

Listen To Us:
**A Screenplay Depicting Community Resistance Against
Developmentalism**

Gilbert Jeremy Karley¹, Liem Satya Limanta²

Master's Program in Literature, Faculty of Humanities and Creative Industry, Petra Christian University,
Sihalankerto 121-131, Surabaya 60236, INDONESIA

E-mail: h21240016@john.petra.ac.id¹, satya@petra.ac.id²

ABSTRACT

This creative work, in the form of a short screenplay, examines how a government's developmental plan can spark collective resistance. Despite the Indonesian government's efforts to improve social welfare through a series of infrastructure development projects known as the National Strategic Project (PSN), these initiatives can still face opposition from the local rural communities, even if they are as important as healthcare facilities. This resistance stems from factors such as a lack of public participation, environmental degradation, human rights violations, or other intangible losses. This creative work addresses two main problems within the story. Firstly, how the protagonist, Uus, becomes a catalyst for a collective action against a hospital development plan; and secondly, how he navigates the stages of grief after his wife's death. The work employs theoretical frameworks of Everyday Resistance and the Stages of Grief to analyze these problems. In conclusion, the creative work highlights the emergence of resistance against a benevolent healthcare facility in a rural village, illustrating that grief can be leveraged to mobilize community resistance in the face of development.

Keywords: community, developmentalism, everyday resistance, grief, hospital

INTRODUCTION

As the fourth most populous country in the world, with approximately 8.47% of its population living below the poverty line in 2025, Indonesia is committed to improving the quality of life for its population (BPS Statistics Indonesia, 2025). This is done by constructing essential infrastructure and public facilities through the National Strategic Project (PSN). PSN encompasses a range of projects and programs proposed by the Indonesian government or corporations, with the objective of not only increasing employment and boosting the country's economic growth but also improving the welfare of society (Widodo & Yujana, n.d.). Indonesia is a large country, and much of the population living outside the major cities still struggles to access basic human necessities such as education, food security, and healthcare in the areas where they reside. Therefore, the government planned many infrastructural projects in these sectors to improve accessibility for all parts of the country, including the areas that are hard to reach.

Despite the benefits to national development and social welfare, PSN is not always considered beneficial, and communities may resist it, violently or non-violently. Some people may believe it to be damaging to the environment, violate human rights, or increase social segregation, especially if the locals have not been included in the consultation or taken into consideration from the beginning. For instance, the "food estate" PSN in Merauke was rejected by the indigenous people as the government planned to take over two million hectares of the land to build food estates that would increase food production and fields of energy crops such as sugarcane and bioethanol (Forest People Programme, 2024). Another example is the development of the Jatigede Water Reservoir, which is in East Sumedang, West Java. The government tried to compensate the affected villagers through donations and benefits; however,

they underestimated the effect of the project on the villagers and overlooked the non-tangible losses that would be suffered by the community (Hermawati & Suwartapradja, 2016). The farmers resisted by refusing to accept land compensation and relocation, and many public demonstrations were conducted by activists, farmers, and students. It can be concluded that people may reject governmental projects or infrastructural developments because of the lack of public participation during the development plans, the potential environmental degradation, human rights violations, and other intangible losses.

Resistance can come in violent, loud forms of protest, but it can also come in discreet, non-confrontative ways. In Indonesia, the latter has been practiced by the rural communities who have faced discrimination from the elites over a long period of time. During Dutch colonial rule in Indonesia, a farmer named Samin Surosentiko from Sukolilo, Pati, Central Java, formed the Samin community; he taught his community to reject the state's institutional structure and take part in a social movement peacefully and quietly (Darmastuti et al., 2016). The Dutch were looting the land and damaging the environment in that area; the Samin community responded by refusing to acknowledge Dutch rule, refusing to pay taxes, and pretending to be crazy, causing the Dutch rulers to feel threatened by the community. Another instance of everyday resistance occurred when farmers in Batang Sinamar, West Sumatra, were threatened by an irrigation project that was part of the government's policy to increase food production in 2015. This project blocked water from flowing into the farmers' traditional irrigation channels, causing water shortages. Initially, farmers filed their complaints about this issue with the village chief; however, no resolution was found after years had passed, and the acting village head involved the police in handling their complaints. Since their voices were not heard, the farmers began to mumble about their frustration in a *lapau*, which is a type of coffee shop where farmers socialize with each other. Eventually, a journalist, who has a good relationship with human rights activists and organizations in Padang, overheard the gossip and helped bring the farmers' concerns to public attention through media and news coverage. This prompted a response from the government since its reputation was threatened.

