

**THE PORTRAYAL OF A LADY COMPANION'S STRUGGLES  
AGAINST NEGATIVE STEREOTYPE IN HER ENVIRONMENT**

Final Project



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**THE BLOOMING CACTUS: THE PORTRAYAL OF A LADY COMPANION'S  
STRUGGLES AGAINST NEGATIVE STEREOTYPE IN HER ENVIRONMENT**

FINAL CREATIVE WRITING PROJECT

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Sincerely,

Angela Gracela

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Background of Study**

In today's society, women are mostly at risk of being labelled. This is influenced by the stereotypes of society towards women. Stereotype puts labels how a person should act or live according to the gender, personality, and other facts. According to the English Oxford Dictionary, stereotype is a "widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing". Lippmann Keenly defines "stereotype" as a "distorted picture or image in a person mind, not based on personal experience, but derived culturally." Furthermore, he also argued that stereotypes are driven by social, political, and economic motivations. Stereotypes often occur in society. In social life there are often social groups in which members of the group cannot accept inequality from other groups. This unwillingness to accept the differences of other people or groups will cause conflicts between individuals or groups. Whenever stereotypes between groups concern with different sex, gender stereotype might occur. United Nations Human Rights defines a gender stereotype as a "generalised view or preconception about attributes or characteristics that are or ought to be possessed by, or the roles that are or should be performed by men and women".

The researcher found out that a karaoke bar usually has certain rules for lady companion to follow when work at that particular place. The rules stated that a lady companion is not allowed to use drugs and not allowed to do sexual intercourse in the bar. However, the society still tend to have negative assumption about this ladies.

There is one example that the researcher learnt about a lady companion (LC) case that shows how gender stereotype occurs in Indonesia. This is what spurred stereotypes in the community. An article published on Kompas.com entitled "Raiding Karaoke Place, Police Find Guests Are Having Sex" stated that the team of the General Criminal Investigation Directorate of East Java Regional Police Officer found that two guests were having sexual intercourse with a lady companion at a Karoke bar in Madiun on Thursday (01/25/2018). "The two guests were found to have intercourse with two LCs in Kimura Karaoke VIP room. In addition to securing two guests, police officers captured 25 lady companion, 1 LC coordinator, 1 supervisor, and 1 cashier. Appart from that, police officers aseized condoms, women's underwears, some cash,

and cellphones. For the sake of investigation, Karaoke Kimura was ligely shut and fitted with a police line. As a result of frequent cases like this take place in Indonesia, the community then tend to assume negatively that all LCs who work in karaoke bars must do the same thing. That is why people easily judge someone based on the work they have.

## **B. Research Problem**

In this research, there are two proposed research questions that will be explored:

1. How does a lady companion (LC) fight against negative stereotype given by society in her surrounding ?
2. How does a woman as lady companion struggle to faces society's disrespect against her?

## **C. The Objective of Study**

The objective of this study is to reflect how a lady companion keep survives to face a hard life despite being avoided by people in her surrounding because of the bad stereotype of against her. The aim of this study is to portray the main character, who is a lady companion working in karaoke bar, as someone who gets scorn and disrespect from the community, and how she struggles. In this proposed short story, the main character will fight gainst the bad stereotype and prove that what people assume about her is wrong.

## **D. Significance of Study**

This study and the creative work afterwards will depict streotype of a lady companion working in a karaoke bar which in fact could be found in daily life in our neighborhood and society. The writer want to emphasize how lady companion struggles, faces society's derision against them portrayed in the story are still common in today's society. Therefore, the readers could realize and understand the bitter praxis which has been happening to themselves since long time ago. The writer would like to ensure that readers of the creative work would have more respect and empathy to lady companion working in a karaoke bar to make this as learning to everyone not to easy judge other people based on the work they do.



## **II. Theoretical Framework**

### **A. Review of Related Study**

In Inda Reski Yanti's thesis entitled, "Persepsi Masyarakat Terhadap Pekerja Wanita Di Tempat Karaoke Princess Syahrini Kota Makassar" the writer presents three sub-problems or research questions, namely: what are the characteristics of lady companion (LC) at the karaoke place of Princess Syahrini in Makassar City; what is the public perception of lady companion (LC) at the Princess Syahrini Karaoke in Makassar City; and how the impact of Lady companion (LC) at Princess Syahrini's karaoke place on the social life of lady companion.

There are several characteristics of lady companion at Princess Syahrini Karaoke Bar in Makassar City according to Indah's thesis. First, the characteristics of female workers in terms of clothing. Princess Syahrini Karaoke Bar has rules or requirements requires the lady companion to wear uniforms that they have determined by management. Regulation regarding clothing has been in effect since the first Princess Syahrini Karaoke Bar was opened in 2014. All lady companions must wear purple and pink mini clothes. Pink uniforms are worn every Monday to Thursday, while purple uniforms are worn on Friday to Sunday. They usually wear skin colored leggings with black high heels. Their appearance is not much different from flight attendants or banks employees that have beautiful faces and attractive looks with mini clothes and wear makeup on their face.

Second, the characteristics of female workers in terms of economy. There are some lady companions who chooses to work because of economic factors, and some of them work only because they fill their spare time when they are on college break, and there are also those who work because they follow their friends. Among 19 lady companions there are approximately 6 lady companions who are classified as poor. The lady companions who are less, come from various regions, even among them who came from Java and had been living in Makassar for a long time. Many of them those who live far from their parents, they only live in rented house not far from a karaoke bar. Lady companions who work because they are joined by friends or just fill their spare time during college break, are those who belong to the family classified as capable, out of 19 female workers there are approximately 13 lady companions who can be categorized as economically capable families. Even there is one of them whose parents work as principals in one of the elementary schools in Jeneponto. They work only because they just fill their time college break, even though the main reason they work to improve quality of life.

Next, the characteristics of female workers in terms of social solidarity. Manager at Princess Syahrini karaoke bar set the rules that, as lady companion must be friendly, and polite to all visitors. They are also required to always smile when serving visitors who come, so they can give best service. So, all lady companions are required to have good social relations or solidarity to visitors and fellow employees both male and female.

The last, the characteristics of female workers in terms of religion. In terms of religion, karaoke bars do not give special rules. The research's results from the writer, there are 39 employees including men. Only two people who have different beliefs in God, and the rest are Muslims. The two non-Muslim work as lady companions. About their clothes using the same uniform as the other lady companion. The writer asks about the worship, especially for lady companion, to one of the speakers, he said that "Most lady companions carry out their obligations as Muslims who always worship God when they enter prayer times, even though there are some of them who rarely worship but overall pray more. This also applies to non-Muslim workers, they always pray before or after work.

Inda Reski Yanti required the opinion about of a lady companion at Princess Syahrini Karaoke Bar to Hadi Sunarto (48), a police officer who was in charge of managing the highway right in front of Princess Syahrini Karaoke Bar. Sunarto said that actually it is not natural for women to work in entertainment venues such as karaoke bars that have to go home late at night. Women coming home at night is very prone to accidents especially women who work in the karaoke bars who dress provocative. According to Sunarto, people who have evil intentions can take advantage of the situation. Clothes used by lady companions in Karaoke Bars is not feasible and not in accordance with Islamic law. It's a shame to see a woman working in a karaoke Bar.

