

**AJI BATARA AGUNG AND PUTRI KARANG
MELENU**
Aji Batara Agung dengan Putri Karang Melenu

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AJI BATARA AGUNG AND PUTRI KARANG MELENU

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AJI BATARA AGUNG AND PRINCESS KARANG MELENU

I. The Birth of Aji Batara Agung

In the region of Kutai, East Kalimantan, a person with formal authority and acknowledged influence is very respectable and awed by the local people. It can be said that all they wish, whether it is expressed explicitly or implicitly, have to be interpreted and implemented by their subordinates.

A respectable leader named Petinggi Jahitan Layar and lived with his wife in a remote mountain far away from the bustling town and festive relatives. They intentionally lived in the isolated area to keep them from any kind of disturbance or interruption to their spiritual meditation. The people of Kutai called the man Petinggi Jaitan Layar and the wife Nyai Minak Mampi.

"Nyai, we have been married for such a long time, but until now we haven't got children. Perhaps, the gods are testing our devotion. Although we are already old, we have to persistently pass prayer to get children," Petinggi Jaitan Layar outpoured his feeling to his wife.

One night Petinggi was soundly asleep due to the extreme fatigue. In his sleep, he had a dream. In the dream, he was instructed to

appear before the gods. He gave a prompt consent. Petinggi and his beloved wife, Nyai Minak Mampi, appeared before the gods.

"Last night I dreamt that I talked to the supreme god. He obliged me to have a meditation in a particular place," said Petinggi to his wife.

"What should I prepare for you, my dear husband?" asked Petinggi's wife.

"Prepare some stuff and supplies for meditation, Nyai. Don't forget to include the incense as well," replied Petinggi.

He chose a quiet and sacred place for meditation.

"Nyai, we have been meditating for forty days as the gods had requested. We are going home today," said Petinggi to his wife.

"Will the gods approve our request, Nyai? We have longed for having a child to flourish our life in the world," asked Petinggi to his wife and to himself.

When he was asleep for only a few moments, a sudden uproar disrupted his sleep. Eventually, Petinggi encouraged himself to open the door and sought the source of the noise. Petinggi was curious about what was happening outside his house.

"What sound was that, dear?" Nyai Minak Mampi asked her husband while they walked around the house.

"What have you seen, Nyai?" Petinggi asked in a soft tone.

"I haven't seen anything," replied his wife softly. "How can we see anything? The night is so dark. No star illuminated the earth," mumbled Petinggi's wife in a bit of fear.

"Well, let's go inside the house again. Tomorrow morning we'll make sure what is happening tonight," said Petinggi Jaitan Layar softly to his wife.

Before they reached the house door, they were shocked to see large black rock flying over the air. However, it was strange that the large black rock brightly illuminated the ground in the dark night. Consequently, the night was brightly illuminated.

"My legs are paralyzed. I am confused and afraid that something may happen to our house," said Nyai Minak Mampi.

Petinggi and his wife stood in a tremble when they saw the flying large black rock radiating a bright light."Finally, we manage to open the door, Nyai," yelled Petinggi. From their room, they heard a loud yelling voice as the voice of someone challenging for a fight.

"Sambut mati babu, tiada sambut mati mama."

Petinggi and his wife said no word and just carefully listened to the voice outside the house. The words 'sambut mati babu, tiada sambut mati mama' were said repeatedly. Petinggi could no

longer keep himself from responding. He encouraged himself and responded the yell in a quivering voice. "Ulur mati lumus, tiada diulur mati lumus." He heard the voice again. "Disambut mati babu, tiada disambut mati mama." Now, Petinggi Jaitan Layar decisively responded the voice.

"Diulur mati lumus, tiada diulur mati lumus."

He heard an extremely loud laughter outside the house. They continuously laughed loudly as if they were satisfied with the response of Petinggi Jaitan Layar. "Finally, our words are responded. We are very happy indeed." The voice outside commented.

Nyai Minak Mampi and her husband throwing a glimpse at the flying large rock previously again. Gradually the large rock appeared. They approached the large black rock slowly.

"Oh... the flying large black rock has turned into a golden box!" yelled Nyai Minak Mampi in amaze. Petinggi and his wife eluded the presence of seven gods. They merely thought that they were in front of a box with glaring light. Petinggi said to his wife that he would like to open the box.

"What do you think if we open up this box?" Petinggi as his wife's approval.

"As long as we have a good intention, I'm sure that the gods will

allow us to open up the box and find out the content of the box," said his wife humbly.

How startled Petinggi and his wife were when they saw a cute baby covered with a yellow cloth. The baby smiled at the couple.

"What is he holding, Nyai?"

"Oh, one of his hands is holding a chicken egg and the other hand is holding a shiny golden Keris. The Keris is used to support his head," said his wife happy.