When it comes to healthcare, Indonesia has made healthcare a priority in its national agenda. Every citizen has the right to access healthcare, as maintaining good health is important for citizens to be productive and contribute positively to society and the economy. Hospitals and *puskesmas* (community health centers) continue to be built by the government throughout the country, with West Java having the highest number of *puskesmas* in 2024 (Hakiki, 2025). Unfortunately, data also show that there is a disparity in accessibility to healthcare with people living in rural areas compared to urban areas. Rural communities face geographical barriers because of long travel times and limited transportation. There are also socio-economic factors that will limit villagers' opportunities in accessing healthcare, such as having inadequate insurance and financial constraints in covering the cost of treatment (Peters et al., 2024). Therefore, the poverty rate of certain regions of Indonesia relates to the lack of accessibility to healthcare.

Even the construction of healthcare facilities is not immune to being rejected by village communities. These are some examples from Indonesian villages:

1. The village of Kampung Nagrak in Kota Tangerang, where 95 people rejected the development of Hermina Hospital in 2020 because of its proximity to the village and the environmental damage the construction would cause, mainly in terms of clean water access for the village (Helmi, 2020).
2. In East Gapura village in Sumenep, the locals rejected the development plan of *RSUD Dr. Moh. Anwar* (RSUDMA), as eight hectares of the land is part of the land belonging to the farmers for food production and farming purposes (Mediajatim, 2025).

3. In Situbondo, the villagers of *Desa Curahjeru* put up banners that explicitly stated their rejection of *Rumah Sakit Mitra Sehat* because it would affect the environment and the villagers' comfort (Kusbiantoro, 2020). However, the hospital's advisor, Reno Widigdo, claimed it to be unreasonable for the locals to reject a facility as helpful as a hospital.

There are also other challenges to the effective provision of healthcare in rural areas. One example comes from the village of Curug in Pandeglang Regency, Banten. At 47.87%, the village of Curug has the lowest percentage of access to health insurance. The village also suffers from poor road conditions and is located far away from a decent healthcare facility, resulting in many people dying on their way to care (Lelyana, 2024). Some of the locals also hold beliefs that make them prefer traditional medicine and healers (*dukun*) over a formal healthcare institution, even if it is accessible.

Therefore, this creative work aims to highlight the negative impacts of hospital development within a poor rural community. While previous paragraphs mentioned other problematic government projects, such as food estate programs or dams, healthcare facilities are a special case as they are inherently beneficial, especially in rural areas where they lack decent healthcare. Therefore, this would create an ethically complex conflict and moral dilemma between the characters and the audience, instead of shifting the blame only to the government. It humanizes all the characters in the story, both protagonist and antagonist. By acknowledging the possibility of a non-confrontative form of resistance against governmental infrastructural projects and the disparity of access to health in rural areas, the author of this thesis proposed a short screenplay titled, *Listen to Us*.

The main character of *Listen to Us* is a 38-year-old widower named Uus, who lives in a poor but densely populated village far from the city. He lost his wife due to an undiagnosed heart disease and was unable to get her to the hospital on time. He becomes the cleaner in the cemetery where his wife is buried so he can visit her every day and talk with her. Uus suffers grief, and he has trouble connecting with other people in his community since his wife passed; therefore, he avoids making meaningful connections or opening to others. Uus' daily ritual in the cemetery was suddenly disrupted when the village chief, Pak Wibawa, and a hospital representative, Pak Yudhi, proposed that a new hospital be built at the cemetery.