Another person interviewed by Inda Reski Yanti, Junaedi (37) argued women working at nightlife could be considered as a badly behaved women (Perempuan nakal). Actually there are still many other jobs women can do without having to work at night life. Showing the nakedness to everyone is a big sin, not to mention religion forbids women to dress openly. As said by Junaedi in Inda Reski Yanti's thesis.

Different opinion is revealed by head of the village of Mangasa, Mahmud (58), He stated that there was actually no problem if women worked at night, if the woman can take care of herself and her safety. There is no problem with his work. Especially nowadays women who dresses like that, we are often seeing everywhere. He also said that uniforms that are used even though they are open are part of the attraction of the karaoke bars to be more attractive to visitors.

The negative impact of lady companion on women's social life, namely there are bad judgments and criticism and satire that affect the status of women in the eyes of the public, while the positive impact of female workers leads to improving quality of life in terms of economy and social solidarity between employees at Princess Syahrini Karaoke Bar.

## **B. Review of Related Theory**

### **Stereotype**

This story is based on stereotype theory. The term stereotype derives from the Greek, *stereos* meaning solid, and *typos* meaning image or impression. A stereotype was originally a solid printing mould or plate which, once cast was difficult to change, but the word was adapted for its present usage by Walter Lippman in his classic book, *Public Opinion* (1992). A. Samovar & E. Porter (in Mulyana, 2000: 218) define stereotypes as perceptions or beliefs that are held regarding groups or individuals based on opinions and attitudes that were first formed. This belief leads to judgment that tends to be negative and even demeaning to others. There is tendency to label certain groups and including problems that need to be addressed are negative stereotypes or degrading other groups. According to Cambridge Dictionary, stereotype is a set idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong. Gender stereotypes can be both positive and negative. Discrimination against women exists because of stereotypical expectations, attitudes and behaviors. Narwoko & Suyanto, define stereotypes as labeling certain parties or group which always cause harm to others and cause injustice. The basic theory of stereotypes initially developed in the area of social psychology. Manstead and Hewstone (1996) in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social Psychology*, defines stereotypes as: societally shared beliefs about the characteristics (personality traits, expected behaviors, or personal values) that are perceived to be true of social groups and their members. (Manstead and Hewstone, 1996: 628).

## **C. Method of the Study**

The method that will be used in this study is by conducting a library research. The purpose of a library study is to gather information that supports research. The strategy used in the library research is by reading other people's research reports and reading academic articles on the internet.

The other method used in this research is interview. Interview in this research method a conducted structured interview with many list of question which the research wants to know more detailed information from the interviewee about negative streotype of lady companion. The participant in this research is Siska. She is a 24-year-old. Former lady companion at Monalisa karaoke bars in Salatiga. This interview was conducted for 30 minutes for one meeting.

List of Questions:

1. When you worked as a lady companion, did you often got inappropriate words from other people?
2. Are there rules in Monalisa, if violated will be subject to sanctions?
3. Can guests who come there touch your body?
4. At what age, you work at Monalisa?
5. Why did you choose to work at Monalisa?
6. Have you ever violated the rules of work, such as having sexual intercourse with guests when outside the workplace?
7. Have you ever used drugs?
8. Why did you choose to stop working?

Participants:

Name : Siska Maharani (24)

Former lady companion at Monalisa

Based on the result of the interview, it is known that Siska often got inappropriate from people in her surrounding. She said that she used to live in a boarding around Monalisa, I often heard that people said, the boarding house where she and her friends lived is the house of the bitches. And often also, guests who came to Monalisa think they are a prostitute who can be asked to make love. Meanwhile, in monalisa there are rules for not having sexual intercourse with the guests. She said at Monalisa they are not allowed to go out with guests during working hours. It is prohibited to use drugs, if caught immediately fired. They must not , having intercourse with guests or anyone while at work, because there are lots of CCTV. They are not allowed to drink alcohol until get drunk, because they have to serve their next guest. She also said that LC has the right to prohibit guests from touching their bodies. Siska



started work as lady companion at 17 years old, she chose to work as lady companion because she didn't have any money at that time. She also have no family at all. When she was invited by my friends there, she heard that the salary was large, she became interested to work there. Even though she knew, the work she did is a job that is not good in people's eyes. She said that she never having sexual intercourse with guests who came to Monalisa. She also never used drugs because she is still afraid of God. She is also afraid to go to jail. Her life is complicated, I don't want to add to the problems in to my life. "She said". Siska chose to stop working because, her boyfriend asked her to stop.

The researcher also conducted direct observations by going to a prostitution place in Bandungan, Semarang Regency, Central Java. The strategy that was carried out was by going around the bandungan area on Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 at 1.25am using a car, without entering the karaoke bars. There are lots of karaoke bars there. There was no found a lady companion sitting outside the karaoke bars with men, they just sat with friends while smoking, and there were also lady companions who were in the beauty salon beside karaoke bars. All lady companions look sexy, they wear mini dresses and wear high heels.

### **III. CREATIVE WORK**

#### **I. Title**

The title of creative work that the researcher's about to write is "What's Wrong With Me?" With a narrator of the lady companion responding to the situation she was facing. Displacement of her feeling is voiced in the title to view from stereotypes perspective.

#### **II. Component of Creative Work**

##### **A. Theme:**

The theme of this creative work is struggle of a woman, who fight againts the streotype given by society in her surrounding.

##### **B. Characters**

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Name</b>         | Davira  |
| <b>Age</b>          | 21  |
| <b>Appearance</b>   | Long black haired, black eyes, pointy nose, height 165cm, weight 55kg.                  |
| <b>Occupation</b>   | Lady Companion at Karaoke Bars  |
| <b>Education</b>    | Not graduating from high school   |
| <b>Relationship</b> | None  |
| <b>Personality</b>  | Friendly to everyone, hard worker, humble, polite, and sometimes she likes to be alone. |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Name</b>         | Richard  |
| <b>Age</b>          | 30   |
| <b>Appearance</b>   | Black haired, black eyes, slanted eyes, pointy nose, height 185 cm, weight 67kg. |
| <b>Occupation</b>   | The owner of a 5-star hotel in Jakarta   |
| <b>Education</b>    | A Harvard University graduate, majoring in Economics.                            |
| <b>Relationship</b> | Married  |
| <b>Personality</b>  | Quiet and polite person  |

### C. Setting:

As one of the supporting aspect in the creative work, the setting took place in the years of 2000s which includes than two decades.

- a. Place : At home, an elite karaokebar and in public area like, coffe shop,etc.
- b. Time : Takes past to present period of time.

In 2003 :

- Davira lost her mother.
- Her father decided to marry another woman.

