From the Heights to the Depths
Rising from the Ashes
Written and Narrated by Yusuf Ahadi

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Mother Begum

Dear Friends, Welcome to This Home of the Heart

Chapter One

A Welcome and a Word from the Author

Hello

The story you are about to read is drawn from the true life of a warrior mother—one who lived for nearly a century in this mortal world and, confronted by hundreds of barriers and hardships, never surrendered to despair but continued on her path.

She faced fierce material and spiritual storms, yet she endured. She passed through countless trials and emerged with her head held high; in the end, she stood so firmly that it seemed she had mocked hardship itself.

My mother, Shah Begum, was born in Baku into a respected family. She came into the world at a time of immense human transformation, when humanitarian ideals, workers' struggles, and the pursuit of just rights had plunged the world into turmoil and change.

The socialist revolution against the exploitation of working people was proclaimed to the world in Lenin's name and began its course by overthrowing Tsarist rule in what would become the Soviet Union. My mother, Shah Begum, was born in that very era. In truth, she was a daughter of her time and a new member of a hardworking family.

Begum's maternal uncle, Dadash Bunyadzadeh, was one of the active and recognized figures of the socialist revolution in Baku. He had no children of his own, and from early childhood Begum grew up beside her well-known and energetic uncle. As she grew older, she took part in the activities of the youth party and developed a prominent standing and a strong spirit.

But life held suffering in store for her—suffering whose path we will follow together, step by step, throughout this book.

Yes, this lionhearted woman was forced to make painful choices in the course of her life—choices that sometimes leave a mother only one path: to choose love over the world and all its games.

Begum had become a mother and had two children whom she loved dearly. But the course of her life forced her to make a choice—a choice for which the price was unbearably high.

Believe me, I wrote most of these pages through tear-filled eyes. It is no exaggeration to say that the ink of my pen was colored by the blood of my heart and moistened by the tears in my eyes.

From the age of sixteen, I longed to write this work. Yet it was not until I turned seventy that I found the confidence to introduce you to her and to the pain she endured. Perhaps her story can be a guiding light for the many unknown mothers who do not even realize the scale of their own heroism.

With gratitude for your attention, I invite you to join me as a fellow traveler in this sincere and unadorned caravan.

Yusuf, Mother Begum's Fifth Child

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About Me

The heartfelt account in your hands is a collection reflecting the sorrows that have lived within my soul for many years.

From the age of six, I was aware of much of the pain around me. Day by day, those sorrows gathered in the book within my breast; in this memoir, they became my hidden thoughts, the lens through which I see, and the scale by which I compare.

I never dared to set them down in writing, although doing so had always been my inward wish. I loved the idea of writing books, but I lacked the courage. I thought it was not a task meant for me. I kept the pain within my breast and recalled it to myself in solitude.

I think I was sixteen when I read Mother by Maxim Gorky. At the same time, I drew my own mother's deeds from the book within my breast and compared them with those of the mother in Gorky's novel.

I wished that one day I, too, could tell my mother's story to humanity. Even before writing a word, I believed that my mother was even more deserving of being written about than Gorky's mother. It pained me that I did not have the ability to write her story.

I was in the fifth year of secondary school. Our algebra and trigonometry teacher, Mr. Sahraei, who was himself a university student while teaching, encouraged us to read books.

One day, he brought a box to class. He asked each of us to place in it whatever we could spare from our pocket money, so that when the box was full we could buy books. When he opened it, the sixty-five of us had each contributed two tomans—a total of 130 tomans.

He said:

“Now we can open a library in our classroom, so that every one of you will have the chance to read all the books.”

I remember thinking how I wished he were our literature teacher.

By the end of the year, our collection had grown and we had read many books. He had taught us that life is short and the number of good books is great; with the help of our friends, therefore, we should choose the books most worth reading.

I have always remained grateful to Mr. Sahraei, and in preparing this memoir I honor the part his guidance played in my life.

That same year, for a composition assignment, I wrote a short fictional story. The subject was:

“Whose place would you most like to take?”

In my story, a father and son were passing through our neighborhood in search of somewhere to sleep. I insisted that they spend the night as guests in our home.

That night, through the keyhole, I watched the boy sleeping sweetly and peacefully in his father’s arms in the cold room. I said to myself:

“My God, if only for one hour, I wish I could be in this boy’s place and sleep so peacefully in my father’s arms.”

My story had moved all the children. They had taken it as truth. Even Mr. Zanouzi, our literature teacher, rose from his seat, came over to me, placed his hand on my shoulder, and offered his condolences.

I felt that my words had entered the hearts of all the children. Everyone applauded me. I said:

“It was only a composition—not a true story.”

This time, Mr. Zanouzi gently tapped my arm and said:

“You rascal—you made us cry.”

And he gave me a perfect score of twenty.

That experience gave me confidence. Unfortunately, however, a life lived below freezing point can freeze many feelings and abilities.

I hold on to the hope that one day awareness and freedom will embrace humanity, the chains of the mind’s inner captivity will be broken, and the spring of freedom will blossom in human thought.

Mother Through My Eyes

I have prepared this memoir out of love for my lionhearted mother, who taught me the right way to live and the meaning of perseverance in difficult times—not through slogans, but through the example of her own life.

I dedicate these words to all courageous mothers who bring the precious gift of womanhood to its fullest expression through selfless, nurturing, and enlightened motherhood—mothers who are the pillars of the family, and beneath whose feet God has promised paradise.

Adapting a line from the epic poet of Iran, I say:

Without a mother, let no life be mine; Where there is a mother, long live life.

The world is made of countries, peoples, tribes, villages, and families; yet the unseen architect of all these structures can be named in a single word: mother.

The soul of the world depends upon exemplary mothers—mothers who quietly build, nurture, endure, and send generations forth from within themselves into life.

If a motherly spirit stood at the summit of humanity's family, the world could overflow with greater justice, sacrifice, honesty, and kindness.

When a woman becomes a mother with her whole soul, paradise grows beneath the feet of humanity.

To me, a mother is not merely a woman who gives birth. A mother is a human being's first home—the first refuge, the first safe sanctuary, and the first temple in which a child is formed.

A mother's womb, to me, is not merely a physical place. It is a sacred sanctuary in which a human soul is formed from a mother's blood, love, patience, and sacrifice. Before a child sees the world, the child comes to know life within the mother. Before learning language, the child learns the first lesson of being from the beat of the mother's heart.

For this reason, I believe that if a mother's place is truly understood—if society recognizes the reverence with which human life begins

within her—then families, societies, and the world can become more humane.

When people say that paradise lies beneath a mother's feet, I do not regard it as merely a beautiful phrase. To me, it is a truth born from the lives of selfless mothers—mothers who burn in silence, yet from their own burning create light.

Mother Begum had seven children, thirty-two grandchildren, and sixty-two great-grandchildren. In all, 101 human beings came into this world through the blessing of her womb—101 branches, fruits, and continuations of life.

The Meaning of "From the Heights to the Depths" and "Rising from the Ashes"

The choice of these titles captures the course of Mother Begum's life: a journey that began in a bright and hopeful place, descended into hardship and ashes, and finally rose from those same ashes through perseverance, love, and sacrifice.

From her birth until her forced exile from her homeland, Mother Begum lived in a place that might be called the heights. She grew up in a respected family, surrounded by affection, support, and attention. In those years, life offered her success, hope, growth, and the protection of her family.

After her forced migration to Iran, however, the page of her life turned. Begum endured two failed marriages—marriages that carried her from the heights to the depths.

Under the weight of hardship, exile, abandonment, and pain, she burned until she seemed reduced to ashes.

Yet the ashes were not Begum's end.

Through her third marriage, to Mammad, she rose phoenix-like from the ashes. With sacrifice, hard work, patience, and the strength of her motherhood, she rebuilt her life and brought her tree of life to fruition.

Begum gave her heart to nine children. Sadly, two of them died in innocence shortly after birth. The other seven survived, and each became a branch of her tree of life.

In time, those seven children added thirty-two children of their own to her family tree; and before Mother Begum passed away, 101 people had taken their place within the tree of her life.

At the commemoration of Mother Begum's one-hundredth birthday, around eighty members of her family tree gathered beneath one roof to honor her memory.

That gathering was more than a memorial. It showed that a woman who had once fallen from the heights to the depths and burned in the ashes of suffering had risen again, leaving behind a living and fruitful tree grown from her own life.

Thus, From the Heights to the Depths is not merely the title of a book. It is the story, in brief, of a woman who fell, burned, and turned to ashes—but was never extinguished.

And this is what Rising from the Ashes means:

A mother who created life anew from the heart of suffering.

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Chapter Two: Roots, Family, and Begum’s Beginning World

Family Roots

No human being is born apart from their roots. Before a child is even given a name, that child carries a past inherited from father, mother, home, society, and the age into which they are born.

So it was with Shah Begum. She was not merely a newborn girl in a house in Baku; she was the continuation of roots that had taken shape before her birth.

Her family, its social standing, Baku's cultural atmosphere, the political upheavals of the time, and the people around her all helped shape her character and destiny.

At the center of those roots stood Dervish, a respected father from an established and honorable family.

Dervish was more than the head of a household; he was the pillar of the home. His presence gave the family meaning, standing, and support. In Dervish's house, children did not merely grow up; they were raised in an atmosphere where one's name, honor, faith, labor, and family bonds carried value.

Beside Dervish stood Tohfeh, a woman who kept the home alive through patience, affection, and care.

If Dervish was the home's outward pillar, Tohfeh was its inner soul. Through her motherly hands, her silences and worries, her care for the children, and her protection of the home's warmth, she created a place where a child received not only food and clothing but also a sense of belonging and roots.

The children of this family each had a place and a destiny of their own. Among them, Fatemeh held a special place: a girl of deep feeling, quiet

love, and a loyalty that would later take on profound meaning in Begum's life.

From the beginning, Fatemeh was not merely a sister beside Begum. She was one of the family's delicate and deeply emotional threads—a thread without which many of Begum's later sorrows cannot be fully understood.

It was into such a home that Shah Begum was born. Her birth was more than the addition of another child to the family; she brought with her fresh energy, hope, and a new future.

Her name, her place within the family, the way they looked upon her, and the atmosphere in which she grew all showed that, at the beginning, life had revealed a brighter face to her.

Baku, too, was part of those roots.

In those years, Baku was more than a place to live. It was a city at the heart of great social and political change. On one side, old traditions, families, beliefs, and social structures remained alive; on the other, waves of revolution, demands for justice, workers' movements, new ideas, and social struggle flowed through the city.

Shah Begum opened her eyes upon such an age—an age in which the old world and the new stood face to face.

Outside the home, history was changing; inside it, Dervish's family lived with its customs, love, sorrows, hopes, and bonds.

These two currents—home and history—would later become entwined in Begum's destiny.

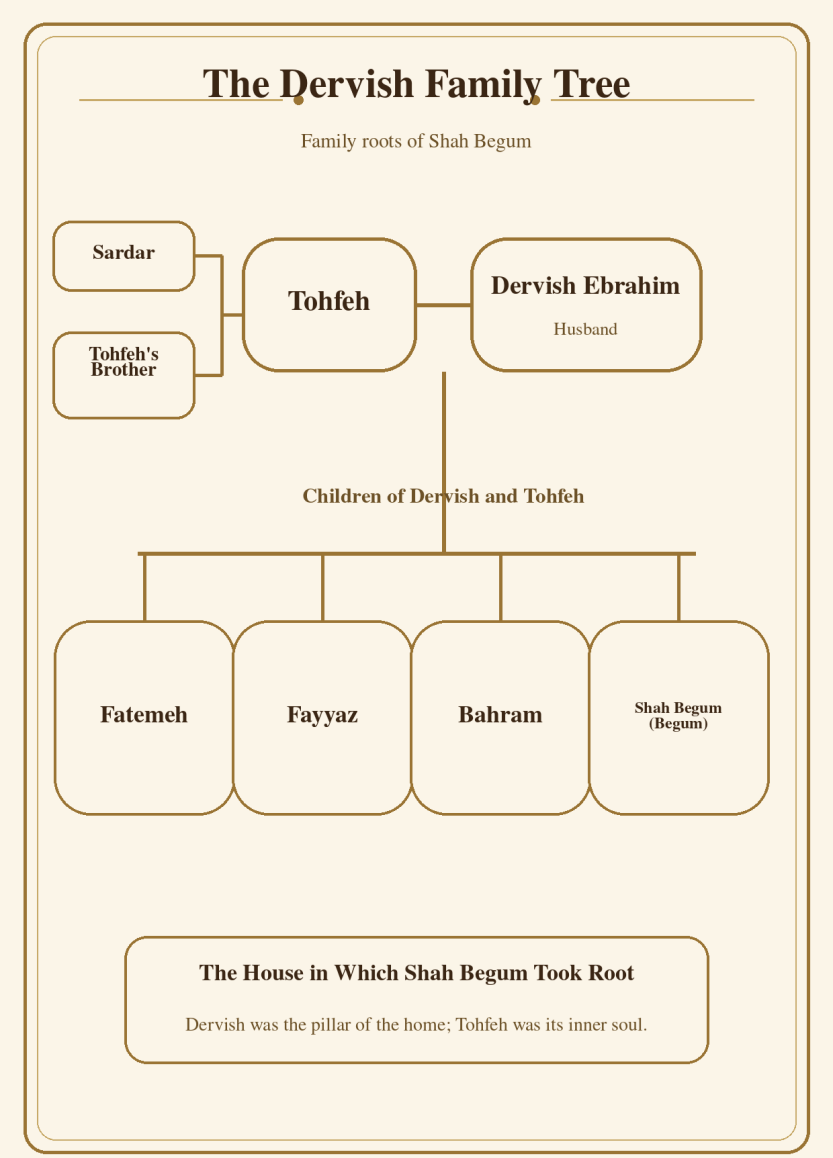
For that reason, this chapter does more than introduce a few names and family relationships. It leads us into the soil from which Begum grew.

We must know Dervish to understand the pillar of the home;
we must know Tohfeh to feel its warmth;
we must know Fatemeh to see the depth of its quiet love;
and we must know Baku to understand the age in which this family breathed.

Shah Begum arose from such roots—roots that at first placed her in the heights of protection, affection, honor, and hope, but were later tested by the storms of history, migration, separation, poverty, vulnerability, and painful choices.

This chapter begins our acquaintance with that tree, before the storms began to shake its branches.

The Dervish Family Tree



Introducing Dervish

To understand Shah Begum, we must first know her father, Dervish—the man who was the family's root, the honor of the home, and one of the central pillars of Begum's life.

Dervish was one of those men whose name is never merely an individual's name; it carries with it honor, respect, and family standing. Among those around him, he was known as a dignified man from an established and honorable line.

His presence in the home gave the family something to lean on—a source of security, dignity, and belonging for his children.

Dervish's house was not merely a residence. It was a home in which one's name, honor, family bonds, labor, faith, and respect had a place. His children grew in an atmosphere that held the warmth of family, a father's discipline, and contact with an age of great upheaval.

Dervish lived at a time when Baku and the society around it were caught up in major political and social transformations. The old world and the new stood in opposition. New ideas, workers' struggles, calls for justice, and the changes brought by the socialist revolution all affected people's lives. Dervish and his family were not separate from that world.

Yet Dervish's importance did not lie only in his social standing or family name. It lay in the home he created—a home in which Shah Begum first experienced roots, protection, and hope.

During her early years, Begum grew under the shelter of such a father, in a world where the heights of family protection still stood above her.

To Begum, Dervish was more than a father; he was part of the safe world of her beginnings—a world later torn apart by the storms of history, migration, separation, and exile.

Therefore, when we speak of Begum's descent from the heights to the depths, we must know where those heights began: in a home of which Dervish was one of the principal pillars.

To know Dervish is to know the root from which Shah Begum grew—a root that, before the storms arrived, gave her life honor, refuge, and meaning.

Introducing Tohfeh

Beside Dervish stood Tohfeh, the woman from whose presence the hidden warmth of the home drew life.

If Dervish was the home's outward pillar, Tohfeh was its inner soul. The home was known by Dervish's name and standing, but it breathed through Tohfeh's hands.

She was one of those mothers whose presence is not always marked by a loud voice or commands, yet whose absence empties everything from within.

Tohfeh did not merely run the household; she kept it alive. Her role was present in her quietness, her care, her attention to the children, her motherly concerns, the meals she prepared, the order she gave the home, and the dignity and warmth she preserved within the family.

For the children, Tohfeh was not only their mother; she was a refuge within the home. Before children understand life through reason, they feel it in a mother's embrace, gaze, voice, and hands.

Tohfeh had precisely such a presence in the home—gentle, yet deeply rooted.

Shah Begum grew within that embrace. At the beginning of her life, she lived not only beneath the shelter of an honorable father such as Dervish, but also within the warmth of a mother such as Tohfeh.

The union of a father's standing and a mother's love formed the heights from which Begum's life began—heights that would later collapse beneath the storms of time, migration, separation, and exile.

Tohfeh was a woman who expressed love more through action than words. She was one of those mothers who carry sorrow within themselves but never allow the lamp of the home to go out.

If Dervish's home was warm, rooted, and alive during its peaceful years, part of that life came from Tohfeh's very breath.

Yet fate was not gentle with Tohfeh either. She would later have to witness separation, departure, forced migration, and loved ones being torn from the embrace of the home.

The very woman who had held the home together through love would one day be forced to watch a part of her own soul being taken from it.

In this account, Tohfeh is more than Shah Begum's mother. She represents the mothers who hold a home together with their very lives—mothers who may appear to stand at history's margins, though the history of every family passes through their patience and sacrifice.

To know Tohfeh is essential to knowing Begum, for Begum inherited not only her blood but also a share of her patience, tenderness, endurance, and motherly spirit.

Introducing Fatemeh

Among the children of Dervish's family, Fatemeh held a special and profound place—one that might not have been obvious at first glance, but would acquire great meaning in the course of Shah Begum's life.

Fatemeh was more than Begum's elder sister. She had a sensitive, loving, loyal, and inward-looking spirit; she showed her affection more through staying, caring, silence, and companionship than through words or displays of emotion.

In many families there are people whose voices are not loud, yet whose absence empties the home from within. Fatemeh was such a person.

She may have appeared quiet and unassuming, but within herself she carried a world of love, attachment, concern, and loyalty.

Fatemeh's bond with Begum was neither simple nor ordinary. To Fatemeh, Begum was more than a younger sister; she was a part of her soul, the center of her affections, and the thread that bound Fatemeh's heart to home, family, and the meaning of life.

That same quiet and profound love would later reveal itself painfully in Fatemeh's life. She was one of those women whose depth of love may be understood too late by society and those around them—women whose pain is not weakness, but evidence of the intensity of their attachment, loyalty, and emotional purity.

To know Begum, one must know Fatemeh, for part of Begum's understanding of love, loyalty, separation, and pain took shape as she watched Fatemeh's life and suffering.

Fatemeh was a mirror in which Begum saw the meaning of quiet love and unspoken self-sacrifice.

In this account, Fatemeh is not a secondary figure. She is one of the story's fine yet vital capillaries. If she is overlooked, the flow of pain, love, and endurance within the family cannot be fully understood.

Fatemeh may have seemed quiet, but in truth she was a courageous, loving, and loyal woman—one who lived love not through claims, but through burning, remaining, and staying faithful.

To know Fatemeh is to know one of the deepest emotional roots of Dervish's home—a root that later reappears in moments of separation, migration, and return, showing that some loves, however quiet, never disappear.

Other Members of Dervish's Family

Dervish's was an extensive and deeply rooted family. The names of its other members appear in Dervish's family tree, and each holds a place in the family's lineage and memory.

This account focuses chiefly on those figures who played the most direct and profound roles in shaping Shah Begum's destiny: Dervish as the pillar of the home, Tohfeh as the family's motherly soul, and Fatemeh as the quiet love and emotional root of Begum's life.

The other members of the family are also part of these roots. Each will be introduced and illuminated at the proper place in the narrative whenever they enter Begum's path.

Introducing Sardar

Among the figures who played a part in Shah Begum's home and surroundings, Sardar also held an important place—one connected not only to the family but to the political and social world of the time.

Sardar was one of Dervish's close relatives and companions, a man whose presence beside him helped shape the family's identity and intellectual atmosphere.

He was one of those people whose name remains not only in a family tree, but also in the memory of an age and in the remembrance of unjust suffering.

To Shah Begum, Sardar was not merely one name among the names of the family. He was part of the atmosphere of her childhood—part of what she came to know, what she heard, the looks she saw, and the conversations that filled the home.

Begum's childhood unfolded in a house where people were not defined solely by family relationships; each carried an experience, an idea, a sorrow, or a destiny that would later influence her understanding of life.

Sardar's importance deepens because his fate became bound to injustice.

His unjust execution wounded more than one individual. It marked the family's memory, Dervish's outlook, and the emotional world of that generation.

Such an event shows that this family's life was not confined to the home and its relationships. Politics, power, oppression, and injustice also entered their destiny from beyond its walls.

To know Sardar is necessary to understand the world in which Shah Begum grew, for she was raised in a home where family love, honor, struggle, ideals, fear, injustice, and loss all stood side by side.

Sardar was one of those roots that may look small above the surface, yet in the depths forms part of the soil from which Begum grew.

For that reason, Sardar's name is not a passing reference in this account. He must be seen as one of the figures who shaped Begum's family and social environment—a man whose tragic fate cast the shadow of his age's injustice across Dervish's family.

Baku and the Social Climate of the Time

To understand Shah Begum, it is not enough to know Dervish's home; we must also know the city in which that home breathed. That city was Baku—lively, historic, multicultural, and caught in the great transformations of its age.

In those years, Baku was no ordinary city. Tradition and modernity, poverty and wealth, labor and capital, hope and unrest all moved through it side by side.

On one side, families lived by long-established customs, beliefs, kinship bonds, and traditions; on the other, new political and social waves were gradually reshaping the city.

In streets and homes, daily life continued. Families baked bread, children grew, mothers kept their households together, and fathers labored for livelihood and honor.

Yet beyond the walls of those homes, history was moving. Calls for justice, workers' struggles, opposition to exploitation, and new ideals were changing the atmosphere of the city.

Especially in those years, Baku was one of the places where social and revolutionary ideas could be heard. The rights of working people, equality, the rejection of exploitation, and resistance to old systems were part of the language of the age.

These transformations did not remain within the realm of politics. Sooner or later, they entered homes, families, ways of seeing, and human destinies.

Dervish's family lived in precisely such an atmosphere. On one side, it was rooted in tradition, honor, family bonds, and the sanctity of the home; on the other, it stood in an age when the old world was slowly giving way to a new one.

This duality would later leave its mark on Shah Begum's life as well.

Shah Begum opened her eyes upon such a city and such an age—an age that held both hope and unrest, in which great ideals could be heard even as the shadows of future storms lay hidden.

For Begum, Baku was more than her birthplace. It was the first soil of her life—the place where her first breaths, first sights, first family bonds, and first signs of promise took shape.

She was born in a city that had both roots and movement, a city that carried the past within itself while facing an unsettled future.

For this reason, Shah Begum's birth must be seen within the heart of this setting:

a deeply rooted home,
an honorable family,
a city in transformation,
and an age pregnant with great hopes and sorrows.

For Shah Begum, Baku was the height from which life began; yet that same city and that same age would later bring the first tremors of descent, migration, and separation into her destiny.

The Social, Family, and Cultural Climate of the Period

Shah Begum was born in years when the world surrounding Dervish's family was undergoing profound change.

At that time, Baku was more than a city. It held deep historical, cultural, and emotional roots. Families lived there with old traditions, beliefs, codes of dignity, and bonds, while at the same time new winds of politics, revolution, justice, and modern thought blew through its streets and homes.

From the outside, people's lives may have appeared ordinary. Mothers kept their homes, fathers worked for livelihood and honor, children grew within their families, and houses breathed through daily customs, food, prayers, worries, and hopes.

Behind that everyday life, however, history was changing.

The First World War, political turmoil, the collapse of old systems, and the rise of new ideas were gradually transforming the social world. The language of justice, equality, workers' rights, resistance to exploitation, and the building of a new world could be heard throughout the age.

Party offices, new slogans, writings, songs, and forms of education gradually entered people's lives. Lenin's name, the idea of revolution, and the promise of a more just world appeared in schools, in print, in conversation, and throughout public life.

In such a climate, traditional and religious ideas could not remain untouched. Some beliefs were re-examined, some were explained in new language, and some were pushed aside under the pressure of law, politics, and the new ideology.

This transformation did not occur only beyond the home. When history swells, it crosses the walls of houses. It enters family meals and conversations, the raising of children, the outlook of fathers, the worries of mothers, and the futures of the young.

Dervish's family lived within just such a world—a family rooted on one side in tradition, honor, family bonds, faith, and the sanctity of the home, yet compelled on the other to face the new social and political waves of its time.

Dervish, Tohfeh, Fatemeh, and the other members of the family lived in a home where love, respect, order, prayer, labor, worry, and hope were all present. Outside that home, however, the world was changing—a world that would not remain still and would sooner or later draw this family's destiny into its course.

Shah Begum was born into this double world: a warm and deeply rooted home within a restless and changing age.

On one side, a mother's embrace, a father's name, a sister's love, and the dignity of family awaited her. On the other, history, politics, migration, separation, and storms that no one could yet see clearly were approaching from afar.

For that reason, Shah Begum's birth should not be understood as merely a family event. She was born at a point where home and history, tradition and revolution, love and anxiety, hope and danger all breathed side by side.

This was the first soil of her life—the soil in which the earliest roots of Shah Begum's character, feeling, courage, and destiny began to form.

Chapter Three: Birth, Childhood, Youth, and Begum’s Marriage

Begum's Childhood, Youth, and Marriage

The Birth of Begum / Shah Begum

In the name of the Beloved One who created the universe with love and the One who ordered the world through His wisdom; the Lord who taught Adam the secret of creation; the Merciful One who guided humanity through messengers and heavenly books.

That night was a pleasant spring night; 26 Farvardin 1296, corresponding to April 15, 1917. The silver rays of the moonlight had given the sky a beautiful appearance, as if the pure skirt of the bride of the earth had covered it. Dervish was sitting quietly in a corner of the room, but one could see the anxiety in his heart in his face. It was as if he knew a secret inside that no one else in that house knew about it.

Dervish Ebrahim and his wife Tohfeh already had three children: two sons and one daughter. Tohfeh was now expecting their fourth child, and Dervish counted the seconds until the baby's arrival; his restlessness was impossible to hide. One moment he would enter his wife's room; the next he would return to the hall. This time, suddenly, Dervish shouted anxiously: "Fatemeh!

Run, tell Khanom-Baji to come." Fatemeh and Fayyaz ran. Their footsteps echoed through the courtyard and corridor, while the pounding of their hearts seemed to race with them. Dervish was in a different mood, it was clear that he was praying under his breath or saying "Ali, oh Ali" and walking next to Tohfeh. Tohfeh's face was yellow, as if she had a fear inside that she could not express her feelings, but with all decency, she had hidden the pain in her chest.

Anyone with a heart could feel the pain of Tohfeh's labor. It grew more intense by the moment. She gripped the sheet and groaned softly until her strength failed and she cried, "Ya Hossein!" Within moments Khanom-Baji arrived. Taking command with practiced calm, she said, "Prepare hot water." Dervish answered respectfully, "The basin, tub, and bucket are ready." With a knowing smile, the family's trusted midwife lowered her head and went into Tohfeh's room.

Dervish's face was rosy. He did not go into the room. He said to Fatemeh, "My daughter, help Khanom-Baji, be with your mother." He went to the prayer rug that had always been his place of comfort. He had just begun, and the sound of her crying was revealed as the first tear fell from her cheeks.

Dervish was praying with both hands raised before his face when the baby's cry suddenly filled the house. Khanom-Baji said loudly, "Blessed!" Dervish said in his qunut, "Alhamdulillah."

Fatemeh ran to Fayyaz to get the good news and be the first to tell her brothers about her sister's birth. But it was clear from the way she broke the news that her childish jealousy was still blossoming. In a trembling voice, she said to Fayyaz, "Well, be happy! Your mother brought you the sister you wanted!" Of course, this feeling was understandable to the family, because Fatemeh was considered lazy and unintelligent among the other children, and they even joked about it.

Yet Dervish understood Fatemeh's feelings. He spoke sternly to his sons and reminded them of their sister's emotional strengths, trying to preserve balance among the children. Although Dervish's attempts to tame the boys' mischief did not have much effect, their hands were tied for direct and public confrontation. This support had created a great place in Fatemeh's heart for her father's love, because she was also aware of the problems that were being raised and in fact, with the arrival of another girl in the family, she considered the situation to her detriment and was afraid of the future. But Dervish was more experienced than Fatemeh understood.

When Dervish finished his prayer, he called Fatemeh, asked for the news, embraced her, and said: "I am happy that you are here and you will help your mother raise your sister. Now you have become a big sister!" Well, this gesture of Dervish was very effective and gave Fatemeh peace. He felt relieved that she still had her place. He became a little more confident and in the world of childhood she quickly said to her brothers: "Did you think I was not alone anymore?

My sister will punish you like a king!" Dervish approved of Fatemeh's attack and said: "Fatemeh, we will name your sister Shah Begum so that you two sisters will represent me."

Dervish said these words with such firmness, eloquence, and seriousness that both brothers heard and were shocked. Of course, Bahram's mood was different and he treated Fatemeh better. The first person to congratulate Dervish and express his joy at his sister's name was Bahram. It was as if at that moment a deep bond had been created between Shah Begum, the newly-born, and Bahram, who was a calm and understanding boy, like a bridge between hearts.

Khanom-Baji tidied up the things and dressed Shah Begum, and tied a beautiful turban around the newly-born head in a special way that is usually worn by elderly Azeri ladies. She said little and worked with practiced calm. Overall, Dervish was comfortable with Khanom-Baji's ability. Dervish quickly went and took a bundle from the wooden box that was his mother's keepsake, which was obviously prepared in advance, and gave it to Khanom-Baji.

Although Khanom-Baji insisted that no payment was necessary and that she considered herself indebted to the family, Dervish's calm sincerity, evident in his expression and words, left no room for refusal. After giving the necessary instructions, Khanom-Baji said goodbye. Since it was the middle of the night, Fayyaz accompanied her safely to her door.

Tohfeh had fallen into a peaceful sleep, as if she had safely carried a heavy load, and she deserved to sleep for an hour in peace. Shah Begum was calm in her own swaddling clothes, her eyes open. Fayyaz returned. Everyone was calm for their mother's comfort.

Each of them gently kissed their sister and went to their own rooms. Dervish sat next to his daughter, and the others left.

A heavy silence had filled the room. For a moment, not even a moment, the eyes of Dervish Shah had not left Begum. He, too, was quietly staring into Baba's eyes. In Dervish's face there was a light of hope and joy, but at the same time there was a strange worry and anguish.

Dervish, who always became like a waveless sea with his prayers and supplications, tonight the waves of anxiety shook his heart. His thoughts were worried. It was as if he felt an unspoken and unknown secret. He did not want to leave his daughter alone.

Dervish rested one hand on the pillow beside Shah Begum to support his head as he watched her. He looked into his daughter's eyes. A little later, involuntarily, Dervish's eyes became heavy from extreme fatigue and in that state, a deep sleep overtook him.

This sleep came and went like thunder. As if someone had called him, he got up in a hurry. He was walking towards the door whispering and whispering under his breath. He opened the door and entered the courtyard garden.

He went to the large pond in the middle of the courtyard. The smell of the beautiful geraniums covered the entire platform by the pond and made one intoxicated. The water of the pond had a thin layer of ice on it. Dervish rolled up his sleeves while reciting the dhikr.

First he washed his mouth and nose, then his hands, face, and arms. Then he ran his hand over his head and legs. All the while he was whispering under his breath. He went to a grapevine whose branches were on a wooden fence by the pond.

It was like a canopy for sunny days. He dried his hands and face with a towel hanging from it. He went to the corner of the courtyard and reached a stone that was like a platform or a chair. He walked slowly over the stone.

First he recited some prayers in a special language and suddenly the sound of peace stopped and he began to speak in a louder and more resounding voice as if he had a message for a nation, with a pleasant voice that rose and fell in a special way. Sometimes you could feel such longing in his words as if he were in another world or singing with the birds. Whatever it was, it was soothing and made for a beautiful morning.

As if his message was over, he went inside the house and opened his prayer rug. He sat down a little calmly. With a small, white, bony comb that had a hint of henna in it, he combed his hair and then stood up like a soldier. His hands and feet were regularly relaxed in the direction where the prayer rug was opened, and Dervish's hands went up to his ears and he whispered.

He let his hands fall to his side. He began to speak in a loud voice that seemed to rise from deep within and his faith. Word by word, and in between, he bent his back to his knees with martial gestures and uttered words. He straightened up again and threw himself hastily to the ground and fell with his head on a piece of dirt.

In all his postures, he had a whisper under his lips. The whole voice, words and movements were so harmonious and charming that it was as if a leader from the unseen world was guiding Dervish's every moment. All the energy was concentrated in one direction and one point. It was as if that point was the first and last point, the beginning and the end.

Before rising from prostration, his hands were again in front of his eyes, whispering on his lips and a burning tear caressing her beauty with its drops. The feeling of a candle burning when it lovingly absorbs a butterfly was lost in his imagination. Dervish's prayer had apparently ended reluctantly. He fell to the ground again and for a few moments he whispered and shed tears.

His sobs were barely concealed. Dervish got up, folded the prayer rug neatly and placed it in a small niche where there was a holy book. He took the book respectfully and kissed it, sat down on a wooden stool by the window, close to the dust-burning lamp that was there, and began to read the book. He read in his heart as if his teacher were standing next to him and watching him.

After some reading, he closed the book, kissed it, and put the book back in its place. He went into the room and asked the lady of the house. The kind Tohfeh wanted to sit down out of respect for Dervish, but Dervish's powerful arms did not allow her to do so. Dervish kissed his wife's forehead and thanked her for the daughter she had brought into their family.

As always, Tohfeh's gentle smile and innocent eyes revealed the secrets of her heart to her husband. Both of them watched the face of the newborn Shah Begum who was sleeping peacefully in her cradle. Dervish lifted Shah Begum, brought her to greet her mother, and then placed her near Tohfeh to nurse. But before that, she kissed Shah Begum's face.

She whispered under her breath and shed tears. She put her mouth close to Shah Begum's ear and seriously told her something. Shah Begum, who had just woken up, seemed to sense the importance of Baba's words. Like a good schoolboy, she listened intently and did not complain until her father's message was finished.

Dervish kissed his daughter's face. When she wanted to give the child to her mother, Shah Begum uttered words that were like the "qghqgh" of every child. As if Dervish understood that language, he replied to him: "Ali will be your friend and God will protect you" and handed the child over to his mother. He went to the breakfast table next to his children and, while congratulating each of his children, gave them some advice and reminded them of their duties in relation to their mother.

He asked them to reactivate in their thoughts the connection between love and motherhood that included all of them but had faded a little in them, and he said frankly: "Not only mother, but also take care of Fatemeh, because Fatemeh will be Shah Begum's help."

After the father's words, the atmosphere became heavy. After a few years without a small child at home, everything smelled new. Even the father's seriousness had either increased or the children were more sensitive to their reception due to their age. In short, the message was clear that the rule would be royal.

Shah Begum At the end of World War I and about eight months before the overthrow of the Russian Tsarist regime and Lenin's rise to power and the formation of the socialist government of the Soviets in Baku, the capital of Northern Azerbaijan, and the offices of the Communist Party throughout the member states of the Union, the formation of the new political order was advancing with the iron will of the party and, as they say, partly real and partly It was a record (despite the wise saying that chickens are counted at the end of autumn). Traditional and religious ideas were being rebuilt and modernized or were being set aside by decree and law.

Of course, as political and ideological party movements, along with economic transformation and respect for some modern ideas, replaced tradition, cultural transformation was slowly taking shape again.

Textbooks and cultural texts were full of praise for the new father of humanity, Lenin, so that the name of this leader, like the spiritual father of the new creation, dominated the examples, verses, hymns and thoughts of the people of their nations, and the old national and patriotic pride faded and the new culture was replaced by the materialistic attitude of the revolution.

Shah Begum's Childhood in Sardar's Family Circle

Several years passed. Dervish spent most of his time in the village and took care of the work there. The children had grown up and went to school. Sardar's sister, Nusibeh, who was also a medical student, lived next to Sardar's house.

In short, Tohfeh family, with Sardar and Nusibeh, filled the void left by Dervish. Meanwhile, Shah Begum was better off than anyone else. She had become a revolutionary in her own right and was taken to school every day by a military jeep and Sardar's driver. In the evenings, she would go with Sardar to his home, filling for Sardar and his wife the emptiness left by not having a child of their own.

Time moved on. Dervish was still traveling between Baku and the village. Tohfeh spent most of her time away from her husband with Fatemeh. Fayyaz and Bahram were busy with their studies.

Meanwhile, Shah Begum grew up with more opportunities at her disposal, and because she was often with the elders and went to different places with them and benefited from Nusibeh for her studies, she had become a woman for herself and went to school. She was very famous and well-known in elementary school. She had also become a scout and participated in all military ceremonies. Her activities were very impressive.

Of course, being the niece of a general had advantages for her, and she was a special student in the eyes of the principal and teachers. In short, she was the adopted daughter of the head of the Party organization in Baku, and her brothers also studied at the military school. Both brothers wanted to become pilots, but Shah Begum wanted to play the role of a teacher and, in fact, a leader. In the classroom, she acted like a deputy teacher.

No one dared quarrel with her openly, and everyone treated her with respect. She deserved that attention, and the recognition of her distinctive gifts strengthened her self-confidence.

With the full establishment of the Soviet government and socialist organizations, the family's financial situation was very good and Shah Begum had the chance to access many educational, recreational and school group outings from a young age and enjoyed every moment of life with enthusiasm.

Fatemeh's Emotional State: Begum's Elder Sister

Fatemeh was always calm. Apparently, she had accepted the loss in life with all its bitterness and, to maintain her morale or appearance, she had made herself serve in a compassionate role, so that everyone who needed anything would mention Fatemeh's name. In fact, wherever there was a need, Fatemeh's name was heard and wherever there was a discussion of victory and success, memories, medals, and excellent grades, it was Shah Begum's name that was heard and Shah Begum was asked to praise herself and again everyone would share in Shah Begum's moments in her own words and congratulate her.

But despite all these events, Shah Begum was kind to Fatemeh She was kind and remembered Fatemeh with a good character and often said: "I wish Fatemeh was with me." These words satisfied Fatemeh's motherly impulses, so much so that Shah Begum would hug her and say: "My little heroic sister, who is always in my memory" and shower her with kisses. When these scenes occurred, Begum, out of curiosity, wished she had the power to go inside Fatemeh's mind and interpret the knowledge from within her kind sister. Of course, for this harmony that existed in the children's attitudes and relationships, Dervish's good management and Tohfeh's patience were admirable.

Although Dervish was often away, Tohfeh spoke of him with such sincerity and respect that his presence remained alive in the home. In all the situations and achievements of the whole family, Khanom Tohfeh reminded the children of the blessing of the influence of her father's presence. It was her face, it was more visible. As if someone had slapped her in the face.

The mole on her face, like a handprint on her face in red, had become another pain for Fatemeh and an eternal reason to avoid confronting others. Poor Fatemeh only felt like a servant rather than a kind-hearted woman. Perhaps all these internal pressures had caused Fatemeh to have difficulty speaking and she often spoke with a stutter, like the family life was going on quietly. The shadow of the passage of time was visible in the wrinkles on Tohfeh's face and the whiteness of Dervish's beards.

The boys' features had become more masculine and the black shadow of their mustaches was visible as they were hard at work. Fatemeh also had a significant physical growth. Although she was short in stature, her sexual maturity and becoming a woman, along with her feminine movements and managing the housework, had made her a lady and had become an alternative to Mother Tohfeh in Dervish's house. But Fatemeh was still weak inside and Her self-confidence was low.

As she grew older, she had not had the courage to speak her words since childhood and would chew her sentences before they came out of her mouth. When she really spoke about her feelings, she would cry like a child and speak in a warlike manner. Without the other children knowing, Dervish had taken Fatemeh to a specialist and tried to help her. He was careful, however, not to weaken her further through excessive attention.

She often tried to highlight Fatemeh's role in everyone's mind by mentioning Fatemeh's name and her work and efforts as the best supporter of her mother and her important role in gathering the needs of her family members; a subtle support that was the cause of her She had become both motivated and persistent, and had created a deep bond in her relationship with Dervish. Fatemeh had replaced her childish jealousy with maximum help and care for Shah Begum, and had become a completely kind mother to Shah Begum. All her efforts and help for her sister's success had become famous in her heart.

Meanwhile, Shah Begum had grown both physically and mentally. She was successful in all her subjects and was considered a leader in most of the environments she entered, as if the mantle of leadership had been sewn and prepared for her in advance.

Begum Leaves School: The Silencing of a Volcano

Although Shah Begum was in the fifth year of elementary school, she participated in many official government ceremonies under the shadow of her uncle. In the same period that had coincided with Lenin's death, Shah Begum's student trips had increased, and she was prominent and prominent in groups. Her movements, attitude, and fiery views had left her older than her age. Of course, Shah Begum herself did not notice this development, so she had a good connection with her position and walked, talked, and commented with great self-confidence.

During the days of Lenin's death, she participated in various ceremonies on behalf of the school and as a representative of the Baku students, and she was often assigned to read or recite. Although her physical maturity was visible, her masculine movements and her stardom on the field were more prominent. A fearless girl, she was successful and a leader in the most difficult physical tasks, and she broke traditional molds for her. These activities had become natural to Shah Begum. Yet despite taking pride in her progress, Dervish worried and could not picture how his daughter would one day enter the traditional role of a wife.

He first had to overcome his own hesitation, for Shah Begum's upbringing and temperament differed greatly from those of his wife and elder daughter. Only Dadash and Zahra could easily enter Shah Begum's new world. Shah Begum understood this difference herself: despite her love and respect for Dervish and Tohfeh, she often preferred the company of her uncle and aunt and spent more time in their home. This was difficult for Dervish. He wanted to speak with Shah Begum about tradition, marriage, and emotional preparation for the future, but the conditions in which she had grown were far removed from conventional domestic life.

Dervish was aware of these conditions with his intelligence, but he was not prepared in himself to how to start. For all his strength as a father and provider, Dervish felt uncertain about how to approach this unfamiliar matter. He felt strange in this unfamiliar world.

After Lenin's death and Stalin's coming to power, the atmosphere and space gradually changed, and those hot, dreamy moods turned cold.

With each passing day, Shah Begum had new achievements. Her life and schedule were as full as a minister's. She was so mixed with these conditions that it was not boring for her at all. With all her hobbies and plans, she was also very successful in her studies.

She was almost thirteen years old in her last year of elementary school. She was preparing for her next steps and for new achievements, largely unaware of Dervish's world and of the hopes he held for her. But suddenly something happened to her that started a storm in her thoughts and heart that like a thunderbolt set fire to Shah Begum's thoughts, so hot that it destroyed Shah Begum's self-confidence. Now she was a lion without a mane and tail, she was even afraid to go to her uncle's house.

She even insisted on not going to school. She avoided participating in school's group activities. She was mostly a recluse and avoided being in public. It was as if she had lost her mind, like a bewildered and possessed person.

It was like. All the family members were confused and empty about her condition, and fear and worry had taken over all thoughts. Everyone tried to somehow calm themselves and others and make excuses for Shah Begum to become silent and cool like a volcano, turning into ash. They often thought that they had hit their eye or that she was tired, that she had reached puberty, and so on...

But no one was convinced by their own or others' reasons. They did not know the real reason for the silence of the volcano that suddenly became cold and no longer had any heat. The teachers, the school principal, were all busy. The psychologists were all trying to understand this problem.

Nights and days passed in absolute silence for Shah Begum, and she spent her time more secluded and alone. A great pain reigned over the family. In the worst season of the year, when all the students are busy preparing for the end-of-year exams, our Shah had become inactive and listless. She often has a fever at night and deliriums in her sleep and wakes up in terror, as if she had a terrible dream.

But she does not speak, does not answer any questions and keeps herself away from the crowd

For several days, Tohfeh has not been feeling well either, and she has no heart or nose, and her eyes are often dim and tearful, waiting for an excuse to cry. The drops that drip like torrential rain on her yellow cheeks have burned so many tears that they burn the hearts of every viewer. As usual, Tohfeh, the oppressed one, goes to the yard to hide her tears and occupies herself with the pleasant aroma of her candlesticks that are next to the pond, and washes her face so that the effects of her helplessness and motherly heartache do not make Fatemeh's condition worse than it already is.

What can I hide from you? Fatemeh is no better off than her mother, but she tries to hide the effects of the slap of time that she feels on her face after seeing her sister's condition behind the red color of her mole. Fatemeh was so absorbed in the life of her beloved sister, her queen and her model, that she no longer looked into the mirror to sigh; the sighs rose from her heart on their own. It seems that Fatemeh, in her inner burning, does not reduce the burning with tears, but with sighs, but because of her mother, who has abandoned all her work, she manages all the family's affairs.

This time Dervish's journey lasted longer. It seemed that the atmosphere of the house in Shah Begum's absence was difficult for him to bear, and he had taken refuge in work. In these circumstances, with the absence of her brothers, who are often busy with lessons and supplementary training courses and come home late and try to hide their feelings and heartbroken mood in the silence of the sweet-tongued nightingale at home, their dear sister takes refuge in books and reading.

In a word, it can be said that with the silence of the sweet-tongued Shah, Dervish's house has become silent and gloomy, and sadness pours from its doors and walls, and every night the lights in the house go out early, but most of the hours are spent in the dark, staring at the ceiling of the house, watching a movie of sadness in their minds, and moment by moment the traces of despair for the recovery of the unknown pain of Shah Begum falling from the throne, cast a shadow in their hearts. There is nothing left until the time of the final exams of the year. Dervish arrives, but with greater courage than before, as if this time of absence from the scene has gained energy.

As soon as she reached home, she called Fatemeh and after kissing her, she gave her a gift and thanked her for all her efforts and gave the same gift to Fatemeh to give to her sister. She explained to Fatemeh that she had bought this gift years ago during the Karbala trip; a pair of beautiful necklaces with silver chains and a crystal star as the jewel. The color of Fatemeh's necklace's jewel was beautiful green and the color of Shah Begum's jewel was ruby red. Dervish asked Fatemeh to tell Shah Begum that Baba had returned and wanted to see her.

He wanted to hang the necklace around his neck so that Baba could see him. After sending Fatemeh away, she went to their room and closed the door behind her. He went to Tohfeh, embraced her, and for the first time in his life wept openly in his wife's arms. Dervish's mood was incomprehensible to Tohfeh.

It was hard to believe this was the same battle-tested Dervish—the man of solemn words, the patient rock, the legend of endurance. In his vulnerability he seemed as innocent as a child, opening a new chamber in Tohfeh's heart. The key to his compassionate and gentle nature had become visible, awakening the wounded mother's deepest tenderness.

Tohfeh's childish heart had become ardent beside Dervish. With all her feelings, she caressed Dervish's head and features with the warmth of her hands and wiped away the tears from Dervish's proud but self-defeating eyes and kissed Dervish's eyes one after another and, like a mother who cannot bear to see her child cry, she went to the alms-giving altar of tears and begged the tears not to fall, as if the tears of Dervish were burning Tohfeh's soul and lighting a fire inside Tohfeh. I wish those moments could be recorded on film and given to the heartbroken humanity. How innocent, romantic, vulnerable and understandable.

Despite the fact that in the patriarchal world, men's tears are not allowed, in the world of love and affection, men's tears are noisy.

I do not know how long Dervish and Tohfeh remained behind that unaccustomed closed door. Then a heavenly voice reached them—a voice of hope, longing, and love. Shah Begum was calling for her father. Dervish composed himself, wiped away his tears, and opened the door. With all his strength he embraced the daughter whom, out of respect for her growing maturity, he had not held so openly for years, and kissed her head and face.

In this state, Shah Begum and Fatemeh were crying and saying "Baba" and clinging to Baba. All three were crying. It wasn't long before the mother joined them, crying too. Everyone was crying like a gray cloud bursting in the sky and becoming a flood.

As if the anger burst from the pain of the months spent in sorrow, at the same time the tears of longing to hear the voice of Shah Begum, the life of the house in that house were crying.

If we say that so many tears were shed that all four of them were drowned in its flood, I am not exaggerating. The tears completely disappeared in the clouds of sadness in that house and warmth reigned in the house again. Everyone was in each other's mood and the girls were worried about Baba's mood. The fragrance of the flower of love and emotion was spread in the house.

There was nothing in the hearts but love and affection. The turbulent sea of that house had calmed down and everyone was calm in the love of reaching the shore of salvation.

The fact that Shah Begum was walking again and her movements became more natural had made everyone in the family happy and content, but still no one tried to find a reason, but instead, everyone was united in maintaining silence about what had happened without any agreement or agreement. Dervish cleverly used this situation and arranged for everyone to go to the village to rest for a few days and then return. Of course, the boys could not accompany the family due to their education and studies. Shah Begum had also stopped studying and schooling for a while.

In short, Dervish and Tohfeh, along with Fatemeh and Shah Begum, got ready and set off. They spent almost a week together happily and cheerfully in the open air and mild air of the village. In fact, it was a good opportunity for the girls to get closer to their father. It was the last night that they were preparing to return, but it seemed that none of them had the heart or mind or desire to return, it was just a kind of compulsion of conscience that they had to return because they did not want to leave the boys alone for too long.

The next morning, after prayer, Dervish loaded his cart and prepared to leave. At the same time, Tohfeh and the girls waited for Dadash's driver, who was in the area on an assignment and would take them back to Baku. At the same time, the driver arrived and they set off. Dervish set off with his horse-drawn cart. Of course, he had some work to do on the way, so he was on his way until nightfall, but the others had arrived earlier.

The women started cleaning and cooking as soon as they arrived, but a new development was visible in the house and, despite the past, Shah Begum was also busy with housework and was helping her sister a lot and taking orders from her. She went. In the meantime, he also packed his bag and books and somehow let everyone know that he was going to school tomorrow and asked his brother Bahram to accompany him to school.

Thus, Shah Begum left for school again and from there she would go to her uncle's office, but as before, she had no desire to go to her uncle's house, no one opposed her so that Shah Begum would not feel pressured and move with her own bag, so she was often busy with Fatemeh at night and helped with the housework.

In short, the important change in Shah Begum's movements was strange, but no one opposed this situation, but it was welcomed, especially the way Shah Begum treated Fatemeh attracted a lot of attention because she willingly obeyed her own sister and carried out her orders and she had become so attached to Fatemeh that she was with her most of the time and did not care to participate in programs outside of school, but she took care of her studies at home.

Fatemeh was very close to Shah Begum and loved her very much. She paid a lot of attention to her sister's moods and was sometimes worried about Shah Begum's condition and felt traces of nervousness, anxiety, impatience and irritability in her. She tried to open the door to her sister's feelings and heart and find out about her sister's heart chest, but her sister's guard was very closed and she managed Fatemeh well so that she would not dare to insist on searching and she often tried to bring up the reason for studies and exams and escape from under the sinjins.

Of course, Shah Begum's reasons were true, that she was worried about her studies because she had to answer many expectations positively with the results of the exams, but sometimes the nightly anxieties in Shah Begum's dreams and the occasional crying and begging and pleading with someone while she was sleeping, all of which had become a mystery in Fatemeh's mind and her worries. Of course, in order not to worry her parents, she kept her mouth shut but her heart was worried.

Days and nights passed one after another, but the reasons for the unhappiness remained unknown. At the same time, the political situation in the societies of the member states of the Soviet Union was unstable, but there was a fire hidden under the ashes. Since Stalin, in order to achieve absolute power in the party, used dictatorial methods to remove her rivals from the social scene and political power, and every day, after ugly and unjustified assassinations, she spread the ground for the elimination of those who were among the main pillars in the victory of the communist revolution by her own direct order.

In the meantime, Dadash's position was under question for having thoughts close to Iran, so he had been removed from the party's center for a while, but due to his national popularity in Baku, he had not been practically eliminated yet, but he was caught in a quagmire of "what will happen next" and his mind was busy.

The exam season was approaching and Shah Begum was busy with her work and preparation for the exam. In short, after sleepless nights and early morning awakenings, the exam date arrived and Shah Begum, relying on her mind and hard work, overcame the prevailing conditions in the best possible way and was able to get the highest scores and pass.

Having passed the final year of primary school exams, all eyes were on Shah Begum to see what her goal was, but Shah Begum did not say a word. Bahram asked him one or two times what he wanted to do, but he did not get a clear answer. Finally, as the summer holidays passed, the issue of registration and the need to clarify goals became more and more difficult for Shah Begum. In short, the circumstances made Shah Begum open her mouth and a statement came out of the mouth of the talented student Shah that no one had even imagined.

Yes, Shah Begum firmly declared that she was not interested in continuing her studies and homework, and she did not want to take an official job and would rather be at home with her mother and sister. Considering the conditions of the time and the relatively religious culture of the family, which considered elementary school sufficient for girls, it was not an unreasonable choice. Well, considering the ambiguities about the empty slogans of the party, as well as Dadash's heartlessness and the fact that working in the party was not as attractive as Shah Begum had previously shown interest in.

In fact, Dervish and Tohfeh were also satisfied with this situation and the selection of Shah Begum, and many of the ambiguities about Shah Begum's future were resolved because the selection process of Shah Begum was in the direction of the traditional culture of the family and was less influenced by communist thinking and its proposed values.

Fatemeh did not dislike this decision either, because Shah Begum no longer had the desire to fly, so Fatemeh's stay at home became more justifiable because, unlike Shah Begum, Fatemeh had not attended formal school and, like many women at that time, took lessons from Mullah Baji and eventually learned the alphabet and reading and writing.

There was not much discussion or talk about Begum's decision, and her will to not continue her education was accepted as normal, and from that day on, Shah Begum lived with her mother and Fatemeh, busy with everyday life. Bahram tried several times, gently and as a brother, to change Shah Begum's decision not to continue her education. Although she respected him deeply, she did not yield. In the end Bahram did not press her. He simply said, "Whenever you want to discuss this, or if you have a new idea, you may share it with me." Shah Begum answered firmly that she did not think such a need would arise, making the strength of her position clear.

For several months, things went on as normal, except for her brother's situation and position, which had its ups and downs. In fact, as Stalin became more powerful, the political and party situation worsened and security became more tight. In fact, Stalin's method scared her more, as her opponents were increasing day by day, and she began to exercise stricter control, and the atmosphere became completely secure. The rest of Dervish's family was living their lives normally, and the boys were busy with their studies and training.

An Unexpected Love: A New Tremor in Begum's Life

One day, Tohfeh and the girls were busy making Dushbara. Dushbara is a soup that requires a lot of effort to cook. You have to prepare the dough and roll it out like bread on a round, flat rolling pin called an akhlo, and roll it out thinly. Then you cut the dough into equal squares, like a chessboard, measuring, for example, three centimeters by three centimeters, and then you put a piece of mortar, which is usually made from ground meat with spices and salt, on each cut square.

Then you fold the corner of the square dough into three corners and make it into an isosceles triangle. By pressing with your fingers, you stick the sides of the dough together and the mortar is completely hidden inside the triangle. Then you round the two corners of the triangle and stick them together to make an ear shape. Then, the prepared Dushbaras were boiled in a pot of water until they were completely cooked.

Salt, pepper, and vinegar or lemon juice were added while cooking. This soup is usually cooked on days when everyone is present; in fact, it is very economical to prepare. Also, if an uninvited guest arrives, you can add a little water and seasoning, and this way, everyone can enjoy it and not be embarrassed. The women were busy preparing the soup with their hands, heads, and faces covered in flour and dough, when suddenly Zahra appeared.

They were frightened and confused. She slowly sat down in front of Tohfeh and whispered something in her ear. Suddenly, her face turned yellow and she fell into a state of weakness. Fatemeh, who knew about her mother's condition, quickly brought a glass of water and put a sugar cube in it.

She also took off her own gold necklace from her neck and melted it in the sugar cube. She slowly poured the golden sugar cube into her mother's mouth. She quickly moved her mother away from the pastry table and pulled two large cushions that were next to the wall of the room forward so that she could stand behind her mother. She tried to lean on the cushions and started rubbing her mother's arms, legs and shoulders.

Zahra was scared and was very worried about Tohfeh because she had been shocked suddenly. It seemed that Zahra was worried and regretful when she saw her condition. When the chaos calmed down a bit and Tohfeh felt a little better, she said to Fatemeh: "Help me take you to my room. You continue cooking.

Leave me and Zahra alone. We have some work to do." Zahra said: "Tohfeh, you are not feeling well. Rest. We will talk later." But Tohfeh said: "No, no, let's go to the room." With Fatemeh's help, Tohfeh rose, and the three women went to her room. Fatemeh brought cushions and made her mother comfortable.

During all this time, Shah Begum was frozen and dazed, as if her soul had flown away or fallen into a deep sleep with her eyes open. As soon as Tohfeh moved, she told Fatemeh to continue preparing the soup and to close the door behind her. As soon as Fatemeh left the room and closed the door behind her, Tohfeh suddenly took Zahra's hands and said with a groan: "Zahra, tell me what has happened to us?" She had not yet finished her sentence, her anger burst out and a flood of tears flowed. Zahra was scared, she tried to calm Tohfeh down and said: "Dad, nothing has happened that you are killing yourself!

Calm down a little. I have good news for you and I have come for a good cause." But Tohfeh's ears did not hear these words, and perhaps she did, but she did not believe them, and she begged Zahra: "What happened that you came in such a hurry?" Zahra said: "For now, just find out for yourself and don't tell the children anything." Tohfeh said: "Okay, don't worry, tell me what happened." Zahra said: "Yesterday, two people came to our house; a lady and a gentleman. They introduced themselves as having a house in the alley next to ours and as Azeri immigrants who had come from Iran.

They had come to ask questions about a girl who often came to our house. From the information they gave, I understood that they were Shah Begum. I became sensitive and said that I was her cousin and that her uncle was not home and would be back in two hours. They apologized profusely for disturbing us at such an untimely time and said that we were leaving, but if you allow us to come back in two hours and talk to her.

I said okay, when my uncle comes home, I will tell her about your visit so that she is informed."

They left and about an hour after my uncle came home, there was a knock on the door. It was clear that it was them. Of course, I had told my uncle about the matter as soon as I entered. Yes, it was them.

They entered the house at my invitation and after greetings, a gentleman who was friendly and seemed to know what she was talking about said: "We apologize for disturbing your time to talk to you about a good cause. In fact, we have been involved in this issue for some time. Our son was talking about a girl who often comes to your house, but we haven't seen her here for a while. Our son insisted that we meet her because she has become interested in her.

Of course, they are not close acquaintances, but during our visits, our son's attention was drawn and she did some research. She even expressed her interest in your girl, but unfortunately, after that your girl has not been sunny and our son has gone crazy and threatened us that if we don't do something, she will kill herself. In short, the pressure was so great that we, as her guardians, took the initiative to get to know you and your family and the girl's opinion, if possible, and if there was any desire on your part, we would officially "Let's go to their parents and propose."

"They have just reached puberty and are looking forward to a bright future for themselves," said the uncle very respectfully. "I don't think she has any desire to get married early, and that too because of a one-sided interest. But since she is a mature girl and has her own opinion on life, let us discuss this matter with the family and then give you an answer."

These days Dadash himself is heavily occupied with administrative work. She said, "I will come to you to raise the issue so that we can first hear the story from Shah Begum and then discuss it with Dervish." Tohfeh's heart had calmed down a little and now many of the puzzles were being solved.

She very sincerely asked Zahra to go out with Shah Begum herself on the pretext of shopping to raise the issue with her so that their assignment would be clear. Zahra accepted wholeheartedly, because Shah Begum was truly of great value to her. She quickly got to work and called Fatemeh and said, "Fatemeh, you help your mother finish the shower. I will go shopping with Shah Begum, we will be back soon." Then she called Shah Begum to be ready to go out together soon.

The female diplomacy began. Zahra and Shah Begum went out. Shah Begum had guessed; in fact, the issue was about her and shopping was the excuse, but she did not say anything. Zahra said: "Let's go somewhere and talk for a while." Shah Begum said: "How is the canteen of the uncle's office?" Zahra said: "Maybe uncle will pass by there." Shah Begum said: "Okay, we didn't commit a crime that all our secrets should be revealed to uncle.

Incidentally, I think uncle will be there too, it would be better." Zahra fully realized that Shah Begum was focused. She said: "Okay, let's talk first, then if uncle has time, we will go to her office, because unfortunately these days uncle has very difficult conditions at work and is being strictly controlled." Shah Begum said: "I know that the situation has changed, there is no more talk of revolution and socialism and the people. Whatever it is, the fight for the division of the country's benefits is for the ruling leaders. History is repeating itself again." Shah Begum's words touched Zahra so much that she kissed Shah Begum's face without hesitation and said: "I'm going, let's go!" They both set off.

It was about a quarter of the way. On the same path, Shah Begum opened the conversation and said to Zahra, who also called her aunt, "Auntie, how are you? I'm fine, God willing." Zahra said, "Yes, I'm fine. I want to talk about this young man who asked you to marry me and hear the story from your own words." Shah Begum said, "Auntie, I don't know this young man, but later on, when I thought about it, I had seen her several times on the way to your house.

One day, she approached me and expressed her interest. I was really shocked. I was not ready to hear these words at all, and I was not prepared for them. I confronted her a little harshly and said, 'You don't know yourself.

First of all, I'm not the girl on the way, as you are showing with this attitude. Second, I'm looking for a ball game, not a date.' The young man stammered, 'But I am serious, and I love you. Even if you don't let me go, I can take you by elopement. Then the family will be satisfied.' I said, 'See, you didn't recognize me and my family?

Go grow up a little. You have a lot of time now. Please don't bother me anymore and get out of my way until I teach you a hard lesson.' And then I walked away. Well, I was shocked.

It was an emotional experience that was being showered on me from outside the family. I became a little proud and relaxed inside, but I am not the kind of girl who would do harm to my family or upset my uncle and you. On the other hand, I had heard news about stupid things related to the issue of elopement of girls and I also had a strong feeling that this gentleman, whether right or wrong, her words were serious. Well, I was scared.

I was helpless and speechless for a while. I couldn't tell anyone anything. So I decided not to come to your house and I didn't go to school for a while. On the one hand, I was curious and interested to see what would happen, because it gave me a good feeling.

Basically, I didn't think about these things at all, especially since the revolutionary movements and goals of the revolution had taken over my mind, but this proposal had created a strange feeling inside me that I didn't know what to do. In short, I had gone into my shell and was ashamed that my actions had caused my family's concern, but my mental conflict was not an easy morsel to swallow or spit out. In short, it took me a while to find myself again and come to a conclusion." Shah Begum fell silent for a while. Zahra, who was immersed in these conversations and whose love for Shah Begum had grown deeper under her skin, was proud to witness such maturity of the generation.

She asked with a sweet and meaningful smile: "Okay, bride, so yes again?!" Shah Begum said: "No yes comes out of my mouth without the consent of the family. In short, I am the daughter of a man who pursues ideals and values. Not long ago, when my father gave me and Fatemeh a gift, she gave me the courage to understand the value of the love that is given to me by my family without any conditions. My throat burst open and seeing the tears of my father, who was the model man of my life, I hugged her lovingly and, far from traditional prejudices, I kissed my father's face and drowned myself in her arms without any fear and reached the shore of peace."

Zahra, who had tear rings visible in her eyes, asked calmly: "Well, my dear, what is your conclusion?" Shah Begum said: "Auntie, the highest and most noble love for me is family; both the family that I have and the family that I have to create. I am not happy with the situation and the process of the government's work and I consider its ideals to be empty, so I do not want to be a toy of my feelings. I want to study, but if it is convenient, I can also get married, but the first condition is the consent of the family and the choice of the partner. In fact, I consider a man worthy who is worthy of proving herself to my family."

Well, Khanom Zahra had reached a state of peace within an hour and the maturity of Shah Begum's approach solved the problem.

Worldly and perceptive, Zahra understood more clearly the depth of Begum's judgment and self-confidence. With only limited knowledge, Begum had listened to the young man's words, weighed his behavior, and reached a firm conclusion. His reaction, by contrast, revealed frustration and an emotional want. Zahra said nothing: she would not judge a person she barely knew, but neither did she ignore the uncertainty she felt.

Zahra said to Begum: "Okay, honey, let's go home. I'll talk to Mom, and Dadash will come tonight and we can have a partnership together. What do you think?" Shah Begum expressed her satisfaction by kissing her aunt's face, and they both returned home.

Tohfeh was sitting in her room as if she were sleeping. Apparently, Fatemeh had packed everything and the room was in perfect order. Fatemeh excitedly went to Shah Begum and asked: "What did you buy?" Of course, she meant something else that she couldn't bear to ask. Shah Begum calmly said: "Don't worry, it's nothing important, but I think we have guests tonight." And she went to her room.

Zahra was with Tohfeh. Apparently, she had told her the whole story. Zahra said goodbye and left to return with her brother at night. Tohfeh went to Shah Begum and kissed her on the cheek and said, "My daughter, may my pure milk be lawful for you, God willing, you will be happy." The prayer was so sincere and heartfelt that it warmed any cold heart.

As usual, when Dervish returned from work or outings, food was almost ready, but Dervish would go first, pray, and return to the table that had been prepared in the meantime. But tonight, after Dervish's prayer, there was no sign of the dinner table. Dervish said with a smile, "Tohfeh, we are having suhoor tonight." Tohfeh said, "No, we are waiting for a guest." Dervish asked, "Well, whom are we waiting for?" Tohfeh took Dervish to the room and told him the whole story. Dervish's feelings were mixed. He was glad that one daughter's future seemed to be opening, yet saddened and worried that his elder daughter, Fatemeh, had not found the same happiness.

A few minutes later, there was a knock on the door. Dadash and Zahra entered with a box of sweets and after the greetings, they went to sit on the sofas. Khanom Tohfeh said, "Let's go to the table first, have dinner, then we can have tea while having fun. Shah Begum and Fatemeh also have work, they will go and get to their work." As soon as Khanom Tohfeh suggested, Fatemeh quickly went to set the table.

Dadash and Dervish spoke together in low voices before joining the table. Zahra and Fatemeh continued the preparations, but the bride-to-be had not yet appeared. At last Zahra called, "Begum dear, your uncle is here." As though she had been waiting behind the door, Begum ran in, kissed her uncle, and cast an innocent glance toward her father that burned like fire in Dervish's soul. Almost involuntarily he said, "May you be happy, my daughter." His blessing calmed Begum's restless heart and eased her fear.

After dinner, Zahra told the girls, "You go about your business. I'll clear the table myself. I'll bring the tea, too. Don't worry about us." The girls left, and Dervish and Dadash began talking, but there was no discussion.

It was as if their mouths had been sealed from the outside and this marriage was taking shape. Ultimately, it was decided that Dadash would first investigate and gather information regarding security issues through the Party's Security Office, based on which information, the next decision would be made or whether to allow the groom's family to come, so that issues could be discussed and prevented. For now, it was decided that this issue would remain closed; Both because of the possibilities that we still do not know what will happen and because of Fatemeh's spirit that needs special attention.

That night passed happily. A few days later, information was collected. The groom and her family were Iranian immigrants, there was not much background and information. At least there did not seem to be any questions or ambiguities.

Before their migration to Baku, they had lived in Iran near the place where Dervish was born. In fact, Dervish himself was born in Qara Dagh before his ancestors migrated. Apparently, this incident also had a positive background in getting to know the two families.

Promises and appointments and a time to meet were made. The promised day. Discussions and conversations that mostly served the purpose of getting to know each other progressed. A time limit for engagement was set for getting to know each other.

Begum had wanted to continue her studies for now, if possible.

The parties did not raise any problems with the conditions, and this marriage began. Of course, this union later became problematic for Dadash, because at that time the Soviet Union was concerned about the connections between the two Azerbaijans (South and North), especially for someone who was inside the system and a party leader, in terms of protection. Given the internal situation in the Soviet Union and the increasingly active security situation in the country, unrest was escalating, and Stalin's dictatorial laws caused a lot of problems for Dadash, and he was even excluded from the party for a while.

