The Sari Club

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Freeport Mine, Papua, Indonesia

Although my wife, Shari, knows that Indonesians often giggle through grief (chuckles safely cupped in their hands, hoping their faces are safe), she is still upset when they confuse their consonants and laugh consolation that “her club” in Bali was bombed. The trouble with martyrs, Supriadi said, is that they always end up too dead to not be correct. Then Ketut, a Hindu who assumes we’re ashes already, said the problem with so many people is that they believe one thing explains all things. It’s easier for us, he said. We get to pick which gods we pay attention to. Just think. Just try to imagine Vishnu choosing you.

1 On October 12th, 2002, a car bomb weighing approximately 1,000 kg was detonated in front of the Sari Club in Kuta Beach, Bali. The explosion left a one-meter-deep crater and more than 200 dead. The majority of those murdered were Australian tourists.