

SUMMARY OF THE STORY

Two mayor candidates of Kupang City mayor fight to be the number one person in next term of office. They are Nikodemus Seran and Beni Muskanan. Nik with his partner, Simon Kase, and Beni Muskanan and his partner, Agus Halungdaka do campaign in many regions in Kupang in order to share their ideas and programs to the people. Knowing that he has no better programs compared to Beni-Agus' programs, Nik-Simon start to play with *SARA* issue, in order to attack Beni, the only Moslem candidate. Marten, the leader of Nik-Simon campaign team, provoke the unemployed people to attack Beni, and pay them low to do demonstration against Beni. This works and finally Nik-Simon win the election with the help of the unemployed people. However, Marten then hears that in their second year leading Kupang, Nik and Simon deals with corruption of the budget for medical equipment supply. Marten, whose daughter ever suffered for blood cancer/leukemia, feel very angry because he knows that medical equipment in Kupang is very limited, till he needed to bring her daughter to Surabaya for the treatment. So, he mobilizes the mass he ever provoked to protest against Nik and Simon, but they don't succeed because of the incompleted evidences.

The Election

“How is the preparation, Marten?” Nikodemus Seran asked Marten, his campaign leader.

“Everything is done, Sir. We are supposed to leave at ten thirty.”

“How about the banner, the artists, sound system and the logistic?”

“We have reconfirmed the artist, sound system and the logistic provider. We will take the banner today.”

“Great! Thank you, Mr. Marten. Keep the coordination with the team and me.”

It was Monday, the third week of January, the first day of the campaign period that would last 135 days later. Nikodemus Seran, or known as Nik by his close friends, – the no 1 candidate – and his team were very busy preparing the first day campaign. Erwin was sitting on his chair busy with his phone coordinating the rundown via chat with his division, Bobi was working with his laptop preparing and printing any important files, Deni was finishing some sudden permission letters with his computer, and so did the other. Nik Seran and his vice, Simon Kase, also held a meeting at the night just before the first campaign day.

About three miles away from the Patriot House – the building used by the Nik and Simon for the meeting – the same thing was done by another candidate, Beni Muskanan and Agus Halungdaka. They had a meeting with their team in Gedung Nusantara, with Kris Mauboy stood as the leader of this campaign team.

“Now everything is ready for tomorrow, Sir. You just have to share your ideas and programs to the people,” Kris reported

“Excellent! Agus and I will have a meeting about tomorrow’s campaign.”

The five years office terms of current mayor would be approaching the end. Beni Muskanan, the current mayor of Kupang, would try to defend his position from his opponent, Nikodemus Seran.

Kupang is a small city in the south of Indonesia, a heavenly city on the northcoast of Timor Island. The hidden beauty that was untouched and unnoticed. If Indonesia was like a

Martabak Telur – a local food from Indonesia made from egg, wheat flour and other ingredients – Kupang is just like a slice of spring onion in it. Though it was unnoticed by the people outside Kupang City, the citizen of Kupang were passionate to give a sense of the democracy party.

Two big parties were on the pitch for the election: National Movement Party and Social Party. Either the pictures of the smiling candidates or banners of the parties were mushrooming wherever one stepped through this city. The people were crazily excited for the election. In the schools, markets, offices, or even in the ricefields, everyone talked about it. Local TV, newspapers, and even radio reported this five years people democracy party. Gossip, infotainment or even entertainment shows were just suddenly bored the people.

After a long night passed with meeting agenda, the candidates were ready for the campaign on the following day. Nik and Simon prepared for Oesapa, a coasted village on the East of Kupang, which was well-known because of the beautiful beaches along the coast. In the other place, Beni and Agus also didn't want to miss this first day of the campaign. They had prepared well for Oebufu, which was known as the source of Kupang traditional food, *Se'i Babi*. They would focus on infrastructures and tourism development while Nik and Simon would focus on building human resource.

In Oesapa...

“Good morning, everyone,” Nik opened the oration while waving his hands to his supporters.

The crowd yelled “*MuSim... MuSim...MuSim...*”

“Shalom,” he waved his hands in the air like a waving flag. “Firstly, it's only by His grace that we can gather in this place. If Mr. Simon and I now can stand as the candidate of Kupang City mayor, it's also only by His grace.”

All the participant wore similar costume. They all wore white t-shirt with Nik and Simon's faces printed on it. A bold letter of “*MuSim*” were written upside their pictures with red, blue, and brown pattern on it.

“*MuSim.. MuSim.. MuSim..*,” no other voices were listened as the yelling shouted out loud with the traditional fragrance of *sirih pinang* which was always with the people.

Sirih pinang is a traditional culture in Kupang – especially Timor Tribe – and some tribes in Indonesia. It is the combination of *pinang* (areca nut), *sirih* (betel leaf), lime, tobacco, and sometimes gambier.

“Yes, it’s our moment now. We are now looking forward for a new better epoch in this city. Together we can create our new epoch better,” he said proudly, replied by the cry of their supporters.

“We are concerned for all the fishermen in Oesapa. The new season of the fishermen in this area is yet to come,” Simon Kase continued the oration with fire in his sound.

“We have plans and programs for the people in this coastal area. We promise you to escalate the infrastructure for fishing and marketing all the sea products from the fishermen.”

The yell of *MuSim* was rumbling all over the field aside the *Puskesmas* Oesapa as the location of the campaign. People stood along the dusty road and were sweating but their face looked happy. A local musician embellished the campaign by chanted a popular song “*Terlatih Patah Hati*”. The vocalist’s husky high-pitched voice entertained the people who joined him singing and moving their bodies following the tunes. Everyone forgot their problems in that day by enjoying the music.

In Oebufu...

“*Bagus.. Bagus.. Bagus,*” the acronym of the candidate yelled roaring as Beni and Agus stepped up the stage in that very bright day where the sky would be very plain if the cloud didn’t embellish it. The crowd’s yell conquered the sound of the songs from the *bemo*, the public transportation in Kupang City which well known as ‘walking discotheque’.

