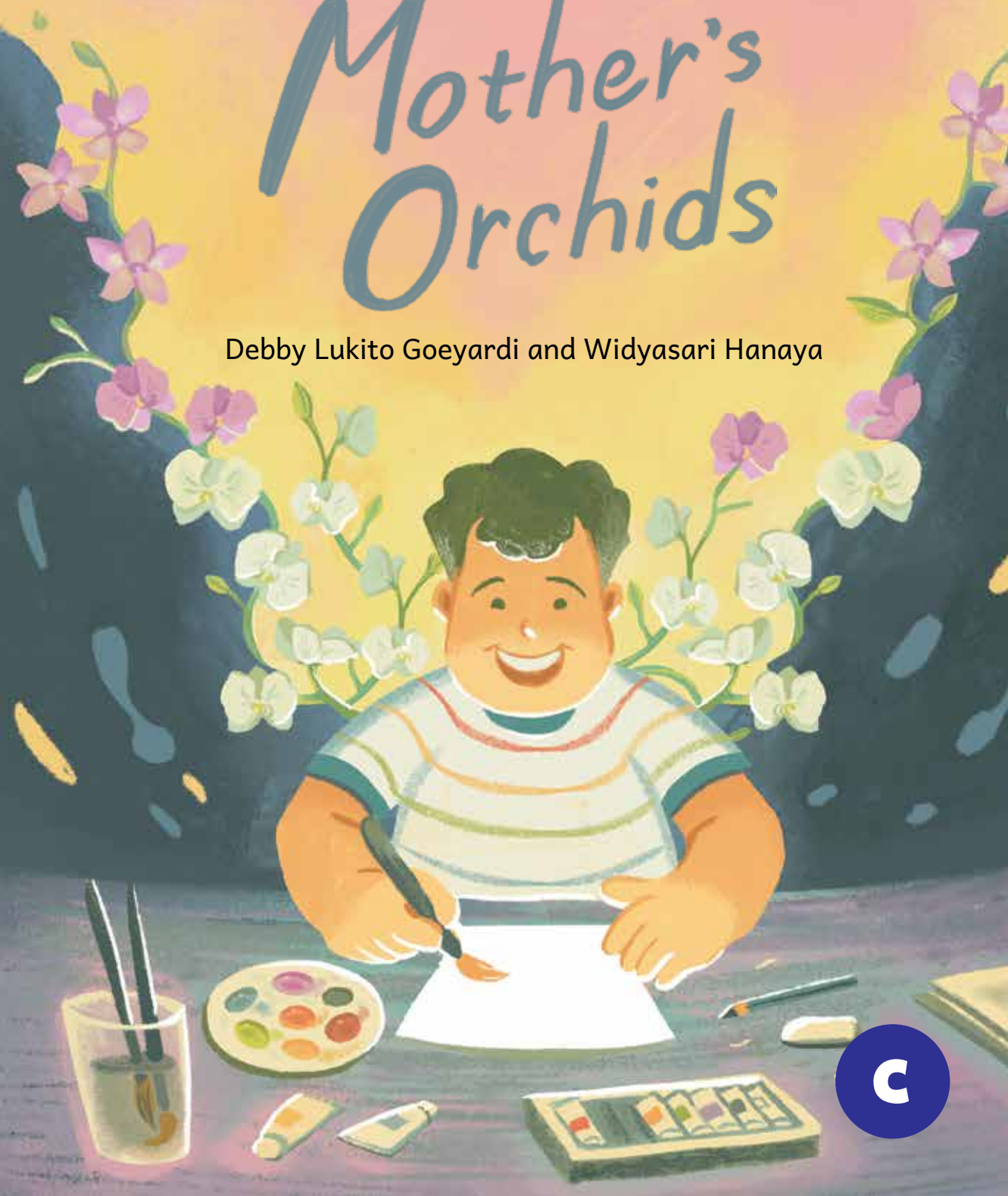




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Mother's Orchids

Debby Lukito Goeyardi and Widyasari Hanaya





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Mother's Orchids

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Message from the Head of Center for Book Affairs

Hello, My Dear Readers! Greetings!

