

RANGER

Range

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

Fire on the Mountain is the story of a boy called Sugeng. He lives on the island of Java in Indonesia. But one night the fire on the mountain near his home changes his life. He loses his home and his family. He goes to town and makes some new friends. Many new and strange things happen to him before he finds his family again.

Ranger books form an illustrated series designed to stimulate the learner's interest at all levels by providing him with enjoyable and extensive reading texts, thereby helping to widen his command of fundamental lexis and structures. The series includes specially written stories, adaptations, documentary narratives and informative texts.

Each range introduces about 350 new lexical items, leading to a 2200 word level for Range 6. The essential structures are similarly controlled for each Range. The introduction of new words is carefully controlled, and new items are picked out where they first appear. Other essential words relating to the topic are kept to a minimum and listed at the end of the book.

In this book the past simple and past continuous tenses have been used to avoid problems with the historic present. Please refer to the last page for further titles.



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GERRY MEISTER
PAUL NATION

Fire on the Mountain

A Story from Java

by Gerry Meister and Paul Nation

Illustrated by Bell Chan

Range 2 Fiction



Gerry Meister



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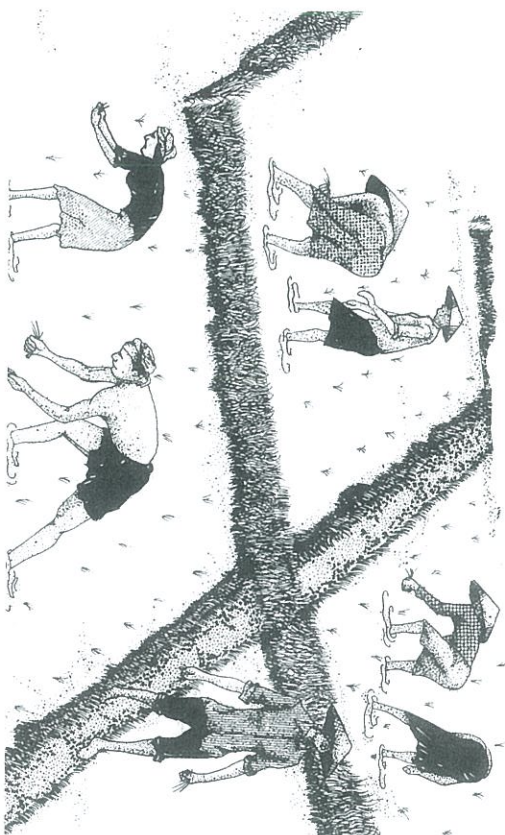
Sugeng Loses his Home

Indonesia is a beautiful country. It has many islands. It is a hot country.

Most people live on the island of Java. Java is a rich island. But too many people live there and life is not easy.

Most people in Indonesia are farmers. They grow rice. They work very hard all the year. This story is about a farmer's son.

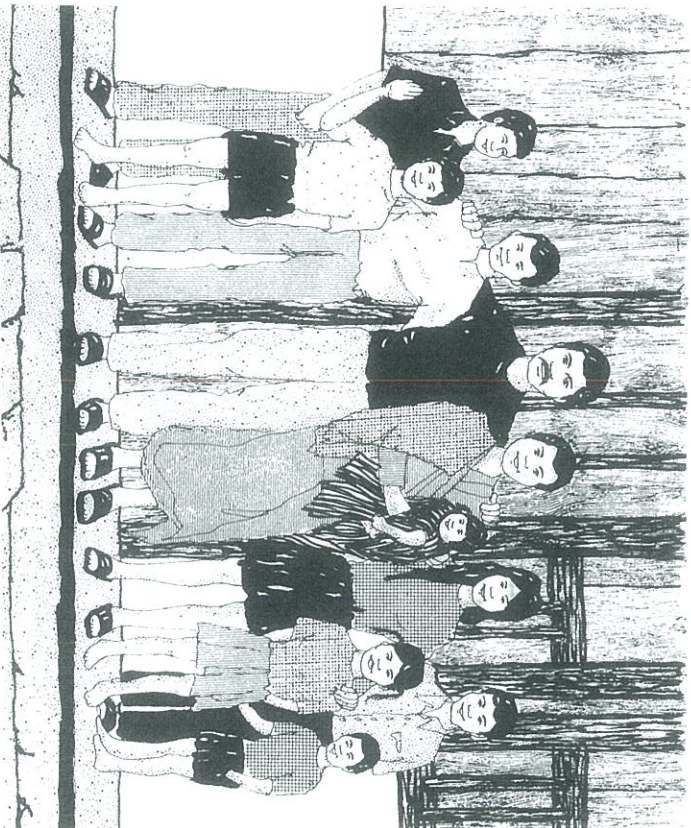
Most people in Indonesia are rice farmers.