“Good morning, Shalom,” Beni started his oration while bowing down his body to the audience. “I’m so glad that we are here for one goal,” he continued. “So, let’s firstly give thanks to the Lord our God who has allowed us gathering in this place.”

“*Bagus.. Bagus.. Bagus..*”

“Entrepreneurship is for everyone. No one was born without entrepreneurship skill. The only thing to stop us is our mentality. So, we will be focusing on small entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship training for you,” he came to his program speech.

“It’s time to make everything good (*Bagus*), make our life better.”

They continued the campaign as the rest of the day, gave *sembako* to the supporters, and free live music – as usual.

The nature in Kupang was so beauty. The beach, the mountain, the rocky hills gathered as a unite to entertain the people. Beautiful beaches would pamper everyone’s eyes when driving through the main street of Kupang as the beaches and the street were alongside each other. From the beaches or the rocky hills, everyone would be captivated by the color of the sky as the sun kissed the horizon. At night, the rocky hills were also homey for everyone to enjoy the flickering stars and garden of light (which actually the light from houses below). Kupang had everything about beauty. God might be thinking about the people when He made Kupang.

Unfortunately, the people’s social class was not as beauty as the nature given. This was the answer of why *sembako* always becomes the special gift in every election. It becomes just like a ‘political culture’. Someone would be touched when we knew and gave what he needed. The politicians knew this very well.

As the campaign period began, both candidate were still working with the programs. Nik and Simon concerned on the coastal area which was fulfilled by the fishermen and salt farmers whereas Beni and Agus focused on infrastructure and tourism development.

The heavenly-earthed paradise of Kupang seemed like having a bright future. Kupang was dressed up in Beni’s hands. One by one the flaw on the face of Kupang City started to be cleaned up. Like a girl attracted a man she liked by her appearance, Kupang tried to attract the tourism investors by its new face of the city.

In his fourth year leading Kupang, Beni gave his marathon stick to his current vice-mayor for a while, because he needed to fight for the upcoming election as the incumbent with his new vice-mayor, Agus. However, he still set his eyes focused on the programs he had planned with his current vice-mayor. On the other hand, his oppositions were looking for any flaws in Kupang’s face to attack him.

A week after the first day of campaign...

Every person in each team had to work hard everyday. Gathering datas and holistic problems also formulating the solutions were only a few things they did. Their table were

decorated by the scattered newspapers. Cups of coffee and the smoke of cigarettes also help them killing the time productively. They were even willing to leave their family to focus on the campaign. The softness of their wooden seats were more comfortable than their bed in their bedroom. The leader of the winning team of Nik, Marten, had to do the same. To win Nik and Simon's election was more important than winning his daughter's smile.

It was the second day Marten's daughter went with a strange nosebleeding, so he wanted to check it up to the doctor. His instinct as a superdad who loved his family was built stronger than before.

"I'm sorry, guys, I have an important bussiness, so I have to leave now." He looked at his watch that showed it was 6 oc'clock.

"It seems to be that important. Take care, bro." One of his friends answered with smoke of cigarette coming out his mouth just like the air sewer pipe in a factory.

"You know that," he replied with smile while tapping his friend's shoulder. "See you tomorrow, Man."

"Good luck!" his friends in the room replied in rhyme.

However, he talked to no one in his team about the problems he had in his little family. He left his desk with documents and papers scattering on it. The aroma of *sirih pinang* was perfuming the room, the aroma that everyone who had not been friend with it, surely, will be intoxicated. The coalition of oxygen and smokes were also united as one - because most of the team were smokers. Though it was drizzle outside, but warm inside the Patriot House. They all worked with all their heart and also ambition till night came just to win their candidate, Nik & Simon.

"How are you, dear?" Marten whispered to his daughter. "Daddy is here," he swept his daughter's dark curly hair with love.

She was lying weakly on her bed. There was a lie in his smiles, pretending that everything was okay. Instead, thousands of worries frightened his mind. But still, an apprehensive smile was on his face. A smile that calm the seas in his daughter's mind. It was what he expected that time.

"Daddy," her sweet soft voice called Marten, her beloved dad. "It's painful," she tried to open her eyes slowly but she couldn't.

Instantly, his tears streamed down his face but he cried soundless because he didn't want his daughter knew it. He put his hand on his daughter's forehead and he found that his daughter's body temperature was so high. Gently he told his wife to be ready in a few minutes.

"It's okay. We are going to hospital, dear," he replied his daughter.

After his wife prepared everything, he started his silver car and they left their house. They were going to RSUD W. Z. Johannes, about 2 km from their house. The sky was dark as the crescent moon was hiding behind the thick clouds. Light rain was drizzling to augment the depressed atmosphere. Behind the steer wheel, Martin was as quiet as the night and his wife sighed all the time. Their daughter slept along the way to the hospital, accompanied by the drizzle outside. They didn't talk much, because both them were thinking of their one and only child, their gift God gave to them.

The drizzle, still, didn't want to leave them as they arrived at the hospital. A little bit muddy and cold that night. Hundreds people, maybe, were there. Some people brought their children to the hospital, because it was rainy season – The children were so susceptible to illness when rainy season. Red spittles of *sirih pinang* were all around the ground – This was one of the result of eating *sirih pinang*: red spittles. The other one has been described before. They met the doctor whom they had made an appointment with. After waiting for some minutes, they were called to come to the doctor's room.

"It is common for children with low immunity system to suffer nosebleeding in rainy season," the doctor says while hanging his stethoscope on his neck. "Don't worry, it will be okay in few days," he continues with smile on his face.

"Are you sure? I don't want anything bad comes to my children," he was still worry because the doctor didn't check his children seriously. He thought so.

"The medicines I give will stop her nosebleeding," the doctor said persuasively.

Marten's wife just sat on the chair and trusted his husband to face the doctor. He shot his eyes right on the doctor eyes like to confirm that his daughter would be okay. The doctor won the eye contact. He succeeded to domesticate Marten's eyes shot and persuaded Marten.

It was about 8.30 p.m. when they left the hospital. It had been dark enough because the drizzle had just stopped. Maybe, the drizzle had been done with its task to wet the dry land of Kupang that night.