This awesome book is especially for you.

You can listen to or read the interesting story in this book and also in the other books that are available to you.

These books will help you be active, make friends and share as well as learn from your surroundings. The stunning illustrations will help you understand each storyline. Hope you enjoy reading these books and become more passionate about reading.

Happy reading!

Head of Center for Book Affairs

Supriyatno, S.Pd., M.A

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Chapter 1

Janu, Mother, and Orchids

Swish... swish...

Janu's painting brush flowed across his drawing paper. Janu liked to spend time with his brush and paint, especially when he wanted to be alone. Janu's mother glanced at him while tidying up her orchid plants and ensuring no pests were on the plants. Seeing the look on Janu's face, Mother knew that Janu did not want to be disturbed.

Janu was a quiet boy. When his father was still alive, Janu was always cheerful, just like any other child. But, since his father had died, his mother noticed that he changed. He spent most of his time on his own. She tried to make him happy again, while inside she felt deep grief too. Janu seemed to be in his own world.

Swish...swish...

On Sunday mornings Janu and his mother were busy. While Mother took care of her beloved orchid collection, Janu spent his time painting.



Janu's paintings were full of meaning. He loved painting. He had been into painting since he was five years old. His paintings were about rivers, animals, Mother, orchids, and colorful abstract paintings. Sometimes, he painted Father on his canvas. When he was painting Father, Mother would know that he was missing him.

Janu did not hang the paintings of Father on the wall. Only the paintings of Mother and her orchids were hung on the house walls. Janu felt a strong connection with Mother and her orchids. Her face always shone with joy whenever she was with her orchids. She treated the orchids with affection.



Mother peeked at Janu's painting from behind him. "What is he painting now?" she thought. Again, he was drawing Mother and her orchids. She smiled and was glad that he was not drawn into thoughts about his father.

"Wow! I look so beautiful in your painting!" praised Mother, stroking Janu's hair affectionately. Janu glimpsed at her and continued painting. She understood the look on Janu's face. He did not want to be disturbed.

"Who would dare say you're not beautiful?" asked Janu suddenly, with a serious face. Mother was silent, not expecting Janu to take her joke seriously.





“I mean...,” Mother did not say more. She looked down at her left side. Her left arm was gone. It happened several years ago. Mother and Father had an accident when they were traveling. Janu lost his father. Mother survived but she had to have her left arm amputated. Since then, Janu became quieter and more withdrawn.

Janu knew how his mother felt about raising him by herself. He wanted to hug her. But, he did not want to make her even sadder.

Janu decided not to talk about it because it would bring up the memories of his father. He had to look strong in front of everyone. He tidied up all his painting tools and went to his bedroom. Mother smiled as he walked away. She knew Janu tried to avoid talking about it. Her eyes grew teary.





Chapter 2

Ten days left!

“Students, just a reminder. In ten days, we are going to have a field trip to Yogyakarta and Borobudur Temple. Have you given the notification letter to your parents? Remember? There is a fee of IDR 800,000 that must be paid to join the field trip. It should be paid no later than three days before departure,” the teacher announced.

“Yes, Teacher!” All students replied in chorus.

“Yeay! We are going on a field trip!”

Everyone cheered but Janu.

His heart pounded. He felt uncertain. He forgot to tell his mother. The letter was still in his bag. He did not know how to tell his mother about this now.

Mother was a well-organized person. She took care of everything, including the family finances. Janu could not just go and ask for such a large amount of money from her. He did not want to burden her with the field trip fee.

He had saved money, but not much.

“I don’t want to bother my mom. She hasn’t had much work lately.” his heart was restless. He scratched his head.



Deep down, Janu was so proud of his mother's job. She was an interpreter. It was a really good job. Have you ever heard of someone's job as an interpreter? An interpreter translates one language into another verbally. Like Janu's mother. She was proficient in English.

For her job, Mother interpreted what speakers said in Indonesian into English, or vice versa. She did it simultaneously.