island -er(farmer)

His name was Sugeng. 'Sugeng' means 'happy' or 'safe', but Sugeng's life was not always happy or safe.

There were many people in Sugeng's family. He had five brothers and four sisters. But one of his sisters died when she was only two months old. One of his brothers died when he fell from a tree.



There were many people in Sugeng's family.

Sugeng's family lived near a mountain. This was a dangerous place because sometimes fire and rocks came down from the mountain. But the land was good and there was a lot of water.

Sugeng was happy on the farm. He had a lot of

2

mean(s) safe life family only
fall(fell) mountain dangerous rock(s) land come(came)

work to do, but he liked his work. Because he was small and strong he climbed coconut trees to get the coconuts. He took the cows to the river to wash them. Sugeng liked the river very much. He rode on the back of one of his cows and swam in the river with them.



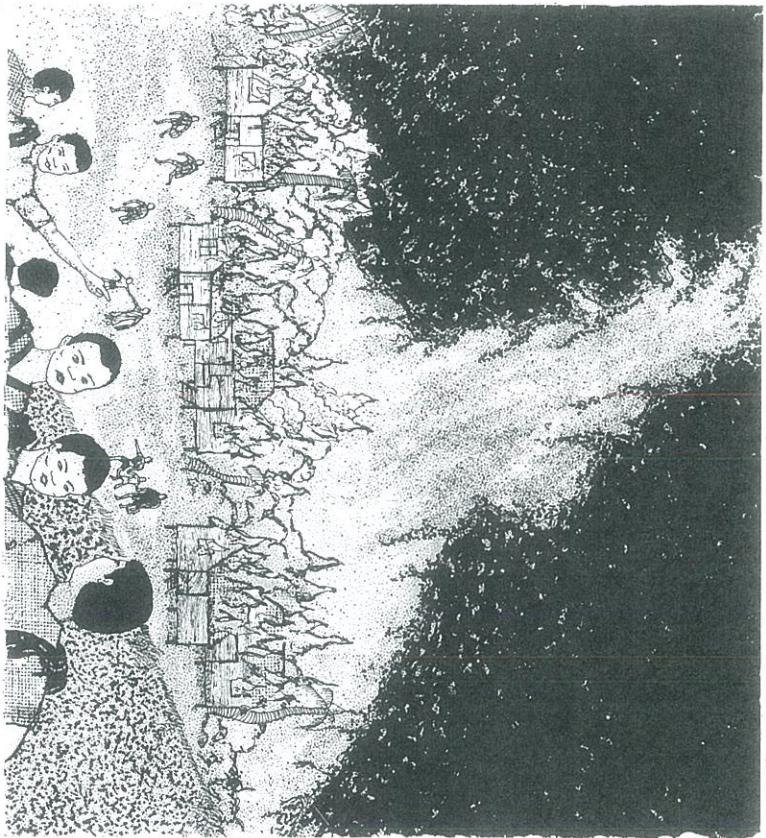
He rode on the back of one of his cows . . .