Marten started his motorcycle and went to his office at 7 o'clock, right in a busy traffic hour. His office is on *Jl. Eltari no 3*, Kupang, about 5,5 km from his house. He worked as chief at *Dinas Pekerjaan Umum Kupang*. He did his works like he usually did: managing and overseeing the development of Kupang City.

After doing his works, as usual, he went to Patriot House to do his other works. It was 4 p.m. and the sun was quite bright like telling everyone that everything's gonna be alright in the rest of the day. One of his friends, Fabi, was already there, some were had not come yet.

"How was yesterday?" Marten opened a conversation with Fabi after doing eye-contact with him and came in then sat on his chair.

"The data is completed. Spyclass Team has gathered the gripes of the citizen."

Spyclass Team was their outfield team to gather information from the citizen.

"Grey datas?" Marten asked.

Grey data that he meant was the datas gathered that was able to modify, whether exaggerated or reduced, in order to win Nik & Simon.

"Sure! We now just need to process the datas," he answered while drinking his coffee.

"Great. How about the preparation for campaign in Kelapa Lima tomorrow?"

Oesapa is a village in Kelapa Lima sub-district. However, the people in Kupang differentiate this two area. It is separated five kilometers away.

"Ready. Mr. Nik and Mr. Simon will be here this evening."

"Nice!" Marten replied just like closing the interview session. "Have you eaten?"

"No, I have not. Soon after this. Why?" Fabi smiled slightly. He knew that Marten would have a funny answer for his "why".

"Good. Don't eat too much. It would be bad for our national food security," Marten laughed, others laughed.

Few minutes later his teammates arrived one by one and they formed a complete team of seven persons. The sun slowly fell down to the west horizon as they worked together making strategies for the campaign tomorrow.

In the evening, Nik and Simon came to the Patriot House to adjust the discussion about the strategies and programs few days ago. They held their meeting in their meeting room. It

was a seven meters square room, used to be a family room for the owner of the house. The owner of the house used to be working for Blue Party, one of the party behind Nik and Simon.

“How did you find, sir?” Nik asked one of his Spyglass Team while opening his files.

“People in Oesapa and Kelapa Lima is now worrying their life because the government is going to relocate the traditional fish market,” he replied in serious way. “The government, the management, and the contractor had made an MoU for the new city park and playground two years ago and now is going to be executed,” he added.

This was the old agreement that should be finished in April. However, because of some set of problems, it had just been started two last week.

On the other side, the market had been the life of the fishermen and their families for long time. The market used to be moved further once ten years ago, but their income were reduced, so they demonstrated the government to replace the market to the previous place. They worried that the case would be happened again. They only needed the strength of their hands and feet to carry their fishes from their ship to the market; didn't need any vehicle to carry.

“Where will the market be?” Simon asked.

“The vacant land beside Jl. S.K. Lerik.”

“What are the people's responses?” Nik continued. His eyes saw this problem as a chance for him to get the votes from the people in Kelapa Lima and Oesapa.

“People don't want their market changed into playground,” he replied as he drank his coffee. “They totally refuse it because of the trauma of the same case happened ten years ago.”

“This is a great chance for us. We have dominated forty percent area of Kupang. Everyone have to work hard, because we have spend so much money for this campaign. If we lose, we will get financial loss,” Nik added seriously.

All the participants of the meeting were serious.

Issues like that were mushrooming, and it was real because Beni and Agus were focusing their programs to build a great infrastructure for Kupang City. The city park and playground was one of their works in that five years behind beside a city hospital in Kelapa Lima, *Jl. Jalur 40* that connecting Bolok Seaport to West Kupang, Lasiana Ringroad that connecting Eltari Airport to East Kupang, hotels and restaurant, etc. They could see the future

of Kupang in few years ahead, so they were quite brave to do that. Kupang, a rocky city, was quite different in their hands.

“*Musim... Musim... Musim...*”

On a fallow land between the fishermen’s houses, that crowded by local people, Nik opened his speech.

“Good morning, all the people of Kelapa Lima. Shalom.”

“*Good morning..*,” the people answered.

“Honestly, I was very sad hearing that our traditional fish market will be replaced by a city park and playground,” Nik continued his speech followed by the applause and yell from the people. “You, sir, in blue shirt, please come to the stage,” he invited one of the people.

It was a sunny day. The sun and the earth were like pulling one another closer. It might be about 39⁰ Celcius. The crowded people made the oxygen was so difficult to come into the body.

The man invited by Nik came to the stage.

“What do you think about the plan to replace the traditional fish market?”

“I don’t agree with that. We have been using the place since I was child. We live from that place,” he answered while chewing *sirih pinang*.

“Are you a fisherman, sir?”

“Yes, I am.”

“We promise you to cancel the plan. Instead, we will renew our traditional fish market become more beautiful and comfortable.”

The people shouted his name, thundering the whole area of this campaign, followed by the shout of...

“*Musim... Musim... Musim...*”

“This is our new epoch, the better story than before,” he closed his speech, down the stage, hailed the people, and had a small talk with the chief of the district. He also visited the fish market to observe the situation and hearing the complaint and aspiration of the local people and gave *sembako* to the people as well.

Two weeks after that day was the time for the debate day for Kupang City's next mayor. The two candidates had been preparing everything for the debate. Their vision, ideas and programs were in the same arena, and ready to help them during the battle. The local TV channel, radios, journalists, were all ready to report the debate. At the same day, Marten and his team was assigned to observe one area in Kupang, Nunbaun Sabu, the small village in the coastal area of West Kupang. They were only 3 person in the team, and Marten was the head. The sun was bright that day, but the streets were still wet enough because the last night, the rain visits the Earth of Kupang.

Marten and his two friends planned to go to Nunbaun Sabu by theirselves and gathered in a small traditional coffee shop for briefing at 10.00 a.m. It was 10.13 a.m. when his two friends gathered in the coffee shop they had pointed. However, Marten had not come yet. They tried to contacted him, but got no response. They had waited till 11.30 a.m. and decided to go back to Patriot House. They practically could do nothing, because all files and target map were picked by Marten. It was actually an important visitation, because there was another issues happened there, just like in Kelapa Lima. However, Marten didn't show his face in that noon.