Overcome by grief, he immediately ran straight to his wife's grave, refusing to move and holding onto her tombstone as if his life depended on it. Throughout his stay in the cemetery, he removed surveyor flags around the cemetery and refused to move when the land surveyors asked him to. Other villagers who saw his action were moved and started gossip that spread to the whole village quickly. Deep down, Uus must debate whether building a proper hospital in the village would be more beneficial for his neighbors than keeping the cemetery, although this comes at the cost of losing his wife for the second time. Uus' dilemma is thought-provoking for the audience as they might ask, "Is the hospital more important than a cemetery in a village where the healthcare facility is poor, and the people are unable to travel far to the city?" Uus eventually learns the importance of community and realizes his effort has convinced the developers to propose to the government to alleviate the financial burden of cemetery relocation and replace the land with a hospital. He has not overcome his grief completely and his wife, but he is slowly overcoming it with the help of his community, who cares about him.

The author deliberately chose a 30-minute short screenplay format that would be effective rather than a full-length screenplay or other storytelling medium, such as a novel or short story. A screenplay is the blueprint of a film, and it can show the audience the actor's complex emotions through action, dialogues or subtext. This form of visual storytelling captures the characters' emotions and community resistance better than novels, which rely on internal

monologue and narrative prose. A 30-minute short-screenplay with drama as the genre typically focuses on the journey of Uus in confronting his flaws instead of focusing on the other characters for too long. It can also leave the ending open and invite the audience to discuss developmental issues with others.

Listen to Us draws inspiration from an Indonesian film called *Ben & Jody*, where Jody went missing and his best friend, Ben, must look for him, until he figures out that Jody is involved in a resistance alongside a small rural community whose land is being taken by corporations and threatened by an armed group of people who support the corporations' actions. This movie, while fictional, reflected the reality of the Indonesian government and corporations being involved in conflict with the locals, which can cause people to lose their homes, source of income, and destroy the environment. What distinguishes this film from this creative work is the type of resistance. Listen to Us employs a more discreet, silent type of resistance from the protagonist and his community without resorting to violence but still has enough power to affect those with power. The other distinction is the motives of the government, mainly the village chief, in Listen to Us. Despite being an antagonist, he is not the villain, as his goal is beneficial for the community at its core, but simply clashes against the interests of Uus.

All in all, *Listen to Us* is different from other stories that portray the elites or people with power as violent oppressors and the locals as subject to their control. In this case, the author wants to twist the story so that the Government and the hospital developer have genuinely benevolent plans to improve the living conditions of the village by building a hospital instead of villainizing them. Unfortunately, their plans must involve removing the cemetery, since it is the only 'spare' land that the village has, and they overlooked the negative consequences that it will bring to one of the villagers' lives.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For this creative work, the author draws on a few theories and concepts to address the problems. To answer the first Statement of the Problem, the author uses the concept of Everyday Resistance, which is employed to show the protagonist creating a quieter alternative to public demonstrations before the actual protest inspired by them. The second concept to answer the second Statement of the Problem is Kübler-Ross's stages of grief model, expanded by David Kessler, which is used to explain Uus's journey to find meaning in life after his wife's death. Both concepts reveal how grief can become a catalyst for resistance in the context of developmentalism.

Everyday Resistance

Everyday Resistance is a concept developed by James C. Scott in 1985. His key ideas revolve around Foucault's concept of "power," but are focused on how there will always be resistance to power or oppression by the subaltern group. A subaltern group is a group of people who are classified as the lowest social rank or status and who are often discriminated against or exploited by the elites. According to Scott, people such as slaves, serfs, or peasants are categorized as subordinated groups and therefore face repression. Furthermore, Vinthagen and Johansson (2013) elaborated on the idea of everyday resistance as an extension of Foucault's argument of power. They emphasized the Marxist idea of class struggle and subalterns being exploited in Scott's definition of everyday resistance (Vinthagen, 2017). The most obvious attitudes displayed by the subalterns are those who submit and those who resist.

