





# A Message in the Envelope

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The Asia Foundation



Marlina arranged her stack of envelopes. Mrs. Rini's messages were inside. Marlina, thanks for your help. Good luck on your exam, Marlina! Set your goals as high as the stars, Marlina! Those messages made Marlina happy. She wanted to make

similar envelopes. She would give them to everyone.



Today was the fifth of the month. Mom came home after helping Mrs. Rini clean her house. She brought some envelopes. Mom said, “Time to do your duty, Marlina.” “Sure, Mom!” Marlina replied happily. First she looked for her envelope. She handed

the money inside to Mom. She then read the message in the envelope: Just like lime and pomegranate. Your smile is sweet, Marlina!



Distributing the envelopes with encouraging messages every month made Marlina happy. She saw every kid laugh. Some jumped up and down with joy. They were orphans, just like Marlina had been. “Envelope of the month? Hooray!” “Thank you,

Marlina!” When would Marlina be able to share her own envelopes?



On the way home, a minivan passed her. “Oh, Sarah is home,” Marlina murmured. Sarah had been hospitalized since Tuesday. Marlina wanted to visit Sarah, but she was unsure about what to bring. “Ah, I’ll make an envelope! Who knows? It

might cheer her up.” Marlina smiled, thinking of a plan.



Marlina took the cover off her notebook. She folded here and folded there. She pressed here and pressed there. Marlina's first envelope was ready! "What should I put inside?"



Marlina opened her tin money box.  
She put some coins in the envelope.  
“Oh! They’re too heavy.”



Sarah loved reading poetry. Marlina tried to write something wholeheartedly. Unfortunately...“My words are not beautiful like in a poetry book.” She crumpled the paper in disappointment.



“Drawings! Sarah likes them too!”  
Marlina exclaimed. Unfortunately...“I  
want to draw Sarah’s pretty face. Why  
does it look like a speckled rooster?”  
Besides poetry and drawings, what  
would cheer her best friend up?



“Aha! Sarah loves flowers!” Marlina put some ashoka flowers in her envelope. “Ouch! Ants!” she shouted. Marlina changed her mind. She would not let Sarah get bitten by ants too!



While Marlina was thinking of another plan, Mom approached. “I’m going out for a while. There is a Quranic study at our neighbor’s house.” Invitation? Marlina had an idea for her envelope!



Sarah's envelope was ready.  
Unexpectedly, Mom said, "Please  
deliver Mrs. Endang's clothes."  
"Marlina nodded, a bit reluctant. To  
get there faster, Marline borrowed  
Mom's bike. Unfortunately, its tire  
was leaking.



There was no other choice. Marlina would walk. The bag of clothes slipped from her arms so many times. She hoped that the envelope for Sarah was safe in her skirt pocket. When Marlina arrived at Mrs. Endang's house, it started raining!



While taking shelter, Marlina kept thinking about the envelope. She looked at the sky, unable to do anything. “Oh no. When will the rain stop?” Marlina stomped her foot.



After falling for a long time, the rain stopped. Marlina felt excited again to deliver the envelope. Impatient, Marlina began running on the bumpy road.



“Ouch!” she cried. She slipped in a puddle.



“My envelope! Don’t get wet,  
please.”





Marlina continued walking. Her leg was in pain from the fall, but she didn't think about it. The only thing she thought about was the envelope.



Marlina was anxious when Sarah answered the door. “This is for you, Sarah,” she said.



“What is it, Marlina?” asked Sarah. “I made you an envelope. I hope you like it,” said Marlina. She wondered, Would Sarah like it?



“Yes, Marlina! I like it! I accept!”





Invitation Get well soon, Sarah.  
Tomorrow we will play together....  
We'll make mango pudding   
and  
read storybooks. I am waiting for your  
answer. Marlina



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