"Hey, good man, show your gratitude to the gods who have answered your prayer through the meditation. Now you are blessed by having a child, although the child is not born to your wife. The baby is the descendant of the gods in the heaven. You will have to put the baby on the laps of your family alternately for forty days and forty nights. Bathe this baby in the water already given fragrant flowers. When your child grows bigger don't let him step on the ground before you perform an erau (traditional ceremony). Later, put your child's feet on the green grass growing in your house yard. Besides, let your child's feet rub the tamed animals' furs in your home slowly and softly."

Petinggi and his wife respectfully listened to the message of the gods. Happily, they took the baby into the house.

Petinggi's wife felt sad and regretful since she could not

breastfeed the baby herself.

"What can we expect from such an old woman as me to breastfeed my baby?"

"Hey, Nyai Petinggi Jaitan Layar, don't be sad since you will be able to breastfeed the baby immediately."

"Thank you very much, gods. You have answered my prayer," said Nyai Petinggi happily.

Petinggi and his wife had cared the baby for three days. On the third day, the baby's umbilical cord cut off. Petinggi shared the good news to the people. Then, many people celebrated the umbilical cord cut off of the child of Petinggi Jaitan Layar.

The gods constantly monitored the baby and instructed Petinggi to name the baby Aji Batara Agung Dewa Sakti. The name implied grandiosity and would bear 'heavy burden' when it was attributed to an ordinary baby. As time went by, Aji Batara Agung had grown up into a healthy and lovable child. Everybody loved him.

Petinggi Jaitan Layar prepared the 'ground stepping' ceremony and traditional festival ceremony of erau, in addition to the first-bathing ceremony for the baby at the poolside. When the preparatory ceremony was over, they performed the traditional ceremony of erau for forty days and nights. They played Gamelan

Gajah Perwata incessantly. They slaughtered some kinds of livestock and served the meat to the people. When the ceremonies had finished, the relatives took Aji Batara Agung into Petinggi's house. Aji Batara Agung wore such nice and beautiful attire as an adult in the royal throne inauguration.

When Aji Batara Agung already wore royal attire, he was taken to the place of ceremony. A very beautiful umbrella sheltered Aji Batara Agung. The sound of Gamelan Gajah Perwata and Canon 'Sapu Jagat' accompanied Aji Batara Agung and his relatives. The people were in an emotional commotion. It was the first time in their life that they saw such a unique and grand ceremony.

When the ceremony was over, the party continued. The people enjoyed the foods and drinks. The young men and women were dancing to express their gratitude for the successful procession of ceremonies. Some of them also exhibited healthy and lovable animals.

Time went by and the life of Jaitan Layar turned as usual. The people did their respective works to earn a living. The country developed into a secure and prosperous country since the birth of Aji Batara Agung in the world of Jaitan Layar. Aji Batara Agung grew up into a strong and charismatic boy. Everybody would love Aji Batara Agung at the first sight.

II. Princess Karang Melenu

In another country, the people of Kampung Melanti lived in harmony although they lived in poverty. In spite of the limitation, there was no dispute or conflict of any scale. All people lived in peace and helped each other. The leader of Kampung Melanti was Petinggi Hulu Dusun.

After having nothing to eat for seven days, Petinggi Hulu Dusun and his wife, Babu Jaruma got very starved and weak. In such a severe hunger, Petinggi Hulu Dusun and his wife sought the food residues in their attempt to survive.

When they found some food remnants, Petinggi and Babu Jaruma excitedly yelled as if they got such unexpected fortune. Like young children, they yelled and cheered because the gods have provided them with food ingredients. However, the excitement did not last long. When they were about to cook the food ingredients, they found no firewood to cook the foods. When Petinggi lifted his head up, he saw some roof woods.

"We have no alternative, dear? We have got the food materials and now we have the wood. But remember, cut only one piece of wood to keep this house from falling down. Come on. Do it or else, we'll be in severe starvation."

Petinggi promptly took a machete and cut one roof wood of their house and sliced it into a few pieces. Unexpectedly, out of one of

the slice, there was a twisted little snake tenderly looking at Petinggi tenderly implying that it asked for protection. They took pity on the snake and decided to look after it.

"Alright, good snake. My wife asked me to take care of you in her betel box. Do you agree?" Petinggi asked the little snake without having to wait for the reply.

When he took the little snake, suddenly a miracle occurred. The dark and gloomy nature suddenly turned into a bright one. The sun shone brightly and dried up the remaining rainwater pool after incessant heavy rain. The rainbow decorated the sky with its colourful perspectives. Flowers blossomed in shining splendour attracting the young men and women of Kampung Melanti to enjoy the beauty of nature.

Babu Jaruma was busy taking care of the little snake. She treated the snake as a human being and gave three meals a day to the little snake. She caressed the snake with full love. She also treated the snake just like a kid and took it to play. In short, the snake had attracted Babu Jaruma's attention. Petinggi Hulu Dusun was not jealous of his wife's new time-consuming activity.

