

THE BICYCLE

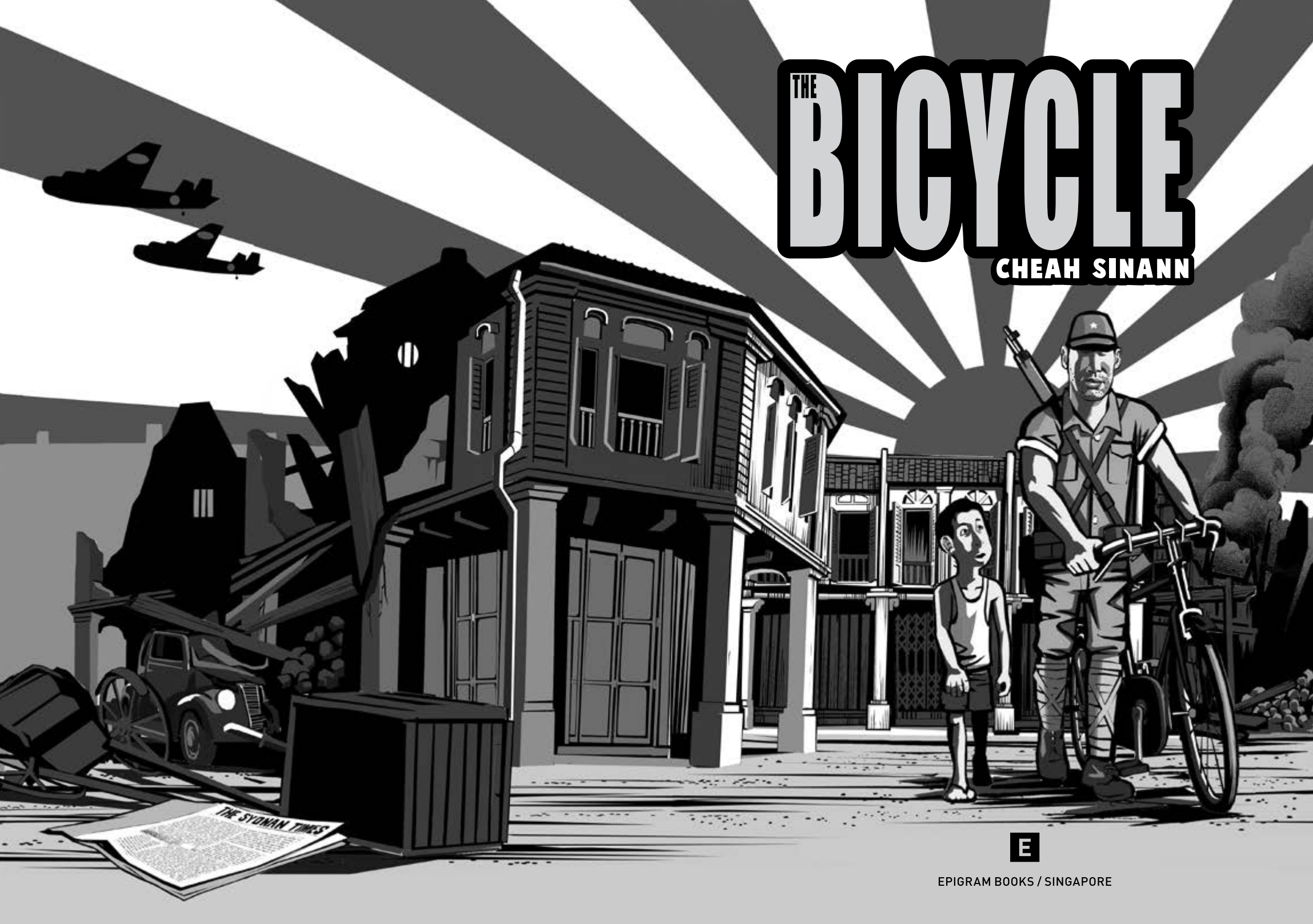
CHEAH SINANN



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BICYCLE**

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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

First Edition
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

To my father.