In fact, Dadash had been accused of sympathizing with and having relations with Iran, without saying anything. Despite the impact that this union had on Dadash's life later, it also created other problems in his heart from the beginning. On one hand, Dervish and Tohfeh were glad that Begum appeared happy with her choice and that a new beginning had come into one daughter's life. But on the other hand, they were very sad and worried about Fatemeh and her spirits.

Well, according to tradition, it was not right for a younger sister to marry before an older sister, especially when she had no excuse not to, so it put psychological pressure on the older sister and deepened the problem of low self-esteem. But despite this fact, Fatemeh was extremely happy for her sister's marriage, as if a daughter had been married and she had become a sympathetic liaison between the groom and the bride. On the other hand, Fayyaz and Bahram, although they did not seem to be against it, thought inwardly that Shah Begum had a bright future on the path of progress that would go beyond the issue of marriage.

Of course, they themselves were very busy with their studies and progress in the military school. They were.

Begum's Marriage

The new groom was handsome, eloquent, and tall, who had also won over Fatemeh's heart, and she had very kind and polite gestures and interactions in her travels. Of course, she was a little shy. She was busy with business alongside her uncle and father and had a lot of free time, so she mostly wandered around the fiancé's house. The engagement process was moving quickly.

It seemed that both parties were happy overall, so the wedding and its preparations began gradually. It was decided to hold a dignified celebration at the end of the summer of 1311, and since the groom did not have a house of her own and her parents were also tenants, at the insistence of her uncle, it was decided that the bride and groom would settle in the uncle's small apartment that was vacant. It was a neat and tidy apartment, close to the sea. Although small, it was very pleasant and compact.

The promised day was approaching. The bride herself and her sister, along with her mother and aunt, were busy sewing, buying, and completing the necessary supplies. Shah Begum had completely distanced herself from the world of the revolution, the party, and studies, and was busy with her future life, and it was clear that she was completely satisfied with her life. In fact, although Begum did not say anything, she was acutely aware of and suffering from her uncle's troubles with the party.

The man who once came and went and had meeting after meeting, these days was often a stay-at-home mom. His wife's warm presence still made their home pleasant and gave Dadash a place of calm. They had a brotherhood of thought and communication, and their conversations often complemented each other, and there was no hint of resentment or aggression. Like two students in a dormitory, they spent hours discussing and giving opinions together, oblivious to the passage of time.

The Birth of Begum's First Child

The wedding night arrived. Everything had been prepared in a neat and orderly manner, under the management of the bride herself, and everything had been thought of. It was a sweet wedding. According to Dervish's character, it was held in a simple, straightforward and concise manner at the level of relatives, and everything went according to plan and desired, and everyone went to their homes, and the bride and groom were also transferred to their own homes.

Since the weather had warmed up, Dervish took his wife, daughters and groom to the village to spend a few days there to enjoy the mild weather of the village. Now Begum and Fatemeh were a team and the responsibility of the entire house was theirs. Begum cared about both her own household chores and her own affairs and paid less attention to the outside. Since it was a hot summer, they actually preferred to stay in the village for a few more weeks, because they had their own facilities there, and the cost of living was cheaper and more abundant there.

The holidays ended and everyone returned to Baku. Only Dervish remained in the village to take care of some work. Fatemeh, Begum and Khanom Tohfeh returned with Khan-Goldi. Begum and Khan-Goldi stayed with Mom for a few days until Dervish returned from the village.

After Dervish returned, Begum went to her own house and the newlywed couple's life practically began. Begum was the housewife and every morning she would wake up earlier than Khan-Goldi and prepare breakfast and set the breakfast table. Then Khan-Goldi would come and they would have breakfast together at the table. Then Khan-Goldi would go to work, usually working until the evening and eating lunch at work.

Begum would often go to her mother's house and be with Fatemeh after cleaning the house and would return home early in the afternoon to prepare dinner so that when Khan-Goldi returned, dinner would be ready quickly. Of course, some days Begum would go to Aunt Zahra's house in the afternoon and often did her shopping with Aunt Zahra. Sometimes Khan-Goldi would also come to the uncle's house and eat there and return to their own house with Begum. They spent most of their weekends and holidays at Dervish's house, and sometimes they would go to Khan-Goldi's father's house, but not much, because their house was very far away.

In short, a calm, carefree, and simple life continued. Begum had become completely the mistress of the house; she only occasionally attended women's gatherings, but she did not tend to do so, as if she was angry with them in her heart, but she did not talk or have any conversations. Months or perhaps a year had passed since Shah Begum fell ill and apparently had been poisoned, but her mother soon realized and woke Begum up and quickly sent a message to Khanom-Baji and they talked about Begum, and Khanom-Baji talked to Begum and the suspicion of pregnancy was raised. In short, this news was welcomed with joy and gratitude by everyone.

Fatemeh and Khanom Zahra showed the most sympathy. Fatemeh, who was not able to stand up and fit into her own skin, grew older with each passing day, and Begum's movements became weaker and Fatemeh's work increased, and she was happier that she had a big role in her family's life. It was as if she considered herself indebted to this family, so she tried to find peace by serving them. It goes without saying that Fatemeh was the softener of Begum's soul, and traces of love and need prevailed between them.

Time passed like the wind. Begum laid down her burden in the same house where she was born and with the help of the same lady Baji. A girl with thick black Azeri eyebrows, an attractive face, and black eyes, although her lips were smiling, a trace of sadness was visible on her face. It was as if she was a stranger in this world.

She often cried fearfully in her mother's arms. Yet this spirited little girl brought abundant laughter and joy to Dervish's house. The newborn was kissed constantly and passed from one embrace to another. But when Dervish took her in his arms, Hafezeh stared into her grandfather's eyes, just as her mother once had, and became calm and free of tears. It was as though she had entrusted her heart to the sea of her grandfather's strength. She waited quietly and listened patiently to every word he whispered in her ear, surrendering to the security of his love.

It was as if the captive of his grandfather's love had achieved inner security.

Dervish called the call to prayer to his beloved child with his pleasant voice and called his name. It was as if Hafezeh had already. She had memorized her name, so she stared into her grandfather's eyes and was silent. Dervish kissed the forehead of his beloved, then handed the innocent child over to his grandmother.

Then he drew Begum and Fatemeh into his arms. Turning toward the Qibla, Dervish said, "Merciful God, even if I prostrated before You day and night, how could I ever give thanks for all these blessings? Once again I ask You to shelter these beloved ones." He glanced toward his son-in-law and added, "Congratulations, dear son. These two daughters are entrusted to your care." Before long, Dadash and Aunt Zahra arrived. The brothers were absent, but the house filled with the fragrance of love and affection, and joy shone in every face.

A feeling of love and support. From that moment on, everyone became Hafezeh's guardian. She passed from one embrace to another and became the center of every gathering, often keeping the household awake well into the night. Apparently, she knew that Mom was busy during the day, but she had a lot of customers at night, so she slept in the mornings so that she could be naughty at night. Of course, as the day and night passed, she became more and more cheerful, plumper, and more and more noisy, and her laughter made hearts rumble.

Day by day, Hafezeh secured her place in every heart and warmed each family gathering. Nearly everyone had grown deeply attached to the sweet child. Without anyone formally arranging it, a kind of changing rota emerged so that each person could spend time with her and join in her games. Masha'Allah, Hafezeh had enough spirit and affection for them all.

But by God, when it came to Dervish and Fatemeh's turn, the story changed and Hafezeh was more at peace. She became very obedient and stopped being naughty and rested in the arms of these two like a warm feather pillow. Whenever she was in her grandfather's arms, she would only stare into Baba's eyes. She would look until Dervish smiled, and then she would respond with an innocent smile.

Ever since she was slowly standing on her feet, Dervish's house had become a child's learning room, and everyone tried to teach this beauty something, and she, with her intelligence, absorbed all the lessons and encouraged them to learn more. His first birthday party was very simple but enthusiastic. His uncles were also on vacation and had plenty of time to spend time with the beauty of the house and enjoy herself.

The days passed happily and cheerfully, and although Shah Begum had her own house, she was often at her father's house. Khan-Goldi, like the son-in-law of the house, was unobtrusive. Although they had their own house, Begum's room and the things she had as a girl were still intact at their disposal, and they rested there and were content with their circumstances.

News of Begum's Second Pregnancy

Not even a few months after Begum's first child was born, another transformation was taking place. Of course, this time Begum was more experienced, and she quickly realized her own situation. Yes, Begum was pregnant with another child. Begum herself was uneasy because Hafezeh was still very young, so she first shared the news with her sister.

Her sister was so excited that she ran around the house screaming and shouting that her beloved was pregnant again and was lost.

Although Begum had meant to announce the news herself, Fatemeh's wild delight revealed it to most of the household, and everyone congratulated one another. Begum remained shocked and bewildered; Khan-Goldi did not yet know. Unable to contain her excitement, Fatemeh ran to her uncle's house and promised good news in exchange for a reward. Unsure what she meant, Zahra promised to buy her a beautiful dress.

Then Fatemeh had told them the news. Of course, this news was not easy for Zahra and her uncle to digest, but in any case, they had hugged Fatemeh very happily and given her a gift on account. Zahra had promised her that she would take Fatemeh with her to the market so that they could buy her dress in her presence. They returned with Fatemeh to Dervish's house and offered their congratulations. Begum was quieter this time, almost embarrassed, until her aunt broke the tension and said, "All right, do not worry!

Hafezeh is ours, you get ready for your next child."

Begum was no longer a naive girl who could be soothed by such words. Even the joking suggestion of giving Hafezeh away was painful to her. Now Shah Begum was a mother, dependent on the fruit of her love; a fruit that she would not trade for the whole world. At that moment, under the pretext of changing the child's clothes, she took Hafezeh with her to her room. She held Hafezeh tightly and wept in silence. In her tender, heartrending voice, she slowly recited a poem to her child, whispering with a mother's intimate affection:

You are the keeper of my soul, don't exaggerate, my world
The starry sky, without your presence there is no light
You are my heart, without you this body has no life
The thought of being without you is very painful
In the thunder and roar of the sky inside me
Your being a rescued drowning person brings peace
If the sky brings an army to learn about you
I will tear out its liver with my claws and teeth
Who dares to come towards you
I will make his mother mourn for him

Begum became so absorbed in her feelings that she forgot they had guests. Fatemeh's voice brought her back to herself. She composed herself, picked up the child, and returned to the others. Aunt Zahra was perceptive and knew Begum's moods well. Joking gently, she said, "Begum dear, why did you take it so seriously and run away with Hafezeh?

Well, Hafezeh is yours, we'll take the next one, maybe it'll be a boy!" Well, everyone laughed. Begum blushed but said nothing, and so the evening passed.

Little by little, Hafezeh grew while Begum's belly became heavier. As usual, Fatemeh's work increased; her whole life had come to center on her sister and her niece.

A Suitor for Fatemeh

Around this time, a suitor unexpectedly appeared for Fatemeh. His respectable, devout family were Dervish's neighbors in the village. Their son worked at a hospital in another Azerbaijani town. The family was financially secure, and the young man held a stable government post with a good salary.

The news of finding a suitor caused Fatemeh to fall ill, because it had shocked her for a moment. Dervish and Tohfeh were very happy. In fact, in those circumstances, their heartfelt wish and their greatest pain was for Fatemeh to settle down, especially after marriage, to have children and settle down. So when Fatemeh was shocked and had a series of mental states, Dervish and Tohfeh thought that Fatemeh had gone mad from the joy of the news.

Trying to reassure Fatemeh, they told her that the proposal was serious and that the young man genuinely wished for the marriage; he would consider it an honor if Dervish accepted him as a devoted son-in-law. And Tohfeh promised Fatemeh that Baba was completely satisfied and that this union would take place any day Fatemeh wanted.

Unfortunately, no one knew about Fatemeh's heart and feelings, and with all their good intentions, they unintentionally poured fire into Fatemeh's soul and drove her even more crazy.

She was struggling to find a way out. The doctor, the medicine, the prayer writer, the vows, and the needs that were being offered to Fatemeh only made Fatemeh's condition worse. Even the boy's family had become heavily involved in the matter, and since they knew that Fatemeh's family was satisfied, they proposed a formal marriage. They even said that they were willing to take their bride away early and that for now they would take the bride to the village and take care of her there in good weather, and God willing, she would get better and the shock would be overcome by doing these things.

When Fatemeh heard the news, her condition collapsed completely. Terror seized her. She fled from everyone, moaned, and locked herself in her room, allowing only Begum and Hafezeh to come near.

For some time, Begum had also been afraid of Fatemeh's moods, because when she wanted to leave Fatemeh's room, Fatemeh had repeatedly forced her to keep Hafezeh with her. Although Hafezeh meant the world to Begum, she could not bring herself to resist Fatemeh's wishes and allowed the child to remain with her. But Begum had quietly raised this concern with the family. They were also worried.

So they decided, on the pretext that Shah Begum had become heavier and needed more rest, and considering Fatemeh's condition, they could no longer pressure her, so they hired a servant to take care of Begum. That person's house was also close to Begum's house, so Begum should return to her own house and Fatemeh would soon go to her husband's house. The boy's family was also getting ready to come and officially finish the job. The groom's father even wanted to deed the small garden they have next to their garden, which also has two rooms, to Fatemeh's name so that Fatemeh would be relieved of her decision and seriousness.

May your eyes never see such a day. When the plan was explained to Fatemeh little by little, she lost all control. She lunged for Hafezeh, trying to pull the child from Tohfeh's arms. Her strength was so great that Tohfeh could not resist and cried out for Begum.

Begum came at her mother's cry and pulled Hafezeh free, but Fatemeh would not let go. She clung to Begum's skirt, wailing like a wounded creature, moaning and pleading. Suddenly Begum shouted, "You madwoman—let go of the child!" The words devastated Fatemeh. As though scalding water had been poured over her, she recoiled from Begum and the child, ran to her room, and continued to howl, repeating only one plea: "No—by God, no!"

From that moment on, Fatemeh became a complete lunatic and did not recognize anyone. She did not allow anyone to come near her, so much so that her mother would leave her food behind the door of the room, and in the middle of the night, Fatemeh, out of extreme hunger, would sneakily open the door and take the food to her room. She did not even leave the room to go to the toilet, and somehow all her work was done in the room with the door closed. It was impossible to bear this state.

A team from the hospital came and, by force and injection of a strong sedative, they numbed her and took her away. Fatemeh was hospitalized for a few weeks. She had calmed down a little. She did not speak, but she was not aggressive either.

In fact, she did not even have a voice. They were constantly injecting her with anesthetic and sedative drugs.

Fatemeh and Hafezeh Meet at the Hospital

Fatemeh's condition had improved a little. During all this time, Begum had not forgiven herself for shouting at her sister. She decided to take Hafezeh to her sister, maybe she would be helped. Now Hafezeh was walking a little on her feet.

Begum took Hafezeh's hand and led her to Fatemeh's bed. Tears were pouring from Fatemeh's eyes like spring clouds when she saw Hafezeh, but she was afraid to get close to Hafezeh, and the burning of the teardrops in her eyes was so obvious that it would hurt the heart of an enemy, let alone a sister. Begum could not bear to see this scene anymore. She lifted Hafezeh and placed it on the bed, on Fatemeh's knee.

Oh, this unfortunate woman began to lick and smell Hafezeh's hand like a thirsty person, and she would gently touch it and touch it, and sometimes she would look at Begum with a world of sorrow, and Begum would break her back under the pressure of it. Begum kissed her sister's hand and said to Fatemeh: "Hug her, kiss her." Fatemeh gently hugged Hafezeh, kissed her head and face, licked her, and smelled her. Calm and unmoving. Everyone calmed down for a while.

The nurses returned when it was time for Fatemeh's medicine. They asked Begum to take the child. As soon as Begum tried to lift Hafezeh away, Fatemeh's face contorted; she clutched the child and howled, pleading, "No, no—by God, no!" With a practiced movement, one nurse injected the medicine into Fatemeh's arm while another held her shoulders firmly.

A few minutes later, Fatemeh's hands went limp and she fell. At the same time, the baby also fell from the bed. And she was separated. There was mourning from door to door.

Fatemeh calmly and oppressively laid her head on her pillow and went to sleep.

No one could bear to see this state of affairs. I must say that she had completely reached zero spiritually and felt guilty and hopeless. Because of her pregnancy, the doctor strictly did not consider it right to see these scenes for the sake of the health of the child in her womb and they prevented her from seeing her. Fatemeh was officially considered crazy.

Everyone was desperate, just waiting for a miracle. The groom's side, completely heartbroken and despite the groom's inner desire, agreed to forget the matter for the time being. Of course, they would wait for the time being. It was as if the groom had said: "I will not marry anyone else after Fatemeh and sit at her feet."

Almost two or three months had passed since this incident. Fatemeh's mood had calmed down and she had moved home. Occasionally, Begum would come to her father's house and see Fatemeh, but there was no news of the groom's family. One day, an aunt deliberately spoke loudly so that Fatemeh could hear.

One day Zahra deliberately spoke loudly enough for Fatemeh to hear. She asked Tohfeh, "What news is there from the suitor's family?" Tohfeh answered, "None. When the poor family understood that Fatemeh was unwilling, they gradually withdrew." The words worked like miraculous medicine. From the other room came Fatemeh's sudden cry, "Thank God!" She said nothing more, but her relief was unmistakable; even her appetite seemed to improve.

The next day, Begum came to her father's house, but her Hafezeh was not with her. As soon as Fatemeh heard Begum's voice, she called her by her name. Begum quickly answered and went to Fatemeh. Fatemeh stood up, hugged her sister.

Fatemeh held her so tightly that Begum feared for the baby in her womb. Noticing her concern, Fatemeh quickly released her, knelt down, and gently stroked Begum's belly. She placed an ear against it as if trying to hear or feel the child move. At the same time, she anxiously asked for Hafezeh. Begum told her, "Hafezeh and Khan-Goldi will come later." Begum remained confused and uneasy.

Fatemeh spoke up and said to Begum: "Do you know what happened?" Begum, not knowing what she was asking, said: "No." Fatemeh said: "Thank God they left and lost their graves." Begum asked: "Who do you mean?" Fatemeh happily said: "I mean Maryam Khanum." Begum asked: "Well, what happened?" Fatemeh said with a smile: "Khanom Zahra told Mom that she and her family have stopped bothering us and will no longer bother us." Begum asked: "And are you happy about this?" Fatemeh said: "Yes, if I got married, they would take me to another city, then I would not be able to be with you and your Hafezeh." Wow, these words were like an iron hammer on my conscience, saying that I had not understood the extent of my sister's love and affection, despite all its unusualness, so that I could at least talk to her sister and find out the reason for Fatemeh's opposition to the proposal.

Of course, no one understood Fatemeh's reason and they thought that she was possessed by the madness of love for her husband. It was a strange night. All this pain, suffering and misery, and so much neglect or inattention in the family! This time, I will say that she hugged Fatemeh lovingly and said: "You said it well." Fatemeh said: "Didn't you see that my father and mother were about to send me to my husband's house and if I had gone, everything would have ended, they would have separated me from you and the children." That night, another night in the history of this family's life, and all this sorrow and grief had arisen for no reason.

A little later, Khan-Goldi and Hafezeh arrived.

Seeing Hafezeh and hearing her greet her aunt miraculously made Fatemeh feel better and happy. A silence reigned, fear took hold of their hearts, wondering what Fatemeh would do.

Fatemeh hugged and kissed Hafezeh with tears of joy, licking her head and face and saying, "I am so sorry, my heart is broken, I am afraid they will separate you from me." All this time, tears of joy were falling from Fatemeh's eyes. Suddenly, she got up and circled around Hafezeh like a butterfly, saying, "Oh God, let me go around you." These feelings were so sincere and genuine that I can say that she lost her temper, and before her mother and Zahra could do anything, it was Fatemeh who ran, prepared a candy, brought it close to her sister's lips and fed it to her. At the same time, she stroked her sister's hair with one hand and apologized, and her sister's charity went.

Begum came back refreshed, but everyone looked incredulous and tired. Dervish was not there either. Zahra went to her house with Khan-Goldi and the news was given to her uncle, and Khan-Goldi went to their house and it was decided to inform Dervish early in the morning through the village minibus driver about the family's situation. Begum, Fatemeh, Hafezeh and Mom slept peacefully together that night after months to start another day, free from sorrow and grief.

The Dervish Family Together Again

At the weekend, the whole family, uncle, aunt, Fayyaz, Bahram, Dervish were all together, in short, they understood all the reasons and causes of Fatemeh's mental illness. Each of them comforted Fatemeh in some way and offered their love. Especially the uncle and aunt were very fascinated by Fatemeh's condition. Dervish was calm, spoke little, and was mostly silent.

The boys were supposed to set up a barbecue and set up a grill, but Dervish objected. Considering the economic situation of the country, which was facing economic problems and shortages, he did not want to upset the neighbors with the smell and smoke of the barbecue; perhaps someone would like to but could not afford it. So they avoided setting up a grill and started cooking stew and rice. Zahra was a good cook and her stuffed stew was famous in the family.

At her own request, Zahra took responsibility for the cooking and spared no effort. The fragrance of local butter and steaming rice filled the entire house. Dinner was served on time. Over tea, the family revisited old memories and gave thanks that their recent ordeal had eased. At the end of the evening, Dadash and Zahra returned home.

The others went to their rooms, but Fatemeh insisted on remaining awake to tidy the house and wash the dishes. And so another night was recorded in the family's book of days.

After many upheavals, Dervish's household had regained a measure of calm. Day by day, Shah Begum drew closer to the birth of her child, and despite the hardships of pregnancy, the family's peace made her happy. Amid all this, preparations for Nowruz began and the house was given its traditional spring cleaning. As usual, everyone would gather at Dervish's home for the New Year, so most of the work fell to Fatemeh while the weary Begum moved less. The baby, too, seemed large and heavy, making the final weeks especially difficult for her.

Preparing for Nowruz

Eid had arrived. The scent of flowers from the gardens, whose cultivation and cultivation were Tohfeh's long-standing interests, was everywhere. Indeed, in the mornings before sunrise, when the fragrance of flowers and the song of birds mingled with the pleasant voice of Dervish's morning call to prayer, the promised paradise was presented to the human nose. The new year was being delivered at seven in the morning.

All the loved ones had gathered an hour earlier. All the necessities and the table setting were ready. After the prayer, Dervish was still busy with the Quran in his hand and studying the Book of Creation. Everyone had come except for his uncle and his wife.

Fatemeh worried that her uncle would not arrive in time. Tradition said that anyone absent from the Haft-Sin at the moment of the New Year might miss that blessing for seven years. She kept hurrying to the courtyard gate to look outside. In the final moments before the year 1315 began, she cried, "They are coming!" She ran to meet her aunt, grasped her hand, and the two hurried toward the house. Only then did their hearts begin to settle.

The entire family was present and gathered around the Haftsin table, eagerly awaiting the arrival of spring. The radio announced the arrival of the year. Yes, spring had arrived at Dervish's house. The family members were kissing and hugging each other.

Khan-Goldi was welcoming the guests. Dervish took out the new banknotes that he had placed among the pages of the Book of God. He started with the youngest member of the family: Hafezeh, Begum. Of course, she gave Begum two banknotes; the second was for the new sapling.

She was also in the mother's heart this spring, next to the family, and her share had been set aside by her grandfather. Uncle also distributed her coins as usual, and then everyone went to the table to have breakfast so that everyone would be ready to eat breakfast before starting to visit friends and neighbors. The table had not yet been completely set when the sound of the doorbell was heard. Khan-Goldi went to the door to open it.

Fatemeh simultaneously took the set table to the kitchen. The neighbors had come to visit for Eid. The house was constantly filling and emptying. Everyone was kissing, expressing love, and expressing various prayers and requests to the Creator, grateful for the blessings of the Nowruz culture.

As usual, Dervish's family would go to the beautiful spring nature of their village every year during Eid and the beginning of spring. Where a view of the promised paradise appeared. Seeing and smelling in that space was relaxing. The eyes could not be satisfied with seeing those sights, and the nose was intoxicated with the delightful aroma of the blossoms.

The earth coming to life under the feet of humans was palpable for pure feelings; like hearts that were evolving and their thoughts and feelings were becoming softer and their hearts were thinner and the buds of hope were blooming in them. But this year, because of Begum's pregnancy, they had not gone to the village to hand over the new year. Of course, it was a good decision, because on the 12th of Farvardin, the pain that had held Begum captive all night brought another gift to Dervish's family before noon.

The Birth of Begum's Second Child

According to the usual procedure of Dervish's family, Khanom-Baji arrived and became Begum's assistant when the new son was born and was the first to announce that the baby was a boy. Dervish and Tohfeh were looking forward to the health of the mother and child. Both were happy. Of course, Tohfeh was happier, because deep down she wanted a boy more, who had now achieved her wish.

Although it was not a naming day according to tradition, the baby's name was pronounced in tongues. Since the newborn was large in weight and had put a little pressure on Begum, they named her "Qahraman." Despite all the difficulties, the result was sweet and happy for the whole family, because the time of her birth was right when a big problem in this family had been solved and a great sorrow had been removed. Qahraman was not merely a name; the child seemed already worthy of a name that meant champion. His handsome face, the color and size of his great eyes, and his sturdy frame all seemed in harmony with the name he had been given.

From the very first moments, Hafezeh showed that she would become her brother's protector. Like an old lady, she was supportive of her brother. She would say: "Mom, hurry up, give me breast milk, brother, don't cry!" Hafezeh stayed beside her mother, watching over her little brother. It was as if these two had been siblings and companions for years.

Qahraman was born on the twelfth of Farvardin 1315, exactly one day before Sizdah Bedar. Well, the family's calculation of not going to the village was useful, and now it was easier for Begum to bathe the newborn and enjoy taking care of Qahraman. Especially the companionship of Hafezeh made the task much easier for Begum. Hafezeh stayed so close to Qahraman that she spoke to him as though he were her doll, asking her little brother questions without waiting for an answer and tending to whatever she imagined he needed.

Sometimes she even asked her mother for permission to do it or not. In short, things were great. Tohfeh remained beside Qahraman, touching and soothing him at every opportunity. She sang her a lullaby.

She sang with such depth of feeling that tears often sparkled in her eyes. Whenever Hafezeh was nearby, Tohfeh was careful to hide her distress, because the perceptive child quickly sensed her grandmother's discomfort and alerted her mother.

Days and nights passed. Dervish's family, despite the problems that were gradually intensifying in the country, was actually the time of the birth of another global disaster. Most people were facing numerous problems. Dervish's family, thanks to the village's facilities, had fewer material problems.

Their only fear was the future of Bahram and Fayyaz, who were both soldiers and had officially entered the military for some time.

Dervish was often busy with his own work and providing for the family's economic needs. He had been officially named a hero and knew his own name well. He practiced movements to stand on his feet with the help of his mother and sister, and day by day that innocent face became more masculine and attractive, and he spoke broken words. The uncle's family came less often.

Uncle was under pressure from the government, and his peace of life was disrupted, and he was less likely to appear in public. Bad news was arriving day by day. The world was pregnant with another war.

Stalin's dictatorship had become more obvious and her control was increasing. Government circulars were issued one after another, and pressure on non-Russians and those who still had dual citizenship was increasing. Stalin's dictatorship had led popularity towards the government to hatred combined with fear day by day. Stalin also suspected her own shadow, and every day she closed the field more and tightened control more than the day before.

Qahraman was growing steadily, and Hafezeh had grown as well. Months passed one after another. Qahraman walked slowly. The winter cold dominated the cities.

This cold was not interesting for Hafezeh and Qahraman, because their playing area was becoming smaller, they often had to play at home. Yalda night arrived. There was always a chair in Dervish's living room. A large chair covered with a large quilt, approximately five meters long and wide.

The enormous quilt had been sewn by hand that summer under Fatemeh's direction, with Begum's help and even little Hafezeh's companionship. Dervish had supplied the wool from their own sheep. Tohfeh and Zahra chose the lining and a richly colored cover embossed with flowers. A man named Mirza carded the wool, and then the women began the sewing.

It took several days. On the one hand, each person, after laying the wool on the lining with a special needle called a quilting needle and with dyed threads, would stitch cotton thread on the front and back of the lining with the needle and prepared threads in a cross pattern, and each of them would proceed in a line. They would also eat together at noon. One day, it was time to make the doshwara.

Zahra took charge of it. It was a holiday. The men were also at home. Bahram and Fayyaz were on leave.

Dadash had also come to see Fayyaz and Bahram. The women had intended to finish the quilt that day, but once the young men arrived everyone preferred to spend time together. Tohfeh agreed that completing the lining would be enough and that the quilt itself could be finished after the boys returned to their posts. So the family gathered around Zahra's Dushbara, with little Qahraman as the star of the gathering.

Chapter Four: Yalda, the Nationality Law, and the Beginning of Forced Migration

What Is Yalda?

The Yalda of Nature and the Yalda of Dervish's Family

After the young men returned to their posts, the women finished the quilt so that it would give the room a special warmth on Yalda. Yalda marks the longest night of the year. By tradition, families gather around the hearth, listen to stories told by their elders, play games, and share fruits and nuts while keeping vigil until morning. In folk legend, Köroğlu—the nation's champion and legendary freedom fighter—had to remain awake in mountain refuges through the longest, coldest nights to protect himself from enemies and oppressive rulers.

Once the bitter night had passed and sunlight returned, he could resume his struggle to free the people from oppression. Thus staying awake on Yalda was not merely a custom but a sign of fellowship with the legendary hero. People longed to see the smoke of Köroğlu's fire rising from the mountain, proof that he was still alive; only then could they rest in peace. That year's Yalda night arrived.

Tohfeh and Dervish were in their room, preparing for the evening. Qahraman carried his toys in the little wooden cart his grandfather had made, while Hafezeh played lovingly with her brother in their shared childhood world. Fatemeh and Begum arranged the fruit and nuts in the kitchen. Suddenly Khan-Goldi rushed into the house.

Khan-Goldi hurried to Begum, held out a leaflet printed with a cartoon, and said in distress, "Look." Begum laughed at first. "What nonsense is this?" She assumed it was a joke, but Khan-Goldi's face exposed a fear long hidden beneath courtesy and silence. Seeing his distress, she asked, "Why are you so upset?" He answered, "Do you not see? The notice says that every foreigner must either change citizenship or return to his own country.

We are ruined!" Begum still did not grasp the danger and was puzzled by his panic. "Why should we be ruined? Thank God, we have no problem." Khan-Goldi said, "My family is preparing to leave." Begum answered, "Then let them go if that is what they want." He said, "I cannot remain without them. We must go too." Before Begum could even think, the words poured over her like boiling water. For a moment they shattered her inner world like a violent earthquake. She ran and gathered the children into her arms.

Fatemeh, who until then had watched in numb silence, suddenly began to wail—a reaction even more alarming than the episodes of earlier years. At the sound, Dervish and Tohfeh hurried in and asked what had happened. Every eye turned toward Khan-Goldi for an explanation.

Trembling, Khan-Goldi showed them the illustrated poster. In the first image, healthy hens and chicks stood in line at the border gate with all their household belongings. Beneath it

The Nationality Law: Expulsion of Those Without Soviet Citizenship

it was written: "Those who go of their own free will.

There was another photo below the above photo, in which several chickens and chicks, with their feathers down, were standing in line in front of the exit gate of the border without any means. Under that photo it was written:

The situation of those who will be forcibly deported.

Forced Migration Becomes Inevitable

Dervish was deeply thoughtful, Tohfeh and Begum asked Dervish: "What does it mean?" Dervish asked Khan-Goldi: "So where did you find this photo?" He said: "The secret police have distributed these photos to the homes or places of foreigners living in Baku. They mean that everyone must either return to their own country or change their dual citizenship to just Soviet citizenship. Of course, those who do not want to change their citizenship can officially leave and take all their belongings with them, otherwise they will be forcibly expelled without permission to leave their property. That is why many are leaving before the situation gets worse and they do not have much time until the end of the year. "

Dervish said, "Very well—let them go. May God help them. Why should we worry?" Suddenly Khan-Goldi said in a trembling voice, "Baba, my family is leaving." Dervish answered, "They have relatives and connections in Iran. Let them go; you can visit them later. Iran is not so far away." Khan-Goldi did not believe that travel back and forth would remain possible. In that respect, he was right.

Dervish continued, "In any case, you have your own life and your children. Do not be afraid. These circumstances are painful, but there is no remedy." Khan-Goldi swallowed hard. "I am going too. I cannot remain without my parents." With greater patience, Dervish replied, "Do not worry. For now, let us investigate and understand the full depth of the matter." Before Khan-Goldi could speak again, he added, "Go and help your parents with their preparations. I am going to Dadash now to learn what he knows."

Dervish took the leaflet from him and repeated with particular gravity, "Go and help your parents." Khan-Goldi understood the weight of his words but did not dare say anything more. He left the house.

Only then did Dervish notice Tohfeh's condition. Her face had turned pale, her blood pressure had fallen, and her body was trembling. She could not control her jaw, and the violent shaking made her teeth chatter. Her eyes had plainly lost their natural focus. Dervish carried her into the room, laid her on the bed, prepared hot sugared water, and whispered in her ear, "Do not be afraid. Dadash is here, and I am here. Do not worry."

Tohfeh said only one thing: "Qahraman... Qahraman..." Then she lost consciousness. Her eyes remained half open and her heart beat rapidly, but outwardly she did not move.

Dervish called for Fatemeh but heard nothing beyond her wailing. He went to Begum's room and found Fatemeh there, distraught. She had clawed and wounded her face and head. Her voice had failed; she could not speak, and only wordless sounds escaped her throat.

Dervish called loudly to Begum: "I did not expect such weakness from you. Have you forgotten that you were the lioness of this house? Have you left me alone now? Is Dervish dead that all of you have begun to mourn? Your mother may be having a stroke. We know Fatemeh's condition, but I expect you to stand firm like a man." Begum answered with a single sentence: "Baba, my children are my whole world."

"Are they only your world?" Dervish replied. "They are the world of all of us, but we must act wisely." Begum said, "Did you not see that Khan-Goldi has already made up his mind?" Dervish answered, "Then we will decide what happens to you and the children. As long as I live, you and your children will face no trouble alone."

He told Shah Begum, "Watch over your mother. I am going for the doctor." Then, his heart aching, he spoke softly to Fatemeh: "My daughter, while your father lives, do not let grief enter your heart. This humble life of mine is a sacrifice for all of you. Fatemeh dear, look after Hafezeh and Qahraman until I return." Fatemeh rose and embraced him. His heartfelt words seemed to pour cool water upon the fire inside her. Weeping like a helpless soul, she said, "Go, Baba. I am here too."

Dervish left the house in tears and hurried to the doctor. He returned moments later. Tohfeh still lay in a deep faint. The doctor checked her blood pressure and pulse, mixed two ampoules, and injected the medicine into her arm. She wrote a prescription for Dervish to fill and explained the directions to Begum. "Khanom Tohfeh must rest," she said. "Do not worry. In a few hours she should recover. Fortunately, her heart is functioning well." The doctor then left with Dervish, who paid her fee, said goodbye, and continued on to Dadash's house.

Dervish knew that Dadash must be at home, for in those days he was mostly housebound and seldom went to the Party office. He went directly to Dadash's home—a place he had not visited for years, since Dadash usually came to see him.

Zahra was away, apparently buying nuts for Yalda so that she and Dadash would not arrive empty-handed at Dervish's house that evening. Dadash opened the door and was startled to find Dervish standing there. Beneath his surprise, he was glad: he knew Dervish as a quiet ally, a man who served others without display in times of hardship. At first he imagined that Dervish had come to hear about his troubles at work, or perhaps to let him speak of the fall from honor into forced idleness. Confiding in a man of God like Dervish might have eased his heart.

But Dervish's face spoke of another pain. He had come to say that this night was no legendary Yalda: a real Yalda, with all its piercing cold, had descended upon his home and was extinguishing the fire in its hearth. The lock upon Dervish's tongue broke open with his tears and grief. For the first time, a man of the family saw Dervish's vulnerability in tears—tears so searing that they set Dadash's soul aflame.

Dadash cried out, "Shame upon a world that turns leaders who seek justice into soulless rulers and executioners! With the people's help they rise to power; once there, they oppress those same people and use the power received from them to destroy them, shrinking from no injustice."

Then he turned to Dervish. "I knew about this matter, and it is very serious. The order has come from the Party's central leadership. There are other aims behind it as well. Under this cover, they intend to move some of their intelligence operatives into foreign countries, strengthen their security apparatus, and establish contacts and networks for future Party expansion."

With regret, he continued, "But I never imagined Khan-Goldi would act with such weakness and surrender. I share the blame. From our first encounter I sensed his liberal disposition and the habits of a khan's son, yet I did not dare interfere in Begum's life. I believed that, with my standing in the nation and the Party, she would face no serious trouble. Look what fate has done: now I must watch helplessly, like a mouse, as something happens that neither you nor I nor anyone in this family deserves."

Dervish, even more desperate after hearing this, half rose and said with a father's grave anger, "If he stays, he stays; if not, then to hell with him. I will raise my children myself. Begum does not need me for that—God bless her, she is strong enough to stand like a man. Until now Khan-Goldi has played the pampered gentleman, while Begum herself has been the true pillar of their life."

Dervish was about to leave and give Khan-Goldi his decision, but Dadash spoke the words that shattered him. "Dervish, do not be hasty. Under the law, custody of the children belongs to the father, not the mother. If Khan-Goldi chooses to take his children, Begum has no legal claim. Only two paths remain for her: give up her children and stay here, or burn for their sake, leave her homeland, and spend the rest of her life in exile—but remain beside them."

Dadash's words were simply an exact account of the law and of what lay ahead. In that moment they embodied the Yalda of Dervish's life and made the cold, extinguished hearth of his home painfully real. The doors of that warm house would close; compulsion would write the bitter beginning of another life. Their own Köroğlu could no longer keep the hearth alight, and no smoke would rise from Dervish's home.

The True Yalda of Dervish's House

There would be grief without measure: lamentation, mourning, and a sorrow that swelled the heart. Crushed by it, Dervish had no strength to return and face his family. Dadash said, "Come, let us go. For now we must persuade Khan-Goldi not to leave with his parents. Let him wait until after Nowruz, when the earth and weather have warmed. His parents can go ahead and find a place; Khan-Goldi and his family can follow later. Even if they cannot take their belongings, it does not matter. By other means I can send them gold with which to buy what they need in Iran."

Their hidden hope was to change Khan-Goldi's mind little by little—or at least to persuade him to go alone, leave the children in their mother's custody, and accept meaningful help from the family in return. These possibilities gave Dervish just enough strength to return home. Though he was a broken boat within, he tried to lower the sails of that sinking vessel, hoping to lessen the force of wind and storm until a better morning came.

Dervish walked home beside Dadash with great effort. Under his breath he murmured the Azerbaijani lament he had once sung for pilgrims on the road to Karbala: "Karavan Kufa yolandı, aman Zeynab, oyan"—"The caravan has set out for Kufa; Zeynab, arise."

Dervish and Dadash returned home. Both tried to keep the matter from seeming even more terrifying, so the family's spirit would not collapse and they could proceed in relative calm. As planned, Dadash opened the conversation. He explained the reality gently while trying to soften it and preserve hope that a solution might still be found.

Dervish reinforced the same message. Whatever happened, they would face it together. The law had to be observed, but perhaps they could use their rights to find another path. He even suggested that a journey to Iran might not be the end: perhaps they could create conditions for a return, or perhaps fate meant to open the way toward their ancestral homeland and allow them to rediscover their roots. These words did not carry Dervish's usual power to console, but between the bad and the worse they offered the family a little hope, a little self-deception, and room enough to breathe.

Later Zahra arrived and sat beside Tohfeh, caring for her. It was a hard Yalda for Dervish's family, yet by morning no smoke rose from Dervish's hearth. It was as though Köroğlu had fallen asleep—or frozen—and no trace of fire remained. Contrary to their custom, everyone, exhausted by the pressure upon them, eventually lay down to await another sunrise. But sleep came neither to Dervish nor to Tohfeh. Both were afraid to reopen the conversation and clung only to hope for the coming day. Dadash and Zahra returned home after midnight; Khan-Goldi had still not appeared.

Bargaining with Khan-Goldi's Fear

The next day, Khan-Goldi returned home pale to see how things were. Dervish called him and the two of them chatted in private. Dervish wanted to see what Khan-Goldi thought. Khan-Goldi said: “My parents have made their decision and are completing the requirements for leaving and are not willing to stay in any way and want to be among the first to leave Baku so that they will not have any restrictions on taking their belongings.

We agreed to buy some belongings that are popular in Iran and we can sell them over there at a huge profit. In fact, this is a good opportunity, not to be missed.”

Khan-Goldi’s words, every word of his were like a dagger to Dervish’s suffering heart, and since he was just getting to know Khan-Goldi’s inner feelings, his fear for the future of his daughter and children increased. In fact, he gradually realized the reason for his worries during the courtship and that he had an unknown storm in his heart. Now he had to deal with a man who was so happy with the profit motive of buying and selling, but was unaware of the tragedy whose first victim was Dervish's children, especially when he saw the groom's very absurd and insensitive values.

Despite his inner desire, he had to speak softly to this creature and dissuade him from his decision; an act that Dervish was hopelessly unsuccessful in, and on the other hand, he knew very well that he would not give up on his children at any cost. So Dervish gained control of his emotions and, while quietly congratulating the groom, tried to bring him a step closer to him. He said, "My son, you have good economic ideas, but if you also listen to my old man, you might earn more. In fact, now Dervish knew the groom better and spoke from his heart, so he said: "Help the parents go, we will even help them buy the things they want and make the most of this opportunity.

We even have a lot of old Nikolai's things that are being bought in Iran, we will give them as gifts to take with them, but considering the cold season, don't go so soon, wait for them to go and prepare a place, you will go to them a few months later. Of course, it is true that if you are not part of the first group, the work will be more difficult financially, but in return it gives us an opportunity to prepare ourselves a little more financially and to be able to provide better and more comfortable travel conditions for the children with more financial help.

Of course, don't worry, if you are taking less money financially, we will send some of your things in advance through them so that when you go, some of your needs will be ready. "Now, if there were any restrictions when you left, we could use your brother's resources to provide you with money." Well, Dervish's words were in line with Khan-Goldi's culture, of course, a little attention to the children and then some emotion were included, so it had a good effect that Dervish was doing his job well.

Dervish even told Khan-Goldi, "Let us go together. I will speak to your parents myself, give them the help they need, and see them safely on their way." He left Khan-Goldi little room to object and strengthened the plan to postpone his own departure through the promise of material support. Khan-Goldi's answer proved the tactic effective. "You are right; this is better. I will speak to my father, arrange a meeting, and tell them I agree." He asked permission to go to his parents' home and inform them. Without saying a word to Begum, he took his leave.

That evening, Dervish went to Dadash and explained how he had persuaded Khan-Goldi to postpone the journey to Iran. Dadash was pleased with this temporary success and briefed him on the law and the circumstances. Yet if Khan-Goldi ultimately refused to remain, Begum would face a terrible choice. Separation from her children would be a fatal blow, but giving them up was impossible. Nor could Dervish's family ask her to part from them; they could not accept Khan-Goldi taking the children away without their mother.

Anyone with a feeling heart who wished not to burst beneath such pain would have had to blind and numb every human emotion, as anesthesia separates a patient from the agony of surgery. Yet there was one terrible difference: after an operation, despite pain and convalescence, there is hope of recovery. Here, once consciousness returned and reality was accepted, the sufferer had to live with it every hour of every day—alive, yet dying inwardly, the soul wandering as it waited for the body to release it into eternity.

The only peace in such a condition comes from a faith strong enough to accept the fire as Abraham did, relying wholly upon God. Only He, in His mercy, can soothe broken hearts. Through a deeper love, one may enter the circle of lovers and receive from the Lord of Love the strength to endure—just as the fire became a garden of peace for Abraham.

Dervish pursued every promise he had made. In effect, he entered a one-sided bargain with Khan-Goldi's family: he pleased them with material help, drew Khan-Goldi closer, and worked more tirelessly than anyone for his parents' welfare. They welcomed this unexpected good fortune and spoke of their satisfaction openly.

The days passed as Khan-Goldi's family prepared for the journey with new hope, encouraged by Dervish's help. They took it as a good omen and sometimes whispered, "When God closes one door, in mercy He opens another." Khan-Goldi, too, was pleased. His parents' departure was being arranged, and his own future seemed to open before him. Though he would not leave with them, he imagined returning later with his wife and children, equipped with money, possessions, and every advantage.

Dervish's family, however, lived in chaos and uncertainty, their hearts trapped beneath a heavy cloud. They were so consumed by the crisis that Nowruz arrived almost unnoticed; no one felt ready to welcome renewal. Even so, they forced themselves to prepare for the last Wednesday of the year, preserving appearances while their spirits remained crushed. Tohfeh's physical and emotional condition was especially poor.

Fatemeh's condition was also beyond description. In fact, Fatemeh's heart was dead and there was no light in her eyes, she was a dead person who had to walk. Begum's situation was also beyond description, she was under mental pressure with the pain of uncertainty and uncertainty about the future, but she did not bring it on herself. Like her daughter Begum, Dervish was just giving others encouragement by maintaining appearances.

Bahram and Fayyaz were also outside Baku and probably did not have a day off on Eid.

Wednesday passed, but there was no firewood. Eid arrived and 1316 was delivered, but the Haftsin table at Dervish's house was not prosperous. Basically, this house was no longer that house.

Expulsion of the First Group of Migrants

The fifth of Farvardin, only days before the anniversary of Qahraman's birth, was fixed as the farewell to Khan-Goldi's family. At last the day of weeping and leave-taking arrived, and the first caravan of deportees set out. Most were desolate and anxious, especially those forced to abandon beloved people, homes, and memories. For Khan-Goldi's family, however, the departure held a different meaning. New hope had begun to grow in them. A window seemed to open before Khan-Goldi, and his old aristocratic manner revived as he imagined a more prosperous future and became dearer than ever to his parents.

Khan-Goldi's behavior had changed completely. Dervish's kindness seemed to have made him feel newly important. A man who until recently had been an ordinary member of the household, welcomed into Dervish's family because of Begum's love, now displayed a growing sense of superiority. He became colder, more commanding, and more severe with Begum. What gave him this opening was the devotion of people who would sacrifice everything for love and for whom nothing mattered more than their children. Yet how could someone whose heart had never blossomed understand the meaning of such love?

Preparing the Second Group for Departure

After the first caravans had departed, Khan-Goldi found a new way each day to draw more from the family. Several times Begum urged him to think of the children's future, remain in Baku, and leave any journey to Iran for later. He met her appeals with cold indifference. Before Dervish, however, he behaved differently, flattering him and using childish tactics to gain concessions. He did not understand what Dervish and his family truly wanted. His conduct ran directly against their wishes, and he grew more determined to leave, waiting only to collect the payment for the land and Begum's gold. He had even asked Fatemeh to entrust him with her jewelry so that he could sell it for her in Iran.

Qahraman's birthday arrived. Dervish's entire family was present. Fayyaz and Bahram had also come on leave. They were also worried about their sister and implicitly had private conversations with their sister about this.

Fayyaz was completely against Begum going to Iran and even told Begum to forget about the children, but Bahram, despite his desire not to be separated from his sister and children, was not cold and soulless like Fayyaz, but encouraged his sister to prepare herself for this trip and not send the children alone with Khan-Goldi. In short, the situation was very chaotic and sad. Dervish's family was all thinking of buying Khan-Goldi, perhaps in this way they could change Khan-Goldi's mind so that he would change his nationality, but Khan-Goldi's mental state was becoming more determined to go day by day.

After some serious tests, Khan-Goldi had revealed his true nature. At the family's urging, Begum told Khan-Goldi firmly that she would not allow him to take the children to Iran, especially now that conditions had worsened. Khan-Goldi answered coldly, "I do not care if you do not come either. I will take my children to me and my mother will take care of them. I will also start a business.

Of course, your parents can also help me financially so that I can build a better future for the children." These answers marked the end of the line, and Begum's relationship with Khan-Goldi had become strained. They hadn't spoken to each other for a few days, and because of that, Dervish's relationship with Khan-Goldi had become colder. Apparently, Khan-Goldi had realized that the free milk was over and that there was no more time to milk. Khan-Goldi didn't come home for a few days.

As usual, she suddenly appeared and told Begum that she had spoken to a lawyer to finalize the separation and divorce issue so that she could legally take custody of the children and prepare herself for the trip. For a woman who had already lost her future in a one-sided and hopeless love, these words were a hundred times more terrible than death. Yet Begum understood that she had to prepare for a painful journey: separation from her children would be worse than separation from life itself, and open hostility could not protect them.

Begum Accepts Forced Migration

For Shah Begum, losing the throne and losing the love of her life with her loved ones forever was the most certain price that she had consciously accepted to be with her children, and she was determined to pay that price manfully. Like all those who enter history, they must pay the necessary price. D, whether they are on the wrong or right front. And today Shah Begum was in a situation and had to make a decision.

One can understand what a true mother's decision is. Yes, Begum chose the one she deserved. She agreed to put on her boots and her cane and, like a blind man, compromise on her shoulders, set off for the field of trials. One could hear the whisper of a poignant poem from her heart, which she repeated to herself inside and in her own mental space, she approached the joy of sacrifice and its effects.

Now, instead of worry and fear, a spiritual and kind state was visible in her movements. She was becoming a butterfly and feeling sorry for her friends. Of course, her only way out was to burn in the burning candle of her loved ones. The atmosphere of the house was filled with the fragrance of love and affection.

All the eyes were wet from the raindrops of worried eyes. You could feel Begum whispering under her lips. Most of them were kissing their loved ones. You could hear her whispering from her heart: "Kiss me for the last time, may God protect you as I go to an unknown destiny." Begum told Dervish of her decision, but she didn't dare tell her mother.

She asked her father to discuss the matter with the family if possible, and to discuss with her the decision to continue the preparations with her husband before the distance between them grew any further. Well, it was a fact that had to be decided, and it was. The family was together for the weekend. Khan-Goldi was there, but Bahram and Fayyaz were not.

Of course, Begum had already informed them of her decision during the last meeting and had explained the reasons for the decision. Despite the fact that the whole family was averse to this separation, due to the sensitivity regarding the children, who would have to give up their children if Begum refused to leave, they all agreed to leave and separate and at the same time they had given their hearts that they would give everything they could to their sister and nieces.

In this gathering, Shah Begum said with complete mastery and maturity: "Dear ones, I know that we have been facing problems together in these few months and the wrath of time was not on our side and despite our inner desire we have to leave the country and as you know Khan-Goldi is also deeply saddened by his parents' migration. Of course, for the sake of the children and me, it was necessary for us to travel after them and so that we could prepare the travel supplies after Eid and the departure of the first batch of immigrants and, when the weather warms up, set off on the path that fate has prepared for us.

Of course, by bringing this up, I wanted to make it clear that all of us, despite our inner desire, decided under some kind of forced circumstances to leave our homeland and separate from our large family. In any case, preserving our small family is not only a duty for Khan-Goldi and me, but also a responsibility and emotional need that we must accept with great regret and because of the tyrants’ decree.

In this way, to maintain unity and strong morale in these remaining days, let’s help each other so that this separation can take place more peacefully, and all of us can turn these circumstances into a new and unknown possibility, make ourselves stronger, and make the most of these remaining days.” As expected, Fatemeh’s condition deteriorated. She was completely numb and did not speak. Tohfeh passed out. Zahra went to her mother’s aid, and Begum went to see Fatemeh.

Dervish, Khan-Goldi, and Dadash began to discuss the matter. Begum's clear, reasoned words calmed the gathering and made Khan-Goldi feel some shame. This shame was expressed in Khan-Goldi's statements and expressions of weakness, of course, hidden in a series of justifications: "If it weren't for his parents' old age, who now have to live alone, we wouldn't have gone either. I hope that I can be a better friend and helper for my wife and family there, in response to this decision of mine.

I know that you dear ones will also help us." Words like salt made the burning inside Dervish a hundredfold. But what can be done? Sometimes a person is condemned to accept defeat and pay the price, and this is the same price that Dervish and his family were moving to pay. Days and nights passed, but there was no joy or cheerfulness in Dervish's family.

The slightest excuse would cause tears to fall from the eyes. These tears came from so deep in the soul that the burning drops sparkled on the cheeks. Fatemeh only talked to the children and was often silent in a corner, hugging her knees and immersed in her own mental world. Tohfeh was officially on the sickbed.

Begum had been at her father's house for a long time and had no idea of her own home. Only Khan-Goldi went to their house every night and came back the next day and was often unemployed, because after his father emigrated, he had no specific work. Dervish did not travel and was often at home either with Khanom Tohfeh or busy with the life of the house with the grandchildren and entertaining them. All the household chores fell on Begum's shoulders.

Dadash's job and party status were also uncertain and he had become a kind of housewife. Of course, his monthly salary was being paid. The weather was gradually getting warmer and the pleasant spring weather was moving towards the heat of summer. According to the announcements, the time for the departure of the second group of immigrants was also approaching.

As time passed, Dervish's family members became increasingly short of breath and signs of nervous breakdowns were visible. The promised day arrived. It was the end of June. Khan-Goldi still had no news of his parents, but he knew that upon arrival, he would have to take his children to a village in Iran, around Khalkhal and Mianeh; in fact, the village where his parents were supposed to have gone.

Despite the fact that they could have taken a bus from the land border to leave Baku, according to the local government, all immigrants had to take a boat to Pahlavi Port, which is what happened.

Fatemeh After the Departure Became Certain

Severe pain gripped the entire family. That night everyone in Dervish's house remained awake, as though the home had become a refuge for grief-stricken souls. Only Hafezeh and Qahraman slept, unaware that by morning their whole world would be uprooted.

The Farewell Night: Dervish's Family in the Evening of Strangers

Khan-Goldi is busy packing and preparing the suitcases. It seems that the pressure on the departure of the passengers, especially those with children, has been reduced. This news itself made Khan-Goldi happy, the only one who expected to leave as soon as possible. But the rest of the people were like convalescent patients and their faces were colorless.

If a painter were an artist and could paint those faces, like the picture of Dorian Gray, he could touch the tears that were burning in his heart. Despite those circumstances, no one except Khan-Goldi wanted that night of sorrow to reach dawn, because they knew that with the sunrise, the sunset of their lives would come. Then they would have to cry forever for the departure of their loved ones, but not in Their cemetery and graves, but rather, every inch of the house that was once a source of warmth and happiness; a house that many had longed to have, but now it was deadly for the survivors of that family to endure. That house was so full of fragrance and imagination that it was unforgettable.

The old dervish had his plan ready for the survival of the survivors.

The Port: The Karbala of Dervish's Family

The promised morning arrived. The port was crowded with migrants and those who had come to bid them farewell. My God—it was a Karbala at the harbor. No one could bear separation from a beloved. It was as though an earthquake were destroying the world, or a ruthless power were tearing children from their mothers beneath the lash of oppression. Wailing and cries of "Ya Hossein" cast a veil of grief over every face.

Khan-Goldi had already carried the luggage aboard, but no one could separate Qahraman from Tohfeh. Fatemeh would not release Hafezeh; the pain in her moans was enough to make the sea itself boil. Dadash embraced his sister and, with Zahra's help, led her away from the crowd. Tohfeh had fainted, yet her tear-filled eyes still stared toward the ship. Dervish took Hafezeh from Fatemeh and placed the child in Khan-Goldi's arms.

Begum held Qahraman. Her eyes remained fixed behind her while her trembling feet were drawn toward the vessel. The ship's whistle sounded again and again like a death knell, announcing its readiness to depart. By then Begum had no tears left and could not speak; her voice seemed to have dried at its root. The sight of her walking would have broken any heart. This was the woman who had once moved like a queen through Baku and whose school parades had won admiration. Now her mind commanded her feet, but they would not obey. It was as though she had to guide them toward the ship with her own hands. She may have been the last passenger to board.

Thick smoke rose into the sky as the ship gave its heartrending whistle. Sound and smoke together seemed to swallow a part of Dervish's family. For Dervish, that evening became Sham-e Ghariban—the night of the forsaken. For years he had led pilgrims toward Karbala and sung laments of caravans, exile, Zeynab, and separation. Now he was living with his whole being what he had so often sung for others, whispering the same laments beneath his breath for himself and those he loved.

The ship receded. The smoke climbed. Voices broke into one another, and Dervish's home stood empty even before the family had returned to it. That day Begum did not merely leave Baku; she left behind the heights of her childhood, youth, motherhood, and family. Standing at the port, Dervish learned that a person may remain alive while a part of the soul sails away forever.

Begum with Hafezeh and Qahraman

Dervish's Family After the Travelers Departed

They had barely left the port when Dervish, still dazed, noticed Tohfeh's condition. She did not move. Her body lay lifeless upon the car seat. Beside her, Fatemeh stared silently ahead, stunned and unaware of her mother's state, as though her open eyes no longer saw or obeyed her mind.

Dervish told the driver to pull over at once. He opened the rear door and shook Tohfeh, but her spirit had already left her body. He groaned in pain and struck his head with both hands. He understood that his wife's soul had refused to part from Qahraman and had boarded the ship with him; Dadash and Zahra had carried only Tohfeh's body to the car.

Dervish's movements seemed to wake Fatemeh from a terrible trance. She looked at her mother, screamed, tore at her hair, flung open the car door, and ran aimlessly, crying out. Poor Dervish chased after his daughter. With the driver's help and that of several bystanders, he brought her back and seated her beside her mother's lifeless body. Dervish sat close to keep her from harming herself, while one compassionate man joined the driver in case more help was needed.

The driver hurried to the hospital. Two nurses led away Fatemeh, who was in a state of delirium, while two others carried Tohfeh's body inside on a stretcher. Dervish sent the driver quickly to Dadash's home with the news. The driver knew both families well and sped away.

Within an hour Dadash stood beside Dervish, burning with grief for his sister's sudden death. Zahra went to the psychiatric ward to arrange Fatemeh's care. By the time she arrived, the staff had calmed Fatemeh with an injection and she was asleep. Friends and relatives gathered. At the earliest opportunity Tohfeh's body was laid to rest, but Fatemeh remained hospitalized in the psychiatric ward.

Dervish visited her every day. Whenever the sedatives weakened, she raved in delirium, and at times the nurses had to secure her hands to the bed so she would not injure herself or anyone else.

To understand Dervish's grief requires only a living heart and the courage to enter his inner world—to discover how far a human being can bend beneath sorrow and still continue to breathe. May God spare anyone such a fate; the heart tightens even at its telling.

God is my witness: even now, as I, the narrator, try to portray those moments, tears give me no respite. It feels as though my heart will break through my chest. I sense death itself; pain grips my chest and breathing becomes difficult. Merciful God, what patience did You give Dervish that he could endure? Not for long—perhaps only a few months.

Fatemeh had only recently been released from the hospital. With Zahra's help, Dervish hired a nurse to remain beside her and assist her in every way. The woman was kind and deeply sympathetic to the family's suffering.

The nurse's brother was also Iranian. He had been married before, but his wife had died. He did not wish to change his nationality and had postponed his departure for a time because of his sister, waiting until she could leave her employers without difficulty. It seemed that fate still held other designs for Dervish's children.

A Suitor Is Found for Fatemeh

Two or three weeks later, one day the nurse's brother came to pick up his sister from Dervish's house. His sister was to accompany him on a two-day visit to friends and then return. Incidentally, Dervish was also home at the time and had met the nurse's brother and invited him to come over and chat until his sister was ready to leave. That brief visit gave rise to events that only the hand of fate could have drawn.

During the visit, the nurse's brother learned the tragic history of Dervish's family, the cause of Fatemeh's illness, and why she had never married. He was very moved and, deeply moved, left Dervish's house with his sister. Out of extreme sadness, he had talked to his sister about the fate of Dervish's family and said, "If Dervish is satisfied with me, I will marry his daughter and take her to Iran with me and find his sister so that she can live with her sister." His sister did not oppose the idea and promised to raise it within the family.

His sister worried that Dervish or Fatemeh might reject the proposal because her brother was at least fifteen years older than Fatemeh and had already been married once. Even so, she promised to raise the matter. The siblings discussed it repeatedly during their journey, which they shortened at the brother's insistence. As soon as they returned, the proposal reached Dervish through Dadash's wife. At first Dervish was reluctant; he feared that the subject might once again disturb Fatemeh. In the end, however, he agreed that Zahra should speak to her herself.

When Zahra spoke to Fatemeh, a strange and almost unbelievable joy appeared on her face. Fatemeh said eagerly, "How can I marry without knowing who the groom is, what kind of man he is, how old he is, or where he comes from?" Her reaction was welcome news for Dervish, though once again he had to prepare himself to let a child go. Deep in his heart he was content, because Fatemeh would travel to Iran with the hope of finding Begum, and the two sisters might be reunited in exile.

Immediately all the talks, arrangements, and appointments, which seemed to have been ordained in heaven, were accepted and a simple wedding was held, followed by preparations for the journey and Fatemeh, along with her husband, who was a sensitive, noble and kind man, was going on a trip where the blessing of meeting her sister and children was possible. The preparations were ready and the day of the trip arrived. Again Dervish sent another beloved one on a trip, but this time the whine of the ship was played to Dervish's ears more faintly and sadness and joy were together.

Of course, there was less sadness and more joy, because with Fatemeh's departure and her marriage and settling down, a great burden was lifted from Dervish's shoulders. Now, after enduring all this suffering, he could ask God to grant him the final journey that he had not been able to make beside his wife, so that he could be freed from this pressure, and that is what happened. Perhaps before Fatemeh had even found Begum, Dervish's final wish was granted: he departed for the realm of his Beloved, washed his hands and heart of all sorrow, and found peace.

Chapter Five: Migration to Iran

The Ship Drops Anchor at Pahlavi Port, Iran

When Shah Begum's ship dropped anchor at Pahlavi Port in Iran, representatives of the Iranian government were present at the harbor to welcome their citizens officially.

After the passengers disembarked, they were taken into a hall. There they were received, and the work of registration and issuing entry papers began.

When it was Khan-Goldi's family's turn, the clerk asked his name.

"Khan-Goldi," he said.

The registration clerk gave a short laugh and said, "You are no khan here anymore!"

In the register, he wrote only: Goldi.

When Shah Begum gave her name, the clerk wrote Begum and said, "We already have our own Shah."

He recorded Hafezeh's and Qahraman's names as he heard them, handed the paper to someone else, and sent the family toward the exit door — a door that was, in truth, the entrance into the soil of Iran.

Because Begum did not know Persian at all, she felt unsettled. The exhaustion of the journey, the torment of separation, and the sound of an unfamiliar language planted a fresh sorrow in her chest. Even so, she tried to keep herself together.

Khan-Goldi was mostly occupied with moving the suitcases. Begum kept both children with her and moved along with the other passengers, passing through customs toward the arrival hall.

Outside the hall, many people were waiting to welcome their travelers. But no one was waiting for Khan-Goldi.

He left Begum and the children in a corner of the courtyard and went off to find transportation.

At that moment, Begum stood among a crowd of people whose language she did not understand and whose looks she did not know, with two small children beside her and a future ahead of her that felt only like a heavy fog.

From the very moment she entered Iran, Begum gradually began to understand the continuation of the scenario before her. The farther they went, the more deeply she sensed the disaster waiting for her. She had no spirit for anything. She stood stunned beside her children.

Her only comfort was the touch of Hafezeh and Qahraman — two pieces of her own soul, for whom she had left every part of her past behind.

The Journey Toward the Intended Village

The place they had to reach was not close. They had to change vehicles several times.

After hours of traveling by car and bus, they finally stopped in front of a coffeehouse whose upper floor served as something like an inn.

Khan-Goldi entered the coffeehouse. A few minutes later, he came back with an elderly man and his son. They helped carry the luggage to a room upstairs, then went to bring food.

Khan-Goldi arranged the belongings and opened the travel bags they would need. Begum dressed the children in more comfortable clothes and, at Khan-Goldi’s reminder, covered her head with her large Azerbaijani shawl, which functioned like a headscarf.

Her clothes were very plain. In those same clothes, she sat beside the children.

A few minutes later, they brought a tray of food: some bread, yogurt, and butter. They placed the tray in the middle of the room on the floor. Begum fed Hafezeh and Qahraman a little bread and yogurt.

The children were completely bewildered. There was no electricity. They could barely see one another in the faint light of an oil lamp.

There was no toilet, washroom, or bath. To relieve themselves, they would have to go behind the building at night and find some hidden place — something that was almost impossible that night. Only Qahraman managed to relieve himself standing outside the room.

They spent that night in the same room until dawn.

Early the next morning, Khan-Goldi told Begum to get the children ready, because they had to leave quickly. The reason for the haste was that they still had a long road ahead and would have to travel with pack animals. If they left late, darkness would catch them on the road, and with children the journey would become extremely difficult.

Khan-Goldi went out and said he would return. Begum fed Hafezeh and Qahraman the remaining piece of bread and yogurt from the night before and ate what was left herself.

Then Khan-Goldi's voice was heard: "Children, be ready!"

He came back with another man, and together they carried the suitcases out one by one. Begum gathered the rest of the belongings, placed them in the bags, and went downstairs with the children.

Outside the coffeehouse, Khan-Goldi and the man were tying the suitcases onto donkeys. On two of the loaded animals, they made a place for the children and spread a quilt over it so they could ride.

Khan-Goldi had rented another donkey for Begum, while he himself would walk beside the muleteer who had rented out the animals and would have to take them back after reaching the destination.

But Begum absolutely refused to ride the donkey. She was afraid.

Khan-Goldi teased her a little and said, "You did not have the courage to ride a donkey, yet you claimed to be a revolutionary! If I had known you were afraid, I would not have rented one for you."

Begum said, “Then you ride it yourself, so your money is not wasted.”

With arrogance, Khan-Goldi answered, “This is Iran. Sons of khans do not ride donkeys.”

This was Khan-Goldi’s first barbed remark on Iranian soil — directed at a woman to whom, before then, no man had dared speak in such a way. But Begum had already prepared herself for anything.

She answered quickly, “Apparently khans do not wish to oppress their own kind.”

Her words showed the return of Begum’s fighting spirit and quick tongue. Khan-Goldi, however, seemed not to grasp the sting of her remark at that moment. His mind was occupied with the cost of the extra donkey. He told the muleteer not to bring the extra animal and to subtract its cost from the payment.

The muleteer did not like that and said, “Excuse me, the agreed price was not based on the number of donkeys. It was based on the distance to be traveled. Even if the number of animals is reduced, the price does not change.”

Annoyed by the muleteer’s words, Khan-Goldi said, “Fine, then bring the extra donkey too.”

The muleteer said nothing.

The little caravan of donkeys set off, carrying Khan-Goldi, Begum, the children, the belongings, and the muleteer.

Begum, who had witnessed Khan-Goldi’s words and decisions, turned to him with a bitter smile and said, “What powerful economic insight you have! Since you have paid for it, at least you will bring the donkey along so you do not suffer a loss. And who knows the road? Perhaps when the khan’s son is out of sight of the people, and the weariness of the road presses on him, his heart will soften toward the empty donkey and he will ride it, so he can benefit from the fare

he has paid. Besides, the poor animal will feel useful too. Well, that is one of the miracles of being khan-born: economic thinking, taking advantage of whatever is free, and deep concern over not losing money!”

Khan-Goldi fell silent. He had neither the strength to answer nor the desire.

The Mountain Road, the Springs, and Meeting Kamal

The children were happy to ride the donkeys, though they were a little frightened at first. But their mother’s presence beside them and the courage Begum gave them pushed their fear aside.

Begum first examined carefully how the loads had been tied and how the children’s seats had been made. She asked the muleteer, “Do you think the children’s places are secure enough?”

The muleteer answered calmly that they were, and added, “We just have to watch the children at every moment — especially on the rises and dips of the road, where their balance might shift.”

Slowly, the caravan moved toward a destination guided by Khan-Goldi’s ambitions. Begum still did not know the future, but she sensed what the old sayings warned: the nature of a year can be seen from its spring, and sour yogurt can be known from its smell.

Still, to be fair, apart from all their differences in thought, spirit, and principle, this journey was a new beginning for Begum and the children. The innocent, fresh, green nature of the road was beautiful and fragrant.

There were fruit trees, natural springs, and waters so cold and crisp they seemed to have just leaked out of nature’s own icebox. Begum gradually found some comfort in the landscape. At every spring they reached, she stopped beside it, gave the children some water, drank some herself, and sometimes washed her face in the clear stream.

The scent of the wild flowers and shrubs growing by the springs intoxicated her.

When the children saw the bright apricots on the trees along the orchards, they wanted to pick them. Begum, however, would not touch a tree without permission.

