

**SERINDU HATI PRINCESS AND PERBIMBANG**  
*Putri Serindu Hati dan Perbimbang*

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## SERINDU HATI PRINCESS AND PERBIMBANG

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## SERINDU HATI PRINCESS AND PERBIMBANG

The rice expanse is yellow like a giant rug. It stretched over the valley of Bukit Resam. The rustling of the wind and the waving of the tree branches made the morning more and more cheerful. A cool mountain breeze and dew drops in the leaves were still very clear dangling the morning light. There was a golden glow rising from the east of Bukit Resam indicating an owl's chirp had been replaced by a sparrow that would fly low, hovering then perched on the rice groves that stretched as far as the eye could see.

“Huaaaaak.... Husss.... Husss.... Huaaak....”

"Oops, birds, do not perch on my rice paddy, what will I eat?" murmured Princess Serindu Hati while walking down the wet rice field dikes.

A teenage girl, running to and fro while driving away the birds that occasionally sneaked into the clumps of her paddy that started to turn yellow. With gasping breath, she continued to run after the birds that sneaked into the grove of her paddy, sometimes had to fall because of the dew that still wetted the grass in the rice field. The girl vigorously guarded her paddy so as not to be eaten by the starving naughty sparrows. That's the tradition that people did when the rice paddies began to turn yellow. Because of the farming land they were working on in the

valley of the hill, many birds became pests for their rice. If it was not guarded and the birds were driven away, the planted rice can be exhausted before it was harvested.

"If father and mother were here, maybe I wouldn't have been busy like this. But let it be, *insya Allah* God willing there must be a lesson and I pray that everything is fine in the garden and later when they come home we have money for school fees of my sisters. Amen." Her reverie

The girl's name was Princess Serindu Hati a beautiful girl with a simple appearance. She spent all day in the fields of his parents only. She had no time to play with her peers. From morning to evening she just did house chores and waited for rice in the rice fields that began yellowing.

"Woi, *Dik* ...? Princess, come here, sit down first. Have a break. I bring coffee and bread for you." Instantly Princess turned and saw Perbimbang smiling sweetly while waving his hand as he called her.

"Woy *Dang* ..."

"There you are, have you been around for a long time, Dang?" asked Princess.

With a bright smile and a rosy face Princess sat next to the handsome man. The two teenagers sat casually while drinking coffee and bread brought by Perbimbang.

"Not really, just now. I want to replace Mother in the rice field because she is hungry, while bringing you bread and coffee here, sister. You must be hungry, right?"

Princess smiled and nodded not knowing whatever was in her mind. No one knew what was in her heart. Her beautiful eyes sparkled far into the rice groves and shouted out the sparrows. Occasionally banners attracted her voice. The clattering noise made the birds pecking rice fly away. Meanwhile, there were shouting voices from other fields. The screams made the birds discouraged to perch again.

"If we're together like this, can you guess what's in the sparrow's mind, *Dik*?" joked Perbimbang breaking the silence of the moment.

"Ha ha ha ha ..." Princess's laughter broke out until she coughed.

"Ah, *Dang*, you're kidding, I do not know what it is," said Princess with a flushed face.

"By the middle of the day, the birds were usually getting desolate and the naughty sparrows returned to the nest. Princess returned

to sit in the hut that her father and mother had made before leaving for their garden for several months.

Every day Perbimbang came accompanying Princess to rest and became the only friend for Princess to joke and tell stories because the other kids were busy with their school lessons. Princess who had dropped out of school since junior high school was now only able to learn to understand the life of her parents and guided her younger siblings to become useful people someday.

The couple of teenagers were engrossed in their minds and momentarily the mood became quiet.

Perbimbang sat by the rope to pull the scarecrow to move to break the silence with his screams. "Hus hus ...." Perbimbang was a simple, kind-hearted young man who often accompanied Princess playing in her fields. Princess was very happy because there was someone who wanted to accompany her playing in the fields when her parents were not available. Moreover, the person was a good and responsible young man. Princess and Perbimbang spent their days in the rice fields while waiting for the yellow rice.

"*Dik*, you know that I like you for long. *Dang* love you because you're a good girl, independent, and polite. I want to invite you to

meet my father and mother," asked Perbimbang to Princess Serindu Hati with his face holding back a loving smile.

"Yeah, Dang, I know, but ..." Princess turned her eyes so far as to penetrate the mighty challenging Bukit Resam.

"But what, Dik ...?" Perbimbang was curious.