The night came and the debate started. 7 o'clock and it was raining outside, but the power of love burned their spirit, making the rain was just a rain, not the challenge to not come. The MC opened the debate and called all the candidate up to the stage. The supporters of each candidate soar their chants high as their candidate stepped on the stage.

"Bagus... Bagus... Bagus is very good."

"Musim... Musim... This is our new epoch... Musim... Musim."

All those voice and chants broke the silent of the night. The candidates stood erect, wave their hands on the air proudly. Smile were on their faces, optimism was deep in their minds and pride glued to their hearts. They all were ready for the debate.

The MC then invited the candidates to sit, read the regulations, and started the debate session.

"Candidate number 1, what are your vision and mission for Kupang if you become the mayor of Kupang City? Your time is two minutes started from the first word you say," the MC opened the first question.

"Good evening, all my beloved people, shalom," Nik came to answer the question."We are all living in a capital city of Nusa Tenggara Timur Province, the biggest city in NTT.

Compared to any other capital cities in Indonesia, Kupang needs more development. The main problem we face today is education matter, where many schools don't have good facilities, many teachers who are not competent, and the bad mental of our students. Based on the statistic, we need more than one thousand teachers for elementary schools and junior high schools. So, we will hire new teachers as non-civil state apparatus and use *APBD* for the funding, and take care of the schools that need improvement. We will also make conditioning situations in school for students to reading book, because we know that literacy competence of our students is very low. The other problem we face is about social imbalance. About ten percent of people in Kota Kupang live below the poverty standard. Ten percent from that total is unemployed. So, we will help them by giving them training for starting a small business, and giving them financial capital. We will be cooperating with local bank for the entrepreneurship capital. We will focus on health things, economic inflation, and also make mutual cooperation with other cities in Indonesia," he ended his speech as the moderator warned that his time is up.

"*Musim... Musim... Musim...*" the yell yelled out loud followed by applause from his supporters.

"The same question for candidate number 2, what are your vision and mission for Kupang if you become the mayor of Kupang City? Your time is two minutes started from the first word you say."

Beni came up and started his speech.

"Well, shalom, good evening. Our country is an archipelago country. We have seventeen thousands and five hundreds islands, where every single islands has its own beauty and uniqueness. We are rich of culture, languages, and the uniqueness of people. Today, tourism has become the main income for Indonesia. Not only Indonesia, some cities in Indonesia has also developed their tourism become the main local income. Let's say Bali, Bandung, Yogyakarta. Kupang is the same. We have our uniqueness in Kupang. We are heterogeneous. We have beautiful nature. So, we will focus on building infrastructure for tourism. Not only the media, we will also empower the people, train them skill like making souvenir, weaving skill, etc., so they can be productive and compete in tourism industry. With this, we can reduce the number of unemployed people which now reach fourteen percent. We will build all things that can support our tourism, such as hospital, streets, bus terminals, etc.

This infrastructures development can also touch every aspect of our life, such as education, social, economy, etc.”

The vociferous yell from Beni and Agus’ supporters fulfill the atmosphere of the ballroom.

The debate went on and came up to the session where both candidate could ask to their rival and their rival would respond it.

“Mr. Beni, the main needs of our people is economy, education and health. How come you go with infrastructure development as your focus, not human resource development? Human development index of Kupang City is down below other cities in Indonesia. So, please don’t enrich investors, but help our people,” Simon asked Beni and Agus.

“We think that this is a narrow understanding. Exactly, this is our way to work with economy, education, and health matter. All of the problems begin with economic problem. Low economic condition makes people are unable to have good education and health. On the other hand, if we always give the people low price education, it will not build their mental to make more money from other things beside their main profession. We have beaches. Most of our low class people work as fisherman. If we can make some of the beaches become a tourism site, they can have more income by selling something in that tourist area. The more the quality of the tourist site, the more the people can get more money. The same thing works for people who live in highland area. In jogja, many highland areas are set as tourism site. We can do just like that here in our land, Kupang,” Agus explained with full of spirit.

That was the highest tense debate for Kupang mayor election ever. Each candidate attacked their rival’s programs and statements. Watching the debate was just like watching a football match where each team played with counter attack style. One team attacked, the other team took the ball away and made counter attack, and the other team retook the ball away and made counter attack, and it went like that till having one winner. However, it seems like candidate number two, Beni and Agus were more dominant than Nik and Simon, and came up as the winner.

The next day...

“Hi, friends, sorry, I couldn’t go to Nunbaun Sabu yesterday,” Marten opened the chat as he arrived at Patriot House with exhausted face. It was a cloudy day, 6 p.m. o’clock.

Darkness started to cover the cold night. The wind blow softly but also warned everyone to take their jackets if want to go out. Marten knew that warning, so he was covered up by a sport riding jacket, that could ensure him warm he needed.

Patriot House was more busy than before because all the campaign team member need to evaluate the result of the first debate.

“We tried to call you but you didn’t response,” one of his friends answered him while wearing his glasses. The sound he produced the face he set was all about disappointment.

Marten took his jacket off, had his seat, and then busy with his phone. He texted his wife asking about their beloved daughter condition. He was still worried about it. His face couldn’t deny it.

“Where were you, sir?” his other friend asked him, wanting to know the reason of Marten’s absence yesterday. His friends were curious about that mystery.

“I was... I was...,” Marten answered that checkmate question stuttered, trying to escape the fact that he was accompanying his wife and daughter to the hospital. “I was accompanying my daughter to the hospital,” he completed his answer but still looked at his phone.

“Oh, poor. What happened to your daughter?”

And the rain, slow but sure, break the silent of the night.

“It’s okay. She was just cough and cold,” Marten answered untruthfully.

Marten, his two friends and the whole of the team then continued that night with meeting about the evaluation about the first debate and the strategy to win the second debate. Nik and Simon were also there leading the meeting.