The muleteer, who had developed a warm connection with Qahraman along the way, picked a few apricots and wanted to give them to the children. Begum objected gently.

The muleteer, whose name was Kamal, answered, “Sister, when a branch is outside the orchard, it is permitted to pick fruit from it for immediate need and eat it, as long as the tree is not harmed.”

This reasoning was acceptable to Begum. She said, “Then let us wash them at the next spring before giving them to the children.”

Kamal said, “Do not worry. I will wash them.”

He ran down the slope as if he knew every span of that road. He washed the fruit in the running water and brought it back for the children.

Qahraman took two apricots and, for the first time, called Kamal, “Uncle!”

That one word from Qahraman split open the compressed cloud of homesickness in Begum’s heart like sudden thunder and lightning. Her tears poured down her sun-reddened cheeks like running water.

With that single word, it was as if Qahraman had reminded Begum of Bahram — the children’s kind uncle, the strength of his sister’s heart. Begum tried to hide her tears from the children.

But Kamal noticed. He was a sensitive man, and he wanted to know more about this little caravan. In his heart, he had begun to feel sympathy for them. He felt he was seeing a new kind of generation before him. He was fascinated by the way Begum treated her children.

Khan-Goldi walked alone most of the time, sometimes picking fruit from the trees and eating it. Kamal, however, was wholly attentive to Qahraman.

He took two handkerchiefs from his pocket and tied the four corners of each one, turning them into little caps. He placed one on Hafezeh's head and the other on Qahraman's. Then he told Begum, "I do not want the sun to bother the children too much. When we reach the first spring, I will wet the handkerchiefs so their heads stay cool."

It was a small act, but a whole world of understanding and feeling lay within it.

In that gesture, Begum smelled something familiar — the same fragrance she had grown up with all her life in her own family: kindness, attention, and unpretentious care.

In truth, Kamal stood at the exact opposite point from Khan-Goldi.

Begum had now been deprived of her past, a past so full of blessing that Khan-Goldi's shortages had not been visible within it. But now the story was different. Begum's need had grown greater, while Khan-Goldi was moving farther away from feeling. Along the entire road, he thought mostly of how to make himself seem great and important in the village.

Rest Along the Way

They had traveled for nearly five hours, and it was around eleven o'clock. The road was gradually becoming harder as they reached the chain of mountains. They decided to rest, eat something, and then set out again. They were nearly halfway there.

They took the children down from the donkeys. Begum assumed they would also unload the animals so they could rest a little, but Khan-Goldi did not agree. In his view, unloading and reloading would take time and was unnecessary. So they took down only what they

needed: a blanket, a groundcover, and the dishes required for the meal.

Kamal had brought strained yogurt and bread. Along the road, he had picked some greens and cucumbers from a garden. He also had a large tinned copper basin with him. From a spring near their resting place, he filled the basin with water, emptied the yogurt into it, dropped in a lump of rock salt, chopped the cucumbers and greens, and added them to the mixture.

Lunch was almost ready.

The taste of that abdoogh, with its greens, cucumbers, and natural salt, was more fragrant and delicious than chelow kebab. Begum poured some into Hafezeh's and Qahraman's bowls and crumbled into it some of the homemade bread Kamal had brought. She gave Hafezeh her portion and slowly fed Qahraman his.

Khan-Goldi did not like abdoogh. He peeled a cucumber, placed it with some greens inside bread, and ate it like a sandwich. Begum poured some abdoogh for herself and then thought of tea.

Kamal lit a fire, filled his black kettle with water, and set it over the flame. When the water boiled, he put in a little dry tea and placed the kettle beside the fire to steep gently. Then, in the small glasses Begum had with her, he poured tea for the adults. The children did not want tea.

Kamal opened a handkerchief and placed a few pieces of broken sugar beside the tea. The three of them drank and spoke of its pleasure. Kamal filled the glasses again, and again they drank tea.

Afterward, Kamal completely extinguished the fire and poured a little water over it to make sure no flame remained. Then he took the glasses and dishes to the stream, washed them, and brought them back.

Kamal said, "I will go a little farther ahead and lie down. You should lie down here too. We will move at one o'clock."

There were about forty minutes left. The time was short, but after the walk, the abdoogh, and the tea, a brief nap felt sweet. They did as Kamal suggested.

Begum had to tend to Qahraman a little. Then she lay down beside Hafezeh. Khan-Goldi also fell asleep there on the groundcover.

Kamal called them exactly on time. Begum answered and woke Khan-Goldi as well. Everyone prepared to continue the road.

Continuing the Road and Nearing the Village

The road grew harder. The rises and dips increased, the path became stonier, and walking grew difficult. Kamal's attention remained mostly on Qahraman, while Begum kept watch over Hafezeh.

Along the way, Begum spoke with Kamal. More than anything, she wanted to learn something about the village to which they were going. Kamal did not have exact information about that specific village, but he told Begum about the culture, customs, and hardships of life in those regions.

He spoke of women's restrictions in movement and companionship; of how carefully they had to watch their clothing and appearance; of the lack of sanitary facilities and the absence of a proper bath; of the lack of roads for cars, mail, electricity, and running water inside homes; of poverty and the villagers' dependence on agriculture that yielded little; and of how most income went into the landlord's pocket.

He also spoke of the absence of an organized judiciary or regular police, and of how only during crises would help be requested from the nearest gendarmerie post.

In short, the picture given to Begum was not a bright one. The only positive effect of these words was that they occupied her mind and made her forget the pain in her feet and the stony road beneath them.

A few more hours of the road passed. The weather was still clear and sunny, but a cool wind had brought a mild chill, especially for the children, who were not moving and sat on the donkeys.

Begum took two children's blankets from the bag and wrapped Hafezeh and Qahraman in them. Khan-Goldi wore a sweater under his jacket. Begum, too, had a large shawl whose pattern and colors, with its large multicolored flowers, strangely matched the green plain around them.

But Begum's mind and attention did not match the beauty around her. Her heart and spirit were caught in an endless worry, a worry whose ending she could not imagine. Still, strong and unbroken, she moved forward along the path of an unknown fate, with a thousand questions in her mind.

The only engine of her movement and inner calm was the sight of Hafezeh's and Qahraman's faces. Those two faces gave her courage and reminded her that seeing and touching these loves again would not have been possible except by crossing this stony road and the many other stony roads still ahead.

The thought of remaining without her children was so painful that it made even the harshest stones bearable.

The caravan was approaching a new height.

A few minutes later, from the top of that height, Khan-Goldi said, "The village can be seen. Come look."

He was so happy that he seemed to have reached salvation.

Begum looked. A small village appeared on the mountainside, surrounded by gardens and greenery. But to Begum, the sight of that landscape, despite its beauty, was so unfamiliar that it awakened within her the sound of a military funeral march — the same march played when the lifeless bodies of defeated soldiers are carried away.

At that sorrowful moment, Khan-Goldi, with a face that seemed kind but a tongue like a poisoned scalpel, turned to Begum and said, “Dear Shah Begum, welcome to your new place — a place where there is no more shah-ness, and where you must be obedience from head to toe. Do not think that in the village you can spend hours walking beside a strange man, flirting and reciting tales like Hossein Kord.”

How strange and poisonous those words were. Behind them, it was as if a torturer sat wearing white gloves to hide bloodied nails — claws savagely tearing at Begum’s heart and liver, trying to rip them from her chest.

Begum was visibly short of breath. Yet in the depths of her heart, she still gave thanks for the bargain life had given her; because in exchange for all this bitterness, two beautiful, innocent, helpless faces were beside her — two children she would not trade for the world.

In spite of every compulsion, one thing in Begum had not changed: her understanding of the world of values.

Begum was not merely the student of a communist country’s school system, as Khan-Goldi imagined. In her conscience, she had been raised by a father who, with all his tenderness, was a caring teacher to his children — a man whose values stood beyond ordinary life, values he had learned from the school of his Master and from the spirit of his Master’s self-sacrificing daughter in captivity, the same values he had sung in his laments to his children, especially to Begum.

And now, in an unfamiliar exile, Begum was facing the rotten, reactionary mentality of khan-born pride. She could not bear to give that filth of thought even a turn.

Suddenly, like a lion, she roared at Khan-Goldi, the khan’s son: “Hey! Wherever this place is, it makes no difference to me. Perhaps

in your mind, and in the minds of those like you, the exchange of thought and ideas between a man and a woman means flirting, bargaining, or only looking through the lens of sex. But from a human point of view, manliness has a human measure, not a sexual one.

“You yourself know well that until today you have not been the man of this life, and you have come this far under my command. Now it seems you are growing a tail. So open your ears and listen: you are dreaming impossible dreams. You have read this all wrong.

“You will take this wish to the grave — the wish that you could force gender in place of humanity and human values upon me and see obedience from me. You are too small to impose khan-born pride or forced surrender on me. If you do not believe it, fight, and we will fight. Alone, I will struggle against your reactionary thinking. I am glad you have shown yourself and your nature more clearly.”

Her words were so fiery and firm that Khan-Goldi had no power to answer. A moment of silence fell. But Begum continued, because an old sea of revolt still surged inside her:

“This same Kamal, whom you regard as a mere muleteer, is in my eyes superior to you, who call yourself a khan’s son and take pride in it. Open your eyes and see.

“For these twelve hours, you did not ride the donkey; you walked ahead and brought yourself here. But it was Mr. Kamal who guided the caravan, the loads, your family and mine, and brought us here.

“At least my son Qahraman called Kamal ‘uncle’ several times, but not once did he call you ‘father,’ because you were not beside him. In the little world of your mind, you walked in front of the donkeys and felt proud that you did not ride one. But Kamal was the one who spoke warmly with your child.

“If Kamal is counted today as a muleteer, that is the result of the compulsion created by ignorant rulers, not the measure of Kamal’s

ability. If Kamal lived in a revolutionary system, he could stand as a commander of the people and a savior of his nation.”

Khan-Goldi had neither the capacity nor the worthiness to understand those words. He continued on, for they had now reached the edge of the village.

Begum Is Struck Down on the Soil of That Village

With the first sign of the village before her, Begum suddenly felt a severe pain in her chest. It was so intense that she could barely breathe. Her face turned bluish, as though she were choking.

She could take only a few more steps. Suddenly her legs trembled, her balance failed, she fell to her knees, and then she collapsed backward onto the ground. At that same moment, her head struck hard against a stone beside the road, something like the wall of a garden.

Although she had a thick lachek tied around her head, blood appeared at once. The wound was so deep that blood poured from her head onto her skirt.

Because Kamal was not a mahram to Begum, he could not go close to her. He shouted for Khan-Goldi. Khan-Goldi had been walking a little ahead. At Kamal’s cry, he turned back in alarm and saw Begum’s condition — but he froze, empty and lifeless. He did not know what to do.

He sat beside Begum, placed her head on his knees, and called to her.

Meanwhile, Kamal ran to the meadow beside the road, picked some grass, and quickly returned. He sprinkled a little soil over the leaves he had brought and gave them to Khan-Goldi to place on the wound.

Kamal’s moving away from the children and his shouting had terrified Hafezeh, who had seen her mother fall. She was so frightened that she tried to climb down from the donkey, but

suddenly fell to the ground. Thank God, she was not seriously hurt, but she was terrified, crying again and again, “Mama... Mama...”

Kamal ran to her, picked her up, and held her in his arms. Then he went back toward Qahraman, took him down from the donkey too, and tried to calm the children.

Khan-Goldi used the lachek, grass, and soil to dress Begum’s broken head in a rough field bandage. Apparently the bleeding stopped, or at least lessened.

For a moment, the whole scene was like a frozen piece of time — like the aftermath of an explosion, when the wounded lie on the ground. The little army of the caravan had been stopped in its tracks. The loads stood still, and the animals looked on meekly, as if deep down they had sensed the beginning of a disaster fate had written for their companions.

Kamal’s eyes were full of tears. Anyone who knew the mood and destiny of these innocents, watching that moment, would have wept blood instead of water.

Begum still lay unconscious.

Suddenly Kamal jumped up, as if an idea had come to him. He took a handkerchief from his pocket and burned one corner of it with a match. When part of the cloth had burned, he put out the flame and gave the charred fabric to Khan-Goldi so he could bring its smoke near Begum’s nose.

Khan-Goldi only followed instructions. He had no idea of his own.

When the smoke from the burned cloth entered Begum’s nose, she moved slightly, as if the burned smoke had found harmony with Begum’s burned liver. With great difficulty, she opened her eyes.

Seeing Hafezeh beside her and the innocent eyes of Qahraman fixed upon his mother gave her a little strength. She gathered herself and

tried to sit. Khan-Goldi helped her and set his knees as a support behind her.

Begum embraced her children and cried without restraint, a weeping that revealed the shock inside her. Like a spring cloud, she shed tears. She turned her face toward the sky. I do not know what she whispered, but whatever it was, it was full of pain.

Then it was as if she gave her knees a new honor. She stood on her own feet. At first she could not keep her balance and staggered. Before Khan-Goldi could reach her, she caught hold of the saddle of the donkey standing beside them, the animal that had witnessed the whole scene. With the help of that saddle, she regained her balance.

She tried to lift Hafezeh and seat her on the donkey, but she could not. Each time she lowered her head, dizziness seized her and she nearly lost balance again.

Kamal asked Khan-Goldi, “Can we ask for help from the village?”

Khan-Goldi did not give a positive answer. “No, do not worry,” he said. “There is not much road left.”

Then he himself lifted Hafezeh onto the donkey and began walking beside it. Kamal seated Qahraman. The caravan set out again.

Begum, on the other side of the donkey carrying Hafezeh, held tightly to the saddle and slowly continued walking.

Arriving Wounded at the Edge of the Village

As the sun began to set, the scene of their arrival at the village became even more sorrowful for that little defeated, broken-handed, broken-hearted army. Yet with all its wounds, that small army still stood like a cypress.

The burning rays of the setting sun clawed at sorrowful hearts. Step by step, they approached the entrance to the village.

On the right side of the entrance road, a cemetery appeared — a cemetery that smelled of death and nothingness.

According to religious habit, paying attention to a cemetery is useful, even necessary. Seeing graves and reflecting on them weakens the arrogance of individual pride and brings down the wind of conceit from the head.

Kamal recited a few words in Arabic and, at the end, said, “Fatiha.”

Those words were familiar to Begum. They revived her father’s voice in her ear. Then they all recited Surah al-Fatiha — that deeply meaningful and liberating manifesto which is repeated so often, yet unfortunately its meaning and content receive little attention, as if it has become mostly a repetitive cultural habit.

After the prayer, the caravan continued on its way.

With her wounded head, bloodstained skirt, aching chest, and one hand still gripping the donkey’s saddle, Begum entered a soil that was to form a new chapter of her life — not a chapter of peace, but of trial.

That fall was not merely a physical accident.

It was the first seal of the soil of exile upon Begum’s body,

a blood-marked sign that this road would not be simple.

Entering the Mud House Wounded

Gradually the faces of the villagers became visible. Those who came closer greeted them and offered welcome.

One of them was a young boy who, after welcoming them, ran toward the center of the village and shouted as he went, “The migrants have arrived!”

As he disappeared, more people became aware of the travelers’ arrival. Most of the men came forward, greeted them, and spoke with Khan-Goldi.

But Begum no longer had the strength or condition of an ordinary newcomer. Her head still burned beneath the field bandage. Her skirt was stained with blood. Her body was weak from the shock of the fall and the pain in her chest. Even so, her eyes did not leave Hafezeh and Qahraman for a moment.

A little farther on, Khan-Goldi's father and mother appeared. They arrived with several others, and as soon as they reached them, they rushed toward Hafezeh and Qahraman, snatched the children up, and carried them away.

Begum panicked and tried to take the children back. After that entire road, after that fall and bleeding, her only support was those two children. Their sudden removal from her embrace was like dragging a fresh blade across her soul.

Khan-Goldi's mother came close to Begum, embraced her, and said, "Do not worry. They are our own children."

Then she hugged and kissed her son. Khan-Goldi walked beside his father, as if in that very moment he had regained his old place. Several people gathered around Kamal and the loads and guided them toward Khan-Goldi's family home.

Khan-Goldi's mother, who had only then noticed the condition of Begum's head, asked, "What happened?"

She called one of the girls and told her to go quickly and heat water so Begum's head bandage could be changed.

They all entered a mud-brick house that had no proper doors or fittings. First they entered a courtyard separated from the outside by wooden fencing. The loads were lowered, and then they entered a hall with only a curtain hanging in place of a door.

Behind the curtain was a dark room without a window, where it was difficult to see one another. In the middle of the hall was a hole in the ground, which Begum later learned was the tandoor where they baked bread. Above the tandoor, the ceiling was made of reeds, with

a round opening that served as both vent and window — letting in light and air, and letting smoke and dust out.

The women gathered around Begum in one corner of the hall, while the men gathered around Khan-Goldi in another. The children were passed from one embrace to another. Hafezeh and Qahraman, utterly bewildered, looked around that mournfully dark house with fear.

For Begum, the darkness of that house was not only the absence of light. It was the sign of entering a world in which she would have to learn anew how to breathe, stand, be a mother, and resist.

Khan-Goldi's mother, along with an older woman who appeared experienced, began tending to Begum's head. They opened the field bandage. The wound was still deep and painful. Begum clenched her teeth upon her liver. Not because of the pain of the wound, but because she did not want any sound from her to frighten the children.

Kamal said goodbye to everyone, and before leaving he wanted to kiss Qahraman. Khan-Goldi took Qahraman in his arms and went toward Kamal. He settled the payment with him.

Kamal was to eat dinner in the neighboring building, rest for the night, and return to his own village early in the morning.

When Kamal took Qahraman in his arms, it was as if he were holding someone dear. Tears wet the child's lovely face. Qahraman, who in those hours had grown attached to Kamal, kissed his face and again called him "uncle."

That word was the last bright thread of that day — a thread that reminded Begum of Bahram, of home, and of unpretentious kindness.

Kamal left the house, but he knew he did not have the right to say goodbye to Begum. In that community, a relationship between a man and a woman had no place, and Kamal knew his own culture well. So he quietly left the house and went to his place of rest.

The next morning he was to leave that village, although in that brief time he had gathered a sea of memory. It was as if he had come to another land and now had to return. But he could not erase the marks of those few hours — perhaps he never would. In any case, he had to go.

Everyone was tired. After dinner, it was decided they would sleep. It seemed that all of them — about ten people — would spend the night in that same hall. Before sleeping, they divided the hall into two parts with hanging curtains: women on one side, men on the other.

They took mattresses and quilts down from the shelves and spread them side by side on the floor. Everyone's place was quickly decided. Begum settled near the wall, beside her children.

But before sleep, she wanted to prepare the children. She asked one of the women where the toilet was. The answer she heard was no longer very surprising to her:

"Toilet? We have to go out into the courtyard, into the garden, to a secluded corner. We wait until the men are asleep, then we go."

They kept one small improvised lamp burning so they could see the way when leaving the house.

That little lamp was an invention in itself. They had poured a little kerosene into a metal tin, something like an oil can, and placed in it a wick made from cotton rope, with one end outside the tin and the other in the kerosene. The wick drew the fuel into itself and burned slowly, giving little flame but much smoke.

Several of these little lamps stood on shelves around the four sides of the room, so the house would have some light and so, if someone needed, one could be used like a hand lamp.

An hour passed. The men's snoring, the sign that they had fallen asleep, grew loud.

Begum took the children with her. A girl who was there also rose to guide them. She was Khan-Goldi's cousin. She took the little lamp and went ahead.

They left the room, but suddenly the chained dogs in the courtyard began howling. Begum's and the children's hearts nearly stopped. Panicked and frightened, they rushed back into the room.

They were no longer willing to go outside. They gave up on the matter for that night and prepared themselves for whatever might happen. They returned to their bedding and lay down.

Begum, with her wounded head, aching chest, and heart full of questions, drew Hafezeh and Qahraman close to herself. Perhaps in that darkness, the only true light was those two childish breaths rising and falling beside her.

A few moments later, from the exhaustion of the road, the pain of the wound, the pressures of the journey, and the heaviness of exile, they fell into a sleep that resembled unconsciousness.

The Beginning of Life in the New Place

At the break of dawn, Begum and the children woke in alarm to the sound of sheep bells.

Because they had slept by the wall the night before, they were fortunate not to end up under the feet of the sheep leaving from the lower part of the room to go out with the shepherds for grazing.

Hafezeh and Qahraman, seeing this scene, were first a little shocked, but it was new and interesting to them as well. They wanted to hold the lambs.

Shah Begum sat stunned, drowned in her thoughts. In a short time, so many new and unfamiliar experiences had poured over her head that her mind had not yet had the chance to absorb them.

Suddenly Qahraman's cry brought Begum back to herself. With childish joy, Qahraman was trying to catch a lamb running after its

mother. It was a moment of happiness, a small particle of light in the heart of darkness.

Just then, Khan's mother appeared and told the shepherd, "Do not let the lamb go out! Do you not know it must not go with its mother?"

The shepherd quickly blocked the lamb's way out and tried to return it to the sheep room. But the poor lamb, unable to bear separation from the mother whose milk was its provision, bleated helplessly and struggled.

Hafezeh and Qahraman, now both aware of the lamb's distress, seemed to understand the words of its heart. Tears appeared in their eyes.

Suddenly Qahraman rushed at the shepherd to save the lamb. The shepherd tried not to let it go. Hafezeh went to help Qahraman and quickly bit the shepherd's hand, so seriously that he cried out from the pain.

Khan-Goldi's mother, watching the scene, said to the shepherd, "Idiot! You cannot manage one child and one lamb? Do you not know that if the lamb goes out with its mother to the fields, it will drink even that little bit of milk in her udder? Then what will become of our milk and yogurt? Useless fool!"

Such humiliations were the shepherd's daily bread and water. But now he had been embarrassed even in front of two children, and his hand was burning. Like an arrow released from a bow, he suddenly leapt, grabbed the lamb by the wool at its neck, lifted it roughly from the ground, and dragged it into the stable that, in the children's imagination, was its room.

Begum's mind was occupied with why the sheep entered from the stable into the living room and from there went out to the courtyard. But the children's minds were filled with anger toward the shepherd who had unjustly torn the innocent lamb from its mother against its will and thrown it violently into the room.

The lamb's cries could still be heard, and they made Hafezeh and Qahraman restless. They did not know what to do. The only thing within their power was sympathy and protest. Both began crying loudly.

Before Begum could gather herself, Khan-Goldi's mother went toward the children to calm them. She wiped their tears, and as she caressed Qahraman, she said, "I kept the little lamb from going out so you could play with it."

These words calmed Qahraman's delicate heart a little, and even made him happy. For a moment, his mind became busy with the thought of playing with the lamb. But Hafezeh was not convinced. She turned to her grandmother and said in an unhappy tone, "Grandmother, there was no need for you to force the lamb away from its mother. I do not agree with that."

Then, with a cold look at Qahraman, as if she wanted to read the book of her heart to her brother, she moved away from them and went crying toward her mother. Qahraman followed Hafezeh.

Hafezeh clung to her mother. But before Begum could enter the scene, Khan's mother shouted at her and, in an ugly tone, fired her first arrow into Begum's heart: "Educated lady, gather your spoiled children. Teach them a little manners."

Those words had not the slightest effect on Begum's power of defense. In a sharp tone, Begum answered, "Grandmother, you call the pure feelings of children who are defending a lamb 'spoiling.' I wish you knew a little about your own spoiled and pampered one; then you would not say such an immature thing."

Begum's response was gasoline poured onto the fire of Khan's mother. Her patience burst. Turning toward Shah Begum, she said, "Mrs. Communist, watch yourself. This is not Dervish's house. Mind your tongue before I am forced to pull it out of your throat."

Khan’s mother had not yet finished speaking when Begum said mockingly, “There is no need to remind me that this is not Dervish’s house. This is the shared house of animals and you, and we too are guests in it by force. But be sure: this, too, shall pass.”

Begum took the children and led them to a corner of the room. From anger, her headache intensified, and she forgot the natural pain of the wound on her head — until she saw the bloody fluid from the wound and remembered the break in her skull.

Khan’s mother, hearing Begum’s words, left the scene like a wounded snake and went out of the house.

The First Softening of Hearts

Meanwhile, Khan-Goldi was nowhere to be seen. Apparently he had gone to send Kamal on his way. An hour later he appeared. When he saw Begum’s condition, he understood that she was upset. Hafezeh, in her own language, also made her father understand that her mother was being hurt.

Khan-Goldi did not take the matter very seriously. In truth, he was afraid to enter the quarrel and knew that his involvement would only make things worse, because he could neither stand against Begum nor deny his mother’s feelings.

So he quickly asked Begum for Kamal’s handkerchiefs, the same ones Kamal had made into little caps for the children along the road.

Begum brought the handkerchiefs, which she had washed and dried the night before. She also placed a little chocolate from what they had brought from Baku inside them, handed them to Khan-Goldi, and said, “It is good that you are returning his trust.”

Then she asked, “Wasn’t Kamal supposed to go back early this morning?”

Khan-Goldi said, “Yes, but Kamal has a friend in our village. That friend knew Kamal had come, and last night Kamal went to stay with him. He will probably return tomorrow.”

Of course, Begum later learned that Kamal’s friend was one of the men of that same village — a political man and an opponent of the khans. Kamal, too, was opposed to the khans and had met him by chance. He had spent the night at his house and was to return the next day with him.

Khan-Goldi took the handkerchiefs with him and did not return home until evening.

Begum was still moaning from the pain in her head. Qahraman and Hafezeh sat meekly beside their mother.

A little later, the grandmother entered the hall. This time she was calm. She brought the breakfast tray toward Begum and kindly asked about her condition. She kissed the children’s faces, and through her movements she showed her regret.

Begum, in return, expressed her own regret for the way she had spoken and thanked her for breakfast. They sat together beside the breakfast tray and began to eat.

It was as if Khan’s mother, inside herself and with what she knew of Begum’s life, had begun to struggle with her own conscience. Perhaps she had understood that what Begum and her children had lost could not be compared with what they still had not found in this house. Her movements had changed. Now she wanted to show them her new understanding.

Of course, Hafezeh was still cold toward her. Grandmother would have to win back a heart that had been broken.

Truly, many times a human being can reach new truths simply by changing the angle of vision — that inward awakening which activates the natural conscience of a person. When a human being’s

outlook turns toward truth, their actions and words also come closer to God, and their presence gains a divine taste and fragrance.

Grandmother had softened, and now she understood Hafezeh more deeply. Gently, she took the girl in her arms, stroked her thick hair, and kissed her cheeks. Tears born from the burning of the heart appeared in her eyes.

This state had a good effect on Hafezeh's feelings. Perhaps the language of love understands what remains unspoken.

Hafezeh's little hands wiped Grandmother's tears. Grandmother cried harder, and in that same state she gathered Qahraman and Hafezeh into her arms and covered them with kisses.

To calm them and place a balm on the wound of their hearts, she said, "I kept the little lamb so you could play with it."

This filled Qahraman's childish emotions with delight. Although he did not yet have a fully speaking tongue, his movements and looks revealed the depth of his joy.

Grandmother went and brought the lamb into the hall. It was as if Qahraman's whole world changed. He ran after the dear lamb. But the mischievous lamb was quicker than Qahraman, and through its playfulness and charm it only filled the child's desires even more.

Hafezeh, who understood this need in her own world but did not show it openly, joined in chasing the lamb under the pretense of helping her brother. This time both children ran after the lamb.

It was as if the lamb itself understood the height of those two children's need. After a few rounds of play, it very calmly surrendered itself to the thirsty companions and, with an innocent look, showed its consent to this new friendship.

A beautiful bond formed in that gathering.

At the same time, Grandmother was examining the wounds on Begum's head. The atmosphere was so gentle and poetic that Begum

and Khan's mother both began to sob. The children noticed and ran toward mother and grandmother.

It was as if the voiceless lamb too knew the language of love; it joined their circle as well.

A great unity of hearts had come into being. Begum, who carried deep wounds inside herself, thanked Grandmother with a respectful and understandable look.

I do not know how much of material time that state occupied, but it was so delicate and full of quality that it brought light into that house and made the hearts of several strangers happy in an unfamiliar place. That state was so dreamlike and loving that it was as if the symphony of heaven had begun to play.

Truly, creating beauty is not as difficult as people imagine; yet it is seldom seen.

The First Lessons of a New Life

That dreamlike state was interrupted for a moment by the sound of Khan-Goldi's voice. Still, the fragrance of that moment remained in the air.

Hearing their father, the children ran toward him to tell him the happy news of their friendship with the lamb. Peace had appeared inside Khan-Goldi too. Of course, most of that peace came from Begum's looks, because Begum's gaze resembled the same first gaze that had once captured Khan-Goldi's heart.

With a childlike air, he thanked his mother.

Yes, even if there was no prosperity in that house, now a real purity had appeared there — born from human friendship. The light of God and the awakened conscience had become visible in that home.

Begum had regained a little energy. Although her head still hurt, she felt more alive. She did not yet know the people, the neighbors, or

the family around her. At Grandmother’s suggestion, they decided to visit some friends and neighbors.

First they went to the house next door. The women were preparing to bake bread. The tandoor was not yet fully hot. It was clear that the firewood had not completely caught fire, and because of that a strange smoke filled the house, a smoke that burned the eyes. The permanent traces of smoke were visible on the walls and ceiling.

In the middle of the room was a pit shaped into a tandoor, rather deep, with smooth walls to which the breads would be stuck for baking. The bottom of the tandoor was heated with dry wood, the roots of dried plants called gon, and also, to keep the fire going longer, with pahn — dried animal dung.

Pahn was the dried manure of cows and sheep. Traditionally, it was collected every day from the floors of stables. Every few days, water was added to make a soft mixture. Then that mixture was separated into lumps, each lump shaped like an oval brick, and dried in open sunlight.

The dried bricks were stacked neatly in a circular form, like a small mountain. These mountains were, in fact, the family’s yearly stored energy — fuel for cooking, warmth, and daily needs across the seasons.

A country whose oil was in the hands of British companies used dried dung as fuel in its villages.

What had happened to Begum carried experiences she had never even imagined before. But now they had become part of the manner and method of her life. She sat beside the village women and learned how to bake bread.

Several women sat in a circle around the tandoor. Around it they spread a white cloth called the sofreh. On one side of the cloth stood a large wooden bowl, like a basin. A great amount of flour had been

poured into it, and with the addition of water, the flour was turned into dough.

After much kneading, a little dough left from previous days was added to the fresh dough. Apparently, because that starter had aged for several days, it gave firmness and increased the dough's elasticity, so that when it was opened and turned into sheets of bread, it would not fall apart and would hold firmly when pressed against the tandoor wall.

With the first bread baked and brought out of the tandoor, a new feeling came over the gathering. Each person whispered prayers and thanks, asking God for blessing upon the table and upon the gift of bread.

They broke the first bread into pieces and distributed it among those present. This was both a taste of the fruit of their labor and, in an indirect way, an opportunity to offer opinions. If a weakness was felt or someone had a question, it was raised, and the more experienced women answered.

In that entirely natural space, one could feel the pleasant success of collective work — the success of women who, for the sake of feeding their families, had prepared bread for at least several days; bread, the most essential and valuable material of survival.

The smell of natural wood burning, the fragrance of baked bread, the warmth of the tandoor, and the excitement of group labor flowed like fresh blood through Begum's veins. It smelled of new life — a spirit Begum enjoyed and to which she inwardly connected with joy.

At the same time, the children were at home with Khan-Goldi's girl cousins, playing with the dear little lamb. They had run the lamb around so much that it was clearly tired. Apparently it had even urinated a little without control. Hafezeh, using cloths of the kind then used to manage children's urination, had tried to wrap the lamb in the same way as a child.

This made the girl cousins laugh, but Hafezeh was puzzled by their laughter and did not understand why they were laughing.

The poor lamb did not know where all this love and affection had come from or what its reason was. In those few hours, it had become so absorbed in pleasure, joy, and play that it had even forgotten its mother.

A few days passed in this way. Begum and the children gradually grew accustomed to the hardships. The wound on Begum's head began to heal, but the wound in her heart became fresh again each day.

With all her strength, she was determined to think only of the future and not to inquire after the past. She had accepted that she must accept a new birth and begin life again from the start.

Khan-Goldi Goes to Tehran

Khan-Goldi was outside the home most of the time. Begum gradually became acquainted with new people. The relationship of Khan-Goldi's father and mother with Begum and the children had become good — one could even say excellent. But the hardship of life and accepting those conditions remained extremely difficult and exhausting for Begum.

The state of cleanliness and sanitation was miserable and unbearable. There was not even a simple toilet in the house. There was no bath and no running water at all. Every day the girls went to the spring carrying jugs and brought drinking water home.

Enduring such conditions was not easy, especially with two small children. But Begum did not complain. Each day she looked for a remedy and asked Khan-Goldi for help. Khan-Goldi became tired of all the pleas and requests.

Finally, one day, he said to Begum with ease, “I must go to Tehran for business. You too must get yourself and the children used to these same conditions and continue life beside my father and mother.”

Two days later, he packed his own belongings and set off for Tehran.

In those days there was no mail and no telephone. So Khan-Goldi’s mind was at ease about the journey. No one could disturb him or force him to answer for himself.

Khan-Goldi stayed away from his family for months, occupied — as he said — with trade. Every few months he returned to the village, stayed as a guest for a few days, and then went back to Tehran.

The first year passed almost entirely in this way. Only at Eid did he return to the village, stay for a few days, and then set out again for Tehran.

Building a Small House in the Heart of Hardship

Begum had, to some degree, learned to stand on her own feet. Gradually she took management of things into her hands and became determined to improve life for herself and the children. She wanted, even in those difficult conditions, to build a more bearable life for herself and her children.

She appealed to Khan-Goldi’s mother to allow her to build a small room in one corner of the hall, a place where she and the children could live in a more controlled and private environment.

At first, Khan’s mother constantly spoke of the lack of means. But Begum was determined to remain active and not sit with hands folded. In the end, the strength of Begum’s will overcame the mother’s hesitation, and she received permission to begin.

With the help of the children of Khan-Goldi’s relatives and with her own hands, Begum built a small room for sleeping. Beside it she created a space for daily life, a simple kitchen, and a small bath in one corner of the courtyard for herself and the children.

She whitened the walls with white earth. She opened the roof in two places to create two vents for sunlight to enter and stale air to leave. With this, the air in the room improved, and in the mornings, when the animals went out to graze, they no longer disturbed the children.

She arranged the room according to the custom of her father's home, with taste and order. Every object had a place. In the heart of that poverty and lack, Begum once again created a sign of home — a small home, but one with order, dignity, and her own motherly breath.

She could not bring Baku back. She could not rebuild Dervish's house. But in that harsh and strange corner, she could make a small refuge for Hafezeh and Qahraman — a place where the children would know that there was still a mother who could build life for them out of earth and scarcity.

Begum, the Unnamed Leader of the Village Women

At the same time, Begum had begun to understand in practice the theories she had learned during her education — ideas about life, feudal relations, and the exploitation of human beings by human beings.

She now saw from close range the hard and unjust system in which the village women were trapped: a system in which woman was exploited physically and emotionally alike.

By day, women were worn down by heavy rural labor; by night, they had to provide a clean house, a warm kitchen, and a prepared bed for men who were themselves crushed beneath the pressure of landlords, owners of land, cattle, and seed — and who then used women at home for their own comfort, service, and pleasure.

In that system, man too was not free. He also received little more than a limited provision from his work and suffering. But that same pressured man transferred his pressure at home onto the woman.

Thus woman became the last link in the chain of oppression — the place where the weight of all injustices fell upon her shoulders.

Begum had not learned this truth only in books or school. Now she saw it with her own eyes, felt it with her skin and bones, and experienced it in daily life.

Gradually Begum became an unnamed leader for the girls and women of the village. Without holding any title, she taught them how to speak, think, question, and see.

Through simple conversations, everyday examples, her own behavior, and the resistance she showed, she lit a spark of awareness in the hearts of young women.

But despite the sympathy and help of Khan-Goldi's father and mother, the circle of Begum's activity came under pressure. The effect of her intellectual work on the women, and the awareness slowly forming in them, had become noticeable to the men.

Those tied to the ruling system grew sensitive to Begum's behavior and influence, and they constantly pressured Khan-Goldi's father and mother to control Begum's contact with the women.

In short, Begum became entangled in new events. Even threats and psychological pressures began.

Sometimes, through hints or insinuations, they made her understand that she should draw close to the khan-born men, stand beside them, and share in their pleasures and relations. She saw and heard words and gestures unworthy of such a woman.

Begum gave all of them crushing answers. But these responses did not help; they only wounded their sense of power more deeply.

Now they began thinking of revenge. At any cost, they wanted to trap Begum in their grip, break the little boat of her pride, and drown her in the game of their animal desires.

But surrender had no place in the code and steel honor of that noble woman.

Begum’s popularity among the young women of the village had risen greatly, and this made matters more difficult for her opponents.

She had placed a mirror before women who had been silent for years, so they could see themselves. And no oppressive system remains calm before a woman who has begun to see herself.

The Hidden Contradictions Become Visible

Each day, the cloud of sorrow over Begum’s face grew thicker.

That night everyone was tired. The children had fallen asleep in the middle of a story. Hafezeh and Qahraman slept sweetly under the korsi quilt like innocent lambs, but their Farhad-hearted mother had no sleep in her eyes.

Begum quietly rose from beside the children and went to the hot water that was ready on the stove in the corner of the house. She took the water to the small bath she had built herself. For the first time, she wanted to bathe alone — something she had not done for a long time.

She prepared her clothes and placed them outside the bath. She undressed, entered, and sat on the stone placed there for sitting.

Suddenly the knot in her throat burst. The thunder and lightning of months of disorder, pain, calamity, exile, and loneliness sounded within her, and the rain of tears began.

Begum’s strong spirit, which had fought bravely for months against every hardship, still watched that the sound of her crying not reach anyone’s ears and, God forbid, wake the children. In that painful exile, she tried to wash away her tears by pouring bowls of warm water over herself, leaving no evidence behind — because for lions, lamenting is considered a fault.

She quieted her weeping and traveled in her mind.

With the same bowl she had brought from Baku, she slowly poured lukewarm water over her head and face. At the same time, mounted on the wing of despair, she flew into the past. Perhaps in a few minutes, images and films of the bitter memories after leaving Baku passed one by one before her eyes. Little by little she moved farther back in time until she reached the beginning of her acquaintance with despair.

Yes, she remembered the first time water had been poured over her head with that same bowl. She remembered well that the bowl had been in the bath bundle used to wash the bride on the night before her wedding.

Suddenly her hand moved over her hair — hair that had once been thick. She used to braid it beautifully and then fasten it with pins in a special way, circling it around her head. But now it seemed that hair no longer had its former fullness.

She wanted to leave that path of memory. She placed the bowl on the ground and closed her eyes. But tears still flowed from beneath her closed eyelids down her cheeks.

This time, with closed eyes, she sat upon the wing of imagination and traveled to a more distant past: to her scouting days, to the activity and movement she had once known, to days full of joy and success, when she was the unmatched rider in the field of life.

She remembered being the jewel in the circle of her family — a family that was always beside her, strengthening her heart and appreciating what she did. She thought of the family's pride, her father's unwavering support, her mother's kindness, her sister's loving affection, the respect and defense of her brothers, and the encouragement and support of her dear uncle and his noble wife, who had been like a second mother to her. She sank into the pleasure of those memories.

Suddenly, hearing a sound, she came back to herself.

She saw that she was sitting on a black stone in the small village bath, and that of all those dreams, only two nearly ripened fruits remained beside her: Hafezeh and Qahraman.

Yes, they were no longer very small children. Hafezeh had become a little lady of her own, and Qahraman, at six years old, was a small man who, beside his kind sister, carried a large part of the work of the house on his shoulders. Those two had not left their mother alone in that poisonous exile, although they too were trapped in the same condition.

Begum sat in silence for a while. She did not understand what sound had torn through her dreams, or where it had come from, because there was no sign of anything.

The bathwater in the large pot beside her had gone cold. She quickly began washing herself. She combed her hair, and seeing clumps of it separate from her head with the comb only deepened her sorrow. But there was nothing she could do.

She gathered the bath things, came out, put on her clothes, and crept under the korsi quilt beside her children.

In the morning, she woke to Qahraman’s voice and saw that Hafezeh was preparing breakfast. It seemed both children had noticed their mother’s exhaustion and her going to bathe, and now they wanted to do something for Mama.

After that state between sleep and waking, Begum accepted reality: the past, whatever it had been, was past.

She had to draw the future for herself from within this same reality. She had to build the children’s future — not as she had wished, but to whatever extent she could — with love and warmth, and she herself had to live beside her family with as much joy as possible.

It was as if, in her sleep, Begum had replaced the dreams of the past with a new plan: a design for the family and a map for passing the coming time better.

The Letter to Khan-Goldi

Several people from the village were going to Tehran. One of them was close to Khan-Goldi's family. Begum decided to send a letter to Khan-Goldi through him.

In the letter, she asked after Khan and tried to write of the successes, joys, shortages, and empty place he had left in the family. She asked him to try to return to the village so they could be together — especially now that another cold, biting winter was approaching that frozen life in exile.

Begum still believed that with the warmth of the presence of her husband, her life companion, and the father of her children, she could attach her heart to a new future and melt the cold of life with the fire of love.

At the end of the letter, she wrote the sentence that recalled the shared code from the beginning of their life together, the covenant they had once held between themselves:

"If the world turns upside down and stones rain from the sky, we will remain one another's companions."

Begum entrusted the letter, along with a little money for the road, to the person leaving for Tehran. She asked him with great sincerity and took his promise that he would deliver the letter safely and soundly to Khan-Goldi.

From that day forward, Begum continued life with her children with a new motivation and a love overflowing with tenderness. There was still hope in her heart — the hope that perhaps Khan-Goldi would return, perhaps the family would take shape again, and perhaps this exile would emerge from its frozen state.

But that same hope, beside her hidden pains, was the great contradiction of Begum's life:

on one side, she was an aware, resistant, constructive woman;

and on the other, a part of her heart still waited for a man who was distancing himself more each day from responsibility, affection, and home.

Building a New Life in the Heart of the Village

Each day Begum took a new step to improve the conditions of life in the village. She held classes for some of the village girls and taught them ways of thinking about life, hope for the future, and awareness of their human rights. She encouraged them to hope for a better life.

In that village, she had made a home for herself — a home fragrant with love and longing. Her taste was so striking that it passed from mouth to mouth among the village women and became something they repeatedly spoke of.

She sewed clothes for her children herself. Gradually she found customers for herself and, through this, earned income for the family. She also taught other girls sewing. Her work drew attention.

Beside the entrance to the hall of the house, she built a small room and set up her sewing there. That room had a window facing out toward the hall and the courtyard. Customers could come to that window for their work.

In truth, Begum was laying the foundations of a small business in the village.

She was not only sewing clothes; she was sewing a way to stand.

She was not only teaching girls sewing; she was showing them that a woman’s hand is not only for nameless labor and silent service. It can be a provider, a builder, a creator, and the bearer of skill.

In that village, Begum gradually became a new sign: a woman who had risen from the soil of exile, whose head had been wounded and whose heart had been broken, yet who built home, work, awareness, and hope from those very wounds and fractures.

She did not seek out the past, but the past was alive within her.

She was not certain of the future, but she worked for the future.

And in the heart of all those hidden contradictions, she still tried to remain a mother, remain a woman, remain a human being, and keep a small lamp lit for others.

Chapter Six: Begum’s Divorce and Homeless Wandering

Only a few days remained before Yalda Night. Begum wanted, without thinking about the bitter experiences of the past, to welcome this tradition, which was also observed in Iran, and to honor it like the other villagers. But Khan-Goldi’s absence had made both her own heart anxious and the children’s feelings uneasy.

Fortunately, news came that a number of travelers who had gone to the capital were returning to the village for the holiday. This gave Begum hope, because at least she might be able to hear some news of Khan-Goldi from them.

But Begum’s small wish was answered fully by her Lord: Khan-Goldi himself was among those who had returned from the city.

Hearing this news took Begum’s breath away. It was a tremendous shock. She was so excited that she did not have the strength to walk out to welcome him. But before long, Khan-Goldi himself entered the house.

Everyone was trapped in a strange astonishment. Despite what their hearts wanted, an icy atmosphere ruled the house. Khan-Goldi, too, had brought no warmth with him. He was not even warm and affectionate with the children.

In any case, he was the father of that family — the very person whose presence had been the main reason for accepting migration from Baku to that village, so they could be near his father, mother, and family. But now, in the worst time and place, he had abandoned the family and, as he put it, gone to the capital to follow his own affairs. And now that he had returned, it was as though no feeling could be seen in him.

Begum did not allow that coldness to last. In her excitement, in honor of the return of her husband and the father of her children, she changed the atmosphere in her own mind. With a smile that was partly forced but full of hope, she danced toward Khan, embraced him, and called the children. Everyone gathered around the father and embraced one another.

Begum proudly tried to show her husband the work she had done and the progress she had made, but Khan-Goldi had no desire to listen and answered nervously.

Begum thought to herself that perhaps he had just arrived and was tired. She helped him take off his clothes. At the same time, she opened a bundle and gave him the new clothes she had sewn with her own hands. She told him he could bathe first, as he used to do in Baku when he returned from work.

There was no shower in the village, but Begum had prepared a small room for bathing. She quickly carried the hot water, which was always ready on the stove, to the bathing room and called Khan-Goldi to come and see it.

Khan-Goldi walked slowly toward the bath. Although he did not show it, his eyes saw the changes in the house: the living space in the hall, the workroom, the compact kitchen, the small bath, and the new order Begum had created. Deep down, he did not dislike these changes.

He went, bathed, and returned. He put on his new clothes.

One might naturally have expected him to have brought some gift from the city for his wife and children. But no warmth could be drawn from this khan’s son. He had brought nothing with him. He had come empty-handed, carrying only his own body.

Begum paid attention to none of this. She was thinking entirely of making him happy. But Khan-Goldi, as though he had laid a golden egg, only found faults and spoke with stinging words.

Begum was living in another world. She quickly spread the tablecloth, brought the food, and told the children:

“Children, tonight we will eat dinner earlier, because your father has arrived from the road and is tired.”

It was clear that Begum had no heart that night for wrestling with the children’s chatter and needs. She wanted them to sleep earlier so that, after so long, she and her husband could be alone together.

And so it happened. That night the children went to sleep early, and Begum drew herself closer to her husband and made her longing for his presence plain. But it seemed that Khan-Goldi was either already satisfied, or ashamed, or perhaps in another world altogether, because he gave nothing of himself.

Despite Begum’s sharp intelligence, it was as if that night she did not want to see the signs in Khan-Goldi’s behavior. She did not read what his actions were hinting at. She carried her own feelings forward one-sidedly and reached the longing of her heart.

That night Begum looked at life with a new hope. She wanted to strengthen her bond with Khan-Goldi and, as in the old days, draw strength from the presence and companionship of her husband. But she decided to speak less and, for the moment, be content with that much.

The two slept beside the children, so that the next day could begin with the presence of the man of her life.

Begum’s Effort to Bring Married Life Back to Life

The next day, Begum rose from bed as she had become accustomed to doing during her husband’s months of absence. She went to tend to the animals, put the house in order, and prepare a generous breakfast. She wanted Khan-Goldi, when he woke, to be received almost like a king.

Before the children woke, she quietly went into the room, woke them, and brought them out so they would not disturb their father’s sleep and could help her prepare breakfast.

That day, after months, Begum was able to lay out a table for her small family and hoped they would all eat breakfast together. Everything was ready. Begum went to her husband and woke him with her kisses.

As soon as Khan-Goldi woke, for a moment he felt like a stranger. Then he quickly got out of bed and went for his clothes. He was putting them on when Begum said:

“My dear, breakfast is ready. The children are waiting too, and they helped prepare it. They want us all to be together. Come whenever you are ready.”

But Khan-Goldi answered with indifference:

“I have work to do. I have to go. You take care of your own business.”

His words were so cold and without feeling that Begum’s blood pressure seemed to drop, and the chill of despair passed through her. But she did not insist. She walked quietly toward the children and tried not to show her disappointment. Again she reddened her face with the slap of endurance and said:

“Children, come on, let us get busy. Your father has work and has to go quickly to take care of his affairs.”

Qahraman said:

“Well, I want to go out with my father. So I will not eat breakfast.”

Hafezeh said too:

“Well, then I am coming too.”

Unaware of their mother’s miserable state, they said:

“Mother, you wait too. Instead of breakfast, we will all have lunch together.”

Qahraman ran into the room, proud to tell his father that they wanted to go out with him. But Khan-Goldi’s reaction ruined Qahraman’s day so completely that the child became like one struck mute and no longer spoke.

Hafezeh saw her father leaving the courtyard and cried out:

“Papa! Papa! Wait! We are coming too!”

The father’s lifeless voice and his burning words would never be forgotten. At the height of heartlessness, he said simply and without spirit:

“You have no right. Stay with your mother. I will come back later.”

Both children sat on the ground and held their knees in sorrow. Their necks, the sign of their collapsed hopes, bent to one side. Their state was worse than the day whose hardship they had gradually begun to forget — the day when Khan-Goldi’s mother had wanted to separate the lamb from its mother and they could not bear to see that grief.

Now that grief had become a piece of a time that was supposed to be called “life beginning again.”

Seeing this atmosphere and Khan-Goldi's behavior in Iran, compared with what she had seen of him in Baku, made the completely different side of his character clearer to Begum. Despite all the decisions she had made in order to accept this new life, drawing close to Khan-Goldi and beginning a new married life with him came into question for her.

But Begum was determined to push this contradiction of feeling and reason away from herself. She wanted to look at the problems positively, understand them, and find a way through them.

She approached the children and, before any objection or complaint could take shape in them, quickly worked with their childlike logic. She spoke of the importance of their father's work, of how he wanted to help the family's happiness, and of how he had no choice but to use his time seriously and with effort.

She explained to them that although the situation was unpleasant, they needed to support their father and give him a chance.

She asked the children to return home, eat their breakfast, and follow their daily routine, each of them doing the duties they had accepted in helping their mother and the household.

Both children became calmer through their mother's explanations and returned home. With a more open spirit, they busied themselves with their work.

But Begum herself, unlike the words she had spoken, was fighting her thoughts inside herself moment by moment. In a way, she regretted the unguarded closeness she had shown Khan-Goldi on the first night, without any real assessment of his behavior. Quietly, in her heart, the seeds of new worries had been planted.

The Ground of Conflict Opens, and Khan-Goldi’s Hidden Face Appears

When Khan-Goldi returned home that evening, the house was like a bouquet. On the table by the window, branches of wildflowers in natural colors delighted the eye, and their fragrance made its presence known even to a blind mind.

But Khan-Goldi’s troubled and anxious mind had lost both the sight and the taste of dreams. He was a moving body without a soul, spreading poison into the atmosphere of love around him.

Begum, according to the old custom, went toward him, embraced him, and told him not to be tired. She asked if he was hungry and whether she should bring him food. Khan-Goldi said no; he had eaten.

With a heart filled with defeat and disappointment, Begum said:

“May it nourish you. Then while you change your clothes, I will prepare tea so we can drink it together.”

The echo of Begum’s broken voice was so affecting that it filled the house. The walls themselves seemed moved by the miserable state of this withered woman, although they knew nothing of the days of her queenly life in the past.

Yes, the tense atmosphere of the house seemed for a moment to affect Khan-Goldi’s heart. His heart trembled a little, and he said:

“All right, my dear. We will drink tea.”

Hearing that simple phrase, “my dear,” was the smallest excuse Begum needed for her sobs to break open. That sob carried joy, longing, and grief together — like a spring rain that is both cloud and sun, both smile and tears.

Begum, softened in the furnace of the harsh and bitter truths of exile, helplessness, and the loss of past protections, was now in the weakest state of her spirit, and sweet words had finally reached her. She pressed herself against her husband's tall frame and embraced him — like an innocent person who, out of inner fear, takes refuge in the jailer and the wielder of the whip and begs.

Yes, any person with feeling could hear the sound of Begum's broken pride in that moment and curse those conditions.

Begum gathered herself and went to prepare the tea. A few minutes later, she returned with a tea tray and cookies she had baked herself. Before bringing the tea, she had asked the grown daughter of a neighbor to keep Hafezeh and Qahraman for a few hours, so she could be alone with her husband for a while. That girl, in a way, played the role of Fatemeh, Begum's sister, for her.

She set the tea tray on the table by the window, next to the vase of wildflower branches. Khan-Goldi came too. They both sat on stools beside the table. Begum began pouring tea into the glasses.

Khan-Goldi asked after the children. With a feminine coquettishness not very much like her usual manner, Begum said:

"Do not worry, my love. I have left them with Homa so that, after such a long separation, we can be alone together."

Then she showed Khan the cookies and said:

"I baked them myself for you."

Begum's words and movements shook Khan-Goldi's conscience. His gaze and words changed a little. He thanked Begum for the progress she had made — the bedroom, the kitchen, the household items, and the way she had arranged the home.

That small attention opened another window in Begum's mind. She dared to say:

“Do not worry. I began from zero so that, in these circumstances, I could provide the best for us and the children.”

As they drank tea, Begum spoke about the work she had learned and done: tending the animals, preparing and storing the dung fuel they needed, setting up the workroom, and her wish to turn that same room, with Khan-Goldi’s help, into a small grocery shop.

She wanted to create a field of work for him, and to be his companion in it. Khan-Goldi could go back and forth to the city, buy goods, and Begum could exchange those goods in their little shop for the things the people needed for daily life. In this way, without farming — for they had no land — they could provide for the family by running a shop.

Khan-Goldi understood that these advances were possible, yet inwardly he kept himself away from accepting them. With different excuses, he avoided agreement. Begum, with patience and logic, answered his objections and questions.

When Khan-Goldi could find no answer or reason to reject her ideas, he pushed Begum’s words away with verbal harshness and spoke of how low such work was. He said it would be a disgrace for him to run a grocery in a village.

He said:

“Begum Khanum, you want me to come here and become a grocer so you can have an easy life? Is that what you call business?”

Begum asked:

“Then what would you like to do?”

He said:

“Trade.”

Begum said:

“Well, what does trade mean? Where? How?”

Khan-Goldi disliked these questions, and again his khan-born airs began to show.

Begum said:

“Well then, let us go to the city and be together there.”

This sentence trembled like a bomb of fear in Khan-Goldi’s heart. With violence and anger, he caught Begum under the chin, pressed upward, and shouted:

“Woman, where will we get the money to pay the costs of living?”

Begum said:

“Why are you upset? You can do business, and I will work too. I have a sewing machine. I know how to sew. Do not worry at all; I will even work as a servant if I must, but at night we will be together.”

Khan-Goldi tried to raise problems and insisted on making Begum accept that going to Tehran was not wise and was not possible. He said:

“You know nothing about the conditions in Iran. You know nothing of the unsettled state of the capital and the high cost of living.”

But Begum, with fresh questions, pushed him further under the pressure of logic. At last she said:

“Well, if the capital is difficult for work and life, then you stay here beside us.”

Instead of answering, Khan-Goldi cursed and insulted. But Begum insisted on receiving a logical answer.

She said:

“If what you say is true and one truly cannot support a family through trade, then what kind of trade is this that you are still pursuing, while you remain there for months and years? If it covers your expenses, then only the cost of our food will be added. You are already paying those same costs for yourself alone. With us there, the expense will increase only a little, while I too will work and earn. We can manage ourselves. Besides, it will be better for the children’s future and education.”

In the face of Begum’s logic, Khan-Goldi could only snap:

“You do not understand. You know nothing.”

Begum continued to answer and offer solutions. She had pressed him so hard with logic that Khan-Goldi had no way to escape the conversation — especially when Begum said:

“You went alone. Well then, what did you build?”

In response to that question, Khan-Goldi gave an insulting answer:

“This is not your country. So you do not know what you are talking about.”

Begum said:

“But look: since you went to the city, I, in this unfamiliar village, even without you and without your father and mother, have used these few cows and sheep to make all this progress. With this very sewing machine, I have paid for construction and the food needs of the house. Now imagine how much better it would be if your help were added. I would no longer have to open my hand before strange men who, when they go to the city, buy things for me and take a commission for themselves.”

Khan-Goldi, burning from the truth of Begum’s words and from having no real answer, spoke words that set Begum’s soul on fire:

“I know about your flirting and your relations with other men. You do not dislike it. You are even happy with it.”

Such filthy words could only come from a person with filthy thoughts. Although the accusation was extremely heavy, Begum, with maturity, did not allow Khan-Goldi to drag the discussion off course. She quickly said:

“If such behavior pleased me, I would not be urging you to return to your home and family, nor would I insist so much. Besides, how lowly your words are. Does such an accusation fit me? It seems you have forgotten that I am the daughter of Dervish and was raised in the lap of Tohfeh. Shame on the times that drew this fate for us.

Now that you are certain the capital is difficult, we can go there temporarily and stay for a few months. We can wrestle with the problems together. If we see that it is impossible, then we will return here.”

Khan-Goldi, having lost the rhyme and come up short, quickly changed his face and said:

“You are right. We should test it. But for now, let us not go to the city, because the risk and cost are greater. Since you have managed this place well, I will also work with you and handle the city errands so we can see what happens. Given the present conditions, the economic and political situation in Iran is not good overall. So it is better to carry forward the plan of staying in the village.”

Begum outwardly welcomed his apparent acceptance, although in her heart she did not believe it. On the basis of that decision, the work began.

Begum and the children were no longer alone, although Khan-Goldi’s presence had little result, and as before, the heavy burden of life still rested on Begum and the children. But Begum, relying on

the old saying that “thin soup is better than nothing,” endured and made do.

Khan-Goldi sometimes helped, but most of the time he was occupied with his friends and his own amusements.

Again, a Yalda Full of Torment Came to Begum’s House

Gradually Yalda Night arrived.

Although the cold grew sharper day by day and made the work harder, Begum remained the caravan-leader of progress. She completed all the daily tasks, and after putting the children to sleep, only then went to her workroom. In the light of the kerosene lamp they had recently bought, she sat behind the sewing machine and sewed clothes for customers and sometimes for the needs of her own family.

But she never had Khan-Goldi beside her. He came toward Begum only when he needed something. After that, he either went out to meet people and entertain himself, or came home to eat and sleep.

Despite all the shortages, Begum reddened her face with the slap of endurance and kept the candle of that cold, loveless house burning. She had prepared herself for Yalda Night.

That night, because of Begum’s heartfelt pleading and desire, Khan-Goldi stayed at home. All of them, wearing new clothes, sat beside the korsi. The traditional Yalda table had already been prepared and arranged.

Begum asked Khan-Goldi, according to the old ritual custom, to tell stories for the children. But Khan-Goldi had no strength or spirit for such a thing and said mockingly:

“You are the speaker. Please, you do it.”

Begum cleverly accepted the mockery as praise and said:

“All right, children, I will tell the story. Listen, all of you.”

She began her story — a story that was, in truth, their own life. She told of hardships in the language of a tale so that it might be a lesson for the children. She said:

“Once upon a time, there was a family that, by enduring hardships and taking inspiration from Yalda Night, worked so it could pass through the cold and difficulty of the age and leave Yalda behind. That family too, with this faith, passed through Yalda, and another child was born to them; and after that, with blessing and joy, they continued their life.”

The story was told with such feeling and truth that the children were drawn into it. It was as though they already knew that sorrow-filled story.

Unconsciously, Hafezeh asked:

“Mother, when will you bring us another baby?”

With a whole world of feeling, Begum answered:

“Right now!”

Then she rose from under the korsi. The children thought their mother was going to bring a baby. But Begum placed her hand on her belly and said:

“Give me congratulations! The baby is growing here. I promise that by next Yalda it will be with you.”

These words filled the children’s hearts with excitement and joy; but in Khan-Goldi they stirred anger and rage.

The Breaking of Yalda

Khan-Goldi suddenly overturned the spread and leapt up. He kicked Begum and shoved her. Begum fell to the ground.

Like an avalanche collapsing, she took the death of all her feelings into her own arms so that no one else would be harmed. It was as if, in that same moment, she wanted to bear the whole ruin herself so the children would not be buried beneath it.

Khan-Goldi picked up his cigarette pack and, as he left the house, said loudly:

“The woman tells stories to me!”

Before leaving the room, he said firmly and mercilessly:

“You have no right to drop another child into this world.”

Then he slammed the door and left the house.

The blow of that door and the weight of those words were such that they shattered all the hope and feeling Begum had built through hardship, suffering, and day-and-night labor during those months of exile. As the door closed behind Khan-Goldi, it was as though his entire being had left forever the hut of Begum’s broken heart.

The last remaining particles of love and feeling burned and turned to ash.

Another Yalda remained eternal in Begum’s hut — a Yalda recorded not with stories, nuts, and the warmth of the korsi, but with a kick, humiliation, the children’s fear, and the breaking of hope.

The next morning, no smoke rose from the mountainside — the smoke that might have been a sign of survival after Yalda.

Begum and the children had frozen again. Grieving, they cursed the day and waited for the darkness of night to arrive, as though perhaps

the final bed of sleep might come and their eyes would no longer have to witness such days.

In the sobs and muffled voices of these oppressed ones, a hidden protest against the director of this part of fate could be felt. Though it was not spoken, its effect was visible in their broken hearts.

And still, becoming alive-to-dead continued.

The winter of this family did not end. Every day was blood of the heart and the continuation of being condemned to die under the name of being alive — like the dance of justice-play performed by judges in the motion of a lifeless body caught on the gallows rope, just when the spectators of death proudly announce:

“We killed.”

But the captive dancers on the gallows whisper in silence:

“We will come alive again, dancing.”

Managing the Continuing Slow Death Called Life Again Fell Upon Begum

Thus time passed.

The births of the children passed too. Spring in nature also arrived. But for this exiled family, even Khan-Goldi did not remain.

On New Year’s Eve, the night when every family covers its loneliness by gathering together, this family sat uncovered and unprotected, with dead hearts, beside the table of spring and heard of spring’s arrival from the tongues of others.

From time to time, Begum thought of some remedy — of how she might prevent the child in her womb from entering this house of mourning, so it would not be born into this graveyard. But her heart

would not consent to issue a command of murder in the name of prudence and become the murderer herself.

Although she knew that the coming of another child would place a new responsibility and a new captivity on her shoulders, she surrendered before the decree of life.

The new child was born.

Yes, it was a birth accompanied not by celebration, but by ill omen and grief.

There was no news of Khan-Goldi. But gradually, from rumors that leaked out, the rooster's tail of the reason for his anger over the birth of the new child began to show.

It became clear that Khan-Goldi had become attached in Tehran to a younger woman — a woman who was waiting for his full return to Tehran so that, after the "problems" were settled — meaning his wife and children and Begum's divorce — she could officially celebrate her married life with Khan-Goldi.

It was now clear that the exiled family who had sacrificed all their beauty and all they possessed in order to be beside their beloved had become, in Khan-Goldi's eyes, a "problem."

Begum and her children, who had come from Baku to this strange soil in the hope of family and refuge, were now counted as an obstacle to the pleasure and freedom of the man who had himself caused their homelessness.

The Birth of Begum's Third Child and the Appearance of an Enraged Khan-Goldi

After hearing the news of Shafiqeh's birth, Khan-Goldi returned to the village — but not with fatherly affection, not with the shame of a

husband, and not with the responsibility of a man who had dragged a family into such a fate.

With humiliating pride he said that since Begum had given birth to a new child without his permission, he was no longer willing to continue married life. He even said that from the very beginning, the marriage had been a mistake of youth.

When such words are spoken so easily, hearing them is difficult for any human being — let alone for a mother whose heart had for years become the lower millstone so she would not lose her children.

A woman who had turned her back on all her beautiful possessions and, to preserve her family, accepted migration and exile, now heard that she herself and her children were counted, in the eyes of merciless people, as Khan-Goldi's "problems."

The khan-born gigolo had only now realized that his marriage had been a mistake of youth — and this while he was paying the expenses of his new love with money Begum's father had given him for the comfort of his grandchildren.

Bearing such a bitter truth weighs heavily on a broken heart and can bring mountains of men to their knees. But Begum took revenge on him with the sword of her tongue and said:

"I too understood early that instead of marrying a husband, I had taken a wife. I understood that I had been trapped in this mistake by childish feeling. But to preserve the foundation of the family and human dignity, I endured until now, and before the eyes of others I did not disgrace my own woman.

Now that you are divorcing me in order to become someone else's wife, while I pity the woman who sees our existence, as a family, as the obstacle to forming her own family, I too divorce you. But know this: you no longer deserve to become a father, so do not wait for that either."

The force of so many sword-strokes of speech brought Khan-Goldi's anger to a boil. With a sudden attack, he ran toward Begum.

But this time, the woman he expected was no longer standing before him.

With agility, Begum took from the shelf the wooden stick she used to flatten dough. In her own hut, defending her life and honor, she stood against the assault of a man who carried the name of man, but in whom no manliness remained.

With that stick Begum defended herself. She struck Khan-Goldi on the head, and blood flowed. That blood, although it was nothing beside all the cruelty, showed for one moment that the oppressed do not always remain silent.

With that stick, Begum drove Khan-Goldi out of the house of her honor and cleansed the home of his polluted presence.

Children in the Middle of the Storm

The children were crying.

Hafezeh held her little sister tightly in her arms and kept Qahraman beside her, comforting him. But her own small and precious heart was beating violently, like the heart of a captive bird trapped in the hand of a hunter.

It was as though her heart wanted to burst out of her chest and fly away. But Hafezeh knew that in those conditions she could not leave her sister, her brother, and her mother alone. For that reason, she stood with all her pain — yet she trembled from the force of what she was bearing.

Her trembling was so severe that the sound of her teeth striking together, beside the crying of the captive children, rang through the air like the ominous drum of the victory of oppressors.

But in this scene, the oppressed one was no longer silent.

A woman who had carried years of pain, exile, slander, helplessness, and humiliation on her shoulders had this time risen with the staff of defense for the honor and sanctity of her home. She struck the head of a faithless man who wanted to say to her:

“Give the new child; let its father keep it.”

To anyone who can understand the injustice of such a statement and not feel the blood boil in their veins, one must say:

“Shame on you, who behind the mask of manhood are nothing but rabble.”

And one must weep tears of regret that a human being was not present in that history, that time, and that place to defend these defenseless ones.

But may your eyes never see a bad day: at that very time, something else happened.

The Village Court, the Divorce Decree, and Begum’s Expulsion from the Village

Several hours had passed. Begum, still in shock, sat beside her children. Each person in that house, according to their own capacity, was watching a dark future in the mind.

But the innocent newborn child, with lips like leaves, was still searching for the mother’s nipple. It seemed that even this new infant had not remained unaware of the intensity of what had happened. She had a high fever, and her restlessness burned Begum’s heart even more.

Suddenly, the pounding of the door tore everyone out of their black dream.

Hafezeh, frightened, went and opened it. Her father, his head wrapped in bandages, entered with the village headman and several elders. They had come to take Begum with them to the house of the headman, to review Khan-Goldi's complaint.

Begum called the neighbor girl, one of her followers, confidantes, and companions in pain, to look after the children in her absence. Then, with difficulty, she freed the hem of her dress from the hands of Hafezeh and Qahraman.

The children had clung to her. It was as though they understood that their mother's leaving was no ordinary departure.

Begum kissed them, comforted them, and told them to stay with Khaleh-jan. Then, with a heart that had fallen a thousand times behind her body, she set off with that group toward the house of the village headman.

That night, in the house of the village headman, the village council gathered to examine Khan-Goldi's complaint against his wife.

All the members of the council were men.

Each of them had heard, in one way or another, of Begum's reputation in the village: how she had awakened the village women, how she had drawn the girls toward thought and questioning, and how she had made them bolder in asking for their human rights.

In the hearts of many of them, there was a hidden grudge against Begum. Khan-Goldi's complaint was only an excuse. Before the court even began, its verdict had already been written in their hearts.

The result of the court was easy to understand and predict: the severest punishment and the most ungentlemanly verdict were issued and carried out then and there.

By order of the council and the command of the village headman, Begum's marriage was declared irrevocably dissolved. She was

condemned for moral corruption, dishonor, disobedience to her husband's commands, and causing injury. Then they announced that her right to live in that village was absolutely unacceptable.

That same night, in that same place, and without delay, they expelled Begum from the village.

They gave her no real chance to defend herself, no chance to say farewell to her children. They did not even allow her, with breasts full of milk, to hold her nursing infant and give her one last motherly drink.