"No, Dang ..." Princess was still silent. Princess continued her conversation, "Dang, you know my condition? My father and mother are in the garden to make money for the necessities of life, sometimes they do not come home for up to a year. Now I live with two younger siblings, other families sometimes do not care about our fate." Princess bowed silently. There was a momentary silence." Besides, if I come to your house, I am afraid that I will be labelled as mischievous girl because it is abstinence in our custom, *Dang*?" explained Princess, then took a deep breath.

Perbimbang had been silent listening to the expression from the heart of the girl he loved. He occasionally looked at Princess's hair that decomposed and flickered swept by the morning wind of the slopes of Bukit Resam that seemed beautifully dotted though sometimes rarely shampooed."Yes, *Dik*, I fully understand, if we do not take this way it's hard for us to get married. I want to marry you *Dik*. Let's try it first, you do not have to be afraid because my parents will surely bless us." Perbimbang tried to persuade Princess."It is not wrong *Dik*. Rejang custom allows

such a thing. We do not make the family disgrace anyway. The only fact is that our village people rarely do it." Perbimbang tried to reassure Princess.

No word could refuse Perbimbang's persuasion. Princess melted away and was willing to come to his house. Perbimbang was a good man and she loved him so much.

Actually, Princess was very happy to meet the parents of Perbimbang. Her lonely and deprived life made her afraid to express her feelings.

Furthermore, she was afraid that the people who do not like her would make this a gossip in her village and she really did not want it to happen.

As promised, Friday night the pair of teenagers met at Perbimbang's house to meet his parents. The moment had arrived and Princess had to keep it. The atmosphere of the night was quiet. The air was cold to pierce the bones because the village of Taba Atas was poured by the rain. Usually people would stay at home after the rain, especially if there was a new body buried in the afternoon. The atmosphere would be a bit gripping and children who usually still played on the sidewalk or in front of their respective homes would not be visible for the next few days, even until the seventh day after the death of the villagers there. The sound of people's reciting Quran was faintly heard. The



sound of recitals and the chanting of the sacred verses from a distance made Friday night feel sacred, but tense. Princess walked by herself and silently continued to pray, "O God, I am going to seek happiness. Blessed your servant O *Allah. Bismillahir rahmanir Rahim.*"

"Oh God, why this feeling is so different. My heart is pounding fast, but it feels sad God. Do I take the right way? Father, mother ... forgive Princess." Princess kept walking while muttering to herself.

"There is a *pengajian* at Dang Perbimbang's house. I'd better just wait here, anyway he will soon come." Princess arrived at the front of crowded Perbimbang's house.

"Will his father and mother accept me or not?" murmured Princess dreamily sitting under a promontory tree at the corner of the fence while waiting for Perbimbang.

*Pengajian* at the Perbimbang's house was crowded by residents of Dusun Taba Atas. The parents of both men and women, *datuk*, and teenage girls were also busy and preoccupied with reading the verses of the Qur'an. No one would have expected the coming of Princess Serindu Hati because only few knew the agreement they had planned together, not even the Perbimbang family. Furthermore, Perbimbang and Princess also lived in different villages so that Princess did not know the girls in Perbimbang's

village except some parents who knew well Princess's parents who were currently in the garden.

"*Assalamualaikum, Dik?*" Greeted a handsome man in white clothes and a slightly pale face.

"Have you been waiting for long, *Dik Princess?*" His smile and handsome face looked more handsome illuminated by the light from Perbimbang's house.

"*Wa alaikum salam, Dang.*" Princess's smile added to her aura of beauty that night.

"Where are you from, Dang Perbimbang? I have been waiting for long," said Princess while standing up from her seat.

"Dang, there is a recitation inside. I heard that there is a reading of *tahlilan*. Regular *pengajian*, Dang? "

"Come on in, it's bad to stay outdoors at night, and not good to be seen by people passing by," said Perbimbang as he stepped over the fence and walked in front followed by Princess behind him.

Perbimbang and Princess entered into the house through a side door that happened to be open. In the main chamber the recitation continued. The atmosphere of sadness was felt. Princess became wondering. "This is a *pengajian*, but why is it so sad? The clothes used also looked different. Some white and others are black." Princess kept thinking. Princess who first entered into the

mansion glanced from the corner of her eyes to the people who were in the recitation one by one. Princess still looked well behaved and polite although her eyes continued to pay attention to everything in the room. Many photos were displayed on the wall of the house including family photos and some wedding photos and graduation photos."Indeed Dang Perbimbang is wealthy person in this village, his house is spacious and the furniture is plenty." Princess kept whispering in her heart. "It looks like an atmosphere of grief," murmured Princess.