In 2004 :

- Davir's father had a car accident and she lost her father.
- Her stepmother left her alone.
- She is cared for by her neighbor

In 2013 :

- Both of her adoptive parents died from accidents

In 2014 :

- Davira decided to leave home and go to Jakarta

In 2014 to 2018

- Davira works in Karaoke bar

#### **D. Conflict : Internal and External**

Davira

Internal:

1. She feels depressed because many people often say inappropriate words to her.
2. Sometimes she feels desperate when she faces society's disrespect against her.
3. She feels depressed because Richard's wife accused Davira of having an affair with her husband

External:

1. Davira vs Nature : Davira works at night until dawn. Cold air at night often makes her get sick.
2. Davira vs Richard's wife : Davira fights with Richard's wife because Richard's wife thinks Davira is having an affair with her husband

Richad

Internal

1. Richard always felt bored because of problems with his wife.

External

1. Richard divorced his wife, knowing that his wife had an affair with someone else.

### **E. Plot**

Davira, the beautiful and kind-hearted daughter, sees her world turn upside down when her beloved mother dies when she is 6, and her father remarries another woman named Elina. Elina doesn't like Davira, because after marriage, Davira's father still sincerely loved Davira, making her very jealous. Once more, things will go from bad to worse, when Davira's father died. Two weeks after her father's funeral, her stepmother decided to leave her alone. The big family of her mother and father has no attention to take care for her. She is cared for by her neighbor named Linda. Linda is a wife of an Indonesian soldier. Since her marriage Linda isn't blessed with a child. They take care of Davira sincerely until Davira grow up. The saddest thing happens. Linda and her husband dies from a car accident when Davira still in the second grade of high school.

Davira is desperate for her life, she decided to leave home and go to the big city to work, so she can get money. Because she doesn't finish high school, she chooses to work as a lady companion with a big salary in the karaoke bars. Karaoke bars where she works are elite places which are often visited by rich people located in south Jakarta. Even so, Davira remains a good woman. Because working there doesn't require her to be able to sleep with many men. Her job at work is to serve guests singing or just accompany the guests to drink beer.

During working as a Lady companion, Davira often gets inappropriate words from neighbors. Sometimes Davira feels sad, because what the neighbors say is not true. They only judge her from the clothes she wears and the work she does. However, Davira doesn't despair, she still works as usual to get money, to fulfill her life's needs.

One day, at the place where she works, she meets a guest named Richard. He is a wealthy businessman in Jakarta and he has a wife. Richard occasionally comes to sing or just drinks beer when he feels bored. Davira serves him well. She never once touches Richard, even when Richard wants to touch her, Davira immediately refuses with the word "Sorry I can't". Time after time passes, Richard comes more often, and wants to continue to be served by Davira. They always spend the night together, just drinking and talking a lot of things.



Davira's pleasure disappeared. Davira is visited by a tall, beautiful woman like a model at her workplace. She is the daughter of a governor. That woman walks towards her and slaps her face hard. She pushes Davira to fall on the floor. She called Davira a slut, wants to be slept with by her husband Richard. Aloud, Davira replied, *"I never slept with your husband!"* She still doesn't believe, she wants to prove whether Davira is a virgin or not. Davira replied, *"You can't do that!, even if I'm not virgin it doesn't mean I have slept with your husband. Women out there who don't work in this place, many of them are not virgins"* Davira doesn't want to test a virgin not because she is not virgin, but because she thinks it is too much. At the same time, the police come to check the workers, whether they used drugs or not. Richard's wife is increasingly satisfied, she wants to prove that Davira is a slut. After testing the urine, the police do not arrest her, because she is declared negative by drugs. Richard's wife is very angry, and she says *"I will come again to prove that you ar a holler back girl. Fuck you, bitch!"*

After a great fight between Davira and Richard's wife, Richard never comes again. Davira doesn't worry about that, Davira continued to focus on working. A month later Richard comes, and she talks about everything that had happened to her. Richard apologizes for what his wife has done. Richard also said that he has divorced his wife because she was having an affair with an artist.

As time went on, Richard confidently asks Davira to marry him. Richard's reason for wanting to marry her, is because during knowing Davira, Davira always serves him kindly. During his time with Davira he feels comfortable. Davira is a good woman. She always entertaining him when he has a lot of problems. Davira doesn't immediately accept it. She asks Richard to give her one day to think about it.

Two days has pass, Richard comes, he asks Davira to answer. Davira immediately answers and says that she wants to live with Richard, but on one condition. When there is a problem in the household, Richard can not come to a place like the place where she works. Because not all women in there are like her. Richard accepts the terms. Richard also asks her to stop working, and she does it. Finally they get married.

#### **F. Point of View:**

My creative work will use 1<sup>st</sup> point of view which is a lady companion as main character.

## G. Symbol

Cactus: In the story the author will use a cactus because can survive in a variety of conditions, no matter how painful it is. The appearance of the cactus in this story is also one of the reasons why a lady companion keep survive no matter how painful her life. Even though many people insult her, disrespect to her, say inappropriate words, she continues to survive day after day, even though it is very painful, she understands herself, that what others say to her is not true. Later in this part of the story, the author will bring up the cactus in the some scene.

## III. Storyboard

| <u>Scene 1</u>  | <u>Scene 2</u>   |
|---|--|
| Setting : In the early weeks of 2003  | Setting : In 2004  |
| Character :   | Character :  |
| Davira  | Davira   |
| Her father  | Her father   |
| Her stepmother  | Her stepmother   |
|   | Her neighbor   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Davira lost her mother at the age of 6.</li><li>- She cries all night for losing her mother.</li><li>- Her father decided to marry another woman.</li><li>- Davira's stepmother doesn't like her.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Davira's father go of town for an official trip.</li><li>- Her father had a car accident</li><li>- Her father died.</li><li>- Her stepmother left her.</li><li>- She is cared for by her neighbor.</li></ul> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><u>Scene 3</u></p> <p>Setting : on Christmas in 2013</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <p>Her adoptive parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Her adoptive father and mother go out of town to visit their best friend's house to celebrate Christmas.</li> <li>- Both of her adoptive parents died from accidents.</li> <li>- She became so depressed, so she stopped going to school</li> </ul> | <p><u>Scene 4</u></p> <p>Setting : New year 2013</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Davira is desperate for her life, she decided to leave home and go to the big city to work.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><u>Scene 5</u></p> <p>Setting : In Jakarta</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Davira arrived in Jakarta and was looking for a place to live.</li> <li>- She applied for a job at an elite karaoke bars being lady companion.</li> </ul>   | <p><u>Scene 6</u></p> <p>Setting : At karaoke bars</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <p>Her boss</p> <p>Her coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She starts working and has many acquaintances.</li> <li>- Her boss give her money so she could buy some sexy clothes, high heels and full set makeup</li> <li>- Given a paper by the lady companion coordinator, the rules she must obey.</li> </ul> |

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| <p><u>Scene 7</u></p> <p>Setting : At house</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Davira inadvertent hears the neighbors talking about herself saying that she has a lot of money because of having sex with a rich man.</li> <li>- When she go out to buy vegetables near her boarding house, the neighbors looked at her sarcastically.</li> <li>- She cries, because all the talk said by neighbors is not true.</li> </ul>                         | <p><u>Scene 8</u></p> <p>Setting : At karaoke bars</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <p>The guests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Davira accompanies guests to sing.</li> <li>- The guest asks her to take three bottles of beer.</li> <li>- The guest tell her to drink.</li> <li>- She says softly that she doesn't drink, she asks guests to understand and she immediately apologizes.</li> </ul>           |
| <p><u>Scene 9</u></p> <p>Setting : On a dark night at home</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She cries while looking at a photo of her biological mother and father, at that time exactly 15 years of her mother's death.</li> <li>- She also immediately takes a photo of her adoptive mother and father who are saved along with a photo of her biological parents.</li> <li>- She speaks to the photo she held that she misses them.</li> </ul> | <p><u>Scene 10</u></p> <p>Setting : At karaoke bars</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <p>Richard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She meets a guest named Richard. He is a wealthy businessman in Jakarta and he has a wife.</li> <li>- He asks Davira to accompany him to drink.</li> <li>- He handed a cigarette to Davira, politely she replies, sorry I don't smoke.</li> <li>- Change information</li> </ul> |



