

# Hushed Conversations



*Khairul Hisyam*

# Copyright

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**KHAIRUL HISYAM BAHARUDDIN**

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# Disclaimer

This is a work of fiction. Unless otherwise indicated, all the names, characters, businesses, places, events, and incidents in this book are either the product of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or events is purely coincidental.

# About the Author

**KHAIRUL HISYAM BAHARUDDIN** has been an academic teaching English at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Universiti Putra Malaysia, and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia previously. He is currently a lecturer at the Faculty of Language Studies and Generic Development at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Most of the time, he teaches English proficiency courses and researches teaching and learning. When not busy with classes and other duties, he often catches up on current events in literary studies. He has been an avid literature reader and hopes to leave a few words in poetry to reflect and share the ideas with the next generation.

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# Preface

This flash story collection consists mostly of reflections on conversations had, personal anecdotes shared, overheard conversations at various places, and personal experiences. Stories often offer opportunities to explore diverse perspectives, foster empathy, and make them valuable personal growth and analysis tools. The collection of flash stories covers several themes of how young adults might view the world in today's contemporary society: identity, friendship, coming of age, love, resilience, diversity, and mental health.

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# Identity & Self-discovery



## *Mixed Ethnicity*

Alya grew up in a multi-ethnic country where the majority were Malay. She was of mixed ethnicity, with a Malay mother and a Chinese father. Being raised in a household where two cultures intertwined, she was constantly navigating between the two in her daily life. At home, Alya was taught to embrace both cultures, speaking both Malay and Chinese fluently. But outside, she often struggled to fit in. Her Malay friends would tease her for her Chinese features, while her Chinese friends would mock her for her Malay traditions. Alya yearned for acceptance but felt like she didn't belong anywhere. She longed for a place where her mixed heritage was not a barrier. But as she grew older, Alya learned to embrace her uniqueness and celebrate her Malay and Chinese roots. She found solace in the fact that she was a bridge between two cultures, bringing them closer together. Despite the struggles, Alya was proud to be a mixed ethnicity in a diverse country where differences were celebrated and not shunned. And in her way, she was contributing to the unity of her nation.

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