everywhere.

"All right, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for coming here. I want to announce that from now on, I will be known as Sisennang. For all business interests, I shall use that name. Thanks for your kind attention and cooperation. And that's the brief announcement from me. Enjoy this party," conveyed

Simpersah in his speech. Thereafter, the audiences gave lively applause as appreciation for him.

After the party, Sisennang looked uneasy. It seemed something bugged his mind. He wanted to convey something important to the merchant, his Master. His behavior caught the attention of the merchant, but he had not had the time to speak to Sisennang. The clamoring sound previously heard in the merchant's house had turned into a different atmosphere. The frenzied party in that luxury house inhabited by many people was no longer heard. The maids and workers at the merchant's house might have taken rest time. That night, Sisennang and the merchant were the only ones there who had not gone to sleep yet.

Under full consideration, Sisennang braved himself to meet that middle-aged man in his room. From the outside, it appeared that the lamps in the merchant's room hadn't gone off. Sisennang concluded that his master had not slept. The knocking at the door was heard from the outside.

“Come in, Sisennang!” asked the man with that oriental face.

Sisennang then entered the room and sat on the edge of the merchant's bed, “Apparently you haven't gone to sleep too, Sir.”

“What's wrong? It seems there's something important you wanted to tell me. You come to see me late at night. You can't even wait until tomorrow,” the merchant reacted.

“Hmm, look, Sir. I would like to convey a highly important matter to you,” told Sisennang nervously.

“Just tell me! I’m listening,” said the merchant.

Sisennang fell silent momentarily. He highly respected the man before his eyes. That man had taken the roles of his parents for all this time so he did not wish to offend him in the least, but he had to convey the desire in his heart to him no matter what.

“I’m planning to get married, Sir. My peers, business colleagues my age, they are mostly married,” Sisennang went on as he got increasingly nervous.

Apparently, Sisennang asked for marriage permission to his master.

As a matter of fact, that request was not surprising. The merchant had predicted that in the near future, Sisennang would surely discuss the matter with him, not to mention after noticing Sisennang’s anxiety that whole day. The merchant did not immediately respond to Sisennang’s request for marriage permission. He paused for a moment. He thought: “If I marry this child off to someone else, then he may not want to stay with me. Then, who will continue all of my business?”

Sisennang held his head down in silence, waiting for an answer from the merchant. Finally, the merchant voiced his answer: “Have you got someone to be your wife?”

“No, I haven’t, Sir,” he replied shyly.

“If so, should I choose the one for you?” questioned the man again.

“If you are willing to make a choice, then your choice will be the best for me, Sir,” answered Sisennang. This time, he answered boldly and confidently.

“Well, tomorrow I will arrange a meeting for you and your bride-to-be. Now, go back to your room and have some rest!” said the merchant, ending their conversation.

That night, Sisennang’s eyes were wide shut already. He was curious about his future wife chosen by the merchant. As he lied down, staring at the room ceiling, he got lost in his fantasy: “Hopefully, Mr. Su will choose his daughter to be my wife. I have always liked her. Besides her beauty, she must be the sole heir of Mr. Su’s entire wealth. Getting married to his daughter equals to possess all of his businesses. I would live in luxury while maintaining my reputation as a merchant. The point is my life will be perfect. I feel like I deserve to be with his daughter. Miss Su has always treated me well so I think she likes me, too. She

has never spoken a word about another man to me as well. I'm sure she fancies me and wants to be my wife."

The next day, the merchant called Sisennang into the living room. He wanted to talk with him in private.

"I will marry you off to my daughter. I have already decided the date. So, both of you only need to prepare yourselves," mentioned Mr. Su in brief, solid and clear words.

Something was expected and then it was there. Sisennang paused. He seemed to disbelieve what he had just heard. His heartbeat went wild, his breathing seemed to get unsteady, and his knees were trembling. He did not expect that something he had been dreaming about would come to reality.

Then, they did the preparation for the wedding. The due date finally arrived. Mr. Su married his daughter off to Sisennang. The wedding party was held in extreme luxury. Many people were invited to attend the grand event. The feast served came in many varieties. The bride and groom seemed to have turned into king and queen. Mr. Su appeared to be over the moon to have Sisennang as his son-in-law. His radiant face seemed to show that he had forgotten his acute illness.

As one already expected, before long, Sisenang had become a great merchant in the city, taking over the role of his son-in-law.

Ever since his business ran by Sisennang, Mr. Su only needed to keep an eye on the business because all the work there was already handled by Sisennang.

Sisennang had been living in his pastures new for many years. He had forgotten to pick up his mother in Sicike-Cike Village. He took a very good care at his reputation as a great merchant in the city, making him embarrassed to introduce his mother to anyone. Shortly after Sisennang took over his father-in-law's business, Mr. Su passed away. Sisennang was occasionally assisted by his wife in managing all of these businesses. That married couple worked well together, bringing in much profit for their business. In fact, Sisennang made his name far to the neighboring country. But, it is unfortunate that Sisennang's success made him even more boastful.

"I'm the richest merchant in the wide world. I have everything. Nobody's able to compete with me," he said that at every merchant meeting in Medan.