“We lost the debate. I believe that you all have done your best for the debate, but we need to make a new strategy,” Nik opened the meeting. “We need to take a look of everything we find in the field. We also need to put more attention on everything Mr. Beni and Mr. Agus do. If they make mistakes, we can take advantage from it. Spyglass Team, are you ready?”

“Sure. Mr. Beni will be visiting Pasir Panjang next week. We will gather more information about that,” one of the member of Spyglass Team respond. “Pasir Panjang is also Mr. Marten mass base. So, why don’t we do something with that?”

“Good idea,” Nik had a spot of light in his head. He, then, was silent for few seconds while playing his pen with his right hand fingers, knocked it to the table two times, and started

again, “What do you think, Mr. Marten? Can we do something with your mass in Pasir Panjang?”

Marten spur his brain to think faster in order to make a quick decision. He used to sit as people’s representative council for Kupang City. So, it was not that easy for him because he has moral and social responsibility to the people in Pasir Panjang, though he was not in council anymore. After few seconds, he took a deep breathe and said, “Yes, I’ll try. I will be working with the strategy home,” he said with face full of considerations.

Nik smiled and the meeting continued. It had been seven forty five, but their adrenaline took them to be more serious, focus and wholehearted. Psychologically, human could produce more creative ideas when underpressure. So do they. Ideas were flowing fluently from their heads like a river flow from upper course to the lower course, whether it was good or bad, positive or cagey. As the time set eight fifteen, they finished the meeting. Light rain had been waiting them outside the house, ready to pick them home.

The following week...

It was Thursday, and Beni and Agus had been ready for Pasir Panjang. A black car brought them there. However, it was actually only Beni who would be in Pasir Panjang. Agus had another things to do. Wearing casual style, Beni and his team down the car. After dropping Beni and two member of their team, Agus and the black car left Pasir Panjang. Beni came out the car and sweat started to flow from his head, down to his neck, and down to his body. No one could stand against the heat of Kupang even though it was Kupangnese. Moreover, it was 2 p.m., where the Sun seemed like getting closer to the Earth and wanting to hug the Earth tightly. Beni and his team walked to the spot where they had pointed, the traditional fish market. The chief of the district, as well as the fish aroma collaborated with *sirih pinang* aroma, welcomed them in that day. After walking around the traditional fish market and listening to fishermen’s grievance, he started to speak to all the people who was there.

“This beach area will never be relocated. This is a productive beach, so we will support all the fishermen’s needs, renew the market, giving more facilities, etc.,” Beni spoke.

There was a very sensitive issue appeared in the last few days, that was about ethnocentricity, religion, race and inter-group (SARA). Beni, the Moslem candidate, was attacked by that issue saying that a Moslem couldn’t be a leader for Christian majority people.

Realizing that the wound was still small enough, he started to speak about that, so that small wound didn't growing wider.

“All my brothers and sisters, in few days ago, we might be hearing about an issue that attacks me, saying that a Moslem can not be a leader in a Christian majority people. They use a verse in the Bible to discredit me, that is in the Book of Ezra chapter seven verse number twenty five that says the people should appoint the leader according to the wisdom of God the people believe. I want to say that Indonesia is a multicultural country, a democratic country, where all the people have the same chance to serve the country. So, let's be open minded to democracy,” Beni ended his speech and all the people there supported him by clapping their hands.

Actually, that SARA issue was created by Nik's team. They had visited some places during that week to spread that issue. They did it diligently like an evangelist spread the gospel with all his heart. It was one of their cagey strategy to attack Beni and Agus because they realized that they might be lose if only competing with programs.

A day after, it was Marten's turn to visit Pasir Panjang, his ex mass base when he elected to the council six years ago. The different day, the different situation. Three o'clock and it was a cloudy day. The Sun played hide and seek with the cloud. He directed his motorcycle to the chief of the district's house, a minimalis house across the traditional fish market. After having a long talk with the chief accompanied by two glasses of ice tea and biscuit, he left the chief's house and the cloudy Pasir Panjang. He brought with him an important information that Beni used a Bible verse when he visited Pasir Panjang, whereas he was a Moslem. Something that might be sensitive to the majority people. He went to Patriot House and the he ran across the light rain on his way. He stopped a while to wear the raincoat, then continued his way.

After having that information, Marten asked his friends to have a small immediate meeting at 5 p.m. While waiting for his friends, he made a glass of cofee and started to do his delayed work with his laptop. Suddenly, he received a text message from his wife telling that his daughter was relapse. It shocked him.

“Is she alright?”

“She started to fever, but I think it's okay to wait until you come back home. But please be fast if you have done with your work.”

“Yes, Dear. I'll be home as soon as possible if the meeting is done.”

He closed his laptop, drank his coffee and started to think, considering the possibility to cancel the meeting.

“No, this is an important meeting. I’ll make it fast,” he talked to himself.

He stared at the wall blankly and frowned. Suddenly, one of his friends came and joined him. He smiled and pretending there was nothing happen to him. One by one his friend came and completed. Marten and his three friends started the meeting at 5 o’clock.

“I’ve just been from Pasir Panjang to get more information about Mr. Beni visitation,” he started to speak and the rest listened to him carefully. “He has heard about the issue and seems like he is panic. He then said that Indonesia is a democracy country, where all the people have the same chance to serve. So, may be we can use this statement to make a new issue that we must obey God, not man.”

All his friends agreed with that. Then, they started to divide their responsibility areas, so that they could spread this issue soon. The meeting finished at six. His friends came back home to enjoy the weekend. Marten also enjoy his weekend, but in the hospital with his relapse daughter.

The rain had stopped, the street was muddy. Marten raced his motorcycle in a hurry to his house. After arriving house, preparing everything, he and his wife brought their daughter to the hospital by his car.

They arrived at the hospital not more than fifteen minutes. After all procedures completed, they have their daughter checked by the doctor. They had no choice when the doctor told their daughter should be hospitalized.

A day passed and that unexpected weekend came. However, the morning sunbeam gave them a strength to face a new day with a new hope. The doctor visited his daughter in the morning, checked her condition and preparing for the further examination.

