

中学生浅易英汉对照读物

Mystery in Malacca

马六甲的秘密

Jeannie Mok 著

田小丽 译

林易 校

张杰 插图

外语教学与研究出版社

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Published by Seriesedition Carol Christim, 1981

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外语教学与研究出版社 出版

(北京市西三环北路 19 号)

华利印刷公司排版、印刷

新华书店总店北京发行所发行

开本 736×965 1/32 4 印张 71 千字

1988 年 2 月第 1 版, 1988 年 2 月北京第一次印刷

印数 1—20,000 册

ISBN 7—5600—0156—4/H · 32

定价: 1.00 元

内 容 简 介

马来西亚港市马六甲的三个少年，在葡萄牙人于十六世纪建造的旧要塞附近的工地上，发现几个拆房子的工人企图盗窃地道里的古代文物。他们在夜间去侦查时，被盗窃文物者抓住，押送到一个岛上去，后设法逃脱，报告了警察局，保住了一批文物。

本书情节生动有趣，语言通俗易懂，书后附有参考译文，可供中学生和自学英语者阅读。

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1. *Saturday morning*

'Go out and play. I've just cleaned up the house and you are making it dirty again,' scolded Puan Aishah, brushing the peanut shells off the armchair. 'And these comic books! Who gave them to you? You know you're not supposed to read comic books. They spoil your English. Give them to me,' she said, looking at them angrily.

The two children gave the comic books to their mother guiltily, and quickly ran out into the garden.

'Go out and play! I'm almost thirteen and she tells me to go out and play!' said Adnan, very annoyed, as he kicked the stones which were arranged in a circle around the flower bed in their front garden.

'Stop complaining, Adnan. Don't be in such a bad mood. Come and play with me. Look! I've got five pretty stones,' said Selina in her high, sweet voice. She produced five small, round stones from her pocket and sat down on the pavement, pushing her long dark hair away from her eyes.

'Play stones?' said Adnan, looking shocked. 'That's for children!' And Adnan walked away disgustedly, leaving his puzzled sister sitting on the pavement alone.

'Hey, what's wrong, Adnan?' asked a serious-looking boy, staring through a hole in the fence. It was Suresh, who looked rather like a teacher in his thick glasses, and who always seemed to remember everything.

Adnan thought of pretending he didn't hear him.

Suresh was only eleven. But he was bright for his age, and Adnan really had nothing to do. In fact, Suresh was a good friend to have when the homework was difficult. So he called, 'Hi, Suresh? How are things? I'm bored stiff!'

'But where's Andrew?' asked Suresh.

'Oh, that's the trouble,' replied Adnan. 'Andrew thinks he's Bruce Lee. He's taking up karate and he has a class every Saturday morning.'

'So why don't you join him?' asked Suresh with a smile.

'Karate? You must be joking! My mother won't even let me learn judo from my uncle Bakar. He's the best at judo in his village. ~~She~~ says there is too much violence these days and I already know enough about fighting,' said Adnan proudly.

'Adnan! I've got an idea,' said Suresh. 'Why don't we go to Fort Road? They're knocking down some old buildings and it'll be fun to watch. We may even find some artefacts. It's very historical, you know. The Portuguese, the Dutch and then the British were there and'

'Wait a second,' interrupted Adnan. 'Artefacts? Er, I know what they are, of course, but what have they got to do with old buildings?'

'When you dig in an old place,' began Suresh enthusiastically, 'you'll probably find lots of old-fashioned tools, weapons, jewellery and broken bits of this and that. Well, they're artefacts and they are then kept in museums. In fact, in Egypt when they found...'

'Hey, I wasn't asking for a history lesson. Of course I know what artefacts are. I was just testing you,' laughed Adnan. It was not quite true, but he could not allow a younger boy to tell him things. 'Anyhow, that's a good idea you have. I'll ask my mother right away.'

'Mak, may I go with Suresh to Fort Road to see the fort?' shouted Adnan as loudly as he could shout.

'How many times have I told you not to shout at me from the garden?' called Puan Aishah, whose head appeared at the window almost immediately. 'Well, anything to keep you quiet! If you're going with Suresh, you'll be all right, I suppose. Make sure you ride carefully. Here, take some money with you.'

Adnan was annoyed at his mother for suggesting that he was not able to look after himself. But he didn't hesitate to take the fifty cents she gave him. 'Thanks, Mak,' he said. 'We' ll be careful; and I'll see that Suresh doesn't get into trouble.'



All the while Selina had been listening. 'Mak, I want to go, too. Mak, may I go?' she asked quickly.

'No, dear, you're too young to go with them. And I don't want you to ride your bicycle through town. It isn't safe. Why don't you come in and help me make some cakes for tea?'