One night, just after the family went to bed, Sugeng heard a loud noise. It was like the noise of thunder before the rain comes. But there was no wind. The noise came again. This time it was louder. Then his father cried, 'It's the mountain. Quick. Run to the river.'

Sugeng ran outside. In the dark he could see the mountain. A river of fire was moving down the side of the mountain. Sugeng could hear the rolling sound of the rocks when they came down the mountain. He could hear the noise of the trees as the fire burnt them.

strong climbed take(took) ride(rode) get swim(swam)
loud -er(louder) dark can(could) move(moving) sound burn(t)

3



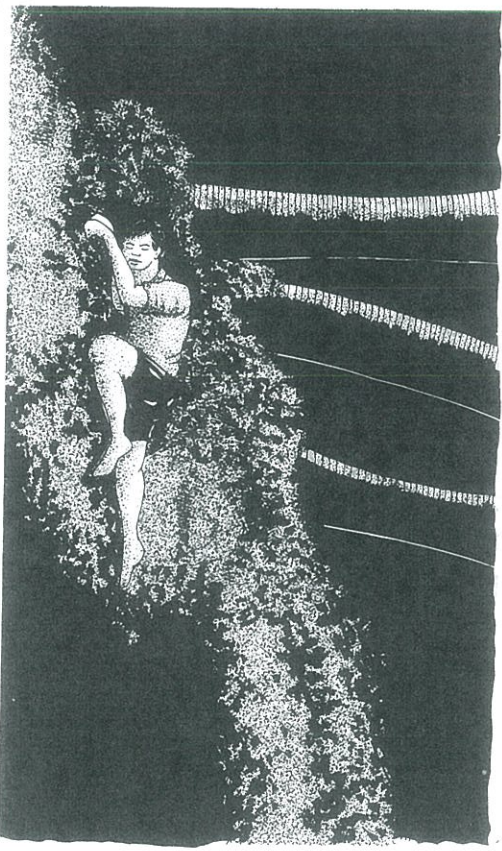
A river of fire was moving down the side of the mountain.

All his family were watching. Sugeng's father said, 'Get some things from the house. We can't stay here. The fire will be here soon.' Sugeng ran to the house again. He put on his clothes.

There was a lot of noise outside by now. People ran about and called to each other. It was very dark. Sugeng felt afraid. He looked for his mother and father, but there was no one in the house. He went outside and called, 'Father! Mother!' But no one heard him.

Sugeng started to run. Many people ran down the side of the mountain, away from the river of fire. Sugeng became more afraid. He could not see the road. He just ran. Several times he fell. When he was tired, he stopped. He could run no more. He lay down near a banana tree and he went to sleep.

He lay down near a banana tree and went to sleep.



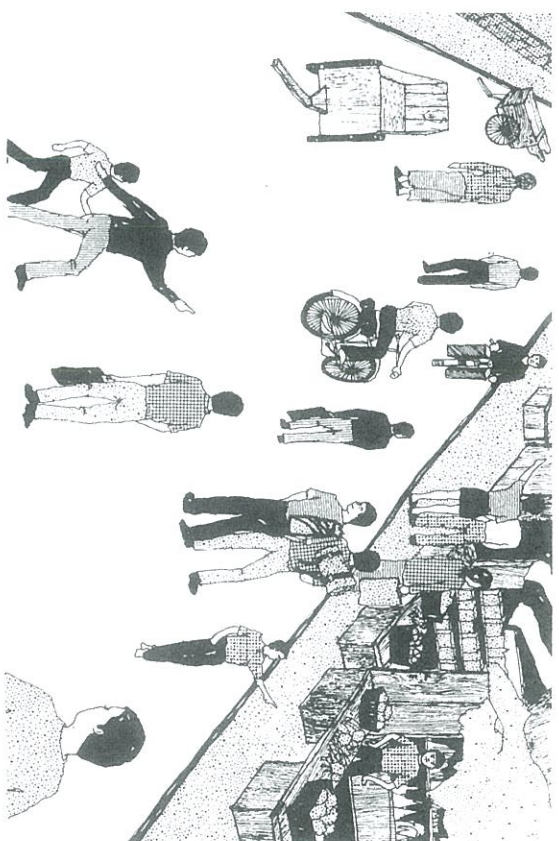
2

Sugeng Goes to Town

He woke up when the sun came up. He felt cold and hungry. He looked around him. Not far away there was a house. He looked at the mountain. He could still hear the noise of the mountain and he could see the fire. He could not go back there. It was too dangerous.