Mother was also a translator. She translated written texts from English into Indonesian or vice versa.

Mother was a popular interpreter. She was often invited to various events--national and international events. Sometimes she took Janu to the events. He watched how her mother worked confidently. She always looked enthusiastic about her job.





Mother's hobby of collecting orchids started when she became an interpreter at an international orchid exhibition. Janu still remembered Mother touching some orchids and smelling their fragrance. She was fascinated by the flowers. She bought the orchids right away, which in fact were quite expensive. She got a discount because she was the interpreter at the event. Since then, the orchids added beauty to the house.

In fact, orchids have various types and names. There are moon orchids, spoon orchids, sandalwood orchids, Hartinah orchids, and many more. Isn't that cool?

Orchids also have unique patterns, shapes, and colors. Some of the petals look like spider legs and some are shaped like a baby dove when they are blooming. Some others have a spot pattern similar to a tiger's body. There are even orchids with curly shapes!





Chapter 3

Why aren't the orchids for sale?

That afternoon, Janu and Mother cleaned the yard as usual. They swept away dry leaves, tidied up pots, and watered the orchids that were hanging on the terrace.

Taking care of orchids is not as easy as one might imagine. Janu learned a lot from Mother. To water the hanging orchids, he had to unhook them first.

Janu had to avoid water spilling on the floor of the terrace. Not all orchids are planted in soil.

“Don’t water them too much. It will cause the roots to rot.” Mother warned every time Janu was ready to water the plants.



Mother was not usually that fussy, but she became meticulous when it came to watering her orchids.



As they were cleaning and laughing together . . .

“Are those orchids for sale?” asked a lady who stopped in front of the house and pointed at one of Mother’s favorite moon orchids.

Janu and Mother looked at each other. Someone wanted to buy one of her orchids! Janu’s eyes lit up. He would have his field trip fee if Mother sold one of her orchids.

Janu had still not given the notification letter to Mother. He was afraid she would be angry if he told her about the trip now. But if Mother had enough money from selling the orchids, she might not be angry at him for his forgetfulness.

“Yeay!” Janu thought to himself.



“No, Ma’am. I’m sorry. These orchids are not for sale,” Mother replied politely.

“I’m in love with that moon orchid. How beautiful!” said the lady as she pointed at the moon orchid. She was enthusiastic about buying it.

“Thank you, Ma’am. But, I’m really sorry. I won’t sell it,” Mother said firmly. The lady went away. Janu felt hopeless.

“How will I get the money for the trip?” complained Janu to himself.

“Mom, why won’t you sell your orchids?” Janu asked Mother carefully. “You have a lot of them.”

Janu looked around the terrace that was full of colorful orchids. There might have been around 27 orchid plants. They had a variety of prices, from the cheapest to the most expensive ones. If Mother would sell just a few orchids, Janu would not need to be busy searching for ways to earn money to pay for the field trip.



“Janu, you know how I take care of these orchids, don’t you?” asked Mother with a gentle smile.

“These orchids are meaningful to me. Your father loved the song ‘Stalking the Moon Orchid’. Now, you know why I love orchids.”

Janu was stunned by his mother’s story about his late father and the story behind his mother’s passion for collecting orchids.

Now, Janu understood that Mother had a special memory for every orchid she collected. No wonder she always looked cheerful whenever she touched and smelled the scent of the orchids.

It was because of the memory of Father. Janu could not stand it if he asked Mother to sell an orchid just so he could go on the field trip. However, Janu just might have a new idea.



“Um... Can I grow orchids and sell them myself, Mom?” asked Janu curiously.

“It’s not easy to grow orchids, Son. And, it takes a long time, for the flowers to bloom. By the way, why are you suddenly interested in selling orchids?” Mother inquired. Janu lowered his head and spoke softly.

“Do you remember that the school has a field trip every year? This year the field trip is to Yogyakarta. But, I forgot to give you the notification letter about the field trip.” Janu looked down, afraid of Mother’s anger. Mother frowned and sighed wearily.