The snake grew up fast and fantastically. The snake looked very clever.

"My betel box is now too small for the snake's body. Make a larger cage for the snake so that it can move freely," said Babu

Jaruma to her husband.

With pleasure, Petinggi developed a larger cage for his beloved snake.

"You are right Nyai. I see that the snake grows very fast. It is healthy too. Alright, I'll make a larger cage in order that it can stay there for longer time."

The cage's size was almost half of the extent of Petinggi's living room. He put the cage on the upper story. The snake would occupy its new cage. Babu Jaruma took care of the snake painstakingly and treated it sincerely.

"Nyai, what will happen when our dragon grows even bigger? I have no idea. I am afraid, " said Petinggi haltingly.

"You are right, dear. Similarly, I am also thinking of what will happen when this dragon grows even bigger and our house can no longer accommodate?" his wife replied. "Gradually, I grow a fear to the dragon now. Although I have taken care of it every day and have caressed it since it was only a little snake, I am scared of the currently large dragon," Babu Jaruma added.

"That's alright, Nyai. Don't be scared too much. I am going to ask the gods to show us the best solution. Actually, I love the dragon very much. But when we see that it is growing even bigger and bigger, I'm scared too."

One night Petinggi Hulu Dusun had a dream when he was sleeping beside the dragon. Petinggi dreamt about encountering a very beautiful girl. When the girl laughed, she showed her neatly arranged white teeth. What a beautiful girl! In a friendly manner, the girl addressed Petinggi.

"Yes, my dear dad and mom. Now I've grown up and made you and the whole population extremely scare. I don't want to break the peace of the people in this village. I had better leave this village and go away from here. Therefore, I wonder if you would make me a staircase so that I can crawl down to the ground."

Petinggi woke up and sat quietly. "Oh, gods....," sighed Petinggi. "Am I dreaming?"

The dawn had broken. Petinggi opened up his eyes and got out of the bed. He didn't see his wife beside him. Babu Jaruma had already been in the kitchen preparing the breakfast for them. He tried to remember the dream last night. Petinggi would like to share the seemingly true dream.

"Why are you so confused my husband?" Babu Jaruma asked.

Petinggi Hulu Dusun looked very confused. The confusion was very apparently seen on his face. He noticed his wife's question and replied.

"I'm going to let you know about my dream last night, Nyai.

Even, I am going to tell about my dream to all of our relatives in order that they can help us find the best solution."

"Great, come on. Hurry up telling me, my Dear. I am very curious to hear the story in your dream," asked Babu Jaruma curiously.

"It turns out that we have a very beautiful girl. She has nicely arranged white teeth when she smiles at us. Our daughter asked us to make her a staircase to crawl down to the ground. She also asked us to put the staircase beside the cage," Petinggi said.

"You mean our dragon?" asked Babu Jaruma. "So, then, is the dragon actually a very beautiful woman blessed by the gods to us, dear?" asked Petinggi's wife incessantly.

"I'm not sure... we don't know yet, Nyai. Let's see what will happen next," Petinggi replied.

At that time, the relatives had gathered to develop a strong staircase collectively for the dragon to crawl down. As requested by the dragon in Petinggi's dream, they put the staircase beside the exit door of the cage. Petinggi smiled when he saw that the staircase had been completely assembled. It looked very strong. Petinggi walked to the staircase and whispered soft words to the dragon.

"Hey, my dear daughter, we've completely made the staircase for you. Please carefully crawl down. Take care so that you don't slip

off."

At that time the dragon was still sleeping, but it immediately opened its eyes and moved her body when it heard Petinggi whispering those soft words. Petinggi gave a command to the dragon to slowly crawl down the staircase. The dragon already took two steps, when they fell off. The dragon stepped back and twisted its body at the initial place.

The people made another staircase made of the ulin wood. After they had finished making the new staircase, five men attempted lifting up the staircase, but they failed. Then eight men attempted to pick up the staircase and put it beside the door.

"My dear daughter, have you already woken up?" Petinggi greeted the dragon softly. "Get down if you are going to leave this house."

The dragon opened up its eyes. It looked miserable. Initially, it lifted the head and the extremely large body. It moved slowly. The dragon stepped down along the staircase to the ground. The dragon had successfully stepped three steps. However, unexpectedly, when it stepped on the next step, the step broke totally. It failed to bear the heavy weight of the dragon.

"Dad and mom, I've bothered you all. Make me another staircase made of Lampung wood. Make the staircase cases from the bamboo tied with the lembiding root. Don't ever make a metal

staircase since it will not be strong enough. Don't forget, when I've reached the ground, you have to follow me wherever I crawled. I also ask you to burn the wijen hirang. Besides, pour yellow rice over my body. If I crawl to the river and dive into the river, I hope that you go along with the buoy."

The relatives and the family made the staircase diligently. Finally, they managed to make the newest and strongest staircase. Petinggi approached the dragon and whispered his words.

