

Some thought him a samurai. With his beard unkempt and his eyes unseen. Unseen but all-seeing, though hidden under the visor of his general's hat. While his body never moved, his gaze, razor sharp, darted everywhere; taking in everything before him. Nothing escaped his sight. Those eyes of his seemed to be able to look right into people's hearts, honing in on any desire to overthrow the Japanese powers, and once it came to that, the stories of their lives were quickly brought to an unfortunate end. Such was Masayoshi-san's impressive strength, reminiscent of a samurai's.

Others thought him a spirit. One that had lived for generations in the bush behind Masjid Petempatan Sembawang. It was as though he commanded mystic powers, the way he knew of the covert operation plans that took form in the village, one after the other like whispers in the wind. He also knew of the venues for the secret assemblies. Without warning, he'd show up with his men, and any aspiration to bring down the Japanese administration quickly vanished. Such was the power that ran in Masayoshi-san's veins.

And still others thought him a descendant of the gods. One that possessed a mystic amulet that allowed him to learn of every single concealed thought and idea that spread through the villages. He knew who had access to a transistor. He knew in which corners their antennae silently crept forward, stretching towards the Indian almond trees. All he had to do was send out his soldiers, and each house they laid their eyes upon would be left a scene of destruction, the anguished wails of wives laying their beheaded husbands to rest echoing in their ears. Such was the extraordinary capability that Masayoshi-san boasts.

Whatever they thought, one thing was clear: the name 'Masayoshi-san' was well-known, striking fear in the very souls of all who heard it. Nothing compared to his blade, with how sharp and swift it was. Additionally, Masayoshi-san had begun travelling from village to village in search of vestal maidens who, once found, were taken away. Any semblance of tranquillity left in the villages quickly morphed into apprehension, with everybody on edge.