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| <p><u>Scene 11</u></p> <p>Setting : At karaoke bars</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <p>Richard's wife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Davira is visited by a tall, beautiful woman like a model at her workplace. She is Richard's wife.</li> <li>- Richard's wife walks towards Davira and slaps her face hard. She pushes Davira to fall on the floor.</li> <li>- Davira replied that she never sleep with her husband.</li> <li>- That woman wants to prove whether Davira is a virgin or not.</li> </ul> | <p><u>Scene 12</u></p> <p>Setting :</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <p>Richard's wife</p> <p>The police</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The police come to check the workers, all the staff, and the visitors whether they used drugs or not.</li> <li>- Richard's wife is increasingly satisfied, she wants to prove that Davira is a slut. After testing the urine, the police do not arrest her, because she is declared negative by drugs.</li> <li>- Richard's wife is very angry.</li> </ul> |
| <p><u>Scene 13</u></p> <p>Setting :</p> <p>Character : At home</p> <p>Davira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- She lays in his bed, the telephone rang and gets a message from unknown number</li> </ul>  | <p><u>Scene 14</u></p> <p>Setting : At karaoke bars</p> <p>Character :</p> <p>Davira</p> <p>Richard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Richard comes after a long time.</li> <li>- Davira talks about everything that had happened to her.</li> <li>- Richard apologizes for what his wife has done.</li> <li>- Richard says that he has divorced his wife because she was having an affair with an artist.</li> </ul>   |

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Richard expresses his feelings, that he misses her, he keeps deep feelings for her, and he proposes Davira to be his wife.</li> </ul> <p>She asks Richard to give her one day to think about it</p> |
| <p><u>Scene 15</u><br/>         Setting : At home<br/>         Character :<br/>         Davira</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Davira lay in her bed, thinking about what Richard says.</li> <li>- She picks up her cell phone, immediately calls Richard, and makes an appointment to meet her in a coffee shop.</li> </ul> | <p><u>Scene 17</u><br/>         Setting : At Bali<br/>         Character :<br/>         Davira<br/>         Richard</p> <p>They get married.</p>   |

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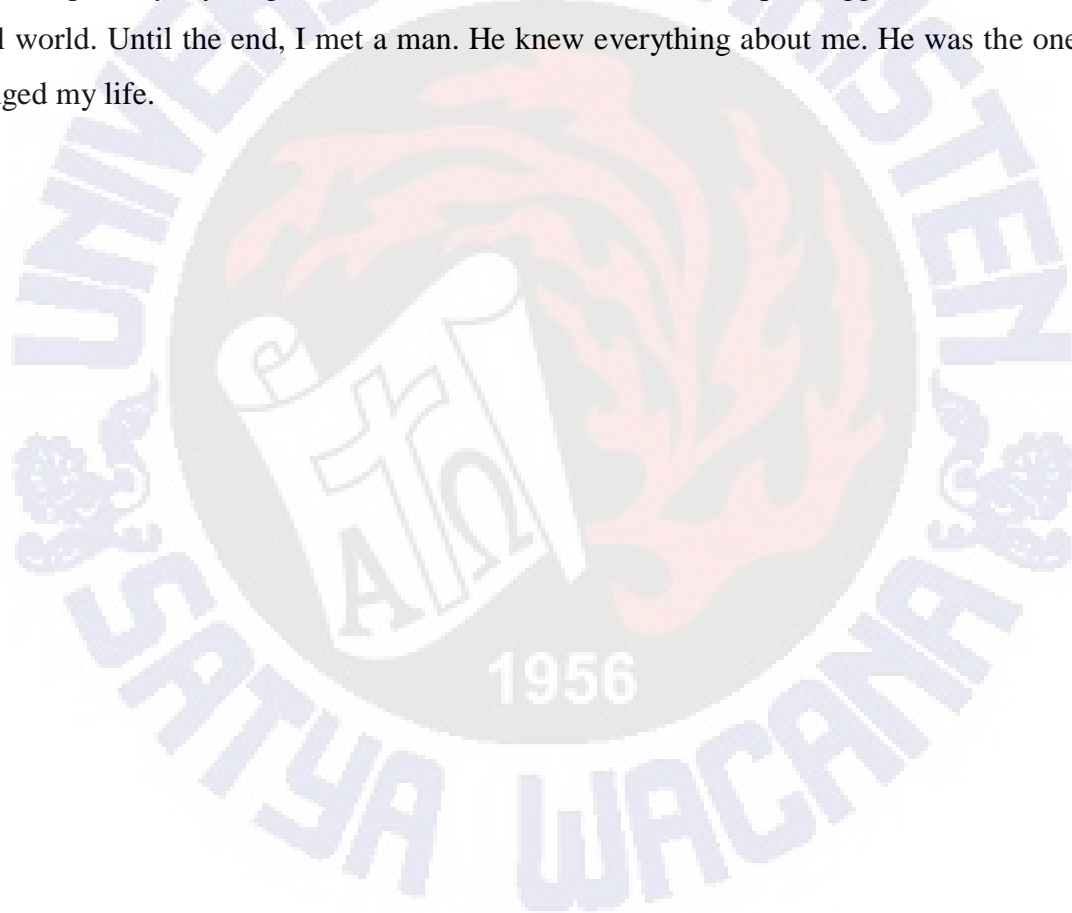
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## SUMMARY OF STORY

My name is Davira Maureen. My friends called me Davira. It's been 21 years, I breathe on this earth. I am a woman whose life was full of dynamics. I was cared for by my adoptive parents. They passed away when I was in the second grade of senior high school. I quit from school. There was no someone for me to lean on. My adoptive parents left a lot of debt at the bank so I had to work hard to pay off the debt. I decided to find a job in Jakarta, with my education limited. The job that I got was to become a Lady Companion (LC) at an Executive Karaoke Bar. With a high salary, enough to pay off my parents' debts little by little each month and for fulfilled my needs. Working as a Lc was not easy, there was a lot of insulted from people, especially my neighborhood where I lived. Even so, I kept struggle to live a life in this cruel world. Until the end, I met a man. He knew everything about me. He was the one who changed my life.



## THE BLOOMING CACTUS

Early morning on Sunday. The sun streamed through my window bedroom. I sat near the window. My eyes stared out, saw a ray of sunshine depicting the charm in the morning, while combing my long hair. The weather was the same as usual, cold and foggy. The breeze blew between the trees, leaves fallen to the ground. That day, I was not very excited. I felt lazy through the day, all I wanted to do was rest. In the room, there are my pet dogs with their tails wagging energetically.

*Knock..knock...knock.*

"Excuse me, anybody home?" a voice of man was heard.

"Yes, wait a moment," I answered.

"Are you miss Davira?" He stood in front of the door.

"Yes, I am."

"There is a package," he said. I received the package from him.

"Oh yeah, Thank you sir," I said.

"You are welcome. Hmm.., have you just live here? I had previously delivered a package here, but it seemed that it was not you who received it at that time."

"Oh yeah, I have just live here for three days," I answered with a slight smile.