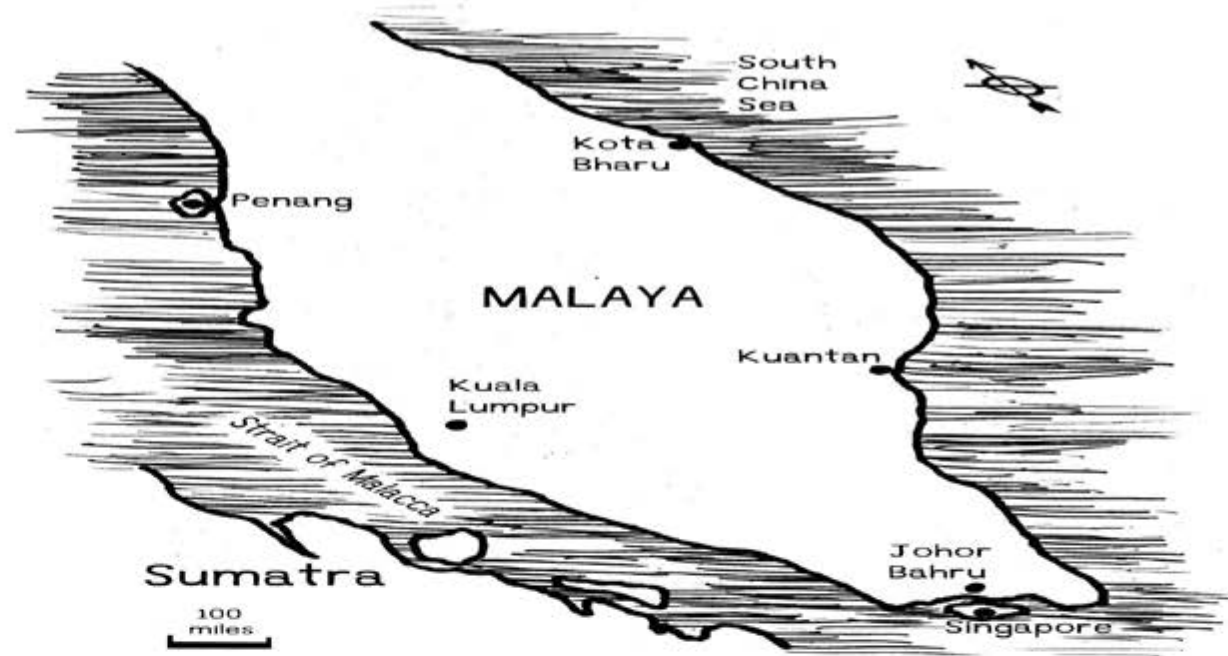
Although he was often short of breath from smoking, he was never short of anecdotes from his childhood days during World War 2 and he didn't mind telling them at all.

Thanks, Pa.

“Singapore...could only be taken after a siege by an enemy of at least 50,000 men...It is not considered possible that the Japanese...would embark on such a mad enterprise.”

—Winston Churchill, November 1939

On 7 December 1942, at least an hour before the first bombs fell on Pearl Harbour, the Japanese Imperial Army attacked Kota Bharu, a town at the northeastern shore of British Malaya. In the days ahead, the troops moved 500 miles down south to conquer their final destination—Singapore, on what must be the simplest and humblest form of transportation of the 20th century...the bicycle.



PRESENT-DAY SINGAPORE. EARLY AFTERNOON.

EASY!

EASY!

IT'S QUITE OLD. WE DON'T WANT ANY PARTS FALLING BACK INTO THE WELL.




CAREFUL!











In one of the last remaining jungles in Singapore, an old bicycle is unearthed in an archaeological dig. Its discovery brings the elderly Lim Ah Cheng back to a time when he rode with his life on the line...

Meticulously researched by the creator of Singapore's first daily comic strip *The House of Lim*, cartoonist Cheah Sinann, *The Bicycle* tells the tale of Toshiro Iwakura, an aristocratic, battle-hardened private haunted by his desire to cycle in the Olympics, and five-year-old street urchin Ah Cheng, who dreams of nothing more than learning how to ride a bike. Their paths cross during the Japanese Occupation, when a unique bond formed over two wheels is quickly put to a life-or-death test.

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