Two types of resistance can arise from subordinated groups: public and everyday resistance (Vinthagen & Johansson, 2013). Public resistance is more organized and calls for public demonstrations that may involve violence and threaten the positions of those in power. On the other hand, everyday resistance is a form of resistance that is not formally or politically organized, but it is just as common and effective because it can be carried out by ordinary people in their everyday lives. This is effective because it is not as obvious to those in power as public resistance. Everyday resistance is relatively more peaceful, as it does not intentionally threaten the elites or their superiors. It is also a good strategy if public resistance is impossible or too risky. Instead, the resisters want to make their movement as undetectable as possible when the risk presented by rebellion or protests is too high.

There are many non-confrontative ways a community can practice everyday resistance against the elites, such as sabotaging, foot-dragging, false compliance, feigned ignorance, pilfering, and slander. Out of all these tactics, the characters employ foot-dragging, pilfering, and slander in this creative work. Foot-dragging is the act of intentionally slowing down the process of something, pilfering is the act of stealing little things that have no value, and slander is the act of spreading false information or statements about someone or an entity. These activities help the exploited gain material advantage and undermine repression by the elites (Vinthagen, 2017). All these methods tend to go unnoticed because they are discreet, yet they require careful cooperation among the subordinated groups.

In the creative work, the author first starts with everyday resistance before transitioning into a collective resistance. After the hospital development proposal at the village meeting, Uus uses pilfering and foot-dragging techniques to remove the surveyor flags whenever they are installed around the cemetery, and he refuses to leave even if he is asked to step aside for the hospital construction to start. As the villagers start to see his act of resistance and sympathize with him, they also start to use slandering techniques to undermine the village chief and the hospital's legitimacy. After Uus was arrested by the chief, the villagers immediately protested collectively for his release and to express their discontent towards the hospital. Despite everyday resistance being the form of protest for Uus, it is strongly connected to the grief stages, as his grief fuels his desire to resist. Without grief, Uus would have no desire to take any action, and he would become an ordinary person.

Theory of Grief Stages

The concept of the "Five Stages of Grief" was introduced by Swiss-American psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, who wrote *On Death and Dying*, which explains the stages of emotions that the dying or bereaving individual goes through when faced with the loss of a loved one due to illness, accident, or old age (Kübler-Ross, 1969). Humans have complex emotions and different coping mechanisms; therefore, each person experiences emotions differently when they are grieving, and people should not try to follow the stages of grief linearly. These are the stages of grief as initially proposed by Kübler-Ross: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance. Firstly, denial is when an individual receives the unexpected, shocking news that their loved one is dying or already gone, they would start denying the fact at first. Secondly, in the anger stage, the individual experiences anger and blames everyone around them, including themselves and God or other higher beings, for not doing enough to prevent their loved ones from dying. Thirdly, as the individual's anger subsides, they begin the process of "negotiating" or "bargaining" with other people or the God that they believe in in exchange for the restoration of the dying or deceased patient to a full life. The following stage is "depression," where most people naturally experience intense sadness, and serves as a bridge to prepare the person for the final stage, which is the acceptance stage.

This five-stage grief model was then developed further by Kübler-Ross's protégé, David Kessler, in his recent book titled *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*, which stated that there is another stage that comes after acceptance, which is meaning. He argued that healing is necessary after accepting someone's death, and that healing occurs by finding meaning amidst the loss of loved ones, transforming the loss into something that will be fulfilling and enrich the lives of the bereaved (Kessler, 2020). It is shown that people who do not find meaning will remain stuck in one of the five stages of grief longer than those who do, even though Kessler did not underestimate the difficulty of finding meaning when faced with a range of emotions that can manifest in many ways, such as alcohol or drug abuse, weight gain or loss, anger issues, and reluctance to form connections in fear of suffering loss again.