“I’m really sorry, Mom. I forgot about the letter.” Janu’s head sank to his chest. “Anyway you don’t need to be worried and bothered looking for money for the field trip fee. My savings is not enough yet, but I have this idea. People want to buy your orchids. If I sell just a few of your orchids, I will get IDR 800,000 for the field trip fee.”

Mother stroked Janu’s hair gently. Her heart was broken. She knew Janu was confused and frustrated. However, she was also aware that it was the right time to teach him about money. She looked at him seriously, while amused at the apologetic look on his face.

“Next time, please share any notification from the school with me as soon as possible. We have to plan our expenses wisely. I hope this will not happen again,” Mother said with a serious look.

“What if you had told me about this at the last minute and I didn’t have the money to give you?” she continued.

Janu nodded softly.

Mother smiled. She had known about the field trip long before Janu told her. She had received the information from the parents' chat group on WhatsApp. She had put the field trip in her agenda book and waited for the notification letter from Janu.

Now, Mother wanted Janu to learn about honesty and the value of money. She would sell some of her orchids if her plan did not work.

"I appreciate your honesty. I'm also amazed by your desire to earn money yourself. I know you didn't want to bother me. Um... Let's come up with some ideas to earn the money. There must be a way."

"I remember now! Your school usually holds a Bazaar Day. You can take part in the event," Mother encouraged Janu. She was thinking about giving him a challenge.

Janu kept thinking about how to earn money for the field trip fee. Mother was right. There would be a Bazaar Day at school in the next five days.

"But, what can I sell?" Janu asked himself. He starting seaching for ideas on his laptop.



Janu found some interesting ideas about making a business from the Internet. They recommended cooking food, making drinks, creating handcrafts, and giving courses.

"I can't find any idea I can do. I can't cook delicious food yet. Giving courses is not suitable for Bazaar Day," Janu cried. "Making handicrafts? What can I make?" Janu was almost desperate.





Chapter 4

Yay, I've got an idea!

The next afternoon, Janu walked into Kawasan Kota Lama. Kawasan Kota Lama is an old area of town that became a popular icon in Semarang City. He really enjoyed walking around among the colonial-era buildings.

Janu stopped at the antique market behind Blenduk Church. He saw many unique items for sale there such as vinyl records, old radios, old advertisements, and used books. He visited some stalls.



“There’s a painting gallery here!” Janu said to himself in surprise. His feet stepped into the painting gallery not far from the antique market. He looked at some paintings. Then, he arrived at a corner of the room.



“Hey, Kid. Do you want me to paint your picture?” said a man. He was cleaning the paint stains off of his hands.

Janu was stunned. Someone could get money from selling paintings. He talked to the man. He found out that the man’s name was Pak Anto. Janu showed his paintings on his cell phone to him. *Pak Anto* was so amazed by his paintings that he praised Janu.

Pak Anto had so many paintings in his gallery. All of them were for sale. He painted self-portraits too. Janu was eager to listen to *Pak Anto*’s stories about his paintings.

It was getting late, so. Janu said goodbye to *Pak Anto*. He could not wait to arrive at home. He came up with an idea to solve his problem.

**Pak* is an address to call an elderly man.

“Selling paintings!”



“Why didn’t I think about this before?” He was so excited.

Janu went to his bedroom and looked at his paintings one by one. He had not finished many of the paintings.

Janu was excited about his idea. But then, he wasn’t sure if he could prepare everything before the Bazaar in just four more days.

“I have to finish these paintings,” Janu said to himself. He stacked up his paintings. Apparently, all his unfinished paintings were orchids.

“I don’t have to sell Mom’s orchids. I can paint her orchids and sell the paintings.” Janu’s heart was full of joy and relief.





The day of the Bazaar was approaching. Janu had been busy painting. He was passionate about completing his paintings. He went to the terrace to take photos of the orchids so that he could paint the details of the flowers. He wanted his paintings to look exactly like the original ones.



Janu also had the idea of making greeting cards. The greeting cards had different themes such as friendship, love for parents, and gratitude to teachers. He found quotes on the Internet. He painted orchids on some of the cards. And he painted other objects on the other cards. He coordinated the paintings with the quotes.