Princess sat and shook hands with several people in the house. Princess was sitting next to a middle-aged woman who was quite different from everyone in the house. This woman seemed very sad and her eyes occasionally closed to hold back her tears. Her face looked shabby and her hair looked tangled and unmade with a comb. Arriving inside the house, Princess shook hands with Mrs. Martiana. She was Perbimbang's mother. The middle-aged woman seemed very sad and lethargic.

"Princess, this is my mother."

Princess put out her hand shaking hands and kissed her hand. Then, Perbimbang spoke again.

"Dik, I have something to do for a moment, you stay here with Mother, I'll be back again." Perbimbang went away leaving Princess and his mother. Princess nodded and Perbimbang passed

away from his room full of people reading the *tahlilan*. "Mom, I am Princess, Dang's friend. Why do you look gloomy and so sad, are you sick *Emak*?" asked the Princess kindly as the opening of her conversation.

"Princess ..." the woman looked at Princess's face carefully. The stream of tears fell down in the hands of Princess.

Princess let her hand held by Perbimbang's mother. She realized that there was something felt by this woman because her tears were so heartbreaking and did not stop flowing. The mother sobbed and the tears rushed. Princess's hand was still held and the woman began to wipe her eyes and face with a scarf that had looked messy

"Who are you, dear?" asked this woman after calming down.

"Princess, Mak. I am Princess, Dang Perbimbang's friend. At first we wanted to meet with mother and father tonight. We had an appointment last week at "*mulea pit nak saweak*", but there is a recitation, I become so confused," said Princess with a smile. The middle-aged woman embraced and hugged Princess Serindu Hati tightly. There was something she wanted to say, but no words came from her mouth.

"Princess, my dear child. Forgive all mistakes made by Perbimbang. Maybe he used to promise you to pick you up. Please forgive him." lamented Mrs. Martiana.

"Yeah, Mak! Dang Perbimbang promised to pick me up, but it is okay, Princess is already here and coming safely so you do not grieve anymore. Dang Perbimbang has also met Princess and invites me to enter, Mak. So, you don't need to be sad anymore," Princess hugged the woman while saying as it is with the hope that her grief could be reduced because it seemed she was a woman who was very dear to her children.

Hearing the words of Princess, Mother Martina instantly fell silent and released her embrace. Her surprise came as Princess said that she had met with Perbimbang.

"Princess, you don't dream dear, do you? Are you aware my dear?" Mak Perbimbang rubbed Princess's head.

"Yes Mak, Princess came earlier and waited for Dang Perbimbang in front of the house, Dang Perbimbang came to Princess and invited in," said Princess. "*Lah*, it's Dang Perbimbang who bid me farewell Mak, to go out for a while. Maybe he is around, Mak," Princess explained again. "Why, Mak?" Princess asked, watching everyone who was staring at her.

The sound of chanting the Qur'an verse that was sung by the man who was *takziah* stopped and the situation turned silent and quiet. They looked at each other and occasionally looked at Princess with a wonder and puzzled look. Princess Serindu Hati was becoming a whim. She was confused as everyone in

Perbimbang's house looked at her weirdly. Princess tried to calm down and fixed the seat. Princess tried to think and recalled what she had just said, there was something wrong and mistaken that made everyone silent. Princess kept thinking. After a few moments Princess tried to open her voice.

"Sorry, Mak and Ladies and gentlemen, am I wrong?" Princess asked with a frown signing that she also did not understand with the attitude of those people. Suddenly Mrs. Martina, Perbimbang's mother, opened her voice who had been silent staring at the teenage girl in front of her."Perbimbang is dead, dear. It's the third day after his death. The man you seek here is gone, my dear," Martina's mother crying broke the silence of the living room. "Forgive me, Princess, because Perbimbang cannot keep his promise to you," said Perbimbang's mother sobbing as she hugged tightly the teen girl's gentle body.

The atmosphere became quiet. The voice of the people chanting *tahlilan* turned down a little slowly. The two women hugged each other. The Perbimbang family watched with emotion. Some of them were crying sadly. The two women were still hugged, but Princess felt there was something strange with the incident. "Mak, sorry, Mak ..." Princess's voice broke the silence.