“She needs to be examined by CT Scan today. It will be two hours from now,” the doctor told them something that hurt them.

“Yes, doctor. Thank you,” his wife responded.

The doctor and a nurse left the room to come again two hours later to pick his daughter up to the CT Scan room. Marten and his wife could only waited outside the room. They waited about almost one hour and the doctor came.

“We are sorry to say this, but the result of the city scan shows that your daughter is suffering for blood cancer or leukemia.”

Marten and his wife were shocked when knowing that fact. His wife suddenly hugged Marten in tears and Marten could only calm her.

“But, don’t be affraid, it is still at second stadium, so with a good treatment, she will be okay. We will monitor your daughter condition, so stay here at least until tomorrow,” the doctor finished his bad news and left them.

Marten, his wife, and the nurse that brought their daughter came back to the room. His wife couldn’t hold her tears. It streamed down her face as she hugged him tightly. Their daughter was still asleep caused by the medicine effect. Beautiful, like a sleeping princess. Marten tried to calm his wife down, but her feeling was too strong to be calmed down. Marten stood with no word.

The next day, the doctor came again and reported the result of the examination. He said that the result was good, so Marten, his wife and their daughter were allowed to leave the hospital, but with a requirement that she had to do medical control once a week. They then leave the hospital and came back to their house.

It was four sharp when Marten went to Patriot House. However, there was no one. So, he decided to go to Pasir Panjang, Kelapa Lima, and Oesapa, the three areas that close to one another. Pasir Panjang was only four kilometers to Kelapa Lima, and Kelapa Lima was only two kilometers to Oesapa. He meant to meet the chief of each district to share his ‘invention’ to discredit Beni and Agus. The evening wind showed him the direction where to go, and Pasir Panjang was the first destination. He planned to meet the chief of the district of Pasir Panjang. The fact that Beni and Agus had been showing theirselves there was not a challenge for him, for he knew that he also used to be there when elected to the council six years ago. It was just five minutes and he arrived at the house of the chief of Pasir Panjang.

“Oh, Mr. Marten. Here you come again! Come in,” the chief welcomed Marten.

“Thank you, sir.”

“Is there something I can do?” the chief asked Marten.

“I’ll not be long here. I just want to tell you and ask for your help.”

“What’s that?”

“It is about Mr. Beni’s speech last week. You told that he spoke about the SARA issue he faces. Then, he used a word from Bible to support his excuse.”

“Alright. Then?”

“What do you think about that?”

“I think it is a little bit sensitive actually, but I don’t know how to respond it. If my people welcome with him, I’m okay.”

“My friends and I had been thinking about this and we have decided that we can take this to law domain. He had used the Bible verse, but he didn’t cite it completely, making the interpretation become more refraction,” the chief listened to him seriously, he continued, “but we need the society movement to help this successful. What do you think, sir?”

The chief thought for seconds considering every risk he might face.

“Don’t worry, we will stand behind you. Also, there will be money for cigarettes,” Marten continued and looked deep into the chief’s eyes.

“Let me think tonight and I’ll give you my answer tomorrow morning.”

“It’s too long, sir. I will be so busy tomorrow. Just think it once again. I’ll wait for your answer.”

The chief then forced his brain to think faster and faster, and came up with the answer, “Okay, I’ll try.”

They then discussed all the things regarding that crafty plan, and... finished. He said goodbye for the chief to continue his trip to Kelapa Lima and Oesapa. In those two places, he shared the same thing and got the same result: all the chiefs were ready to help them. He bought a box of *Martabak Telur* for his beloved wife and daughter before coming back home at seven thirty.

Started from the next day, Marten and his friends kept in touch with every chief they had met to monitor the plan. All the chiefs also started working with that issue. They commanded all the *Rukun Warga (RW)* to gather in the district administration office. They then commanded all the *RW* to create the banners to refuse Beni and Agus. There should be a writing on the banner saying “WE REFUSE RELIGION ABUSE”.

All this black campaign started here. With only a week, the banners had been mushrooming, covering almost forty percent of Kupang City area, although many people were still confused with what it meant. Not only the nonaligned people, some of the people who installed the banners around the city were also didn't know what was behind that banners. They were unemployed youth and adult that was asked by the *RW* to install the banners with a box of cigarette as the payment. However, the issue became more familiar as the newspapers and local televisions reported it massively.

Knowing that the very sensitive issue appeared, Beni and Agus became more panic. They seemed like knowing that they had stepped into the fire that would burn them slowly.

“It was only a misunderstanding. You can ask the people there, what did I say when I was there,” Beni once answered the journalist when he visited Liliba, trying to make excuse for his blunder.

The days passed and the issue was growing more massive. Not only banner, Marten and his team also provoked the mass to demonstrate in front of the city hall, demanding Beni to apologize and to resign as the nonactive mayor. Besides, Marten's team had also registered the law process for this case. They seemed like didn't want to miss this chance.

Beni, Agus, and their team had been very panic. They had nothing to do but taking advantage of the rest of the campaign period very well, sharing their ideas and thoughts, and winning the rest of the nonaligned people's heart.

The campaign period was four weeks left. Whether Nik and Simon or Beni and Agus, they took this good chance to campaign their programs and ideas to the areas they had pointed. On the other hand, Nik and Simon needed to groped their pocket deeper, because they had to pay the rest payment of the mass they mobilized. They had proved that every chief of the district they cooperated with would get twenty five to thirty million rupiah, according to the mass they mobilized, a quite big amount for a district. The chief would have the right to distribute the money again to the every *RW*, and every *RW* would distribute it to the people they mobilized. No one would believe if anyone said that the money would be distributed fairly. It had been corrupted before coming to their underling, and so on. The lowest people, the people mobilized by the *RW*, would only get about fifty thousand rupiah per person. No one would protest about it, because the people they mobilized were unemployed, so they were all thanking God if

getting money for something they did perfunctorily, such as installing the banners, demonstrating in front of the hall, etc.