"My daughter, get down along the staircase that we have made as you have requested! I'll lead you to crawl down slowly."

The dragon lifted her head and crawl down slowly along the staircase to the ground. Upon reaching the ground, the dragon halted for a moment and took a breath. Everybody was startled and touched when they watched the dragon crawling down along the staircase that they had made. They felt very delighted, satisfied, and proud since they had managed to make such a strong staircase. Previously, they had never imagined that they would be able to make such a strong staircase. In addition, it was the first time that they saw such a large dragon.

The dragon moved down to the ground slowly. Petinggi Hulu Dusun and Babu Jaruma followed her. The dragon moved ahead towards the river. The dragon sought the right way to the expected direction. Her father and mother followed her silently

wherever she was crawling. Finally, the dragon arrived at a large and deep river. The water of the river was very muddy and looked very eerie.

The dragon halted temporarily before she jumped into the river. She swam hence and forth in the water. First, the dragon swam upstream. After that, she swam downstream through the rock sides. She swam back and forth for seven times. In that place, the dragon swam three times to the left, and three times to the right, before it dived.

With a boat, Petinggi and his wife followed wherever the dragon swam. However, when the dragon dived to the ground of the river, Petinggi silently waited since he could not dive. In the boat, Petinggi and his wife expected what might happen next.

A few moments later, suddenly a wild storm blew. Horrible lightening flashed one after another. Thunders sounded more loudly than the sound of a canon. An extremely large wave came over and shocked Petinggi's boat. Petinggi and his wife rowed the boat as strongly as they could toward the riverside. They strived to balance the boat to keep it from drowning due to the fiercely gigantic rolling wave.

Finally, Petinggi and his wife managed to reach the riverside. They felt relieved. They thanked the gods for having saved them. When they reached the riverside, the previously turmoil nature

suddenly turned calm. All they heard was raindrops, soft wind blow, and thunders' faint sound. Clouds appeared in the grey sky. Clear and refreshing colourful rainbow extended from the sky to the earth.

They were fascinated by the beauty of nature which they never saw previously in their life.

"Where has our dragon gone?" Babu Jaruma repeatedly asked her husband.

When the husband and the wife were in deep thought of their daughter, suddenly Mahakam River was full of buoys. As long as they saw the river, they merely saw buoys. They did not see any water around their boat. They felt as if they were sailing across the buoys.

When Petinggi was rowing the boat, suddenly he heard a newly-born baby crying.

"What sound is it, my dear?" Babu Jaruma asked her husband.

Babu Jaruma soon told what she had seen to her husband.

Then, they rowed the boat toward the magic stone. When the boat approached it, they realized that what they saw was not a stone. Instead, it was a shining baby lying in a gong, a large percussive musical instrument.

The couple observed the large gong carefully. Suddenly the gong moved upward. Later it was apparent that a dragon had lifted the gong containing a baby. The dragon lifted the gong even higher. When the gong and the dragon were already above the water surface, they further saw a cow under the dragon. The cow stepped on a rock.

The cow named "Lembu Suana", had a trunk like an elephant and had a tusk as a tiger. The body resembled a horse. However, it had wings and spurs like an eagle. It had a tail like a dragon. It had scales all over the body.

"Is the baby lying in the large gong is the descendant of the god delivered to the earth for us to replace the dragon that we had taken care in full love?" asked the couple quietly.

Petinggi immediately approached the rock on which Lembu Suana stepped. Gradually, the rock, Lembu Suana, and the dragon were sinking. Finally, only the large gong containing the heaven-origin baby was floating on the water. They saw the baby's right hand holding gold, while the left hand holding an egg. Suddenly the egg in the baby's left hand broke. A little chicken got out of the broken egg. Indeed, they had seen a series of miraculous events.

Petinggi and his wife took the baby and carried it home safely. They thanked the gods for the endless blessing to Petinggi's

family. However, the baby continuously cried. Babu Jaruma was very sad since she failed to breastfeed the baby. At that time, Babu Jaruma heard a voice.

"Hey, Babu Jaruma, don't be sad. Breastfeed your baby!"

In response to the clearly heard instruction, Babu Jaruma breastfed the baby. She did it finally.

"Hey, happy Babu Jaruma. Look after your baby properly. Name her Princess Karang Melenu. The girl is the daughter of the gods in the heaven. Listen carefully to my message on how you should take care of the baby girl. You have to lay down Princess Melenu on the mat for forty days. When the umbilical cord was cut off, treat her like a princess of the king who holds the sovereignty of the whole universe. When for the first time the Princess would like to take a bath in the river, perform an erau and 'ground-stepping' ceremonies. Only after that ceremony can you let her walk on the ground."

The baby had been taken care by the family of Petinggi Hulu Dusun. On the third day, the umbilical cord of the baby cut off. To meet the requirement specified by the gods, he performed a festive traditional ceremony of erau.