"Mak, you just said that Dang Perbimbang is dead?" Princess asked while looking around. Their faces twitched sadly and

lost."Mak, is it true that Dang Perbimbang is dead? It's the third day after he was buried? "

"Yeah, sister, Dang Perbimbang is dead," replied Perbimbang's sister-in-law called Juni.Momentarily Princess was silent and even more confused with what she was facing.

A thing she never thought of. This really made Princess very disconcerting. The sense of sadness and confusion began to hit her heart. Princess sat silent and speechless.

Her brain rotated like a power meter with high voltage. She tried to recall the early events she had come to and arrived in front of the house of Perbimbang. Princess felt nothing strange, nothing odd. She was very sure that the young man who came to her in white clothes was Perbimbang, the man who invited her to come to this house. Princess continued to search for what was strange with her words. Instantly she began to doubt and hesitate. Tears began to drip from her clear eyes. Without wiping her tears, Princess reassured her that she was not dreaming and was not joking.

Princess was silent momentarily and more confused with what she was facing. A thing she never thought of. This really made Princess very confused. The sense of sadness and confusion began to hit the inner of this girl. "Mak, Dang Perbimbang is not dead, he has just been here with us, Mak." Princess started to

Princess started to tell.

Princess started to tell.

"We have been together for a long time, we are often together in the fields. Then, Dang invited Princess to come here to meet Mak and Dad," Princess explained her story.

"A week ago we promised to meet in this house. We wanted parents to know. We love each other and want to get married," continued Princess while occasionally wiping tears that moistened her cheeks.

Everyone looked at Princess with sad eyes. A gaze filled with pity and empathy. One by one the person who was studying began to close the Qur'an. They began to sit closer and closer to Princess. They wanted to hear a story that to them was very strange and it just happened in their hamlet.

Princess just kept telling about Perbimbang. The beginning of their introduction was in the fields. Every day they met in the fields while banishing the birds. Princess told who she was and her family. She told that she lived in the next village just with her little siblings. Her father and mother were in their own garden to earn money and then would be sent for her sibling's school fees.



Her early friendship with Perbimbang was just plain because she did not have many friends and every day she had to go to the rice fields because the rice that his parents have started yellowed. However, she did not know how he originally asked her to come to his house tonight.

Her family did not know because she was afraid of being scolded because it was very abstinence for our custom if a girl came to the house of a bachelor especially at night. It was due to her promise to Permimbang that she ventured even though her family would get embarrassed in this village.

"Oh .... So, you are the beautiful Princess told by Perbimbang?" replied Mrs. Martiana

"You are Princess who is loved by my son. You are really a good and courteous and courageous lady, Princess. Emak is proud of you. However, forgive Perbimbang," said the woman sobbed. "Mak is proud of your courage, *dak ado*, no one would scold you to come to my house. You are my daughter, Princess. Perhaps you are the one sent by God as a substitute for my son, Perbimbang," the woman sobbed louder.

The atmosphere of recitation changed to quiet. No more noises whatsoever. All eyes were fixed on Princess Serindu Hati who was sad and confused with the incident that happened though in her little heart she felt that Perbimbang was really there with her.

"Yeah right, dear, Perbimbang is dead," Mak Tina repeated still crying to remember her son. "Three days ago, Emak told him to go to the rice fields to bring rice to his father." The woman grew sad and silent. "Unfortunately, on the way, he met a snake who wanted to eat a goat of Pak Uwan. He tried to rescue the goat, but the snake even pecked on Perbimbang." The woman wiped away her tears. "The snake killed my only son, Princess," explained Perbimbang's mother who was shocked by the incident.

Princess could feel the sadness felt by Perbimbang's mother. She wanted to deny the sad woman's words to say that Perbimbang was still alive according to her conviction. However, it was impossible because it would make these people sadder and thought that Princess was crazy and stressed for losing Perbimbang. Princess looked at the shabby face of Perbimbang's mother. She wanted to say something, but still unable to move her lips to speak. With all her might she tried but still unable and not to have the courage.

"Mak, may I talk?" Princess ventured herself to speak. Princess was ready with everyone's assumption if everybody in the house would say it's crazy and insane.

She must be honest with her conscience that Perbimbang had not died as they had said before. She believed Perbimbang was still alive even though he had been buried for three days because if he

had completely died who was the man resembling Perbimbang and invited her into this house.

For it was impossible for her to enter the house of a stranger. It's impossible if she was invited by a person who was not the owner of the house. "However, Princess does not believe Mak. Princess just entered the house with Dang Perbimbang," said the Princess.