Finding meaning is a relative concept for people who have different personalities or grieving experiences. For some, it may be relatively easy to find meaning after a loss, but some may also see no meaning and are too consumed by grief to look for meaning. However, Kessler claims that it is possible to find meaning in multiple ways, such as performing rituals to honor the deceased family member or friend or reconciling with people with whom they have a strained relationship (Kessler, 2020). Finding meaning is a challenging process, but it gives other people, such as family and friends, chances to support and help them overcome their grief. Therefore, this last stage of grief serves as a precursor for true acceptance, not because the bereaved are okay with the death of their loved ones, but it can lead them to take meaningful action for themselves and others who are still alive in honor of the deceased.

In this creative work, Uus is already in the 'depression' stage of grief as the story takes place a few years after his wife passed away. He is depressed and driven by his grief to always stay close to his wife's grave whenever he works in the cemetery to clean gravesites. However, as Uus is made aware of the hospital development plan that threatens to replace the cemetery where he works, he experiences the beginning of the 'denial' stage of grief again. Throughout the story, he moves to different stages of grief and uses it as a weapon to resist against the surveyors and the village chief to stop or slow down the development. If the everyday resistance concept provides the form of Uus's resistance, the stages of grief provide the emotional core and catalyst that drives him to resist. However, at the end of the story, when Uus thought he had lost everything after he was detained, his hope was restored when he saw the impact of his resistance on the villagers. This is the beginning of his recovery towards acceptance and finding meaning in life with his villagers. As mentioned previously, individuals can experience different stages of grief in a non-linear order, as it makes them human.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this creative work primarily involves secondary research, which includes collecting and analyzing existing data, such as news or data from social media platforms. Books and scholarly journals are also used to connect the story with the theoretical framework. The aim is to analyze the negative impacts of developmentalism and how rural communities resist it, ensuring that the story reflects the reality of what is happening in Indonesia.

The next step that is taken after extensive research about the government's developmentalism in Indonesia is to select the genre and theme that are suitable for this short screenplay, as it deals with realistic Indonesian social issues. Next, the author creates the protagonist of the story that the audience will root for and can relate to alongside other characters, to fill the world of the story. Then the author chooses the format of the creative work output; in this case, the format is a screenplay. Then, the author establishes all the elements that are essential for screenwriting, such as the structure of the story, the type of conflict, the plot,

and the characters, all of which will show the readers how the conflict between the protagonist and his powerful opponent plays out and how it gets resolved within the 30 minutes of the screenplay. During this process, intertextual influences from both films and literature with a similar topic are used as inspiration. Finally, the author writes the story in the form of a screenplay using external screenwriting software, namely Fade In, a professional screenwriting program that allows authors to write screenplay treatments or a draft in a film industry standard format instead of using Word or Google Docs.

CONCEPT OF THE CREATIVE WORK

The most suitable genre for *Listen to Us* is drama, which is a genre that is more serious in tone than comedy, although it can be combined with other genres such as adventure, action, mystery, or romance. Drama gives the audience real-life examples of human interactions and conflict in the storytelling to make the story and characters as realistic as possible. Drama can be divided into two types: plot-driven drama and character-driven drama (Cook, 2014). The former focuses more on the plot, while the latter puts an emphasis on the characters, which is suitable for *Listen to Us*. Character-driven drama delves deep into the characters' backstories, character development, and relationships with other characters for the audience to empathize with the characters and their psychological depth.

In many drama-genre films, the characters in the story must also be relatable to the audience, possessing their own strengths and flaws that do not render them perfect or grant them superpowers (Selbo, 2014). The goal is for the audience to root for the protagonist to be able to reach their goal despite the obstacles that might seem impossible to overcome. Still, eventually, the protagonist can succeed by discovering parts of themselves that they might not be aware of in the early part of the story. The stakes must also be high to keep the audience on the edge of their seats. Therefore, a drama screenplay will be considered successful if the story and characters successfully resonate with the audience.