"Ladies and gentlemen, hereby I am announcing the name of our baby to you all. As explicitly requested in my wife's dream, we name this baby Princess Karang Melenu," said Petinggi Hulu

Dusun proudly.

The traditional ceremony of Princess Karang Melenu's umbilical cord cut off in Kampung Melanti was coincidentally performed at the same time as the similar traditional ceremony for Aji Batara Agung, the son of Petinggi Jaitan Layar.

The two children were delivered by the gods respectively for Petinggi Jaitan Layar and Petinggi Hulu Dusun. Both of the children had grown up. They had been carefully nurtured and cared thoroughly. They took herbal medicines regularly to keep their health and fitness. The neighbouring villages close to Petinggi Hulu Dusun such as Binalu, Sembaran, Penyuangan, Senawan, Sanga-Sangaan, Kembang, Sungai Samir, Dundang, Manggar, Sambuni, Tanah Merah, Susuran Dagang, and Tanah Malang were invited to attend and witness the 'ground stepping' ceremony of the heavenly gods' daughter Princess Karang Melenu.

The gods in the heaven proudly watched the procession of the traditional ceremonies in the two villages. The gods watched the procession of the traditional ceremonies in Hulu Dusun and Jaitan Layar happily. The two leaders looked after care Princess Karang Melenu and Aji Batara Agung Dewa Sakti in the good and right manner. The gods were very satisfied since everything run well as they had expected.

The Princess seemed to understand the whole process of the traditional ceremony specifically arranged for her. It was apparent that Princess Melenu was very cooperative. She looked very glad. She enjoyed the ceremony very much. She smiled when she sat in the weapon case before she was brought into the house. The people followed them delightedly and happily.

As the surrogate mother of Princess Karang Melenu in the earth, it was normal that Babu Jaruma felt anxious. Her daughter was actually not hers. She was a god's daughter. There was no guarantee that the girl would not be taken back to the heaven. She was not sure if she would take care of the girl forever in the earth. After anxiously expecting for a long time, she was relieved when she saw a group of people coming. They were holding the great umbrella and playing the traditional percussive musical instrument of gamelan. Babu Jaruma asked quietly.

"Is that my daughter, Princess Karang Melenu?"

The procession stopped in front of Babu Jaruma. With a cheer look, she welcomed the baby.

She helped her baby get out of the weapon case in which she had lied. It seemed that the baby understood. She opened up her eyes as if she greeted her mother.

Seven water jars containing water from seven springs had been available. Babu Jaruma bathed the Princess immediately. When

she had finished bathing, the Princess was brought to the river for another bathing. Although the baby had to follow the whole procession of river bathing, the Princess did not feel tired. When all processions had finished, the Princess looked even brighter and more enchanting. She smiled charmingly at the people around her. Her eyes radiated the energy of life to other people. Time went by so fast and Princess Karang Melenu had grown up. She looked even more mature than her real age.

"Dad and Mom, go along with all of the people to go to the palace earlier. I'll go there by myself."

Petinggi Hulu Dusun said to Princess Karang Melenu, "My dear daughter, it would be improper for you to walk alone to the palace without your parents and the maids and the visitors."

"Just take my words, Dad," the Princess prodded.

Then Petinggi Hulu Dusun, his wife, and all of the visitors went to the palace.

When Princess Karang Melenu stayed alone, she burned an incense and scatter yellow rice three times. She also passed prayer. When she had spread the yellow rice, suddenly Lembu Suana appeared from an unexpected place. Then, Princess Karang Melenu said to her cow.

"Lembu Suana, take me to the palace!"

Lembu Suana replied, "As you wish, Princess!"

"Put your head down, I'll get on!" Princess Karang Melenu commanded.

Lembu Suana flew with Princess Karang Melenu from the hut to the palace under the colourful rainbow. The beautiful Princess looked even more charming. Everybody in the palace was fascinated by the beauty of the Princess. Her father and her mother welcomed her. Then the Princess sat at the Mandargili. Everybody had sat around the Mandargili. After delivering Princess Karang Melenu, Lembu Suana stayed and expected another instruction from the Princess.

"Lembu Suana, disappear soon from this palace. You and I have made many people were startled. Later, when I need you, I'll summon you," said Princess Karang Melenu.

It seemed that the gods in the heaven thoroughly observed the people of Petinggi Hulu Dusun.

"It's ridiculous to see the how the people of Hulu Dusun are charmed and enchanted by the beauty of Princess Karang Melenu. How pity they are if they are continuously in that condition. They can turn crazy. The already established norms and traditions may be endangered," said the gods.

III. Aji Batara Agung the Divinely-Powered God Found His Soulmate

One day, Aji Batara Agung was taking a bath. He rubbed three kinds of purut lime and fragrant lotion all over his body. The purut lime was served by his servants. After taking a bath, Aji Batara looked clean and smelled fragrant.