Begum was forced to leave the village — in the heart of night, in exile, helpless, childless, rightless, and without farewell.

The Woman Who Once Again Faced the Same Question

I do not know with what state of heart one can record those moments and make free human beings hear them.

A woman with whom history was at war had, only a short time earlier, once faced the bitter demand to leave her children. At that time, by denying all her dreams, possibilities, name, standing, father, mother, and home, she had not been able to give up her children. She came into exile so she would not lose them.

Now, after years of suffering, torment, separation from loved ones, and life in an unfamiliar soil, she had to answer that same question again.

But this time, a nursing infant had been added to that list.

This time, she did not even have the right to choose. Without farewell, in the heart of night, in a land of exile where she had no one but God, they separated her from her children.

Begum had no doubt about the stone-heartedness of that people. Yet deep in her heart she still searched for a light — perhaps a deliverance, perhaps a mercy, perhaps one awakened heart that, at the final moment, would say:

“This woman is a mother. Do not separate this woman from her nursing child.”

But no light rose from those people.

Her steps had no strength to move. She was like a captive deer who thinks only of her fawns — numb, powerless, filled from head to toe with despair and oppression.

Suddenly, another light was kindled in her heart.

She turned toward the village cemetery — the same place where, on her first day entering the village, she had fallen nearby, struck her head on a stone, and split it open.

Now once again, the same earth, the same darkness, and the same bitter sign stood before her. The film of her sorrowful life played before her eyes, alive and merciless. Every single moment smelled of grief.

In spite of all this, she decided to spend the night in the cemetery.

She said to herself that perhaps a particle of honor and humanity remained in that region. Perhaps someone would come after her. Perhaps, at least, they would give her conditional permission to remain near her children.

But alas a hundred times, that hope too was empty.

No warmth came from that people. That ill-fated village had sunk into an inhuman silence, rotten and soulless.

The Night in the Cemetery and the Awakening of Shah Begum

That night, with all its anxiety and fear, continued until true dawn, but Begum’s worried and waiting eyes did not close for even a moment.

The rising sun tore open the blackness of the night, but the blackness of Begum’s fate in that valley of exile remained in her heart. For her sleepless, waiting eyes, no light of hope was shining.

After a brief doze that had caught her eyes for a moment, she suddenly woke with a start — as though her head had struck a fresh stone again. But this time her head had not broken; they had broken her heart.

Even so, she felt a new energy inside herself. It was as if a pure sense of revenge had awakened Shah Begum within her. Once again she wanted to defend the lost queenly dignity inside herself.

That scene was so painful that the hearts of the angels of justice in creation would bleed, and the pages of their reports would drip with blood.

I believe that in that soil, red tulips will always grow; but their secret will never be revealed to anyone. Forever, the cries of that night will not reach the ears of that base crowd of human-looking creatures.

But in the heart of that cemetery, on a morning when no one had come to save her, something died in Begum and something else came alive.

The woman who the previous night had been separated from her nursing infant with breasts full of milk now understood that if she waited for the mercy of that people, nothing would remain of her but bones in the soil.

So she had to rise herself.

Not as a woman cast out,

not as a defeated mother,

but as the Shah Begum who still kept alive, in the depths of her being, the right to be a mother, the right to be human, and the right to return to her children.

Begum’s Homeless Wandering in a Completely Unfamiliar Place

Begum had come back to herself — with a heart filled with grief, with the pain of separation, and with fear of the conditions fate had drawn for her.

Now she had to set her face toward nowhere, with no guide except, after reliance on her God, the footprints left in the soil by the daily comings and goings of others.

A woman who, after separation from homeland and family and after turning her back on comfort and ease, had endured so much cruelty and hardship to begin life again, now had to walk a road many men could not even bear to imagine.

But this lion-natured woman, this time with a deeper wound in her soul and spirit, had no choice but to turn her back on all the emotional substance of her life.

This time she had no provisions with her,

no refuge,

no companion,

and not even the chance to say farewell.

With a hungry stomach and breasts that, from the pressure of milk, were on the verge of bursting, she had to begin another migration — a migration more bitter than the one before.

She had to turn her back on all her attachments and beloved ones, especially her nursing infant, and also on every achievement she had gained through years of hardship, and set out on the road.

Milking Her Breast Onto the Soil of the Cemetery

Before she moved away from that ill-fated cemetery, the same cemetery where she had carried the night into morning, she stopped.

Her breasts burned from the pressure of milk. She had no choice but to milk them and pour the milk onto the soil of the cemetery.

What a fate!

The same cemetery where, on the first day of her arrival in that ill-fated village, she had fallen from the donkey and the blood of her split head had been spilled, now witnessed once more the spilling of something from her life:

that day, her blood had been spilled;

and today, her milk.

Milk that, by divine decree, was the sustenance of her nursing infant was now, by force, pouring onto the cold soil of the cemetery.

Begum murmured words of pain under her breath and wept like a spring cloud.

A wounded and exiled lioness, in an unfamiliar wilderness, beside silent dead and a merciless world, prepared herself for a heavy migration.

The Beginning of an Unknown Road

She tightened the straps of her charuq shoes.

She picked up a piece of wood from the ground, broke it to the length of a staff, and held it in her hand like Moses.

Then she set out toward an unknown fate.

She was beginning her road from a place where all her attachments had remained behind; and with every step, she moved farther from them.

Her steps were taken with an iron will, but her heart was still left behind.

From time to time she turned her head and looked back;

and in that very moment, the veins of her feeling, capillary by capillary, tore apart.

The sound of her crying mingled with the crying of the angels.

She had begun a road whose path she did not know and whose end she could not see.

She was losing herself in an unknown fate — perhaps so that she could once again bring the story of her life into being from the heart of ruin.

Beautiful Nature, Merciless Fate

Her path was unknown, but its nature was beautiful — full of greenery, colorful flowers, and mountains with gray faces, silent and heavy; mountains that, despite all their lifelessness, possessed their own special beauty.

But that beauty was no balm for Begum’s heart.

These mountains had seen many cruelties in their lap, and now too, indifferently, they were witnessing the oppression of a woman who once again had to be separated in that plain and wilderness from all her attachments — from everything that was a piece of her liver — and not by choice, but in the most ungentlemanly way, in the name of man-made judgment and law.

Begum walked on;

with a wounded body,

with a broken heart,

but with a spirit that had not yet surrendered.

Begum’s First Steps Outside the Village

Begum set out.

She did not know where she was going, where she would sleep the next night, or with what she would fill her hungry stomach.

She only knew that if she stayed there, in the silence of the cemetery, among dead people who no longer felt pain, she too would gradually become a lifeless stone.

So she walked.

She held tightly the wooden staff she had picked up from the ground. With every step she took, it was as though a piece of her heart remained behind.

The village had not yet fully disappeared from her sight. Behind those mud-brick walls were Hafezeh, Qahraman, and Shafiqeh the infant — the same child who had not yet properly known the smell of her mother’s body and had already been separated from her breast.

Begum stopped several times.

Each time her heart wanted to turn back, to run, to cry out, to break down the door of Khan-Goldi's house and pull her children out of that home.

But she knew that if she returned, that same merciless people would bury not only her, but even the hope of her return.

So she bit down on her own liver and walked.

The morning wind passed through the greenery. Wildflowers had risen on both sides of the path, as though nature, unaware of the unjust verdict of the night before, simply continued its own work.

The sun was rising, birds were singing, sheep were grazing in the distance, and life, outwardly, was going on.

But for Begum, that morning was not the beginning of life. It was the continuation of slow death — with the difference that now there was no one left even to witness her dying by degrees.

Gradually she went down a narrow path, a path made by the footsteps of people and animals. Here and there one could see the mark of a donkey's hoof, the footprint of a man wearing charuq, or the sign of something dragged over the soil.

Begum sought her way through these signs. In that helplessness, the footprints of others were like a half-living map for her.

She said to herself:

"My God, You saw. You heard. You are witness. Carry me to a place where I can return to my children again."

She repeated that sentence under her breath not once, but many times. It was as though each time she said it, a torn band of her soul was tied together again.

Chapter Seven: Mother’s Koroghli Journey through the Harsh Mountains of Fate

Historical Note: Iran in the Whirlwind of the Second World War

To understand the years in which Begum became homeless and was separated from her children, we must also look at the larger condition of Iran in those days.

Begum’s suffering did not take place only inside one house, one village, or one family relationship. Her life moved inside a greater storm: the storm of the Second World War, the occupation of Iran, the weakness of the central government, shortages, insecurity, and the heavy shadow of local powers.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Iran had declared neutrality. But the neutrality of a weak country, when great powers are fighting over roads, oil, and military routes, has little protection.

In Shahrivar 1320, Soviet forces entered Iran from the north and British forces from the south. The Iranian army could not mount effective resistance, and the country was practically divided into spheres of occupation and influence.

The Allies occupied Iran for several reasons: to protect the oil of the south, to limit German influence in Iran, and above all to open a route for sending equipment, arms, food, and supplies to the Soviet Union through the route later known as the Persian Corridor.

After this occupation, Reza Shah was forced to abdicate on the twenty-fifth of Shahrivar 1320, and the throne passed to his son, Mohammad Reza. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who had studied in Switzerland and returned to Iran, suddenly found himself on the throne of a country caught between war, occupation, poverty, and foreign pressure.

America’s role at the beginning of Iran’s occupation was not like that of Britain and the Soviet Union; it was not direct and military in the same sense. But in later years, especially from 1321 onward, American forces and facilities also entered Iran to organize transport and supplies.

But the cost of this global game was paid by the people of Iran.

The presence of foreign forces, the weakness of the government, shortage of goods, rising prices, insecurity, and disorder on the roads made ordinary life harder. In villages too, local khans used the confusion of the time to tighten their control over the poor and defenseless.

In such an atmosphere, Begum wanted to win back her children. But the roads were unsafe, the cities were unsettled, the khans still held heavy power in the villages, and the law — instead of being a shelter for the oppressed — was often only another instrument in the hands of the powerful.

So Begum’s homelessness must not be seen merely as the story of a divorced and expelled woman.

She was a mother trapped at the crossroads of family cruelty, village tyranny, world war, foreign occupation, and the games of great powers.

Begum’s Wandering and Her Arrival at an Unknown Settlement

Begum walked with anger and stubbornness over the mountain stones. Each step she took was firmer than the one before it.

Inside herself she felt a strange certainty, as though a hidden force within her had given her patience and strength.

That force was so dear to her that she walked toward an unknown freedom like a lioness moving through the forest.

She did not even have a bite of bread with her. Yet whenever she saw a spring, she could not pass it by. She would sit beside the water, wash her face, moisten her thirsty lips, and say with grief in her voice:

“Peace be upon thirsty Hossein. Curse be upon Yazid.”

But she did not allow the fragrant plants around the springs, or the softness of the water, to make her weak. With one “Ya Ali,” she would rise again and continue walking.

The heat of the sun struck directly upon her head. Hunger, thirst, and exhaustion drained her strength. She wrapped her charuq scarf around herself so the sun would not burn her face.

The smell of young crops in the nearby fields drew her attention. Without hesitation she went toward them, picked a handful of green peas, peeled them, and ate them while walking. It seemed that, deep in her heart, she was grateful to have found food.

She knew how to cook such peas over a fire; she had cooked them before for her children. But she deliberately did not allow herself to sink into memories that would slow her steps. She ate them raw and kept walking.

Hours passed like wind. Green nature was busy making love to the sun, which was slowly moving away and preparing for sunset.

That beauty did not pass without effect on Begum’s heart. It also worried her, because she was thinking of the darkness of night.

Suddenly, from the hill she had just climbed, she saw a small settlement lower down the slope. The sight of that little village, which seemed to her like the next land of her fate, made her heart

glad. It was as though new energy entered her steps. She felt, for a moment, as if she had reached a promised place.

She hurried down the hillside, although she still had no idea what awaited her. From above, the settlement looked close, but the steep slope made the way longer than it seemed. Her desire to reach the village before nightfall gave her hope.

She reached the village spring. Beside it stood a damp chamber. Later she would learn that it was the village bathhouse, where the dead were washed before burial. At first she thought of taking shelter there for the night, but her inner voice led her into the village.

She entered through a lane lined with gardens. Thorn bushes formed the walls on both sides. The houses, some without proper doors, stood scattered and disorderly, made of brick and mud. The sight saddened her.

A girl who had once been a leader in her own land, whose family's summer house had resembled a palace, now after hours of walking and after losing all her attachments, had prepared her mind to spend the night in a bathhouse for the dead.

Then, before her, she saw a house different from the others. It had a large double door and was protected by a high wall.

Begum went straight toward that door.

Her heart pounded so loudly that she could hardly hear the sound of the door knocker. She knocked several times, hurried and trembling.

A voice came from inside the courtyard, worried and calling:

"Wait, I'm coming. Who is it? Who is it? I'm coming."

She heard the latch move behind the door. A woman opened it and, seeing Begum's distressed and unfamiliar appearance, asked cautiously:

"Yes? Do you need something?"

Shah Begum, like a helpless beggar, but with a voice still clear and dignified, said:

"I am a stranger. A traveler. A woman alone and without shelter. I ask for refuge."

The woman opened one leaf of the door without hesitation and let Begum enter. Then she said:

"Wait here until I ask my lady's permission."

The woman hurried toward the inner rooms. A little later, a woman's voice was heard:

"Leila, who is at the door?"

The voice was familiar to Begum.

Before Leila could answer, Begum's body trembled. Her breath stopped for a moment. That voice had awakened something deep from her past.

The mistress of the house stepped forward.

She looked at Begum.

Begum looked at her.

For a heartbeat, the world stopped.

Then both women cried out and fell to the ground.

My God — I, the narrator, feel as though my heart is coming out of my mouth when I recall that scene.

The servants ran in confusion. Water was brought. Faces were sprinkled. Names were called.

Suddenly the eyes of both women opened.

They looked at one another again.

Again they cried out, calling each other by name, and again they fainted.

This time, a man who was in the house suddenly spoke Begum’s name aloud and began to weep.

What a strange game fate plays.

The House of Salar and the Return of an Old Refuge

The house belonged to Salar, the son of a well-known khan of that region. The lady of the house was Soraya, Salar’s wife.

Soraya and Begum had known one another in Baku. They had been classmates and friends. Soraya too had been drawn away from Baku because Salar was Iranian, and after their marriage they had returned to Iran and to Salar’s ancestral village.

What had appeared to be chance was, for Begum, like a light suddenly lit in the darkest hour of her life.

From that moment, tears and smiles began together for those old friends. Soraya and Salar called her again by the name that carried the dignity of her youth:

“Shah Begum.”

Refuge, Bitter News, and a New Wound

Begum told Soraya of her sorrows: the expulsion, the separation from her children, and especially the newborn baby whose milk still pressed painfully in her breasts.

That was her deepest torment. Her body still belonged to a child who was no longer in her arms.

Because of the war and the unsettled condition of the country, travel and legal pursuit were difficult. The roads were unsafe, cities were unstable, and local powers still had their own force. Still, Salar promised that at the right time he would act on Begum’s behalf and try to defend her violated rights.

Days passed. Begum’s milk slowly dried. She spent most of her days with Soraya. Speaking with her old friend, crying with her, and sharing the weight of her heart reduced some of her mental pressure.

Three months passed after Begum’s separation from Khan-Goldi. Soraya began thinking of arranging a new marriage for her. Begum resisted. She did not want a new husband; she wanted her children.

Soraya, with friendship and care, explained to her that in the culture of the village a beautiful, young, single woman without male protection would constantly be exposed to suspicion, talk, danger, and social pressure. Soraya knew Begum’s mind well and did not pressure her harshly. Instead, she and Salar agreed first to make a serious attempt regarding the children.

Salar sent trusted representatives to the village where the children were. He also sent word to the local khan that he would stand as Begum’s protector and legal supporter, and that the children should be brought to their mother.

But a few days later, the representatives returned with terrible news.

After Begum’s expulsion from the village, Khan-Goldi had faced many problems. Shafiqeh, the infant, had died twenty days after Begum’s departure, under unclear and painful circumstances. After that tragedy, Khan-Goldi had taken Hafezeh and Qahraman with him to Tehran, to his mother’s house.

Khan-Goldi himself was also living in Tehran with his new wife.

This news reopened Begum’s old wounds. Shafiqeh’s death was a wound beyond words. The news of Khan-Goldi’s marriage in Tehran made the blow heavier still, because Begum knew that the root of so many of her misfortunes lay in his weakness, selfishness, and cowardice.

For a while Begum withdrew into herself. Soraya did not leave her alone, but she no longer pressed her. All suitors were rejected without even being discussed.

In those days Begum had shelter in the house of Salar and Soraya, but her heart remained homeless.

The Beginning of a New Life with the Grief of Separation

The conditions of the time kept growing harder. War had dragged its claws across Iran. The villagers felt shortages, insecurity, and fear. The khans tightened control over those beneath them. News from the cities was troubling.

Under such circumstances, Soraya again returned carefully to the question of Begum's future. Begum understood the truth of what Soraya was saying. In that village, a woman without a husband, especially a woman with Begum's appearance, strength, and background, would never be left in peace.

But the thought that Shah Begum should need an "owner" was itself a strange sorrow.

Soraya soon introduced a young man: Rasoul, a relative of Salar's family. According to the standards of that time and place, he had a good appearance, a gentle face, and a simple sincerity. Begum had seen him before in Salar's house, serving respectfully at gatherings. His innocent way of behaving had not escaped her attention.

Rasoul might have been a suitable candidate, but Begum's real question remained unanswered.

This time she was not looking for a husband through the excitement of youth, white dresses, and bridal dreams. She needed a companion — someone who understood her wounds, her motherhood, her missing children, and her need for loyalty.

She asked Soraya to arrange a meeting so that she could speak with Rasoul directly.

The appointed day soon arrived.

Begum and Rasoul sat facing one another in a room. Rasoul was not a man of great calculation or worldly intelligence, but his heart was clear like a mirror. Begum asked him:

“What do you know about me?”

Rasoul lowered his head and answered with difficulty.

“I know that you are a mother whose heart has been burned by separation from her children.”

He said these words with such honesty and dignity, while hot tears gathered on his face, that Begum was left speechless. Her heart recognized sincerity in him.

With a burning heart, Begum looked toward Rasoul, whose head was still lowered and whose tears would not stop. She asked:

“Rasoul jan, are you willing to become my companion and my comforter?”

Rasoul answered quickly and firmly:

“Madam, I have come so that, if you accept me, I may be your servant.”

His words carried such purity that the room seemed for a moment like a sanctuary.

Begum stood. She went to him, took his head gently in both hands, and kissed his forehead. Something like thunder and lightning passed through the air, and the years of pain within Begum broke open.

Rasoul stood too, embraced Begum, and whispered in her ear:

“I am your servant. I will not leave you alone.”

For a few moments, they breathed in each other’s arms.

Begum felt that Rasoul was sincere. She still did not know whether he had the strength and ability that her life required, but in the conditions of that time and place, she agreed to marry him.

The Joy of Soraya and Salar

Begum and Rasoul gathered themselves and came out of the room. Soraya and Salar were waiting.

Begum went to Soraya. Rasoul went to Salar.

Soraya held Begum tightly, kissed her again and again, and asked quietly:

“What happened?”

Begum said calmly:

“With trust in God. I am satisfied.”

When Soraya heard Begum’s answer, joy broke her restraint. She cried:

“Blessed! Blessed!”

Then she began to dance.

Salar too danced toward his wife and then took Rasoul’s hand into the circle. In that house, such a scene had perhaps never happened: the khan and his wife dancing before servants and relatives. But in that moment, the only measure was friendship.

Soraya and Salar were intoxicated with the happiness of having fulfilled a friend’s duty.

Yet Begum’s eyes were no longer in that house.

Her spirit had traveled back into time. Her first meeting with Khan-Goldi passed before her eyes. The alleys of Baku returned. Her father, her mother, her brothers, Fatemeh — one by one, their faces appeared in the screen of her mind.

The quiet tears became sobs.

She pressed her breasts with both hands. The pain of milk, the memory of her children, the shame of surviving without them, and the terror of beginning again all rose together.

Begum’s Collapse and Soraya’s Embrace

Soraya rushed to her.

Begum and Soraya wept in each other’s arms like two broken sisters.

Shah Begum felt as if her soul had left her body. She could no longer stand. She slipped from Soraya’s arms, sank to her knees, and collapsed on the floor.

Soraya put a pillow beneath Begum’s head and lay beside her, stroking her long, thick hair until exhaustion overcame them both.

I do not know how many hours passed.

When Begum awoke, she was surprised to see Soraya asleep beside her. The torn shirt, the pain in her scalp where her hair had been pulled, and the heaviness of her limbs made her understand the state she had fallen into.

She felt ashamed. She kissed Soraya gently on the forehead and woke her.

Begum laughed at her own madness, but that laughter was more painful than crying.

She rose from the floor, changed her shirt, washed her face and hands, and returned. Her voice was hoarse. She had little strength for speech.

She comforted Soraya and told her not to worry. She asked her, together with Salar, to arrange the marriage in whatever way was proper by custom and religion.

Formation of a New Family

At Begum’s request, the wedding was held simply at Salar’s house, in the presence of Soraya, Salar, the household staff, and Rasoul’s family.

It was a strange combination. The groom seemed as though he had been lifted to the sky. The bride was leaving the last dark corner of her torn past with a wounded heart and stepping, unwillingly yet deliberately, toward another life.

Soon, with Begum’s guidance and Soraya’s help, Rasoul began preparing a small home in a corner of his father’s property.

The walls of the old room were repaired. Simple household goods were gathered. Whatever was needed, Begum advised and arranged. Rasoul, faithful to his promise, obeyed Begum’s wishes in every stage.

Beside Rasoul’s father’s house stood the house of Rasoul’s uncle. In that household lived the uncle, his wife, two sons, and an older daughter named Qand-Ahar. Between the two houses there was no wall. In the pressured poverty of village life, such shared space was common.

Qand-Ahar had been intended for Rasoul according to old family customs. She was older than Begum and carried, beneath ordinary silence, a deep resentment. The arrival of Begum wounded her pride and her hopes.

For a while, however, the new life moved forward.

Rasoul tried to serve. Begum tried to build. Soraya and Salar supported them. They brought cloth, food, utensils, and whatever help they could. Each day a new branch was added to the book of Begum's new life.

But Begum's heart was still divided. On one side she wanted to accept this new shelter. On the other, a part of her remained beside Hafezeh, Qahraman, and the grave of Shafiqeh.

The Birth of the First Child in the New Life

After a time, Begum became pregnant.

For the village women, this was a natural sign that the new household had taken root. For Begum, it was more complicated. A new child could fill part of the silence in her little home, but could never erase the absence of the children torn from her.

When her daughter was born, they named her Gol-Ara.

Gol-Ara was not only an infant in that small house. She became a patient stone for Begum's heart, a listener to the poems and whispers of a mother who had no one else to hear the mountain of her grief.

Begum would hold Gol-Ara, sing to her softly, and pour her pain into the child's ear as though reciting poetry. Sometimes the sorrow in her voice was so deep that the little girl would stare into her mother's eyes, and tears would gather in her innocent face.

Gol-Ara could not speak sympathy, but she grieved with her mother in the only way a child can: with tears, with a smile, with her warm little body pressed against her.

Nights and days passed. The world outside was still in upheaval. The Allies had divided Iran's roads and cities among themselves. In the village, the war was felt through shortages, hunger, anxiety, and the tightening of local power.

Begum gradually wrapped herself around Gol-Ara. Like a little girl with her doll, she turned away from the world and busied herself with that child. She sewed new clothes for her and remade old cloth into garments for her.

Yet even in those quieter days, signs of Rasoul's weakness began to appear. Outwardly he was calm, but certain answers and silences carried the smell of hidden nerves.

Jealousies, Village Pressure, and the Decision to Travel North

In winter, agricultural work in the village stopped because of snow and cold. Livestock duties continued mostly in the hands of the women. Many men remained idle.

Before Nowruz, some men of the village would travel north to work for wages in the rice fields and return with a little money. Rasoul had gone the previous year. This time, when he prepared to go again, Begum told him:

"I will come with you too."

Rasoul found this difficult to accept. He did not like the thought of his wife being among the young men of the village, but he did not dare openly oppose her.

With a calm and friendly tone he said:

"Dear one, it will be very hard for you to come with Gol-Ara."

His gentle tone pleased Begum. She replied:

"Do not worry. I will help you there. I will cook, keep the place clean, and Gol-Ara will be with me."

Before Rasoul could find another excuse, Begum said:

"Tell your friends that this year I am coming too."

With sweetness, encouragement, and a smile, she practically made the decision final.

Rasoul, despite his resistance, did not dislike it completely. He spoke with the group. One of the young men, Timur, who was also related to Rasoul and had previously worked in Salar's household, became important in helping with arrangements.

The time for the journey to Talesh arrived.

On the day of departure, according to custom, the elders sprinkled water behind the travelers for safety. Some women, out of jealousy disguised as joking, threw stones instead. The smoke of their envy was visible.

The last nickname they had made for Begum was "the migrant woman."

Begum, however, had once been a commander of scouting trips in Baku. She had gone to organized outings, carried plans, followed order, and even traveled in cars whose doors were opened by drivers. This journey was not strange to her in its nature. What worried her was Gol-Ara's comfort in an unfamiliar place.

Finally, the day of departure arrived.

For Begum and Gol-Ara, a donkey had been prepared. They would ride it until reaching the road where freight trucks passed toward Khalkhal and beyond.

Timur had decorated and prepared the donkey with care. From the beginning, Gol-Ara's comfort was managed by Timur and supervised by Begum.

The caravan moved.

The Beginning of Begum’s Command on the Road

After the group had gone a short distance from the village, Begum ordered a halt.

Some young men laughed under their breath, thinking this was the tiredness of a woman. But they soon saw a scene they had never witnessed before.

Begum removed the outer covering that had wrapped her like an ordinary village woman. Beneath it she wore practical clothes: trousers suited for travel, a fitted tunic, and a head covering tied firmly so her movement would not be hindered.

Her clothing resembled more the clothing of brave girls, riders, or guerrilla fighters than that of a submissive village bride.

With a voice that cut through the noise she called:

“Quiet! Quiet!”

The men were stunned. A woman had commanded them to be silent, and the force of her voice made obedience natural.

Begum held a list in her hand.

She briefly explained the plan she had prepared. The large group would be divided into smaller groups. Each group would have a leader. Tasks would be assigned clearly. Instructions would first be given by Begum to the group leaders, and the leaders would then explain them to the members.

Any problem on the road would first be brought to the group leaders. After review and consultation, the final decision would return to the groups through the same order.

Several men who had served in the army and knew something of command and division of duty were appointed by Begum as group leaders.

She read the names of the groups from her list and made sure no one had an unanswered question. Then she turned to the gathering and said:

“If anyone disagrees with this method and plan, raise your hand.”

No hand was raised.

Instead, hands clapped. Applause filled the air. Without having planned it, the men accepted Begum as commander.

Begum gave the order to move.

From that moment, they were no longer a scattered crowd of village men. They had become an organized group with a commander, leaders, and a clear plan.

Organizing Responsibilities and the March of the Commander’s Brigade

After the order to move, the group leaders walked one by one beside Begum and received instructions for their groups.

The structure of duties was arranged around several main responsibilities: command and management, direction and control of movement, food and supplies, protection and communication, health and cleanliness, and scouting the road.

Organizing raw and often illiterate forces in the middle of movement was not simple. It could not be without mistakes. But with Begum’s effort, as time passed, the group’s movements became more orderly and purposeful.

The travelers grew livelier. They seemed to enjoy being part of something organized and meaningful.

Meanwhile, Rasoul felt, moment by moment, the distance between himself and Commander Begum. In truth, he was losing himself. Step by step, in his own mind, he moved from being the

husband beside Begum to being one quiet member among the commander's soldiers.

He was not tired physically. He was tired in spirit.

After hours of walking, solving small conflicts, and becoming more familiar with their duties, the groups reached the roadside where they were to rest and wait for transport for the next stage.

Each person had a task. The whole group moved like the hands of a clock within the circle of Begum's command.

Yet Begum was never careless about Gol-Ara. Her role as commander did not make her neglect her motherhood. She controlled the group and, at the same time, watched over her child.

That long, tiring day became almost a family outing under Commander Begum's management. She had come prepared. She had predicted needs. She taught without speeches; she taught through action.

Like an Iranian silk carpet, she wove before their eyes another meaning of womanhood. The "weak woman" of old sayings, the creature treated as servant or burden, had appeared in the field as a mother, organizer, protector, and commander.

At the meal, Commander Begum sat between Rasoul and Gol-Ara and shaped, in practice, the image of a family nucleus: man, woman, child, cooperation, order, and affection.

She showed that men and women need not be enemies or competitors in a culture that turns them into toys. They can, through love, work, and companionship, produce and raise the future generation — the first living cell of a humane society.

The next morning, early, the group — now better called the commander’s brigade — set off toward Talesh in an old freight truck prepared the night before.

Toward Talesh and the Ordered Life of the Brigade

The journey to the work area took them to the northern fields. They settled in the same place where some of the men had worked the year before.

But this year was different.

There was a schedule for everything: personal duties, cooking, cleaning, work, rest, washing, and preparation for the next day.

Breakfast was prepared and served by those responsible for food. The brigade went to the rice fields. Commander Begum herself took charge of cooking. When the workers returned, lunch was served and collected according to plan. Dinner followed the same order.

Before sleep, as in a military dormitory, the supplies and clothes needed for the next day were prepared. The lights were lowered. Necessary lamps remained for nighttime movement.

The workers in the surrounding fields watched with curiosity. Soon the talk spread. People began saying that a woman commanded that group like an experienced officer.

Even bathing was organized. There were no proper facilities. A simple enclosed place was prepared, and each person, in turn, bathed with only one tin of water. The order prevented quarrels and embarrassment.

Begum’s management made the hard work lighter. The men earned their wages, ate better, rested better, and fought less.

The End of Work, Nowruz Purchases, and the Return of the Brigade

The contract in the rice fields ended successfully.

The group collected its earnings. Under Begum's advice, the money was not wasted. They bought cloth, household needs, sweets for the children, and supplies for Nowruz.

The truck carried them back as far as the nearest possible bridge. From there the group began walking toward the village.

News of their return spread quickly, and people gathered to welcome them.

Eyes fell upon the decorated saddle, Gol-Ara, the ordered packs, and Begum's semi-combat traveling clothes. Ears thirsted for news.

The first word that spread was this:

They had called Begum "Commander."

That one word was enough to ignite envy and longing.

The group that had left the village had returned as a disciplined and experienced brigade. They were the same people in body, but not in spirit. Their chests were full of stories.

Commander Begum had disturbed the old order of the village.

The Commander's Return and the Beginning of New Coldness

That day passed, and everyone returned to their homes. But in the houses of the village, the talk was no longer the small, empty talk of before.

The headline was:

Begum had been called Commander.

For many women, the story was a spark. For many men, it was discomfort. For Rasoul, it was a wound to his fragile pride.

Begum's relationship with Rasoul grew colder day by day. The more she tried to soften the air, the more the distance widened.

Rasoul's mind remained caught between admiration, fear, and resentment. He had seen what Begum could do. He had also seen his own weakness beside her.

Qand-Ahar's old wound grew active too. In village tradition people said:

"The marriage contract between a cousin girl and a cousin boy has been written in heaven."

In her eyes, that traditional right had been ignored. The presence of Begum in Rasoul's life was not simply the presence of another woman; it was the living sign of a lost claim.

The combined pressure of Rasoul's weakness, Qand-Ahar's resentment, and the village's jealousy began to turn the house cold.

One day Begum asked Rasoul why he had not bought the buttons she had requested.

Rasoul answered angrily:

"Are you blind? Can't you see I have work?"

The tone was not about buttons. It was about the bitter distance growing inside him.

The Birth of the Second Child and News of Soraya's Illness

Time passed. Begum became pregnant again.

During those days, news came that Soraya was seriously ill. For Begum, Soraya was not merely the wife of a khan. She was the old

friend who had opened the door of refuge when Begum had been more broken than ever.

Rasoul, as usual, was at his uncle's house. Begum told Gol-Ara to go call her father so they could visit Aunt Soraya.

Gol-Ara quickly went.

When she reached her father, Qand-Ahar was there. Rasoul looked at the child and, half mockingly, said:

"Well? Have you brought news, or do you want to carry news?"

Gol-Ara, confused by her father's tone and Qand-Ahar's smirk, said quickly:

"Mama wants us to go see Aunt Soraya. She is very sick."

Rasoul answered coldly:

"Let her go herself. Let her go quickly and not leave Salar jan alone. I will come later."

Gol-Ara returned crushed. She had seen the difference between claim and duty, between name and love.

She kissed her mother's hands again and again.

Seeing the incompetence and hypocrisy of people who opportunistically disrespected their worthy but defeated commander, Gol-Ara seemed to awaken inside.

She returned to the room, shut the door hard in the face of her mean father and his shameless cousin, and went back to her mother.

In that moment she wanted only not to leave the commander alone.

With a trembling voice she said:

“Mama, forgive me. I will never leave you for the rest of my life. Get up. Let us go together to visit Aunt Soraya.”

Begum was pregnant under heavy clouds. Old memories returned: the birth of Shafiqeh, the milk she had not been allowed to give, the child who had died motherless. Now another child was under her heart.

Her hand was in the small hand of the only soldier who had remained beside her.

The Death of Soraya and the Birth of Hossein

Begum and Gol-Ara entered Salar’s house through the half-open wooden door. The servants rushed toward them and guided them to Soraya’s room.

Soraya could not rise. But when she saw Begum, she burst into tears, just as she had years before when Begum first arrived as a homeless woman at that door.

This time, however, there was no hope in the tears. Soraya’s body was leaving.

Begum held her friend. Soraya, with difficulty, called Begum close with a movement of her head.

She wanted to say something, but words no longer served her. A cold sigh came from her chest — a sigh whose burning set fire to Begum’s soul.

Suddenly Begum’s cries set the room aflame.

From the doctor’s face, it was clear that Soraya’s soul had flown and her kind heart had stopped.

At those same moments, Begum’s labor pains began.

Leila, the same woman who had opened the door for Begum years earlier, quickly took her to a side room.

The child's water had broken. Fortunately, the village midwife was present. Necessary preparations were made at once.

Before long, Hossein was born in the middle of mourning and grief.

Tears, smiles, birth, and death became one in that house. In one room lay the lifeless body of Soraya, Begum's only true friend in that village after God. In another room, a newborn child was placed on Begum's chest, a child whose future already seemed burdened by sorrow.

Begum had decided before that if the child were a girl she would name her Zeynab, and if a boy, Hossein.

Now Hossein had come.

Hossein was not alone.

Gol-Ara sat beside him and tried to help her little brother on their mother's chest. Hossein searched for his mother's breast, to drink the blood that, by God's command, had become milk.

Gol-Ara, small and oppressed herself, felt responsible for caring for her brother. With a worried face she stroked her mother's hair.

But Begum showed almost no sign of life.

After Soraya: Begum's Silence and Hossein's First Laugh

Salar's house was in commotion. Villagers and guests came and went for Soraya's mourning. Servants prepared for the funeral. But in a back room, a living but lifeless mother lay with two anxious children beside her.

Only Leila, because of Soraya’s wishes and because of her own affection, did not forget that soulless room.

For days, Begum seemed separated from herself. She ate only when forced. Gol-Ara quietly cared for her mother and brother.

According to village custom, mourning continued until the seventh night. Guests came from neighboring villages. Rasoul was busy among the guests and did not truly look after his wife and children.

At one point Salar noticed this and called Rasoul. He asked how Begum was.

Rasoul said, with confusion and coldness, that he did not know; he had been busy with the funeral arrangements and had not seen his wife and children.

This answer angered Salar. He told Rasoul sharply that Soraya had entrusted Begum to him in his presence before the marriage, and that negligence toward Begum would wound Soraya’s soul.

After the seventh-night ceremony, Leila arranged for Begum, Gol-Ara, and the newborn Hossein to be taken back to their own house. She had the room cleaned, necessary things prepared, and a servant assigned to help them.

The doctor examined Begum and the child. Medicine was sent for. Strengthening injections were given. Begum’s eyes opened, but movement and feeling returned slowly.

For months she remained under treatment. She spoke little, almost nothing. She ate with help. Her spirit had gone somewhere beyond reach.

Rasoul also seemed stunned, but his shock did not become care. He spent much of his time at his uncle’s house.

Hossein gradually gained strength. He began to sit, then to try to stand. Gol-Ara became his nurse.

Begum too, little by little, began to reconnect with Gol-Ara and Hossein.

One day, after feeding Hossein, Begum gently rubbed his back and patted him. Suddenly Hossein burped, and at the same time passed wind loudly.

The coincidence of the two sounds made Begum laugh.

Gol-Ara, who had been watching everything, saw laughter on her mother's frozen lips for the first time in months. In helpless joy, she hugged her brother tightly. Hossein laughed too.

Gol-Ara cried happily:

"Was it you? Did you do that?"

Hossein wriggled out of her arms and laughed:

"Ma... ma..."

Gol-Ara asked:

"Who?"

Hossein laughed again:

"Ma... man."

Begum smiled at her children and said to Hossein:

"No, it was you."

Hossein laughed again:

"No, Mama."

For a brief moment, silence settled over the room.

Hossein's first words had entered like the fragrance of life.

He was covered in kisses. The sorrowful hut became fragrant.

But that tenderness did not last long.

Rasoul appeared and, with an ugly, mocking voice, said:

“Was there a wedding here? We are under the shame of the whole clan!”

Before Begum could react, Gol-Ara answered her father sharply:

“If you cannot bear it, go where they make you happy.”

Rasoul shouted:

“Shut up!”

Then he turned his back on them and left the house.

Hossein’s Illness and Fandogh Khanum’s Cry

One day Hossein came home crying and twisting with pain.

Apparently his urine had stopped, and his belly was swollen.

Gol-Ara ran for help. Fortunately Timur was nearby and came quickly. Fandogh Khanum was also informed.

The child was in terrible pain. Begum was helpless. She threw her head covering under Rasoul’s feet and wept, begging him to do something.

Fandogh Khanum, seeing the state of the child and the negligence around him, shouted with a voice that shook the house.

Rasoul asked Hossein:

“Hossein jan, what do you want me to give you?”

Hossein, with difficulty, said:

“Po fo...”

Rasoul asked:

“Po fo? What do you want?”

Hossein said:

“Auntie... po fo...”

Suddenly it was as though a message entered Rasoul’s ear. He turned to Timur and said:

“Go ask Qand-Ahar for some of the leftover food from lunch and bring it.”

Until Timur returned, Rasoul told Fandogh Khanum:

“Maybe the smell of food reached him.”

Timur came back empty-handed.

“Cousin says there is no food left. She says the dishes have already been washed.”

At that moment Rasoul’s sleeping conscience awoke.

The Death of Hossein and the Body on the Chest

Hossein died.

Rasoul cried out and wept. He wanted to give Hossein’s body to Begum.

Begum said quietly:

“Take him. Give him as a gift to your love.”

Rasoul’s back bent. Holding Hossein’s body in his arms, he sat on the floor.

Fandogh Khanum whispered something in Timur’s ear, and Timur left the house.

But Rasoul stayed beside his son’s body.

Hossein’s Burial and Begum’s Unhealed Wound

Before long, neighbors came with the family of Fandogh Khanum. The women began mourning loudly, but most gathered around Fandogh. Apart from Fandogh’s daughter, almost no one went to Begum.

The men gathered around Rasoul to comfort him.

Begum and Gol-Ara sat frozen in a corner, neither crying nor moving.

They were silent with the silence of the oppressed.

The men consulted quickly and wrapped Hossein’s body in a shroud. Rasoul took the body in his arms, and the others followed him toward the cemetery.

Begum and Gol-Ara remained where they were, without control over their limbs. Fandogh urged them to come, but Begum only looked at her. Her silence explained everything.

Fandogh had to go. Leila, who had come with the others, did not leave Begum alone.

After the burial, according to village custom, the people went to the mosque. Food was served after the mourning and recitation. When the gathering ended, everyone returned to their homes.

Timur and one of the elders accompanied Rasoul to his door.

No one from Rasoul’s uncle’s family had attended.

That night Leila stayed with Begum and Gol-Ara. Rasoul slept silently in the hall. After the morning prayer, Leila left for her duties.

From then on, there was only silence in that house.

There was a whole world of words and pain to share, but no one had the courage to begin.

Three days passed.

Rasoul did not leave the house. He cried quietly and seemed to want to wash his sins with tears.

Begum and Gol-Ara looked at each other, stunned and bewildered.

Leila came each day with food, but the food remained untouched.

On the third day, Rasoul threw himself at Begum’s feet. Crying, with sincerity trembling in his voice, he confessed his mistakes and begged forgiveness.

Begum, seeing his condition, softened a little. She turned to Gol-Ara and said:

“My dear, get up and set the table. Let us eat a bite together.”

Rasoul, filled with relief, went quickly to Gol-Ara, hugged her, and began kissing her small hands.

But Gol-Ara’s heart was still broken.

Begum went to her daughter. Mother and daughter embraced.

Begum told her:

“My child, if we do not hold ourselves together, we will be left alone. Completely alone.”

In the blind eyes of the villagers, they had been treated like outcasts.

Only kind Fandogh remained beside these strangers.

What happened when Begum and Gol-Ara reached the grave of their Hossein — God knows.

Mother and daughter clung to the grave. Their cries were the cries of a two-person army, louder than a regiment. It was as if screams stored in their throats for years had finally broken loose.

They sang lullabies for Hossein. They mourned him with voices that shook the dead earth.

Begum had no peace.

The burning of old tears, asleep but never forgotten, could be heard in her words.

I am unable to draw that scene with language.

In her laments, Begum repeatedly referred to the calamity of Karbala. Fandogh, unable to bear the sight, fell upon Hossein's grave.

More days passed.

In Rasoul's house, spirits were wounded and restless, but the days still moved.

The wound in Begum and Gol-Ara's hearts had not healed. Rasoul tried to win Begum's heart again, but he still did not have the courage to confront the true cause of Hossein's death or to condemn Qand-Ahar and the negligence surrounding that tragedy.

Qand-Ahar did not yield either.

Once, when Begum pressed the matter, Rasoul became aggressive. In anger he even blamed Begum for all the misfortunes and said:

"You want to destroy me and my family with your hatred. Go fight everyone yourself. I will not enter a war with them because of you."

Those words poured salt into Begum's wounds.

There was no ointment for such wounds. But under the ashes of silence, a fire lived. A volcano burned inside the grieving Begum.

The Second Divorce and the Repeated Choice: Freedom or Child

Days passed in that bitter way.

One day, while Gol-Ara was away fetching water, Begum calmly sat across from Rasoul and said:

“I suggest that, for the sake of ending this family crisis and finding peace, you also consider my feelings and Gol-Ara’s feelings. You always preach compromise, but you do not look at the effects of all the calamities forced upon us. You do not even speak of the fact that you were the first to cooperate with Qand-Ahar and her betrayals.

“I am not saying we should fight. I am saying we should change our surroundings.”

Rasoul asked:

“What do you mean?”

Begum answered:

“Let us leave this village. Let us go to Tehran or another city. Let us live somewhere away from this poison.”

Rasoul rejected it without hesitation. He said he would not leave his people, his house, his father’s property, and the village.

Begum listened and then said quietly but firmly:

“You are afraid of me. You are afraid of my abilities. You do not trust yourself either.”

She paused and continued:

“If you cannot build a life with me, then let us separate with dignity.”

Rasoul did not need to think. He said:

“I agree to divorce. But you have no right over my child. Go whenever you want.”

Once again Begum stood before the same unjust two-way road:

freedom or child.

It was the same cruel method, supported by unjust legal foundations.

The bitterness of repeated history entered her bones. She said to Rasoul:

“Fine. Think again about your thoughts, and I will review mine.”

Time moved forward again, but the gap between Begum and Rasoul grew wider day by day.

Begum kept her connection with Fandogh, the only person and place she still trusted. In those visits she quietly gathered information about the laws, work, and living conditions in Tehran, without revealing her plan.

During her years in Iran she had tried to learn Persian, to read and write. Now she used that ability with care.

From these visits she learned that Fandogh Khanum’s elder daughter lived in Tehran. She also asked Timur, carefully and under oath, not to repeat her questions to anyone, not even to his mother.

When she trusted him, she told him that she intended to go to Tehran and needed help. Timur responded with sympathy and gave her the necessary address.

In a short time, Begum arranged her scenario: divorce, departure from the village, and refuge first with the daughter of Fandogh Khanum in Tehran.

Begum's Conversation with Gol-Ara

Begum was now more prepared.

But Gol-Ara remained the knot in her heart.

She told her daughter that she might need to leave first, establish herself in Tehran, and then fight to bring her children together.

With pain rising from the depth of her soul, she explained that sometimes a mother must first save her own ability to stand, so that later she can save her children.

Gol-Ara, that innocent angel, answered without hesitation:

"Mama, do not ruin your mind. I agree that you must save yourself first. I am sure you will be able to take me later. It will be hard, but I see the future clearly. I can imagine my sister and brother with you in Tehran."

Begum could not bear the thought of leaving Gol-Ara alone.

How could she consciously accept another separation? Gol-Ara had carried heavy burdens on her small shoulders. How could Begum leave her in that cursed village with a weak father and a poisonous household?

But Gol-Ara would not accept her mother's hesitation.

She insisted that her mother must open a road. Her task was not to sacrifice herself in one place forever, but to break the deadlock. If Begum freed herself, the others too could eventually be saved.

Gol-Ara believed Rasoul would finally surrender.

At last she told her mother:

“When you settle in the city, I will run away and come to you. Do not worry.”

Gol-Ara was no longer the unaware, helpless child of earlier days. She knew what kind of poisonous fate awaited her if she remained without her mother, especially in that household and under her father’s weakness.

She was ready to endure hardship so that her mother could reach freedom and later gather the scattered children.

After hearing Gol-Ara’s strength, Begum promised that she would fight with all her heart to bring Gol-Ara, Hafezeh, and Qahraman together under one roof.

The mental deadlock inside Begum broke.

She became calmer and more determined.

She shared the matter with Leila and asked her, for the time being, to tell no one.

The Divorce and the Journey toward Tehran

The appointed day arrived.

Begum proposed the divorce to Rasoul and made one condition: no one must know about it until the work was finished and she had left the village.

It was agreed that Rasoul and Gol-Ara would accompany her to the nearest town so the legal work could be completed.

Before leaving the village, Begum packed some personal belongings and left them with Fandogh. With her she carried only a small bundle of essentials.

They left secretly and set out toward Mianeh to complete the divorce legally.

The legal divorce was done easily.

But the emotional separation was not easy, especially the separation from Gol-Ara, who had been her loyal companion for years.

Another part of Begum’s fate, another page of her sorrow-book, ended in separation.

Now the commander was free and moving toward an unknown future.

She ate the first meal after her freedom alone, in a restaurant near the notary’s office.

From the waiter she asked about the train and the station.

Then she went to the station and bought a ticket for the first possible train.

The next morning, early, she stepped down at the Tehran railway station.

It should not be left unsaid: this was Begum’s first journey in Iran in which she walked without a husband beside her.

In her handbag she carried a folding knife. Outwardly, it was for peeling fruit. In truth, it was there to tear open the heart of any namard who tried to block her road.

Begum was alone, but she was not defenseless.

She had left the cursed village behind, but she carried its wounds with her.

She had left Gol-Ara behind, but not her heart.

Hafezeh and Qahraman were still lost in the far distance of life. But now Tehran, with all its fears and unknowns, could become the commander’s new field.

The commander had been defeated, but she was not finished.

This time, from the depths, she had to find a new road for rising.

Chapter Eight: Begum’s Migration to Tehran and Her Meeting with Mammad

Reaching Tehran and Finding Temporary Shelter

Using the address she had received from Timur, Begum made her way, by whatever transportation was available, to the home of Fandogh Khanum’s daughter.

The two women had never met, but they were not entirely strangers to one another. Fandogh Khanum’s daughter was named Robush. She lived with her husband, Sadeq, who also came from the same region and from the villages of their people.

They had no children. No one knew where the problem lay, but husband and wife loved each other and had accepted childlessness together, building their life around that reality.

Their house stood in south Tehran, in a poor neighborhood called Darvazeh Ghar. With all its poverty and disorder, that place meant something immense to Begum at that moment: a temporary refuge, a roof under which she could breathe, and a narrow opening toward a new beginning.

Some of Darvazeh Ghar’s alleys lay lower than the main street and sank into pits. One of the best-known of these was Gowd-e Masoumi, a pit reached by forty-two steps. Some houses stood five or six steps lower even than the floor of the pit itself.

Robush’s house stood near the beginning of the pit, about ten steps below the main street. At the head of each pit were two public pressure taps. The people used them for drinking water, washing, filling containers, and daily chores. The conditions were painful and unsanitary. Quarrels over turns at the water were common, and even

fights among women were part of the cultural and psychological suffering of that environment.

The real hardship began after dishes or clothes had been washed, or after jugs had been filled: carrying all that water and all those things from the tap down into the pit and into the house.

Robush's house had three rooms. One room, with a window for light, belonged to Robush and Sadeq. The other two rooms were rented day and night. Usually ten men slept in each. In truth, those rooms were rented more for sleeping than for living.

If someone did not wish to stay another night, he could leave; but if he wanted to keep his place, he had to pay the next day's rent the night before. That money was not refundable, even if he failed to return.

Because Robush's house was close to places where laborers found work, the rooms were usually full, sometimes with more than ten men in each room. Robush and Sadeq were warm, kind people. Most of their tenants were villagers from their own region or nearby villages. Their income was good. Robush's arms were full of gold bangles, and Sadeq's smile shone with several gold-covered teeth.

Malek Khanum's House: Begum's First Shelter in Tehran

Because Robush's tenants were all men, Begum could not stay in that house. Robush told her, "I know you have no work yet. I have a suitable place in mind for you."

She explained that for the time being Begum could live as a guest with Sadeq's mother, Malek Khanum, a woman who had a separate room of her own.

Robush said, "We know it is not an ideal arrangement, but for now it is a safe shelter. Until your situation becomes clear, you can be

Malek Khanum's guest. You will provide your own food. Do not worry. If suitable work appears, we can rent a proper room for you in this neighborhood at a fair price, so that we do not lose sight of you."

Begum was relieved to have a relatively safe place to stay. Without embarrassment, she embraced Robush, kissed her face, and thanked her. Then, with the honesty of a burned heart, she said, "For supporting a stranger, may the Lord surely be your helper."

She spoke that prayer with such feeling that her grief broke open and she began to cry. The atmosphere became so sincere and friendly that Robush too wept as she wiped Begum's tears. She comforted Begum and prayed that her troubles would soon be resolved.

Robush took Begum to Malek Khanum's room and introduced her. Malek Khanum was kind and welcomed Begum warmly. In the wall of her room there was a small built-in shelf; she showed it to Shah Begum and told her to put her belongings there.

The house was modest and small. All Begum owned could fit into one small suitcase. Yet she was glad. It seemed that the wheel of fate, if only slightly, had turned in her favor.

Meeting Aqa Nosrat: Begum's First Guide in Tehran

On the way back to Robush's house, Begum thanked her again and asked whether Robush or Sadeq could help her find work. Robush answered, "Do not worry. My mother Fandogh is devoted to you and worried for you. I promised her I would stand beside you like a sister."

As soon as they reached Robush's house, Begum took a list from her pocket and said, "Sister dear, these are my questions." Robush smiled and said, "Good sister, by God's grace I am not educated like you. I cannot even read and write."

Begum felt a little embarrassed. From Robush's intelligence, maturity, and manner of management, she had not imagined that Robush was illiterate. In that moment she understood that Sadeq too could not read and write, yet their lack of schooling had not diminished their understanding, experience, or humanity.

Robush thought for a moment and suddenly said, "Get up, get up. I will take you to someone who will help solve your problem. He is a very good man. His name is Nosrat. He owns the neighborhood grocery, near our house."

Begum asked, "A woman owns a grocery?" Robush laughed and said, "No." Begum asked in surprise, "But did you not say Nosrat? Is that not a woman's name?" They both laughed.

Robush and Begum went to the grocery. Robush introduced Begum as her sister and a close friend of her mother. She told Aqa Nosrat that Begum was also a migrant, that she had come from Baku, had lived for a time in nearby villages, and had now come to Tehran looking for work. Then she left Begum in Nosrat's care and returned home.

For a moment Begum stood inside the grocery: a woman newly arrived in Tehran, alone, with a small bundle, a great wound in her heart, and a list of questions meant to light the road ahead.

Aqa Nosrat looked at her calmly and thoughtfully. Begum was no longer merely a weeping, helpless woman from the first days of wandering. In her eyes there was fear, fatigue, and decision all at once. She had come to Tehran not to disappear, but to find a road: the road to work, the road to a home, the road to her children, and perhaps the road back to the Shah Begum still alive beneath the ashes of suffering.

Nosrat felt that this encounter was too rooted to be handled standing in the grocery. He asked Begum to come with him to his home so she could meet his wife, Shokat, and so they could speak about work and

life in a calmer place. Begum, cautious from bitter experience, first asked that they stop at Robush's house to tell her where they were going and to ask her opinion. Nosrat agreed.

Robush trusted Shokat Khanum and Aqa Nosrat and allowed Begum to go. Begum and Nosrat then went to Nosrat's home. Shokat welcomed Begum warmly when she understood that Begum came from the same roots of exile and migration.

After Nosrat returned to his shop, Shokat Khanum turned to Begum and said, "My good sister, I am very happy we have met. Before any questions, I want first to tell you a little of my own story. It is the treasure of my experience. Even if you have understood some of it already, hearing it again will do no harm."

Begum looked at Shokat's face. There was something in her voice that did not resemble dry advice. It was more like the voice of a woman who had crossed a stony road and now wished to place a lamp in the hand of her newly arrived sister.

Shokat's Words: Tehran, Poverty, Sympathy, and Two-Faced People

Shokat Khanum told Begum, "My good sister, I am very happy that we met. But before any conversation or question, I would like to first tell you a little about my own story, which contains a treasure trove of experience and information. Even if you have understood this information yourself by now, it will not hurt to repeat it."

Shokat invited Begum to a chair next to the dining table and sat down in the chair opposite him and told Begum that Tehran is the capital of Iran, but this neighborhood is culturally and economically a poor area and is mostly a place where villagers who have taken refuge in Tehran live. Most people come to these neighborhoods to find work because there is a common denominator in this neighborhood. Here, everyone considers themselves fellow

countrymen, the gate of the cave, and when they see each other without speaking, they are familiar with each other's pains and without thinking or thinking, they try to help me, but you have to be polite.

Behind this mask of philanthropy and kindness that creates a mask of humanity and intimacy, they try to help, influenced by the common pain, and also seek benefits for themselves, influenced by the culture of poverty and self-liberation. In fact, they are double-minded. You can smell the sweet proverbs of the great Iranian literary figures. These deceitful friends that you see flying around the sweetness of Shokat tells Begum that I don't want to ruin your mind, but I want to be the bearer of a message that will be a wake-up call, so don't be hard-hearted and pessimistic. Not too naive and gullible. Look, my husband, this same Mr. Nosrat, even though he has helped me a lot and is not a bad person, but with all his compassion for me, he ended up trapping me in a way.

He started a business in his own name with my capital, which was a lot of gold I had brought with me from Baku, because he rightly said that if a woman is rich, many people here will cheat her and set a trap for her. In fact, by stating these facts, he did the same thing to me, even though he is about twenty years older than me, after he became the owner of your pants twice and with my wealth, he was the one who took care of my material needs and was the one who took care of my material needs. One day, he proposed going on a business trip together and explained that this trip would be useful for the progress of the work.

I accepted on that trip, despite the fact that we each had our own independent living space because privacy is important and very valuable to me, and I had always raised the importance of the red line of privacy in my actions and words in different ways and had never made any move against it and had placed him in my heart like a brother, but he had taken a room for each of us in the hotel, which

was unacceptable to me. When I quickly expressed my opposition, unfortunately, he said things that gave me a double sting. First, he tried to convince my mind with logical reasons as usual, and he excused himself for reducing the cost by saying that he thought of economics.

I said that economics should not be disregarding the values of custom, logic, and breaking boundaries, it should be planned in such a way that it remains profitable even with the cost, otherwise it is not a wise business. When he faced my logical objections, I felt that another face was appearing behind the mask. He said angrily and sharply, as if you had brought your firstborn. I wanted to The successes I have achieved, to make you happy and to have fun together.?.?? Here I became certain that I had made a big mistake in my understanding. Now I must approach it with caution. I told him that I am having fun by working hard and earning the money for a piece of halal bread and eating it. It was clear that he did not expect to hear these words and that he had used my trust and kindness for his own benefit.

But now he saw that he had miscalculated. Suddenly, he showed his duplicity and opportunism and told me very rudely. You have put yourself on a very high pedestal. There are dozens of beautiful women here like a flock of pigeons. No, I have tried to provide you with peace all this time, but it seems that you do not deserve it. Go around. Go wherever you like. Harry. You do not have to be with me. Go and be with whoever you like. I will also look for a job and live. Those moments were unbelievable and unacceptable to me. I thought I was dreaming, my hands and feet were shaking, my heart was coming to my mouth, I didn't want to accept it, I was experiencing the reality and the double standards of this bunch of people in action.

I was experiencing the collapse of buildings built on a bunch of my own stupid beliefs, but I still wanted to not lose control of the situation. I told him calmly and sincerely, okay, you have the right to

get a little better for the effort you put in. Please provide me with a means. I'm going back home. After you return, we'll talk about our work. He said angrily like thunder, "Go wherever you want, get lost. I have nothing to do with you anymore. I don't want to bother you anymore. Go pursue your own life. I'm going back too. I'll sell what I have and don't have. I'll pursue my own goals." Peas, peas, whoever goes home, it was easy to hear these words because they were easy to say, but it was impossible to believe and swallow them. Now the effects of double standards were real in front of me.

All the haves and don't haves in this The world of exile was destroyed because of my foolish and optimistic trust and I had to return to the house I had built for myself to receive money. I was begging, I don't know how and from where, as if an inspiration had been transmitted to my heart and soul. With a cheerful face, I lit my dual burner and told him, "Brother, it's like a very strong fire, unaware of the other person's heart, you made your plans and sewed a dress for my bride, and now you have given me a sudden shock, Dad, give me the right to gather my thoughts and make a decision.

Of course, I still didn't know what the future would be, but I spoke with a strong heart, as if my dual burner was strong, because from his painful words I had realized the reality behind his mask and now, with my dual burner thoughts, I had to find a way to take back everything that was completely in his possession. I had to say things that wouldn't break all his hopes. I told him that I wasn't waiting for this offer at all. I needed time to prepare a suitable plan for my future inside, and at the first possible opportunity. I will review the situation together and prepare my thoughts for the future. In the first step, my dual-fuel power worked, I had given him a chance to come back and apologize. My temporary mask had gained trust.

He apologized with embarrassment for his reaction, and the mask showed its usual face before, saying, "Okay, I will get another room for my future bride so that you can be comfortable. We will follow

up on our conversation after we return from the trip." The strong smell of my dual-fuel was bothering me, but despite this feeling, I thought logically to save my future. I had a strange feeling, I hated myself. Walking next to him, talking, sitting under the same roof was painful, although the new dual-fuel mask was a problem solver. We were there for two nights. I was not feeling well at all. All my beliefs were under pressure. Occasionally, my father's face would appear before me with pride and honor, as if he was seeing me. Finally, I blamed myself on a woman's illness so that I could justify my cold behavior. In short, the trip was over.

We returned to Tehran. As soon as possible, without hearing from Nosrat, I went to see Mammad, who is a family friend and an honorable and fighting man with strong motivations to defend the working people and farmers and to fight and oppose the feudal lords. For this reason, he has been arrested several times and has a history of political imprisonment. He is also close to Nosrat and has a lot of influence.

The Trade Journey and the Revelation of Nosrat’s Second Face

I kept Mammad fully informed about Nosrat's encounter with me, the topic of travel, and Nosrat's taint becoming clear with the way she spoke, and I asked her for some intellectual help. Mammad said that Nosrat acted hastily and unilaterally, with her lust overcoming her thoughts, and that she acted immaturely. In contrast, you, using your own pure taint, controlled the scene well by pulling the handbrake at the right time and being clever. Of course, you shouldn't be naive. In short, between two opposite sexes, if the lust is not mutual, the possibility of a boundary being crossed is not unexpected. Now, regardless of his mistake, what do you think about his proposal? Of course, I know that your age gap is large. I was really confused, my face was burning with shame and it was completely red.

Before I could speak, Mammad said, "Sister, I know that it is customary to discuss such matters with your sister, mother, or a woman first, but unfortunately we do not have this condition. I don't think it is easy. It is not easy for me either. But in these circumstances and situations, I have a duty not to leave you alone. So let's talk like two friends and students. In that case, the emotional pressure will be reduced. I also completely agreed with Mammad's approach." In response to Mammad's question, I said, "Dad, due to the harshness of the game and my unwillingness to be in this situation, my mind is not yet ready to imagine my future with life here. If one day I am free from my inner war, then I will think about the conditions of choosing a future wife. That's all I can say. I don't feel this way about Mr.

Nosrat, and our external and emotional conditions don't suit me either. Mammad, who was listening with complete coolness, told me, "I don't want to introduce you to a wife, and I appreciate you sharing your inner feelings with me. Just pay attention. Now we are talking about a problem, which is to save you from the current situation, looking for a way out of the work that has been done." Regarding a marriage proposal for the future, you are currently being offered a marriage proposal by a man who has been a good help and advisor so far. In any case, he has foreseen benefits for himself and unilaterally made you an offer because of his help. Now, rightly or wrongly, he has sovereignty over your assets.

Now, in today's circumstances and the prevailing situation in society, suppose we succeed in taking back your assets or part of them, by setting aside Nosrat Baez. Considering the prevailing culture in this society, you are a single woman and are forced to need someone else to continue your life, even if it is as a turnip. Being next to a man will give you an identity. Now, what if this turnip is the son of the Prophet and he just wants to help you? In short, this closeness creates a kind of attachment and expectations that you have already said you are not ready for, but you do not need someone to rely on in this situation. In addition, this person must be a man because the global

society is governed by patriarchy and restrictions on women's independence. Well, for now, this person is Nosrat. Let's say we remove Nosrat.

As a result, you will return to the same zero point and ultimately need to choose an alternative. Well, if your choice is a young man, he will be less patient and more demanding, so you must be patient in choosing to go to your ideal man. And marry as a wife, who can be the wife of an ideal partner, but you don't have this chance now, and getting an ideal wife is difficult to achieve, so you will have to wait until you reach that ideal to advance your affairs. In addition, you have already lost your property in a way, and you no longer have the material attraction to choose another husband, but you must wait until someone comes to marry you. So, with this analysis that I have expressed, do you agree or disagree with it rationally..?

Shokat's New Mask to Save the Future

Mammad remained silent for me to express my opinion. The atmosphere had become heavy, the ball was in my court, and Mammad waited. The silence continued for a few minutes. A war had begun inside me, because according to the realities raised by Mammad, now is the time to choose, I must choose my path by examining the existing conditions and suggestions, and prepare myself for his missions.

At this time and with all the bitterness, I have to break my silence. With a lump in my throat, tears in my eyes, and a face that showed concern and helplessness, I turned to Mammad and said, "I agree with every word you say and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. But God, I don't know what to do. Please guide me. I believe in you and your abilities. You give me a solution. I will tell you my opinion so that we can reach a final decision step by step." Mammad promised to be my support all the way. Shokat continued, "Let's first examine Nosrat's proposal together. In this examination, we agree that this proposal is not ideal. We have come to the conclusion that

we do not have the possibility of achieving an ideal together at the moment. Therefore, we must seek an expedient choice.

Then, let's look at Nosrat's proposal from this perspective. You have been closely acquainted with Nosrat for some time. You have practically trusted him in terms of work and financial partnership. By God, he has not been a bad supporter for you. Of course, I know that he has also had good interests. In the current situation, all your property is legally at his disposal. It is natural that he is thinking of establishing a life and you are also ideal for him. He has already gained a position by relying on you and wants to take this relationship to a higher level. Nosrat is older than you, he has been trusted by you until now. He is a hardworking and blameless person. Like any raw milk you drink, he has the potential to deviate. Nosrat will lose without you and suffer a lot of psychological damage.

Accepting defeat and being fair is not an easy task, so in most failures, pain is the only thing that can be done." And let's not forget that there are many heads, experience has shown that if people lose, they often lose badly.

Considering the above-mentioned perceptions, logically accepting Nosrat's proposal would be beneficial for you as well. Of course, there is a twist that must be managed wisely and consciously, namely how to return your property to yourself, which is currently legally in Nosrat's possession. For this, I must obtain her consent with appropriate preconditions, and I promised you that I would be by your side until the end. He continued, "Sister, what do you think about the matters raised above?" In fact, now you must answer whether you agree or disagree, because the burden of responsibility and achieving inner peace is only in your hands. Be alone with yourself for a few days and let me know the result. I do not want an answer now, nor do I want an answer. Go and think about it.

The result that you announced after listening to the opinions and thoughts about the positive and negative points will be your own

conscious decision. Until you announce the result, I will review all the issues again in my mind and prepare myself about the aspects of the work and the necessary and appropriate methods.

After listening to Mammad's logical words and thinking about them for two or three days, I agreed to give a positive answer to Nosrat. It was not ideal, but it was positive and less harmful. I made an appointment with Mammad and informed him of my decision. Now, the management of the marriage was in Mammad's hands.

Mammad was in and out with Nosrat for a few days without saying anything about their petty talk until Mammad came to see me with a happy face and said that he had spoken to Nosrat and that she welcomed the official marriage and that it was agreed that all my assets would be officially transferred to my name, and in return, I would officially transfer one-third of my assets to Nosrat as a token of appreciation for her efforts. In the meantime, God forbid, in the event of a crisis and the need for separation, Nosrat officially agrees that the right to divorce will be with me without any conditions.

After the couple agreed and understood Mammad's proposal, our marriage was held and officially registered in a short time according to the conditions. At Mammad's suggestion, we went to the same hotel where we had previously gone with Nosrat for three days as a honeymoon.

Mammad’s Role in Shokat’s Fate

From then on, we will lead our agreed-upon, wise and almost fair life.

Thus, within two hours, Shokat briefly conveyed to Begum the story of his acquaintance and marriage and the positive role of Mammad in making this union possible, because he wanted to convey his practical experience to Begum's mind to better understand the existing conditions and the importance of having a good life partner

and prioritize it. And to consciously avoid any traps and double entendres.

Mammad’s Analysis: Forced Choice in a Male-Dominated Society

Time passed like lightning between Begum and Shokat, but the food was not ready yet. Shokat was worried because there was a possibility that Nosrat would return home at any moment. Begum comforted him and said, "Don't worry, tell me. I wanted to spend the first night getting to know each other more. Away from the formalities, we'll eat a Mashdi omelet. Of course, I'll cook it, so we'll wait for Mr. Nosrat to come home and prepare it. I'll prepare the omelet."

Not long after, Nosrat arrived, and the omelet was ready, and dinner was served and the dishes were collected. Before washing the dishes, Shokat suggested to Nosrat that she wash the dishes and he prepare tea. During tea, they would sit down to discuss so that Mr. Nosrat could also join in the discussion.

While having tea, Shokat explained to Nosrat about the talks about their marriage and introducing Mammad, and said that she had tried to introduce Mammad to Begum by sharing her own experience, because she thought He could help Begum a lot, and Nosrat also agreed with Shokat's opinion. That night, during tea, most of the talk was about Mammad. Finally, Shokat suggested that if Begum agreed, Mr. Nosrat would provide the opportunity for Begum to meet and introduce Begum to Mammad at the earliest possible opportunity. Of course, if Begum was happy, he would.

Shokat thought that Mammad could be a good marriage alter ego for Begum. Because Mammad was a humane man and had the ability to manage Begum, he could be a good partner for Begum in solving many of her problems.

Begum had experienced two failed marriages and had three children from these two marriages that separated him. He was not happy to start a new life without his children. In addition, he was afraid that Mammad would be a secret pain for him, considering that he was younger than Begum. It is true that he had the experience and ability to help and manage Begum, but why involve himself in this problem?