Therefore, in this creative work, Uus serves as the story's protagonist to stop the hospital development plan from replacing the cemetery where his wife is buried. In a drama genre, his character's motivation can be empathized by the audience because of his clear motive as someone who loves his wife dearly. If Uus does not take any action, the stake would be the loss of his cemetery and his wife. The audience would then root for his character as he navigates through the challenges of the surveyors and the village chief as they try to do their job.

Story Elements	Convention of Drama Screenplay	Convention in <i>Listen to Us</i>
Setting	In a drama-centric movie, a film can be in any period and in any location (Selbo, 2014).	This short film takes place in a rural village in Central Java, Indonesia. As for specific places, the film also takes place in the villagers' houses, the cemetery, and the village's community center.
Theme	Drama explores universal human experiences or issues that resonate with the audience's daily lives (Selbo, 2014).	The issue that is being treated in this creative work is the negative socio-environmental effect of developmentalism and community resistance against it. Not every

		infrastructural project initiated by the government is accepted by the rural community, especially if it will disturb the peacefulness, damage the environment, or if the people have not been involved in the discussion process.
Tone	Unlike comedy, which is more lighthearted and humorous, drama tends to tackle its issues in a serious tone to make it realistic. (Selbo, 2014).	The tone in this creative work is mostly serious and melancholy as it reflects Uus's emptiness and sadness.
Character	The characters in a drama must be as relatable as possible for the audience to empathize with them, including their strengths and weaknesses. The screenwriters must allow them to struggle with their morals before they are able to reach their goals (Selbo, 2014).	Uus is the protagonist who is still grieving his wife's death. He serves as an underrepresented member of society who does not like to stand out or socialize with other people. His grief helped gather sympathy, and he unintentionally became the spark of a community resistance. He is a protagonist who is morally complex, as his loyalty lies with his wife, and he tries to stop the hospital development in his village despite the benefits it brings. On the other hand, Pak Wibawa, Pak Yudhi, and the hospital are presented as the antagonists, yet this does not make them inherently villains nor prove that Uus's action is good too. Their intentions are clear and understandable too: to build a hospital and reduce the mortality rate in the village, as they lack a decent healthcare facility.
Plot	Gustav Freytag came up with a pyramid of the five-act structure of drama (Turco, 2020): 1. Exposition: The background information that the audience needs to understand the characters and the storyline. 2. Rising Action: After an event serves as an inciting incident between the protagonist and the antagonist that kickstarts the story,	The overall plot of the creative work: 1. Exposition: Uus, the village's grave cleaner, spends his day cleaning graves, including his wife's grave. One day, Ibu Endah invited him to attend the village meeting with her. During the meeting, it was announced that a hospital development plan may replace

	<p>rising action is the increasing challenges that the protagonist has to face to shape their character.</p> <p>3. Climax: When either the protagonist achieves his goal or loses the conflict with the antagonist.</p> <p>4. Falling Action: When the tension begins to decrease, as all the previous actions by the protagonist reach their resolution.</p> <p>5. Resolution: The wrapping of the plot occurs when all the previous conflicts have been resolved, and the characters have been transformed.</p>	<p>the cemetery.</p> <p>2. Rising Action: Shocked by the announcement, Uus returns to the cemetery and refuses to leave. He stayed there overnight. When the surveyors begin the flag-marking process for bulldozing, Uus repeatedly removes their flags. This fueled concerns about Uus and gossip about the hospital and Pak Wibawa.</p> <p>3. Climax: Uus's action was reported to Pak Wibawa and Pak Yudhi. They authorized the bulldozer to intimidate him. However, seeing Uus's refusal to move, Pak Wibawa ordered an arrest for him.</p> <p>4. Falling Action: Pak Wibawa's action caused outrage among the villagers. As Pak Wibawa and Pak Yudhi were going to continue with their plans, villagers gathered outside the chief's office and demanded Uus's release.</p> <p>5. Resolution: Uus overheard the protest from his cell and approached the barred window to see the villagers gathered. He looked at his wife's handkerchief in his pocket and at the crowd again. He is trying to embrace his community, which cares about him but is still stuck in grief.</p>
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Premise and Creative Principle