Sugeng walked to the house. It was quiet. He called, but there was no answer. The door was open. Sugeng looked inside. He could not see anyone. 'Perhaps the people have run from the fire too,' he thought. Sugeng had a drink and he took some bananas. He started to walk.

He came to a town as night fell. This was Sugeng's first time in a town like this. The town was not big, but it seemed big to Sugeng. At first he did not feel afraid. He liked the many lights and the noise of the town. In some of the shops music played loudly. Along the street people sold many different things, fruit, clothes, cups and glasses, food. When Sugeng saw the food he felt hungry. But he had no money. He stood near one of the food-sellers. She was an old woman. The rice and



The town was not big but it seemed big to Sugeng.

other food were in big black pots in front of her. Sugeng stood and looked at the food. The old woman saw him.

'What do you want?' she said.

'I'm hungry.'

'Do you have any money?'

'No,' Sugeng answered.

'Where do you come from?'

'My home is near the mountain. I had to leave because the mountain was angry.'

'Where are your mother and father?'

'I don't know. Perhaps they are dead.' Sugeng began to cry.

'Here, sit down by me,' said the old woman. She took a clean piece of banana leaf. She put some rice

on it and then some other food.

'Eat this!' she said. Sugeng ate hungrily.

Sugeng sat and ate his food. The seller was busy with other people. Then she took her pots. She put them on her back and she left. All the other sellers left too. It was late. The streets were quiet. Some people lay down in front of closed shop doors. They were going to sleep.

Sugeng felt tired. He found a place and lay down. Sugeng went to sleep quickly. In his village he sometimes slept outside when the night was warm.

Sugeng woke when the sun came up. He was hungry and dirty. There was nowhere to wash. He went to look for his friend, the food-seller. She was not there. He walked slowly about. The street

Sugeng ate hungrily.



became busier. People on bicycles passed on their way to work. No one looked at Sugeng. Shops opened. People cleaned in front of their shops. When Sugeng stopped to look in one of the shops, the shopkeeper told him to go away. Sugeng walked on. He felt hungrier.

He saw some poor people. Some sat near the shops. When a person came out of a shop, they asked him for money. Sometimes they got some money. Sugeng tried too, but no one gave him anything. He walked along the street and he tried again. He stood in front of the market. Still no one gave him any money. Suddenly he felt a hand on his arm. He turned around. A boy stood there.

'What are you doing here?' he said to Sugeng. 'This is our place.' Some other boys moved around him. One of them pushed Sugeng.

'This place is ours. You can't ask for money here.' One of them pushed him again.

'Take him away from here, Kardi,' said one of the boys. This boy was older than the others.

'O.K. Edy,' said Kardi. A big boy held Sugeng's arm.