Shokat's Decision, Introducing Mammad, and the First Light for Begum

Shokat was sure that if Mammad's relationship with Begum did not end in marriage, then getting to know Mammad would be a good chance for him. He was in a hurry to get to know him as soon as possible. Mammad had not officially married by then, but due to his political circumstances, he had been in several temporary relationships during his secret periods and travels. Shokat was eager to get them married because he believed that with Mammad's marriage, he would also be reunited with his other half. Shokat would also have two good friends in the meantime. That night passed very well and half of the light from the first night of being with Begum and his future shone. Unconsciously, he was wondering when he would meet Mammad. He stayed at Shokat's house that night, of course, he had sent a message to Robush so that they would not worry.

Shokat made Begum sleep in a small room next to the kitchen and recklessly said, "I will prepare this room for you tomorrow so that you can be with them until you find a place to live." Luck had brought him six pairs of twins, he felt so good that he couldn't sleep until morning, and hope for a bright and happy tomorrow was alive in his heart, something he hadn't had since the beginning of his marriage. Although not a day or night had passed since his presence in Tehran, a night candle had been lit in the heart of the defeated commander. Despite the fact that he had closed all the openings in

his heart to enter into a partnership and create a common life, fate had a plan for him again. Everything that happened in Tehran was not an accident, but he felt the light shining on his path.

Fate was so strong that gradually, the coldness of Begum's body and soul was covered with warmth. His heart did not want to sleep. He was in a hurry to see the sunrise with peace and new hope after enduring years of sorrow and stories. In the morning, before sunrise, courtyard went to Shokat's house. His eyes fell on the wooden ladder that was installed in the corner of the yard to go to the roof. He went towards the ladder and shook it. To make sure of the safety and strength of the ladder, he slowly climbed the ladder in silence. Far from his imagination, he realized that Shokat was there before him. He was both shocked and happy. Both of them telepathically told me the story of why and sympathies without mentioning anything. Shokat was sitting on a bench. He invited her to him.

They held each other's hands and talked to each other without saying a word, both of them waiting for the energizing sunrise of the fateful creation. The sunrise, which was the messenger of the birth of a new scenario, was so strong that it had taken both friends to sleep in each other's arms. Seeing their dreams, perhaps in a very short time, thousands of nights of inspired memories in the form of a movie with the voice of Nosrat inviting Shokat for breakfast. The curtain of those dreams was torn, but it did not disappear. I heard Nosrat say, Shokat, you used to go to the roof. You took your dear guest with you to yours. Please come down. Breakfast is ready. I can tell you that he did not want to part with his dream on the roof.

He came down with the breakfast on a large tray on a small flower cloth on the balcony next to an old Russian charcoal samovar with a boiling Nikolai brand and a porcelain teapot with roses on the samovar containing delicious tea from the northern region, with the pleasant smell of fresh Berber, next to a plate full of Tabriz cheese and three glasses with saucers. Everyone was waiting. Shokat

Khanum came to visit her new friend, but also an old neighbor and a long-term destiny in her time tunnel. These were precious moments when each of them, with their own Leila, virtually produced their own script in their minds. After breakfast, Nosrat said, "I'm going to open the shop. Whatever you have to do, tell me. I'll leave you alone today. I know you're in a lot of pain. You're my guest for lunch.

If you agree, I'll order Hassan Jaggeraki some skewers of grilled liver. Bring them to my shop at twelve o'clock. I'll come home with fresh liver and bread. Then he said goodbye and went to work. But the drunks, who hadn't drunk, were sharing the cup in their hands, pouring the blood of their livers into the air. Secret and pain, but the honest, sincere, secret, sharing the story of their separations from their nothingnesses, drunk from the longing for the lost days of their glory. Like the wailing of a reed cut from their nothingnesses, they played to each other's ears.

Listen to the reed, because it tells a story, it complains about separations.

An unspoken resentment was exploding from within. He whispered a poem by Mowla Na in a burning voice. That heavenly voice that had escaped from his throat, defeated, had brought his drunkenness to its peak. Suddenly, he was so drunk that he simultaneously shed tears like spring rain with velvet in his voice. He recited poems that he remembered by imitating Rashid Behbood.

Ozone, the dark thoughts of the black, the blackness, I am going away, I am going to kill them, the blackness Separation from the homeland had overwhelmed them, so much so that they were unaware of the world for hours. With Nosrat's gentle voice, which showed that she was happy with what had happened to her, Razieh announced that her beloved had traveled in her imagination. Come down early for lunch, so that we can eat Hassan's liver before it gets cold.

Nosrat Returns Home and the Plan to Introduce Mammad to Begum

Lunch was served, and the greatest pleasure was that after enduring all the bitterness and humiliation, he was an uninvited guest of a family who, in a strange city full of wolves and multi-faceted foxes who were thinking of catching prey for hunting, was quietly sitting at the table of love of two friends for whom Begum had never done anything before. In this atmosphere, his mind was immersed in a philosophical journey. He heard the voice of Shokat who was clearing the table and washing the dishes. He was laughingly saying, "Where did you go? You left me alone. Nosrat went to work." Shokat's words were so full of love that he hit the brakes on his mind and ran towards Shokat and hugged him.

He was grateful to God that after enduring all the pressure, inhumanity, and loneliness, his relationship with him had weakened, and now, with his kindness and compassion at the table of his other servants, the hope of life had sprouted in his heart again. He thanked Shokat with all courtesy and gratitude and hugged each other tightly. At that moment, Begum could smell his sister Fatima, a pleasure he had been deprived of for years. Shokat took Begum's hand and pulled her towards two wooden chairs on either side of a small table by the window of the room. They both sat down. Shokat said, "Last night, in my sleep and wakefulness, I was thinking about how to arrange the conditions for you and Mammad to meet.

Finally, after much thought, I came to the conclusion that I should organize a pilgrimage and entertainment program, and invite Mammad as well. This pilgrimage was in the middle of the mountains around Tehran, where many people go for both pilgrimage and entertainment. It was the most useful, cheapest, and most enjoyable recreation. He enjoyed hiking and picnicking. Shokat's idea was attractive to Begum. He quickly agreed. Hearing Shokat's program, he felt the feeling of his scouting days or the memory of his

trip north with Rasool and the people of the village, in fact, the time when he became Begum's commander, but this time, apart from his new activities and the pain of separation from Gul, Her motherless Ara had a plan, thinking about the future and trying to gather her children.

Unconsciously, her heart yearned to reach her dreamy companion as soon as possible and, with his white horse, heal the traces of the oppression that had accumulated in her soul.

Shokat said, "Let's go to Nosrat's house to plan the work together." Shokat quickly got ready and went with Shokat to see Nosrat. On the way, they saw Robush and asked about the situation. Robush asked about the situation. Robush expressed his complete satisfaction with meeting Shokat and thanked and prayed for the kindness he had done. Then he said, "I will no longer bother my mother. I will stay in the room that Robush has provided until my future is determined." After meeting Nosrat, Shokat and Robush agreed to take her belongings from her mother's house and move them to Shokat's house. Robush hugged Shokat and said, "I am very happy to see you happy. Now, whatever happens, I will tell my mother, who was worried about you coming to Tehran, so that she can also rest easy." They said goodbye to Robush and went to the shop.

Shokat explained his plan. Nosrat quickly got involved in organizing the work. Robush said, "We will go this Thursday, spend the night in a tent, and return on Friday evening. I will also invite Mammad." I will prepare the necessities, Shokat also said, I will prepare the necessary things too. Today is Wednesday. We are going to prepare for the trip. On the way back home, we will pick up the things of Begum. We are going home.

Thursday morning, Shokat, Nosrat and Begum quickly prepared the breakfast table. Mammad was supposed to come for breakfast and be together. According to the plan, Mammad also came and introduced Begum to Begum. The cordial but shy interactions progressed. You

could see traces of happiness under the skin of Begum, but traces of redness were still visible on his cheeks. It was clear that Begum was busy meeting with Mammad under the cleverness of his mind, but Mammad was very calm and relaxed. Shokat knew that Mammad was very sensitive and quick-witted when it came to matters of honor and he was still unaware of the trap that Shokat had prepared for him. They started eating together at the table. Shokat had told Mammad to tell him where Mohajer and his family were in Baku. His mind was curious, so he told him to gather information.

While talking about his khatavad, he briefly mentioned his uncle, which Mammad found of great value because Mammad knew about the general and his political life. The breakfast time was getting long, and Nosrat was left alone around the ring. It seemed that he was a little withdrawn. God knows what was on his mind, but there was a certain alienation in him. In short, his friend Mammad was no longer discussing with him as he usually did in the past.

Shokat and Begum’s Dreamlike Privacy

Shokat called out that there was too much time for conversation, let's quickly pack the table and move on. We'll go to Farahzad and stay there. Nosrat was setting up the barbecue there. After lunch and a little rest, and when the sun's heat had weakened, we set off on the rocky road towards Amzadeh. We pitched our tents for the night and prepared to return on Friday morning after breakfast so that we could enjoy the serenity of the mountains and be able to get home before it got dark. The table was set. They brought the picnic supplies for the pilgrimage and acquaintances to courtyard's corner. Mammad quickly went up the hill and rented a motorbike to go and ride a tricycle. We rode around together until Farahzad rode a motorbike. These motorbikes had three wheels and had a small engine and were started by turning the handle.

Instead of luggage, they were also used as a taxi. One person sat in the cabin next to the driver, and at least six people sat in the back

trunk, which was like a two-seat basket with bars drawn so that the luggage wouldn't fall out while moving.

Mammad returned home and with the help of Nosrat, they picked up the luggage and hurried towards Mutu M. They went to tell me and Shokat with some lighter equipment were moving behind the men. They put their luggage in a corner of the trunk. Shokat cautiously told Nosrat, you sit in front, I will lead the driver, I will ride in the back of the motorcycle. Along the way, the chatter of Begum and Mammad continued. It was a journey full of joy. Everyone with their own Leila. Mammad, while enjoying getting to know Begum, asked his opinion on various issues. Begum also carefully observed Mammad's words and answered them accurately. The atmosphere was very good. Begum returned to the spirit of Shah Begum. Shokat was happy with the proper planning he had made, standing beside them in silence.

Occasionally, the driver made some turns that caused irritation and fear in the passengers. Shokat shouted, "Dad, go a little slower." The driver said, "I am tearing my companion's nap." So it was clear that Nosrat was also napping.

The journey was pleasant. Mammad was careful not to jump on the turns. He would turn around but did nothing. Although sometimes, out of fear of falling, he wanted to reach out to help him, but a force within him would not allow him to do so. The motorcycle reached its destination. They unloaded the luggage. Mammad said, "Wait a few moments until I find a suitable place to stay." They went back and forth, and with each other's help, all the belongings were carried to the place of stay.

Meeting Mammad: The Plan for a Pilgrimage Trip

Shokat whispered to Nosrat secretly. Then he said to Mammad, "Nosrat and I are hosting you today. We will be busy preparing

lunch. You and your brother Mammad can sit down and get to know each other better." Then he turned to Mammad and said, "Brother Mammad, you are my dear fellow citizen and sister. I have explained everything to you as best I can, but he needs a reliable guide. I beg you, as usual, to accept our efforts and help Mammad in whatever way you can." He is a stranger and a loner, of course he has been a king in his own country and has been on the throne until now, and he has endured with manliness and has brought himself to this point by enduring many hardships. I would like us to make the most of this opportunity. Talk to each other easily and carry out this good deed to the best of your ability.

Then he said to Nosrat, my dear and faithful friend, come and let us also go and get busy preparing tea and lunch. With these things, Shokat was helping Begum to migrate from the bitterness of loneliness to unity and beauty. Begum and Mammad were like apples that had been cut in half. Now they were half of each other, Mammad with full enthusiasm. His heart and soul were melting with Begum and he was intelligently draining Begum of information. Begum was also walking with Mammad in the secret of his house and walking through the streets of his broken, sad and wounded heart. This intimacy was so sincere and clear that the melting of their logic and feelings could be seen in one.

This new couple enjoyed the passage of time with each other and there was not a moment of silence between them. They were guiding each other's thoughts and feelings with all their strength, with a desire and thirst from marriage to unity and separation. Twice, Shokat brought them tea, the smell of which was intoxicating in that natural atmosphere, but it was useless compared to what Mammad and Begum had found. Tea is a friend's way of relieving fatigue, but these two friends were not tired of each other. Twice, Shokat refreshed the cold and uneaten teas, but the tea was ignored. Information passed over Megum moment by moment. It was sincerely conveyed to Mammad. The movement and presence of

these two deceived every viewer, as if they had lived together for years in mystical and poetic harmony. Gradually, Nosrat's voice rose.

He said, "My dears, lunch is ready and the table is spread out, we are waiting for the bride and groom." This was indeed a joke from Nosrat, but underneath the surface of this word, it revealed a reality that had taken shape in that afternoon. He served lunch to Shokat for himself and Nosrat on one plate, and to Mammad and Begum on the other. Shokat played a very experienced role in this afternoon and in this delightful nature, like a midwife, busy guiding the growth and development of the fetus, love, and giving birth to the moment of the child's birth. Skillfully, sincerely, and masterfully, he did a job full of success. After finishing lunch, Nosrat said, "Let's take a little break." Mammad said, "I will take a little walk to organize the heavy load of data in my mind. In the meantime, my food will be better digested."

Shokat said, "I will rest next to my friend." With this, he gave the space to Begum. Begum turned to Mammad and said, "If I don't disturb your time, I want to walk next to you." Mammad said in his own masculine voice, "Walking with you in this space is the ideal of God, Shokat, in his heart is sugar water." It was possible, Nosrat was busy in her own thoughts with the depth of seriousness of her joke, in the theater at that moment, the program had been formed outside, and the bride had also expressed her desire to walk beside Mammad, Mammad had also announced his ideal point and moment in practice, but there was no gramophone in the room that could play on a circular disc with the magical sound of Wigan, the Sultan of Jazz of Iran, and invite everyone to rejoice, dance, and throw candy and candy on the heads of the bride and groom.

Mammad and Begum set off. Mammad had little formal schooling, but he had an intelligent and powerful memory. He was a guerrilla who knew philosophy and had the power to summarize in his mind and plan for his movement and for his life, both short-term and long-term. Although Begum was a pioneer and had a short-term

experience of being a farm worker in the village of Tovin on a trip to the north, he had in his experience book, and before, when he first arrived, Hajj Yousef had planned and created a core of work, production, and sales in that village in his file. But now he was walking next to a man who truly had the position of a competent farm worker for Begum. He felt so serious about Begum that he had gradually entered the world of marriage and discovered his lost half in time.

Breakfast, the Road to Farahzad, and the Beginning of Conversation

While walking, Mammad asked Begum to take notes and record all the discussions, conclusions, ideas agreed upon, and plans agreed upon for the work. It was not until Mammad's compiled thoughts, which he had memorized, were recorded in Begum's notebook. In fact, these writings would include his life lessons with Begum and programs that he would include with Begum to manage.

Begum took a pen and notebook in his hand and began writing. Of course, Begum's literacy in Persian was not good, but he wrote well in Latin letters. After walking for a while next to the water stream that flowed from the valley between two mountains, he noticed a boulder next to the water stream. It was clear that it had once been part of the mountain range in that place. After enduring years of hardship and hardship, and the cold and heat of the environment, now, like a wise old man, he had been removed and had a suitable chair. He sat on that rock to compile a love notebook and record the master's training topics for the new bride and groom.

Begum sat on a stone chair, while Mammad stood next to him, walking slowly and dictating their future plans, and Begum was also busy recording them in his notebook.

Mammad spoke with trust in the eternal power of creation, and said, "Please write down the plan and the goals you have decided on, in

order." Short-term goals: *Finding a suitable job to earn money. *Finding a place. *Researching and finding Begum's children. *Resolving conflicts along the way to collect Begum's children and connect them to their mother. *Gathering information and addresses of Begum's family members in Baku. Trying to establish contact with them. Fortunately, Mammad had obtained a lot of information in his discussions with Begum. He should start by following up on the available clues and finding more information.

Camping in Nature and the Joining of Two Halves

Mammad knew Begum's first wife. They were villagers and enemies of each other, because Mammad was a supporter of farmers, but Khan-Khan-Goldi and her family were supporters of the usurpers of farmers' rights. Of course, no one in that village dared to openly be hostile to the ruling regime. Mammad had a very strong role and power in fighting against the situation due to his courage and revolutionary thinking, as well as the financial power and influence of his older brother Imran, who was in love with Mammad. Mammad had a clue to find the memory and the hero. In addition, he could stab Khan-Goldi in the heart by taking back Begum's children, especially since he had learned what betrayals Khan-Goldi had committed against Begum and even disrespected Sardar, Begum's uncle.

Mammad secretly had great respect for Sardar because he knew that he was one of the leaders of Azerbaijan separated from the homeland and even knew that Sardar had been angered by Stalin because of his sympathy for Iran and had even been sent to a state of exile. He also knew Begum's second wife's village well and had an intellectual relationship with some active people in that village, so that way he could also connect with Gol-Ara's father. Mammad was completely tuned in, his other half was by his side, there were many potential connections between him and Begum, which was attractive to him

both with his revolutionary motives and the nature of helping a woman who was of free descent.

Begum's ability and history of oppression in Iran, especially the destructive role that Khan-Goldi had with Begum, the Sardar's niece, were enough reasons and motives to hit Khan-Goldi. Emotionally, he was fascinated by Begum's understanding and intelligence. Of course, he had already known about Khan-Goldi's migration and return from Azerbaijan to the village and more or less about Khan-Goldi's immigrant wife, and now he had that beautiful and capable woman by his side. Mammad did not hesitate any longer and said to Begum, "I have a question for you that may be very difficult for you to answer, but I suggest that you answer it with patience and calmness at the right time. But regardless of your answer, I promise that, with God's permission, I will support and help you to the end in order to achieve your true desires."

In all these moments, Begum's heart was like a bird that was scared and sat quietly, but his heart was beating fast in his chest, his eyes were full of joy and hope, like a deer that had smelled the scent of seeing its children again. Now, a man from the Azadegan tribe wants to be the guarantor of his return to his children, who he once gave up everything to avoid losing, but still in that sad village, those beautiful women were separated from him.

Although he felt the arrival of his children in his heart, and his trust was in God, and deep down in his heart he had great trust in Mammad, and in his mouth he felt the beginning of a life of hope, his heart still trembled because he had endured so much hardship in this land, and he was always like the war victims whose bombs and accidents had repeatedly ruined our lives and drawn a black curtain over their joys, and who had witnessed the bodies of loved ones shaking under piles of dirt, grief had reached despair. Without taking the medicine, she was unconscious and insensible, but full of expectation. Now, Mammad, a man of good lineage, had lowered his

head in shame and embarrassment and asked Begum, "Are you willing to be my wife?" The explosion of this request was the beginning of a bud of hope.

Although the film of what had happened to this woman was alive again in his thoughts, and within him was a question of what plan the universe had prepared for her again. How could he believe that this time of oppression would again be pregnant with peace for him? Suddenly, lightning struck the captive deer's eyes and its rain miraculously washed away all the despair and hopelessness. Instead, a feeling of joy and belief sprouted in his heart. Under the weight of that rain, he said to Mammad:

"I have lost myself on the gambling table in my attempt to achieve my mother's rights, but my loved ones have been taken from me again, but a force has shone a light in my heart that you are the one who will guide this sad story and broken boat to the shore of its dreams." Both of them shook each other's hands and made a pact of their hearts.

Mammad could not bear it anymore from the joy of what he had received. He told Begum to give this news to Nosrat and Shokat. Without waiting for a response, Begum ran back to Nosrat, while Begum also went to Shokat. Both of them said at the same time, "We have made a pact to be partners in life and we love each other." You are the first friends to know the news of our unity. After the grace of God and the blessing of your friendship, this blessing has come to us. Nosrat and Shokat were stunned by the result of the work, but Shokat, as if he had made a vow, was standing in the cold and harsh mountains. Under the blessed shade of the rainy sky, he raised his hands to the God of lovers and with a smiling face, he cried out from the bottom of his heart, "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Mammad said to Nosrat and Shokat, "If you allow us to finish this blessed picnic here and return home, I have a lot of work to do. If you help us, we will announce and formalize this union tomorrow

evening at a small party with the presence of a limited number of guests." He turned to Shokat and said, "With the permission of my brother Nosrat, all this effort will be on you and your house. Please pack up and let's go. In the face of all this excitement, waiting is no longer permissible." As soon as they returned home and packed their things, Mammad said, "I'm going to go look for a few things, I'll be back tomorrow. I'll leave the bride's wedding and her necessary things and the party preparations to you. Of course, we'll order food from outside."

He turned to Nosrat and said, "Brother, I'll take care of the preparations, order food, and buy sweets and fruit with you." Then he pulled Nosrat aside and quietly said, "Go to Mr. Mansouri's office and tell him that my wedding ceremony will be at your house tomorrow at four o'clock to sign the marriage contract and register it." Then he turned to Begum and said, "I want to always be by your side to witness your happiness." He secretly took Begum's ring from her and left. The next day, before breakfast, Mammad returned to Nosrat's house. By the time they had breakfast together, Mammad was completely exhausted and had a sense of humor. It was clear that with the power and gifts he had in mind, pregnancy would be a lot of good news for Begum. Mammad agreed with Shokat and Nosrat about the list of people to be invited.

It was decided to have a limited number but a small group. Bekmam said that Rou Bush and Agha Sadeq should be invited, and if he was available, Rou Bush's brother Timur should be invited too. Shokat also had two people in mind. Nosrat suggested two mutual friends with Mammad. There were about ten to fifteen people to invite. After breakfast, Mammad went out again to follow up on a number of things. He said that he would be back by two o'clock so that they could review and complete the missing items together before the guests arrived. Before leaving the separate house, he told Shokat to follow up on the necessary arrangements for the bride herself. He also gave Shokat some money and left.

Mammad’s Marriage Proposal: Two Halves Begin to Walk

Mammad returned and gave Shokat a package to use. Inside the package were two silver rings, a shirt, and a white scarf.

"Truly, love is the strongest medicine in human relations. The essence of love is that it provides its own happiness in making others happy."

Hajj Mansouri came first, he had a special wish for Mammad, one by one the guests came. It was four o'clock, the bride and groom, the wedding table, the guests were all present, but Mammad was not ready, he was like a sparrow with his head cut off. He was walking outside the house. In short, he was patient. Mr. Mansouri asked Mammad, is it okay to start, Mr. Groom? Mammad said, I am waiting for the other two guests. Mammad had not finished his sentences yet. The door of courtyard House opened. Two children entered with a woman. Mammad went to the children. Mammad's movements had created a stir. No one knew what was going on. The children entered the room with Mammad, and as soon as both mothers entered, they ran towards Begum. Begum hugged them like a deer that has witnessed the release of her children from captivity.

A mother who has spent her life separated from her children is now smelling her children, kissing their hands. The kingdom of love had entered that room. Mammad and Begum turned to He took a side room so that the mother and children could be together. Meanwhile, Begum threw himself at Mammad's feet and wanted to kiss Mammad's feet. Mammad kindly sat down on the floor and did not allow Megum to kiss his feet. He told Begum that it was your love that deserved all this change. Now we have two celebrations. You can be busy with your children in this room. I will follow the preparations for my marriage with you in the side room until it is

your turn. You will give the notary's answer with your children so that he can be your lawyer for our marriage. He left the room.

Mammad turned to the guests and while welcoming the guests said that you are also lucky. Today you are witnessing two sacred bonds. The most important of them is the bond between an oppressed and heartbroken mother who has been held captive by the separation of her children in the side room. The second bond is the marriage between me and Begum. Haj Agha is starting the marriage ceremony. Believe me, there was no one in that room who was not conquered by the shadow of his love. Everyone was grateful to Mammad in some way, but Mammad believed. "Only a mother's love, which brings new life and rebirth by enduring hardship, reproach, and oppression in the present, brings us new life and rebirth. Therefore, we should all be grateful to mothers for their love. We can live a life of love with divine grace and their love.

Yes, we cannot live without love. We must always be devoted to love." Haj Mansouri began the marriage sermon by announcing his agreement to the marriage from the room next to the attorney's office. To the joy and gratitude of the people present in this gathering, who were witnessing tears and smiles, in fact, the end of a separation and the beginning of a bond, they sweetened their mouths. At the same time, Mammad promised that if you bring justice, Gol-Ara would soon be added to this gathering.

The wedding ceremony was over. The guests slowly left. When they left, it seemed that they were heavier than when they came. They walked slowly and cautiously. Even Haj Mansouri, who was in the greatest hurry to leave, was the last person to leave Nosrat's house. It was clear that no one had the strength to leave and they were walking with difficulty. Everyone had dozens of questions and opinions in their hearts, but no one dared to speak. Surely you would also like to know how this masterpiece was created, who was the director of this

real comedy-tragedy that was able to create so much anger and forgiveness, laughter and tears, in the shortest possible time.

Afreen, you have turned the impossible into possible and separation into union, and turned years of pain and suffering and enduring distance from everything that could not bring happiness into such a joy, and overnight, all the pain that was spent in silence and crying into union with her children for a mother. Now, the witnesses of this short film are leaving the scene with dozens of questions and surprises, but let me tell you that in the next room next to her children, she was overwhelmed with joy and overflowing with hope, playing with her sweethearts, and was making up for the lack and thirst of years of separation by kissing her countless children. I will not keep you waiting too long in a hangover, and I will explain to you about the director of this part of life and how this masterpiece and love was born.

After they returned from the picnic and set the wedding plan for the next day, Mammad himself said that he had some things he had to go do and said that he would come the next day.

Behind the Return of the Children and the New Home

After leaving Nosrat's house, he went to Safar's coffee house, which was on the main street of Darwaza Ghar, to meet Safar, who was a fellow villager and close friend. He was a descendant of Khan, but his thoughts were the same as Mammad's.

In that meeting, he explained to Safar the story of his marriage to Khan's ex-wife Khan-Goldi and a little about Khan's betrayals towards Begum.

Safar knew a little about the matter from what he had heard from his family, but he had complete trust in Mammad and his words. He asked Mammad what the matter was now. Mammad replied, "Go to

Khan, wherever he is, and tell him. I came to you with a knife in my hand." (While he was talking to Safar, he took out a bone-handled knife made in Zanjan from his pocket.) First of all, I have to say that I married your ex-wife. We will hold the wedding ceremony tomorrow. I want Begum's children to be with him tomorrow. He must send Hafezeh and Ghahraman to Nosrat's house with Sadeq. He wants Safar to tell Khan Khan-Goldi that if he says anything against my wishes or does not go along with my wishes, I will cut this knife to the hilt, and if he survives, I will have to remove his excrement from his mouth.

Safar, who knew about Mammad's seriousness and manliness, had only said one word to Mammad and had disappeared.

After Safar, he had gone to Sadiq and told him the matter, saying that with the help of Robosh, after receiving the children and before bringing them to Nosrat's house, he had checked on the children's condition and had them brought to Nosrat's house later. He had also given Sadiq some money and had requested that no one should know about this matter because he wanted Sayed to remain unaware.

All of Mammad's wishes were implemented in practice, as you witnessed yourself at the scene.

That night, after the wedding ceremony, Mammad said goodbye to Begum and his children, telling Begum to stay here with the children. At the same time, he gave her a handful of banknotes and said, "Go buy whatever you need with Shokat and the children. I have some work to do in a few days." After thanking Nosrat and Shokat for all their kindness, he left.

Begum no longer noticed the passage of time. All her dreams and hopes seemed to be sitting before her. She carried an ocean of love and affection within her—an ocean she longed to pour over her children and her own wounded heart.

That night, Tehran was no longer merely a city of exile for Begum.

In the embrace of Hafezeh and Qahraman, in Mammad's promise to bring Gol-Ara, and in the small home of Nosrat and Shokat, Tehran smelled like home for the first time.

Building a Family: A New Home for Begum and Mammad

Mammad did not visit Begum for two or three days. He wanted her to be at ease with her children and, after years of separation, to soothe the thirst in her heart by seeing, smelling, kissing, and holding Hafezeh and Qahraman.

Mammad also had tasks of his own to complete.

His first task was to find two empty rooms—a place suitable for the beginning of their family life.

Once he found the rooms, he moved his belongings there from his former room. He asked Robush to help clean and prepare them. At the same time, he made a list of what was missing and what a family home would need, and began to obtain those things.

Until then, Mammad had paid little attention to such matters. His had been the life of a solitary man and fighter, always on the move and occupied with affairs outside the home.

But now everything was different.

He was no longer alone. There was Begum, there was Hafezeh, there was Qahraman, and there was also the hope that Gol-Ara would soon join them.

When the home was ready, Mammad went to see a friend named Ebrahim, whom he had first met in prison. Everyone called Ebrahim 'Abi.'

Abi had many friends. He promised Mammad that, because Begum was educated, he would find her a job in the accounting department of a wool-spinning factory.

Mammad told Abi that Begum could begin at the start of the month, about a week later.

Three days later, Mammad returned to Nosrat's home and told Begum and the others that he had rented a two-room house nearby.

He said that he wanted to move the belongings from his old room into their new shared home so that they could all live under one roof.

Everyone was happy that day.

Overwhelmed by so much care and attention, Begum believed that God's grace could work miracles.

The household belongings—only the basic necessities needed to begin a life together—were moved safely into the new home.

Begum asked Timur, who was staying with his sister in Tehran, to go to the village and, with his mother's help, collect all of Begum's belongings from Rasoul and bring them to Tehran. For the time being, however, he was to tell no one.

Mammad coordinated the arrangements with Timur himself and gave him the money he needed.

Timur set out to carry out the task and returned.

Begum had strongly emphasized that all her household possessions and tools of work must be brought, especially her sewing machine, for she knew how useful it would later become.

Everything arrived safely in Tehran and was moved into the new home.

With her own hands, Begum arranged the belongings and set up a place for both living and working.

Her workroom would also serve as the children's living space, although their final situation was still uncertain and no one yet knew exactly what the future would bring.

From the beginning, Begum did not see a home as merely a place for sleeping and eating.

To her, a home meant a refuge, a workshop, a school of hope, and a stronghold from which she could gather her children around her once again.

Begum Begins Work and the Children's Lives Take Shape

On the first day of the month, Begum went with Mammad to see Abi. From there, all three went together to the workshop.

The workshop manager met Begum and reviewed her circumstances. Everything was acceptable. Because her written Persian was not yet fully developed, however, it was agreed that she would keep the records and accounts in the Latin alphabet.

Begum began work the following morning on the day shift, from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon.

After returning home, Begum and Mammad discussed the children's situation so that arrangements could be made for Hafezeh and Qahraman during Begum's working hours. They also consulted Nosrat and Shokat.

Hafezeh was about ten or eleven years old, and Qahraman was about ten.

Shokat said that Hafezeh could stay with her while Begum was at work.

Nosrat said that Qahraman could work under his supervision at the shop. Then he added:

‘I’ll buy Qahraman a set of shoeshining supplies. I’ll teach him how to earn money for himself in front of the shop, and I’ll look after him too.’

With the blessing of their friends’ help, matters gradually began to fall into place.

Begum went to work the next day and had only Fridays off. She was also given a good wage. In effect, part of the workshop’s deputy management had been entrusted to her.

Within a few days, Begum had earned the trust of both the manager and the workers. During that short time, she spoke with the manager about hiring Mammad to assist her in the supplies department.

The manager agreed to her proposal.

With Mammad at the workshop, Begum now had a man beside her who would support her, and she was no longer alone on the journey between home and work.

Life with Mammad was the dream—the missing half—that, by God’s grace, Begum had found.

Mammad, too, had been given the chance to live with a family in a peaceful, well-kept home. Working at the workshop brought him greater calm and drew him away from scattered journeys and the constant conflicts of life outside the home.

The presence of Begum and the children brought him peace; it was as though God had achieved two aims with a single arrow.

Mammad cherished every moment of this life. Day by day, as Begum gradually thawed and became more active both at home and at work, a fresh blossom opened in every corner of Mammad’s heart.

A Home Shaped by Begum’s Hands: A New Command in Life and Work

Mammad’s once silent and lifeless house gradually became a home filled with the scent of potted geraniums, order, and a woman’s gentle touch.

The kitchen cabinet was built and arranged through Begum’s ideas and by her own hands. A folding table and chairs were added so that the family could use them when they gathered to eat together.

As soon as Begum returned from work, she set the samovar going, filling the house with the steam of tea and the warmth of life.

The matching rose-patterned porcelain dishes, the curtains over the doors and windows, and the pictures and photographs of Mammad and the children all found their proper places.

A place was set aside for shoes. A clothes rack was installed and covered with an embroidered curtain. A small table with drawers was provided for Begum’s cosmetics, with a mirror above it and a chair set in front.

All of this took shape through Begum’s thought and capable hands.

In that poor neighborhood, where most households lived with only the traditional bare minimum, Begum and Mammad’s home gradually became a place of refinement. Its very doors and walls spoke of the care, love, taste, and presence of a true lady of the house.

Mammad and Begum drew closer to one another with each passing day. With the companionship and help of her beloved Mammad, Begum gradually became familiar with the neighborhoods and places she needed to know.

The children occasionally visited their grandmother's home. Their father's family treated them kindly and were happy that their former daughter-in-law was once again together with her children.

Yet they did not openly express their displeasure with their son, Khan-Goldi—a man who seemed, like one of the accursed, to have lost his way, and whose only refuge was a woman younger than himself, a woman whose hearth had remained cold and childless.

As usual, Khan-Goldi dressed stylishly and took great care with his appearance—the very picture of 'all style and empty pockets.' But he knew very well that he had to keep out of Mammad's sights.

With every passing day, Begum became more firmly established at work. She had recently arranged for Timur to be hired at the workshop as well.

In effect, she was building a team around herself at work, too, so that she could exercise greater control and gradually bring order to the workshop.

Once a week, she held a meeting with the workers at the workshop so that she could learn about their problems and try to resolve them.

She wanted to breathe new life into the relationships among the people there. She even introduced a system of rewards and the selection of a Worker of the Month.

The many concerns of Begum's life and destiny so completely occupied her mind that she remained unaware of the world of politics and the condition of the country.

For the time being, she was fighting on another battlefield:

the battlefield of home,

the battlefield of work,

the battlefield of motherhood,

and the battlefield of rebuilding herself from the ashes.

Poverty, War, and the Hardships of Daily Life

During the very days when Begum was trying to rebuild her small home, the condition of the country grew more chaotic, painful, and oppressive with each passing day.

Within, Iran was gripped by poverty, famine, disease, and disorder; from without, it was being crushed under the pressure of the Allied forces.

Although Iran had declared its neutrality in the World War, the Allies had occupied the country, each pursuing its own interests on Iranian soil.

Foreign forces had effectively divided Iran into spheres of influence and occupation. Each power demanded its share from some corner of the country, while the Iranian people—who had played no part in starting the war—were forced to pay the price for a conflict begun by others.

Hunger, frailty, and disease raged through cities and villages. Deaths caused by poverty, famine, and the lack of medical care increased day by day.

In the cities, soaring prices and shortages broke the people's backs. In the villages, disease claimed lives, and many people had no access even to the most basic medical care.

There was no visible order or plan for prevention, treatment, or the rescue of the people.

In Tehran, foreign forces and the institutions tied to them treated the country's resources as ownerless property. Whatever they needed—

railways, roads, warehouses, grain, fuel, or labor—they commandeered for their own war.

In their own homeland, the people gradually came to feel that they owned nothing: not bread, not security, not freedom of choice, not even a future.

The crafty and seasoned British still kept their eyes fixed on the oil and the south of Iran. For years they had mastered the art of plundering Iran's resources, and under the cover of war their hands were freer than ever.

In the north, the so-called socialist Soviet Union was extending its domination. It proclaimed justice and support for working people, but in practice it was chiefly pursuing political influence, party activity, recruitment, and organizational control.

In that atmosphere, the Tudeh Party—which many regarded as a puppet in Soviet hands—continued to grow.

In short, Iran's nationalist intellectuals could sense the approaching destruction of the country's independence.

National sovereignty had effectively faded away. The young Shah, the royal court, Parliament, and the machinery of government, instead of serving as supports for the nation, moved increasingly at the command of foreign powers.

Iran—a country that had declared neutrality in the war—had now become a silent semi-colony: outwardly independent, but wounded and captive in its will.

Neutral Iran and the Price of Other Nations' War

The Germans, too, had encountered great difficulties in the war. Hitler's dream of expanding the conflict and reaching new resources and routes met with formidable obstacles.

The Allied occupation of Iran closed one possible route of German advance and turned Iran into a transit corridor, storehouse, and logistical base for the Allied war effort.

Hitler could not reach his objectives through Iran and Azerbaijan. His war against the Soviet Union was ultimately drawn into the cold and deadly battlefields of Russia and Siberia, where bone-chilling temperatures, shortages of supplies, and the resistance of the Red Army brought the German war machine to its knees.

The Allies won on the battlefield, but their victory brought no benefit to the people of Iran.

For Iran, the war brought nothing but greater destruction, rising prices, famine, poverty, disease, and humiliation.

Even after the war, Iran's economy remained more damaged than before. The old British colonial power continued to use its political and economic influence to obstruct the growth of Iran's native industries.

Wherever there was a sign of domestic production, a small workshop, a national industry, or economic independence, the shadow of interference and obstruction followed it.

Textile weaving, glassmaking, carpet weaving, agriculture, animal husbandry, and much of what the people possessed were worn away under the pressure of foreign policies and the weakness of Iran's rulers.

What should have formed the roots of Iran's national economic survival was being felled beneath the axe of foreigners, with the signed consent of a young and rootless monarch.

For neutral Iran, nothing remained but confusion, helplessness, despair, and humiliation.

The army had no power to mount a real defense,

Parliament was not the voice of the people,

and the royal court was no refuge for the nation.

In such a country, ordinary people had to fight poverty, disease, unemployment, insecurity, and the humiliation of living in a land that was their homeland on paper, while in reality every corner of it was being trampled under the feet of a foreign power.

The Shadow of War Over Begum's Life

For a time, Begum was so occupied with the home, the workshop, the children, Mammad, and the building of a new life that she had no opportunity to reflect on the depth of the country's condition.

She herself had already survived an inner and family war:

a war for motherhood,

a war for bread,

a war for honor,

and a war to gather her children around her once again.

But the war outside was also slowly crossing the walls of the home.

High prices, shortages, queues, disease, bitter news, displaced people, hungry workers, defenseless women, thin children, and men who were either unemployed or crushed beneath exhausting labor had all become part of the daily atmosphere of Tehran.

The effects of this turmoil could be seen in the workshop as well.

Raw materials became scarce, costs rose, workers' wages were not enough to live on, and every day a new cry rose from the depths of poverty.

Begum, who had only recently found a measure of order and hope in her own life, now saw that she was surrounded by people who, each in their own way, were struggling with war, poverty, and injustice.

It was here that Begum's commanding spirit rose again, this time on the battlefield of work and social life.

She did not want merely to keep the accounts.

She did not want merely to preserve her home.

She did not want merely to save her own children.

Gradually, she came to understand that her suffering was not separate from the suffering of others.

A mother who had burned for her own children could now see the pain of other mothers, other workers, and other families as well.

War, poverty, and occupation had made the people's lives unbearably hard. Yet in the heart of that darkness, Begum was learning how to keep the lamp of her own home alight—and perhaps to light a lamp for those around her as well.

The Pits of Darvazeh-Ghar

Chapter Nine

Home, the Coup, the Children, and the Family Reunited

A New Era: A Different Life for Begum

In the pits carved by time, people struggled on through their own efforts—keeping their faces red, as the saying goes, with the sting of their own hands—and lived with their heads held high. In those same impoverished hollows, amid cramped houses, worn steps, water queues, the sound of quarrels, and the smell of damp, there were still people who refused to be crushed beneath poverty and humiliation.

Begum's children now had two homes. From time to time, they visited their paternal grandmother's house. Their appearance and clothing, of course, were entirely different from those of the neighborhood children. Despite all the hardships of her daily work outside the home, Begum began another, even more demanding shift whenever she returned.

At home, she was not merely a woman exhausted by the workshop. She was a devoted, caring, and cultivated mother who attended to her family, cooked, prepared the next day's food for work, and at the same time kept the home orderly and peaceful.

After the workshop, the sound of Begum's sewing machine could often be heard until late at night. To Begum, the weary sound of her old machine was like the voice of a familiar friend, a longtime companion in her life in Iran. This time, however, something was different: beside her now stood a man who was faithful to the marrow of his bones, a loyal companion and true friend.

At night, Mammad would sit beside Begum's machine and would not leave her alone. As she worked, he asked her all manner of questions. Sometimes he would plead:

“For God's sake, sing me a song.”

Because the children were usually asleep, Begum would sing for Mammad's heart from stories filled with sorrow, drawing the sound from the ache within her. Begum's voice was more plaintive than a violin, a clarinet, or a garmon accordion; it was as though, to give voice to her soul, she needed an instrument of another kind.

Sometimes she sank so deeply into herself that the ache in her heart and the wounds of the age made tears rain from her tired eyes. Through all those moments, Mammad's eyes also filled with tears as he listened to Begum's voice. It was as though, moved by Begum's sorrowful fate, he too walked beside her in his mind through the garden lanes of the house of grief that had been her life.

On some nights, the children stayed at their grandmother's house. That was the only other home in which they felt safe; they never went to their father's house at all. They knew very well that their stepmother was pleased that they were no longer part of her life. The wretched Khan-Goldi, meanwhile, spent his nights merry beside his beloved and never asked after his children. Perhaps he had forgotten them entirely.

One day, however, as Khan-Goldi passed in front of Nosrat's shop, he noticed Ghahreman's shoeshine stand. He walked over, planted his foot on Ghahreman's shoeshine box, and said:

“Shine my shoe.”

Ghahreman already had a shoe in his hand and was busy polishing it. He tried to ignore his father. His heart had been wounded too deeply by him.

Suddenly, he remembered the day his stepmother had complained about him and his father had just arrived home in a rage. With his shoe still on his foot, before Ghahreman had any chance to run, he had kicked him. The pointed toe had struck Ghahreman so hard from behind that he remained in pain for a long time and even relieving himself had become an ordeal.

Now a shoe like that one rested on his workbox, and the owner of the shoe expected him to polish it.

Ghahreman froze for a moment.

He felt that now he had both a mother and Baba Mammad. But his silence and stillness exhausted the khan's son's patience. Khan-Goldi bent down, struck Ghahreman on the head, and said:

“Hurry up. I have things to do.”

Ghahreman's cheek burned from the slap. Suddenly, with a grown man's anger, he pushed Khan-Goldi's foot firmly off his workbox and said in a voice that no longer belonged to a frightened child:

“I don't have time.”

At the same moment, the knot in his throat broke. He stood up and, angry and weeping, went into the shop. Before Nosrat could find out why Ghahreman was so upset, Khan-Goldi had cleared out and left the place.

Ghahreman and Hafezeh: The Children's Shared Wound

Ghahreman did not tell Nosrat what had happened. He only said that he did not feel well and wanted to go home.

Nosrat said:

“Go to your sister at our house.”

“All right,” Ghahreman replied, and went to Nosrat's home.

Hafezeh was sitting beside the courtyard pool, washing dishes. When she saw Ghahreman's hurt and troubled face, her heart trembled. The moment she saw the brother who shared her pain and fate, she hurried toward him. She wiped her palms on the white flowered dress Begum had sewn for her and quickly took her brother in her arms.

She tried to wipe away Ghahreman's tears.

Ghahreman settled into his sister's tight embrace and, before Hafezeh asked a question, said angrily:

“I knocked his filthy foot aside.”

Hafezeh anxiously asked what had happened.

Ghahreman told her the whole story: how he had stood up to the man who, for his love affair and his choice of a younger woman, had torn their lives apart; the man whose cowardice had caused their displaced mother to be driven out of the village; the man who had left them without their mother for years and, through cunning and lies, poisoned their minds against her.

Ghahreman said:

“And now he comes and orders me to polish his shoes.”

The sight of those shoes had revived the memory of the kick that had tormented him for so long. In his young but wounded mind, he felt that today he had to take revenge on this well-dressed scoundrel for his sister, his mother, and himself.

When Hafezeh heard of her brother's courage, she covered him with kisses. Tears of joy gathered in her eyes.

Ghahreman was no longer a child who would quietly accept every blow.

Until evening, while they waited for his mother and the kind man who supported her to return from work, Hafezeh stood at the end of the alley, eager to tell Begum proudly about Ghahreman's courage. But the hands of time moved slowly and lazily, entirely out of step with Ghahreman's impatience.

Ghahreman suddenly went to the grocery shop at the corner. Pretending that he was buying them for his father, he bought a packet of cigarettes and some matches and put them in his pocket. A little way from the neighborhood, in a secluded place, he lit his first cigarette—a cigarette that would become the potential beginning of many troubles later in his life.

Because of the resentments that had settled in his mind over the years, he now took the first step down a wrong road, deluded about the path he had chosen. In the theater of his imagination, life had become a parade of angry men who believed that cigarettes brought them peace.

He walked about, imitating furious grown men and talking silently to himself. He was completely absorbed in his pride—so intoxicated by it that this time he failed to notice how quickly the hands of the clock were moving.

When he came to himself, he saw that it was late. He thought Mama and Baba Mammad must already be home. Trying to conceal the cigarette packet and matchbox in his clothes, he hurried back.

When he arrived, he realized that his mother and Mammad had been worried about him. He guessed that Hafezeh, who had come home earlier, had already told them the story of his courage.

He hesitated, uncertain where or how to begin. But before he could speak, Mammad came toward him, embraced him, and with one brief sentence gave him a great lesson.

Mammad's Lesson and Ghahreman's Calm

After Mammad stepped away, Ghahreman was still uncertain. He did not know exactly what Mammad had meant. In so short a time, he had become deeply drawn to Mammad's behavior, manner, and character and had come to regard him as both model and father. He could not bear the thought that Mammad—the rescuer of his mother and his own kind father—might be even slightly displeased with him.

He was still searching for an answer when Begum came forward, took her son in her arms, and said:

“You must be tired. I heard you had a difficult day. Now help your sister set the table for supper. Mammad will soon be back with barbari bread.”

Ghahreman had expected a different response. As the saying goes, his fire was burning fiercely; but instead of fanning the flames of revenge, they poured cold water over the fire within him.

He struggled with himself. On the one hand, without forgetting what had been done to him, his sister, and his mother, he felt that he had every right to be angry. On the other, he could not understand why, although they knew how despicably Khan-Goldi had behaved, they did not praise his courage in confronting him.

These thoughts, together with his trust in Mammad's judgment, made him spring to his feet as soon as Mammad returned. He went to him, embraced him, and without saying a word turned back toward the table.

But Mammad reached from behind, drew Ghahreman into his arms once more, and whispered in his ear:

“Well done. Today you lifted from your mother's heart the weariness of many long years and showed her that she has someone to defend her. Just take care of yourself; all of us are waiting for you.”

Father and son sat down at the table—a table supplied in those days only through labor and the endurance of hardship.

Everyone in the household sat there in silence. Inwardly, each of them was grateful and content for the healthy bond of affection that fate had granted them.

That night Ghahreman understood that defending one's mother is not only a matter of fists and revenge. Sometimes removing the foot of oppression from a small workbox is enough to let a mother know that she is not alone. But the rest of the road cannot be entrusted to raw anger; it requires manliness, patience, work, barbari bread, and a home whose lamp remains lit each night by love.

Begum too watched her son's face in silence. There was both pain and pride in her heart. The child from whom she had been separated for years now stood at the threshold of manhood—a manhood that, without a kind hand like Mammad's beside it, might be driven astray by the road of old wounds.

That same night, Begum understood more clearly than ever that gathering a family did not mean merely living beneath one roof. The family had to be raised again, healed again, and taught to trust again; from the wounds of the past, it had to build a sound road toward the future.

A New Job for Mammad

The days passed quickly, while working conditions grew harder by the day. Food prices rose, goods became scarcer, and most workshops stood on the verge of bankruptcy and closure.

A year or two passed, yet despite Mammad's efforts, Begum still had not managed to see her beloved Gol-Ara. Conditions had become so unsettled and alarming that people no longer had peace of mind. The storms of hardship—inflation, unemployment, and failing workshops—struck Begum's life as well.

The workshop was gradually forced to reduce its workforce and cut expenses. Timur was the first casualty. A few weeks later, Mammad's turn came. Even as the amount of work declined, however, the workshop manager continued to pay Begum because he still needed her.

With the help of a friend, Mammad succeeded in finding a new job. He became an apprentice to a building architect—effectively the man's assistant, carrying his tools and remaining at his side.

The man's name was Simon. He was kind and warmhearted and had an equally kind wife named Madame Zina. Simon and Madame Zina were immigrants too, living as strangers in Iran.

Madame Zina was eager to meet Begum. At last, at Simon's invitation, Mammad and Begum went to their home one Friday, when they were not working.

From the first moments of their visit, Madame Zina became close to Begum. By good fortune, she also spoke Russian—indeed, she spoke Russian better than Persian.

A bond both practical and affectionate soon formed between the two women. Sometimes they jokingly spoke Russian to one another and laughed aloud, partly because it made their husbands jealous. Mammad and Simon could not understand what they were saying and felt a childlike jealousy toward this sweet little mystery.

Simon and Madame Zina were themselves alone and far from home in Iran; now they had met a family who understood the pain of exile. Begum's presence in particular brought the two families very close.

Begum's education and resourcefulness, together with Mammad's alert and perceptive mind, gradually created a good team—a team built on exile, work, trust, and a shared need for a better life.

Moving from the Pit to Simon's House

Simon suggested that Mammad bring his family to Simon's house and live there.

Simon's house was large and had a spacious semi-basement completely separate from the rooms where Simon and Madame Zina lived. That part of the house had enough space for a family and its own independent facilities.

Simon and Madame Zina regarded Mammad's family as their own. They proposed that Hafezeh help Madame Zina and earn some money for herself in return. Madame would also look after Hafezeh whenever Begum was away.

Simon also placed Ghahreman with an Armenian friend who made shoes by hand, so that the boy could become his apprentice.

Meanwhile, Begum still had to travel to work, and the workshop's economic uncertainty remained. Madame Zina wanted Begum to leave the workshop and continue sewing at home. She promised Begum that she would succeed and told her:

“You need only introduce yourself in the neighborhood; you will find plenty of sewing work.”

All that remained was for Begum, out of gratitude to the workshop manager, to finish the urgent work temporarily left in her care and then leave the workshop.

The proposal was sensible. Everyone agreed, and they acted on it.

When the workshop manager settled Begum's account, he paid her not only her wages but also a considerable sum as a bonus and a token of appreciation. With foresight and an open mind, Begum kept the bonus hidden from everyone for a day of need. Later, that money would help untie an important knot in her life.

Accepting Simon's offer and moving the family into his home brought a quiet, reassuring revolution to Begum and Mammad's life. The new conveniences, the adequate space, and the chance to live in a prosperous Tehran neighborhood without paying rent were an enormous help.

For a family coming from the pits of Darvazeh-Ghar and its poor, damp rooms, that independent semi-basement was more than a new place to live; it was an opening.

They could breathe more freely. The children could move about in a safer setting. Begum could operate her sewing machine with greater peace of mind, and Mammad gained some distance from the anxiety of unemployment and the pressure of each day.

For Begum, the move from a life in the pits to an affluent neighborhood was like passing through a dark tunnel into a brighter space, although the shadows of poverty, war, and separation from Gol-Ara had not yet left her heart.

A New Opening and the Fading Bond with Nosrat and Shokat

The changes came quickly and brought many blessings, as though a single arrow had struck several targets.

Mammad had found new work. Begum could gradually leave the workshop and continue her sewing at home. Hafezeh found safety and light work beside Madame Zina. Ghahreman began an apprenticeship with the Armenian shoemaker and could learn a craft. The family, meanwhile, lived in a better and quieter place without paying rent.

Yet within this opening, a painful distance also began to appear.

After the move from the pits to the prosperous neighborhood, Nosrat and Shokat's relationship with Mammad, Begum, and the children gradually grew less close.

Nosrat and Shokat had been the first people to give Begum refuge in Tehran. During her first nights as a stranger in the city, their home had been like a lamp in the dark. Shokat had become a sister, confidante, and guide to her. Nosrat too, for all the complexities of his character, had offered support at important moments and made Begum's meeting with Mammad possible.

Life, however, does not always move in harmony with the loyalties of the heart. Sometimes a change of home, a new neighborhood, different work, the demands of children, and the difficulties of daily life place a quiet, unintended distance between people.

In her heart, Begum knew the worth of Shokat and Nosrat. She never forgot that without Rubush, Shokat, Nosrat, and later Mammad, Tehran might have become another pit for her instead of a field of rescue.

Still, the new life with Simon and Madame Zina had set the family on a different road. Once again, Begum had to make a new home, help the children adjust to their surroundings, build up her sewing work, and continue waiting for the day when Gol-Ara too would return to her arms.

An opening had come, but Begum's heart was still incomplete.

The house was larger.

The family's bread was a little more secure.

New friendships had formed.

But Gol-Ara's empty place still trembled in Begum's heart like an open window in the cold of night.

News of Begum's Pregnancy: Joy Amid Anxiety

The preceding weeks had been full. Life appeared to be moving smoothly, yet Begum carried news that brought happiness and anxiety together.

Begum was pregnant. She rejoiced because the child would deepen the bond between her and Mammad, but the disorder around them gave her reason to worry. With her resilient spirit, she nevertheless treated the news as precious. Simon and Madame Zina celebrated with them, and Mammad could barely contain the excitement of awaiting his first child with Begum.

By then, Begum had gained her own sewing customers, many of them Armenian women with whom she could also speak Russian. She was able to work full-time at home instead of returning to the workshop. Mammad's work was steady, Simon treated him like a supportive brother, and Madame Zina found in Begum the sister she had never had.

The two families lived together in sincere, respectful harmony. Begum's pregnancy advanced day by day. Conditions in Iran continued to worsen, but for a time this small circle remained safe.

Timur, travelling between the village and Tehran, stayed with his sister when he was in the city. He remained close to Begum and Mammad, brought them news of Gol-Ara, and carried Begum's gifts to her whenever he returned to the village.

Simon and Madame Zina Leave: A Return to Darvazeh-Ghar

Then a shock shattered the family's peace. Simon and Madame Zina received notice from their consulate that, because they were not

Iranian citizens, they should remove their capital from Iran and be prepared to leave the country. Once again, a difficult fate approached the family.

Ghahreman on the Road to Work and Independence

Simon's house was sold, and the day of separation arrived. Before leaving, Simon gave Mammad many household items to help the family. Mammad rented a small place in Darvazeh-Ghar, and they compressed their lives and belongings into it.

Begum and Mammad cared deeply for one another and guarded the health of their relationship. They were one spirit in two bodies, often understanding one another without words. Hafezeh had reached marriageable age. Together they decided that she and Timur should marry and begin an independent life nearby. Neither objected. With the household goods Simon had left, the couple furnished a modest rented room and settled there after a small, intimate ceremony.

Timur found work in the vegetable market and earned enough, with occasional help, to support their household. Ghahreman was hired by an electrical-cable company as a warehouse worker who also moved equipment. He loved driving and sometimes used the company vehicle for deliveries. His belongings remained at his mother's home; he slept there on some nights, though he often spent time elsewhere with friends.

The Birth of Mammad's First Child with Begum: Tahereh in Masoumi Pit

Begum and Mammad's first child was born: a beautiful little girl bearing traces of both parents. They named her Tahereh, a name that seemed to belong equally to both their hearts.

Time was again at odds with Begum, again economic poverty with a new child in her life that increased the economic pressure and reduced Begum's ability to work, in short, there were many problems. There was a time when Begum always carried it with her, but Begum's greatest achievement was being by her side, a man who was her sincere support and refuge. Begum knew the value of this blessing very well and was always grateful to her God and tried hard to carry some of the pressure on her shoulders so that less pressure would be transferred to Mammad. He knew how to make the most of the minimum, and he managed his own problems with the help of the neighboring women who lived together in a large rented house, often renting rooms one after the other, and most of them could not even read or write.

All these people, who were angry with time, lived in the pits at Darvazeh-Ghar, especially the most famous pit, known as the Masoumi Pit, which was called the gradual death of the secret. It had forty-two wide stone steps, each step about two meters long, nearly one meter wide, and thirty centimeters high. In fact, when you reached the bottom of the pit from the street, you had to walk about fifty meters, just like a house that was alive. In addition to the main stairs, six steps from the bottom of the main pit connected to the pit of life, a path that had to be taken to fulfill every need. Drinking water, washing dishes, and clothes were provided by the water taps installed at the top of the pit. You had to wash your clothes, and you had to take turns using these taps so that you could wash your dishes.

The closer you get, the more you push, the more you fight, the more you have to carry all the dishes and clothes down the forty-two steps. The more you think about it, the more you have to endure these conditions, along with the physical fatigue, the more your spirit and soul will be shattered. Although it was much easier to go down the stairs than up, you still had to stop to catch your breath. In those days, you would often hear the sound of loud radios, from which you could hear the songs of the bazaar alley. Often, in the depths of those

sounds, you could hear the sounds of break-up and uplifting songs. Believe me, being alive in those pits and cave dwellers in the modern era meant nothing but torture and gradual death.

All these conditions, in addition to carrying a Tahereh tied to your back, along with carrying two bags of luggage containing the washed and ironed clothes of the customers, which had to be washed and ironed. They were transported to their owners who were in the wealthy neighborhoods of the city. Tahereh was an additional burden, which she carried three times a week, so that on the way back home, she would have to buy some vegetables, onions, and potatoes at a cheaper price and bring them home with her to prepare food for Mammad, Tahereh, and herself, as well as a pot. I called this daily journey, which included going out of the pit and returning to the pit, where they lived, which we would better call "gradual death. " I called this daily journey "Throne to Carpet. "

Two years had passed since this stage and the tortures had passed. Believe me, enduring hardships gradually makes them easier. Because there are no healthy nerves left to feel, but a person reaches an existential anesthesia, like the state of the body before a medical surgery that occurs after an injection.

Enduring hardships is like injecting an embol and anesthetizing these angry people inside caves and pits. Enduring the back-breaking suffering of drunkenness without an ampoule was born.

Mammad's Wish for a Son and Begum's Second Pregnancy

Mammad adored Tahereh, yet carried a private wish: in the conventions of that time, he could not easily take a little girl with him to the public bath or on men's errands. Begum understood. She also saw that he could share certain activities more readily with Ghahreman than with Hafezeh. It seemed that her endless list of

tasks had gained one more item—a curly-haired son whom Mammad could proudly take by the hand.

Around them, poverty deepened and the country's political unrest grew. Though the World War had ended, Britain's influence still weighed upon Iran, supported by its allies within the ruling establishment. Resistance to foreign domination was becoming a central demand of the people.

Amid these pressures, Begum had joyful news for Mammad: she was pregnant again. She knew that a child's sex was not hers to choose, but her wish to bring Mammad the son he longed for was so strong that she turned to vows and prayer. Bent beneath the weight of life, she still wanted to bring hope into their home for the man who had become her comrade and refuge.

The Birth of Begum and Mammad's Second Child: Yusuf Arrives

The appointed day arrived. Alongside the countless pains of her life, Begum now endured labor. Mammad, flustered and anxious, hurried to fetch Malek Khanum, the midwife who had also delivered Tahereh.

Hours later, in their poor home, a boy was born—a gift of hope to Mammad and another life for the family to protect. Mammad chose the name Yusuf. Begum did not object; perhaps she had already arrived at the same name in her heart, or perhaps they had quietly cherished it together before the birth.

Thus Yusuf was born, so that many years later he might narrate the boundless suffering of his devoted mother. The words before you are his heart set down on the page: Begum's life, carried for years in Yusuf's breast, recorded as testimony to suffering, love, loyalty, and resistance.

Who knows what God may bring? Perhaps one day these pages will spark the imagination of a filmmaker and become a series—another revelation of the truths hidden beneath society's surface, of honesty and loyalty confronting malice and betrayal, and of the endurance required to resist injustice from one generation to the next.

Mammad's Apricot Stew for Begum

It was six in the evening on the eighth of Mordad 1332—July 30, 1953—when God gave Yusuf to Begum and Mammad. Their poor house lay at the bottom of a pit reached from street level by forty-eight steps. Since before sunrise, women with their chadors tied around their waists had been washing or waiting their turn at the pressurized street tap.

Yusuf was a new gift to Mammad's heart. Another responsibility had been added to Begum's endless work, though in that hour the child's birth overshadowed every fatigue.

Mammad began to cook. His food was usually excellent, and that day he prepared an apricot stew. Let us pause beside him in the corner of the room where Yusuf had been born, beside the mattress on which Begum rested with the newborn. On a Valor stove, in an aluminum pan, Mammad placed dried apricots that had soaked in water since the previous day. He stirred and spread them across the pan, added a little water as they softened, removed their stones, and then added a little Shahpasand vegetable oil so they would not dry again.

He worked cheerfully. To him, this was not merely food: he believed the apricots would strengthen Begum and become the milk that nourished Yusuf. With every movement of the spoon, he seemed to pour a measure of his new father's joy into the pan. The scene was modest—a poor room, a stove, a metal pan, a few dried apricots, a little oil, and a man cooking for his wife after childbirth—but it was also one of love's purest forms.

Milk, Poverty, and Begum's Early Return to Work

Mammad hoped the meal would restore Begum's strength and help her feed their son. Yet poverty allowed neither mother nor child the luxury of rest. Less than a week later, Begum packed away her bedding and returned to work.

Her body was still weary from childbirth; Yusuf still carried the scent of a newborn, Tahereh was small, and the household tasks never ended. But life in the pit offered no convalescence. Begum had to re-enter every field at once: the home, the children, the sewing machine, washing, cooking, and the daily contest with poverty.

She rose again with a tired body, a wounded heart, a newborn in her arms, and a new responsibility on her shoulders. Life gave her no respite, but neither would she allow life to defeat her easily.

The Latest News from the Homeland: Oil, Mossadegh, and the People's Uprising

"For a while now, we have been caught up in the upheavals of life and have become unaware of the news of our homeland. During these days, scattered riots had gradually taken hold everywhere, and widespread unrest was raging in the parliament, protesting and complaining about the high cost and misery in the streets. They had managed to send a few popular figures to the parliament, whose symbol was the burning duality of the voice of struggle against the light of the eyes of the British government, which was completely greedy for the black blood in the wells under the soil of the homeland and was busy looting and plundering.

That ceremonial parliament under the umbrella of an inexperienced and wounded Shah government during its shaky rule from the resistance and stubbornness of the representatives who now raise

their voices in that parliament and demand the nationalization of oil and the liberation of the homeland from the tyrannical contracts of the British oil companies.

The parliament carries within itself three germs, including a million religious and a million conservatives and the traitorous elements of the fifth column of colonialism. In the parliament, there are benevolent people who pursue the interests of the nation and are managed by Mossadegh, who himself is a moderate and the son of some of the rulers in the government. Mossadegh is a trained lawyer who has been known for his seriousness and ability for years as the horn of the Shah's government.

According to the constitution of the country, the Shah should not have direct interference in the affairs, but the Shah leads the affairs every day in practice according to the interests of the Fakhima government. Mossadegh is a stubborn opponent of the Shah and the enemies of the friendly foreign governments that suck the blood of Iran in the form of oil companies.

Mossadegh, with the help of his allies, avoided removing the cowardly dictator named Shah, only opposed the Shah's interference in national sovereignty and the parliament, and supported popular, national, acceptable, and widespread movements and slogans in the parliament to unite all classes and neutralize the voices of his sold-out influencers. The man who is elected by the parliament to form the government.

The elected prime minister, by spreading the slogan of nationalizing oil and wanting to cut off the hands of his government, supports and guides seemingly private oil companies like England. However, the British government supported the Negin contract imposed on Iran and took a monopoly on the extraction and sale of Iranian oil, and through its influencers, they obstructed the prime minister's goals.

In fact, this contract was very treacherous and against the interests of the Iranian nation. According to the contract, the responsibility for exploration, production, and sales, and the accounting of the profit or loss of the Iranian Oil Company was completely in the hands of the British company, and according to that contract, sixteen percent of the profit that was obtained after the sale and deduction of production costs was fixed as Iran's share.

Throughout the entire period of its rule, the rial share contract was not paid to Iran because according to the books of the British company, which had full authority over the company's accounting and gave the invoices directly to the British government, the company's books always showed losses.

In this way, black blood was being drawn from the soil of Iran by the foreign company, but it did not bring any benefit to the nation. Even the Iranian government did not have the right to check and control the financial books and invoices. For this reason, the Mossadegh government terminated the contract and took over the management of the nation's oil.

The British government, as a defender of the rights of its own company, entered into war with Mossadegh. The Shah was a traitor to the homeland. The world was afraid of the oppressor, and fortunately, he no longer had the power to fight the national government.

The puppet representatives and supporters of the British government's interests were well surrounded in the parliament. Mossadegh was becoming more popular day by day. The Shah fled Iran under the pretext of illness to wait outside Iran to see how the British government, using international law, could bring their puppet Lulu, the son of their former servant, back to Iran for their colonialist benefit and impose it on the Iranian nation again.

After the Shah fled abroad, Mossadegh, with effort and sacrifice, was able to win the majority vote of the parliament and passed the nationalization of Iranian oil in the parliament and made it legal.

Mossadegh, The Hague, and the Rights of the Iranian People

After failing to achieve its goal, the British government filed a complaint with the Hague Tribunal against the Iranian government. Since Mossadegh himself was a lawyer, he took on the task of defending the rights of the Iranian people. Although he had suspicious and pro-British elements in his government and knew that they would seek to create problems for Mossadegh's defense in court, he cleverly tricked them by giving them the legal file and documents needed for his defense, and insisted that they protect the defense well. Mossadegh's apparent confidence had put them at ease. When they entered the courtroom, Mossadegh asked for the file. The responsible party hit him on the head and said that the bag of documents was missing. Mossadegh simply said, "Don't worry, I have some notes that I will rely on to start my defense. "

As soon as he entered, Badadga took out the complete copy of the file that he had hidden under his shirt and deliberately went and sat in the chair of the British representative. When the British representative entered, he saw that the seat was occupied by Mossadegh and asked the parliament's security forces to guide Mossadegh to the Iranian seat, but Mossadegh He did not move on the pretext that he did not understand what they were saying. When the judge entered the hall, everyone stood up and after the judge sat down, everyone sat down.

But the British representative was standing. The judge noticed a note on his desk that the security guard had left on his desk that Mossadegh was not sitting in the British lawyer's seat, while the British lawyer remained standing. The judge did not notice

Mossadegh's cleverness in doing this and kindly asked Mossadegh to please sit in his seat.

Mossadegh stood up from the British lawyer's seat and at the same time told the judge that in defense of the British ambassador's rights, your Excellency has proven your justice to me. You rightly urged me to stand up from the Engels lawyer's seat, which I had occupied for only half an hour, so that he could sit in his seat to defend the rights of his people.

I believe you will tell the British government lawyer that after years of unjustly sitting in the position of the representative of the Iranian people and now complaining about us, he should give up his position. Your Excellency, I have come here. You should order him to sit in his rightful position so that I can defend the rightful demands of my people.

The judge immediately announced the verdict of condemnation of the British government, defended the legitimacy of Iran's work, and thanked Mossadegh for his sincere and rightful defense of the rights of his people. From that day on, that position was recognized in that court with respect for Mossadegh.

From here on out, and my name

The Anglo-American Coup Against Mossadegh's National Government

The British government, having escaped legal prosecution, prepared a coup plan in collaboration with the newly-emerging capitalist government of America, distributing American dollars to Tehran's banks. With the help of Ashraf, the Shah's sister, she threw the city into chaos with slogans of death to Mossadegh. At the same time, the army was busy arresting and detaining Mossadegh's supporters in the square. Since Mossadegh had come to power through the election of his people, he did not even have a guard in front of his own office.

As a result, by the order of the Shah, in the hands of the head of SAVAK, they surrendered Mossadegh on a military tank and took him to the Shahrbani prison. "

On August 18, 1953, Mossadegh's national government was overthrown and the fugitive Shah returned to the throne.

Unfortunately, the Iranian national movement was once again slaughtered.

"If a country does not have a revolutionary leader, honest and loyal, a strong military base, and a diplomatic system with insight, it is inevitably doomed to failure. "

"In the absence of a revolutionary leader, honest and loyal, a strong military base, and a diplomatic system with insight, preserving the achievements is a problem, a sure defeat. "

Unfortunately, after the removal of the Safavid government in Iran, despite the self-sacrificing and scattered uprisings and resistances, we have been deprived of the blessing of having this complex, and despite enduring The failures that are many, but the art of our oppressed nation is to have the blessing of hope for the future, and it is and will be. God has promised victory to the patient.