"My guess is correct. Okay then, I excuse to go, miss."

"Okay," I responded.

*The cactus that I ordered is in my hands.* My heart is flowering. Immediately I took it out from the box. The cactus I bought was as beautiful as I expected. I took it out from inside the box and I put it on the line of the cactus in my rack beside the windows. My bed room seemed like an enchanted garden.

Monday was my day off. I spent my time to watch the news on television. At that time the news was about a woman locked up her stepdaughter in the toilet for two days, because the child upset her.

*Such a cruel mother, same like my stepmother.* I sighed. I still felt annoyance remembering her.



We did not live together for so long. A year after my mother's death, my father remarried with someone named Elina. My stepmother did not like me, she always scolded me, even hit me if my dad was not at home. Since the death of my father, she left me alone at home and never came back.

I walked toward the kitchen to get some water to pour the cactus I had planted next to the window of my room. I returned to my room, holding a glass of water and watering it in a cactus. When I looking it instantly my tears drop like rain. I cried very loudly when I remembered on my 6<sup>th</sup> birthday, my biological mother gave me a cactus gift. It was the last gift from my mother. She passed away because of brain cancer.

I heard my two dogs barking loudly, walked towards me as if they understood how sad their owner was. Hearing the dogs kept barking, diverting my attention to stroke them. I stopped crying, gently hugged my beloved dogs.

I took a picture of my parents that I kept exactly beside the cactus. I returned to my bed, while looking at the photo, I missed them so much. I really wanted to hug them, but that was not possible, all I did was put the photo right on my chest and hug it, then I fallen asleep.

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At half past four in the afternoon. Snowa, one of my dogs licked my face. He could tell that something different was going to happen. I woke up from my slept, *Buzzeed..buzzeed..buzzeed*. My mobile phone vibrating. I got up from the bed, walked towards the table and then reach it.

“Hallo, Ma’am,” I said.

“Hallo, Davira. Are you bussy?” Mrs Risma, the LC coordinator was on the other end.

“Not really, what’s going on, ma’am?”

“Sorry to tell you just right now. Rika is sick. She cannot go work. Can you take over it?” she asked.

“But today is my day off, ma’am.”

“I know, that's why I ask you for help. Today is Sunday, of course there are so many guests coming. I hope you can help me.”

“But...”

“Please, I need your help. I will give you a bonus.”

*Thats great, I need extra money.* I became interested when I heard the word bonus.

“Okay then, I'll get ready soon, ma'am.”

“Thank you for helping me. See you!”

“See you.”

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I immediately get ready. I walked toward the closet to get my uniform. I did not put on too much makeup. I just put little bit nude lipstick on my lips. Standing in front of the mirror, I could see a young native girl. Many people told that LCs put too much makeup to attract their customers, but I was not one of them. *Davira, fighting! don't think about what other people say. They don't know how you struggle to survive so far.* I sighed. Before I left home, I took a long jacket to cover my thighs, because I wore mini dress. Then, I walked toward the desk to pick up my cellphone and wallet.

At seven in the evening, I walked to the Lc room, preparing myself and filling in the attendance list. My duty was to serve a rich old man. That night I was not alone, there were two of my work partners who also served him.

"Hey you, woman in red". I heard somebody called me. *Hey you, what if I smack your face.* I immediately approached him.

"Can I help you, sir?" I asked.

"Sit beside me, and pour the wine into the glass." He looked at with flirtatious gaze.

I obeyed his will. I sat beside him and then poured the wine. I felt his hand touch my hip. I move my body bit far. Seemed he didnt understand my body language. He started touching my body, I felt uncomfortable. He put his hand on my thigh. Slowly I moved a little away from him. He pulled me to be attached to him. For the second time he put his hand on my thigh as he sang. I immediately held his hand, I put my finger in between his finger, avoiding him from touching my thigh. The old man who seemed to be my grand father didn't

try to touch me again, I looked at my friends in same room. They enjoyed that night, because they were just busy singing.

"You look so sexy." He whispered on my ear.

*Sexy? Let me slap your face.* I was annoyed to hear that word.

His face moved closer to my face, tried to kiss me, and he put his hand on my breast. I was surprised at that time. I push him and retreat away from him.

"Look, grandpa. What the are you doing?" I questioned in a high tone.

My friends suddenly stopped singing.

"Grandpa? Damn it! I ordered you to serve me," he said. His eyes glow red with anger. "How much money do you want? I can buy your body at a high price." He added and asked arrogantly.

I did not answer his question and immediately left the room. I ran into the toilet and cried. Actually, I am okay if he embraced me or holds me as long as he did not hold a sensitive area. I feel very harassed. Indeed there is a risk of work in such a workplace, but as a woman I have to control myself. From the beginning I entered work, I had read all the rules. No rules Lc must satisfy the appetite of the guests, the job was to only to serve what guests need related to work. I stopped working for two hours, calming down so that I was ready to serve the next guest. I don't care about that old grandpa.

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"Davira." One of my friends at work who was sitting with a guest in a lobby of karaoke bar called me.

"Yeea, what's up, Nisa?" I answered.

She walked toward me.

*I have died every day waiting for you. Darling don't be afraid, I have loved you for a thousand years.* My cellphone was singing.

"Hello," I said. I give sign to Nisa to wait.

"Hello, good afternoon. Am I talking to Ms. Davira?"

“Speaking.”

"I am Dina, from JKT bank. I need to ask about the monthly bill."

“Yes. I will pay it as soon as possible. Sorry I have something else to do now.”

“Alright, Ms. Davira. Thank you. We will wait for the good news.”

“Thank you for contacting me.”

“You are very welcome.” I put my handphone in my pocket.

Nisa was still standing right in front of me.

“Why are you working?” she asked. “Today is your day off, isn't it?” she continued.

“Oh, Mrs. Risma called me. She asked me to take over Rika's position, because she is sick.”

“Oh yea?” By the way, are you still fighting with your neighbor? I heard your story from Nita.”

I sighed.

“I feel sick when I remember how annoying my neighbor was. She said that I am a cheap chick.”

“What the f\*\*\*. How come?”

“I was shopping then at a stall near my house. When I walked out of the stall, I accidentally nudged a woman's shoulder. She was mad at me. And said dirty words to me. I got emotional. I said “shut your mouth!” Nisa laughed. I continued. That woman said that I was a bitch, she mentioned about I support my live by the money give by a sugar dady.

“What did you do then?”

“I just said, keep your mouth shut." Nisa laughed so hard.

“So,what happened after that? why didn't you slap her face?” she asked curiously while laughing and giggling.

“I told her. "Ma'am, I am not a dirty woman as you thought, and I use the money from my hard work. I am sorry for what happened, I didn't do it on purpose" Then, I left her. Aaarrrrgghhhh.. I was as mad as hell when remembered it. She smiled sinlessly as if she did not believe my words. I eager to slap her face but I tried to be patient.”

“If I were you, I would slap her face as hard as possible,” Nisa said.

I laughed so hard.

“You better just move, find a new home,” she continued.

“I have moved since 3 days ago,” I smiled.

“Oh yeea? It’s good. Hope you are comfortable in your new home.”

“Okay, thank...”

“Can you accompany me tonight?” In the midst of my conversation with Anisa suddenly came a man approaching us. I didn’t have time to thank Nisa.

“Hmmm...sorry?” I was confused.