"Forgive Princess, Mak, I still do not believe that Dang Perbimbang is dead." With a quivering voice Princess tried to calm her mind.

"Princess is completely conscious and is not dreaming Mak. It was Dang Perbimbang who took Princess into the house." Princess tried to convince Perbimbang's family that Perbimbang had just been in their midst. By the time Princess convinced everyone who was watching her suddenly Perbimbang's mother stood up. Mrs. Martiana and her daughter-in-law stood up and were followed by several other families and Princess Serindu Hati. They stepped into the kitchen and opened the back door. Dark terraces were dimly lit by residents' lights. The part that would be shown by the middle-aged woman was clear.

"Princess, this is the Tomb of Perbimbang," said Mrs. Tina as she sat down in the new-looking tomb."Dang .... Dang.... *Ya Allah*, Dang." Princess sobbed and gasped when she saw the inscription on the tombstone. Princess sat limply next to the Perbimbang's

mother who continued to cry. It turned out what she delivered in front of many people was just useless that there was actually a graveyard that read the name of Perbimbang.

"Dang .... what should I do? Why should I lose you like this?" Princess was still crying in the tomb of Perbimbang. "Why should Princess have to experience this again, Dang? Dang Perbimbang, if you could come to invite me in, why now you don't invite Princess to join you Dang?" Princess continued to cry while holding the tomb of Perbimbang regardless of those who paid attention to her.

Princess kept crying over the tomb of Perbimbang. The gravestone that read Perbimbang bin Mahmudin was wet with Princess's tears. At that moment, when Princess still did not believe in the reality of her life, the tombstone collapsed to form a dark alley. Princess snapped out of her tears. She saw an alley the size of an adult body in the tomb of the Perbimbang grave.

At that moment her strange thought came to her that Perimbang had just gone back into the passage. Princess studied the dark hallway. No sound was heard from inside, but she felt something was pulling her hand to get into the hallway. Princess felt there was some kind of force that pulled her into the hallway.

Every time she tried to reject it in a moment that the force was again pressed against Princess. Princess closed her eyes. Without

looking around, Princess jumped into the hole. She believed there was a connection between the hole and Perbimbang who had come to her.

What was exactly going on with Perbimbang and how his love story with Princess Serindu who had to experience profound sorrow until Perbimbang was buried. Perbimbang had really died. It's common that a dead person would soon be buried. Likewise with the body of Perbimbang who died from the snake's poison. After three days of dying and being buried, Perbimbang's spirits felt uncomfortable in his new nature. Perbimbang still thought about his promise with Princess Serindu Hati. In the journey of his soul, Perbimbang continued to pray.

"*Ya Allah*, I accept this death willingly for I know that all souls will die." Perbimbang felt sad to leave the people he loved too soon.

"If I could ask, I would like to meet the one I love because I have a promise to keep today." Perbimbang tried to hope.

The angel replied, "O young man, go back to the person you love because she is waiting for you as you promised. However, on one condition that you have to dress all white and go up with this *keranda*."

Perbimbang jerked at the consoling voice. He felt really listening to something that made his heart peaceful. The voice was very

clear and aimed at him even though he did not know where that very beautiful voice came from. Nor did he see any light as a marker if there was a voice addressed to him. Perbimbang felt very happy because the prayer that was always conveyed to the Creator as long as he was in the grave really was heard. Perbimbang answered the voice with a very happy voice. "Thank you, a very reconcile voice for me. I have been given the opportunity to fulfil my promise. I will soon return because I will not deny my destiny even though I still want to live longer."

Perbimbang was happy. Perbimbang continued to run without realizing that a beam of light that shone on him had guided him not to get lost on his way to the door of his grave. Once arriving at his grave Perbimbang darted like a brilliant white glow to the surface of the grave so that the tomb that was flat changed to form like a long hall.

Perbimbang came with white clothing as recommended by the voice of peace.

He went to meet Princess Serindu Hati who was waiting to sit under a flower tree grown on the corner of the fence of Perbimbang's house. Perbimbang approached Princess and invited her to meet her parents. Princess followed behind because she did not know the true Perbimbang state. The people who were in the house did not see him coming because only Princess could see it, but Princess did not realize it. Everyone was initially ignorant of

the arrival of Princess because many of the girls were coming into and out the house as guests who wanted to mourn and they were all friends of Perbimbang. Without thinking twice Perbimbang ran straight down the narrow hallway. He was carrying a white glowing *keranda*. He would not waste the opportunity given. After fulfilling his promise to Princess to meet with his parents on that Friday night, Perbimbang went back to the realm of spirits that became his nature today.