"Aji Batara, mom has cooked your favourite food. Let's have a meal. Ask your father to join."

They had a meal with Aji Batara Agung's favourite dish. His father asked about Aji's wish of going to Majapahit in the near future. Therefore, while his father asked about that, Aji asked for permission to his parents to leave.

"You may go wherever you like as long as you go with the guards. Your father must get worried about your safety. Have you got it, my son?"

The midnight had passed, but Aji Batara Agung failed to sleep. He was eager to open the lontar pertenungan, which was a kind of lontar leaves containing the prediction of fate and other matters. He looked up in the lontar leaves to get the clues of the best possible time for a long journey. He looked at every page of the lontar leaves.

At that time, in addition to looking up for a clue of the best

possible time for a long journey to Majapahit, he also sought the country in which he could find his soul mate. He had looked up information about many countries in the lontar leaves but he failed to find the expected soul mate. Aji Batara Agung almost got frustrated. Suddenly Aji Batara Agung heard a voice.

"Aji, go on looking up the lontar leaves. Don't ever get frustrated. One of the pages will show you a bright light. Look at that part."

Aji got startled. However, he remained calm since his curiosity will soon come true. Aji went on opening the pages of the lontar leaves, which he had previously closed.

In his anxiety, Aji Batara Agung fell asleep. He had a very sound sleep. In his sleep, Aji Batara Agung dreamt that a yellow bear had grabbed him. Aji got shocked and woke up. He immediately took his Keris and shouted 'bear, bear, bear' Aji stabbed arbitrarily with his Keris. Aji had damaged many things in the room with his Keris. Aji's bedroom was very dark without any light at all.

"What is going on? Why is this room extremely dark and quiet?" a servant wondered. One of the male servants hurriedly came in and brought a room light.

They had no idea of what was happening in the room of their lord. In fact, Aji Batara Agung was asleep with his forehead frowned.

Aji told about his dream to his mother, Nyai Petinggi Jaitan Layar.

"In my opinion, your dream implied that you will get married soon," said Nyai Petinggi Jaitan Layar.

"Frankly, Mom. That's what I have been expecting. But, I hope that my prospective wife should have equal status to me and be the descendant of the god," replied Aji Batara Agung Sakti with a smile.

"Therefore, I call off my journey to Majapahit since I would like to go the country where I can find my soul mate. I have not known the country. However, I'll take the necessary efforts to find her. If she is at the mountaintop, I'll climb the mountain. If she lives in the ocean, I'll sail to get her. And if she is in the sky, I still go there to get her."

The following day, Aji Batara Dewa instructed his two servants to prepare the purut lime for his bathing. He also asked them to look after his rooster.

To meet Aji Batara Agung's request, the two servants left him. They sought it around the village.

As Aji Batara Agung requested, they brought Aji Batara Agung's rooster along with them. The rooster had grown up and had beautiful and long feathers. The rooster was also healthy and

dashing. It also had a sharp spur. It would be a fool leaving the rooster at home alone. The two servants kept walking while singing to entertain themselves. One of the servants carried Aji Batara Agung's rooster while imagining Aji Batara Agung who would get married soon. Because he was too busy with his imagination, lost his control over the rooster. The rooster escaped and crow. The two servants got shocked for a while. A few moments later they chased Aji Batara Agung's rooster. However, the rooster had run away. They went after it, but the rooster had run even farther.

After going far away to catch Aji Batara Agung's rooster, the two servants got very exhausted. However, they didn't dare to take a rest. They knew that when they took a rest, the rooster will run even farther and they would be unable to catch it. Unexpectedly, the rooster entered Dusun Melanti in the country of Hulu Dusun. Aji Batara Agung's rooster entered a very large yard. Then, it flew and perched on the branch of a lime tree. The two servants who run after it felt relieved since they had found the purut lime tree they had been seeking.

"This is the multi-stalked purut lime tree that we are looking for," said one servant in a gleaming face.

Immediately, the climbed up the purut lime tree to take some pieces of the purut limes and catch Aji Batara Agung Sakti's rooster at once. However, the rooster flew to the ground and run

around the yard. The other servant attempted to catch it, but the rooster had run even more wildly. Suddenly the rooster stopped and soon entered a cage the door of which intentionally opened by the cage owner. They put the chicken cage under the house.

"We've got the purut lime and the rooster is already trapped in the cage. What should we do now?" the two servants thought. They called out the cage owner to get permission.

"Excuse me...excuse me."

"Who's out there?" a reply came out from inside of the house.

The two servants were enchanted to see a very beautiful girl. She was known as Princess Karang Melenu.

"What a very beautiful girl!" said the two servants in their heart.

"Why are you coming here"? Princess Karang Melenu asked to the two servants.

"If you think that what we had done is wrong, we sincerely will take the punishment whatsoever. We will also pay at a reasonable price for the purut lime that we had taken from the tree," the two servants begged a favour from Princess Karang Melenu.