Every now and then, his wife reminded and rebuked him for not telling such snobbery around. But, he never had a care about his wife's warning, for her words fell on deaf ears. His wife could not do a thing but to withstand her husband's attitude, despite the occasional embarrassment she felt in front of many people. The people around Sisennang held his attitude in total contempt.

At the meantime, in Sicike-Cike Village, Sisennang's mother desperately missed her son. She really wanted to meet her son, Simpersah, but she had no knowledge of her son whereabouts, let alone having money to go where he was. Every time, she wished that her son would come home soon. Sisennang's mother cried every single day, calling out her son, making the people in that village showed sympathy to her. "Oh, Simpersah, how much I miss you, son, but I don't know where you are. What can I do to see you? Come back home, son, please come home. I'm waiting for you here."

The villagers felt mercy towards her. They voluntarily raised money for paying the transportation fare for Sisennang's mother to go to the city. Due to the kindness of the villagers, his mother finally went to Medan. She brought a piece of sweet potato as a gift for his son.

"Please be careful on your way!" told her neighbor.

"I will, thank you all for your kindness," replied Sisennang's mother.

"Hopefully you get to meet Simpersah soon," other neighbors expressed their blessing.

"Thank you once again," said Simpersah's mother.

After traveling far from the village to the city, the mother of Simpersah/ Sisennang finally arrived somewhere in Medan. The mother asked the people there, “Do you know where Simpersah is?” And then they replied, “Who is Simpersah? Nobody’s named Simpersah in this region. The only one here is Sisennang. He’s a tall man with dark complexion, prominent nose, and sharp eye sight.”

“I’m looking for my son named Simpersah, but he has similar physical features as Sisennang you mentioned earlier,” said Simpersah’s mother.

“To make it clear, just go to see the man named Sisennang,” advised a young man she met.

Furthermore, the mother asked again, “Where does Sisennang live?”

One of them gave her direction to Sisennang’s address; and then, the woman walked to her son’s house. She asked here and there to find the address, until she ultimately found the address in question. She arrived in front of a luxury house with spacious yard. There are various types of ornamental plants that were arranged neatly, as well as several brands of vehicles parked in the garage. The owner of the house was truly a wealthy man. She braved herself to go in there.

When the mother went knocking of Sisennang's door, a beautiful young woman came out, "Who do you like to meet?" welcomed Sisennang's wife.

"I came from Sicike-Cike Village. Do you know where my son, Simpersah, is?" She replied softly.

"Wait a minute! I will ask my husband first," said Sisennang's wife again.

Then Mr. Su's young daughter came into the house and told her husband. "There is an elderly mother who came here and asked about her son named Simpersah. She also said that she came from Sicike-Cike Village."

Sisennang was shocked to hear what his wife told him, but he tried to remain calm. The reason was because he did not want his wife to find out about his origin.

Sisennang rose from his seat and walked to the front door, followed by his wife behind him. They met the woman. Sisennang met his elderly mother; her hair had turned grey and begun to look so old. The woman who came in rag was indeed her biological mother. His mother's face was still fresh in his memory that he could recognize her despite her old face. His childhood memories flashed in the woman's face. He had his eyes on the woman, from her head down to her tiptoe. Inside the little basket she was carrying, a piece of roasted sweet potato was seen.

It was his favorite food as a child. Sweet potatoes roasted by his mother were the most delicious for Simpersah/ Sisenang. The presence of the woman that gave him flashes of his entire childhood memories made him completely believe that she, unmistakably, was his mother. As the appearance of the woman seemed inappropriate, Sisenang was humiliated in front of his wife. Proud Sisenang eventually denied that the woman was his biological mother. He haughtily said, “Nobody’s named Simpersah here. You must have got the wrong address. Your presence is nothing but nuisance here, so you better get going, old hag!”

“If so I’m leaving now. I’m sorry for wasting your time,” the woman was disappointed. She initially hoped that the man she met in that house truly was her son.

Simpersah and his wife immediately closed the door when the mother left. She had to continue her journey, keep walking to find her son.

“Don’t you know the woman for real, my husband? Isn’t Simpersah your old name?” asked Simpersah’s wife with a bit of suspicion.

“What’s your point?” Simpersah asked her back to conceal his mistake.

“It’s okay. I’m just asking because I feel a bit unsettled after meeting that woman,” replied his wife.

“Feeling unsettled like what?” Simpersah once again asked her, slightly worried.

“I feel sorry for her. I imagine if I were her. Good grief, what an unfortunate faith she must have endured!” told his wife emphatically.

“Never mind, she’s gone anyway. You shouldn’t think of her anymore, we don’t even know she is. She might just claim to be my mother had I told her that I was Simpersah who once changed my name into Sisennang,” said Simpersah, convincing his wife.

But you should have asked her intention here,” urged his wife.

“I shouldn’t have to. Her grubby appearance indicates that she’s just a poor woman from a village. What else did she want other than asking some money from us? Had she just begged me straightforwardly, I would have given her some. She had to pretend to look for Simpersah. I have suspicion that she had evil intention against us,” Simpersah gave her a reason.