Princess Serindu Hati, who had been following the magical powers that dragged her into the corridor of the cemetery, continued, "The hole is very dark, feels damp and slippery," Princess murmured as she walked down the aisle.

"A lot of bones here. What kind of place is this?" murmured Princess hesitate even though her legs continued to move. "I wish I could meet Dang Perbimbang. I'm sure Dang Perbimbang must have passed this hole." Princess kept walking down the dark alley. Princess continued to step and feel every gap in the tunnel. Until the end, Princess unconsciously had entered into the world of spirits. She had passed the place where the spirits were gathered. The place in Rejang language was called *tujau*. In the *tujau* Princess met with many people. After she left from *tujau* to *tujau* until finally she arrived at the seventh *tujau*. On her way past the *tujaus*, Princess met with the tortured persons. Princess unintentionally saw various tortures.

She didn't know what the mistake they made before. Every now and then Princess thought that it might be a place of vengeance and punishment for those who had died because she realized that she had been at the grave of Perbimbang with her mother and sister.

Princess continued to observe one by one the door of the *tujau*. At the first door Princess witnessed a woman whose hair was hung and pulled like a pulley. The woman's voice was screaming with pain until the tears were red like blood. Princess mumbled whether this was a punishment for a woman who always opened her hair cover. Have I sinned for not wearing the *jilbab* veil advocated by religion? Princess walked and was on second door. There was a group of boys being tortured and soaking in boiling water.

The boys were told to sit down, then stand up. That's how it went. Their cries and screams were heartbreaking. A voice calling his father and mother was heard; there was also a voice calling on the name of *Allah*; there was a pardon. "O *Allah* put me away and my family from this painful doom, O God," murmured Princess withheld her tears to see the punishment. Princess saw torment by torture as she traced the aisle that led her to the realm of the spirits. The eyes and heart of Princess seemed to be inconceivable to see the torture until she kept her eyes closed just following the force of encouragement that led her to walk.



Finally, Princess Serindu Hati stopped at the seventh door. It was in this seventh *tujau* that she met a white glow that was very dazzling to the eye and was in the shape of a man sitting prostrate, *tafakur*. After she observed it carefully, Princess remembered the white outfit of Perbimbang who drove her inside his house. He was Perbimbang. Princess saw a man dressed in white sitting cross-legged like a man in prayer.

"Dang Perbimbang ....?" Princess shouted. "Princess, why are you here, Dik?" the man was surprised to see Princess. He was the spirit of Perbimbang. Perbimbang turned his seat toward Princess who still did not believe what she witnessed with her eyes. She convinced herself that she was not dreaming and not sleeping. Princess began to approach Perbimbang while asking many things about this very sad and confused event. With a sad face and a tear, but in her deepest heart there was an unnatural happiness when she met with Perbimbang again.

"Dang, what exactly happened?" Princess tried to approach Perbimbang. Perbimbang heaved a deep breath and began to organize his words to explain everything that happened to the teenage girl who was in front of him. "Princess, forgive me for making you sad with this incident. This is the destiny that we must live. We cannot resist the will of the Almighty."

Perbimbang bowed sadly. Perbimbang held back his tears to fall with the sadness of his heart when he had to part with those who

loved him. "Dang, I love you very much. I want us to live the same way again." Princess sat next to the sad Perbimbang. Princess's tears kept pouring down her clothes until the hamper she carried falling unconsciously. "Dang, what can I do now?" "I want to die because there's no point in living again. Father and mother are gone, and now you are also like this and I cannot live alone, Dang." Princess was more and more sad.

"*Dik*, forgive me to have made you like this. This is the destiny that must prevail. I am also very sad. I am not ready for this yet. I love you, *Dik*. I want someday we get married and have children. However, *Allah* is fonder of Dang.

God knows that you a strong and independent girl. Surely you will be able to get through this," said Perbimbang trying to calm Princess. "Dik, I have asked for an opportunity to fulfil my promise with you. It's impossible for me to plead again even though in this heart I want to live longer than this time," said Perbimbang convincing Princess. Perbimbang spilled his sadness to Princess Serindu Hati without having to pay attention to the falling tears that had soaked his grave.

"O *Allah*, is there no chance for me to enjoy happiness with the person whom I love?" Princess Serindu Hati begged while mentioning Allah's name.