Princess Karang Melenu said to the two servants softly, "My purut lime is too invaluable to be exchanged for anything. Even gold will not pay the purut lime. It can't. All I want is that you

return the purut limes to me. Then, I asked you two not to tell about our encounter with anybody. I will curse you if you tell this encounter to anybody."

The two servants replied to what Princess Karang Melenu had said. However, their reply was not clear.

"Since it is already late of night, it would be better if you spend the night here," offered the Princess.

The two servants accepted Princess Karang Melenu's offer happily. That night the two servants felt honourably respected. The two had never dreamt before that they would have such a wonderful experience. They were confused. The female servants faithfully serve Princess Karang Melenu's guests. They served all kinds of food that night. The servants ate up all the served foods. They ate extravagantly at the home of Princess Karang Melenu.

Princess Karang Melenu had not been sleepy that time. She still had many things to do. She took a rest for a while, but then she already took another work to do. The two servants kept their eyes on what the Princess was doing all night long. Gradually, they compared the character of the Prince to that of Aji Batara Agung. The two servants concluded that both Aji Batara Agung Sakti and Princess Karang Melenu had many things in common. They thought that the two were matched to become a married couple.

It would be great. "They would be a harmonious married couple and they would live in unity happily forever," one of the servants uttered slowly to keep his voice from being heard.

The next day they planned to return to Jaitan Layar.

"Princess, allow me to take Aji Batara Agung's rooster home. It entered the cage below this house yesterday."

"I'll not let you take the rooster home since the rooster had made coitus with my hen in the cage," the Princess declined the request.

"Unless we bring the rooster with us, Aji will get furious and we will be punished!" one of the servants replied.

"It is normal that a rooster comes with a hen. So, leave the rooster here," replied the Prince in affirmed tone.

"Alright then, Princess. We have failed to keep our promise. When Aji asked us about the rooster, we will let him know that you have forbidden us to bring the rooster along with us," the two servants replied alternately.

The two servants stepped backward and gave a salute. Then they left for Jaitan Layar. On their way home, the two servants did not talk much. They were too busy with their own thoughts. One of them was busy arranging the proper reply when Aji asked about the rooster and the other was busy finding the excuse for having failed to bring purut lime to Jaitan Layar. In fact, the two servants

were very afraid.

A few days later, they had arrived at the country of Jaitan Layar. Immediately they entered Aji Batara Agung's house. They greeted the whole people in the house.

"Where have you been, servants? Where have you kept my beloved rooster?" Aji Batara Agung asked curtly when he knew that the rooster was not with the two servants.

Aji Batara Agung got extremely furious. The two servants' bodies were trembling. Fearing of the possible death punishment, the two servants encouraged them to tell about what they had experienced when they were away from Aji Batara Agung's house to seek the purut lime requested by the lord.

"Forgive us for our late return, My Lord. We have strived to find the five-stalked or seven-stalked purut lime throughout other villages around this country. Even we have gone to other countries as well. We have arrived at the Dusun Melanti in the country of Hulu Dusun. Would you still like to hear our story?"

"Go on telling me the story. I'm listening carefully," Aji Batara Agung replied in a flat tone.

"Alright. Frankly, at that time, we were searching the purut-lime tree while imagining that you were going to get married. Because we were too busy with the imagination, I lost control over the

rooster and it escaped. We had to run after the rooster until we arrived in a very far place.

In short, the rooster entered a very large yard. We followed the rooster to the yard. The rooster was there and did not go out even once. Meanwhile, we were searching the well-grown and nurtured plants. One of the plants was the purut lime tree with abundant fruit. We picked off five-stalked limes and seven-stalked limes as you have requested."

"Then, what about my rooster? Are you telling me the truth? You are not lying to me, aren't you?"

Silently, Aji put his Keris into the case again. Suddenly, his heart beat very fast. His body got warm. His blood was in turmoil. Then he asked his servants slowly.

"Is the Princess you have described is really more beautiful than the beautiful princess you have ever seen?" Aji asked incessantly.

"Yes, My Lord. In our opinion, Princess Karang Melenu is much more beautiful than Princess Brunei or Princess Kencana Ungu. The Princess is equally beautiful to Princess Junjung Buih of Banjar whom we had ever seen in our dream. We don't know why we had a dream of seeing Princess Junjung Buih of Banjar. The two princesses are equally beautiful and equally enchanting. But we think Princess Karang Melenu is more attractive," the servant promoted.

"So do you think they both have equal beauty?" Aji confirmed.

"In our opinion, Princess Karang Melenu is more beautiful.

Princess Karang Melenu's body resembles the palm tree swung by a storm, while the body swing of Princess Junjung Buih of Banjar resembles the areca nut tree blown by a heavily-blowing wind," the servants added.