Now I will return to fate.

Returning to Begum's Fate on the Day of the Coup

As usual, I will say that he got out of bed and went about his business, and often early in the morning he would tie Yusuf with a locally designed chador on his back, put on his shoes, and take the packages of the fruits of his day's work and go to the customers' houses to deliver them to his customers. He took advantage of the duality of religion and worldliness, which is often dominated by the worldly majority ruling the region, by keeping his chador as a veil

and a chador in the form of a cradle for his infant child, so that his hands were free and able to carry at least two bags in his hands, to deliver the clothes that he had finished washing, ironing, and probably sewing to his customers. Most of his customers were around the Amir neighborhood of Tehran. If possible, he would try to get new jobs.

Of course, it should not be forgotten that the journey to and from the place was on foot with steady but She walked with her back bent under the load and her engine was running on gasoline. It was the pride and honor that was boiling in her veins.

The burden of years of suffering from inhumanity and injustice, carrying the swaddling clothes of her newborn son Yusuf, and in her hands was the fruit of her daily and nightly suffering. A mother who was a lion of the field, a kind mother with wounds because of being a mother, a devoted wife despite the wounds she received from unworthy husbands, a mother who raised her children with love despite the difficult financial conditions, a woman with honor and a compassionate citizen, and because of this compassion and awareness of oppressed and honorable women, she had been oppressed in a village, and the price she paid was the loss of her children, which was the only material benefit of her life for the pain she had endured.

Begum's Cry Amid the Coup

That day, when she left home, she felt that there was movement under the skin of the neighborhoods and the city was gradually getting busier. She could hear a muffled voice of a seemingly organized group shouting: Long live the Shah and death to Mossadegh. It was as if the military forces were already ready to control the scene, while on the other side, the decentralized and scattered forces were excitedly chanting "Death to the Shah. " He was stuck between the two groups of chanters. For a while, he was

only careful about himself, Yusuf, and the people's clothes, but he could not control his excitement, especially when he saw the military forces beating the people who were chanting in favor of Mossadegh. His blood boiled. Seeing the signs of brokenness and injuries of the people who were shouting and being beaten to protect their national state, his emotions became more hurt.

He unconsciously felt the spirit of the time before his concert in Baku. Yusuf was silent in his backpack, afraid of the sounds, but he did not know that he would inevitably share in this national loss along with the current developments. His zeal was boiling. Despite the heavy burden he was carrying, he attacked the soldier who was beating and tearing a young man to pieces with his rifle butt and started kicking the soldier. In fact, at that moment, only his legs were able to participate in the resistance. There were people above me who were kicking him. He realized that there was a mother with a child tied to her back. He didn't want to hit this mother with a rifle butt because he was a soldier and was only carrying out orders, but he wasn't a mercenary who was in love.

Maybe he was in pain inside, but he didn't have the strength to attack. And me wouldn't back down and became even angrier. The soldier pushed me badly. I lost my balance. I fell back to the ground. Yusuf's screams and cries came out. This was the first cry from Yusuf's throat that he had raised in a movement to be with his mother for support and defense. Despite the scattering and scattering of his packages, he tried to get up. The people who were stuck in the middle of their circle were moved by the scene. Despite all the misfortune, he stood up and started shouting for the legitimate prime minister of his country. His voice was louder than Yusuf's voice. It was as if Yusuf loved his mother's voice and had remained silent. Izmir's screams attacked the soldier again, while chanting in favor of Mossadegh, he said to the guards.

Where is your honor? You don't even have mercy on the women and children of your country. I'm telling you, Ferdowsi, who had the pain and wounds of many daggers under his skin, had the opportunity to show it in action, and he roared and howled like a lion. He no longer felt alone. Yusuf was also present on the scene, and his screams were getting louder. This time, his voice was joined by the crowd. He was saying, "Where has your honor gone? " People were shouting at the military forces, "Dishonorable, dishonorable! " Suddenly, another soldier who was with the soldiers shouted, His commander, who was shouting, "Shut up these bastards, " was afraid of his commander, who hit him in the chest with a rifle butt. Unaware of his heart, he raised his hand on a mother who was chanting while holding a baby on her back. His balance was again upset.

His scream was more sad than before, as if the pain of the gun butt had activated his old wounds. The situation was already chaotic. The commanding officer was shouting, "Shut up this scoundrel. " The baby, who was angry at his mother for hearing the ugly words, could not bear to hear the undeserved kindness of Paki, whose armor, beliefs, and actions contradicted this claim of a mercenary and hated officer.

With great difficulty, Begum rose to her feet again and shouted at the officer, saying, "Dios Selita is in your house. The woman who breastfed you deserves you. I am fighting for sustenance. I am fighting for a piece of pure bread. Under the burden of my right to life, there is no blow from a pacifier in a chest that has a breastplate made of pure blood to feed its twenty-day-old child. I have risen to support the legal government of my country. Dishonorable, Mother Selita, what Begum said inside that space was like cooked halwa, screaming without fear and full of fear. The mercenary officer slapped Begum hard in the face and herself started to push Begum into the army's pocket, but she was met with a riot of people shouting, Dishonorable, dishonorable, where is mercy? You don't see the baby.

The officer, who no longer had the power of thought, as if her conscience had also become active, was like a double-edged sword. The officer who was challenged between religion and the world, chose the rule of the usurper government and began to untie the baby from Begum's back and forcibly wrapped the baby. The women around Yusuf grabbed Begum and put her in her pocket. The driver told her to take it. The driver was behind the wheel. Her thoughts were confused and frozen between right and wrong. Begum was caught in the crowd. She did not know what to do. At the same time, one of the old women present at the scene stood in front of the officer and said, "My son, this oppressed woman is a mother. If you have no mercy on yourself, have mercy on her child. "

The officer shouted at the driver, "Didn't I tell you to go? " The old woman said, "Okay, now that you have no mercy, this begum must pass over my body. I cannot act dishonorably like you. " She went and stood in front of Begum. The officer shouted at the driver again. I said, "Go. " The driver started to boil and said, "Can't you see? Close the front door? " She said, "Davis, go in reverse and kill these rioting scumbags. " In this situation, the soldier who was first in our fight, pointed her gun at the officer and pulled her gun. She shouted to her own officer, "If you don't free this mother, I will kill you first and then myself. "

The words and bravery of that soldier woke up the officer as if she was waiting for a It was an excuse so that this shameful act would not be recorded in the record of her actions. She herself forcibly took the money from her pocket and took her child, but she had become lifeless like a corpse. She had truly become stagnant, as if she had drowned in history. Oh God, how many times have you implemented the scenario of the forced loss of a child in the fate of a mother? Oh God, what a difficult test this is, even the film is heartbreaking, let alone the witnesses in action. Oh God, you yourself know how difficult the life of a real mother is, a fate that is completely drawn with blood.

The blood that comes out of a woman every month after reaching puberty, during pregnancy, instead of being excreted, is used for the growth and development of her child in the womb so that its organs can be formed, and as soon as the child is born, that same blood, transformed into milk, is fed to the child to nourish it.

After the Coup: Her Milk Dries Up and News Comes of Mammad's Imprisonment

That day was a day of failure for Iran. With the help of a handful of thugs and the plans and money of foreign exploiters, the Mossadegh government was overthrown, the people's movement was suppressed, and the traitorous king was put back in power and continued to betray the nation. Mossadegh lived in the village of his birth until the end of his life. With the help of the people, he was heartbroken and his children were given to him by the spectators on the stage. He started walking towards his home with a broken heart and a broken chest, his legs were weak and he was carrying all this pain and burden. But he had learned to endure such conditions. When he got home, Yusuf sat in his room like a walking corpse.

He felt all his mother's pain for twenty days, and perhaps he was still shocked and silent from the shock of the disaster that had befallen his mother and himself. Hours passed, the weather became dark, but there was still no sign of Mammad. He sent a message to Mammad through the neighbor's daughter to come to him. His fast Hafezeh turned to her mother and saw her mother's distressed state. She was depressed. She first took care of Yusuf. After cleaning, Yusuf cooked two eggs that were in the cupboard with a little oil and gave them to his mother with some dried bread in a basket.

Sayfa, who was restless due to the pain in his chest, ate a little of that bread and asked Hafezeh to go to Shokat's aunt and ask her to come to her mother. Hafezeh went to Shokat with tearful eyes and with

Tahereh, who had been with her since morning, and returned home with her.

Shokat witnessed Begum's condition. She was left alone. She didn't know what to do. She just tried to comfort Begum.

Begum's restless heart was less complaining about her own pain, more worried about Mammad's empty place next to him. He told Shokat about her worries. Knowing Mammad's spirit, he was deeply saddened. He asked Shokat to help Nosrat and bring news of Mammad through their mutual friends. Shokat left quickly and was not heard from until the next day.

Timur had been to the countryside for a few days to bring some provisions from the village. Hafezeh stayed at her mother's house and helped her mother and Yusuf. Of course, Ghahreman had also come to his mother's house. Although he saw his children around him, he was happy in his heart, but there was still a place for Gol-Ara beside her. However, she was very worried and uncomfortable when she didn't see Mammad, but he didn't have the strength to move or cry. He spent the night in Bida. Ray passed until noon, there was no new news from Mammad. In the afternoon, Nosrat and Shokat came to Begum. Begum was distraught about what had happened. Nosrat had learned from Mammad's mutual friends that Mammad had been arrested, but due to the chaos in the country after the coup, there was still no peace.

Shah Begum had lost her patience and was silently enduring all the pain. Nosrat promised that he would follow up on Mammad's situation. Their mutual friends were also searching to find his trace. Then they left with Shokat.

Yusuf was feeling a little lethargic. Begum hugged her and petted her, crying and singing heartbreaking songs to her. She felt that she had not breastfed her for a while. She prepared her breast and put the breast in Yusuf's mouth. Although Yusuf was sucking his mother's

breast with hunger, there was no milk. Yusuf's restlessness increased. Begum was worried. She asked her Hafezeh to put the kettle on the lamp to prepare some tea.

The tea was prepared by adding a little sugar and adding it to the tea. He poured a little of it into a saucer that he was holding. He also added a little dry barbari bread into the saucer. He waited for the dry bread to soften. He listened to Yusuf slowly. Yusuf said softly that Yusuf had fallen asleep on an empty stomach.

Bem laid Yusuf down quietly and went out of the room to relieve himself. When the door of the room was opened or closed, he would groan as if the hinges of the door had become stiff and lifeless. When Bem entered the room and the groan rose in Yusuf, Bem quickly grabbed a saucer and started crushing the dry bread with the back of a teaspoon and fed Yusuf a handful of that sweet dough. This food did not taste like mother's milk, but Yusuf had understood that there was no choice. As we Azeri people say, by understanding and accepting forced oppression, we submit to the philosophy of "When did you come here? ", which means (in short, that's all you have to do).

Yusuf was grateful. He swallowed his father's first bite of bread and after that he became well acquainted with the taste of his food. Therefore, Yusuf did not receive a drop of mother's milk from then on and another pain was added to the list of pains of Begum. Another hardship had been added to her burden.

As usual, Begum threw a pair of sixes. She had no luck because Falak had started to be mean to her again. Things remained like this for a few days until Nosrat heard that Mammad was in the city police prison and due to the crowding and the large number of arrests, they were currently waiting for their case to be resolved and they would go to a ceremonial court.

Through his friends, Nosrat had met a city police officer who was a supporter of the movement to save Mammad and asked for help in freeing Mammad. He had said that by pledging a property deed for a shop or house, he could temporarily release Mammad from prison. Of course, the officer's attempt was to be able to release Mammad without filing a case and before the court and filing a case.

Nosrat had given the officer the deed for his shop, but unfortunately, this goal was not achieved, apparently they were unable to raise enough money for the bribe.

Yusuf's Fortieth Night: A Small Joy Amid Great Fear

On the eve of Yusuf's fortieth day, with Mammad still absent, Begum wanted to create a small celebration for herself and the children. She had already returned to work. Her customers sympathized with her and helped where they could, so her finances had improved slightly. On the way home she bought a few nuts and chocolates from Nosrat for the gathering.

After arriving, she turned as usual to the endless work of the household and washed the children's clothes beside the courtyard pool with water carried from the pressurized street tap. Suddenly Sara-Simeh, a neighbor, ran into the courtyard calling, 'Haji is coming! ' Haji was the landlord, arriving to collect the rent—and he still did not know that a newborn had increased the number of people in the room.

Haji, the Mothballed Bedding, and Yusuf's Stifled Breath

He placed Yusuf's wet diaper on the extra beds that were kept behind the curtain and inside the doorway for the winter because they were

made of wool. To prevent moths from eating them, he always put some naphthalene balls between them.

And he quickly reached the courtyard before Haji arrived and started sweeping the courtyard.

The courtyard was paved with baked clay tiles. Before sweeping, he always sprinkled a little water on it to prevent dust from rising.

The reason Begum was hiding Yusuf from Haji was that Haji did not know about Yusuf's birth at the moment, which had been added to the number of people he had tenants with. If he had known, he would have quickly increased the rent, so Begum should hide Yusuf.

A Poor Celebration for Yusuf's Fortieth Day

Haji came and Begum quickly gave Haji a cup of tea and placed a wooden stool, which was usually in a corner of the yard, near the pond, away from their room, for Haji to sit and drink tea. All this time, Begum was worried that Yusuf would cry and Haji would find out, and then Haji would lose trust in Begum, which would result in both the rent being added and the rent that was overdue and unaccounted for forty days before having to be paid to Haji. Fortunately, Haji was tired that day, so she didn't waste much time, and after drinking tea and getting her rent money, she left. When Haji left and went away from the house, Begum went and brought the pan of rags and started finishing the unfinished work.

After spreading the rags on the rope, exhausted by the problems of the day and the anxiety of Haji's presence, she returned to the room to pour herself a cup of tea. Suddenly, Yusuf remembered that he hadn't heard from him for a while. He pulled aside the curtain and took Yusuf's swaddling clothes from the bed, but the baby's body was still there. He was like a dried-up doll. He screamed and brought the baby. The tenant of the next room was in the yard. He asked Begum why she was screaming and realized the problem. She quickly took

Yusuf's swaddle from Begum. She was dizzy. She started shaking the swaddle and slapping the baby's face and back, but she didn't feel any movement. She reached the pond and sat on the edge of the pond and started soaking Yusuf's head and face. Some difficult moments were passing by.

Begum was crying blood inside herself and begging the saints and prophets. She could no longer bear another calamity. In her heart, she was overcome with grief and thought of complaining to her God. But suddenly, at the sound of Yusuf crying, who had just regained consciousness after being slapped in the face, a ray of hope was injected into his heart. He took Yusuf with the wet swaddle from Begum and kissed Yusuf's cheeks. He went into the room and wetted and dried him and prepared his usual food and fed him. An hour later, Hajime came from his house with Tahereh and learned about the matter, especially the news of the birthday party. The fortieth day of her brother's life and the opportunity to laugh and be happy again. That night, no one slept until midnight. Everyone was teasing Yusuf, kissing him and eating nuts. Oh my God, let's think for a moment.

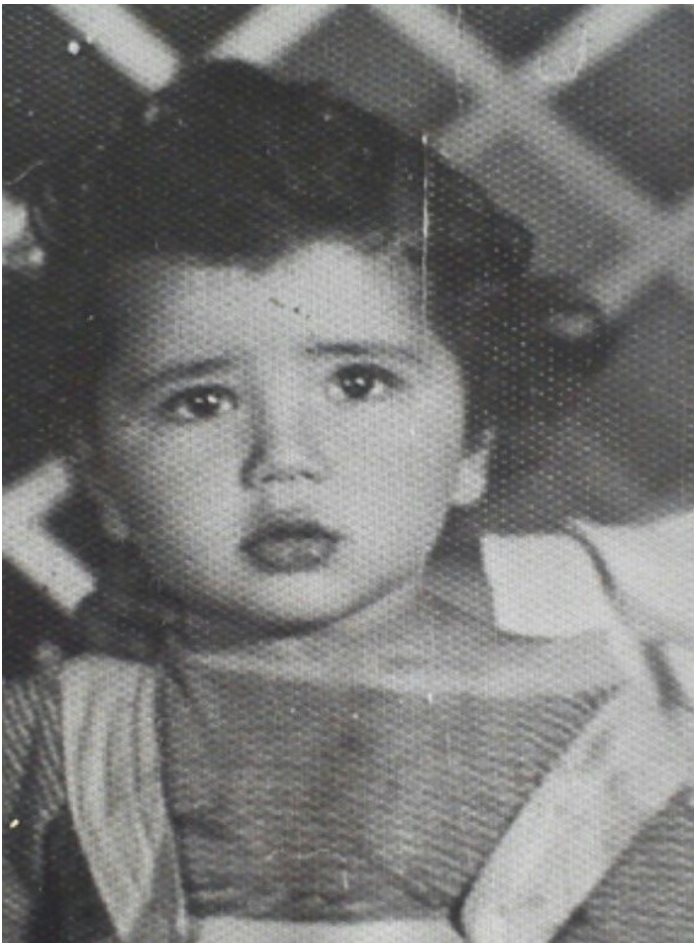
We see how the poor can quickly become happy with minimal means. But by God's grace, it seems that his power reaches the poor more and he tests the unknown calamity in their lives, but his tail is warm, in short, he helps them. Weeks passed like this. A riot warrant had been issued for Mammad, but he was still in temporary prison. They had no evidence to prove the warrant. He was allowed to visit, and he often went to visit. Mammad had also visited Yusuf with the help of his lawyer. The last time he saw Yusuf again, one of his fellow prisoners had noticed Yusuf's visit. He had told Mammad that prison is not a place for children. Mammad, in response, turned to Yusuf, who was lovingly holding him in his arms.

He said, "My son, prison is not a place for children, it is a place for men, and now you are also a man in your mother's house. " There will come a day when your existence and all the hardships that have

been bestowed upon us in the face of oppression and oppression will bring pride and peace to your conscience.

The Lessons Prison Taught Mammad

Life, with all its bitterness, was passing in Mammad's family, like millions of other oppressed people. Movement and movement had been suppressed. Foreign forces were present in the structure and protection of new conditions. Alongside the influence of British forces, now the Americans and Russians had also been added, and each of these countries, seeking to prove their friendship and reach a tastier morsel under the umbrella of humanitarian aid, were active in Iran in various forms.



Yusuf: a child who, amid poverty, the coup, his mother's loss of milk, and Mammad's absence, gradually became the messenger of Begum's suffering.

Dry Bread, Powdered Milk, and Begum's Pride

One day, one of my neighbors told me that the American hospital in Tehran was giving out free powdered milk to help feed children. Despite the anticipation of the news, I had responded coldly but

angrily inside. I would never give my child the American powder that they have earned from the benefits of our national wealth and are now distributing a small portion of it to deceive the people. We eat hay like the leaders of our country's history, but we will not submit to an unjust government. Dry, wet barbari bread strengthens our skin and bones, strengthens our will and strengthens our skin.

A Brief Look at the Growth of Begum's Children

Yusuf gradually grew larger and sweeter, absorbed in the world of childhood. Begum continued to labor day and night. The family moved into a smaller room that had become available in the same house, adapting once more to whatever space poverty allowed them.

Timur was often in and out of the village and gradually turned to business. From Tehran, he would buy the villagers' necessities and take them to the village to sell, and in return he would exchange some food for some food. He brought it from the village to Tehran and sold it with the help of Nosrat. At the same time, he was a means to Gol-Ara's relationship with her mother.

Ghahreman: A Tender Heart in a Harsh Life

Ghahreman was growing up, his heart was big and his soul was heavenly, but unfortunately and foolishly at his young age, he had become a prisoner of common drugs. Whenever his mother came to visit, he would not put down Yusuf's laments. Ghahreman, who often grew up in a cruel and unjust life, had a heart as soft as silk and eyes that were always rainy. Pain had made Ghahreman's sweet heart as precious as a shell. He was very sensitive when he saw children, but he was living in Badr. He had become a driver, and he had thousands of wounds hidden in his heart. He was even kind to his father, who was responsible for creating the above conditions, and occasionally bought him cigarettes.

This unknown great man was full of kindness and gentleness. Difficulties softened his pure heart and made his soul free from resentment. Hafezeh had become a little easier with her coming to her mother's side, and she spent her lonely nights with her mother. She was a good nurse for her brother and sister, and a helper for her mother and a treasurer of her brother's pains, who sympathized with her.

About two years later, Mammad was forcibly released from prison by a lawyer, as if he had a different pain due to being away from his family and his responsibilities for many years. He loved Begum because she was a kind and loyal brother. She met people in prison and became more mature in her intellectual development. Although she could not read or write, she was a skilled designer and philosopher in her mind. The hardships of the time had hardened her. Through some of her fellow prisoners in prison, she was connected to people outside the prison.

Tahereh and Yusuf

Tahereh and Yusuf: Two Small Lamps in the Home

Mammad was in love with Yusuf, and Tahereh was the healer of her bearded heart, a girl who had been the patient rock of the family since childhood, and who found peace in spending time and helping Yusuf.

Mounting Financial Pressure and the Thought of Building a Home

The pressure of unemployment was hurting Mammad's soul, the scourge of poverty was eating at him. Unspokenly, he was suffering inside because of his inability to provide for the family's livelihood in the face of Ali Ram's unstinting help and ungrateful support from his wife.

Begum that she treated Mammad like his son, always ironing his clothes and sewing clothes for him, never letting Mammad suffer in the worst of circumstances, after collecting the amount needed to support the family, he would put all his income in Mammad's pants pocket.

After the death of his father and becoming the heir to his wealth, the son of the owner of the house had become less kind and more critical of the tenants. He wanted to fill his pockets by constantly raising rents. In our culture, it is rightly said, "God forbid a beggar becomes reputable. If he becomes reputable, God will not know. "

Mammad met one of the people he met after his release from prison through his fellow inmates, named Ebrahi, and they were close. Ebrahi had a small house in the Javadieh neighborhood and had married an Armenian woman. With her money, he had bought a forty-meter house at a reasonable price. His financial situation was not good, but he had a place to live and was happy with his wife,

who was a few years older than him. One day, after hearing Mammad's concerns about the house, he gave Mammad some good news.

Buying Land: The First Step Toward the House of Love

There was agricultural land near the Javadieh Air Force Base in Qaleh-Morghi that they wanted to sell. He told Mammad that he could buy the land cheaply and build slowly. Mammad shared the matter with Begum with sadness and regret. Begum said that it was good news, why the inconvenience? Mammad said very coldly and hopelessly, "Okay, I need money. " He asked how much. Mammad jokingly said, "A century. " "Seriously, " he replied, "Tell me how many tomans. " "Seriously, " he shook Mammad. "What difference does it make how much it costs? We don't have the means to print money. " "Seriously, " he said, "Mammad Jan, why do you underestimate me? " Mammad replied, "No, dear, in short, nowadays a man is measured by his means and capital. I feel that I am not a man and I am ashamed of my family. "

"Seriously, " he humbly wrapped his arms around Mammad, squeezed them, and said, "Mammad Jan, your love and affection for your wife gave me the axe of Farhad. Dear, in your separation, I sacrificed myself for this broken boat, relying on your love, and became full of hope. " You have given me new hope with your management and support. You gathered my scattered family around me. I also saved money for you with my work and effort and became the guardian of our hut. You have money with me. Go to the transaction. Don't worry. I paid for my living expenses with my own effort and invested the money that I saved when our financial situation was better. Through Timur, I started a trade between the city and the village. It became easier for Timur to work and live. I have not taken any right from the profit of the trade yet.

You can take as much as you need.

It was as if Mammad had been reborn and the human values of a property had entered his life. One of his complexes was simultaneously imagined in his mind that now that he had become a homeowner, no one would have the power to make Yusuf's eyes cry. He remembered how the landlord's son had pulled Yusuf's three-wheeler from under him and thrown it out on the pretext that he had broken the three-wheeler by riding it. The act that had always hurt his heart, now that he had built a house, he would no longer see tears in Bosef's eyes. For a moment, these two lovers, separated from the world filled with darkness and gloom, relaxed in each other's arms.

Mammad immediately went to Abrahi and went with him to the firm and chose a fifty-meter plot of land at the end of a back alley, one meter wide, which was one of the cheapest plots. He received a promissory note by paying a deposit and returned home with a manly pride. On the way, he had bought some sweets. He gave the promissory note to Begum. As usual, her tired face, but a smile under the skin of Mammad's face, was seen twice after a long time. The face that Begum loved. The smell of sweat and fatigue from this man had captured Begum's entire body and soul with love. Mammad's happiness was Begum's best wish. Mammad gave the can of sweets to the Hafezeh to distribute. She showered Tahereh and Yusuf with hugs and kisses and gave them the good news.

Yusuf cried out with joy and said "My dear" and Mammad's wound healed. Yusuf said, "My soul is at ease, thank God, no one can take my wheel from me anymore. "

Begum that I was intoxicated by seeing happiness and smiles again. A new page was written on the bitterness and disappointments in her life.

Everyone insisted on going with Mammad to see the unbuilt house of their future. God, surely this tragedy and comedy is an act of wisdom and plan of your heavens.

Moving to Roofless Ground: The Beginning of Building a Home

When Mammad showed the ground of their future home, the children started playing with the dirt of their future home. Mammad could not fit in his skin and was explaining the plan of building his house to Mammad. It was getting late, but no one was interested in leaving there. Mammad said, "Let's go, it's getting late, " but the children asked, "Can't we stay here tonight? " Mammad tried to convince them to leave, but the children didn't want to leave their soil. Finally, Mammad said, "We can't stay without our belongings. Let's go pack our belongings and then we'll come here. " The children wanted to ask their mother for time. Mammad promised, "Two or three days. " Three more days. They always believed, as their mother said, that it would be implemented, quickly get ready and return home. That night, no one really slept well.

Everyone had a plan for themselves and their house. Begum, they drew a plan for the construction they wanted. They reached an agreement with Mammad on their plan. Begum, they prepared a plan to transfer the necessary equipment and they agreed to temporarily transfer some of the equipment to the Hafezeh room. The next morning, Mammad went to prepare some supplies. Begum, she categorized the equipment according to need and according to the plan, she put some in the Hafezeh room and packed the rest well. As soon as Mammad returned, some of the equipment and the children got into the cart by a rented cart. And they all moved towards the house of their love. Of course, before setting off, they handed over the keys to their previous house to the landlord's son.

As soon as they arrived at the new house, Begum marked the ground left and right with a ruler and drew her imaginary plan on the ground, and determined where to place the equipment. She tried to arrange the equipment in a way that would not interfere with the start of the construction of the house.

First, he spread the mats in the desired places and everyone started emptying the cart and placing them in the designated places.

. It didn't take long for the cart to be empty. Begum quickly prepared the samovar to prepare breakfast. Mammad went to buy construction equipment. The list they had set in advance went, of course, they also needed to buy some plastic to cover their living things to protect them from dust, which was added to the shopping list.

Begum, she left the children to take care of their house and she herself went a little higher up the house to buy bread.

That day, all the preparations and relocations were done, and they had a late breakfast and an early dinner. Everyone was tired. Begum that the beds were spread out on the mats. That night, everyone slept under the light of the stars. I have no doubt that each of them knew a star from the bottom of their hearts and expressed their satisfaction with the merciful God through them. Their hearts were bright with hope for the future.

Building Begins: Mud Bricks, a Well, and Begum's Hands

The next morning, they were given an early wake-up call and the building pickaxe was hit in the ground. It was decided to start by making mud bricks first. The soil and water were needed. The soil could be collected from the ground. For water, Mammad prepared a large oil barrel by cutting it in half to store water. Mammad and Begum that a little distance from the already built houses, one of the neighbors talked and welcomed them, realizing that they were trying

to build their own house. As a help, they said, "First, you need a well. We will bring my cousin to dig a well for you for a reasonable fee. Of course, you have to specify the location of the well. " Begum that I had not thought of it before.

The well-digger came and started his work, and the soil that had been removed from the site was being prepared for the need for making bricks. With the completion of the well and the access to water, the water issue was also solved.

Begum the Builder: Commander of the Future Home

Begum that she was in a hurry to start the work as soon as possible. With the minimum soil and water that she had, she started the work. With the help of a helper, mud was made from soil and water. Then the mud was poured into a large ball inside a square wooden brick. Then, by spreading the mud in the brick, the mud was smoothed with a little water. Then, the formed bricks were taken out of the mold and the next brick was prepared next to the prepared brick. The children were also busy helping their mother in preparing the bricks.

The next day, they connected the relatively dried bricks standing up so that more air and the heat of the sun could reach them. The work of making bricks had become more active with the preparation of the well and the access to water. Now it was easier to fetch water because a wheel had been prepared on the well. With a long rope and a special bucket that was thrown to the bottom and pulled up from the well with the bucket using a water wheel.

The brick production continued for several days and the whole family had started living there like gypsies. They did not have much opportunity to cook food, so they mostly satisfied their needs with buttermilk, cucumbers, bread, cheese, vegetables, half-cooked eggs or omelets.

Begum's Compact Home: The Family's Noah's Ark

As usual, the children in that desert would keep themselves busy with dirt and mud during the day. With the help of Mammad, they would stack the dried bricks on top of each other to make a wall. Of course, the children would also move the bricks that were further away to the wall. Mammad, who had no experience, got help from a builder named Aziz in building. Aziz did not have much strength to work. He was suffering from tuberculosis and had his own financial problems, so Mammad helped Aziz's family. Aziz's house was nearby. Sometimes, I would buy food and use the stove to go to Aziz's house and cook, and they would eat dinner with Aziz's family. Aziz's house had a roof, but its walls and doors were decorated with sadness and grief. The materials were both plentiful and free.

By being there, the children also became familiar with the pain and sorrow of others. It was a good objective experience to increase their tolerance for hardships. In the evenings, I would leave work early and go to Aziz's house with the children. Sometimes I would stay at Aziz's house and play with Aziz's children. Instead, Aziz would sleep with Mammad next to the furniture.

The cul-de-sac leading to the House of Love

The door of the House of Love

A view of the House of Love: the Begum family's small refuge through years of poverty, the coup, prison, and homelessness.

The Security of the New Home and Begum's Visit to Qaleh-Morghi Garrison

The house was gradually approaching the roof. They had started to build other houses next to the house. Approximately fifteen more families had been added, which was useful for increasing their security. Begum that Aziz was very grateful to her family for their secret and honorable kindness and helped with all her strength and her sick condition to build the house. I would hide her long hair with a hat and tuck the skirt she wore over a pair of trousers into her trousers and put on a work coat she had sewn herself. Even up close, no one would notice the gender of the building, especially when she was standing on the scaffolding. She would ask Mammad and Aziz for help and shout, "Dad, give me bricks up" or "Quick, give me flowers up. " Aziz would whisper to himself, "God, you did not leave me and my family alone in this predicament. "

Of course, Begum that the walls were wide from the base, which was crooked. The roof of the house was built and the walls were smoothed with straw and mud from the inside, and a few days later, a white paint made from a special white stone was painted. It took almost three months, enough time for them to celebrate their first Eid in their new home. In addition, before vacating Darvazeh-Ghar house, they had agreed with the landlord to pay a little more rent so that they could move to the room where her mother lived. Begum had moved some of her belongings that she had previously left in that house to her new home so that she could whitewash her house for Eid with the help of Begum and without paying any fees.

Ghahreman now came to his mother's house more often and had a relationship with Mammad that was more than that of a father and son. Mammad loved him and was very worried about his future due to the circumstances of the time and place. Begum and Mammad were gradually thinking about marrying Ghahreman. Begum's house

had three rooms, two of them attached, one large and the other smaller. In the middle was a small courtyard and a pond in the middle of the courtyard, and on the other side was a medium-sized room that faced the corridor that led to the entrance and exit of the house. Part of that corridor also had a toilet and a small bathroom with a shower.

There was no water or heating system. There was only a room for washing, where they heated water in a large pot and took it inside to bathe. There was a round staircase between the two rooms. There was also an oil stove there for cooking. It was a mobile, prosperous and well-run house that had become Noah's Ark and the salvation of the Begum family. Since that place was considered outside the city limits and had not yet been fully developed, there was insecurity and there were many cases of theft. In that area, where Javadieh and Hath-Meter Chaafari Street were famous, there was an Air Force guard known as the Guard of Qaleh Morghi. Begum one day visited the aforementioned guard and managed to have a conversation with the deputy commander.

She was a good speaker and, considering the cultural development of that time, was several heads above the women of that time, especially in that area. She was able to warn the deputy commander of the garrison about the dangers that threatened the families in that area and there was no help available. Neither the police nor the gendarmes persuaded Mary with words and received some kind of support from them.

A Suspicious Night and Begum's Guard Whistle

After thinking for a while, Commander asked Begum, "Don't you want to be in this situation? " Begum turned to tears with a grudge. She said that she had come to this point because of a bad accident and a little bit of her own lineage. The deputy commander of the

garrison called her office and ordered her to order the head cook of the battalion to send fifteen packs of food from the barracks kitchen to Begum's house without stopping and report to the garrison. She also gave Begum a special guard whistle so that in case of need and feeling danger or fear and a suspicious incident, she could use that sound to alert the guard post. She also warned the guards of the posts in that neighborhood to be alert to the possibility of needing help so that they could act quickly.

She also ordered that every day before dark, a guard of the garrison would give Begum the night code so that in case of a problem, she could get official help by stating the night code. Begum was very grateful for the commander's kindness. She separated from the deputy commander with a military and backward respect that she remembered from the scouting days. Begum's movement had absorbed the deputy's spirit, so she also said to Begum with military respect, "Thank you, sir. " The work of those moments revived her dormant pride. I remember a fond Hafezeh of that time. One day, while her children were sleeping on the roof, she noticed a suspicious movement. She quickly took the pickaxe she always kept next to her mattress and called Yusuf softly to check outside the house with his mother. He noticed a man hiding behind the bricks and dirt there.

He thought it might be a thief or a vandal lurking there. He slowly approached the man's back and knocked him out with the pickaxe handle. He quickly raised his voice and used it. He quickly sent several of his guards to the scene. When the guards saw the man lying on the ground and covered in blood, they realized that the intelligence officer was injured and was looking for suspicious people there. The police ambulance came and took the injured man. The guards also took Begum and Yusuf with them to the police station office, leaving Begum and Yusuf, who acted like a strong man despite his childhood, waiting for Deputy Far Manda to arrive. They asked him to wait in the office for a long time. Takshid, the deputy

commander, burst into laughter and came to Begum's office. She said, "Well done, you are a good hunter.

But this time you killed the Kahadan and the intelligence officer. Don't be a coward. Your job is to carry out your duty in practice and there is encouragement. That officer was not well-justified. Be in harmony with you. She invited Begum to attend the morning ceremony of the guards. Then in the morning, introducing Begum as the lioness and praising the work of those present in the morning procession, she turned to Begum in the manner of a soldier and said, "Thank you for your work. " She repeated it three times. The soldiers also repeated their thanks for your work. Another page was added to Begum's life book.

Thank You, Officer: The Garrison's Respect for a Lionhearted Woman

Every day that passed, a new incident happened.

Mammad's Effort to Gather All of Begum's Children Under One Roof

Now it was time for Mammad to get down to business and bring Gol-Ara to her mother. She went on a trip to their village and from there she found clues that could connect her to Gol-Ara's father. At the same time, by coincidence or by chance, she met a boy she had known before, her name was Kamal and he was a char-vadari, who always brought ten passengers.

During the chats between Kamal and Mammad, it turned out that this person had brought Begum and Goldie from around the Khalkhal road to Mammad's village when they had just arrived in Iran. This acquaintance was like a miracle that opened the way for Begum to meet her daughter and also her sister Fatemeh, who had come to Iran from Baku to live.

The same shepherd of Fatemeh and her husband, who had also emigrated to Iran a few years after Begum arrived in Iran. After they arrived at Bandar Pahlavi and from there towards the Khalkhal road, they were ready to go to the same coffee house on the way to Khalkhal, from where they were transferred to another village. Their shepherd was also Kamal.

During the journey and many questions and answers between Fatemeh and Kamal's husband, it became clear that this family had a relationship with Goldi. Kamal had realized that Fatemeh's aunt was Begum's son, the same little boy who had become friends with them. Kamal had said that I would take them to Haji Yusuf village and had promised that he would establish a relationship with Goldi so that the two sisters could be connected. Kamal had pursued Goldi based on his promise, but unfortunately, because of Begum's divorce and Goldi's departure to Tehran with her children, this chance had been lost.

Now Kamal realized that Begum was now Mammad's wife, so he would definitely pursue her to bring the two sisters back to Bosal.

. Kamal was supposed to inform Mammad of the result of his success through Timur. Kamal knew Timur because he used Kamal to take Timur's goods from Tehran to the village.

Gol-Ara's Trail: From Rasoul's House to Tehran

From there, Mammad had gone to the village of Tuin and had become acquainted with Rasoul. Rasoul and Mammad were at the house of the ruler, who had previously met Mammad and had met him several times at parties. Mammad had attended Khan Huzur Salar's parties because of his friendship and respect for Mammad.

Rasoul had met Mammad with an open face and had understood that Mammad was Begum's new wife. Upon hearing this news, she had

started to cry profusely and confessed her regret for her wrong dealings with Begum.

Now that he had learned of Begum's happiness, she had gladly agreed to help Mammad in whatever was necessary.

Unfortunately, Rasoul had sold Gol-Ara several months ago, due to her poverty and lack of Hafezeh, as a slave to a family headed by the head of the train in Tehran.

Gol-Ara Returns to Begum's Embrace

Mammad had taken the other party's track from Rasoul and had returned to Tehran by train. From there, he had tracked down Gol-Ara. After much coaxing and reluctance, the other party refused to show Gol-Ara, and then, out of fear of Mammad's threats that if he objected, Mammad would have no choice but to sue him for human trafficking. But if he helped, Mammad was willing to pay for any damages, if any, so the other party was forced to take Mammad to Gol-Ara out of fear.

Although it was the first time she had seen Mammad, she had heard a lot about him from Timur and had received his gift from Tehran every Eid night. She threw herself into Mammad's arms with tearful eyes and called him "Dad. " Mammad, like an angry lion, went crazy when he saw Gol-Ara's cracked and disheveled hands and felt sorry for the injustices in the world. As she had promised, she also gave her some money because she said, "I want my loss, you have made a one-sided deal. " Ara and Mammad set off together. They both went to Hafezeh's house to help her take a bath with Mulay. After they had settled down, they went to her mother. She went to Nosrat and asked Shokat Khanum to quickly buy some clothes for Gol-Ara. Shokat went, saw Gol-Ara, measured her, and left. Hours later, she returned.

In short, after a few hours of waiting, Gol-Ara was ready like a bouquet of roses.

Mammad, Gol-Ara, and Hafezeh walked home together. Mammad entered first, the children stayed outside the house. I am worried because Mammad had returned later than he thought. Mammad said that something important had happened and asked Begum to come and tell me what I brought. She thought that she had probably bought some materials or things. Mammad said that it was heavy, I put it outside, I will bring it now. He went outside and grabbed Gul and the Hafezeh and brought it to you. Oh my God, oh my God, what a scene. A happy ending, but heartbreaking. Mammad had showered Gol-Ara with kisses. She was all tears and smiles. She was constantly thanking God for having brought Mammad on her path. When she looked at Mammad, she knew him as a savior sent by God. Mammad was a human being who had brought Begum to her children. I call God to witness.

My pen is not capable of drawing these situations. I myself am lost in the wonders of this creation and its designs. Gol-Ara could not be separated from her mother for a moment. She could not stop crying, but deep down she was very happy to see her mother happy and successful. And on the other hand, she has been freed from her misfortunes, her cruelty, and her unfair exploitation. Now she is with her noble adoptive mother and father and the kind circle of her sisters and brothers. Ghahreman was not there yet. About an hour later, Ghahreman arrived. The scene of the meeting was twice filled with moments of joy and sadness, tears and smiles.

The Search to Reconnect Begum with Her Sister Fatemeh

Mammad still had other hot news to tell, but he preferred to keep quiet about the news of his sister's arrival in Iran until he found the necessary clue.

That night, Mammad took her home to deliver the Hafezeh and at the same time to see Timur. When he saw Timur, he told him about the

Char Wadar incident and told him to inform him immediately if he received any news and he returned home.

A few days passed since the incident. In these few days, I will tell you that they spent time with Gol-Ara. According to Mammad's advice, Gol-Ara was supposed to keep her mother from telling her about her problems because she had suffered enough from the separation and could not change the past. It was better for them to talk about the future. Therefore, Gol tried to be a listener and think and talk about a sweet and new future.

A while later, Timur came to him with news of Kamal and gave him an address in Khalkhal. Mammad quickly prepared his travel plan and went to find them. Fatemeh's husband was a noble man and much older than Fatemeh. In addition, she had an incurable disease that was getting worse and worse every day. In fact, Fatemeh was potentially involved with a patient, of course, her family was also completely supportive and following up on the illness. They were, after an introduction ceremony, of course, they had heard about Mammad and his personality and popularity from Charvadar. Mammad suggested that if possible, he take Fatemeh and Ibrahim with her to Tehran and return them to them after a few days.

Qezel Bash had no objection at all because she knew about Begum and the conditions of her departure and knew that one of the reasons for Fatemeh's marriage to her was so that she could join her sister and children by coming to Iran. Now that Fatemeh could meet her sister, Qezel Bash was also very happy because she was afraid that she would die early due to illness and that Fatemeh, who was a little naive and timid, would be left alone. But now that Fatemeh was connected to Begum, she would find life again and meet her beloved Ghahreman again, now that he had become a man for himself. He only asked Mammad to give him one day to go to his doctor and renew his medication. Unfortunately, the doctor had not allowed him

to travel due to the deterioration of Qezel Bash's condition, but at his suggestion and insistence.

It was decided that Mammad, Ibrahim, and Fatemeh would set off for Tehran, and the two sisters would be reunited, and the story of this heartbreaking separation would end.

Mammad Succeeds and Brings Fatemeh to Begum

Two days later, the travelers arrived in Tehran and went home, as Mammad had always done. The purpose of finding lost loved ones and connecting them to Begum was.

When Mammad entered the house, he entered alone and asked Begum again, "If it were possible, would you ask God for someone to see who that person would be? " It was a difficult question, but Begum, despite all the difficulty, answered, "My brother Bahram. " But alas, that request was impossible. So Mammad went and brought Fatemeh and Ibrahim. Of course, on the way back, she had debriefed Fatemeh.

Fatemeh had a lot of bad news. Mammad had asked him to pretend to be a little ignorant in response to Begum's questions so that Mammad would have a chance to prepare for the memorial ceremony and then inform Begum.

First, he brought Ibrahim, but Begum didn't recognize her because she hadn't seen her. Mammad didn't answer until Begum entered. Oh my God, maybe it was impossible for Begum to imagine this meeting at all, because she knew that Fatemeh was weak like a chicken, but now. Fatemeh's meeting with Begum was unbelievable.

Now Fatemeh's chest is a box of secrets that she will now learn about the chance to connect to her past that she did not know about. With the grace of God and the help of Mammad, the impossible has

become possible and Mammad shines among her lost loved ones like a jewel, but she does not know what awaits her in Fatemeh's chest.

A Plan to Honor the Deceased of Begum's Family

Mammad asked the crowd to rest well tonight because a gathering will be held tomorrow in honor of this achievement, so she has some important work to do tomorrow. After asking the crowd for permission to go and do her work, she will return tomorrow morning and asked Begum to go to bed early because she wants to organize a gathering in honor of her sister-in-law and Gol-Ara and gather friends and acquaintances, so everyone should get enough rest tonight because they will have a lot of work tomorrow.

Mammad was no less than Begum in organizing things. She went to Nosrat and Shokat and the story of Fatemeh's arrival and some bad news from Begum's family.

He knew that this news would make Begum sad again, who was just beginning to feel a little more at ease, because her mother, father, uncle, and two brothers had died, each carrying a painful grief. Mammad wanted to organize a memorial service and have a group by Begum's side to share Begum's grief and accompany her in giving her patience.

The Memorial Gathering: Names of the Departed and Begum's Breaking Heart

The ceremony was planned, the invitation list was prepared, Timur and Hajjat were informed, Robush and Sadeq and their close friends, Robush Fandogh's mother who was in Tehran, Agha Kamal, the village akhund, and a few others like Esta Aziz and his family, and the new neighbors, were invited and told about the matter. Without exception, everyone accepted. The food was prepared by Timur and

Sadeq, who were good cooks, and Shokat and Nosrat, the hosts on the stage, and Hajjat and Qamar were given the responsibility of the liaison and the supplies.

Mammad returned home early in the morning. The party was gradually prepared and everyone was ready on time before lunchtime when Agha Kamal arrived. Begum's heart sank. She took refuge in Mammad's arms. He asked Mammad pleadingly, "What happened? " Mammad could not remain calm because he was the bearer of news that he did not want his wife to receive. He burst into tears like an innocent child and said, "I have some bad news today, even though it happened a long time ago, but it is new to us. We have all gathered around you to share your grief. " This time, Mammad was very heartbreaking. It shook Begum's heart. Mr. Kamal asked for a chair and sat on it. According to the list of people with brief explanations about each one, after praying and remembering death as an indisputable right, he prepared the minds.

He said, "Dear friends, we have gathered today to share in the sorrow of the separation of loved ones from this family. We are all mourning and we are by her side to support the mourner. The deceased are Begum's relatives who flew from this mortal world to their afterlife after their migration to Iran. But Begum was unaware of it due to the lack of communication. At that moment, Begum passed away. Our Hafezeh of the anger, our flowers, Tahereh Yusuf, had circled around her mother to share in the sorrow and comfort their grieving mother.

The atmosphere of the assembly changed. Wailing and wailing dominated the scene. Mr. Kamal avoided Begum, whom she loved, and the patient stone, as a strange guarantor. Upon hearing the name of Begum, Begum spoke with her heart-rending voice and stirred hearts. The atmosphere was so lively and magnificent that She greeted Mr. Kamal, took off his turban and shouted to the sky, Mr. Imam Reza, we are all here as your guests, we are around him to share his sorrow, but only your love will make this stranger's heart

calm. Then he shouted, Bibi, what happened to you when you heard the news of the death of your father, your mother, and, oh, your brothers? How were you feeling? Our lady is mourning the loss of her loved ones today. Bibi, call her because you have endured the greatest sorrows in the world. Help her.

Mr. Kamal began to read the names of the deceased.

Mr. Kamal began to read the names of the deceased.

Mr. Darwish, father.

Mr. Sardar, uncle.

Mr. Fayyaz, brother.

And here I should cry out, and his moans were loud and frantic, wailing and howling. He shouted, "Don't tell the next person, don Fatemeh was shocked. The ladies of the assembly, especially Shokat, had grabbed Begum's head and was trying to calm Begum's burning heart and bring her to her senses by sprinkling water on her face. Agha Kamal released the arrow from the quiver and said to the crowd, "Dear friends, today we are all in great mourning for Begum, we are with her. We are comforting her. Let's travel together to the bloody pits of Karbala, where the daughter of Ghahreman Ali stood alone next to the torn bodies of her loved ones, among whom was her brother Hussein. " He was alone and had no one to comfort him except God and a number of wailing women and children. He had to comfort his grieving and frightened loved ones.

Let's all sympathize with Zainab's heartache and say, "Hussein, Hussein, Hussein, oh dear Karbala, the unshrouded martyr, Hussein, oh dear. " The audience was filled with grief and tears, and Fatemeh's face was torn apart by the fighting.

Kamal found some courage and said, "I will tell you, Madam Bahramat is gone too. "

Oh, oh, no one was able to tell her to keep her face on the ground. She would jump to the sky and grab her head and face, howling, and hit her head and face so hard that she fainted again.

And they took Fatemeh into a room and their children circled around her.

The audience quietly fell silent. Agha Kamal asked the guests to offer a fatiha to bring joy to the souls of the people in question.

After the end of the assembly, the guests were asked to sit at the table of charity next to the mourners and eat with them.

No one had the heart or nose to eat. Sadeq, anticipating the situation, had surrounded the dishes so that the honored guests could take these charity items with them as a charity for the souls of the deceased when they left the assembly.

That day was the height of Begum's despair and hopelessness, but the presence of a kind-hearted, capable, compassionate, and loving man named Mammad was the cure for Begum's heart to bear this pain.

The Silent Night After the Gathering and the Two Sisters' Conversation

That night, a cold, silent, and sad mood prevailed in the house, but in the atmosphere, there was a fire of love and loyalty that could be seen in each and every movement. Fatemeh, despite all her mental and psychological problems, was in a happy mood when she saw the masculine face of Ghahreman next to her son Ibrahim and the recovery of her sister, who had always been the role model of her life. Despite the sad atmosphere, a joy was palpable under everyone's skin. No one was tired of the meeting and their eyelids could not close, although fatigue was evident on everyone's faces. Begum they were very lethargic. The lights were turned off, but no one closed their eyes, but absolute silence prevailed. In the morning, Hazem and

Timur woke up earlier. Mammad, who had not slept until morning, was also awake.

The three of them helped prepare breakfast, and an hour later, everyone gradually woke up. Begum went to Mammad with a sad and wounded face and softly whispered in his ear the melody of his satisfaction and the depth of his feelings for all this support, respect and gratitude. These words were so sincere and loving that the sovereignty of one soul and the beating and warm heartbeat between them were completely clear. Now Begum had all her capital with the help of God and Mammad's unwavering support by his side. After breakfast, two or three people sat together in every corner of the house, discussing the lack of hard years, leisure, and the passing of their lives. In the midst of all that need, Begum would not leave Fatemeh alone. She wanted to hear from Fatemeh about the lack of years of ignorance about what had happened in the Darwish family after her migration.

Both of them were far away from everyone in the small room of the house and behind closed doors, asking and answering questions together.

Dark News from the Dervish Family

Fatemeh was the news reporter and Begum was hungry for news all over the place. Now let's hear the brief and concise news of a sea of pain from Fatemeh's mouth.

After the separation in the Baku port, after they forcibly separated Ghahreman from her, Tohfeh's mother was no longer alive. When she returned home, only her lifeless body was inside the car, but no one noticed until the car reached the house. As usual and out of respect for Tohfeh, Darvish went and opened the door to Begum's side so that she could get out, but she saw no movement. She thought she was sleeping. She called her, but she didn't hear a response. She shook her a little, but she still didn't see any movement. She panicked

because Fatemeh was sitting next to her mother, but she was completely unconscious. There was no movement either. Zahra, her brother's wife, approached and tried to wake up Tohfeh's lifeless body. She didn't succeed. She quickly called her brother, who realized the situation.

Sitting next to the driver, they quickly took her sister Fatemeh to the hospital. After the doctors checked, they took Tohfeh's lifeless body to the hospital. And Fatemeh is admitted to the hospital bed for treatment.

Yes, Tohfeh's kind and sick heart could not bear the separation from Ghahreman, and at the moment of separation from Ghahreman, she had surrendered her soul to him, flying and living life to the fullest.

Fatemeh recovers a little later after receiving an injection of medicine and is discharged from the hospital, but they return home with Darvish restlessly.

A few months later, the news of her brother's re-arrest by the military police worries Darvish. The news of the conditions and the many arrests by the government were due to Stalin's fear of losing his power. Any movement or statement that smells of competition or criticism is strictly controlled, pursued and smothered in the bud.

In her last arrest, her brother is convicted of the crime of sympathy and collaboration with the Iranians and sentenced to death, but before the verdict is confirmed and during the appeal process, the verdict is not implemented. The verdict is implemented by the security order. And the verdict is implemented.

After the physical elimination of his brother, the judicial system announces his acquittal. Unfortunately, the only antidote after his brother's death was to state that the death sentence was wrong. They pinned all of his combat medals, which had been taken away from him, to his sister Nussiba's chest in an official party ceremony because he had no children or heirs.

In Vish, with the departure of Begum and her children, and the loss of the friend of her youth, who had always supported and healed her inner wounds, and her faithful wife, she had become very lonely. In this incurable loneliness, the departure of her brother, the man who had always been there for her, especially in those conditions of a devastating war where every day a body was surrendered to their families from the fronts. The news on the radio secretly directly bothered Darvish's mind because Fayyaz and Bahram, Darvish's two sons, were pilots and participated in the war. This combination of hidden and obvious pain was enough to push Darvish to bed, in the solitude of his home, and then take half of his life, so Darvish surrendered, life after life.

It didn't take long for the news of Fayyaz and Bahram's deaths to spread.

The news of their plane being shot down by Nazi fighters in one day was reported to the only remaining representative of the Darwish family, Fatemeh. In this way, the ashes of the painful letter of the Darwish family were gifted to Fatemeh Mazloum as an inheritance. Of course, let's not forget that after emigrating to Iran, Fatemeh was looking for a way to reach Iran and be with and support her beloved sister and her children. Therefore, she deliberately agreed to marry an Iranian citizen who was also an Iranian immigrant in Baku, so that she could immigrate to Iran. Despite the large age difference between them and Fatemeh, she was a compassionate man who was familiar with the pain of the Darwish family and was unwavering in her efforts to resolve her legal issues to return to Iran.

Fatemeh, Migration to Iran, and Begum's New Mirror

Finally, Fatemeh managed to escape from the control of the government in Baku and reached Iran. After entering Iran, due to the situation of the World War and the problems imposed by those

conditions on Iran, despite its declaration of neutrality in the World War, unfortunately its territory was occupied by the Allied forces. However, due to its good financial situation and the loyalty of the Qizil Bash to Fatemeh, their situation was not bad, but due to the lack of a trace of Begum, Fatemeh had become a stranger and was always as psychotic as before.

Now Begum had a real picture of the situation of her family in Baku and realized that what she had was the same ones who were with her today. In her heart and thoughts, she focused on what she had from a positive angle. In the meantime, Fatemeh was happy with her husband despite the situation of her sister's family, who had suffered many tragedies, in her own marriage, despite the mental hardships of being away from home. Of course, due to her husband's illness, she had to return to Khalkhal quickly. In addition, she was two months pregnant with another child.

Daily Life Returns and Begum Tries to Prepare Her Successors

Two or three days later, Begum's sister sent her child to Khalkhal with Timur, despite her inner desire. However, this did not mean another separation. Begum intended for her sister to be by her side. Of course, she needed a chance to plan and act after the funeral ceremony to move her sister's family to Tehran.

Days passed with difficulty, but the atmosphere in Begum's house was still filled with sadness and grief. The grief had entered deeply and its impact was great. Despite these circumstances, the time for the funeral ceremony of her beloved arrived, and Mammad laid the foundation stone for this ceremony. The number of guests increased several times. The magnificent ceremony was a mercy for Begum's aggrieved soul. She was no longer alone and, free from the separation of her children, she gradually accepted the grief of the departed and looked to the future.

Unfortunately, no action could be taken to transfer Fatemeh to Tehran due to the severity of her illness. Transferring the patient to Tehran in those conditions would have had bad effects on her spiritual well-being, so the transfer project was abandoned, but the second child was born safely. Now Fatemeh has two sons and they named her Abdullah. Begum that she sent Hafezeh and Timur to Khalkhal to help her sister. This act of Hafezeh revived her first works in Fatemeh's belief. Although Fatemeh was the younger sister, with skin and bones, the kind Fatemeh always loved and respected Begum with her skin, bones, and soul as her older sister.

The Family Grows: Hafezeh, Timur, and Ghahreman

The clock was turning and moving forward, and during these years, Hafezeh had two children, Arefeh and Manouchehr. Mammad supported them in all situations like a kind father, and Begum constantly reached out to them. Qahram also met and married a girl from Timur's city and rented a small room next to Hafezeh, and her wife was also pregnant.

Now Ghahreman, a gentle-hearted man with a kind soul, was preparing to become a father. His job situation was relatively good. He was a skilled driver. Because of his heroic charm and soft heart, everyone was fascinated by this man for a reason. In that deceitful and dirty world, he was purer and more modest than a pure and innocent woman. For a while, he was hired by companies as a private driver. For a while, he was the personal driver of Saber Atshin, Googoosh's father, who later became a young and famous singer in Iran. After her husband's death, Fatemeh lived in a rented room near Shokat's house in Tehran, and Shokat always took care of her. Fatemeh's son Ibrahim started working with a shoemaker's apprentice. She was now a master shoemaker and paid for her mother

and brother's expenses. Of course, Mammad did not hesitate to strengthen their financial strength.

Gol-Ara asked Mammad to ask Begum's permission to go to her father and not leave her alone in her old age and brokenness, but to have full authority over the fire in her mother's hands. She also wanted Rasoul, who was now left alone, to have some peace. His uncle's family was completely destroyed and everyone died without pain. Khand Ahar, who had officially become his wife after Rasoul's divorce, had become mentally ill and died in the worst possible condition after a lot of medication and treatment.

Fatemeh, Ebrahim, Gol-Ara, and Begum's Continuing Road

Begum did not oppose Gol-Ara's request to go to her father. She went to her father and later took on the responsibility of taking care of her father.

A Suitor Is Found for Gol-Ara

Some time later, Rasoul informed Mammad that Gol-Ara had a suitor who was from Rasoul's relatives. If Begum that she would agree to this request, which was Rasoul's first condition, then he would order whatever he saw fit, because the only responsible, compassionate, and owner of Gol-Ara is Gul and Mammad. He only begged that I forgive him, who is remorseful for his actions. Now that, thank God, Gul's children, who are with him, allow him to manage Gol-Ara's suitor in Twine on her own terms and will. With this, I also have hope of having a child that I know I have no right to, with grace, and that I will have her pure heart by my side before I die to be at peace. Begum that with the approval of Sadr and after consulting Gol-Ara herself and getting her permission, Mammad sent a positive response to Rasoul.

It went without saying that Gol-Ara was not happy in her heart to be separated from her mother again, but with I said she agreed, I said she promised that wherever Gol-Ara is, she will not be alone, but Gol-Ara was still restless. I said she asked for Mammad's opinion. Mammad said to Gol-Ara with tearful eyes, "My daughter, accepting that giving a daughter to a husband is a pain for a father, but marriage is also a trick, because Rasoul has given your power of attorney to your mother. I tell you with all my heart that separating from you is a great sorrow for me, but whatever happens, Rasoul also deserves forgiveness. My daughter, the joy that lies in forgiveness is not in revenge.

I, for my part, promise you that I will always be dear to you and separating Gol-Ara, who has now become an inseparable part of my heart, just accept that you marry me and say that we will support you with all our might. " Gol-Ara always trusted Mammad's words and with all her heart she considered Mammad to be her kind father. Mammad was Gol-Ara's kind heart. With all her feelings and burning tears, she kissed Mammad's hands. Gol-Ara's burning tears burned Mammad's hard-working hands. Mammad kindly kissed Mammad's forehead. He kissed Gol-Ara and said, "I don't think I deserve all this love, " but Gol-Ara said with a trembling voice and tearful eyes, "Father, you have made me feel loved when my pride was broken in the thicket, with your kindness, and you have given me pride again.

Of course, I was happy with my mother, but you did not even allow me to feel like an adopted child for a moment. You even left my position in my heart as their older sister and healed my broken pride. Maybe I have a grievance against my mother in my heart, but you were an illusion, a sign of mercy for me.. Mammad could no longer bear to hear Gol-Ara's words of kindness. Her soul was rebellious and worried. She said to Gol-Ara, "Congratulations, my daughter, God willing, you will be happy. " Then she quickly left the house in the mood to prepare sweets. She knew that Mammad went under the pretext of sweets to shed tears of love in secret. Hours later, he

returned home with a can of sweets and with swollen eyes from a separation that had not yet taken place and had only been blown away.

Of course, in Mammad's absence, Begum that Mammad felt pain. She told Gol-Ara and asked her not to burden Mammad with too much sadness and to give her a little encouragement so that her soul could calm down. Gol-Ara understood her mother's message. When Mammad returned, as usual, he gave the can to Gol-Ara. She took the can and turned to her siblings and said, "Look, baby, Dad is giving me sweets for my departure. " Then she hugged Mammad with a laugh and said, "Forgetting you is impossible. Thank you, Dad, for teaching us how to love in action. " Again, that night, the duality of sadness and joy, tears and smiles, was activated in that house, and it didn't take long for Gol-Ara to be transferred to Twin, accompanied by Begum and Begum.

Again, Begum entered with her own humble spirit, a slave who had spent the days there being attacked by ignorant women and empty-headed fools with mental abuse and breaking her pride with a barrage of fabricated accusations and lies. Rasool also made preparations to welcome her dear guests, who had once shared with the enemies and envious people of the village in creating oppression and alienation against her, and had disgraced and divorced her rightfully. Despite the fact that she had once promised to marry her as her servant and always support her, in practice she had disgraced and abandoned her and taken her child from her.

Begum Returns to Tovin and Speaks at the Cemetery

Many had come among the future guests, old and new friends, and ignorant enemies who regretted the Khan's surroundings. Of course, the place of Khan and his wife was empty, and the commander's team, who had once bowed down to his worthy commander, had

bowed down. Timur was the host of the scene and seven sheep were slaughtered on the way to the village grave under the steps of Begum, Mammad and the whole Ara.

At Begum's request, the guests went to the grave first, the people of the village behind Fandogh, one of the happiest people and the most regretful messengers, were moving in the scene.

Before entering the grave, Begum sat on a wooden chair so that she could see everyone with her own eyes and that they could see Begum. Begum's sermon began with a request to recite a fatiha for the happiness of the souls of those who are captives of that earth.

Begum's sermon began. "O you who are present here by the grave of the dead, you must know that this is the abode of human physical existence and that no one can escape. It is a camel that will appear in front of everyone's door. None of these dead people in front of your eyes could take a single piece of armor or a pen with them from this world. Whether rich or poor, they only had two trusts with them.

A list of deeds that have been done under the influence of evil thoughts and a list of deeds done for the pleasure of God. It has been done. Let us be sure that for those who are captives of the earth, there is no opportunity for regret. Only before entering the gate of the grave does a person have time to regret.

In the cold winter, coal burns. After the cold ends and the afterlife begins, the darkness remains as coal.

Today, in front of your generation and the generation of the earth, I am telling you about my strange and broken heart that I have been hurt by the people of this village and their actions, words, deeds and unjust accusations. My goal is not to prove my claim. Whoever does not know, ask those who know what they did to me. I will only say a few words and then I will pass.

I had taken refuge in this village. Because I had been unjustly expelled from another village for the sake of justice and the loss of my children and rights. Without prior knowledge, I became a refugee in the house of the late Salar and his wife Soraya Khanum after the death of my sister Soraya. After the death of my sister Soraya, who was my only support and refuge after God, I cowardly and out of jealousy, by expressing unjust accusations, took my house and family by taking They took the life of one of my children and the freedom of another child from this village. I do not condone the perpetrators of that behavior, even though some of them are now prisoners of the graves near us.

Now, because the fate of my daughter, Gol-Ara, who was born in this village, has drawn me to her, I have come here to be with her so that she is not alone, and also to those loved ones who have come to visit us today. Or those who have soothed my pain with their support, I thank them and visit them again and entrust my daughter to them. Finally, I forgive all those who made life hell for me and my family out of ignorance and ignorance, except for those who tried to make my sister Soraya suffer with their unjust accusations and caused her death.

I am happy that I had the chance to say goodbye to her before she passed away, and after kissing my suffering face, she surrendered her life for life, and the day of her death coincided with the birthday of my flower, which today is your guest in the form of a conscious girl. "

I am grateful that you accepted our presence with great honor. Bem had not yet got out of the chair, Rasoul rushed to Bem's feet and apologized to Bem with heartbreaking tears in front of those present. Mammad quickly bent down and lifted Rasoul to his feet.

When Bem finished speaking, which had captivated hearts, a commotion began and saw and heard The meeting began with Begum, Gol-Ara, and Mammad. For an hour, the group exchanged

messages and sympathies. All the people went to the village mosque for lunch. By the end of the night, the mental atmosphere of the villagers was overwhelmed by Begum's words and sermons.

The guests were led to Rasoul's house, which had been built and decorated by Begum, and now only Rasoul lived there. Rasoul left and left them alone to rest.

Gol-Ara's Marriage: From the Depths to the Heights

The next morning, Begum, Mammad, and Rasoul talked about the proposal and the conditions. Rasoul was completely surrendered to Begum's will and accepted this decision wholeheartedly. Finally, Mammad and Begum, along with Rasoul, made their decision and decided to inform the family of Abdullah, who was to marry Gol-Ara, to come.

Two or three neighboring girls, who were the same age as Gol-Ara, came there at Rasoul's request and were busy with the reception. Abdullah's family came in the afternoon. The discussions began and ended in a friendly manner. It was decided that the betrothal would be celebrated tomorrow with a limited reception and that the wedding would be held in the village in a week.

The wedding table The wasigh was spread and the ladies were busy with their celebration and dancing.

Begum and Mammad left Gol-Ara with tears in their eyes. Before they left, Rasoul apologized to Gol-Ara in the presence of Mammad and, while expressing his understanding of his mistake, promised to be Gol-Ara's guardian with all her heart. Mammad and Begum left the village and returned to Tehran. The day after returning, they went to the market to prepare Gol-Ara's dowry.

The night before the wedding ceremony, Begum and all her children left for the village. As soon as they arrived, they prepared the dowry trays and took them to Bakht Gol-Ara's house and decorated the bride's house. The groom's family had also prepared the wedding preparations in the village.

The wedding began and continued for three days and nights. In this way, Gol-Ara, with the help of her mother and her kind father Mammad, rose from the carpet to the throne in that village and became the bride.

A Third Child Draws Near in Begum and Mammad's Life

The flow of life was flowing with all the bitterness of hardships and sweetness of joys. Ghahreman came to his mother's house with a heavy heart and calmly told her about his pain. He had heard for a while that his biological father's financial situation was in ruins and his wife, Jawahar, would not let him in the house sometimes, blaming him for not having a man who could have at least one child in his heart. I went to see Jawahar and he threw me out of the house with spit and curses. I came to their alley. Hours later, I saw my father coming home, but for the first time I saw Goldi Khanzadeh in disheveled clothes. I went near her and got in the car. I said, "Daddy, I want to go out and have dinner together. " She was happy, but she was hesitant. Maybe her conscience was on the brakes.

She didn't see it in her right to be loved. But the gentle-hearted Ghahreman broke her father's hesitation by hugging and kissing his father's shoulder. They started walking together. First, Ghahreman took her father to a familiar clothing store and changed all his clothes. At the table, Khan opened her heart to her son and said, "Jawahar, I'm saying, 'either the child or the divorce, ' my day and night are black. After finishing the meal, he took her father back to his house and from there he went to his mother's house, just like his

childhood. " He had put his head on his mother's shoulder and was crying, saying, "Mom, my heart aches for my father. I have a decision that I want to consult with you about.

I want to talk to Sayeera and get her consent that as soon as he is born, we will give our child, whose birth date is not far away, to Jeweler so that he can come down from the devil's curse and this old man's heart is broken, but he will not break the law. " Hearing these words, the devil inside him suddenly roared and wanted to oppose. Ghahreman felt the blood rushing to his mother's face. He quickly gave it to his mother and said, "Mom, you know how sweet it is to have a child. Me and Sayeera can have another child. Our child will not go far. Truly, Jeweler is more understanding than Sayeera in terms of upbringing. I am now my child. In short, my father, with all his mistakes, is a better father with the help of the good people.

Of course, I will take an oath from all my loved ones to respect my decision and protect this as the head of the family as long as my father is alive and not let the child know that I am his father. Just think about it. Goldie, her father, and Jawaher, her mother. Ghahreman delivered her final verbal blow to her mother. She said, "Mom, don't you see how kindly Baba Mammad has brought us, siblings, together with one eye? " Ghahreman was completely captivated by Ghahreman's selfless thoughts, but everything was postponed on the condition of Sayara's consent. Sayara surrendered to Ghahreman's request wholeheartedly because she knew about Ghahreman's heart. Ghahreman and Sayara's child was born.

Sayara loved the name Ruqiya and Ruqiya's name was written on her birth certificate, but Jawaher went and got another birth certificate in the name of Parvin, and through that, she strengthened her rule, regardless of Sayara's feelings. Ghahreman, in return, bought a robe for Sayara and promised her not to be afraid, I will work on her betterment in your heart. At the same time, he defended Sayara's actions because he did not want Parvin to see Ghahreman and

Sayara's names on her birth certificate in the future. Although it was difficult for Sayara to bear this reality, in the arms of her heroic wife, she became as soft as wax, and her tongue was sealed with the kiss of her loyal and kind-hearted man.