Counting down the weeks before the quiet period, Marten got a bad news that his daughter was getting worse and had to be on a surgery and therapy. Like standing in two boats, Marten felt like he lost his focus. He thought very hard. His daughter was in his heart, but Nik and Simon were in his head. He had only one choice if only his daughter should go for further treatment: Surabaya.

After thinking with all considerations, he chose to take his furlough time from his work and political world in order to be with his daughter through her difficult time. So, he met Nik and Simon privately in Patriot House and, for the first time, told them his problem.

“What happen? You are the most important person in this team,” Simon responded with the sound of unwillingness.

“My daughter is now suffering for leukemia and she needs a surgery and therapy. I’ll be with her in Surabaya for that,” he answered with listless face.

“Oh, God. How long has she suffered?” Nik answered.

“I don’t know.”

“How long will you be there?” Simon asked.

“A month may be.”

“I have a relative in Surabaya. If you want, your daughter and your wife can live there, but you, please stay here. We need you,” Nik added.

“No, I can’t. I have made a strict decision with all of the risks I might get.”

“Hmm... We can do nothing if it’s your decision. We pray the best for your daughter,” Nik ended the conversation.

Marten then came back home and preparing everything for his medical trip to Surabaya two days ahead.

The next day, Marten went to his office and finished all his works in *Dinas PU* and in Patriot House. He didn’t want leaving any undone works. As long as he is in Surabaya, his job

in *Dinas Pekerjaan Umum* would be handled by his secretary. However, he didn't tell everyone that he would be in Surabaya starting from tomorrow.

In the following day, they had to wake up earlier, because their plan was on boarding at five thirty. They went to the airport, got on the plane, take off, and left their house, their routine, their problems, their struggling, and all their worries. Marten had also planned to inactivate his work phone number as long as he was in Surabaya because he really wanted to be the witness of his daughter struggle.

The days passed, the weeks gone, and the election was one week left. That week was a quiet time for the candidate, so all the campaign attributes were uninstalled. There was nothing special in that week. Everything was running well, just like the days before the campaign period.

If there was something interesting, it was the survey from some survey organizations that coloring the political world. The electability of Beni and Agus were decreased than the first survey. Even, their rival, Nik and Simon overtook them. It was about forty eight percent for Beni and Agus, and fifty two percent for Nik and Simon. However, it was only a survey. Next week, everyone would know the real result.

The election

The democracy party of Kupang citizen finally began. Kupang citizen was in throng fulfilling the ballot arena. The village security apparatus were standing in every ballot arena. All the people of the village smiled when arrived at the ballot arena. The inkblot on their fingers was their pride, the proof that they had chosen their best inside the ballot divider. However, red spittles and its aroma were still everywhere. The democracy party were only about nine hours. No one could be in that party any longer. It would not become a party anymore, but the biggest worry of the candidates on the pitch. If they win, praise God. If they lost, it might be very difficult to say 'Thank God', because they had sacrificed their time, strength, and the most valuable thing for them, money. The money they spend for the campaign period was not in a small amount. It was enough to buy a house with type thirty six, and the rest they could buy motorcycle, or even car.

Apparently, Marten was still in Surabaya with his family, enjoying the progress of his daughter's health. She was getting better day by day. She had just to be in a chemotherapy for two weeks. Her surgery last two weeks was also successfully done. Her smile was brighter than before. Her heart was getting stronger than before. She was walking reaching the future. No one could stop her at that time, because her superdad and supermom were there behind her.

After two weeks, the doctor examined that she had been recovered one hundred percent, so they were allowed to leave the hospital. They went back to Kupang with grateful heart, for The Creator of life had created new life for them. Moreover, Marten heard a good news that Nik and Simon won the election when he arrived at El Tari Airport. He was very happy. The heat of Kupang couldn't burn his happiness. Just in the night of that day, he went to Patriot House to meet his friends. There was a small celebration for their winning, apparently. Everyone were welcomed him back, giving him a warm hug, and the laugh of winning were sounded in the whole of the room. All they did in the Nik and Simon were also there, giving him a high appreciation for his dedication in the team.

After that celebration night, Marten chose not to continue his political carrier, because he wanted to spend more time with his wife and his beloved daughter. The most priority thing for him was his family. He then had more time to play with her daughter, to watch her natural growing, and become the really superdad for his daughter.

Although he was not in the political world anymore, he was still working in *Dinas PU*, so he was still close enough with the things and programs Nik and Simon did.

One day, in the second year of Nik and Simon's regime, Marten heard that they corrupted the budget for medical equipment supply. He then started to investigate it. Then, his anger was culminated and he couldn't handled it anymore when knowing that it was true. The reason he chose Surabaya for his daughter medical treatment was because of the limited equipment in all hospitals in Kupang. All his memories about his daughter suffering started to dance in his mind. He didn't want it happened again to his family or to another family. So, he decided to do something. Starting from that day, he was not in Nik and Simon side anymore. He stood as the opposition, and ready for open fighting.

Burned by the anger in his heart and his head, he visited all the chiefs of the district that he used to provoke to discredit Beni and Agus in that night. He started with Pasir Panjang again. He meet the chief of Pasir Panjang and shared his other 'invention' to the chief.

“I need your help to mobilize our mass again. We can make a movement again and sign a petition for our Anti-Corruption Organization (ACO) to investigate it.”

“Hmm.. Why not? I’ll be with you,” the chief answered with all his heart.

He then moved to Kelapa Lima and Oesapa, and did the same, and got the same result. He was one of the most influencing functionary in Kupang and linked to many important and unimportant people. He liked to interact with everyone. That’s why it was easy for him to influence people.

All the chiefs than mobilized the same mass when they ever protested Beni and Agus. After agreeing the date with Marten, they moved to City Hall and demonstrated. They brought the banner and big papers with writing “WE REFUSE THE CORRUPTOR”, “GIVE OUR MONEY BACK”, “LAY YOUR POSITION DOWN”, and other attacking writings. They also brought the petition that had been signed by more than four hundreds people. They then moved to the ACO and did the same demonstration. Their spirit now burned naturally because they knew that their leader dealt with corruption.