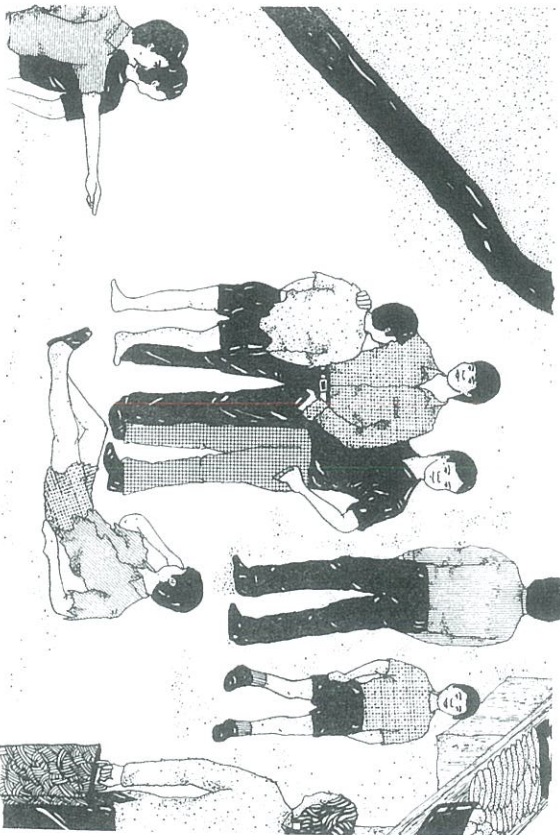
Sugeng was angry now. He pulled his arm away, and the fight started. Sugeng was small, but he was strong. Kardi was strong too, but he was not strong enough. Soon Kardi was on the ground with blood on his face.

'That's enough,' said Edy.

'What's your name?'

'Sugeng.'
 'Do you want to work with us?'
 'Give me something to eat and we can talk about
 it,' said Sugeng.

'That's enough.'



3

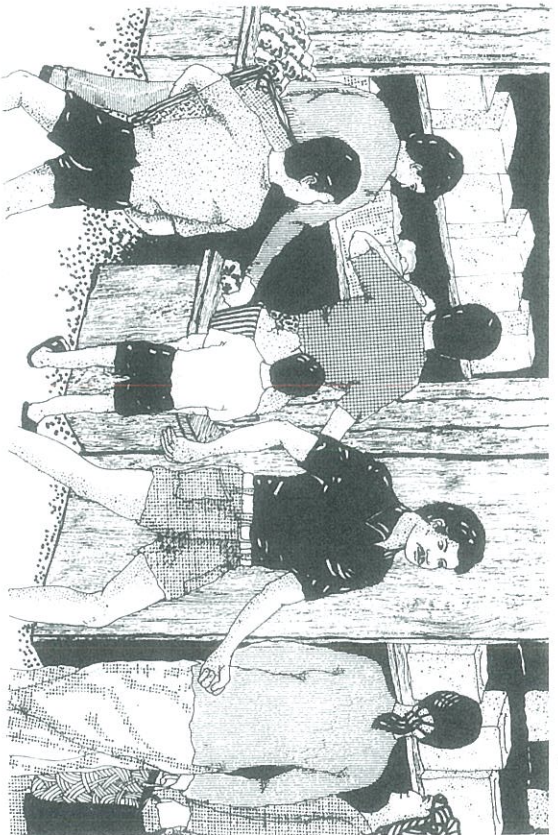
Sugeng Makes some Friends

The next day Edy gave him his first job. He went with Kardi to eating places. Kardi was his friend now. They cleaned people's shoes. They had to give half of the money to Edy. They kept the rest for themselves. Sugeng was happier, but he wanted to be with his family.

After a few days Edy gave him some newspapers to sell. Sugeng worked with Yanto. They tried to sell the newspapers for a lot of money. They could sell the newspapers for fifty rupiahs and they could still have some money for themselves. But they always asked for one hundred rupiahs. Sometimes people gave them a hundred. When this happened Sugeng and Yanto had a big meal.

Yanto's mother and father were dead. He lived in his brother's house. Sugeng sometimes went there to sleep. On other nights he slept under a bridge.