"What about the Princess' pronunciation of 'r'?" Aji Batara Agung asked.

"Oh, yes. Princess Karang Melenu can perfectly pronounce 'r', while PRINCESS Junjung Buih cannot perfectly pronounce 'r' although it does not reduce the quality of her melodious voice," the servants replied clearly.

"Alright then. We'll find Princess Karang Melenu. But if you have lied to me, I'll punish you."

Aji Batara Agung took a bath and cleanse up his body. He asked his maid to prepare deodorizing powder and lotion. After taking a bath, Aji wore proper royal attire. He inserted the Keris Buritkang in his waist. Aji Batara Agung Dewa Sakti looked handsome and strong.

Aji thought deeply what the servants had said. After dressing up properly, Aji said to his two servants.

"Hey... you two. Hold on my legs. One of you holds my right leg, and the other my left leg!" Aji immediately closed his eyes and held his breath. Aji lifted up his body like cotton and flew as an eagle. His two servants held his legs firmly. They looked like kites attached to some tree twigs.

When Aji Batara Agung was flying over in the sky, at that time Princess Karang Melenu was weaving a cloth while chewing some betel leaves and areca nut. Her mother, Babu Jaruma, accompanied by the maids was enjoying her leisure time. While weaving, the Prince told a story to her mother Babu Jaruma.

"Mom, last night I had a dream. My fingers were bitten by tedung ari and my waist was twisted by tedung bulan. What was implied in the dream, mom?"

"In the near future, a bachelor will come to marry you," replied her mother.

Suddenly, the Princess' body trembled. She got up from her seat and said to the earthen jug, "Hey...earthen jug, crack now!" The earthen jug cracked and the prince got into the jug.

Aji Batara Agung entered the home of the Prince and approached Babu Jaruma. He said,

"Oh... good old woman, don't be afraid of me since I come here to take my rooster already entering the chicken cage of this house

owner."

"We don't have your rooster here!" replied Babu Jaruma.

"That's my rooster," Aji said. "I am familiar with the loud crow when it challenged another rooster for a fight. Whose betel case is it and who has disposed of the chew in this spittle pot?"

"That's my daughter's," replied Babu Jaruma.

"That's impossible. This kind of betel case is only owned by a king rather than a common young woman."

"If you don't believe me, go and find the owner of this betel case yourself!" said Babu Jaruma in a tremble.

"Alright, I'll find her," Aji replied.

Aji Batara Agung closed his eyes. He pointed his feeling to Shiva God asking for instruction and favour to seek the owner of the betel case supposed to be the princess described by his two servants.

After having a meditation, Aji opened up his eyes and looked around.

He saw an earthen jug above the head and he thought that what he was looking for was in the earthen jug. Then, Aji said, "Hey earthen jug, open up!" The earthen jug opened up and Aji Batara

Agung immediately entered it. Suddenly, the Princess got out of the earthen jug. She entered the pillar. However, Aji did not give up. He got out of the earthen jug, and run after the Princess into the pillar. Knowing that he had run after her, the Prince entered the threshold beam. They run one after another through solid materials.

Aji Batara Agung carried Princess Karang Melenu and took the Princess up to the cradle. They swung together. He persuaded the Princess with sweet words and soft tone of voice.

"You are the Princess I have been craving for," said Aji Batara Agung.

"It seems that you are the tedung biting my fingers in my dream," thought Princess Karang Melenu shyly.

"You are my prospective wife I have been looking for," said Aji while holding the Princess' hand.

The Prince said, "Hey, Aji, if you really want to marry me, you had better go home now to your country. Ask your parents to meet mine and organize our wedding."

How excited Aji Batara Agung was when he heard the melodious voice of Princess Karang Melenu who had agreed to marry him. Aji and his two servants left for Jaitan Layar to report to his parents. They organized the wedding mechanism and determined

the proper wedding time and day.

In Hulu Dusun, there was a crowd of people wishing to see the representatives of Jaitan Layar. A few moments later, a group of representatives of Aji walked on foot to the house of Petinggi Hulu Dusun in Melanti. A kingly traditional ceremony welcomed them.

A number of officials and officers from the neighbouring countries were invited to attend the wedding ceremony. They were officials from Binalu, Sembaran, Penyuangan, Senawan, Sanga-Sangaan, Kembang, Sungai Samir, Dundang, Manggara, Sambuni, Tanah Merah, Susuran Dagang, Tanah Malang, Pulau Atas, Karang Asam, Karang Mumus, Mangkupalas, Loa Bakung, and Sembuyutan. The gods also witnessed the wedding ceremony of their descendants in the world. In addition to giving the blessing, the gods were also proud of the wedding.

The bridal couple, Aji Batara Agung and Princess Karang Melenu loved respect, and care for each other. They had a child named Paduka Nira.

In line with the custom and tradition of king's children, they hired the best people throughout the country of Sembaran and Binalu to take care of the baby.