“Can you accompany me tonight?” he asked with the same questioned.

"Yes you can, but you have to register yourself to customer service," I answered.

“Okay then.” He smiled and left me.

“Who is he?” Nisa asked in curiosity.

“I don’t know.”

“Holy sh\*t! He is so freakin’ handsome,” she said, while staring at the man with great charm.

I haughed.

“You’d better prepare yourself.”

“Okay then, see you Nis.”

“See you. Fighting!”

I walked toward the LC room.

*Who is he? He looks very handsome. OMG! I was like a child when I beside him. He is so tall. His fair complexion made him looked clean and his narrow eyes grew smaller when he smiled. Such a handsome man.*

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A fragrance of alcohol and expensive perfume aird the karaoke room. I sat right next to the man whose name I didn't know. His eyes stared straight at me then smiled while taking a glass full with wine.

“Would you like to have some?”

“No, thank you. I do not drink alcohol,” I answered.

“Oh ya? Why?” he asked.

“I don't drink alcohol because it tastes bitter. Even though it tastes sweet, I'm not interested to drink it if it makes me drunk.”

He smiled without saying a word.

“Do you smoke?” he asked while lighting up a cigarette.

“No, I don't. Thank you.”

That man smile again.

I did not know what the man thought. He always looked at me and smiled. I immediately made a questions, so that the man would wanted to talk more.

“Do you need some help? Do you want to order cigarettes or beer? If you want, I will order it to you,” I asked softly.

“Nope. Thank you. I just need a friend to talk,” he answered.

“Do yo wanna sing?” I added.

“No, I have no mood to sing.”

The man made me even more confused. *What was the purpose of coming to the karaoke bar if he did not want to sing?* The atmosphere was getting tense, the man did not say much. I did not know what to do.

“What is your name?” He started making conversation.

He looked at me with a look full of charm.

"Davira." I answered.

*Oh my god, whats going on with my heart? I felt my heart biting.*

"And you? What is your name?" I asked.

"Richard Carlo, you can call me Richard."

"You look like my young sister," he added.

"Oh yeah?" I chuckled.

"Yeah," he said. "Can you sing a song for me?" he added.

"Yeah sure, my job is indeed singing." I smiled.

Richard asked me to sing a song, "The sound of a broken heart by Westlife". I sang the song for him with all my heart, it seemed like he enjoyed it. I began to realize why he came to the karaoke bar, it seemed like he was broken hearted. After singing he praised me.

"Your voice is beautiful."

"Thank you."

*Start a new day, but not alone. I am gonna break away from this broken heart. I'll meet a woman, I am gonna take her home.* The sound of his cellphone.

*Wow, broken heart by white lion. It is one of my favorite song.*

Richard, answered someone's call, not many words he said, he just answered, yes, yes, and yes.

"Davira, I have to go home now."

"Oh yeah, Richard." *Will he come back again, tomorrow?*

"Tomorrow we have to meet, many things I want to know about you. Do you mind?"

"No, I don't mind," I answered with a cheerful tone. *Oh my God!!! He wants to meet me again.*

"Nice to see you Davira," he smiled.

"Nice to see you too," I smiled.

*OH MY GOSH! I am gonna die! His smile is so sweet. Looks like tonight I'll have beautiful dream.*

My first meeting with Richard was quite pleasant. He was not like most guests I met. He was a polite man, he did not touch me at all.

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About ten in the morning, I woke up from my slept. I took the glass filled with water that I put on the table next to my bed. *I have died every day waiting for you. Darling don't be afraid, I have loved you for a thousand years.* Simultaneously my cell phone rang. My friend at work texted me. With bleary eyes and my still-sleepy mind thinking that she texted me to ask about my new home. I got my phone.

“Morning, Davira.”

“Hi. Whats up, Nita?” I replied.

“Nisa said that you had find a new home. Is it true?”

“Haha, yes. I have moved since three days ago”

“Wah, it's great. Is your new neighbor the same as your previous neighbor?”

“I think no. They are different. When I still in my previous rent house, there were so many housewife who often clustered at the end of the alley. When I passed a small alley that connected my house to the highway, they were often insulted me. Foul and offensive words were said to me as if I were rubbish and woman with no value at all. But, when I came here. They are friendly to me. They didn't matter what my job is.”

“Wow. So, what did you do when they insulted you? Thankfully, if your new neighbor welcome you well.”

“Huft. Instead of wasting my time answering them, I usually chose to give my best smile to repay their invectives. Amazingly, they never got tired of telling about me every time I passed that alley.

“Oh my God. You have to be patient. Whatever you do, good or bad, people will always have something negative to say about you. That's life.

“Thank you, dear.”

“Much welcome, dear”

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*Bweeep..bweeep...*

“Davira.” Someone called me from the car.

I looked at the car. He was Richard, that was the second time I met him. He looked cool when he came down from his luxury car to approach me. At that time I was at a flower shop to buy a cactus, the place was not far from the karaoke bar.

"Hi, what are you doing here?" he asked.

"Buy a cactus."

"Oh yea? Do you like cactus?"

"Yeea, I like it so much. I plant a lot of cactus at home"

“Wow, you are really charming. Rarely, do women like cactus, as far as I know most women like roses or jasmine,” he said with amazed face.

*My goodness. He says I am charming. My heart beated faster.*

“Oh yea?” I asked while blushing.

“Yea. You are different from the other women. You are really charming. Actually I also like cactus. My mother plant lots of cactus at home. Someday I will invite you to see a cactus plant at my mother's house.”

*Invite me to his mother's house? Really? Geez.. I am gonna die!*

"Hmmm.. By the way, what time do you work? It's five now," he added.

"I'll be working soon."

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"I want to go to the karaoke bar to meet you, it turns out you are here."

*Want to meet me?* My heart was beating faster than a humming birds wings.

I went with Richard to my workplace. When we arrived there, Richard booked a room. I went to the Lc room while preparing and filling in the attendance list. After that, I met him in the lobby and went to the karaoke room.

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"Do you wanna sing today?" I asked Richard doubtfully.

"Nope. I just want to talk to you." He laughed while Lighting up a cigarette.

"Dav, I want some wine, please." He added.

"Okay,wait for a moment."

I walked toward the showcase cooler. *Is he going to get drunk today?*

"How many bottles?" I asked.

"Three." He smiled.

*What! Is he serious?*

"You will get drunk if you drink three bottles." I said with a grinning face.

"Okay, just one then," he smiled again.

I walked toward him carrying a bottle of wine and a glass. I sat beside him then pour wine into a glass and then I give it to him.

"Do you mind if I ask you about sensitive things?" He asked while looking at me.

"Yes sure." What do you wanna ask? I asked with a curious face.

"Sorry, what was the reason you worked at the karaoke bar?" He asked slowly.

*What should I tell you, handsome?. Huuuhh... I really do not want to remember my gloomy childhood.* "Hmm. I am orphan. My biological parents passed away when I was child," I said.

His face look surprised. "I am really sorry to hear that."

"It's okay, Richard." I smiled. I continued "Since my parents passed away, I was taken care by my neighbors. They were not blessed with children. I was cared for by them with love. They were willing to do anything for me. When I was a child, I was diagnosed with brain cancer. They didn't want my fate like my biological mother. They borrowed hundreds of millions at the bank for my medical expenses at the hospital until I fully recovered. But, my happiness didn't last long. My adoptive parents passed away when I was in second grade in senior high school."