One day when Sugeng was on the street with his newspapers, a man walked past. Sugeng looked at him. 'That's my father,' thought Sugeng. He ran after the man. The man walked into a busy



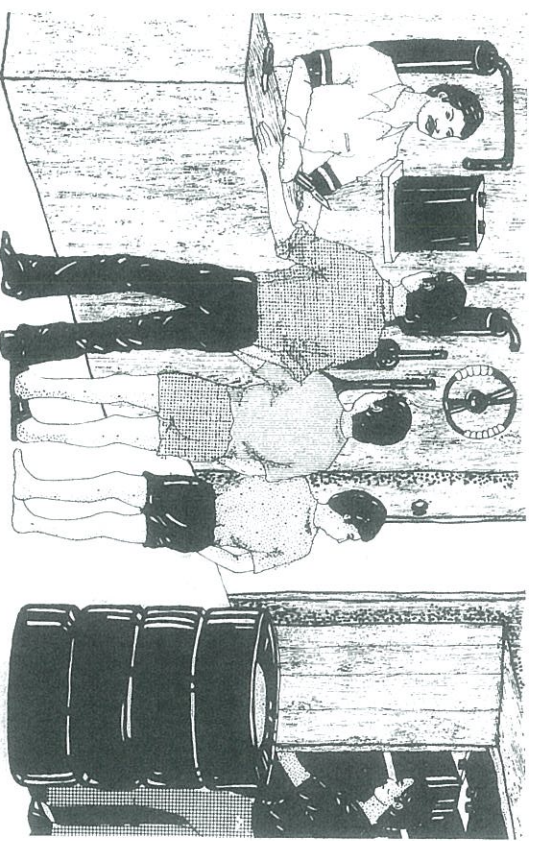
A man walked past.

shop. Sugeng could not see him. He waited outside and he looked at every face. Then he saw the man again. The man came nearer. Sugeng ran to him.

'Father!' he cried. The man looked down at him. Sugeng stopped. It was not his father. Sugeng felt very sad. He walked slowly away. 'My father and mother are dead,' he thought. 'I am alone now.'

The next morning, Edy said to Sugeng, 'Come with us. We've got another job.' Sugeng, Kardi, Edy and Yanto went into a shop. Edy said to the man in the shop, 'I want to see some knives.' The man went to get some knives and he showed them to Edy. Edy talked to the man and they looked at the knives. Kardi went near the back of the shop. The man could not see Kardi there, but Sugeng

watched him. Kardi took something and put it under his shirt.



Kardi took something and put it under his shirt.

'These knives are too expensive,' said Edy. 'I'll look in another shop.' And they all walked out of the shop.

'Have you got it?' Edy asked. Kardi pulled out a screwdriver from under his shirt. He gave it to Edy. 'Good,' said Edy.

'But you didn't give the man any money for it,' said Sugeng. Edy just laughed. Sugeng did not say anything more, but he did not feel very happy.

They walked to the market. In front of the market, Edy said, 'Kardi, Yanto, you know what to do. Sugeng, you stay with me. Watch what they do. You can learn a lot from these boys.'

Kardi and Yanto walked among the people in front of the market. They walked near a woman with a bag. Kardi pushed her a little, and Yanto pulled her bag. The woman held on to her bag. She called out loudly. People turned to look at her. 'Someone tried to take my bag!' she said. Kardi and Yanto laughed. They ran down the street. Some people called 'Stop! Stop!' Others ran after them. But Kardi and Yanto were too fast. Everyone in the street looked at Kardi and Yanto and at the woman.

Edy said to Sugeng, 'Now, no one is watching us.' He walked to a car. He took the screwdriver and he began to take the small mirror off the side

Kardi pushed her a little and Yanto pulled her bag.