'Oh, who wants to cook? I want to go. I'm always left out,' said Selina, bursting into tears.

But before Puan Aishah's heart could melt at her daughter's tears, Adnan had disappeared. He jumped on his bicycle, which was in the garage, and hurriedly rode away to the front gate where Suresh was waiting for him.

2. *At the work site*

The two boys rode happily out of Taman Aman, which is a small group of houses in Ujong Pasir, south of Malacca. They passed the Rukun Tetangga house and reached the main road, which was filled with cars, trishaws and bullockcarts. They continued on into Bandar Hilir, past the old grey prison near Garden City and the school buildings along the way. Soon, to the left, they saw the Rest House with its attractive view of the sea. Then they arrived at the fort and parked their bicycles at the Malacca Club car park.

After making sure their bicycles were locked, they made their approach to the Portuguese fort. It had stood there since the time of Alfonso d'Albuquerque, who had taken Malacca from the local ruler in 1511. Now only the main gate was left.

Adnan and Suresh walked around the famous ruin, mixing with the foreign tourists, who had come armed with cameras and large sun hats. The boys walked into the fort, touching the rough brown stones and reading the old writing on the walls. Suresh looked closely at the writing nearest him, and read the information out loud. 'The only remaining part of the original fortress of Malacca which was built by Alfonso d'Albuquerque and which he named Famosa in 1511.' He paused, 'Adnan, I read somewhere about a tunnel between this fort and the other fort on St John's Hill. It used to be a way to escape when the fort was attacked.'

'Really?' Adnan said as he thought about this piece of information. Actually, it was good to move around with Suresh. He always knew all the correct facts and figures! 'Wouldn't it be fun if they allowed us to explore the tunnel? Who knows? We might even find some treasure!'

'Oh no, Adnan,' Suresh replied, looking very serious. 'That would be very dangerous. By now the roof of the tunnel has surely fallen in and the way is certainly blocked.'

The two boys ran around the grounds, jumping on to the cannons which were all round the fort. Not far away they could hear the sound of a tractor.

'Hey, let's not forget we came to see the workmen knocking down the old buildings. Let's go, Suresh.' Adnan rushed off, followed by Suresh who was trying hard to keep up with him.

The work site was only a hundred yards to the left of the fort. The town government had decided to keep Fort Road and its surroundings as a tourist attraction, so they were getting rid of the ugly old wooden houses facing the Malacca Club sports field. These buildings had been put up during the days when the British ruled Malacca, but now they were really ugly with faded paint and dirty walls.

Adnan and Suresh stood and eagerly watched the huge yellow machine as it knocked down the wooden houses. They were careful to stand at the edge of the work site because they didn't want to be hit by any falling wood or bricks.

Dust was everywhere and, in the middle of all the noise, Suresh turned to Adnan, 'Oh, how exciting it would be if they found some more skeletons!'

'Sk-skeletons! What skeletons?'

'Didn't you read the article in the newspaper? Last week, while the workmen were digging up the road in front of the Town Hall, they found two old skeletons. The men were frightened, of course, but they told the engineer in charge, who telephoned the local museum. The National Museum in Kuala Lumpur sent down a man who thought the find was of great historical importance. Why, I'm quite sure that if you dug up any of the streets in town, you'd find something.' Suresh was quite breathless after such a long speech.

'You mean there's a good chance that the workmen here

will discover something important? Why don't we go and ask them? Perhaps they're made a discovery already. Come on Suresh, let's go and ask them.'

Feeling very excited, the two boys ran to the man who was in charge of the work. 'Excuse me, sir, could you please ...?'

'What are you doing here, eh? What do you want?' interrupted the Sikh angrily, his bearded jaw pushed out in a very threatening way. 'It's forbidden for anyone to walk in these grounds. Get out! Shoo! If I catch you again, I'll report you to the police!'

'But, sir, we only wanted to know if you've found anything here while digging—you know, like the workmen last week. Have you found any old bones or swords or coins...?'

Before Adnan could go on, the tall Sikh took a firm hold of the front of his shirt and shouted angrily. 'What did you say? Swords? Coins? What do you know, eh?' He shook the frightened boy, and then suddenly let go of his shirt so he fell backwards.

'Nnn—nothing,' answered the frightened boy.

'Nothing? then go—get out!'

Adnan and Suresh didn't need any more persuasion. They climbed hurriedly over the rubbish and ran towards the fort. Out of breath and still frightened, they stopped to rest under a big tree. 'Well!' Adnan said. 'What was the matter with that man? Why was he so angry?'

'Oh, Adnan. What a nasty man! I was afraid when he was holding your shirt. Weren't you?'

'Huh, afraid of that man?' replied Adnan. 'Why, if I had had a stone, I would have knocked his turban off. And I would have pulled his beard and....'