As a hospital development plan threatens to erase the village's cemetery where his wife rests, a grieving grave cleaner's quiet resistance becomes an unlikely catalyst for a community resistance. To create an accurate representation of grief, this creative work will show the protagonist's grief in detail through his dialogues, body language, and his reluctance to engage in a meaningful interaction with anyone else. It will also show the progress of how he moved through the stages of grief in a non-linear order, like human nature, and utilizes his grief as a motivation to start a quiet form of resistance. Accuracy can only be measured by the feedback of the readers who have gone through the stages of grief after seeing Uus's character and give their judgment on whether his grief feels real or not.

Characters

Main Character:

Uus is the local grave cleaner in a rural village in Indonesia who suffers from social anxiety and is still grieving 3 years after his wife, Indah, died. He spends every day cleaning the graves, including his wife's, so that he can always stay close to her physically and emotionally. While he is very introverted, he has a high level of awareness towards the people around him. He especially cared about Ibu Endah because of her unconditional kindness towards him, even though he never said anything about it. His grief also made him refuse to speak verbally and instead, use his body language to communicate.

Supporting Characters:

Ibu Endah, a 62-year-old woman, is Uus's next-door neighbor, and she is a motherly figure to Uus, who took care of him after his wife passed away. She always packs him lunch and invites him to dinner. She is a kind and loving woman who does not hesitate to help Uus whenever he asks for her help, despite Uus's tendency not to speak his mind. When the villagers see her feeding Uus every day, they start to sympathize with Uus and talk negatively about Pak Wibawa and the hospital. She was the most critical in demanding Uus's release when he was detained.

Pak Wibawa, a 59-year-old man, is the head chief of the village where Uus lives, and he is in charge of mediating between the village and the hospital developers. He is a strict man who wants to build a good relationship with the Government and wants to be respected by them and his villagers. Thus, he does not hesitate to act against Uus if he threatens to disrupt the hospital's development because it would prove that he is an incompetent chief. He does not want to look weak in front of others.

Ibu Nur, a 51-year-old woman, is a loyal customer of Ibu Endah's restaurant. She has many friends with whom she gossips and spreads rumors. She is the source of gossip to her friends, which can easily circulate through the village quickly. When she and her friends see Uus's resistance, they become concerned about Uus, and their loud voices when gossiping about the hospital and Pak Wibawa contribute significantly to spreading the gossip to the other villagers and passersby.

Pak Yudhi, a 52-year-old man, is a representative of a hospital developer who was sent to Uus' village by the government to propose a hospital. He is a rational, polite man, but he can be ignorant at first about the consequences his hospital would cause to the locals. He is also easily anxious when things go out of control, such as the delayed hospital construction because of Uus, and he fears he would lose his job if he does not pressure Pak Wibawa to keep the situation controlled.

Plot

In a remote mountainous village of Central Java, Uus, a grieving grave cleaner who finds solace near his late wife Indah's burial site and avoids social connection, has his solitary life disrupted when village chief Pak Wibawa and hospital representative Pak Yudhi announce a hospital development plan to address high mortality rates, revealing that the cemetery will be used as the construction site. Shocked and fearing he will lose his wife for a second time, Uus flees to Indah's grave and refuses to leave, even as his neighbor Ibu Endah brings him food and cares for him. Over the following days, Uus repeatedly removes land survey flags placed around the cemetery, defying the surveyors and silently resisting the project. His actions, coupled with Ibu Endah's concern, spread through village gossip led by Ibu Nur, causing villagers to

sympathize with Uus, question the hospital project, and undermine Pak Wibawa's reputation. As Uus's resistance delays construction, tensions escalate until a bulldozer is sent to intimidate him, and Pak Wibawa ultimately orders for Uus's arrest when he still refuses to move. Witnessed by the villagers, his arrest sparks public outrage, and when Uus hears the villagers protesting about his release, he realizes for the first time how deeply his community comes to care for him.