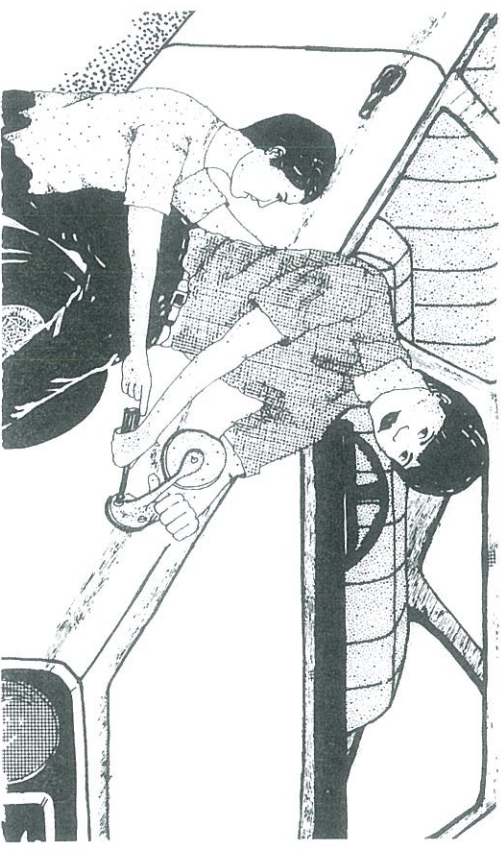
of the car. Sugeng was very surprised.

'What are you doing, Edy?' he said. Then a man came to the car. He saw Edy and Sugeng.

'Hey, that's my car. What are you doing with my mirror?'

Edy turned. He gave the screwdriver to Sugeng. 'Run!' said Edy, and he ran quickly among the people in front of the market. At first, Sugeng was too surprised to run. But then he tried to follow Edy. It was too late. He felt a hand on his arm.

'What are you doing, Edy?'



4

Sugeng Finds a New Home

'I've got you!' the man said. He held Sugeng with one hand. He started to hit him with the other.

By this time there was a policeman in front of the market. He came because of the noise. He saw Sugeng and the man.

'What's happening here?' he said.

'This boy tried to take the mirror from my car. Look. He has a screwdriver.'

'Come with me,' said the policeman. Sugeng was too afraid to say anything. The policeman took Sugeng to the police station. The man came with them.

At the police station, the man told his story and then he went away. The policeman asked Sugeng some questions. 'What's your name? Where did you get this screwdriver? Where do you come from?' Sugeng was afraid. He could not speak.

Do you come from this town?' the policeman asked.

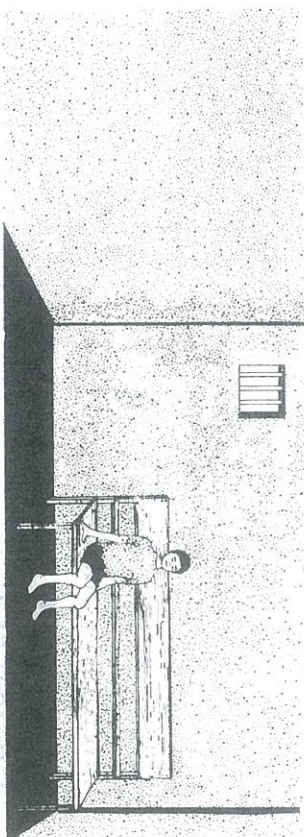
'No,' said Sugeng.

'What's the name of your village?'

Sugeng told him. The policeman thought for a few minutes.

'Come with me,' he said. He took Sugeng to a small room and he left him there. There was only one small window in the room. Sugeng was alone. He thought about his family. He thought about his home on the mountain. He was very unhappy.

Sugeng was all alone.



'All my family is dead. I don't have a home. I have nothing,' he thought. Then he heard the policeman again. Sugeng was not afraid. He had nothing. What could he lose?

The policeman came into the room. 'Is your name Sugeng?' he said.

'The police have Edy and the others,' Sugeng thought.

'Yes,' he answered.

The policeman said, 'Your father and mother are looking for you.'

Sugeng was surprised. 'They're alive?' he asked.

'Yes,' said the policeman. 'The fire from the mountain burnt your village. The Government is building another village in a different place. Your

family is there now. But why did you have that screwdriver? Why were you near the car?’

Now Sugeng was really afraid. His family was alive but he could not go to them.

‘Tell me,’ said the policeman. ‘I can help you. Sugeng told his story and the policeman understood.’