'But, Adnan, why did he become so angry when you asked him if they had found anything?'

Adnan thought for a while. 'I don't know, Suresh. Let's

ask Andrew. He might have some ideas. I'll ring him up as soon as we get home.'

'Maybe they're hiding something and are afraid that we will discover their secret.'

Adnan laughed bitterly. 'Afraid of us! You must be crazy! Why should they hide anything? They're only workmen, you know.'

Adnan led the way to the sugar-cane stall nearby. 'Let's have a drink, Suresh. I'm thirsty. I'll buy you one this time.'

Suresh accepted Adnan's offer gratefully. He was just recovering from the fright and suddenly discovered that his throat was very dry. He drank eagerly, enjoying the cold sweet sugar-cane juice and observing the flies around the plastic container. 'Not very clean,' he thought. 'Mak would surely scold me if she could see us now.'

'Thanks, Adnan. That was good.'

Feeling refreshed and in good spirits again, the two boys began the long ride home.

3. Andrew has a plan

As soon as he reached home, Adnan rushed in to telephone Andrew. He was bursting with excitement as he waited for Andrew to answer. Within seconds, Andrew's voice said, 'Hi, Adnan. What's new?'

'Andrew, you'll never guess what happened to Suresh and me this morning.'

'Come on, Adnan. You know how I hate these guessing games. I just haven't got the patience. Tell me now.'

'Well, all right, but it's no fun. Anyway, this morning, Suresh and I went down to the old fort to see the men knocking down some old houses. And the strangest thing

happened to us! It's a long story. Why don't you come over after lunch and I'll tell you everything?" Then Adnan whispered, 'I think we've discovered something funny. It's a secret, and I don't want to tell it over the phone.'

'You sound really mysterious. I'll come over as soon as I can, and it had better be good! See you then.'

As Adnan finished talking, he caught sight of Selina staring wide-eyed at him.

'Aha! I heard what you said.'

'My goodness, can't a person have a private conversation around here? Anyway, it's none of your business, so get lost!'

'You can't tell me what to do! I heard you telling Andrew that you had a secret, and you had better tell me! Otherwise I'll tell Mak.'

'Don't you dare tell! Look here, you keep quiet and I'll give you my autographed picture of Muhammad Ali.'

Selina clapped her hands with joy. 'Really? You mean it? Ooh, thanks, Adnan, I won't tell, honest!'

Selina danced away, not noticing the smile on Adnan's face. He had decided to keep the original photograph and to give Selina one exactly like it with a false autograph on it. She would not know the difference. He went into the dining-room for lunch laughing.

'Oh, stewed beef!' Adnan washed his hands hurriedly.

'My goodness!' cried his mother, as he seated himself.

'Adnan! Look at your shirt! What are those dirty marks?'

He looked down. There were brown spots near his collar, and a button was missing. The Sikh must have done it.

'Oh, these. Well, I was climbing on St Paul's Hill and I fell, but I'm perfectly all right.'

'So you fell! Probably you were showing off as usual!' Puan Aishah continued. Then she shook her head. 'Why are you so awkward? I'm sure this didn't happen to Suresh.'

'Sorry, Mak, I'll make sure it doesn't happen again. May I start my meal now? I'm hungry!'

Adnan began to eat greedily. He started with the fried eggs and went on to the golden brown stewed beef. As he was finishing the last bit of rice, he heard a loud call from outside. 'That must be Andrew. Mak, will you please let him in? My hands are dirty.'

Puan Aishah sighed, 'Sometimes I think I'm only a servant in this house. I cook and sweep and wash and iron, and now it seems I have to open the door for your friends too! I need a rest. Your father had better take me out tonight.' With that, she walked to the front door.

'Hi, Makchik, is Adnan having his lunch?'

'Hello, Andrew, come in. Adnan should have finished by now. You can join him for some ice cream.'

'Mmm, that will be nice, thank you. You always have such lovely things to eat.'

Andrew followed her into the dining-room. He was a clever-looking boy with thick hair almost covering his eyes, and he was smiling at the thought of the cold, refreshing ice cream. As soon as he saw Adnan coming out of the kitchen, Andrew shouted 'Eeyahh!' and, with a flying kick in the air, landed a few inches away from the astonished Adnan.

'Hey! That was great! Did you learn that today? Come on, show me more.'

'Oh no, you don't,' said Puan Aishah quickly. 'I don't want any more of that karate or those screams. Why don't you both go upstairs to Adnan's room?'

'Sorry, Makchik. I just had to show off my "flying side-kick"! Do you want to see how to block it?'

Before he could make another move, Puan Aishah said hurriedly, 'Oh, the first one was very nice, Andrew. Er, I don't want my furniture broken. Run along, boys.'

