

New Home

It was a fine, beautiful morning. The sky was dotted with clouds and the sun was shining down on a small seashore village near Mare island, Tidore, North Maluku. Laena, a 10-year-old skinny girl with curly hair was feeling happy. There was a new neighbor in the village named Sigi and his house was just in front of Laena's. Both houses were small and simple with a row of coconut trees.

Surrounded by the ocean, the village had an exquisite view. Waves rippled gently on the white sandy shore. The water was so clear that

the people could see the fish swimming beneath the surface. The men who lived in the village were mostly fishermen, while the women mostly created handmade pottery.

With freckles on his face, Sigi looked about the same age as Laena. Laena returned his friendly smile and approached him.

“Hi, my name is Laena. What’s your name? Where are you from?” she asked.

“Oh hi, my name is Sigi. I’m from a village near Ternate Island,” he answered.

“Why did you move here?” Laena asked again.

The Mighty Keris in the Tiny Hands

Sharon Suherman



The Spell

Empu Arya was a noble keris craftsman who lived in a Java's countryside, Indonesia. He is the third generation of the famous keris maker, Empu Ahmad, who made the keris for royal members in Java Palaces. He is a tall and charismatic man with a long beard. His wife, Sri Sulastri, is a soft spoken Javanese woman with long black hair.

Keris is an asymmetrical dagger from Indonesia. It is both weapon and spiritual object

that is considered to possess magical powers. The blade of each keris was made using seven types of iron materials that you can find from items such as nails, knives, chisels, shovels, umbrella, frames and fences. This dedication to source the materials, on top of their spiritual belief, is the key element that gives keris its value. Empu Arya made each Keris with the spiritual power suitable with the owner's personality. He did some spiritual deeds to prepare every keris, like fasting and meditation for three days. His works of art were really masterpiece.

The couple had been married for 13 years, but they did not have any child.

Warrior's Jump in Nias

Rachel Kalona



The Challenge

It was a fine, beautiful morning in Nias Islands. A boy named Saota was a son of a highly respected chief. On the day he turned 13, he felt very happy and excited, but a great sense of apprehension enveloped him as well.

His village had a ritual called “Fahombo Batu”, which was a tradition that had to be accomplished by boys turning 13 years of age. This ritual required the boys in the island to jump over a stone wall which was 2 metres high and 40 centimetres thick. This custom posed

immense importance because once completed, a boy would no longer be called a boy, but a man.

Saota felt a lot of pressure because he was a son of a chief. If he failed, he would not only bring disgrace to himself but to his father, the chief, and his entire family. Ever since Saota was a little boy, he was always practicing. He trained very hard but never believed in himself.

One day, while training with his good friend Arsad, Saota kept on telling him how badly he would fail and embarrass his father.

Arsad, being a good friend, always motivated him and encouraged him by saying, "You don't have to worry so much; just believe