That afternoon, the policeman took Sugeng in his jeep to the new village. On the way they drove past the market. Sugeng saw Edy, Yanto and Kardi. They were near the market. But Sugeng did not say anything to the policeman. The policeman wanted to catch Edy, but still Sugeng did not say anything. Edy and Yanto and Kardi were his friends.

The people in the new village came out of their houses when they heard the jeep. They laughed

Sugeng saw Edy, Yanto and Kardi.



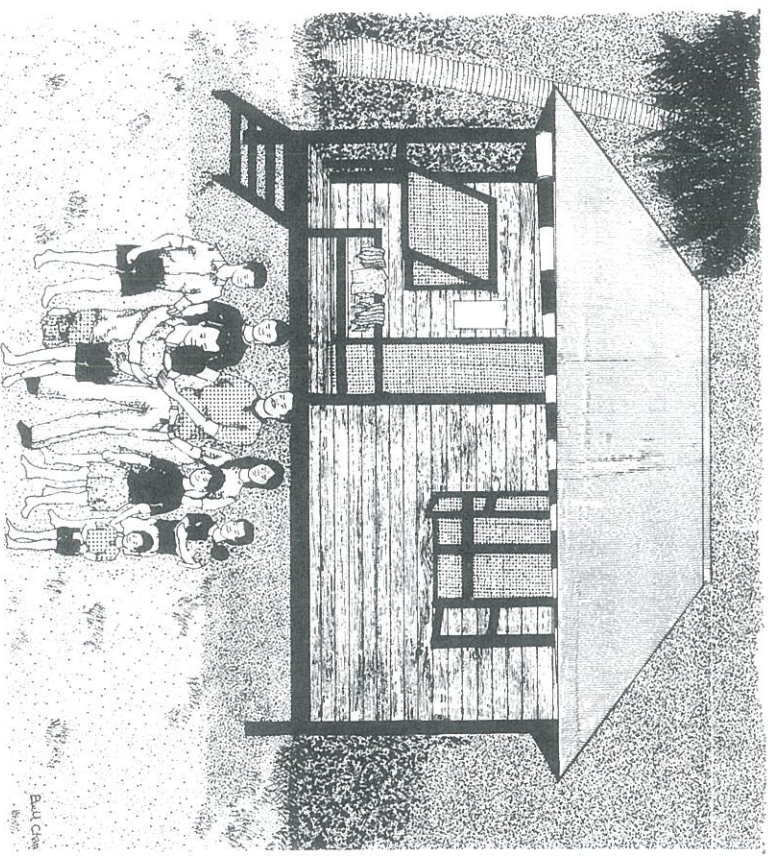
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building(ng) really understand (understood) drive(drove)

and called out when they saw Sugeng. He laughed too, and he called out to his old friends. Then the jeep stopped and Sugeng saw his family. He ran to them.

‘Sugeng’ means ‘happy’ or ‘safe.’ Now Sugeng was happy and safe.

Now Sugeng was happy and safe.



19

Questions

- Why did Sugeng leave his village?
 How did Sugeng go to the town?
 Who first helped Sugeng in the town?
 Where did Sugeng sleep on his first night in the town?
 Did Sugeng see his father in the town?
 How did Sugeng and his friends get money?
 Why did Edy ask the shopkeeper about some knives?
 Why did Kardi take a screwdriver from the shop?
 Why did Yanto pull the woman's bag?
 Why was the man with the car angry at Sugeng?
 What did Sugeng ride in when he went to meet his family?
 Did Sugeng meet his family again in their village on the mountain?

Topic Words

The number shows the page on which the word first appears.

bag	14	nowhere	8
banana	5		
bicycle	9	O.K.	9
coconut	2	police station	16
Government	18	rice	1
hey	15	rupiah	11
Indonesia	1	screwdriver	13
Java	1	shopkeeper	9
jeep	18	start	4
		Sugeng	1
mirror	14	thunder	3
most	1		