She urged them upstairs, hoping that Andrew would not make another attempt at side-kicks or blocks. Really, he was a little too wild at times. First, she had seen him take up stamp-collecting, then it was swimming, and now karate. But she

liked the Chinese boy and met his parents regularly. Meanwhile, the boys hurried upstairs to Adnan's room. It was a small room but he was proud of it. In one corner, he had hung the red and gold dragon that Andrew's mother had given him during the last Mooncake Festival, Adnan's favourite Chinese holiday. It had served as a lamp, then, and now he sometimes lit it up when there was no electricity.

Andrew lay on Adnan's bed.

'All right. What happened?' burst out Andrew. 'I can't wait a minute longer!'

Adnan quickly told him what had happened, boasting a little, and, of course, not mentioning how frightened he had been when the Sikh shook him. 'Well, what do you think? Don't you agree that there's something strange going on?' asked Adnan. Andrew thought for a while, then he replied, 'You know, I think Suresh is right, Adnan. The men must be hiding something and were afraid you might find out about it, since you were asking so many questions. Otherwise, why would the Sikh act like that?'

Adnan nodded. 'Yes, I suspect something is going on.'

Andrew's eyes brightened. 'There's only one thing we can do. We'll have to go back and find out.'

It was Adnan's turn to stare. 'Find out?'

'Yes, we'll go tonight, before they have time to cover their tracks.'

'Tonight?' said Adnan in surprise. 'You're crazy. I'm not allowed to go out at night.'

'Well, you'll have to find a way. It'll be no problem for me. My parents are going out tonight.'

'But what about your grandmother, Andrew? She'll be at home.'

'Oh, she's deaf. If I leave my radio playing loudly she'll think I'm in my room.'

'But what about me? Ah, I hope Mak gets father to take her out tonight. Then I'll be able to go out, too. Do you think

Suresh. . . no, forget it, he'll ruin things for us.'

Andrew disagreed. 'I don't think so. Suresh has a lot of common sense; he never loses his head. He might not be able to get out, but there's no harm in asking him. Why don't we go now?'

Adnan nodded his head. 'Well, all right. But I am sure the Rama won't let him out.'

As they came down the stairs, Puan Aishah called out to them. 'Oh, there you are, boys. I thought you were never coming down. Come and have your ice cream.'

Adnan turned to Andrew and said. 'Suresh can wait, can't he?'

'He certainly can! The ice cream comes first,' said Andrew, with a broad smile.

The two of them settled down to enjoy their treat in silence.

After finishing his second bowl, Andrew stood up.

'Thanks, Makchik. That was wonderful. Are you ready, Adnan?'

Adnan swallowed the last spoonful and told his mother, 'Mak, we're going next door.'

They found Suresh sitting on the carpet in the living-room. He was trying out some card tricks from a book.

'Hi' said Suresh when he saw them. 'Andrew, has Adnan told you what happened this morning?'

'Yes,' said Andrew. 'We are going back there to find out what's going on. Do you think you can join us tonight? If we're lucky, there won't be anyone there.'

Suresh looked surprised. 'What? Tonight? But you know it's impossible. I can't go out at night. Now, if only you were going tomorrow night! My parents will be going out for dinner and I'll be able to get out quite easily.'

'Well, too bad. We're going tonight and that's that,' said Adnan firmly.

'Never mind, Suresh,' Andrew said, seeing how

disappointed Suresh was. 'We'll come tomorrow and tell you what's happened.'

'I know what you can do tonight,' said Adnan. 'Watch my house. Selina will be alone at home. She should be perfectly all right, but all the same...'

Suresh brightened up a little. 'Yes, I can do that. I've no choice anyway. But I wish I could go,' he said with envy.

Andrew quickly changed the subject. 'What about a game of cards?'

'Cards?' said Suresh, 'I'm not allowed to gamble!'

Andrew laughed. 'Come on, we're not gambling. Let's play for the fun of it.'

'Yes, I'd like to learn a new game,' replied Adnan excitedly.

So, for the next hour or so, the boys spent their time learning a new game, until Suresh's mother appeared. Mrs Rama took one look at what was going on, scolded them and took away the cards.

4. *What happened on Saturday night*

At a quarter to nine that night, Adnan heard Andrew's bicycle bell ringing at the gate. Earlier in the evening, his parents had gone out to dinner and then to a film. They would be back at half-past eleven, which left him about two and a half hours to look around at the fort. When Selina found out he was going out, she was determined to go with him. Again, he had to persuade her to stay at home, and not to tell their parents about it. However, this time he had to give her the blue ribbon he had won as a prize at school, as well as a bar of chocolate. Now, hearing Andrew's bell, he locked the front door, leaving Selina in front of the television.