With this sacrifice of life, Khan Goldi came to life again, and in front of the great character of her son, who had often wronged her, she regretted her wrongdoings. At the same time, Bembe also learned that she was pregnant, and a few months later she gave birth to a lovely girl, Topolovo, for Mamdi, who loved his daughters. Bembe chose his mother's name for his child and named her Tohfeh. Now Tohfeh was the toy of the whole family, and they would warm up the family gatherings, and because of the honor of her name, she was respected and truly the Tohfeh of the Majlis. Now three of Bembe's children had their own home and home, and in the difficult conditions prevailing in Iran and Tehran, they were living expensively. The other three were directly with her.

Tahereh was a reserved daughter, a helper to her mother, a caring father, and at the same time Bembe's successor. Most of the days when Bembe worked outside the house, she was the supporter of Yusuf and Tohfeh. Mamdi, due to her political background, She had no paid employment, and with the remaining capital, she did some buying and selling and brokerage work. She also worked outside the home in several houses in the upper neighborhoods of the city, from cleaning the house to washing and ironing clothes and household appliances, and doing small sewing and embroidery. Often, when she returned home, she would return from work with a backpack to do their work at home, and then she would go back to her customers to deliver them, and this cycle continued.

Now it is time for me to introduce the author of this story, Yusuf, who is busy writing this story at the age of seventy. Yes, I am Yusuf, the son of a villain. Up to this point, I have written the story with the help of what I have heard, and from now on, with the help of

collecting information and years of practice, evidence and my own personal experiences. Of course, you have the right to know why it is so late. But I would like to know the rest of the story as much as possible from Yusuf's writings for now, so that you can get acquainted with the reasons for the delay. So from now on, instead of saying my name, I will say Mom, because I am more familiar with my soul and spirit, and instead of Mammad, I will say Aqam, because I mean my father.

Yusuf and Tahereh started school together. Although Tahereh was born two years earlier than Yusuf, they started school at the same time with Yusuf. Because at the time of Tahereh's birth, Mom had been delayed in obtaining Tahereh's birth certificate due to thousands of internal problems, the state of the country, her own inexperience, and my father's political problems.

Life Continues and the Family Struggles with Economic Hardship

The economic situation was becoming more difficult, with high prices and unemployment destroying the house. Fortunately, thanks to Mom's capital and dedication, we now owned a house and did not have housing problems. My father had bought a fruit cart and was learning. To sell vegetables or fruits and, in season, grains, and all our food needs, with this cart, usually these carts had two floors. One floor was like a box that was used as a warehouse. On top of that box, there was a flat floor and short sides made of wood for distributing the materials for sale. A scale was seen in one corner of the cart and a small box for carrying the sold items was seen in the other corner of the cart.

Although my father was a quiet and patient person and rarely talked, he was serious in his actions, his face was attractive and his work was very hard. Of course, my mother always helped him. He even marketed the materials for my father among the neighbors and

introduced useful projects to the neighboring women around. My father helped positively to sell the unsold materials. For example, he would sell crushed tomatoes at a good price with encouragement and set up a tomato paste making business so that they could use the paste during the expensive tomato season. Or, when the tomatoes were cheap, he would buy the leftover pumpkins and eggplants and dry them so that they could use them in the vegetable market. It was rare and more expensive to use.

All this help was in addition to the work that she did herself, under the command and guidance of her mother. Everyone in the house was a helper in increasing income and saving money so that less pressure fell on her father. Often at night, the sound of her mother's sewing machine could be heard until midnight.

The Doll Workshop, School, and Begum's Maternal Discipline

All of our family members worked for a workshop in our neighborhood, under the management of Mom, where they prepared naked dolls by sewing clothes and gluing hair into a bride, and placed them in elegant boxes and delivered them to their employers, who were mostly Jewish marketers living in the market. These products were mostly exported abroad. Since the cost of these products was low, due to the presence of cheap labor and fuel energy, it was profitable to export.

After getting to know the owner of this workshop, Mom signed an agreement that they would then cut out clothes the size of their dolls and deliver them to Mom, and receive the prepared clothes from Mom in exchange for an agreed fee. Because Mom was literate and had accounting and books, she would write and sign contracts in Latin letters, and her work was respected and had a relatively good income. All the work was done by the entire family under Mom's management.

My sister Tahereh and my father also helped my mother with sewing and embroidery. I would go straight to the workshop after returning from school. There I would spend three hours a day sewing the dolls' hair and hand it over to the workshop workers to glue and shape the dolls' hair. My mother and father always slept later than us. In the morning, my mother's samovar was boiling and sweet tea and hard cheese were ready, which were much cheaper than market cheese and easy to store because they were stored inside prepared sheepskin. They had a slightly unpleasant smell of sheepskin and were also slightly salty, which made them last longer. Except for the gift and my mother, we all went to the market to look for work. Of course, the time and place of shopping varied depending on the need. My sister and I also went to school together.

Of course, we also had no experience in this responsibility and management.

We were not around Mom, and with her orders and training, order and discipline were our first and most colorful achievement. Bags, books, and pens were difficult to obtain. We were kindly taught how to use them by Mom. Each and every page of the notebook was counted before our eyes, and each page was numbered, and we realized that a forty-page notebook had thirty-eight pages for writing and four pages for the cover of the notebook. Mom would hand over the notebook and get us to sign it, saying that the condition for getting a new notebook was to return the old notebook intact. In fact, when we wrote our homework, we had to write with a pencil and we had to write with less pressure on the pen because after the teacher checked the homework, we had to erase those pages and prepare them for writing again.

That's why she asked our class teacher not to cross out her work when she checked our homework. So our teacher knew that we, by enduring a poor and frugal life, did not want her children to fall behind due to the lack of stationery and education.

Mom's presence was a source of pride and distinction in every corner of our lives. At night, despite her heavy work and responsibility, she would check our exercise books and the readiness of our school bags and books before we went to bed. To make sure that we had put all our supplies for the next day in the designated place before going to bed,

Before leaving the house to go to school, she would check our appearance, nails and collars of our clothes, and while helping us put our bags on our shoulders, she would wish us success with a smile and a kiss. There was not a day when we wanted to leave the house but our mother's shadow was not beside and behind us.

Another Youngest Child Draws Near in Begum and Mammad's Life

As usual, things went on as time went by. New news: two more children were born to the Hafezeh family, two sons in the Ghahreman family, and two daughters in the Gol-Ara family. A boy and a girl have been added to the Begum family.

Begum and Mammad with Tahereh, Yusuf, and Tohfeh—the fruit of a home rebuilt from suffering.

Tahereh played a significant role in helping her mother, enduring Yusuf's mischief, and meeting the needs of Tohfeh as she began to go to school.

After Yusuf and Tahereh finished the sixth grade of elementary school, they did not send Tahereh to school anymore. Partly to help Begum, who was really lonely, and partly because they were not very interested in sending girls to study outside the family, and they tried to make the girls familiar with the responsibilities of the family and learn the necessary exercises to become wives and mothers. Of course, Tahereh got engaged at the end of her studies so that after she finished her studies, the wedding ceremony could be prepared. On the other hand, Begum had become pregnant and it was gradually becoming difficult for her to bear the burden of responsibilities and

she wanted to rest a little, but my father's income situation was not such that my mother would not want to work. My last child was born. She was a big boy physically.

It created a lot of female problems for my mother. My mother was in Badr looking for a suitable job for my father. She had several unsuccessful applications to the Ministry of Labor's employment office. Based on the instructions she had obtained in her investigations, she decided to apply directly to the Prime Minister's Office. At that time, Sharif Emami was the Prime Minister of Iran.

Begum Meets Sharif-Emami and Secures Work for Mammad

Early in the morning, Mom was ready to go to the Prime Minister's Office because the newborn brother Younes was heavy and Mom was also sick. She asked me to leave high school and stay with Mom so that I could carry Younes.

We arrived there before office hours. Suddenly, we noticed movement as if someone was coming. A black car entered the garden. The policeman opened the car door. A man got out. There was no doubt that it was the Prime Minister himself. Mom, with Younes by my side, went towards the entrance door of the building. There was a soldier standing in the corner of the entrance door in the kiosk until Badr's mother approached. The soldier bent his rifle so that no one could enter. Mom cried and pleaded, "I have a petition to the Prime Minister. I have a baby. Let me in. " The soldier didn't say a word, but he was determined not to let anyone in. Mom, like a possessed person, instead of entering the door, went behind the kiosk where the soldier was standing and started talking loudly, as if talking to someone.

She said loudly, "Okay, the soldier won't let me in. " He opened it and said, "Dad, he won't let me in, and he won't talk either. Please tell

him yourself. " Then he came in front of the kiosk and told the soldier, "Come with me for a moment. " The soldier left the kiosk and let me see who you are talking to. Mom went like a bullet. Inside the building until the soldier returned, Mom was inside the building. The soldier grabbed Mom's tent to catch it. Mom dropped her tent, but the soldier's hand remained. Mom was shouting. Isn't there a place for a funeral here?

When I was a child in the yard, I saw a man come to my mother from the rooms inside the building and ask me to go to the wall outside the building. Younes also added everything he could to his crying. Any passerby would notice. In short, about half an hour later, my mother came out very happy, went to the soldier, apologized to him and took his cloak from him. He came to me and took Younes. He sat on a bench in the garden and fed Younes. When Younes's stomach was full and two gusts of wind blew, he calmed down. I asked my mother what happened. She said with all her pride, I put a hat on the soldier's head so that I could go inside the building. I shouted and made a commotion, there is no one to give me.

A man came out of his office and said, "Madam, what is this nonsense and what do you want? " I said, "I want to talk to the Prime Minister of your country. " He said, "Okay, tell me. " I said, "Your appearance doesn't make you a prime minister. " I was told that our prime minister is an exemplary and kind person, but you are neither. At that moment, another door opened. A man came and said, "Madam, what's your problem? " I said, "I'll just tell the Prime Minister. " He said, "Okay, I'm the Prime Minister. " I quickly attacked him by the collar and tie, startled him, and said, "If you don't have anything to offer, I'll be your guest. " I want my passport back, I want to go back to my homeland. He had heard me well.

He calmed me down and took my hand and pulled me into his room. He said, "Sit down, mother. " I sat on the sofa. He sat on the chair behind the table. He said, "Tell me about my being an immigrant and

becoming a refugee in this country. After enduring thousands of pains over the years due to my wife's unemployment, I raised four children with a lot of work and laundry. I can't do it anymore, and my husband is unemployed. " Then I said, "I thought they were hospitable here, but what a pity. " Sharif Emami without a word took a pen and paper and wrote two lines in his own handwriting. He gave it to me and told me to go with your wife to the Sanglaj Garden, the municipal office, and tell me that you have a letter from me. They will give your wife a job today.

If they don't solve your problem, come back to me. I thanked him and came out. He gave me the letter. I read it. It said, "Mr. Mayor, please provide this poor woman with a job as soon as you receive this note and inform me of the result. "

Signature Sharif Emami

We rushed home by motorbike and bus and went to Sanglaj with my parents. From that day on, my father was hired as a gardener for the municipality, and from that day on, with a steady stream of water, my father's salary was enough to cover our expenses and we were able to live without food. Mom achieved her goals.

Pursuing a New Home and Moving to a New Neighborhood

Now an important change was happening in the family. I registered to continue my education and studied at a high school near the Tehran slaughterhouse. Tahereh had grown up and had a husband, and I had lost my friend during the difficult times. This separation happened very soon. A simple and inexpensive wedding was held for Tahereh, and one of the rooms in the house was temporarily given to her and her husband.

Life in the New Place and Changes in the Children's Lives

Now I had a bicycle for myself and I used to go to high school with it. Of course, I would take the gift with me to and from her school so that she wouldn't have to travel alone.

My father heard news that helped and paved the way for the family. The neighborhoods near Javadieh were considered agricultural areas, but with the population growth that occurred in Tehran and many of the elite traveled to the capital due to the high employment opportunities, from time to time, the areas around Tehran would convert agricultural lands into freed land and allow construction. My father seriously went looking for work and this time he bought three plots of land, each 65 square meters in size, adjacent to each other, inside six-meter-wide alleys. These plots were purchased for ourselves, Tahereh, her husband, and Ghahreman. My father put Javadieh's house up for sale, of course, the delivery date was conditional on the completion of our new house. Ghahreman also sold his car to cover the cost of buying the land and building it.

My father took on the share of buying and building Tahereh's house, and Ali Agha, Tahereh's husband, borrowed part of it from their office to pay in installments. The construction of the houses did not take long. The layout was very simple, with a large room in it, and the rest of the yard and the corner at the entrance to the yard had a toilet and a storage room built on top of it. We all arrived at the new house. The new house had many advantages over Javadieh's house. For example, it was larger and had an official document. Instead of mud bricks and a thatched roof, it was built with avalanche bricks and an iron beam roof. Instead of a dead-end alley, it was located in a six-meter two-way alley.

In short, after several years of progress in construction, but there was a setback in the neighborhood, we started from a newly built dirt

neighborhood, but due to the cheapness of the land, we started again from dirt alleys. We were marginalized in terms of location. I had also grown a mustache, Tohfeh had finished elementary school and was no longer going to school. She helped her mother at home, but it didn't take long for Tohfeh to marry the son of one of my father's acquaintances. A marriage based on the choice of the elders who would slap her in the face. In fact, in name and means, they were trying to reduce the problems of raising girls in poor financial conditions by sending them to their husbands' homes.

Of course, in essence, marriage is a culturally and religiously accepted commitment, and despite economic poverty, with loyalty and sacrifice, the relationship between the couple and marriage itself is a process of construction and practice of self-knowledge in practice and the creation of a healthy relationship between two people. It is a school of knowledge that causes the growth of man and humanity, which in the shadow of those two people, by benefiting from its benefits through their other half, is a transcendent perspective in personal development. Girls were so-called reminded to understand that they should go to the house of fortune with a white veil and move to their eternal home with a white shroud.

The Fruit of Begum and Mammad's Years of Effort

This move was more than a change of address; it marked the family's passage from one stage of life into another.

Begum and Mammad had once lived in the pits of Darvazeh-Ghar, in damp rooms and under the pressure of landlords. Later they built the Javadieh house with mud bricks, their own hands and sweat, beneath the open sky and beside the stars. Now, after years of effort, three adjoining plots had been bought so that Begum's children, too, might possess a measure of security, shelter, and independence.

Life was still not easy. The alleys were unpaved, poverty had not withdrawn its shadow, and the family remained on the margins of the city. Yet one great difference had emerged: they were no longer struggling merely to survive. They were putting down roots.

Begum, through work, discipline, sacrifice, management, and a mother's heart, and Mammad, through honor, support, persistence, land, construction, and loyalty to his promise, had helped the children move from dispersal and helplessness toward home, work, marriage, and responsibility.

Hafezeh, Ghahreman, Gol-Ara, Tahereh, Yusuf, Tohfeh, and Younes had each set out on a different road. Some were near, some far away; some were in Tehran, some in the village, and one was even in London. Yet all remained joined to the same root: Begum—and to the man who stood beside her so that this root would not dry out: Mammad.

Chapter Ten

Yusuf: Heir to Begum's Hopes and His Role in the Family

Mom used to do sewing, but very limited, and she could not do outside work. I converted the room on the side of the alley into a grocery store by putting a large door and started it with a small capital because I had not finished high school yet. After returning from high school, I would open the shop and I was busy on holidays. It was both my workplace and a place to study and prepare for high school. Of course, I had established relationships with all the neighbors in the area so that they would buy from me. I would sell to them in installments. In the evenings, I would go to them and get their list of needs, prepare them, and deliver them in a box to their house. In fact, because the family's living expenses were heavy, I worked during the three-month summer vacations myself.

I paid for my and Younes's education from the age of thirteen. At the end of high school, I bought a Peugeot gas engine that Younes and I used to go to high school with. Although I didn't have much free time, I loved reading books and often had one or two books under my pillow that I would always read before going to bed.

High School Years: Security, Repression, and Intellectual Awakening

The situation in the country was one of security after the overthrow of Mossadegh's national government. With the help of the United States and England, secret movements had emerged. The SAVAK We were given a device that secretly sought to hunt down the opposition's core and leaders. Many books in the form of children's stories but with interpretations to enlighten the minds, such as books

by Samad Behrangi, Jalal Al-Ahmad, etc., were secretly circulated among interested people. High schools became more active in connection with universities. There was a fire hidden under the ashes, and sporadic demonstrations occasionally arose under various pretexts. The first organization that was formed freely and openly was when Jahan Pahlawan Takhti died. It was rumored that Takhti did not commit suicide but was killed by SAVAK. I, for my part, smelled of green sorghum. I wrote short, fragrant stories as essay topics.

During this time, when I was in the fifth year of Rastakhiz High School, the high school was opposite the Tehran Slaughterhouse in Teh Javadieh, a place that became better known for the activities of Golsorkhi (a militant teacher who was later arrested and imprisoned by SAVAK, and later by holding a mock trial with journalists present at the time of Mahko's execution). Our algebra teacher was Mr. Sahrai, who was a teacher at the time and also a student at Tehran University. He had a great interest in books. He introduced us to reading more than our literature teacher. With our own financial support, he created a small library in our class. With this work, he helped us to become more aware. For me, being a student of this teacher was a heartfelt interest, an honor, and a constructive thing. He activated us at the 40th Takhti ceremony.

The Conflict with the High School Principal

One day, when we were preparing for the third-grade exams, we only had one two-hour English class. At the suggestion of our classmates, we decided not to go to the English class. By God, we were not happy with our language teacher either. It had been spread that he, Mr. Fanaian, was a Baha'i, was attending. So instead of class, we all went to the Shahrivar Park, which was near the high school, to prepare ourselves for the next day's exam. Apparently, one of our classmates, who was a little delicate and pampered, had gone to class alone and told Fanaian that we should all go to the park to study.

Fanaian also told the high school principal, Mr. Biglari, about this. The next day, when we were all in class, it happened that there was also an algebra class. We were having a hard time when the high school principal suddenly came to class.

He was very nervous, arrogant and arrogant, and without paying attention to Mr. Sahrai, who was in charge of the class, he went and sat behind our teacher's desk. Mr. Sahrai stood up out of respect for him, and we all scattered, but Biglari said to Tamarid violently, "This high school doesn't have accounting and books, that you closed the class without permission. " Then he took out a list of students' names from the folder and started calling out the names of the people in the order of the names on the list. During this time, Mr. Sahrai was standing by the classroom blackboard with chalk in his hand, observing the scene. The names of the people were recorded alphabetically by first and last name. Since my last name is A, I was the fifth person. He called out the previous four people who had to stand.

Then he gave them a zero to discipline them and they sat down. It was my turn. He announced a zero, but I didn't sit down. He looked at me from under his glasses. He said, "Sit down. " I said, "I won't sit down. " My words were heavy for him. He said, "Come out. " I stood in front of his desk. He pulled me tight. Believe me, even after so many years have passed since that moment, I can still hear the ringing of his voice in my ears. Without saying a word, I grabbed the other side of my face to slap him, but he felt the effects of his actions, especially when he saw Mr. Sahrai slam his hand hard on the board, pick up his coat from the chair, and leave the class. I felt embarrassed because I felt that I had been encouraged by my teacher.

I became more courageous and said loudly, "Mr. Principal, you have wrongly accused me. As a student, I do not accept that my disciplinary grade should be zero. Have I committed a crime? " If a disciplinary grade is zero for not attending class for two hours, then

what is your ethics grade that you gave your student in front of the teacher? The principal's face was like chalk that the teacher had hit on the board. He tore up his list in anger and was about to leave the class. I said loudly again, "Your good-natured principal, you no longer deserve my bad manners, and I will no longer continue my studies at this high school. "

Leaving for Marvi High School and Beginning the Journey Toward the Sea

After this story, Professor Sahrai also left that high school, and I also left after the exams were over and I received the passing score that I had received with good grades and a score of twenty in ethics. With an interesting excuse, I took my file from that school and enrolled in Marvi High School, one of the best in Tehran at that time, located in the famous Arab alley in Nasser Khosrow neighborhood near the Shams Al-Amara building. Of course, Mr. Biglari officially asked me not to leave there, but I respectfully said that it was not possible for me to stay in this space without the presence of the field professor.

Of course, I know that this conflict was not just a union protest, but a social protest. Inside me, there was the movement of a goldfish that no longer had a place in the pond and it was the beginning of going towards the sea (the book Black Fish was written by Samad Behrangi, which was the protest of a small black fish that talked about life in a closed space with its mother).

The Dream of Writing Mother of Yusuf

In those days, some good books were produced in partnership and distributed, one by one, among interested people for reading.

Awareness and an Awakening Mind in an Atmosphere of Repression

In case of a leak, it was a crime, not a whole book. We secretly had a special system among friends where we distributed the pages of a book among each other according to the page number so that all friends had a chance to read them. Among these books, I was assigned to read a book by the Russian writer Maxim Gorky. I was interested in reading this book called Maxim Gorky's Mother. It described the biography and how a mother helped her child and her child's revolutionary friends. At the same time, reading this book brings back memories of my mother's problems.

At that time, I wanted to write the book Mother of Yusuf in opposition to Maxim Gorky's Mother because I believed that my mother had a superior hand compared to Maxim Gorky's Mother, but for various reasons, the most important of which was that I had a slight nose due to the psychological repressions of the period of poverty and forced exile and the tolerance of injustices in my mind. I did not dare to write it, perhaps I had not yet forgotten my eardrum. Finally, I gained the self-confidence to fulfill this wish and, by writing about my mother's passing, make a mark in the history of humanity. The truth is that I believed that, along with the lessons and the hardships endured and inspired by the spirit of resistance of my mother throughout her life, I had become tempered and resistant.

I had come to believe that in countless moments of time, although small, I had been present in the resistance of the contemporary era. I remember reading a book by Samad called The Firefly and the words that were exchanged between the Firefly and the Rabbit in Samad's writing. The Firefly did not dare to say that he was a light because of the ridicule of the intellectuals, but the Rabbit changed his mind and convinced the Firefly that in the heart of the darkness of the armor of

light there was also light. My thoughts were captive to this idea in the world of theory, but it took years for that belief to reach here.

I thank God that, in short, although it is late, I will enter the Hafezeh and ability and fight against the common systems of injustice accepted in the lives of people by planning actions and sacrifice and rising up against the oppression of Commander Begum. I believe that by reading the life letter full of pain, tolerance and resistance of Commander Begum as a devoted mother, it will be a light for their path. I will leave you with the judgment in comparing the two books "Maxim Gorky's Mother and Mother of Yusuf".

I went a little off-topic again, although I would like you to get to know my motivations more. As you can feel, my mother has suppressed her fire a little, but she still has a fire under the ashes, although it has become less active and I feel that she wants to be her child's helper. From this point on, my mother's work becomes daily and she has entrusted her wishes to me. She often called me brother and said that I grew up without a brother, although I am proud of their existence as a sister. Unfortunately, the anger of cruel people, by creating devastating wars to achieve their animal goals and needs, has colored the page of history with unjust bloodshed and dragged good people to their slaughterhouse.

I also had good brothers and uncles whose existence I was proud of, but they were full, now in my heart I know you in the privacy of my heart as a comforter for my pain. "Brother, uncle, child, you are all mine and my hope for the continuation of my path".

Believe me, carrying this mission is not easy, from now on the ball is somewhat in my court.

After half a century (the night of Yalda 1355 to 1405 solar) of my forced migration from my homeland, I am happy to have prepared the first part of this sad story and present it to you.

I will continue the story a little until I reach the point where I chose migration and went to another foreign land, far away from my mother and like my mother.

The Philosophy of the Three Ps and the Underground Society

Life had become more and more difficult, society and resistance were seemingly forgotten, but in reality, there was a fire under the ashes. Still, on Yalda nights, the smoke of Koroglu's hearth (Koroglu is a legendary Iranian Ghahreman who lived in the mountains in difficult and dangerous conditions to survive and win the movements, until one day, by setting fire to the peaks, they would give hope of victory to the people in the days of flaming political cold. Resistance had not died in the hearts of the conscious, even in the form of legends and stories on Yalda nights of the time, it was passed down from generation to generation by grandmothers enjoying the fire under the chairs. Yalda night had become the night of renewal of hopeful hearts, a traditional celebration, so that the inner belief in the melting of snow and the remaining blackness of the earth would not be forgotten.

The atmosphere was completely secure and stifling, red tongues were scolding green heads, the audit office even prevented certain words from being written in writing, for example, writing The word rose was forbidden in writings. The officially printed ketais of that time were only useful for wrapping materials in grocery stores or street vendors. The grocers sold them on the side of the streets, but as Kachi famously said, it was nothing and the armor of light was like light.

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were only useful for wrapping materials in grocery stores or street vendors.

In that closed and cold atmosphere, listening to the story of Koroglu on Yalda nights was part of the struggle itself. Every few people were small, but as Kachi famously said, it was nothing and the armor of light was like light.

The Iranian society was captive to a suffocation. There was so much propaganda that out of every three people who spoke to each other normally, two of them were SAVAK agents (SAVAK is the abbreviation for the Iranian Security Organization, which was systematically The US, British and Mossad security agencies were working)

The imposition of self-censorship and fear by being present in people's daily lives had opened the way for control and submission. Even essay classes in schools were not safe. I was in high school in Marvi, my friend was arrested for writing an essay in which he compared the level of poverty of the people with the living conditions of the poor in the capital, from the Susa region to the lower part of the city, the customs that housed the castles of Mama Peri, to the slums of Rahan, known as Hasirabad, and we, the children of Javadiyeh, whose blinding cannons surrounded the upper parts of the city, and were produced by the whistle of the Tehran-Khorramshahr train, the smell of the oil from its wagons intoxicated our hungry stomachs, and in contrast to spending millions of dollars on celebrations commemorating Cyrus, he slept in tents.

Those Thousand and One Nights were the palaces of the kings in the deserts and near the ruins of Persepolis for the pleasures and feasts of the heads of state so that they could truly experience the ruined country of Iran. Yes, these few sentences caused my friend's father to suddenly and apparently be transferred from Tehran to Shahrestani, and my friend came with his eyes unlit and said goodbye to us, and they made high school difficult for him and took him away. The

system had forbidden sleep to those with open eyes, and they had easily planted suffocation in their minds with the philosophy of P, P, P. The first means take the money and shut up

The second means take the passport and go

The third means get ready to endure a Pepsi-Cola bottle full of boiling water

The existing categories under the umbrella of SAVAK formed a fundamental and new society with divergent ideas, walking side by side but with their own rhythms, and the daily normalization and the increasing immersion in the vulgar and irresponsible culture imported from the West were being shaped in the minds of the young people, and the Western market had become a place of life and a place of pleasure. The transformation in thoughts and acceptance, or let's say ape-like copying, of the name of the intellectual had taken root. Of course, the idea of resistance continued more or less in the speech and actions of society by the forces under the skin of the city of resistance.

Although it was not dominant, it showed that it was alive, and still, as it were, the philosophy of life of Karaglu in the mountains continued in the form of traditional clothes in the stories of grandmothers next to the chair as a celebration.

Families gradually became indifferent to the relations of the opposite sex of a Western culture. Of course, all these new moral outputs were the fruit of the systematic work of the new capitalism, which, with its continuous psychological work and philosophical grounding under the umbrella Human freedom was being promoted. Luxury and competition were the order of the day. The burning pain of the market street singers, who often whispered about their disappointments, was evident in their voices.

In reality, the imposition of this culture and the promotion of continuous education using new, borderless media was destroying

people's culture like a flood. Identitylessness and low self-esteem were prevailing in the minds of the youth. Recklessness and freedom of borderless and unaccountable relationships, along with the chemicals of Valkly, played the role of a painkiller.

On Fridays, coffins were taken away.

The world, let me die, I am a prisoner in your trap.

The smell of wheat is my property, whatever I do is yours.

No one knows which day he will come, which day he will die.

.....

The First Signs of Migration for Yusuf

In this prevailing atmosphere, the first migration, of course, with a mask, the struggle to provide better welfare for our family, was also ours.

My sister-in-law Tohfeh, who used to be a carpet sweeper in the carpet market, decided to go to London with her brother, who had previously been taken to London by an Iranian carpet merchant as a carpet sweeper, and her family. Of course, it was a step forward on the surface, but in reality they had chosen to accept the "second degree".

Giving Up University: Yusuf's Conversation with Ghahreman

My high school was over. I was not calm and composed in class. Inside, I was all protesting and restless. Since I opened my mind, I was all critical, but I was powerless to change. Most of the time, my words would point out my right, which unfortunately ended up to my detriment. Under my skin, wherever I went, with whomever I spoke, I felt a mask on my face. It was as if there was some kind of horror

that I was not yet aware of. No matter how much I wanted to be kind to those around me, the reactions were very cold, as if they were afraid of me.

I registered for the entrance exam and took the exam, but before the results of the entrance exam were known, my brother Ghahreman came to our house and asked me to sit near him and talk to him. He started his conversation with questions and eventually it turned out that he was complaining about me because I wanted to go to university. He told me, "You really don't see how hard it is for mom and dad to prepare a shelter and a piece of bread on the table. How can they afford to pay for you for so many years? If you can make your own rug, who can help with your family's expenses? " Oh my God, his words were bitter, but he was 100% right. He was right. As soon as the children of poor families have dinner, they should be grateful and satisfied.

I was upset by my brother's words, but I didn't get angry with my brother. Golsorkhi's words always stuck in my mind, saying, "Who says that we should go one by one? " He was lying. Aren't the living conditions of a child born into a poor family the same as those of a child born into a rich family? And since I was interested in Riyadh's progress, I was not uncomfortable with myself. The words of Golsorkhi were active in my mind when he was circling around Javadieh, the minister of the bridge, saying, "We are the children of the train whistle that makes our brothers wake up and their dormant desires are stimulated and they start producing and throwing us away in a society that was full of worries and has a poisonous and deadly living environment. " In the philosophical logic, "one is not equal to one. "

A person who was born in a house in Zafaranieh with me, who had to live illegally because my father had no money and did not pay the higher rent in a hole about fifty steps below the capital's street, and now my brother is telling the truth, where am I and where is the

university? His profession was not right because we did not live in a real world, but his profession was real, regardless of whether we were satisfied or not.

I bent down and kissed his hands. He was a witness himself. Or rather, he was a living sacrifice. He was very knowledgeable and a symbol of loyalty and purity. He was a suffering doctor. He had given up the pleasure of his firstborn to give his unworthy father a life of hope. Because not everyone has this ability. As the saying goes, these things happen to men who have been the stones of the mill. Ghahreman was born for the mill. Fortunately, he did not have a complex about being crushed. He was sweet inside and had a sweet soul. His heart was so tender that he could not bear to see the tears of a child. If he saw an ant passing by on his path, he would change his path or wait for them to go first and then Ghahreman to go. He didn't kick Murray.

He was aware of Amy Morshed's lack of schooling and classes, and I deeply followed his example.

Ghahreman's cup of wisdom: an unschooled sage and Yusuf's sincere guide through life.

Entering Military Service

After his brother's words, I gave up on the entrance exam and its results, forbade myself from the dream of university, and entered the

job market. I did not avoid doing anything as long as it did not conflict with human honor. At the same time, I applied for military service. A few months later, it was my turn as a soldier of the Extension and Development Corps. I served for six months in the army, and eighteen of us went to the villages and served the farmers, which was mentioned in theory.

Begum and Yusuf, before Yusuf entered military service.

These empty names were in practice part of the politicians' games, who had created a way to control the released energies. They were painting the imperialists' servant king and the chain dog, and like a painted crow, they are selling these false ideas to the Iranian nation. During military training, even though I was at war with the system inside, I learned lessons, movements, and combat training from the training courses like donkeys, and I was often one of the successful ones. On the days when we had weapons training, I was the earliest

to arrive at class and the latest to leave. I was in a barracks near Karaj city. We had one day off a week on Fridays. On Thursdays, they would bring us by bus to Tehran near Biswa Char Asfand Square. The next day, at 4:00 PM, we would board a bus from there and return to Karaj and the barracks.

To end the training course,

The military parade is usually held in the barracks. For that day, one person was chosen from among the selected and tested people whose parade was more principled and orderly. In this selection, I was the first of the three finalists to be selected. On the day of the graduation ceremony, a team leader from another larger barracks, which was a brigade, participated in the parade of the regiment's cadets. Before the parade began, the team leader symbolically placed the end-of-service cap on the shoulders of the selected representative of the graduates. That year, I was the selected representative. According to the experience of the permanent cadres of the barracks who were in the official ranks, it was said that the head of the Ovesi division came to present the cap. It is true that in any task, anyone who is selected first is proud and happy, but I regretted it inside myself.

Being first was a source of pride, but accepting the responsibility that the elements of the Shah's servants placed on my shoulders was a disgrace for me. I talked to two of my close friends about how to be soft under this burden but at the same time not to reveal my inner thoughts. We went to a buffet with them, we caught fish, I don't know what was inside that fish. What did they spill that made my mood worse and I looked terrible outside? They quickly told the guard and the barracks ambulance came and took me to the barracks infirmary and gave me serum and medicine and finally they admitted me to the clinic.

According to the previous plan, one of the friends who was helping me had informed the company commander about my hospitalization and had also reminded him about my responsibility for the parade

that I might not be able to march and that it might be better to give this responsibility to someone else. Fortunately, I escaped the shame of being showered by an incompetent commander and did not even show up on the day of the parade.

The End of Training and the Choice of Kermanshah

The training period ended and on the day of choosing the places we had the right to choose, it was written on the board that people had the right to choose the place of their military service according to the number of points they had earned during the training period.

Deployment to Kermanshah and the Agricultural Joint-Stock Company

We were six local children and high school students, and one of our friends was from Kermanshah and he praised us a lot. In addition, Kermanshah had a capacity of six people. We chose that place, and according to the order, we had to introduce ourselves to the Kermanshah Rural Cooperative Office within three days.

After introducing ourselves and participating in an explanatory meeting about the work process with all the people on the Kermanshah contingent, we then went to the cooperative warehouse to receive all our amenities. Then, in a pickup truck, two cooperative cabinets took us to our place of duty, which was located in the Ravan Sar Agricultural Joint Stock Company, one of the Kermanshah districts, an hour and a half drive away.

You should know that in the system that was called the Revolution of the King and the Nation, there were principles and organizations, and we were the soldiers who implemented these principles. In this revolution, several issues were defined for three educational corps. It was called the Knowledge Corps, the Health Corps, and the

Extension Corps, and we were members of the Extension Corps, and the agricultural joint stock companies were our places of service. According to the laws of the Shah's revolution, agricultural lands were required to be purchased from feudal landowners and given to the resident villagers with a deed. Then, those lands were joined together and formed into a company, in which each farmer would own a share in the company based on the area of his land. No one else would have separate land.

The right to produce, sell, and determine the profit of each farmer was in the hands of the managing director and the company council, who were elected from the major shareholders. Under the managing director, who was usually an agricultural engineer and an employee of the rural cooperative office, they managed the affairs of the established joint-stock company. My duty was to supervise and help the company to move forward with its work.

New Buildings and the Truth Hidden Behind the Appearance of Development

Our living quarters were renovated stone buildings, which were clean and apparently complete according to the standards of those days. These buildings and all similar buildings were built on the contract of Shapur Gholamreza, the Shah's brother. None of the members of the village council and we knew about the budget and its income and expenditure.

Because the area had no electricity, the company had three hours of generator power at night, which was announced by turning the generator off and on three times a quarter of an hour before the scheduled shutdown time.

The first day we arrived at the dormitory and sorted out our belongings, having new rooms that I had never seen before. I'm sure we all had the same living conditions. The rooms were clear for each

person. Our friend Dariush, as the saying goes, was more elegant and cleaner than ours. He took his bathroom supplies and went to the bathroom, but he came out half-naked. He said to Reza, "Look, it seems that the water supply to the building has not been connected yet. Please tell Alimardan, the person in charge of the technical department and the security guard there. " Reza left. Alimardan came to check the situation himself. He knew that the water supply was open, but there was no water in the pipe. In short, Dariush was poisoned by the snake and had to heat water in a kettle and take a bath.

It was only later that it turned out that the water taps were installed just for show. The water pipe was not connected to any source at all. About four weeks later, it rained heavily and at the end of the night the generator went off. We also often got ready to sleep. There was nothing to do in the darkness. Of course, I had bought an oil lantern from Kermanshah that was always lit at night with a low flame. Sometimes I used it for I used to read before bed. I fell asleep earlier than usual that night. I don't know how long I had been asleep. Suddenly, it seemed like someone had hit me hard with a large hand. I woke up in a panic. I pulled my hand away and felt something loose and soft on my face. I quickly raised the lantern light.

In the lantern light, I realized that the wet and torn flower pieces from the ceiling of the room had fallen on my face. I had to clean my head, face, bedsheets, and floor so that I could clean them completely in the morning. In the morning, I realized that the roof of the building had been asphalted without any foundation, tar, or sealing. In addition, there was no gutter system to drain the accumulated water. As a result,

The water that had collected on the roof had seeped under the asphalt, and the wet, heavy plaster of the roof had broken into pieces and fallen to the ground.

The First Protest Report and Mr. Khaksar's Warning

My spirit of protest, criticism, and interest in writing had blossomed. As soon as I arrived at the office, the first thing I did was write an honorable report and protest about the lack of water in the showers and the lack of necessary infrastructure on the roof before asphalting, which caused damage and damage. My friends also signed it. I took it and gave it to the CEO of the company. Our manager was a very modest and noble man from Sanandaj. Upon receiving my report and seeing the signatures of other people, he became a little angry. On the pretext of going to see the situation, we left the office together and walked towards our residence. On the way, he told me, "Okay, young man. You are serving in the military here and your movements will be monitored by military laws.

I know that your intentions are pure and your goal is compassion and responsibility. But in the system, not everything is acceptable, especially when you bring other people behind you to support your work. The practical meaning of this act of protest and making it public is considered to be against the rules of the system. Come, take your letter back and don't say anything, as if nothing had happened. I don't know anything either. While I was handing over my report, he looked me innocently in the eye and calmly asked, "Did you get an explanation? " I didn't answer him, but I showed my satisfaction with his help in a non-verbal way. Of course, he understood my heart's desire from my attitude and silence, because from that day on, I felt that he understood me. Whenever I passed by him, I would greet him and turn my head away from him.

But inside, I felt closer to him than before, because of the code he had given me. His duties were progressing slowly. We were going to the 6th of Bahman, the anniversary of the Shah's revolution, but we also had to participate in the celebration and declare our happiness. I

really didn't have the heart to do this. On the appointed day, since we were on holiday, we were sitting in our room with my colleagues. They were playing Passour. I was also reading a book of poetry. Of course, according to my friends' custom and request, I recited the poems out loud. I had the books of poems by Karo and Nima with me. Of course, my work was also paid by my friends.

My pay was that I didn't have a role in cooking or washing the dishes, but the loser of the Passour between the two of them was responsible for doing the work. That day we started, the radio was on and slowly some things were being broadcast behind the scenes. It was a program to promote the Shah's revolution. The radio was broadcasting small fragments of the great celebrations and the villagers' dancing throughout the villages of Iran. There were fragments of the celebrations and dancing in the courtyards of the villages of Iran that were being broadcast. News after news, suddenly a news was broadcast that shocked all three of us and we hurriedly went to our clothes because all three of us were not worried about the Shah's revolution. But the radio was playing musical instruments and drums and praising the revolution with emotion and enthusiasm.

The announcer was saying with warmth that you can now hear the sounds of the celebration and dancing at the Ravansar Agricultural Company. Oh, how unfortunate we were, we who were soldiers of the revolution, were still playing passer-by with our underwear on and had not participated in the celebration.

The Imaginary Sixth of Bahman Celebration and the Shah's Revolutionary Soldiers

All three of us soldiers of the Shah's White Revolution came out of the house with a whistle. There was more than half a meter of snow in the area and no footprints were visible. If you looked carefully,

there were no other footprints except for the footprints of Alimardan's dog. I think he came to check our garbage bin. Maybe he caught some leftovers from the soldiers of the Shah's White Revolution. Unfortunately, we ourselves had not eaten enough to catch any leftovers. The sound of the radio would not turn off. Even though we had left the room, the sound of celebration and dancing was still playing on the radio. We tried to go towards the village of Hassan Abad with misfortune. We thought maybe the soldiers of the Shah's White Revolution were celebrating there without their knowledge. Oh, what a whistle we blew. May God bless our fate.

God, walking on half a meter of untrodden snow became more difficult. The further we went, the snow was everywhere. Not even traces of Alimardan's dog's footprints could be seen. The sound of the celebration had also stopped. It was as if all three of us had stopped at the same time, or we were dreaming or the celebration was over. In short, the radio was no longer playing. We went back home. The next day, when we went to the office, I was waiting for Matalki, to chat with Nassar. No one was in the office, except for the goddamn Amir, who was looking at our office, not for work, but because their boiler oil had run out. He had come to borrow some oil from the oil barrel that was in our office. We jokingly asked him, "Did you make love yesterday? " He said, "How was it? " What was going on?

I was shocked to find that there was no news, and the celebration was only on the radio, and there was no news of the anniversary at the revolution site. Who would forgive the Shah? The Shah's revolution was a big deal in Kurdistan, and they had not seen anything good to celebrate about. I quickly changed the subject and went back to our room. The children continued playing passerby until the one in charge of cooking was found out, and the tired and hungry soldiers of the Shah's revolution would satisfy their needs after gambling passerby.

Harvest Season and Mr. Khaksar's Departure

A few months passed, and the harvest season had arrived. The wheat harvest was abundant by God's grace. The campaigns were harvesting and the wheat separated from the reduction was put into sacks and the filled sacks were left next to the field to be transported by tractor to the company's warehouse and stored there. After the work was completed and the product was ready in the warehouse, it was loaded under the supervision of the soldiers of the Shah's White Revolution and transported to the cooperative's headquarters in Kermanshah.

One day, Mr. Khaksar came to our dormitory to say goodbye and said that he had been transferred to another location and that two other engineers had come to the company in his place.

The New Engineers and the First Humiliation

The new engineers asked us on their first day of work to go with them to tour and identify the villages. Engineer Mehrabi was behind the wheel of the company's double-cabin pickup truck and Engineer Nazeri was also there. They sat next to him in front of the pickup truck, next to the arch. We, three soldiers, went inside the cabin and sat in the row behind them. The inspector told us in a harsh tone that you were going to ride in the back of the pickup truck on the way to the CEO and the God Code. We stopped for a moment because we could smell the oppression and crushing of us. At that moment, a question came to my mind. I didn't know what our rights and status were in that group.

However, based on our knowledge of rural culture, we knew that every move was important to them and could be analyzed. Where

and how we sat, talked, dressed, and interacted with others all had meanings that could be analyzed. I thought, with the training we received during our training, that being a member of the soldiers of the Shah's White Revolution was very important. If these two were paid engineers from the government, what message would riding a soldier in the back of a pickup truck with a load of luggage send to the villagers? I wondered. On the way, when we reached the CEO's office, they honked their horns. The CEO and the CEO were coming towards the car. They had a number of tools with them. Engineer Mehrabi told us in a rude tone to put the luggage in the back of the car.

We were completely confused about whether to rebel or obey. Neither of us was forced to endure it until later, but we were wounded by their behavior.

Loading the Wheat and the Minutes That Were Altered

A few The next day, Engineer Nateri informed us that the next day, trucks were going to come to load the joint-stock company's wheat and take it to the central warehouse in Kermanshah. Nateri said that we should also be there with the chief of staff and the CEO.

The next day, at the appointed time, we were in front of the CEO's office, but the CEO and the chief of staff's approach to us was completely commanding and from a superior position.

My task was to supervise and prepare a report that should include the entire process of the work done and the complete specifications of the truck and the driver, including the number of sacks and their weight.

This report had to be signed by each and every supervisor, who included the following people:

The company's engineers,

The soldiers of the Shah's White Revolution,

The CEO of the company,

The selected chief of staff

All of the above people, after reading the report and stating their specifications, must accept the minutes of the meeting with their own signatures.

The signed minutes, which included the transfer of three trucks of wheat to the cooperative office's warehouse, were registered and filed in the company's office according to the company's articles of association.

Some time later, while one of the villagers was talking to the CEO, he asked him about the status of the year's crop and its quantity. The CEO said with discomfort that it was not good. The villager said in surprise that the product in the farm was very good. He said, "God's code. " In short, everything was controlled and the report was issued and recorded. Don't worry.

Hearing these words made me feel very sad. Then, when the engineers left for work, I went to the report file. I noticed that in the file, there was only a report for one truck, but it was repeated three times, mentioning the number of one truck, and in the column of the file, the numbers of the other trucks were completely crossed out. The reason for my sadness became clear. I was sure that there was a bowl under half a bowl. I sat down and prepared a report from garlic to onion. In that report, I also wrote about the problems in the dormitory building, but I did not mention Mr. Khaksar's name. Then I wrote about the problem of tampering with the wheat transport report and that all three were changed with the same truck number.

I also wrote that one of the villagers had also been following up on the number of trucks, but the CEO did not give him a correct answer,

and this made me suspicious. I went and checked the file and noticed the changes. I am reporting this for your information. Of course, I had written this report to the general manager of the cooperative in Kermanshah.

Hope Broken Behind a Closed Door

Last weekend when we went to Kermanshah, I went to the central office of the cooperative and asked to introduce myself and talk to the general manager of the cooperative and submit a report about the Ravansar Agricultural Company. The person in charge of the return office said that the boss doesn't have time to give me the report, I will submit it to them. I was a little clever and said, please register it and give me the registration number, I will need it for follow-up, this was done.

Two or three weeks later, Engineer Mehrabi announced that the director of the central cooperative would come here in two days to visit our joint-stock company and suddenly addressed me and said that the director wants to talk to you too. Of course, in Mehrabi's tone when he announced that the director wanted to talk to me too, I sensed a fear or a change in his face.

Upon hearing the news of the CEO of Markaz coming to Ravansar Company, I was very happy and hopeful that it would be fixed. With great joy, as soon as the CEO arrived, I was the first to proudly go to his car and open the car door and introduce myself with military respect. However, he ignored Engineer Mehrabi and went with him to his office and spent a few minutes with him. Then Mehrabi came out of the room and took Engineer Nazeri, the CEO of the company, and the code of God with him inside. He told the others, including us, to go to their work. He also went into the room and closed the door. In fact, with its closing, I witnessed the fulfillment of all the hopes with which I had built dreams.

My goal was to reach the truths that could change the fate of hundreds of rural families and protect their rights.

A Sudden Transfer: Hope Shattered

Heartbroken and distraught, I went to the dormitory wearing the same military uniform and boots. I threw myself on my bed and closed my eyes in despair at the events of those moments. It was as if I had fallen into a deep sleep. I woke up to Alimardan's voice. Alimardan said from behind the loud window, "Sir, Engineer Mehrabi is working with you. " I quickly went to Mehrabi's room, I must have fallen asleep for two hours. When I arrived in front of Mehrabi's room, I saw the CEO of the center standing outside the room. I greeted him and said, "Let's take a walk together. " We walked towards the compound. He said, "Where is your dormitory? " I pointed to the dormitory with my finger. He told me, "I'll inspect these areas for a few moments. " You too, gather all your personal belongings. We're going to the provincial capital together.

We'll talk on the way. Don't talk to anyone. Get ready quickly and hand over your belongings to my driver. Bring them to your car. He spoke as if he was removing a criminal from that place. Oh my God, I had lost my limbs, but I remember telling him, "Ouch! " I went inside the dormitory and packed my belongings and handed them over to the manager's driver as instructed. The manager was sitting in the back seat of the car. His driver opened the back door for me to sit next to the manager. I was a little confused. The manager himself said, "Get in. Let's go. It's late. I got in carefully. The driver started walking. The manager woke me up with his first words. He said, "I read your nonsense on the man's desk. You didn't respect your boundaries and made an extra mistake.

I didn't want to humiliate you in front of them anymore. Don't forget that you're nothing more than a hungry beggar soldier. I tore up your letters. Don't do this nonsense again. A report has been filed against

you. " I don't blame you, but tomorrow morning you will go to the office and see Mr. Javadi. He will introduce you to your new place of service. You should go and spend the rest of your service there like a child. You don't need to tell him what happened. I have also written in the report that the reason for your transfer from the company is positive. We have chosen you because of your high self-confidence and ability to promote you to a new place. Don't forget, this is a favor to you. Be careful of your actions and words. At this time, we had reached the beginning of Kermanshah.

He said, "Go to Javadi wherever you like. " The driver will now go to the warehouse of the office and deliver the belongings to Mr. Javadi. He will manage the rest of your work. I got out of the car at the Ojaq intersection, which was one of the new intersections in Kermanshah. I walked with difficulty, my hair on the ground. I went to the guesthouse where we often stayed when we came to the city. I got a room. I slept in the same military uniform until the morning. When I woke up, I was confused. For a moment, I really didn't understand where I was. Why? I quickly came to my senses, feeling that I had neither the time nor the inclination to eat breakfast. I had paid the hotel fee upon arrival. I quickly left the hotel. There was no way to the cooperative office.

I walked along the road, lost in various questions in my mind. I arrived on time, even half an hour before office hours. I sat on a platform next to the cooperative office building. The office door opened. Gradually, employees and clients entered the office. I followed them in. In front of the entrance door was a small cubicle. Apparently, it was the office's waterman. I went forward and asked the man who was cleaning and preparing tea. He showed me where Mr. Javadi's room was and said, "They haven't arrived yet. Sit down on the bench. I'll show you. " About an hour later, the waterman said, "Come in. " The waterman said, "Hello and good morning. " He continued, "Mr. Javadi has been waiting for you at work since

morning. " Javadi looked at me and said, "Sit down. I'll let you know. "

Then he told the waterman to bring me a cup of tea with a sandwich if you're ready. He went to his room. The waterman, muttering incomprehensibly, placed a tray on the counter and took a cup, saucer, and a piece of bread from the shelf above the counter. He put a cheese plate and a knife on the tray. He poured tea into a glass, then took the tray in his hand and went into Mr. Javadi's room. When he came out of the room, he repeated incomprehensible words under his tongue like a grunt. When he caught sight of me, for no reason, he called me a man who acted as if I were his wife. Then he went into the house's water cooler. This time, he prepared some tea glasses in a larger tray and took them out. He distributed tea to all the rooms.

When he returned, he offered me some tea. I thanked him for the offer and said, "I don't want it, thank you. I really don't want it. " After a while, the water cooler caught sight of me again. He quickly went into Javadi's room and brought back the tea tray. He told me that he was on the phone and reminded him of you.

Morning at the Cooperative Office: Waiting and Inner Turmoil

There was a strange chaos inside me. On the one hand, the kind waterman's attention had attracted me. On the other hand, a lot of ambiguity and hesitation was bothering me. I was talking to myself and asked myself what the story really was. We had been taught in our training that we were the youth of the country and part of the Revolutionary Guard and soldiers supporting the nation. So why did my support and compassion for the rights of farmers bring me here and prove to me the futility of so many things? My soul had probably flown away from that place for an hour, but with the waterman's quick movement and repeated grumbling, he prepared another cup of tea and knocked on the door and went into the room to give him

some tea. He had not closed the door of the room. He smiled and said to Mr.

Javadi, "Sir, this servant of God has been waiting for you at work since morning. God knows what he wants from you. " Javadi, who felt a little embarrassed with the extra tea, said, "Okay, tell me, come in. " I myself heard the other party inviting the soldier of the Shah's Revolution to visit. Before the waterman told me the news, my body was half alive, but I really had no legs to leave. He wouldn't help me. I forced myself into his office. Before I could introduce myself, he told me to sit down and work. I'll just say one thing. From now on, you'll be on my side. If you want to end your service without any pain, you'll go to your new place of service like a child and work peacefully until the day you end your service. You only have Thursday evenings off.

You'll return on Friday evenings so that you can be at your post on Saturday morning. During your leave, you have to do your personal duties and prepare the materials you need. On Thursdays, leave a little earlier than ten. On the way, come first. Put your weekly report in the box on the door of my room. Then go and pursue your personal plans. My place of service was in a village called Talsam, which is far from the main road of Kerand Gharb. My job was to handle statistical and There was a clinic where a doctor came with his pocket money twice a week to examine and treat patients. The clinic was almost new and was built on the top floor of the village headman's house and was rented to the cooperative. My room was in the same apartment.

My workplace was not bad, but there was no longer any illusion of the soldierly spirit of the Shah and the nation's revolution. In fact, I was the caretaker of our house and during the day I had some work to do at our house. Of course, I was friends with the doctor who looked after my work and it made it easier. I was kind to him about the doctor's delays or absences. He also helped me to get my

necessities and to go to the nearest town to the village. Gradually, with a little friendship and respect, I became a good friend of the village headman, who was trying hard to please others because of the renewal of his post as headman.

Javadi: A New Assignment

His friendship with me and my satisfaction were a good help in achieving his wish. He also liked me by ignoring my absence from the place of service. If the officer of the department visited the village during my absence, he would assure the inspector with appropriate materials that I had gone to a nearby town to make up for the shortages in the camp and that my absence from the place of service would not be considered.

Telesm: The New Place of Service

Of course, on the day of my end of service, it turned out that the rival of the God Code was sending negative reports against him to the department office. As a result, it turned out that I was reprimanded and three months of overtime was written for me. My skin was already thick and I had a way to escape. On the day of the end of our service period, all my friends from the same period had gone to the office to get their end-of-service cards. I was there, of course not to get my card but to learn how to issue end-of-service cards. It turned out that I and two other soldiers from the same period had the same overtime problem as me.

The End-of-Service Card: One Last Game with the System

We came up with a plan to steal your end-of-service cards. On the first day of the end of service, all individuals would go to the archives to obtain their end-of-service cards. The archives officer would open the iron cabinet behind him and take out a large folder,

take out the individuals' cards, and give the table inside the same folder to the individuals receiving the end-of-service cards so that they could sign their names opposite the end-of-service cards to confirm receipt of their end-of-service cards.

With the friendship I had made with the waterman and whom I always gave a good time to, I asked him to let me and my other friend stay at the waterman's house before the office closed, and he would try to close the office door from the inside after everyone left the building and return to their workplaces, and we would go to get our end-of-service cards. The plan was successfully completed without any problems. We took out the file, took our cards, which had a letter written on them about the additional service, along with our cards, signed the relevant form in front of our names, came down, gave the waterman a tip as a dessert for the end of service, and said goodbye to him.

We were worried about the outcome of our work, but with the experience that we knew about the openness and irresponsibility in the system, we freed ourselves, trusting in God, and were so excited that all our annoyance had turned into joy and the joy of victory with this move.

My friend took his card in his hand and started talking to his card like crazy. He said to his card loudly, "Your theft was revenge for all the humiliation, disrespect, and the crushing of our character. " Then, with a military respect, he said, "Damn it. We spent two years of our lives chasing you with all the hardships to get you. Now it's your turn to chase us for two hours and witness the joy of our victory. " Then, he pierced the corner of the card with the sharp tip of his strong knife and attached the card to the bottom of his pants with a safety pin. He started dancing and running. We were running like crazy people who had been freed from their chains, laughing and not caring about the world.

Although we were worried about the future in our hearts, no one followed us due to the openness of the system in which everything was transfigured by the government and most people felt like the walking dead. Okay, I tried to give a general picture of the military service process and how it ended. Now, to explain another part of my destiny game that had me intoxicated, I have to go back a little so that I can take you with me to a space that has completely changed the course of the game's life. After coming to Kermanshah to serve in the military, our place of service was a village between Kermanshah and Ravansar, in an agricultural joint-stock company near a village called Hassan Abad.

Of course, I was sent to this company alone, and five other friends who had come to Kermanshah together were sent to other places, and we only saw each other at joint provincial gatherings. At my place of service, we were serving and being friends with two male soldiers in the clinic and another female soldier in the agricultural company's kindergarten. The gentlemen's dormitory was together. We had a good day and night together. It had not been almost two months since I had served when a gentleman on a motorbike came to my workplace and asked me to come and see him. They informed me. I went to see the gentleman. He was carrying a message from my parents. He told me to read a letter and send my answer back with the same courier. My mother had sent a message to my father to come to Kermanshah to see Aunt Marzieh's house.

She had asked me if I could go to them during the weekend leave or not. I wrote a positive answer and handed it to the courier. She also gave me the full address of Aunt Marzieh's house and Mashad Abolghasem. On Thursday, I went to Kermanshah and took my taxi to my aunt's house, which was in a residential complex where the Kermanshah Radio transmitter worked.

Meeting Nasrin: A Message from Kermanshah

Now, before I continue my journey, I must reveal the story of the meal that my mother and aunt cooked for me years ago, and now, by the merciful Creator, it was timed so that it was impossible to escape from it and was somewhat unchangeable.

The Javadieh Neighbors and the Roots of an Acquaintance

Aunt Marzieh and Mashad Abul Qasem had two daughters. They also had a small house in the Javadieh neighborhood, in the same narrow, dead-end alley. We were neighbors. In fact, there were four houses in that dead-end alley. When we entered the alley, the first house on the left was Mashad Abul Qasem's house, along with Aunt Marzieh and their two children, Masoumeh and Nasrin. Adjacent to the house of Abul Qasem, which is an abbreviation of Mashad Abul Qasem, was the house of Nadali and her wife, Alam, and their three children, named San Ghulam, Masoumeh, and Zari, respectively. The age gap between Masoumeh and Zari was large, as if Alam had been pregnant twice after Masoumeh's birth, but due to female problems and insufficient sperm, the two children, both boys, had been aborted.

Of course, it was not said that among the women's gossip, we had heard that the real reason for the abortions was the fear of the cost and some kind of intentional abortion. The reason for these abortions was the age gap between Masoumeh and Zari. Let's move on. The next house had a door that opened in the middle of a dead end, but the whole house was attached to our house, which was the fourth house. In fact, our house was exactly in that narrow place, facing Aboli's house. In fact, our neighbors, like many others around our house, were all considered to be the worst on earth, and we had one

thing in common. The common point was that we were rooted in poverty, which was unmanly and had all of us in its grasp. In fact, we were all on the same team.

Aboli was unemployed for a while, like my father, and we were very close. He was a pure, simple-hearted, and kind man. Of course, because he was a good cook, he occasionally helped Aunt Marzieh in cooking for the Colonel's parties in the Amir area. She had a little income. She also gave her free time to my father. She helped and tried to learn from my father how to buy and sell fruit, but like the lazy students in the class, she was not at all suited for that job. In the end, she didn't last long. However, the colonel for whom Marzieh Khaleh worked had suggested that she take Marzieh Khaleh and her entire family with her to Kermanshah because her mission was being transferred. Of course, she should also find a job for Aboli at a radio transmitter. As a result, Aboli sold Javadieh's house and left Tehran.

But whenever they came to Tehran for any reason, they would definitely visit us. They had a very friendly relationship with us, so we called them Marzieh Khaleh. After a few years after their move, Marzieh Khaleh came to Tehran with her little daughter and stayed at our house as guests. Later, when the case was opened, it became clear that my mother and aunt had a purpose for this meeting. Their purpose was for Nasrin and I, who were fourteen or fifteen at the time, to meet each other. Perhaps it would pave the way for a bond. Auntie loved me very much because she knew that I had been a friend since childhood. I was religious and religious, meaning I had been praying and fasting since I was seven years old. She wanted me to get engaged to Nasrin Khanum.

As the saying goes, they had planned a wedding for themselves, but we were not in the garden. Basically, I didn't think about marriage at all because of the way I was growing up. I was more idealistic and interested in struggle and sacrifice. The subject of Karbala and Ghahreman's resistance in Karbala and the image I had of those

events in my mind. I was fascinated by Dr. Shariati's thoughts and his line of thought. I had a completely different space in my mind and I enjoyed secretly studying his speeches that were distributed as cassette tapes or pamphlets. I was very much in love with his martyrdom pamphlet. I had listened to the cassette several times. In the back of my mind, I loved the loyalty, purity, and sacrifice expressed in those speeches.

Of course, this frame in my mind had been formed with my relative familiarity with the soul of Ali and his descendants. As a result, another way of life had been formed in my mind. As a result, my aunt's dream of connecting us was not fulfilled. The subject was forgotten without being discussed, but the destiny of the forgotten Had not.

The Mothers' Plan and Yusuf's Idealistic Youth

After many years, I chose Kermanshah for my military service because I wanted to be in the same place with my friends, so we came together, but we couldn't continue together because our service location was not the same. It is true that we made plans with our own minds to be together, but fate had prepared another goal. I worked with new people at the service location. A short time later, apparently by accident, my younger brother was being disobedient at home, and with me being away from home, a management vacuum had been created for him. He unintentionally became disobedient in the family under the influence of this vacuum, and as a result, he had become more under the control of his father. One day, he told my mother that he was packing up his belongings, running away from this house, and going to live with my brother.

In fact, he was trying to fill the void that had arisen by drawing more attention from the family to his presence, and to take a more important role in the family instead of me, but unfortunately, due to

the lack of necessary awareness, he had the opposite effect with his abnormal movements. In fact, more attention had resulted in more control, that is, more pressure. He tried to bring up the story of running away from home. He proved his importance by packing his suitcase and leaving the house secretly, leaving a note on the window sill saying, "Don't worry about me, I'm going to my brother's. " As a result, my parents took Younes' words seriously and came to Kermanshah to see me and talk to me about Beyonce. It was natural for Mom to go and read with her. She had suggested that she go to her aunt's house.

But Younes had returned home that night and upon learning that his parents had gone to Kermanshah to follow him, he was very scared that he had upset his family. But deep down, he was happy that despite his thoughts, he was important to the family, that they were following him, but the result of his actions was nothing more than a temporary dream. Not only did it not become possible to take the role of Yusuf's successor, but it also strengthened Yusuf's position.

Unfortunately, this feeling never

Fate, Younes, and the Reopening of the Road to Nasrin

This did not leave Younes and remained hidden in his mind and became the root of many disobediences and even problems for himself and his family. I was reminded of a mystical and meaningful poem by the poet Shirin Bayan Saadi that says, "The clouds and the wind and the fog and the sun and the sky are at work so that you can have enough bread and not be careless. " My parents had announced their arrival with a motorbike courier and wanted me to go to my aunt's house to meet them, so I went. So now, I was standing behind a faded wooden double door in a soldier's uniform and a box of rice bread in my hand to meet my aunt, without knowing what fate had

prepared for me behind it. I had a strange feeling. I was usually a shy and timid person.

I slowly knocked on the door as if the door had opened before I knocked. Suddenly, a face full of love appeared in my heart. A girl in a tent was leaving the house, but her plan was disrupted by my arrival. It was as if the aunt's prayers had been answered and her wish had come true.

Behind My Aunt's Door: The First Meeting with Nasrin

I was shocked like people whose hands had been electrocuted by a live cable. With the same shock, I asked the fairy who had opened her face in love, "Excuse me, is this Mr. Gholam Rezaei's house? " The fairy took her veil off her head, folded it, and threw it over her arm. She asked in her velvety, warm, and loving voice, "Oh, Mr. Yusuf, are you? "

"Oh, Mr. Yusuf, are you? "

The waves of her voice echoed repeatedly in my ears.

With a trembling voice, I asked, "Are you Nasrin Khanum? "

Without another answer, she said, "Tell me. " Before I set foot in her house, she had entered my heart with all her grandeur.

Suddenly, I had half of myself in my heart, inviting me to enter her life. God is my witness that my pen and tongue are incapable of depicting my present or past life. Even now, exactly after more than half a century, the engine of my heart's youth is on.

I felt inside me saying, "Yes, dear Yusuf, I am Yusuf, but I was too embarrassed to say it in my own language. "

Excuse me, I got caught up in the mood. For a few moments, I was thrown back more than fifty years.

I will go back to history and continue. You may not believe me. I did not believe in love and falling in love, but now I was trying to lead myself to it and I did not give up. We went into the room. My aunt and my mother were chatting and hugging. My father was having tea with Mr. Gholam Rezaei. I do not know if I was dreaming or I heard Aunt Marzieh say to my mother, "May God bless you and may you be well, may God bless you. "

My Aunt's House and the Plan Everyone Understood

After greeting and greetings, seeing and kissing my parents and kissing the hands of Abuli and Marzieh Khaleh, I went and sat in the corner of the room. Nasrin Khanum also came and sat near me and started to engage me with questions, about my service period and its conditions, how many years of service I had, and when my service would end. Marzieh Khaleh said to Nasrin Khanum, "Dear Jan Pashu, let's have some tea. " I think she wanted to take off her daughter's handbrake.

The tea was served and served. After a moment of silence in the air, unheard words were in the minds of everyone present, immersed in a dream that was taking shape outside their minds.

Walking Beside Nasrin and Embarrassment at the Ticket Booth

Nasrin reminded her father that the film began at four. He said they had a guest and could not go that day. Without hesitation, she announced that she would go with me. The room fell silent until Aunt Marzieh suggested that I might be tired. Before Nasrin could answer, my mother said, 'They are young. Let them go out for some air. ' Nasrin's father quietly slipped ten tomans into my pocket.

A few minutes later, Nasrin and I left together. I felt as though I were walking on clouds. Even the guards at the gate seemed to know how fortunate I was to be beside the beauty of the city. I suggested a taxi, but she said the cinema was close. With every step, I felt myself melting like Kermanshahi butter in the warmth of her presence.

At the ticket window, I reached into my pocket—and found nothing. My wallet was in the bag I had left behind, and the ten tomans her father had given me had disappeared. I searched every pocket again and again, my face burning with shame. Nasrin noticed and asked what was wrong. When I confessed, she said gently, 'Don't worry. I have money with me. '

Her kindness carried me back to childhood, to the day I lost the proceeds from selling baklava. The earnings of several hours were gone, and with them, it seemed, the value of my entire day. Worse, I had no money to buy another tray and begin again. I paced desperately, searching the ground while two boys my age watched.

They asked what had happened. When I told them, one pointed toward an old man who sat behind a cart selling ice cream, faloodeh, and yakh-dar-behesht. The boys had seen him step out, bend down behind me, pick something up, and return to his place. They approached him and demanded our friend's money. The old man's wrinkled face flushed dark red. He swore that he had found nothing and offered us a frozen sweet instead.

My anger rose, yet the image of my own father struggling behind his fruit cart came to mind. I turned away without accusing him further. The old man called me back and asked how much I had lost. 'Two tomans, ' I said. 'I needed it for a tray of baklava. ' He emptied his change onto the counter. It came to eighteen rials. I refused it, but he insisted and led me to Agha Khalil, the confectioner from whom we bought our trays. 'Give this boy a tray, ' he said. 'I will pay the balance tonight. The poor child has lost his takings. ' Agha Khalil handed it to me and forgave the remainder.

That day I tasted both the sweetness of heaven and the bitterness of hell. Now Nasrin's voice brought me back: 'Yusuf, where have you gone? Come—the film is starting. ' She had already bought the tickets. My body sat beside her in the dark cinema, but my mind wandered. I understood almost nothing of the film, not even its title. I remember only the light within me and the moonlike face beside me. Such inward states are not easily explained to anyone who has not lived them.

The movie ended, we came out. I felt that Nasrin's face was pale. I thought that she wanted to know that she was absent from my presence, but she didn't ask anything. I said, "Let's take a taxi so that we can get home early. They are waiting for us. " Nasrin said, "No, Dad. We didn't have a chance to talk in the dark and silence of the cinema. Let's go here. " She meant a restaurant that had self-service. Before I could say anything, she said, "You are my guest. Please don't be rude. "

Our First Dinner Together

I followed Nasrin into the restaurant. It was my first time in such a place, and beside me was the beautiful, kind face that had filled my heart.

I walked behind her through the self-service line and copied what she did: taking a tray, plate, spoon, and fork, then choosing the same food. Yet every choice felt exactly like what I would have made myself. I did not want the clock to advance. During the meal, I understood little beyond the joy of sitting opposite her.

Returning Home and a Sleepless Night

It was late when we returned, but neither my will nor my heart had wanted to leave. Everyone at home had been worried, though no one was angry. Aunt Marzieh said they had already eaten and that our food was ready. Nasrin and I answered at the same moment, 'We

have had dinner. ' Their unspoken questions filled the silence. I apologized, my voice trembling, for bringing us home so late.

