HIKAYAT
Awang Sulung Merah Muda

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THE TALE OF THE RED PRINCE

In Old Tērēngganu the Independent, there was once a prince the Hawk of Mawai, who had four daughters, the eldest called princess Mother the Dog; the princess called the Pride of Tērēngganu, the princess called the Dark Lady of the Long Shore, and youngest of all the princesses called Hawk of the Mangrove. Prince Hawk of Mawai died and the husband of princess the Pride of Tērēngganu succeeded to his throne.

Princess Hawk of the Mangrove had wedded a landless prince called Hawk of the Sea. And he sailed away with his consort and her eldest sister to the country of Bandar Mēngkaleh; because it was a country without a prince ruled by Batins only, Batin 'Alam, Batin Sangeru, Batin Laksamana, Batin Bongsu. These four chiefs gave him a palace:—

Nine the spaces 'tween its pillars;
Ten to the short verandah posts;
To th' eaves of outer-way eleven;
Twelve to th' high o'er-hanging balcony;
Th' Eight Viziers name o' the corner pillars;
The tallest called Mah' raja Lela;
Rollers named the Angry Serpents,  
Each rafter dubb'd the Bowing Princess,  
Curving down like hawk a-swoop;
Ridge-pole carved like a writhing snake;
Painted red its carved top-angles;
Stained red too were the door-posts:
'Bove the royal portal carving,
Work of craftsmen come from Java,
Flowers knit and interwoven,
Like grains of salt the beaded pattern,
Batin 'Alam, chief of the world, married princess Mother the Dog. Prince Hawk of the Sea and princess Hawk of the Mangrove were childless. So, one day the Hawk of the Sea bade his Trusty Page summon all the Batins, and the twelve lēmbaga, the court dignitaries, and all the people to the palace.

Came the halt upon their crutches;
Came the blind a-groping groping;
Quick the deaf to ask and question;
Mothers brought their babes in arms;
Children hurried pressing pushing;
And the short folk craned a-tiptoe;
And the sick tailed off to leeward.
Came the deaf to fire the cannon:
Came the blind to blow the mortars;
Came the halt to drive the chicken;

And the scrofulous and those afflicted with ringworm were appointed out-door tasks drying clothes, and carrying bamboos, tasks suited to their respective complaints.

They did homage, and asked: "What business is toward, your highness,

That the royal drums are beaten;
And the call of summons sounded;
And the gong is struck so loudly
That the drums is ev'ry kampong
Thud in answer one by one.
Where the foeman that is coming?
Where the bank that totters down?
Where the fort you'd have us batter?
Wher the powder we must dry?"
Where the guns you’d have us shoulder?
Where the dyke that’s broken through?
Or bamboo-clump that would be tended?
Or what embassy has come?

Then prince Hawk of the Sea answered: “No foeman is coming, but we would sail to the sea of the Teak Headland in our wind-swift vessel the Attar of Flowers, to pay our vows at the shrine there: and we would have you prepare firewood and rice and escort us.” So, the prince with his consort sailed out, visited the shrine, bathed as ceremony ordains, burnt magic incense and made his invocation to Allah. “Lord God, the only true God: if in sooth I am the grandson of prince Hawk of Mawai, whose tomb is on mount Ophir, the grandson of prince Simbang Ğerda, the flags of whose tomb wave against the gate of Allah’s temple at Mecca and determine right and wrong the lawful and unlawful; we beseech thee vouchsafe us a child, but one male child.”

Then there was feasting and music and the royal party turned homewards. But princess Hawk of the Mangrove saw a yellow mangrove leaf floating in the sea, ate half of it and gave half of it to princess Mother the Dog. Within a month, both the princesses were with child.

When princess Hawk of the Mangrove had been with child three months, she longed for a white mouse-deer, male, with young! And prince Hawk of the Sea took nine hunting dogs and went in search of the deer; at mid-day reached the deep Mere of Hollow Dene. The nine dogs yelped.

Sun shone and rain-storm pattered:
Forks of lighting flashed and flickered:
Thunder shot it leven-bolts.

A white mouse-deer, male, with young, leapt down and was caught by the prince, and taken home. The princess ate the flesh but saved the bones.
When seven months had passed, the princess longed for a tɛrubok fish, male, with young. A whole day the prince spent fishing but in vain: so, at night he donned magic raiment:

Botched the skirt a hundred patches;
Botched the coat a thousand patches;
Patches not to mend the fabric
Patches full of magic meaning:
Kerchief twisted like the twine
Used by folk to tether fowl.

And he burnt magic incense, and fumigated the raiment, and made invocation to Allah, beseeching that he might catch a tɛrubok fish made with young. Then he went to sleep, and at mid-night came a saint of God,

Bearded far as to the waist,
Robe down-reaching to his feet:

And said: “Oh, prince Hawk of the Sea, wouldst thou get a tɛrubok fish male, with young, take a silken net with golden cord and fish in the sea of the Teak Foreland.” On the morrow, the prince did so:

Sun shone and rain-storm patterned:
Forks of lightning flashed and flickered:
Thunder shot its leven-bolts.

The fish was caught, taken back to the princess; the flesh eaten and the bones preserved.