“So what about your parents' debt?”

“I pay their debt. Because they don't register life insurance. Bank gave a choice. I would bear it or my parents' house would be taken by the bank. I chose to bear it, because I did not want my parents' house to be taken.

“Why?” he asked curiously.

“Lots of memories of my childhood there with my parents that I cannot express with words. I don't have anything. All I have is my adoptive parents' house.”

“How about your biological parents' house?”

“That house had been empty for years”

“So, the reason you work here is because of that?”

“Yea, I quit from school. Than I looked for a job in Jakarta. The salary here enough to pay off my parents' debts little by little each month and for fulfilled my needs.”

“Actually, where are you from?”

“I am from a small village in Central Java.”

“Davira, I am really sorry to hear your story. Thank you for telling me about your past.”

“It's okay Richard.” I smiled.

*Huh, Finally finish. Remembering my past was really painful.*

Richard was the first person who knew my past. I felt very comfortable to talk many things, so did him. I began to feel comfortable and happy near him. His gaze and the way he heard me told the stories made my feelings mixed. The figure of the man I just met twice was able to captivate my heart. He looked different from other men I had ever known. I started to like and love him with no reason.

“It's time for you to tell about yourself,” I asked while smiling broadly.

He laughed so hard. “I am an alumni of Harvard University” I am an owner of a five star hotel in South Jakarta.”

I was immediately shocked. *Geez. Harvard? The owner of a five star hotel? He would no longer meet me after he knew my past and my educational background.* I was silent for a moment, without speaking a word. I knew, Richard felt something was wrong with me.

“What's wrong with you?” he asked.

“I am alright,” I answered.

“Why are you silent? And why does your face suddenly change?” he added.

“I am fine. Don't think about it.”

“I don't like you like this. I want you as usual, smile happily when you hear me tell a story.”

I knew, Richard actually knew why I suddenly changed, but he didn't want to say it, with the intention of keeping my feelings.

“I'm fine. I'm little tired. Just continue your story.”

“I am a married man.” He said.

*Married? OMG,* I was immediately shocked. All I wanted to do that night, run out the room as hard as I could, crying as hard as I could, shouting as loud as possible. *Richard. you are really broke my heart. I did not think if a man I just loved in a matter of minutes, really hurt my feelings.* Not many things I did, I tried not to cry and pretended as if nothing had happen.

“Really? Wow, I am surprised hearing that you are married,” I pretended to laugh, until finally my tears dripped.

“Why are you crying?” he asked.

He was surprised to see me suddenly crying, she holding my shoulder and looking at me with a worried looked. I could not look into his eyes, my heart was getting hurt.

“I am fine. I am headache, It is maybe because I am too tired,” I answered.

I lied to him. I could not express what I felt at that moment. He was not wrong, and I could not blame him. The biggest mistake was in me. As stupid as that I could easily love him, without me knowing about him deeper.

“I'll take you home.”

“I can go home alone,” I answered.

“No, I have to take you home,” he insisted.

Richard drove me home. As long as in the car. I did not speak a word. all I did was silence and pretended to sleep.

“Get well soon, don't cry anymore, I don't like to see you crying.” He gently stroked my head. He thought I was really sleeping.

He stroked my head again.

“Davira, we have arrived at home,” he said.

I pretended to wake up from my slept. Got out of the car without looking at him and then walked as fast as possible.

“Davira.” He shouted then followed me.

“I will get you inside,” he said, while holding my hand.

“I can do it alone.” I refused.

“Whats wrong with you? Are you angry with me?” he asked.

“No, I am not” *I hate you, really hate you!*

“Why you become like this?” he asked anxiously.

“Why are you treating me so well? Why did you come to me to accompany you that night? Why are you looking at me like you always do? Why you smile at me? Why are you stroking me? Why? Why?” I asked softly and cried.

“Da ...” He wanted to speak.

I continued. “Since you treat me like that, I started to love you. Apparently you already have a wife. I do not blame you. All of this is my fault. I am a fool, love you too easily.” I kept crying.

“Davira, please hear me. I did not have time to tell you about my household. The conversation stopped because you were crying. Many things I want to tell you.” He spoke softly while holding my shoulders.

“I currently don't want to hear your story. I want to take some rest.” I immediately left him.

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The atmosphere of the city was so crowded, I stand under a shady tree near the road.

I miss Richard so much. It has been a month already.

“Miss Davira?” An online taxi driver asked me from behind the car window.

“Yes I am,” I answered. I got into the car.

*Vrooom..* The sound of car starting up.

When on the way, I stared out the window of the car, there were so many skyscraper. I saw a large five-star hotel. *Richard, where are you?* I missed him at the time. It was getting dark, the birds flying freeing through the sky.

*Wow, it so beautiful.*

The car arrived in front of the lobby karaoke bar. I went out to the lobby and went to the LC room to fill the attendance list. I stepped out of the room, walking towards the lobby. A beautiful woman like a model came to me and suddenly slapped me. I was surprised at that time.

“Who are you? Why you slapping me?” I asked in high tone while touching my face.

“Who?” she asked back.

“Are you cheating on my husband?” She shouted while showing a picture of me standing in the lobby. I remembered clearly, the photo was taken when I was talking to Nisa. But, I did not know who took it.

“I'm Richard's wife, I found this photo on his cellphone. What's relationship do you have with my husband? How much money did he spent on you?” she asked in high tone.

*Richard's wife?* I was surprised that woman was Richard's wife.

“I have nothing to do with him.” I answered and she slapped me a second time.

I was very angry at the time. I slapped her face back.

“How dare you slap me.” She said in high tone.

“I have never had an affair with your husband and I have never received the money from your husband. You better ask your husband, why my picture on his cellphone”

“You slut! Have ruined my family. How much money do you need to go far from my husband?” She opened her wallet from inside her fancy bag. Then threw it on my face.

“I don't need your money” I threw her wallet back on her face.

The woman seemed very angry at me. Immediately she grabbed my hair, and so did I. We had a big fight at that time. Two security came to stop us. We stopped. That woman seemed arrogant.

“Don't touch me.” She asked the security not to touch her.

The fancy clothes she wore look very messy.

“Just wait, I will destroy your life. I have everything, I can do whatever I want. She spoke in an arrogant tone while pointing at me and spitting my clothes.

I spontaneously slapped her face. She wanted to slap me back, but she was held by security.

“Stop. You better go home. Don't make trouble here,” said one of security.

Suddenly dozens of police officers entered the karaoke bar, and locked the whole building.

“Everyone in this building cannot leave this building,” said one of the police officer.

My boss immediately approached the police. I was confused at the time.

*What's going on? Why police come?* Then, a policewoman approached me.

“Do you work here?” she asked.

“Yes I am.”

“Come with me.”

*What's going on?* I was confused. I walked following the direction of the police.

“Slut, your life stop here. I'm sure you will be put in jail. You are a f\*\*\*ing slut. She shouted at me.

I flicked a glance over my left shoulder.

“What you say will not happen.” I shouted.



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All Lcs and guests were asked for a urine test. All rooms were searched by police officers. The atmosphere was extremely tense. We checked by them one by one.

"Show your ID card," said a policewoman.

I showed my ID card to her.