"I have lived alone for a few years without parents who always keep and accompany. I do not have a teacher who loves me because I do not go to school anymore. At this moment, when there is a good man who can keep my life, should you take it too, *ya Allah?*" Princess lamented as she kneeled begging without realizing that she had prayed from her deepest heart. "Lord, I do not ask for much, only one *ya Allah*. I want to live guided and guarded by a good and responsible man like Dang Perbimbang. I want to be a good person and sacrifice for my family. I want to be with good people like Dang Perbimbang. If I cannot ask please let me be here with him and die with him. "

At that moment the silence was overwhelming, no sound was heard from Perbimbang and Princess's mouth except the sobs of Princess Serindu Hati. Suddenly from a distance there was a bright white light coming closer to dazzle the eyes. A middle-aged man emerged from the glare of the light.

The voice of the male figure was similar to the sound of peace. "My dear, what do you worry about, live your life as predestined by the Almighty," the man said.

"Father, Princess cannot live this life alone. We'd better gather here than Princess should return to live alone," said Princess. "I don't want to fight fate, Father, but just want to change fate if God permits and grants my prayer. Allow me to live with Dang Perbimbang or I die with him here," said Princess sad. "Dik, we

will always be alive or dead because no one can change destiny. So is the case to my love. My love will not change until we are resurrected again," persuaded Perbimbang to calm Princess.

"My children, the whole of the spirits know the power of your love and your sincerity to accept the destiny of God. I am the embodiment of the angel who carries the spirit of Perbimbang. God allows you to come back to life until your second destiny will come back." The man spoke again. Then, he resumed his conversation.

"Go back, my son. Enter your spirit into an egg in the basket that was brought by Princess. As soon as you are out the grave then break the egg. You will live again, Perbimbang. However, after that, be a responsible and wise man in the face of increasingly heavy life problems that you will pass. "

The man disappeared from Perbimbang and Princess sight together with the fading white light. "Dang, Princess heard we can return to the world with the condition that your soul should enter into this egg. Come on, Dang we come back."

Princess rushed to take an egg from her *rantang* and get closer to Perbimbang who sat cross-legged. Slowly Perbimbang turned into light and flew through the duck egg in the hands of Princess.

"*Alhamdulillah*, Dang, we made it. I have to save this egg. I do not want to fall in that dark hallway." Princess kept the egg

containing the spirit of Perbimbang in the folds of her shawl. Perbimbang felt very happy when Princess brought a number of eggs in her *rantang*. Then, the angel helped to blow Perbimbang into an egg in the basket. Once convinced the egg was in a safe position, Princess stepped to leave the *tujau*. Many other spirits watched Princess to return after entering into the seventh *tujau*. With great love and full belief Princess went step by step. Princess passed the dark alley toward the hole on the Perbimbang's tombstone.

Without fear and worry Princess confidently stepped out of the *tujau* after the existing *tujaus*. Finally Princess reached the tombstone hole. She immediately jumped up in a wet and dirty clothes by the mud of grave ground.

"Dad, Mother, help Princess," said Princess who emerged from the hole.

"Princess, what are you doing? Poor Perbimbang, we have to sincerely accept all of this for his peaceful existence there," continued Perbimbang's father. "Forgive me, Father, Princess wanted to fetch Dang Perbimbang there. Dang Perbimbang is back, Daddy," said Princess as she broke the egg she was holding. All eyes were on Princess who appeared suddenly from the aisle in the grave of Perbimbang. Many said that the girl had gone crazy for entering into a collapsed grave. Some felt pity because she really loved Perbimbang. Those who saw the act of Princess

were surprised. A bright white light emerged from the eggshell broken by Princess at that moment. The white light was slowly transformed into a gallant and authoritative man, very much like Perbimbang.

"Dad .... Mom ... Ayuk .... Ambo Perbimbang."

Perbimbang approached his father who stood trembling to see the figure of his son.

"Forgive *ambo*, Daddy, to have made all grieving for losing *ambo*. I promised not to upset you all again. It's a second chance for me to come back to live with the people whom I love and who love me." Perbimbang hugged his still-stuck father. "*Emak*, this is your son Mak. I have been picked up by Princess. She made me want to live longer. We have ideals to please Father and Mother and our extended family," said Perbimbang while embracing his mother.

Everyone behind Mrs. Martiana's house was moved. Unexpectedly the dead could return to life. It was because of the enormous power of love and great sincerity towards the destiny they received. Then they all went back into the house. Perbimbang told all that happened to the people who were there at the time. All felt salute to Princess because she dared to pick up alone the soul of her lover. Everyone was more affectionate to Princess and wished her a soul mate to Perbimbang.