Chapter 5

The Bazaar Day

A day before the Bazaar, Janu was even busier. Janu asked Mother to help him with the price tags. He also needed her help packing the paintings and greeting cards so they would look beautiful in their packages.

While packing, Janu could not stop thinking about his products. Maybe they weren't worth selling. Such a thoughts made him gradually lose his confidence.

"Mom, are these paintings good? Are they worth selling?" asked Janu.

"Mom, I'm not a famous painter. Who would buy my paintings?" Janu kept asking.



Mother laughed. She understood his feelings but she was happy to see Janu's hard work.

"Mom, what if no one buys my paintings?" Janu could not stop asking.

"Mom..." His worry haunted him.

"You will not know until you try," Mother tried to comfort Janu. She smiled at him.

"You done your best, son. Come on. Cheer up. I'm proud of you. Your paintings are very beautiful because you made them with all your heart," Mother said.

Janu's eyes lit up.

"You've wanted to earn money by yourself. You're a businessman now," Mother continued showing how proud she was of Janu.

"Don't you think the prices are too high, Mom?" Janu was still worried. He looked at a framed painting with the price IDR 150,000 on the tag.

"Well. If you think so, you can give a discount on the prices. The prices should show how hard you have worked on the paintings," Mother suggested. "They are just right for the beauty of your paintings. Trust me."



Bazaar Day came. Janu decorated his booth with beautiful ornaments to make it attractive for visitors.

“Dear God. I hope my friends and teachers like my work,” Janu said his prayers in his heart with his hands clasped together.

“Dear God. Please let my paintings be sold out,”

Janu’s classmates and other students arrived at the Bazaar. The teachers also came.

Some of them stopped at Janu’s booth. Some just glanced at it and walked away. Janu was worried. He kept his head down.

“No one is interested in my paintings. I’m not a famous painter,” Janu said to himself.





Wow! The cards are cute.
They have beautiful words.

This one is so
beautiful, Janu!

I want to buy this one.

Hey! I saw it first.
I want to buy that one!

I'll take this one,
please.

After the bazaar was over, Janu hurried home. He was so excited to see his mother.

“Mom. I sold them all!” Janu yelled. Mother was moving the orchids on the terrace.

“Really? I told you. That’s great, Janu,” Mother was amazed. She helped Janu count the money from the sale.

Janu went to his bedroom to get his piggy bank. He broke it and counted the money.

“It’s IDR 720,000. It’s almost enough for the field trip fee,” Janu smiled at Mother. “Thank you for your orchids, Mom.”

Janu hugged Mother.



A Message to Our Readers

Dearest readers!

Wasn't the story fun? After reading the story, do you have some thoughts about financial literacy? Financial literacy is about how to differentiate needs and wants and how to be wise in spending and saving money.

Do you have ideas about how to earn money like Janu?

The tips of earning money. Apply the 3Cs.

Consistency, Commitment, and Creativity.

Kak Widya drew Mother's orchids and

Janu's expressions very well.

Warm regards,

Debby and Widya



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Debby Lukito Goeyardi, called Debby, is a writer of children and teens' books. She spent her childhood and teenage life in Surakarta City, Solo, Central Java Province. She earned her diploma at Universitas Satya Wacana, Salatiga in 1994. She earned her bachelor degree in the United States of America in 2000. She also actively participates in charity programs. She founded a foundation that helps children with serious diseases, women who experienced violence, and other issues. Some of her works are *Waktunya Cepuk Terbang* (2015), *Cepuk Tersesat!* (2018), *Rumah Burung Gatotkaca* (2018), and many more.



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Well, wasn't the story fun? You can read these other three books that are also fascinating. Happy reading!



Janu was confused and afraid. Janu forgot to give the school notification letter to his mother about the field trip to Yogyakarta. The fee for the trip was Rp. 800.000. She was a well-organized person, especially about money. She thought everything should be planned well. So, Janu thought of ways to earn the money himself in ten days. What would Janu do to get the money? What is the story of Mother and her orchids?



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