"Enter the toilet." She asked and gave me a small glass to save my urine.

I gave my urine to her, then she put an object like a pregnancy test into a glass. She waited for about a minute.

"Negative." She notified her work partner and then her partner noted in the report book.

Some people who had been tested positive using drugs. I was not afraid at that time. Some of my friends cried and looked scared.

"F\*\*k, I am so scared," said a woman talking to her friend. I looked at them.

*Did they using drugs? Why they are scared?*

Investigation was completed after about four hours. Many guests and LC were arrested by the police for using drugs. One of them was Nisa, my friend. I had never thought she used them. I feel so sad.

*Where is she?* Richard's wife was not in the lobby. I did not know whether she checked or not by the police officer, because as I knew everyone in the karaoke bar was checked. My fight with her was end. I never met her again.

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*Wow it's beautiful. One by one the stars winked on in darkening sky. I'm sure, there are my father and mother there.* I sat on the porch of the house, accompanied by my two dogs and a cup of warm tea. I enjoyed the tea. A luxury car stopped in front of my house. Someone in the car opened the door and he got out of the car. He walked towards me, holding a cactus. Slowly he walked closer and closer. He stopped in front of my eyes.

"Davira." He called me.

*Richard?* I looked at him with glaring eyes.

"Davira. How are you?"

*Am I dreaming?* I kept looking at him.

"Davira, are you okay?"

Craaaaaaaaaaaaaack! The glass I held fell on the floor. I immediately realized.

"Richard!" I shouted happily and stood up.

"Dav ..."

Without thinking, I immediately hugged him. I felt something warm came out of my feet.

"Davira, your feet." He spoke in a panicked tone.

I did not realize at that time I was stepping on the splinters of glass. Richard immediately carried me into the living room, and put me on the sofa.

"Don't move," he said. He wiped my feet with tissue.

"Does it hurt?" he asked.

"No, not really. Thank you, Richard."

I looked at his worried face . That night was truly a memorable night.

"Davira, I miss you." He looked at me.

"Me too." I answered, looking at his face.

"This is for you." He gave me cactus.

"I'm sorry, for what I've done to you, and sorry, for what my ex-wife done to you."

"Ex-wife?" I shocked. *Ex-wife? Ex-wife?*

"Yes, ex-wife, I divorced my wife five months ago."

"Oh my goodness!" I closed my open mouth with my hand.

Looking at my expression Richard said, "My wife was having an affair with another man. I was very angry with her. I found her sleeping in a hotel. She said she wanted revenge on me

because she thought I was having an affair with you. Actually from the beginning I had a lot of problems with her. She was very rude to me, almost every day she scolding me. I'm tired of having a relationship with her. At that time I want to tell you about this problem, but you don't want to hear me."

"I'm sorry Richard, I'm really sorry."

"It's okay Davira, everything had passed."

That night I was very sorry. I'm sorry I didn't hear what Richard wanted to say to me. Clockwork kept moving.

"How do you know my house?" I asked.

"I was at the karaoke bar. I'm looking for you, but you're not there. I asked for your home address to a woman named Nita."

"Oh, she is my work partner."

Richard suddenly holding my hand and looked at me.

"I don't want to date you."

*What the hell he is talking about?* I was surprised to hear what he said.

"But I want you to be my wife."

*God, what did he say? I'm gonna die! Am I dreaming?* I couldn't say anything at the time.

"What do you mean?" I stuttered.

"Would you like to be my wife? I thought about it for a long time. Therefore after my divorce, I did not immediately meet you. I thought about mrying you over and over"

"Yea ... Richard, yea ... I would." I hugged him while crying.

"I hope you don't regret marrying me. I'm very grateful because you want to marry a woman like me." I spoke while crying.

Not many words I said. It did not take long for me to think, I was sure that Richard was a good person. I accepted him to be my husband. I quited my job.

A month later we got married in Bali. It was not a big party but, it was very luxurious. I'm glad, Richard's parents accepted me wholeheartedly and accepting all my shortcomings. All of

my debt to the bank had been paid in full by him. We lived happily ever after, and were blessed with two children.

Many people thought cactus is not as beautiful as roses. People rarely like it because of its sharp thorns. Cactus also rarely grew flowers. It had to wait for a long time to bloom and present beautiful flowers. Similar to cactus, although many people avoided me, they stayed away from me, I think I was patient enough to wait for my time to blossom. And I know God is wise because when I bloom somebody with love came to have me.



## **REFLECTIVE PAPER**

In Indonesia, Lady Companion (LC) is still controversial among society. As we know, In social life often found social groups that are undeniable that there are many conflicts between members in meeting each other's needs. The lack of preparation accepts differences in other people or groups, this is what will lead to conflict between individuals or groups. In everyday human life, there are often cases of discrimination carried out and experienced by certain people, especially for LC. In Indonesia, work as an LC is still considered taboo. Then came the bad perception of the community towards LC.

The theory that used in the short story, it had been decided that it would be using gender stereotype theory. A. Samovar & E. Porter (in Mulyana, 2000: 218) define stereotypes are perceptions or beliefs that are held regarding groups or individuals based on opinions and attitudes that were first formed. This belief leads to judgment that tends to be negative and even demeaning to others. There is tendency to label certain groups and including problems that need to be addressed are negative stereotypes or degrading other groups. A stereotype is an assessment of someone based solely on perceptions of the group in which the person can be categorized. Stereotypes can be either positive or negative prejudices, and sometimes used as an excuse to discriminate.

Negative stereotype to a lady companion actually often be found in daily life in our neighborhood and society. The story portray how a lady companion keep survives to face a hard life despite being avoided by people in her surrounding because of the bad stereotype of against her. In this story the author make the main character will fight against the bad stereotype and prove that what people assume about her is wrong. The author's purpose is so that the readers would have more respect and empathy to them and to make this as learning to everyone not to easy judge other people based on the work they do.

In the process of writing short story, there are some aspects which cannot be forgotten, such as genre, characterization, setting, plot, etc. Writing can be interpreted as activities to convey ideas, expression and feeling using written language in the form of letters and numbers in a systematic symbol so that it can be understood by others. In writing this story, the author needs to find the inspiration by looking at events that occur around. So that the author can develop ideas and imagination. In order to understand more about LC. The author do research of library studies was conducted such read journals and articles that discuss about LC. Behind all that, of course the author experiences a little difficulty, such as making the sentence more

dramatic and also it's hard to relate the characterization to characters, so it would be reasonable in how the character reacts in the story.

In the process of making this story, of course there are some changes such as plot. On the plot, the author changes the storyline so that the story makes more sense. The storyline changed by the author is, "Davira works as an LC because she has no parents, she is desperate for her life, she decided to leave home and go to the big city to work, so she can get money," being "When Davira's foster parent passed away, they left a lot of debt at the bank so Davira had to work hard to as a LC to pay off the debt, because the salary there more high." The author chose this reason, so that the story more reasonable. If the author write, Davira works as a LC because she has no parents, the reader would think, "why isn't she looking for a more decent job?"

At the end, there are revisions since the first draft to final draft from the proposal project up to the finished creative work. The supervisor has guided the author to overcome the difficulties in writing the story. Writing the facts from real life to be told in the story really helped in completing progress of writing the story. Writing the story is not as simple as the author thought. By searching the facts in real life, can help a lot along the way in writing the story.