"Mak, ambo would tell you that ambo and Princess love each other. I really hope Mak and family bless this relationship. I cannot live without Princess," said Perbimbang cajoling to his mother.

"Son, I definitely bless you to be friends with Princess. I never forbid you to be friends with anyone. If you want to marry anyone I will also give blessing as long as you are ready and with a good woman," replied his mother hugging Perbimbang.

"Mak and Dad feel grateful you can come back here. I feel to owe Princess a life because with her love and sincerity she can bring you back to me. I still want you to help in the fields, son." The mother wiped his son's head.

Finally, the evening *pengajian* was finished. Princess was staying at Perbimbang parent's house. After recitation the guests came home, the talk of the family continued. The sadness of losing Perbimbang had turned into a sense of happiness because Perbimbang lived again. Talks about marriage were soon discussed with the *adat* chief. In the Rejang Tribal custom, when a girl had been staying at the home of a man and his parents agreed, it is called a *maling*. *Maling* was allowed for several reasons, including family economic factor.

The following morning Princess came home from the house of Perbimbang. She went straight to the fields. Her yellowish paddy

must be guarded from starving birds. The incident at the house of Perbimbang last night became a byword of the village people in Bukit Resam. Princess also became a byword among the villagers. Many people suggested that Princess and Perbimbang got married. They were good and obedient children to both parents. In addition, Princess was also a beautiful and earthy girl. Her life will be more assured by the family of Perbimbang.

"Dik, come here, mother made coffee and fried bananas for you," said Perbimbang as he reached the rice field. "Yeah Dang, just a minute .... There are birds in the rice corner on the other end, I drive them away first," answered Princess and passed.

"*Huaaaaaak .... Husss ... Huaaakkk ... Hussss ...*," Princess shouted.

"Dik, be careful there might be a snake there ...," cried Perbimbang. "Yeah Dang, I bring a wood stick," joked Princess while smiling sweetly and staring at Perbimbang from a distance.

"*Dik*, Mother and Father have agreed we are married. They said the *adat* chief had also given his approval. We planned to get married after this year's harvest season." Perbimbang sat next to Princess after arriving at her cottage.

"Really, all have agreed that we will get married?" asked the Princess happily.



"Is it true we are mate, Dang?" Princess brushed her tears.

"Yes Dik, *Insha Allah* we get married after this harvest. All will be prepared. You don't need to prepare anything. All has been taken care of by Dang Wawan and Ayuk Leha," explained Perbimbang smiling sweetly while staring at the girl he loved. "But, Dang, aren't we married too soon? We are still very young to live a married life," she asked hesitantly. "I am afraid, Dang, afraid to live alone again." Princess deeply recalled the figure of his father and mother.

"For now, I have no place to share except you, Dang Perbimbang." Princess swept her tears of joy that kept flowing. Every now and then she saw birds in her yellow paddy field. "*Dik*, we have proven that we have grown and responsible with our loved one," said Perbimbang convincing Princess.

"We have proved to all people and even to the Lord who gives life and the dead to His servant. We have a sincere love to continue this life together.

We certainly can. I will make you happy and we will have many children later." Perbimbang smiled and Princess responded with smile. "Dang, honestly I am very happy to live with you. No one can refuse a good-natured and handsome man like you," joked Princess. "Of course my courageous and independent wife

candidate," Perbimbang answered jokingly. "Ah, you naughty. I'm so embarrassed." Princess's face flushed with embarrassment.

After the rice harvest was over, the marriage plan between Perbimbang with Princess Serindu Hati was discussed again. All matters have been carried out including customs issues. The issue of guardianship for Princess's marriage will be immediately taken over by her father who would be home when the rice harvest had arrived. The second week of the following month, the marriage would be carried out with complete customs because Perbimbang parents were customary stakeholder in the Rejang Tribe.

The marriage was carried out by slaughtering three goats of Perbimbang's cattle yields. Perbimbang was a diligent young man. He had cattle and paddy fields of his parents as a provision of his life with Princess someday. All the guests who came congratulated the bride and prayed for their blessing. All prayed that their marriage would last long before death really separated them. After marriage, they were blessed with three children. Their children were born out of the love and affection they built. They did not want their children to be lonely as orphaned children. Finally, Princess Serindu Hati and Perbimbang lived in a family filled with happiness and love of each other.