ACO was actually open with the report. However, there was no official report received by ACO, so they couldn’t process it. Nik and Simon had also disappeared the evidences and played with number in the APBD, so the evidences became more bias.

Marten was very disappointed with Nik and Simon. The persons he used to work for had done something immoral and illegal, that was corrupting on medical equipment which for people in Kupang really need them, the need that was very basic in Kupang, something that caused his daughter had to suffer from leukemia. If the medical equipment and the quality of the doctors were good, his daughter would be treated better from the very beginning and he didn’t need to go to Surabaya for it. However, he then realized that in politic, everything could happen. And in politic, it is common if a rival becomes a partner and a best friend becomes an enemy. Everyone could change because of their political orientation, especially it is related to money.

REFLECTIVE PAPER

a. Introduction

Indonesia is a very rich country naturally and culturally. Naturally, Indonesia has enchanted nature, something that has been avowed by the world. The biggest gold mine in the world, Grasberg, is located in Papua, Indonesia. Indonesia also becomes one of the countries in Asia that has the biggest oil reserve. Culturally, Indonesia has about 1.340 tribes, 1.211 languages, 6 national religions, and so many traditional religions that spread all over the country, from the West to the East, from the North to the South. All those beauty make Indonesia becomes one of the tourism destination country for foreigners.

For the writer, Indonesia has another interesting side, that is political field. Politic in Indonesia has become one of the best 'theatrical stage' for the 'actors' (politicians) to show their best acting off. They compete to be the main 'actor' even they have to kick another 'actor' out the stage. Their importance and their group importance is higher than anything. Support as friend or stand against as enemy. Stand beside or stand opposite. Those are the only choices available in political field. That is why the opposition side often attacks and criticizes the running government, and so the runnig government does.

The tension of the political field in Indonesia was heated when the writer came up with the ideas of this story. There came an all at once local election in many regions in Indonesia, whether mayor or governor election. Just like a 'theatrical stage', all the candidates wanted to take over the stage and showed their drama. One of the most attractive 'show' was DKI Jakarta governor election. As the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta's governor election was very spotlighted by the press. Two couple of candidates were on the stage, showing theirselves and attacking their rival in order to attract the people to choose them. They did all things to win, even the very embarassing way, that was playing with *Suku, Agama, Ras, & Antar-golongan (SARA)* issue. At the end, this issue was effective enough to kick another candidate out and lift the player of the issue high.

DKI Jakarta governor election's story is adapted by the writer to the writer's origin: Kupang. Kupang is the capital city of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) Province.

That story is adapted to the places, issues, society condition, social condition, and cultures in Kupang. The writer tries to depict all the situations as real as it is. This association between DKI Jakarta and Kupang City shows that every city might be unique naturally and culturally, but the problems and issues in the the government or the politician face are the same.

b. Body

If there is a theory or method that is compatible to talk about economy, social system, and political system, it must be Marxist Theory. Marxist theory is a concept from Karl Marx to see how the capitalist gain money by taking advantage of the proletariat. Marx says that the proletariat will come up and strive for their justice if this condition happened continuously.

Basically, human being will strive for their lives and their main needs: food, house, and clothing. Everyone will try to reach the proper life. However, some will succeed, some not. This condition then creates the social class in human's life. Those who are in the higher class can oppres or take advantages from those who are powerless.

Looking from this perspective, the writer applies this theory to the story the writer created. The story is about two candidates of Kupang City mayor that fight to be the number one person in Kupang City. They are Nik-Simon and Beni-Agus. They do campaign in many regions in Kupang in order to share their ideas and programs to the people. Knowing that he has no better programs compared to Beni-Agus' programs, Nik-Simon start to play with *SARA* issue, mean to attack Beni, the only Moslem candidate. Marten, the leader of Nik-Simon campaign team, provoke the unemployed people to attack Beni, and pay them low to do demonstration against Beni. This works and finally Nik-Simon win the election with the help of the unemployed people. However, Marten then hears that in their second year leading Kupang, Nik and Simon deals with corruption of the budget for medical equipment supply. Marten, whose daughter ever suffered for blood cancer/leukemia, feel very angry because he knows that medical equipment in Kupang is very limited, till he needed to bring her daughter to Surabaya for the treatment. So, he mobilizes the mass he ever provoked to protest against Nik and Simon, but they don't succeed because of the incompleted evidences.

The two couple of candidates for Kupang City mayor are the people who has power. They have better lives than the other characters in the story. They have money and authority to do what they want. This is proven when Nik and Simon, via Marten, provoke and pay low payment to the unemployed people to attack Beni as the minority. The unemployed people are okay with that because they are paid, though it was low. It then succeed because their income, later, is more than the money they used to pay the unemployed. Nik and Simon are successfully take advantages of the powerless people in order to get more money. The unemployed people are then realized that they were exploited, moreover they know that the governor that used to give them low payment, deal with corruption. They try to fight against, but got no result because the leaders have many ways to disappear the evidence.

By working with this story, the writer knows more about political field in Indonesia because the writer is always update with the fresh news that are reported in every media the writer can reach, whether digital or printing. The writer's nationalism soul is also growing stronger. Beside that, the writer also knows more about leukemia because it becomes an important issue in the story. However, some of the writer's friend claim that the writer becomes more rigid because the writer is always interested with the news about politic.

c. Conclusion

Living in a very heterogeneous country like Indonesia is a gain for the writer. The beauty of the diversity can be seen clearer. The diversity then leads to the curiosity to know more about something new where people don't live in. When seeing that diversity of every unique place and society in Indonesia, there is one thing remain the same: the people. The writer means every human, wherever he was born, will have the same desire to be better in his life. The different is the way they take, whether it is good or bad, whether they reach by theirselves or by sacrificing other.

The experience the writer experienced while working with this story is more about literacy experience. The more someone reads, the more he knows. By reading the updated political issues, the writer knows more about the national political condition

and is able to analyze it. The writer also becomes easier to make a political decision and to influence other. Beside that, the writer becomes more care about the living of Indonesia and its everything.



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The Writer

Allan Christanto Liu



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