Conflict

Conflict is an integral part of a story because it creates dramatic tension between the protagonist and antagonist. A conflict is the struggle of the protagonist against an obstacle, whether internal or external, that makes it difficult for them to achieve their goals and overcome their flaws. It keeps the audience engaged and rooting for the hero throughout the story. According to Ballon (2014), conflict is the heart of drama and shapes the characters' desire and motivation. Without conflict, the plot would not interest the audience, and the protagonist would easily achieve their desired goals. Through conflict and obstacles, the audience can see the multifaceted layers of the characters, how they behave during the conflict, and how they would overcome the obstacles. Therefore, having an external and/or internal conflict can make the protagonist's struggle more interesting and engaging for the audience.

There are many types of conflict in story writing, but the most relevant type of conflict used in this creative work is *Man against Man* and *Man against Himself*, external and internal types of conflict, respectively. *Man against Man* conflict is sometimes called inter-personal conflict, which involves a character struggling against another character to test their beliefs and motivation, or because of a complex relationship (Wati, 2025). The conflict can manifest in different ways, such as physical struggle, ideological clashes, or psychological differences with the opponent. This battle can be settled once the antagonist is defeated physically or persuaded otherwise. In this creative work, the main antagonist is Pak Wibawa. Even though he is the antagonist, it does not mean he is a malicious villain since his goal is to ensure his village has a decent healthcare facility to reduce the mortality rate in the village. This humanizes Pak Wibawa as a non-villain antagonist. Since Pak Wibawa's goal clashes with Uus' desire to protect the cemetery and reject the development, Uus struggles to achieve his goal because Pak Wibawa has more power and resources than he does. Uus does not technically defeat Pak Wibawa in the conflict, but his action in the cemetery caused the villagers to undermine his power and reputation.

The *Man against Himself* conflict is a type of internal conflict that the protagonist must overcome by themselves, as the characters struggle with morality, desires, or personal beliefs, which can lead to unusual behavior (Wati, 2025). Uus is described as a grieving man, which causes him to refuse to make any meaningful connection with other people and fail to stand up for himself. His backstory is that he lost his wife due to an untreatable disease and was unable to let go of her. Therefore, his struggle is with his own grief that has caused him to refuse to make any other meaningful connection with the other villagers. Fortunately, after he realized that his action had sparked community resistance, he slowly overcoming his grief.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a background explanation and insight into the issue of developmentalism in Indonesia and why the government is motivated to propose many programs or projects to improve the welfare of its population. However, after numerous news articles and protests emerged in the media, infrastructural development or any kind of developmentalism does not always gain a positive response from the locals who reside in that

area, especially in rural areas. Multiple factors need to be considered by the government before continuing with a development plan. Most importantly, the locals must be consulted beforehand, and transparency is necessary to ensure the community's interests and concerns are considered in the decision-making. Otherwise, community resistance is inevitable if the community strongly believes its concerns are ignored. The author thinks that there is still a lack of non-documentary movies that bring up the issue of resistance against developmentalism, which is why *Listen to Us* would be a good contribution to the film industry, as it tackles topics that are rarely produced into a movie.

This thesis uses the stages of grief theory to provide a framework to build Uus' journey to slowly overcome his grief by slowly embracing his village community and finding a new meaning in life after his wife's passing. Another theory used in this thesis is the everyday resistance theory, which is a quiet, discreet type of resistance that does not involve violence or loud acts of protests such as slandering, pilfering, or foot-dragging. It is also not formally organized, yet it can have the same impact that a public demonstration has on the elites or people in power. Both theories were used in this creative work through Uus's efforts in quietly slowing down the hospital development by refusing to move from his wife's grave, throwing away surveyor flags, and blocking bulldozers from clearing out the cemetery. His small act of everyday resistance also inspired Ibu Endah and other villagers to spread gossip around the village to undermine Pak Wibawa and the hospital. After Uus's detainment, he realized his grief had generated lots of sympathy for the other villagers, and he could finally see how other people cared about him. He would then find a meaning in his life by embracing his community while slowly overcoming his grief in the process.

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