Now, one day prince Hawk of the Sea said to his consort: “Seven months have passed. It is meet we feast and bathe together in state as custom enjoins and call the mid-wives.” All kinds of amusement were provided:

Fencers came expert in fencing;
Fiddlers came and played their viols.
The Trusty Page

Took a tray and betel-caskets,
Made by craftsmen of Macassar;
Wrapped in gay and fringed linen.
Betel-leaf on golden stalk;
Areca nut that's cleft in four;
Finest lime and scented water;
Tobacco clinging to its stem:—
These the contents of the caskets.

And he went to the house of the eldest mid-wife and stood under a coconut tree.

Decoy cock crowed and strained his tether;
Crowed the fighting cock in chorus;
The ring-dove cooed three notes of welcome:
Signal these a stranger came.

The old mid-wife invited him up into her house, listened to the royal behest and declined to go:

None there is to watch my homestead;
None to pen my goats and kine;
None to house my geese and chicken.

(The real reason was that she knew calamity must attend the magic birth and was afraid). But the Trusty Page returned and told the prince how the midwives would not come. The prince decreed the usual punishment for the disloyal: "To-morrow my captains shall slay the seven midwives, scatter their possessions, burn their homes, and destroy the soil whereon their houses stood, and their house-pillars shall be turned upside down." Just then the midwives came running up:

Some had come and left their children;
Others run till they were foot-sore;
Others came with hair dishevelled,
Clothes down-slipping at the waist.
From afar they did obeisance;  
Drawing nearer bowed in homage;  
At each step they raised their fingers  
Ranged like betel-leaves in order  
Closed their hands like folded palm-roots:  
Bent their necks and soft their speeches,  
Crown of head declined in homage.  
“Sell us prince and make us captive;  
“Hang us high upon the gallows;  
“Drown us in the depths of ocean;  
“Burn us utterly in fire.”

They received the royal pardon, and requested that feasts, water for the ceremonial purification, palm-leaf lids and trailers for the water pots and a litter be prepared. The prince and princess donned magic costume. The prince donned

Silken trousers tight at ankle;  
Round the feet a hundred spangles:  
Round the waist a thousand spangles,  
Coat of blue and varied pattern;—  
Hung to dry its fabric moistens,  
Dryer grows if soaked in water.—  
Round his brows he wore a kerchief  
Folded bright with varied colours:  
Charms inwoven at each corner,  
In each pattern charms for beauty.

All the officials of state assembled, holding royal umbrellas and yellow pennons:

Right and left were lances clanking;  
Right and left the fencers fenced.

Prince and princess were carried in a litter, in procession down to the bathing stage; bathed; and then home to the palace. When princess Hawk of the Man-
grov e had been pregnant twelve months (the time a hornbill goes with young and the papaya and sago tree
take to bear fruit,) she felt the pangs of child-birth.

Twixt the Sunday and the Monday,
On the twelfth day of the moon,
Shadows falling twelve feet long:

She bore a son of supernatural stature and intelli-
gence.

Seven floors were split and shattered
Bands of seven roof-trees broken;
Sun shone and rain storm pattered;
Fork of lightning flashed and flickered;
'Gan to blare the royal trumpets,
'Gan to thud the royal drums.

The infant was named Awang Sulong Merah Muda,
the First-born the Red Prince.

Now one day prince Hawk of the Sea gathered his
subjects to clear a hill rice-field.

In a day they did the clearing:
In a day they did the felling!
Far as eye could reach, the clearing:
Bullet could not travel further,
Horse accomplish longer course.

Three months brought the dry season and medicine-
men were summoned to burnt the logs of the clearing.
The fire of that burning lasted seven days and seven
nights:

Burnt the leaves and lesser branches;
Then consumed the larger branches;
Burnt the trunks, the stumps, and tree roots;
Reached the ground, died down: the clearing
Wide and clean as stretch of carpet.
Then prince Hawk of the Sea summoned the royal midwife to make holes and plant the rice-seeds. The midwife came and did her task with some head-shaking over the unpropitious omens;

Hawks in heaven quick-retiring;
Up above the branches falling;
On the ground the apes a-chattering.

A rich crop was gathered and the royal party sailed off to the sea of the Teak Headland to feast and fish. On their return, princess Hawk of the Mangrove fell sick and vomited a mangrove leaf. After three days' sickness she died. Seven days later, princess Hawk of the Sea died also. Awang Sulong Merah Muda was adopted by Chief of the World and his consort princess Mother the Dog, and brought up along with their daughter princess Nuramah. He was taught the Kor'an and all secular learning, showing miraculous aptitude after seven days of backwardness in each case. His adoptive father, Chief of the World, next taught him fencing and the secrets of invulnerability. After that he was circumcised amid the usual festivities.

Cocks in battle night and day
Till the pits were strewn with feathers;
Flowed in streams the boiling water,
Heaped in mounds the offal rice:
Egg-plants sprouted on the rafters,
Turmeric grew upon the shelves,
Lemon-grass within the kitchen,
For so long the feasting lasted.

The modin is summoned. Awang Sulong Merah Muda dons

Robe of linen fine in texture,
Robe down-reaching to the feet:
Turban green from looms of Mecca;