“Whatever, I still feel sorry for her,” his wife said that as she left her husband alone in the workroom.

After walking for a day long, Simpersah’s mother got hungry. She rested on a bench on the roadside. There, she ate the roasted

sweet potato that she carried. Before long, dusk fell and the street was getting dark, so the mother walked slowly. As her eyesight had weakened, she could no longer see things clearly. Still, she kept walking to nowhere. She didn't even realize when she had walked into the center of a market.

“Where’s my son, Simpersah? Where else should I go looking for you? Then, why did that young man look so much like Simpersah?” she thought about it as he walked.

The night was getting late, and the woman’s eyes became blurrier. She could not even see that there is a vehicle speeding towards her.

“Hiiiiikkssss....Daaaaarrkh.....” The sound of someone abruptly slammed on their brake was heard, followed by quite loud crashing sound.

It was a streak of unfortunate events for her. She was hit by a car. Witnessing that incident, people came to her aid. Not long after, the security officers also came and hastily took her to hospital. On the way to hospital, the woman took her last breath. The woman’s body was then brought back to Sicike-Cike Village. She was buried by the villagers under bamboo groves.

The news on the accident happened to Sisennang’s mother was spread to every corner of the city. The news also reached the ears of Sisennang’s wife. She was saddened by the news of the death

of an old woman who once came to her house. She told the news on that woman to her husband, “That woman was indeed ill-fated, right? Some time ago she got into an accident. She died and was buried in Sicike-Cike Village.”

Sisennang just casually responded to the story told by his wife: “Why should we care about the people that we don’t know?” said Sisennang to his wife.

Time went on, the trading business run by Sisennang and his wife suffered huge losses. They lost their entire wealth, except for the house that they occupied. It all started when Sisennang went overseas to shop for goods. Sisennang and his merchandise were transported by a ship. On the way back, their ship was drowned, but Sisennang managed to survive from that disaster. Word has it that Sisennang’s ship and all of its contents were turned into a boulder. That boulder still exists to this present day nearby Sibolga City and was named Marsala Island.

The huge loss that they suffered left Sisennang devastated. Then they found themselves fallen into poverty. Seeing the condition of her husband, the wife tried to find out what to do. She then came to see people who had the knowledge to heal people and were well-known everywhere. All the traditional healers whom she questioned about her husband’s fate gave the same answer: that married couple must clean up the grave of Sisennang's mother in Sicike-Cike Village. After that, their fate could return as it was

before. The wife believed in the words of the traditional healer then went back to her home in order to convey that important matter to her husband.

Once she got home, Sisennang immediately scolded his wife: “Where have you been? You do nothing but going around looking for psychics. You don’t do your duty as a wife anymore. You don’t take care of your house or your husband. Then, what did you get out there? Aren’t you tired of leaving the house every day? I even have gone tired seeing you like this.”

“That’s still better than what you do. What you do all day long is to mourn over your fate, Sisennang. Every time I come home like this, you always vent your anger and think you’re free of guilt. In fact, I’m trying to recover our economic condition. You’ve committed an evil deed. You have forgotten your responsibility as the head of the family. You’ve to rise up to improve your fate. Your family needs food and other necessities to fulfill,” she replied.

“What’s the way out told by the psychic to you anyway?” Sisennang asked sarcastically.

“Every psychic whom I visited told me that we must clean up your mother’s grave in Sicike-Cike Village. Once we did that, our fate would return to the way it was before.

Just tell me the truth, what have you done to your mother? Our awful destiny today might be the manifestation of your mother's curse, Sisennang. Do realize it and admit it!"

"I've never done anything, believe me!" Sisennang reacted.

"I'm going to dump you if you insist on being dishonest with me," she threatened.

Having been threatened and cornered by his wife in such a way, Sisennang finally caved in.

"The old woman who once came here looking for her son was indeed my mother. I was embarrassed to admit it because I feared that it would taint my reputation at that time. Besides, I don't want you to dump me if you find out whose son I am. I'm not the son of your father's distant relative. My mother was alive and lived in the village. So, I was just a village boy who took my chances in the city. Now I realize that all the misfortunes happening in our lives lately may be the result of my sin to my mother. Forgive me, my wife! Tell me, what should I do to improve our situation?"

His wife was moved by her husband's confession. But, she firmly told him: "No matter what, we have to visit your mother's grave soon. You cannot be a wicked son. If you don't want to do it, then let me go there alone to find it."

On the next day, they made an agreement to visit the grave of Sisennang's mother in Sicike-Cike Village. Thanks to the direction given by the villagers, they finally found the grave of his mother.

Upon arriving at his mother's grave, Sisennang prayed and asked for forgiveness for all the mistakes he committed. A heavy rain fell down thereafter. It appeared that nature was also furious for Sisennang's treatment towards his mother. Not long after, the graveyard seemed to be fiercely hit by storm. Strong winds abruptly came along with the tears of Sisennang and his wife. The bamboo groves around the grave flew one by one and hit both of them. That husband and wife died on the spot. Their dead bodies were found by the villager later on, and both of them were buried next to the grave of Sisennang's mother. And that was the end of the story of a wicked son from Sicike-Cike Village.