Nasrin whispered to her father. Aboli then told me not to pack my bag or leave that night. He suggested that I accompany the departing guests to the terminal with Nasrin, return to the house, and travel back the next morning after breakfast. On his way to the office, he would come part of the road with me.

Nasrin allowed me no time to object. She took my bag and placed it in the room beside theirs. After an emotional farewell, the older family members left for the terminal, and Nasrin and I went with them. Once we had seen them off, the two of us returned to the house together.

A Bowl of Ash Reshteh and the Invisible Bond of the Heart

There was a strange feeling in my heart, sadness and happiness were mixed together, I was happy that I had not found my half and I was sad because I had not answered many questions for the future. I didn't have it. Worse, I had to go back to a place I had no attachment to, and worst of all, I had to turn my back on a fleeting world that had the equivalent of hundreds of years of achievements. This sadness was evident on Nasrin's face. After the breakfast table was set, which was completely untouched, Aunt Marzieh, with her own resourcefulness, gave me a bowl of it, wrapped in a closed container, and said, "Take it with you to your place of service and drink it there. But please promise me that you will return the container because it is a reminder of my youth.

Of course, I am not in a hurry, but when you come to Kermanshah, be sure not to bring it to the mouse. This is like your home. "

God knows, I wanted to be allowed to hug Nasrin, if possible, squeeze her into my stomach or go into her stomach like a baby so

that my umbilical cord would be tied to her, but it was a fantasy that would become clear over time.

Separation: The Bitter Pain of Returning

Bad Painful Separation is an Azeri poem that I always whisper to myself when I am feeling down. Sometimes while driving on the roads, when I am often alone, I try to repeat it. These poems were sung by famous Azeri singers. I have heard or read this poem hundreds of times with all my heart, so I am writing its Persian translation for you.

Very long black nights, when I think of you.

I don't know where to go in these black nights.

My heart is wounded by these black nights.

Separation, separation, safety from separation.

More difficult than any pain than these separations.

In fact, anything that can attract the human heart is an art, and by nature this art has a relationship at the root of human feelings. Poetry, music, speech, painting, architecture, the beauty of nature, animals, birds, insects, all are the keys to entering hearts that have their souls active and feeling.

The feeling I had that day was difficult and painful to bear, even in expressing and remembering, I had never experienced this kind of feeling, I did not want to be separated from this blessing that Reem had given me, even for a moment, but the lives of people whose app is open often touch the bitter experience of separation and are familiar with its bitterness. The heartache of leaving a loved one is well-known and is often mentioned in poems and writings.

That day, returning from my beloved's side had a different feeling. The minibus was moving, my body was inside it, but my soul and

mind were left behind, I came to my senses with the voice of the driver calling me, We have arrived at work, won't you get off at the destination? The pain of hearing these sentences was like the burning of a wound that had a burning and bad meaning. In fact, I had moved away from my destination.

I had been standing for a long time on the main road to Shahabad from Qasr Shirin on the dirt road towards Talsam, waiting for a tractor to pass or for a pick-up truck to pass. I don't know how long I had been sitting on a rock by the side of the road when I noticed a tractor approaching. I got up from my seat and picked up my bag. I raised my hand so that the tractor driver would look at me. The driver was Murad's brother, the code of God of the village. As soon as we turned onto Talsam road, he stopped and greeted me with greetings and greetings. We returned to the village. I didn't hear a word from me until we reached Bade. It was as if Murad had sensed my lethargy. He didn't have any questions either. When we reached Bade, I got out.

I remember I just said thank you. I didn't even remember Murad's name. I went up the stairs. I took my key from my bag. I unlocked the door of Talsam's house with my own hands. I was silent so that God of the village wouldn't notice because when he found out I had returned, he would quickly come to report what had happened in my absence. I would debrief me.

That house was no longer a home, it had become my university again. A strange feeling of nausea filled my throat. I forced myself to my bed and lay down on it. I don't know how many hours had passed when I woke up to the sound of God's code from behind the door, ready to get ready for his sex.

The Ash Dish: An Excuse to Return

By the end of the week, my life was over. I was like a beheaded chicken. I was flying every day to get back to Kermanshah and be

able to be loyal to my aunt and give her back her dish as I promised! My aunt's love was very deep in my heart. She was a master of relationships. By giving her dish and asking for it back, she had given me a good excuse. In fact, her greater gift was giving me Nasrin, who had succeeded in doing that with all her heart.

This coming and going continued for weeks. I was practically unspoken. I was Sorkhana's son-in-law. Little by little, Nasrin insisted that I leave my clothes at their house to be washed. Of course, I understood the reason for my aunt's love better: I was filling the place of the cousin she had from her first husband but lost. Eboli also always longed for a son to be her cane in her old age. Now I understood that the reason for my interest in visiting was not just because of my aunt's daughter. I felt completely safe and now another house had been provided for me and I had a place for myself next to her. I was at my aunt's house on the pretext of returning her bowl. Once, Aboli jokingly said that Mr. Yusuf was busy serving in two provinces. Even once, I couldn't return to Kermanshah due to necessary work at the clinic.

During the next visit, Aboli secretly asked me what did you feed my daughter? Last week, when you didn't come, she was restless and had a fever and had become reclusive.

Nasrin's Hidden Words

Seeing and hearing these words made my emotional position in Aboli's house clearer to me. During one of my visits, when Nasrin and I were out shopping, we went to a coffee shop. Without any preamble, Nasrin told me, Mr. Yusuf, I want to tell you something, but I don't want my mom and dad to know about this. For a moment, I felt scared. I promised her that her words would remain hidden in my heart.

Nasrin's Confession: Fear of Separation

He said, "Without any pretense, your love has become a need for me and I have an excessive interest in you. I want you to tell me, manly and honestly, is your coming and going to our house just a friendly and family visit? Of course, you know that my parents love you like their own child, but I want to ask you if you have no feelings for me without your family finding out. "

Don't come to our house with any more excuses because I'm afraid that you will become more emotionally dependent on me. If you don't have feelings and this relationship ends after the end of your military service, it will be difficult for me to accept the separation, so it's better that these meetings don't continue.

I hope you don't take it badly and whatever your decision is, I respect you. I know you're being a little mean.

Between Love and Responsibility

For a moment, there was a cold silence between us. Many thoughts were stirring me from within in the moments of silence, but I tried not to express them. The honesty in Nasrin's words had killed me.

She didn't know how much I wanted and needed not just to see her, but to be by her side with all my being for the rest of my life. Even the thought of not seeing her for a day would make me cry and resentful. Oh, the day that God didn't want a separation to happen.

From the very first meeting, when she told me (Hey, Mr. Yusuf, it's you, come here, you're welcome), my soul was trapped in the trap of her love. But I didn't have the courage to say it, even though I couldn't even imagine having a relationship with anyone. Now, this Nasrin heart, which is exactly the same as my heart, is suffering and is afraid of the terrible phenomenon of separation. I honestly wanted

to kneel in front of her right now and present her with the ring of my heart.

A mischievous thought crossed my mind. For a moment, I felt an unbelievable pride. I calmed down a little and told her from a high position. You are an angel in my opinion and the ideal of every fair man. Happy is the fate of every man who has the honor of being by your side. I could see that hearing these beautiful words would make her heart ache. The best answer for her heart was just to hear a reason from me. But I wasn't ready to answer at that moment and I needed to think about many things. At that moment, I couldn't give a responsible answer without thinking about the realities and responsibilities of living together.

As the saying goes, it's not like I can make a sincere promise quickly and without thinking. Honestly, I am very lucky. "Despite the logic of the above proverb, this logic was not true for my situation and position. " That was my aunt's house and I was also her aunt's food.

I told her honestly, "Nasrin, thank you for trusting me with your words. Let me think about my thoughts. We can talk next time. If it's possible for you, you can come to my office. We can talk there. Of course, if your parents agree or you want to be my guest at work as a visit. " Nasrin was a little hesitant, maybe her pride was a little hurt, but she said gently, "Okay, tomorrow before you go to the talisman, I will set the meeting date with you. "

The Appointment at Ferdowsi Square

Let's go, don't be late. It was as if she didn't have the strength or the heart or the brain to talk anymore. We returned to Nasrin's house. She was bored. She said loudly to her mother, "Mom, my head hurts. I'm going to sleep. " She told me, "God willing, we'll have breakfast together before you leave. " She said good night and left. Of course, I saw that she talked to her father for a few moments and went to sleep. As usual, she was worried and wondered what would happen.

What should I do? Choosing to buy a new pair of shoes is not a choice. Marriage is a one-way street. It contradicts the life philosophy I had for myself. And so on. There were many other things inside me that were at odds with my desires and thoughts and the call of my heart.

I didn't sleep well, but my eyes were closed and the inner battle continued. The light outside was coming into the room through the curtains. I could hear Aboli's voice waking up Nasrin. Of course, I don't think she slept like me. Breakfast was apparently over. Aboli said goodbye and left. I also went to pack my bag to leave. Nasrin brought it. She told me that coming to your workplace was a problem and generally not appropriate, but set a time on the weekend to meet outside the house and complete our conversation. The atmosphere was cold and lifeless. We agreed to meet at Ferdowsi Square on Thursday at two o'clock. That week, equivalent to years, was hard for me. A strange fear reigned within me. After enduring a week of torture, the promised day arrived.

I was present at Sartosht Square at one and a half, half an hour before the appointment, but Nasrin appeared from a distance at two fifteen minutes. If there had been a blood pressure monitor and a nurse, she would have been able to record the effect of enduring those fifteen minutes until Nasrin came back. She would have understood the depth of her need. Sitting on the bars around the grass field for about half an hour had made my legs dizzy, but with every step she took towards me, my legs felt more alive, and by the time she arrived, I was standing in front of her, exhausted. I said quietly, "You're late. " Her delay had been slowly killing me, but I didn't bring it up. She said very coldly, "So, have you thought about it? What's your message? "

I said if you want, let's walk to Crown Prince Park and sit there and talk. The park was right across from the cinema where we had gone on the first day of our family visit. She gave me a little shake and

said okay, let's go. We both walked towards the park. I felt that she felt a little better. Maybe she had felt that there must be some conditions that must be stated with patience and patience.

The Park Bench: A Confession Disguised as a Joke

A bench stood beside the park's wooden wall, secluded from everyone else. We sat facing one another at opposite ends. I began carefully: 'I hope you will not misunderstand me, but I must tell you that, unfortunately, I already have a fiancée in Tehran. ' Before I could finish, Nasrin rose in anger. 'Thank you for telling me honestly and quickly, ' she said.

The same bench, the same park: the fortieth anniversary of a pledge made in youth amid fear, love, and poverty—a pledge that still lives.

A Pledge in the Park

'You have not heard the whole story, ' I protested. She turned away. 'I am not a child. You have said what matters, and I have no patience for philosophy. Goodbye. ' I asked her not to turn my confession into philosophy. I told her that I had never dared speak of what was in my heart, but her trust and courage had taught me to do the same. Her anger softened. She apologized, sat again, and asked, 'Then who is this fortunate girl? '

'The problem is not the girl, ' I said. 'The problem is that I will leave military service with nothing. How can a man without a settled life or the basic necessities ask a woman to share his future? ' Nasrin answered wisely: 'A woman who respects the wish of her own heart can help the man she loves, and together they can build their life. You should speak honestly with her. ' Still wounded, she stood and wished me happiness.

I thanked her for the advice, then asked whether she wanted to see the girl's photograph. With restrained hostility she said, 'Let me see what this fortunate young woman looks like. ' I handed her a small heart-shaped key ring containing two photographs. When she opened it and saw her own face, her broken pride revived. 'I knew no one could take my place in your heart, ' she said.

I asked whether that young woman could endure hardship with me and help build a life from little, while I promised to do any honorable work necessary for her happiness. Without hesitation, she answered, 'That girl loves you. For her, breathing beside you is life itself. The wealth of love rules over every poverty. '

She took my hands and promised that even in the depths of the earth she would remain the queen of our modest home; my warmth would be her covering, and she would stand beside me while I earned an honest living. If I sold fruit, she said, she would hand bags to the customers. In prosperity or hardship, she would remain. There, in the

park, we made our pledge and returned to Aunt Marzieh's house, which had become the palace of my dreams.

Aunt Marzieh's Joy: Entrusting Nasrin

Nasrin gave the good news to her parents. Aunt, who had been ill for a while and had difficulty moving, stood up that day and danced, hugged me and showered me with kisses on my face. She was so grateful for this union that she stood in front of the room, raised her hands to the sky and prayed for our happiness. She pulled Nasrin to her and hugged her and kissed her head and face. With a voice of anger in her throat, she said to the sky, "Thank you, thank you, thank you, " and turned to Nasrin and said, "My daughter, I am happy with you. May God be happy with you. You have made me achieve my dream. " Then she pulled her to her side, took Nasrin's hand, put it in mine, and cried, "Good boy, I entrust this precious jewel of mine to you.

I have no worries, I know you will take good care of it. May God bless you. " She also called Abuli, took her hand, and started dancing, congratulating Abuli. Aunt Jan had achieved her dreams with her own, as the famous saying goes, "She could crack walnuts with her tail. "

From that day on, I was in the heart of the family, I officially became my aunt's son-in-law and the son of that quiet, deep, kind, and loyal man, Aboli. In those moments, I witnessed tears on Aboli's face, the face that repeated one sentence in all the hardships: Trust in God, trust in God.

News of the Engagement in Begum's Home

I was supposed to take a short leave and go home and share this happy news with my family. I took the night bus to Tehran. Along the way, I prepared myself on how and with whom to talk first.

As soon as I arrived at the dorm, I went to my sister Tahereh's house, whose house was adjacent to ours. I knocked on her door, she opened it herself, and after kissing her, we went to her room. Without wasting time, I said, "Abji, I came to tell you the good news first. " I hadn't said anything yet. Tahereh said, with a sweet smile that made her sweet face even more adorable, "Thank God, Mubarak. " I asked in surprise, "What do you mean, Mubarak? " She said, "Your son-in-law, " I said, "How do you know? " She said, "She who doesn't know, Khwaja Shirazeh. " I was surprised. I said, "What do you mean? " She said with a laugh, "Since the day Mom and Agha returned from Kermanshah, we had been preparing ourselves. " I said, "I don't understand what you're saying. "

She hugged me and kissed me, and said, "Don't you know your own mom? " When they returned from Kermanshah, Mom told me that Yusuf had fallen in love with Nasrin. From the very first meeting, when Yusuf came to your aunt Marzieh's house, I felt that Yusuf's mind and emotions were somewhere else. That first day, when he went to the cinema with Nasrin and Nasrin returned, she had done her own thing. That night, Yusuf was in another world. He didn't say anything, but his movements and face told my heart that his heart was captured. We were waiting to see when you would confess. "Okay, tell me. " It became easier for me. I said calmly. Nasrin and I talked to each other and told each other our deepest secrets and made a promise, trusting in God, to be together for the rest of our lives from now on.

The work is on your shoulders, she kissed me again and placed her right hand on her right eye and said on my eye, every sister's wish is to see her brother's wedding, may her duty be fulfilled, God willing, you cut and sewed it yourself, let's go to mom and dad, I said I can't go, you go first, I'll take a nap here, you two make plans to go to aunt's house together, Tahereh left and I stayed to rest for a while.

My eyes had just closed, my mom told me the news from home My mother came to me in a panic, hugged me and said, "Come to your father's house so we can make plans to go to your aunt's house. " My father was a quiet, reserved, and deep man until he saw me and started to break down. He hugged me and said, "Congratulations. " My mother, father, and Tahereh sat with me to make plans. It was agreed that Tahereh, my mother, and father would come to Kermanshah with me to plan the engagement ceremony, exchange of rings, and wedding ceremony. I gave my savings to Tahereh and went to buy a ticket back to Kermanshah with my family. Two days later, we took a bus to Kermanshah and went straight to my aunt's house.

After seeing the bride and groom, it was clear that she had not told us the purpose of our trip. My mother suggested that we had come to agree on this happy union between the two families and to make the couple's plans public and plan for the wedding ceremony.

With the permission of the elders, Nasrin and I went to the market with Tahereh and bought rings, and that evening, in a very simple and intimate way, we exchanged shawls and rings according to tradition.

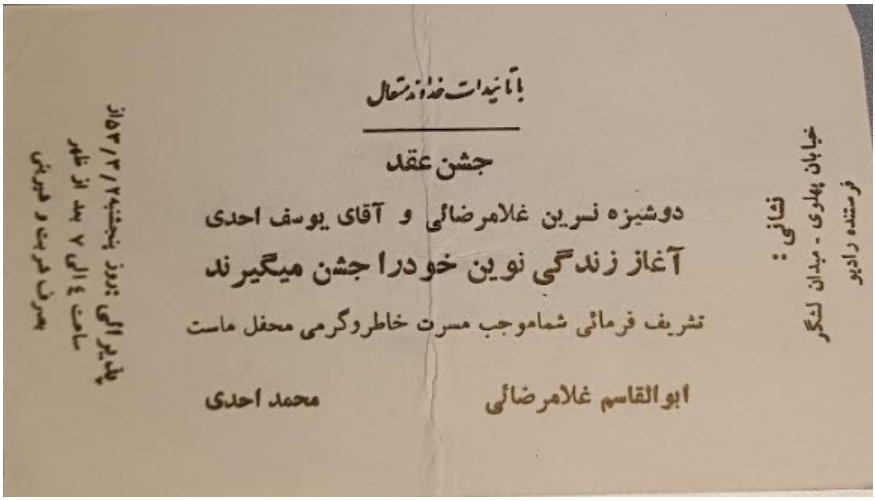
Marriage and Wedding: Simple, Sincere Agreements

We had already discussed the terms of Nasrin and I's marriage. That day, they only asked us about the dowry. I said that our agreed dowry was a volume of Nahjul-Balagha with a Persian translation that we had previously prepared and that we were studying together. My mother mockingly said with a laugh, "Mashallah, you have done all your work. Now tell me what the bride price will be. " I replied, "Whatever my aunt thinks, it will be fine. " During the family's discussion, the bride price was set at two thousand tomans. Regarding the dowry, Abuli said, "You know, I have no family and Marzieh Khanum is not able to move or work. Whatever needs to be

purchased, it is better to buy it in Tehran. There is no need to buy it here. I will pay five thousand tomans. The bride and groom in Tehran can buy their own necessities.

Of course, I have already bought a twelve-meter Kashan carpet in Nasrin's name so that they can take it with them when they go to Tehran. They also set the wedding ceremony for the middle of Sha'ban, which was about two months away. The plan was that The groom's guests who are in Tehran on the morning of the wedding day will be in Kermanshah. We will hold a very simple wedding ceremony at home in the morning, and in the evening, we will have a gathering with sweets and sherbet at the home of Aboli's colleague who was in the same complex. Of course, a few friends and neighbors of Aboli will also be invited. The wedding will be held in Tehran after my military service ends, approximately two months after the wedding ceremony.

All appointments were made simply and without pretense and formality, and my mother, father, Tahereh, and Nasrin's dowry carpet returned to Tehran by bus.



Nasrin and Yusuf's marriage-ceremony invitation: a record of the beginning of their life together.

The Marriage Ceremony

According to the wedding ceremony plan, it was really like a family gathering in the morning of the wedding ceremony and in the evening, a guest of bread from both parties and friends gathered at Mr. Moghimi's house for sweets and sherbet. The entire ceremony was simple and unpretentious, and everything was normal but warm. There was no makeup or bridal salon, no new dress. Of course, Nasrin and I had bought a wedding dress in advance for the bride, which she wore that day. I was present at the wedding table in the same casual and ordinary dress as always. Tahereh had also brought a mirror and candlestick from Tehran, which they had placed on the table.

The Guests and the Warmth of a Simple Gathering

The participants in the ceremony from our side included my father, my mother, my sister Hafezeh with her eldest son Manouchehr, her fiancée Maryam, and my elder brother Ghahreman and my sister Tahereh. "Ms. Parsa was the nickname of Tahereh that my mother had given her. Parsa was the name of the first woman in the Shah's government who was the Minister of Education. My mother said that if the government was just, Tahereh would have had the right to become a minister. Maman said this jokingly, but she was not joking. She believed it deeply. "Present from the bride's side were also Nasrin's parents, her friend Aboli and her family, who were all around her at their house, and the neighbor's wife and husband were with us. After the wedding ceremony, Aboli ordered kebabs with bread, which was amazing.

Although the food was four more than the number of guests, but there was no extra. I think if ten extra were prepared, it would have been over. Kebabs and Kermanshahi oil had a different taste. Don't forget that the spirit that ruled the ceremony also had a different smell. And there was no movement that was not full of love and peace, and Aunt Marzieh's happy face and the lovely laughter of Aboli, who would entertain my father like two brothers at a gathering, and everyone was lovely, who made that day unforgettable with their presence.

Nasrin and Yusuf's marriage spread

Exchanging the rings of commitment

The End of Military Service and Preparing Our First Home

The military service was over. Of course, I have already written to you about the beginning and end of military service. Almost a week after the end of the service, Nasrin and I went to Tehran. Of course, I had already talked to my father about where Nasrin and I would live so that we could have our own independent lives. My father's house was two stories high, with one room measuring approximately four by five meters on the ground floor and another room of the same size upstairs.

We were supposed to live upstairs and pay my father a monthly rent. Of course, he didn't accept the rent, but with my insistence and logical and fair reasons, he gave in and agreed to include the rent. It's true that I had been working and struggling since I was six to cover some of my living expenses. Now, I wanted to have some payment, no matter how small, to help my father, who is responsible for the entire family, and also to teach myself that I must pay the price of independence, even if it's to my father. We had learned from my mother that free food is not good. As soon as I returned to Tehran, I started preparing our first house. I divided our room into two parts, each with an independent door to the balcony from the outside, and also with a curtain from the inside.

As a result, one room was two meters wide. It was five meters wide, and there was a place to sleep, study, and work, and the next room, which was three meters by five meters, became our daily living space.

. Outside the room, the width of both rooms, there was a balcony one meter wide, that is, one meter by five meters, which was connected to the yard of the house by stairs on one side of the balcony. At the other end of the balcony, I installed a cabinet-like space that included

a washing machine, a dishwasher, and above that, a cupboard for cooking and baking utensils.

سپاس یزدان پاك را

که پیوند زنده دلها و بوجود آورنده محبتها است

اینك که بیاریش

نسرین و یوسف

بهم می‌پیوندند وجود پر مهرتان در این شادی آذین بخش

این پیوند آسمانی است

غلامرضائی احدی

1974, Sept, 4

پذیرائی روز سه شنبه ۵۳/۶/۱۲

از ساعت ۶ الی ۱۲ بعد از ظهر

بصرف شام

نشانی خزانه قلعه مرغی اول ۲۰ متری فلاح خیابان ده متری حبیب

کوچه ۷ محمدیان پلاك ۲۵

Nasrin and Yusuf's wedding invitation: September 3, 1974, the formal beginning of their life together.

A Glance at the Cultural Climate and the Question of Westernization

. A mobile and warm house, all these preparations were done independently by me in consultation with Nasrin. Perhaps it would be right to make a brief point here and pass it on.

Mom, with all the high values she had and had built her life from the ground up, was now seeing that her authority was diminishing with the arrival of the bride. Unfortunately, she saw this independent

growth of mine that I had learned from her through the eyes of the bride, and by teasing me while talking, she made her message public, as the mother-in-law famously said, playing a traditional game. Of course, she also applied this perspective when buying our living equipment, which she was with us.

I would first ask Nasrin's opinion on all the choices of equipment in terms of color and model, then I would ask Mom about the quality and price. It was clear that she was not satisfied, and sometimes she would laugh and say that it had just come to the market and was old, which was annoying.

I grew up under Mom and tried to act logically and fairly, and at the same time, I could teach Nasrin step by step. Nasrin had weak executive maturity and decision-making for her age, and she was aware of Mom's power. Mom had scared the cat in the hole and completely dominated Nasrin's thoughts.

Even if I spoke to Nasrin and asked her for her opinion, she would tell me not to be upset with my aunt. Despite my mother's temperament, which she had built in her own struggles and was a good manager, there was a difference between me and my mother in my ideology. Of course, my mother had this difference with everyone.

The Psychological War Between Matter and Meaning

I was the only one who had the courage to express my opinion, even if it was against my mother's opinion.

When my mother and I were together, she would go head to head with my opinions and check hers with me, but everyone else was on one side, but the commander's opinion was on the other side. Like a retired military colonel, he would forget during his retirement that

the military era was over, now it was a period of constructive thinking and growth of individuals' thoughts and experiences.

While respecting the old traditions that age was the dominant criterion for accepting opinions, I believed in a more complementary belief. In fact, I accepted age as an individual's experience, of course with some caveats and not absolute. For example, for individuals to grow independently, I believed that each individual should be given the opportunity to try and make mistakes so that they too can gain experience.

. It was like this, to say that the compassionate, kind, strong and resourceful and the one who rode the difficult times had to accept that now he too had to perfect his own views and sometimes run alongside others and sometimes behind others. Well, these conditions were not compatible with his thinking.

Now the new generation had new views. Even if it was contrary to traditional and common views, we had to accept that another time was being born, right or wrong.

Democracy, Voting, and the Difficulty of Setting Boundaries in a Family

Considering the scientific advances and new discoveries in the world, the media had become a powerful means of communication between humans.

In this way, young capitalism broke the values of the traditional closed world, right or wrong, day by day, and with the help of the media, introduced and managed new ideas in society.

With the arrival of television in society, the formation of minds had undergone a leap. All kinds of films, new concepts and values were promoted by young capitalism.

The words of the elders, who had remained in the closed circle and were still trying to preserve the values of perfectionism with old methods, were slowly, slowly and creepingly directed towards the thoughts of oppression and as a result, further exploitation of man by man.

The new calculated views with material psychology in the guise of entertainment and pleasure as the goal were propagated in society and by spreading them, the dominant meanings of old values such as dignity and pleasure were completely transformed into mental contradictions of the youth.

In this campaign, the media also acted completely in the service of spreading the culture of unlimited pleasure and importing Western culture and purposefully subverting the value infrastructure and human-friendly education and the growth of a knowledge-based and respect-seeking culture.

In this psychological war, the media portrayed the supporters of knowledge-based and respect-based values as reactionary and backward and with complex illusions of humiliation, and in return, by spreading Western culture and showing its freedoms and pleasures, the followers of this culture were introduced as modern and enlightened.

The world community was captured in this war, the identity and mission of man became more one-dimensional, and in this war, the more and more bitter and dry it was, the human thoughts were burned together under the burden of complex and psychoanalytic propaganda towards the thoughts of hedonism and the daily negation of the thoughts of honor were presented and despised as backwardness.

By using the media, the depth of understanding of society became more empty of thought and planning, and watching was a means of advancing simplicity and ignorance.

The story of seeing a snake's picture instead of writing a snake became valuable. A psychological war was created in the minds of humanity in society between matter and meaning or religion and knowledge, and the media were fueling this fire and leading thoughts towards materialism and achieving the peak of pleasure, and under the banner of physical freedom, the interests of the exploiters were laid down, which became the evidence to prove the claim.

The materialists, by despising the wrongdoings of the false gods, by strengthening the theory of the materiality of existence, presented their own scientific philosophy. They promoted the thoughts of society towards maximum enjoyment and the unrestricted use of time by promoting spirituality.

Based on the new system, the artists were paid abundant benefits by the agents of implementing the philosophy of materialism and creating new discourses. The slogans of "The world is only two days old",

"Take your hat, the wind won't blow it away", "Make your love, there's no news there", "Be happy, don't miss the opportunities" became daily discourse. Young and new capitalism broke the strongholds of the old era every day and made its ideas dominant. In the meantime, even universities used their mercenary and obedient professors to break the shackles of the old intellectual systems and despise them, and very cleverly, by using the power of their own theory and the most sophisticated psychological methods, quickly make their teachings dominate the thoughts of society.

In short, they popularized new concepts in opposite ways: "Is knowledge better than wealth? ", "Honor is good or pleasure? ", "Jesus, Moses, and thousands of other slogans were transformed into a complex philosophy of selfishness, replacing God-seeking in classrooms as the discourse of the day. Behind the scenes, they invested heavily in making the changes that were presented and injected as transformations a success because their goal was to make

a profit and they had no qualms about destroying old values. They tried to distort the minds of the society at any cost and spread lies and rumors. They exaggerated the reactionary religions and rightly despised them about the original religion and spiritual values, and burned everything to engineer the thoughts of the society towards the oppressive ideals of the West. To be fair, they made good progress in their falsehood.

Now, in this era when right and wrong were confused, Yusuf was becoming a reference in the family who could establish boundaries and maintain peace among those around him with correct knowledge and principled methods. It was a very difficult task. People were gradually becoming familiar with these problems, but because they did not know the root of the pain correctly, they were captured and surrendered to the network of cunning conspirators.

As the saying goes, very firm and court-like words were put forward, but on the contrary, in their actions they were supporters of the injection of injustice and corruption. For example, they were promoting independence, but using human psychology, they sought pleasure and presented honor as null. In order to succeed, they were trained cadres and killed their own work. They propagated falsehood and managed the minds of society, as the saying goes, "Words of truth but intentions of falsehood. " They consciously waged psychological warfare.

In practice, confronting dualism caused many losses, as these confrontations caused many divisions, which was also the deep desire of capitalism. Instead of solving problems and creating unity, they established the theory of democracy as the principle, in which the criterion is the number of votes and not the legitimacy of the vote. As a result, to solve the problem of the principle of dualism in societies, they promoted the solution in Western democracy, which they claimed was a scientific solution, so that they could manage the scene by holding elections or referendums, and to strengthen their

views, they enacted laws under the umbrella of human rights. By relying on the above laws, they in practice, with the help of their media, fueled the ignorance of the people and voted for their representatives at great expense. They placed them in important seats and organized seats.

Then, by engineering thoughts and using audio-visual propaganda tools and any other possible method, without considering right and wrong, they established falsehood.

Let's continue our story.

Buying Household Necessities and Preparing for the Wedding

To buy our future living necessities that Aboli had asked for, I was supposed to go to the market with Nasrin and together we would buy as many of our favorite items as possible.

This would definitely have been a disadvantage without the presence of Mom, who is experienced and self-made and who in practice wants to be our help, especially considering our lack of experience.

Mom, Tahereh, Nasrin, and I were supposed to go to the market. Knowing what I had about Mom, Mom's thoughts and Yusuf's perspective on managing the scene were spot on.

Mom had come to help in her own mind, using her experience. Yusuf, as Aboli's representative, wanted to fulfill his duty as a groom well so that they could obtain their living necessities with the money that his wife's father had given them. At the same time, he was keen that no rights be violated.

And that the bride-to-be could obtain her living necessities with her father's money, her husband's help, her mother-in-law's management, and her own taste.

"If a person pays close attention to his actions in practice, he can prevent his mistakes and not allow himself to cause discomfort to others through love, help, and benevolence, which is very difficult. Failure to pay attention to the subtleties of the work and insistence on imposing one's own ideas can upset the other party and lead to the conclusion that "we do not want good, we do not want evil. " If you cannot separate your ego from your help, then you cannot be my helper. Please do not be a thorn in my path. "

I leave the conclusions and thoughts on these issues to you, my dears. That same day, during lunch when we were gathered together, I asked my mother cleverly, "Where and how did your mother learn to persuade the seller to give a better price or help us identify the quality of the goods to advance our business? " Mom replied, "I have bought for many people hundreds of times. Now I want to help my loved ones. " I also said, "Mom, you know that Nasrin is very naive and can be said to be inexperienced. With respect to your experience and compassion, I want Nasrin to enter the world of decision-making by spending her father's money and relying on her husband so that her self-confidence can grow.

Even if she is not successful in quality or price, at least she will live by her own choices tomorrow and can be more experienced like you next time. What do you think? " Mom repeated again with a mocking smile, instead of paying attention to the logic of the words, "You just came to the adult market and shut up. " I told her, "Mom, even if I become the most knowledgeable mujtahid in terms of rank, you still won't be willing to pray behind me. It's not a new or old issue, it's a matter of truth and justice. " But since the answers come from my mind, it's hard to bear. When Mom asked me to continue the discussion, I said, "Mom, we're not discussing it. "

I just wanted to share a point with you based on my own experience, which I leave to your own judgment whether to accept or reject.

I closed this notebook, knowing that I knew that solving the root of these angles and eradicating the mental minus would take a lot of work.

All the items prepared for our first house, from garlic to onions, were prepared and decorated with my own hands. Throughout the entire time, Nasrin only enjoyed it and had no role in the process. She didn't need to. Just being by my side was enough.

The Honeymoon and the Employment Process

Aboli and her aunt also came to Tehran. The next night, a family gathering was held, and at that gathering, the wedding day was determined and a list of guests who were to be invited was prepared. My sister Tahereh's family secretary recorded the decisions and determined the responsibilities of the people who had been chosen to hold the ceremony, so that Tahereh would inform them and follow up on the implementation. Of course, Tahereh and I were together unintentionally and without any intention. Although there was a good harmony, it was not ideal for Mom. Without any plan, she would still hear her teasing. She would ask Tahereh, "How are things going, Mrs. Parsa? ", which means that I don't know how things are progressing.

The wedding was scheduled for the middle of Shaban. It was a small, intimate gathering, and it ended happily and happily, and the beginning of our life began.

From the day after the wedding, I was looking for work so that I could pay for my living expenses. I really didn't know how and where to pursue it. Mom was a master at these things. With Tahereh's help, I read the advertisements in the needs pages of newspapers that were available in our house every day, because Tahereh's husband,

Ali Agha, was a printer at the Ettelaat newspaper institute, and he would bring a copy home with him every night.

I saw a job advertisement in the newspaper that the Ministry of Labor needed workers. I prepared myself to go to the employment office to follow up on those advertisements. I was a little hesitant and didn't know what to do. Mom was aware of my hesitation. She lifted me up kindly by the chin and said, "Hey, sir, unless your mother is dead, you'll come with me. I know the place. God willing, I needed his help. He had the strength, but first I offered him a favor, saying I didn't want to bother him. " She gave me a meaningful look and said, "Excuse me, Mr. Yusuf, don't forget that you're not just my son. First, you're my brother. Your relationship with Tahereh is the same as my relationship with Bahram, your uncle. We were close like that.

When I was ironing his clothes, I stood next to him while he was getting dressed to make sure he didn't have any shortcomings. Don't worry, we'll go to the employment office together in the morning. " We were sitting in the waiting room waiting for our turn. When it was our turn, the officer went to the room before me and quickly returned to me and said, "Go, my son, you will be successful. " I went inside and greeted him. The gentleman sitting at the desk got up and shook my hand and offered me a compliment. I sat down on the chair in front of his desk. He was silent for a moment, thinking. He said without preamble, "No, unfortunately, this job is not suitable for you. " He said it in such a way that I didn't realize he was talking loudly to himself or to me.

Before I could say anything, he said, "Son, this job is not suitable for you. This is a request for a worker and it is not suitable for you. " I, who was a little disappointed, said, "Sir, I am a worker by birth and I don't know the work of a laborer. Freelancing and inaction are not suitable for me. Please help me. I just got married. My wife is also pregnant. I promise to endure whatever hardship it may be. " He said, "No, this job is actually filling gas cylinders, which you have to do at

the loading dock. Then put those cylinders in the car and take them to the door of the customers who have bought coupons. " Deliver it and receive their coupons and bring it to the sales manager's secretary. I quickly said, "Dad, this is no problem. "

In response, he said, "I know your personality, and your qualifications are a hallmark of mine. Believe me, if I had the power, I would make you my deputy and successor. "

He wrote down his direct phone number and gave it to me, saying, "Call me every morning to see what I can do for you. " I didn't insist anymore because I was convinced that he was speaking from the heart. I got up to say goodbye. He came to me from behind his desk, patted my back, said, "Don't worry, it'll be fine. " He shook my hand and walked me to the door of his room and said, "Call me. " I said, "I'll definitely come to Mom. " She was in a panic and asked, "What happened? " I said, "Let's go, I'll explain it to you on the way. " He said, "No, tell me now. " I said, "You don't think this is a good idea for me. " He gave me his phone number to call him every day until I find a job.

Suddenly, he got angry and his jealousy swelled up and told me, "Sit down, I'll come now. " Although I was embarrassed that my mother would go to him, my heart was full of hope, gratitude, and pride for having such a mother. At that moment, I remembered how my mother had held the responsible person's collar to get my father a job, how she had my father's back, and what she didn't do to get my father hired.

Mom went to the manager's office. The door was not closed properly behind her. Nothing could be seen through the crack. There was a bitter silence. It was as if my whole being was frozen. Suddenly, through the crack, I noticed my mother's head falling on the floor. I felt a stroke for a moment and became speechless. I had nothing to say. Tears had dried in my waiting eyes. The door opened. My dear old Ghahreman came out of the manager's office and told me to go

in. Mr. Manager is dealing with you. It's true. Don't forget. "The old lion was still a lion. "

I went inside the room and told me to sit down, dear. Now I understand better who your coach is. Then he wrote down an address and a name. He told me to go to this address on the old road of Karjeh. Go to the employment office of the Persi Gas Company. I spoke to Sargerd Mozaffari, one of my friends who is retired from the military. We agreed to meet.

Give me a proper office job, go now, your mother doesn't have to go. I promised her that you will be hired. She said, "I know you know, but I still say, take care of your mother. "

She got up from her chair and came to me. She shook my hand again. I came outside. The door to the room was still open. The manager was waiting to see my mother. My mother told the manager, who had not yet entered the room, that your hand shouldn't hurt. May God not deprive you of your brotherhood. We set off to return. I asked her why her scarf fell to the floor. She said, "I don't know. " Of course, I found out years later that she had thrown her scarf under the manager's feet to help me.

I insisted on taking my mother back. I went to the Percy Gas Company. Mr. Mozaffari's office. He greeted me warmly with a greeting and a greeting and offered to sit on a chair. He himself came and sat next to me and started talking to me very friendly. He was so friendly that I forgot that I had gone for work and employment.

He asked me, "Tell me, what are your skills? " I replied that I started working at the age of six to help my parents and share in the financial responsibility of providing for the family. When I was about four years old, I learned to make bricks and helped to build our first house and to turn over the dried bricks.

My sister, who was three years older than me, was my teacher and encourager. Then, when I was seven, I started selling fruit. I

continued to sell baklava, ice cream, corn, and balloons. My income was not much.

I felt like I had become a man, a child of labor, and in practice, I was really connected to the pain of the family with my skin and bones.

Because my mother knew how to sew and sew doll clothes for the doll shop in our neighborhood, Tahereh and I helped her. We had also practiced sewing.

I was eleven years old when, in addition to my studies, I started working in a neighborhood workshop after finishing school. I officially became a staff member. I sewed doll hair. My employer was very pleased with me, and since I was literate, he gave me all the accounting, recording of people's working hours, and preparing pay slips.

The workshop was closed due to the employer's illness, so I became an apprentice tailor for a gentleman engineer who had a tailoring shop. In general, every three months during school holidays, I found a new job according to the conditions and possibilities, plumbing, carpentry. Suddenly, Mr. Mozaffari put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Get up, master. " I quickly got up.

Showing me his desk, he said, "Go and sit behind that desk. " I was lost in myself for a moment, caught up in my double mindset. One of them kept banging my head, telling me to be careful not to get too full, it's time to be quiet, but the other one kept saying, "Your value is higher than this job. There's not enough desk there for you, but be patient, you're in a world without laws. Don't be arrogant. "

I heard him say again, "Go sit there, you're right. " I was both happy and embarrassed by his fatherly attitude. He said, "Sit down. " I sat down in my chair. He went to the phone and asked the sales manager to come to his office quickly. Mr. Khajeh Gani came. I didn't like him from the first moment. He was very rude and harsh.

He introduced me to Khajeh Gani as a new colleague and said, "Murshid had asked for an assistant some time ago. You should take Mr. Ahadi and familiarize him with the environment. Immediately tell him to put his desk in Murshid's office. I know Murshid is on leave today. I will talk to him tomorrow myself. Then he told me, "Go with Khajeh Gani and get familiar with the environment. " When your meeting is over, please come to the office so that we can complete your work file together. "

I went back to him and said, "In terms of employment, I have to hire you as a worker and on a basic wage basis, as we wrote in the advertisement, but regarding wages, I will talk to the mentor who will report both commission and overtime for you so that your income will increase a little. " He continued, "I first treated you with respect for your mother, which I was advised to do, but now, more than ever, I am saying goodbye to you as a worthy son of the country. Don't forget to come to me with whatever you have to do. Now go to the canteen and rest until you leave in an hour with the work service. The service driver will specify your daily pick-up and drop-off location. " When leaving his office, instead of shaking hands, he said goodbye to me with military respect.

That day was a day of pride and self-confidence for me, but a thick black cloud still reigned in my mind. Before going to bed, I went to the local bakery to buy a box of sweets and walked steadily to my mother's house, where she was praying. It was an opportunity to go upstairs first to give the good news to the light of the hut and the other half of my being, as well as my child who was just growing inside her mother's belly. Of course, no one knew about Nasrin's pregnancy yet because I had rushed and had been impatient before the wedding ceremony and after the official and religious marriage. In fact, on the wedding night, my child was also present at the wedding party.

I gave Nasrin the box of sweets and the news of the recruitment. As usual, she welcomed me with tears on her innocent face. I quickly went downstairs and kissed my mother's hands and told her the story of the recruitment, and I kissed her feet for her active presence in my life. Nasrin also brought the box of sweets and gave it to my mother.

That night in our hut, there was joy and gratitude that adorned our hearts. When my father saw me, he hugged me tightly and cried, saying, "I believe in your manhood and I know that God gave me so much energy and intoxicated me with these words, tears, and the pressure of my father's embrace that while I was drunk, my mind vividly played a trip to the past. I remembered the day when I had written an essay in high school titled "Who would you like to be? " It was a fictional short story about the life of a poor father and son. I had written. "It was a cold night. I was sitting by the window on the chair left by my father. I was looking at the stars in the sky that were bright and shiny after the snowfall. Suddenly, I noticed a shadow moving from afar towards our house.

As time passed, the shadow got closer and closer. It was more recognizable, an old man and a little boy. One by one, they were knocking on the neighbors' doors and then continuing on their way again. They were approaching our house. I wanted to know what they were doing. I quickly reached the back door of our house. Maybe they hadn't opened the door yet. I opened the door. They were shivering from the cold. They were a father and son who were looking for a shelter to escape the cold night. I begged and pleaded with my mother to let them stay the night in our house, in my father's library, a room that no one had gone there for years after my father's death. My mother gave them a bed. I gave them a bed and said goodbye. I went back to my room, but I don't know why I couldn't sleep.

I needed to witness a reality. I went behind the guest room door and looked through the keyhole inside. I saw how the boy was sleeping

peacefully in his father's arms in that cold room. Seeing that scene and the bone-chilling cold that prevailed, I felt like I had a fire in my heart. I thought I had a fever. I prayed to God right then and there, wishing I were in that boy's place for a moment and I was sleeping in my father's arms. A Hafezeh, although imaginary, was real to me. "

Six days a week, at five o'clock, I was waiting for the service at the twenty-meter-long first street of Fallah, next to other gas stations. Our service was a truck, like a meat refrigerator. About thirty people would get on the back of the truck. We all stood on our feet, depending on the time. Sometimes three or four more people would get on the service on the way because the space was tight. The driver himself would come and put them in and, in short, he would push the door from the outside to lock it so that it wouldn't open suddenly.

That Cycle Did Not Make Me Happy

Based on my progress at work and at my request, they gave me a three-person team to market the gas cylinder coupons in advance. But this cycle was a boring and unexciting day for me. In the end, in this job, we would sell coupons for gas cylinders filled with gas to people, and they would use up every last drop of gas. They burned it in the ovens for cooking. The money from the sale went into the pockets of the CEOs and the ruling capitalists. We were also given armor to provide a bite of bread for the workers. That cycle inside me did not make me happy. As a result, I was looking for another job. I really wanted to become a pilot to make my mother happy, which I was looking for.

After applying to register for the pilot entrance exam, I took the exam and passed, but during the process of completing my application, they actually removed me from the system on the pretext that my application was incomplete. I was still pursuing my job. As a result, after much discussion and searching, I found out that my mother was born in Baku, and Baku was also affiliated with the

communist Soviet Union, so in terms of security, I had no chance of becoming a member. Some time later, I read an advertisement in the Kayhan newspaper that the Civil Aviation Organization was recruiting a number of trainees. After two years of training and passing the internal exams, they would be hired. The training place and then the workplace were at Mehrabad Airport. After reading this advertisement, I felt that my wish had come true.

Although I was not allowed to fly, my job was to justify the flight routes of national pilots. May God bless me. "Kachi Beh from Nothing"

I passed the recruitment exam with a good score. After completing my registration process, the training classes started. Fortunately, the classes started at 3 pm, but my working hours at the gas company were until 3 pm.

I didn't want to leave the company's job for now. I went to the job interview and told the major about my problem. He was very happy and encouraged me.

He told the mentor to write me a marketing letter at 2-3 pm. The major was very happy that I was thinking about my own development.

It was less than an hour's walk from the company to the airport, and I eagerly attended the training classes every day.

The Law: The Greatest Cause of My Exclusion

At the same time, the political situation in Iran was chaotic and tense. Occasionally, I heard news of street shootings. By order of the Shah, the Civil Aviation Organization was separated from the Ministry of Interior and joined the Ministry of War so that the Shah could have a more comfortable air border security. Unfortunately, with these

developments, my position was in danger because from that day on, the military aviation employment rules prevailed over the civil aviation. As a result, attention was paid to the security protection of individuals. It became more precise and finally my flight was broken and the last chance to achieve my dream was closed. A week later, my disqualification from serving in the military was issued and announced. I was like an earthquake victim whose house of hope had collapsed on my head.

This complex never left my mind because it was instilled in me that I was an infidel in the sanctuary of my own homeland, in a country where American advisors were happily raiding under the shadow of the capitulation law. Thanks to the Shah's incompetence and his fear of the people, they set fire to my farm of hope and, to my astonishment, burned it alive and scattered its ashes.

Finally, the Shah's laws were implemented and I was expelled from there so that the Shah and his family could live in a humiliating sleep captivity, only with the desire for money and power, but soulless and confused. For several months, I went to language classes at night during the training course to learn English step by step.

I had no heart or brain left and my only joy was seeing my parents alive and having Nasrin with me in my dimly lit hut. It was.

I knew that working at the gas station, even with a basic wage, would not provide me with the future and income I needed, but it was a good start.

Nasrin's Labor and the Death of Our Arzoo

I also had the responsibility of a child in my basket, of course, having a child whose date of birth was different from the date of the wedding. I knew that I was in a hurry, but I had done nothing wrong, but Nasrin would turn a blind eye and listen to her mother's taunts,

saying, "You haven't controlled yourself, what should I tell people now? "

In short, I felt that Nasrin was under pressure spiritually, but she wouldn't give me any armor. One day, when I was home a little earlier than usual, but my mother didn't know, I heard from the balcony that Mom was in pain.

She is upset and somehow, because of my religious and legal actions, she has the right to ruin Nasrin's morale. I just realized what caused Nasrin's depression. I couldn't bear it anymore and went downstairs. I dragged my mother and Tahereh, who were in the yard, into the room and criticized my mother and sister. Tahereh was right. I didn't say anything. My mother quickly said in a panic, "Refill your chink and send it to me. " This unjust statement from my mother caused my fuse to go off for a moment, and I went crazy without thinking. My eyes fell on the rice that was steaming on the lamp. I attacked her and took the steamer off the pot and with my hand I tore off a piece of hot rice and put it on my eyes. I cried and said, "May this blessing make me blind if I lie.

I swear to God, Nasrin Zherei didn't tell me. She's sleeping upstairs now. She doesn't know that I came. I heard it myself when you were having a heart attack with Tahereh. " The burning of my hands and eyelids didn't burn me as much as my mother's words did. Tahereh was terrified because one of my eyes was swollen. She quickly took a potato from the basket, cut it in half, and gently placed it on my eyelid. She insisted that we go to the doctor, but I was having a stroke. I left the house, just put a handkerchief on the potato on my eyelid, and walked aimlessly to the end of our street. My heart was bursting. I walked fast and fast until I reached the South Tehran train tracks that passed through there and there was no guard.

There I sat on the tracks, the burning words of my mother, who was my living Ghahreman and always my helper, were burning my heart. My innocent wife had no armor of wrongdoing. She was truly

oppressed. I couldn't accept how a woman who had been oppressed for years in exile could now easily wrong this woman and put me in a severe mental state. I was in a war inside me when I heard the sound of a train coming from the railway towards the south. A spark struck my mind. I didn't get up from my seat. For a moment, I felt like I didn't want to move. I wanted to stay under the train to escape from all this hardship. The train driver seemed to be scared. He was expressing his fear in the sound of the train. For a moment, the movie flashed past my mind.

I remembered my first meeting in front of Aunt Marzieh's house when Nasrin opened the door for me and said, "Mr. Yusuf, you're welcome. " I regretted it and quickly moved away from the tracks, but I was still so close to the tracks that I was thrown to the ground by the force of the wind as the train passed. I woke up for a moment.

It was as if I was listening to my twin, saying, "How quickly did you cut it? Did you just want to save yourself? Didn't you even think for a moment where you were going to release this kind bird in the cage? " My legs became weak, I turned around and sat on the rail again. I thought for a moment. At that moment, I felt that the cure for all the pain and suffering of my ups and downs in life was that bird waiting for me to go to its heart and make it happy. On the other hand, I couldn't take my resentment towards my mother seriously. I understood that, unfortunately, my mother's reaction was to the psychological pressures, deprivations, and wounds in her heart.

I thought that seeing me defend my wife had turned into a kind of complex for her, unaware that Nasrin Zereh had no sin in this and was patiently and compassionately caring for my heart. Later, I realized that my mother, seeing my support for Nasrin, especially Nasrin's sister, who took care of Nasrin with all her might and with her own resources and experience as a nurse, left no stone unturned in helping Nasrin with medical issues and had also chosen a famous midwife to have Nasrin's delivery under her supervision. Despite the

fact that my mother was compassionate for me and my family from the bottom of her heart, the burning wounds inside her would unwittingly distract her thoughts, as a result of which her inner complexes would become active and her undesirable movements would cause harm to herself and others.

I must say, The Pain of the King was a thick book that the unread cannot digest. Despite all this mental conflict, I returned to read it. I went to my mother's room, she was sitting alone, looking at her condition and her daily life made my heart burn.

I quickly threw myself at his feet and showered him with kisses. His first reaction was that while he was crying like a spring cloud, he checked my eyes, kissed my head and face, and apologized profusely, saying, "God forbid, forgive me. I make a mistake, but I can't control my unjustified anger, which, as the wounds inside me opened, seemed to be rubbing salt into it. " When Nasrin came down, she noticed my eyes, suddenly came to me, and for the first time, hugged me to my mom. She asked what happened. I said, "Read it. " When they came, I was looking from in front of the building where the blacksmiths were welding. The welding current had damaged my eye. It would heal. She soothed my pain like a deer with her kind eyes. My mom got up, hugged Nasrin, and told her, "Don't worry, it's not too serious.

Go to your room. I'll bring you dinner. " Two days ago, Masoumeh had come to take Nasrin for a visit to Ms. Moshiri, who was Nasrin's doctor. The night before, Nasrin had been in a little pain. Masoumeh knew that the baby's story and her date of birth suggested that it could be labor pains. It wasn't time to go to the doctor yet when the pain got worse. Masoumeh went to the butcher's shop down the street and asked if she could use their phone. Sometimes, as a reward, the neighbors used the butcher's phone, which had become a kind of bridge for neighbors to communicate with.

Masoumeh calls Ms. Moshiri and informs her about Nasrin's condition. She says, "Take her straight to the hospital until you get there. I'll go and handle the hospital admission myself. " As soon as you get there, tell the security guard that you are my patient. You will be transferred. The nurse will take care of the necessary procedures until I get there. Hopefully, the delivery won't take long. I have to go to my sister's wedding tonight. Masoumeh tells my mom. Mom also quickly goes to our neighbor Kamal's house, who has a car. His wife wakes him up. Mom, Nasrin, and Ms. Masoumeh go to the hospital. Nasrin is being hospitalized

I knew we were going to see Mrs. Moshiri in the evening for Nasrin's checkup. I was home on time when my sister said, "Mom, let's go to the hospital early. " I quickly took her to the hospital. Nasrin was sitting calmly on the bed. Masoumeh was next to her. I went and kissed Nasrin's forehead and started to comfort her. She was not in pain, but her color was pale. When she saw me, it was as if blood was being injected under her skin. Her color was red and her face became brighter. Masoumeh said that her doctor had not come, but she was constantly in contact with the hospital. She told the nurse to inject her with an injection if there was no news in an hour.

Mrs. Moshiri was very worried about her sister's wedding and she was late. Nasrin's delivery had made her nervous. Nasrin was no longer in pain. The nurse told me that she didn't think one of the companions could stay if she was discharged tonight. The rest should be taken.

Masoumeh told me to go home because I had to go to work in the morning, but she was on leave and was staying with Nasrin. I said goodbye to my wife and went home. I don't know why I didn't want to leave Nasrin alone, but in terms of medical assistance, Masoumeh was more appropriate because she was both a nurse and the liaison with Mrs. Moshiri and the person who arranged the appointment with the hospital. Forced and against my will, I returned home. The whole

family was waiting for the news. I gave it to my room without changing my clothes. I lay down on the bed out of exhaustion. I woke up early in the morning and went to the work station. I had written a note to my manager about the possibility of my wife giving birth and I couldn't come to work.

I gave it to one of my colleagues who took the bus together every day so that she would remember to call me at my workplace or to the hiring manager so that they wouldn't worry about me not coming.

I went to the hospital, Masoumeh was lying in the waiting room, she got up when she saw me, her face was very tired. I asked her how Nasrin was. She was discharged safely. Masoumeh had a lump in her throat and said, "Nasrin is fine, but your daughter died. " I asked if Nasrin knew. She said, "No, I was waiting for you. I just know that my life left my body. " It was as if I had fainted and the nurses had forcibly brought me to her. I just realized that Arezoo had died. We were supposed to call her Arezoo. If it was a boy, my screams would have shaken the entire hospital. All I could see was a bunch of white shrouds wrapped around me. I asked Masoumeh to go to the doctor. She said, "It's not a good time. "

She said, "After giving birth, she went to her sister's wedding. " I shouted with boundless anger, she made our wish a wedding gift for her sister. The head nurse, who was an experienced lady, tried to calm me down, rejecting the others. She herself started by remaining innocent to fully inform me of what had happened. Her first words ruined my mood again. She said that the mother still doesn't know the baby and she keeps asking the nurses why they don't grant her wish and breastfeed her. So first we have to give her this bad news. You have to be patient and think about your husband for now. Of course, after calming Nasrin down, we will form a council to investigate all the questions and causes of death.

I turned to Masoumeh and said, crying, "Masoumeh, I don't have the courage. You talk to Nasrin. " You said it right. You know for

yourself that I am treating Nasrin, and it's useless for me to say that she is waiting for you.,,,,, An incomprehensible howl from within me filled the air like the burning scream of a broken heart.

I washed my head and face, and then I saw my Nasrin sitting on the bed, looking at the ceiling of the room. I trusted in God and went to my love and mother, Arzoo. When she saw me, she asked, "Did you see Arzoo? Did she take your face or mine? " She continued, "I still haven't brought Arzoo to hug her. " My liver was on fire. I didn't know how to give the news of the fullness of Arzoo to that pure and oppressed angel. With all my inner helplessness, I said, "Father, Arzoo, you have not spread your wings and flown away to heaven to prepare a place for you. " Hearing my words, a sweet smile brightened her bright face and said, "Okay, she is your daughter. God willing, Father, you brought me into this world. "

I said, "Yes, this world is full of pain and sorrow, which is not worthy of a Nasrin daughter. " She was about to be happy with the words that came from her heart, but for a moment, her eyebrows furrowed. You, too, asked, "You, Yusuf, have you seen Arzoo? " Is he okay? I hugged her and said, "To be honest, she had been under a lot of pressure during the three deliveries. Because of this, the doctors were busy with her because she had breathing problems. Her father, who was burned, wouldn't wake up. But she spread her wings and flew away from these unlucky people. I pressed her in my arms and told her in her ear, "I asked you to take good care of her. " I said calmly, "Nasrin, our dream has gone to heaven. "

She asked me to tell you, "Don't worry, her brother Ali will come to be by your side very soon. " I held her tightly in my arms out of fear that her soul wouldn't fly away. She just asked, "What happened to Arzoom? " "Yusuf, did Arzoom die? " I kissed her head and face and said again in her ear, "No, Arzoom didn't die. He didn't fail the exam. He continued his journey to God. " She became quiet and quiet. She had maintained her strong spirit with her faith. A teardrop was

dripping down her face. A teardrop that still makes my heart ache when I remember it. She was worried because of me that Arzoom had died.

As usual, he turned the space around, feeling my anxiety, he took my hand in his and connected his heart to mine and said, "Good luck, Arzu, you passed the exam without taking it, don't worry, it's you, God willing, Ali will come in his place. " Nasrin calmed down to calm Yusuf.

I said, "Nasrin, I'm waiting for Masi to go to her so we can do the discharge from the hospital. She's restless because she went through the delivery process. Later, she'll explain to us in full what happened. Right now, we all just need to rest. "

We went to the head nurse with Masi and asked for discharge. I was completely calm now. With the help of Nasrin's soul, I was completely satisfied with God's will. I had no more complaints, so I wanted to participate in a council. The reasons And the officials should take action to sum up the quality of their work. I told Masi that I will go home early. I have some work to do. You stay with Nasrin at the hospital because Mrs. Moshiri had announced that she was coming to the hospital. Don't get Nasrin involved in any more discussions. After the meeting with Mrs. Moshiri, come home by taxi. Masi agreed. I went to explain the plan to Nasrin, said goodbye to her, and returned home.

I wanted to get some things we had bought for our child before Nasrin returned home. Especially Masi had prepared all the comfort items we wanted. We didn't want Nasrin to see those things again. After moving the items, I went to the butcher in our alley and ordered her to prepare a sheep for me in about an hour so that Nasrin could eat before she returned. I want to sacrifice it in front of my wife.

Content with God's Will, I Sought an Honest Living

I returned home, my mother and father were not home, I told my sister about the matter and the reason for Arzoo's death, she was very upset, so I told her to emphasize to everyone that no one should make themselves uncomfortable in Nasrin's presence, the cause of the child's death was premature graduation, meaning the child was miscarried in some way, so the issue of doubt and suspicion about the child's date of birth also becomes colorless. Nasrin came and became a victim. Slowly, slowly, everyone left. Masoumeh also went to her own home. That night was a difficult night. We had an unspoken missing person that Arzoo remained a substitute for seeing. With the help of my father, I was hired for a new job in the Municipality of District 2. My job situation had improved a lot.

I had become the person in charge of purchasing and logistics in the technical department at the Traffic Organization workshop that was responsible for laying the lines in Tehran. I went to work from eight in the morning to two in the afternoon. With the help of my brother Ghahreman, I wanted to buy a very good and almost new German Ford car that had been brought to Iran from Germany by an Iranian student. Of course, I didn't have much money. I was afraid to ask a little price. It was a really great car. I didn't want to I shook hands with the owner of the car, a young man of my age. He asked me why I was hesitant. I honestly said, "I'm not hesitant. God, I don't have much money. I don't know what you're looking for. " Azam asked how much you want.

I said, "With all my savings and the loans I took from nine people, it's eighteen thousand tomans. " He said, "Okay, give me sixteen and spend the rest on other things. " I tried to stop myself from crying, but I couldn't hide it. He said, "I've benefited a lot from this car. I'm sure it will be good for you too. " We were going to the car

dealership where they had brought it to sell it. He said to my uncle, "Please tell Abbas, he meant the owner of the dealership. You bought it from me for twenty-five thousand tomans. " He continued, "Abbas is my uncle. I didn't sell it for less than twenty-five thousand tomans before you. I'm glad you got it. I don't know why or where this love came from, but I know that I won't do anything else with this car except for good deeds. "

My father worked nights, from eight to midnight, overseeing the irrigation program for trees in the Bi-Shahrdari area, which did not have a running irrigation system, with the help of water tanker drivers. Six days a week, every night, my father would barely make it to the municipal water pump house near Ferdowsi Square, and at night, he would walk part of the way home with the last driver that night, as far as the road they were on. Sometimes, he would have to walk home from there to the Qalae Morghi treasury because he couldn't afford to pay for a car. But now he had a driver for himself. At six in the morning, after prayers, I would say goodbye to Nasrin and set off for my workplace, which was near Seyyed Khandan. I would pick up passengers on the way. I was filled with positive energy from head to toe.

I was very grateful for this chance that God had given me. Every moment, my parents' prayers were a source of inspiration for my soul. Every day, I would drive myself to my workplace by eight in the morning. Then, on the way back, I would pick up passengers from two in the afternoon. I would arrive home at around five in the afternoon. Then, I would say hello and aliqa to everyone downstairs.

I quickly went upstairs to Nasrin. After Arzoo's death, Nasrin had become quieter than ever, and the balcony mat was often hanging down, and no one could see any movement. I was not with Nasrin except on Fridays from five in the morning to five at night, and I would eat lunch and dinner together and get ready to leave for work with my father. As usual, we would leave at seven at night.

My father would sit in the front seat in front of me, and the passengers would sit in the back seats. After my father got off, I continued to pull passengers. I often went to Mehrabad Airport to pick up passengers for flights. Sometimes I would catch a foreign passenger. I liked to speak in English, which I had learned. They would also give me a tip. I would return to my father's work at midnight so that we could read together.

Our Second Child Is Born

Days and nights passed one after another, God bless the armored car, there was no headache, Nasrin had been pregnant for a long time, and Nasrin's wings were a little more open and her spirit was happier, I was at Nasrin's service more on Fridays, the day was getting heavier

The promised time for Nasrin to give birth had arrived, due to the bitter experience of the past, there was a concern about the baby's health in our hearts

We were doing everything right. We had a son, whom we had already named Ali, all his belongings were ready, Masi Zherei had not failed Ali. The night of the first day Ali was born, I didn't want to go to work and leave Nasrin alone, but on the one hand, I was not satisfied with not sending my father to work, a father who had sold her blood with honor several times when the family needed her so that she wouldn't be humiliated by her family.

With trust in God and consultation with Nasrin, I secretly kissed Ali's face and went to take him to my father. My mother said, "Your father left on his own. He wanted you to stay with your son tonight. " My mood changed because of my father's kindness. I ran to the car with tears in my eyes. I set off, knowing the path of my father. God, God, I was going with my eyes closed. I saw my faithful helper. I pulled over to the side of the road and waited. I didn't honk. I ran to him, hugged him, kissed his hand, and kissed his hand. I looked at him with tearful eyes, like a man, with his kind eyes. I wanted to

complain to him. Why did I say that? He said kindly, "I know how you feel tonight. " The movie "The Night You Were Born" appeared before my eyes.

"My son, you don't want to come with me. Go home to your son. I'm going back tonight in Mr. Farahani's car. " I couldn't help but feel my feelings. I said, crying, "Dad, I'm feeling better. Now that I'm a father, I feel your love even more. Come, don't break your driver's heart. You're a dear passenger. God, I'm yours. I took his hand and kissed it. We went to the car as usual. I opened the car and he got in. We started walking. I didn't feel like picking up passengers, but I was tired of serving him with all my heart. A loving silence filled the air the entire way. I was in the middle of two drunken feelings, "the new feeling of a father and son, a father with knowledge. " When we arrived at his work, I quickly went to his office.

I felt that he was in a different mood that night. He got off and told the drivers that his father had grown up and told Farhani to go buy sweets and bring them with us to eat. He told me, "You go, son, your son is waiting, don't follow me. Tonight, my grandfather will return home with Farhani. " Farhani quickly confirmed. I also started walking home. I had just reached the Imamzadeh Masoom Bridge, where after a few meters I had to turn left towards Khazaneh and ten meters from Habib, someone from the side of the street shouted, "Customs warehouses, thirty tomans are Hubi's currency. " He provoked me. I slowed down, but I was hesitant. I wanted to speed up and continue on my own. He shouted again, "Forty tomans more, it was a blow. " I thought to myself, "This passenger is a blessed step for my son. "

I stopped. Two people were truck drivers. Their trucks were in line at customs for clearance. The drivers who had left Istanbul had gone to drink. They kept coming back to my mind. At that time, I was a little hesitant to take a stranger out of town and out of the area at night. Because I knew Turkish, I spoke to them and they were very polite.

One of them asked, "Why were you hesitant to give us a ride? " I said, "I became a father today. I wanted to go home early. But to be honest, when you said a high amount, I thought I would go two hours later but with a fuller pocket for my son's benefit. I couldn't ignore it anymore because God was blessing me with my son's feet. They liked it very much.

When we arrived, they gave me fifty tomans and said, "If you wait a little, one of our friends wants to go near the same place where we got off. Take him with you. " He put his hand in his pocket and gave me another fifty tomans. I offered. I said, "I'll drop him off on the way back. " He doesn't want any more money, but they said, "No, a good father needs more money for his son. " That night, with a full pocket and a calm and hopeful heart, I returned to my son and wife. Of course, my father had arrived earlier than me. He was a little worried about why I hadn't arrived yet. I told my father, "Don't worry, I arrived safely. " He looked me in the eyes and said, "Son, how can you worry about your one-day-old son?

I don't want to worry about my grown son. Now that you've become a father, you understand the meaning of this love better. " Everything went smoothly and safely. I gave my money that night to Nasrin so she could buy whatever she wanted for herself and Ali, but she never allowed herself to burden me with financial demands. She brought me some money and gave it to me and said, "This is my son's fund. Put it here. I will try to help Ali's fund by making do with my living expenses. We should think about his university expenses from now on. "

The Workplace, Its Atmosphere, and the Obstacles Along the Way

I worked hard day and night. I paid off all my debts, I helped my parents financially, and I had taken care of my brother's education expenses.

I was very serious about my work and diligent in implementing the engineer's wishes. I never left the engineer who was my boss alone.

Engineer Amini was a very technical, experienced, and serious person. He was not an engineer by college education, but he was capable and creative in his experience and practice. Everyone called him an engineer.

He was pursuing a project where he could make changes to a drawing machine with his own initiative that would increase the speed of the machine, provided that the engine did not burn out.

Line drawing machines were purchased from Germany. Simple machines that included a three-cylinder engine and an air compressor. While the wheels moved slowly, the compressor engine activated the paint pump. It was generally used to draw traffic lines on the streets.

Unfortunately, if the car was moving at speed while using the paint spray pump, the entire machine would be stressed and the engine would burn out. Perhaps the goal was to draw a thick line at a low speed that would be erased later, but in our culture, the story is often different and we put quality before quantity. The engineer had a project that by adding the length of the chassis and adding a new cylinder to the chassis and two belts, we would drive the wheels of the car with one belt and the pump motor with another, so that the speed of the car would not conflict with the work of the pump.

After three months of intensive work and using the lathe facilities of his father-in-law's workshop, the engineer's desired machine was ready and successfully tested in the parking lot of the Traffic Organization warehouse, but it had not yet been started.

At the same time, the Shah was seeking to establish economic relations with the Soviet government, which would in some way introduce Iran's claim to independence for cooperation with the superpowers. The Soviet government was eager for this relationship,

and an agreement had been reached for the Russians to provide Iran with an iron smelting plant. The Shah's request was met with a positive response from the Soviet Communist Party.

They set up an iron smelting furnace in Isfahan. The furnace was old, smelting crude iron. Both regimes did a lot of propaganda with the idol of cooperation. They were presenting an industry in between and as an important achievement.

In the annex, it was planned that Brezhnev, the chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, would be present at the factory's opening, but later it turned out that the United States did not like his coming to Iran. Therefore, under the pretext that Brezhnev's presence posed a security risk, Brezhnev's son-in-law was secretly and without further publicity to come to Iran for the opening ceremony. As a result, the security system was ordered to lay the ceremonial route and welcome the guests from the airport to Niavaran Palace instead of the Pahlavi Road, which was previously supposed to be the old Shemiran Road. No one, not even Mr. Amini, knew the reason for the change of route. We all later found out the reason. At midnight, the order to lay the route was given, and the work had to be finished by morning.

It was really impossible to lay that route in one night with the old machines unless parts of the route were removed or a new machine was put into operation. Despite great anxiety and concern about the success or failure of the new machine, the engineer put the new machine into operation on a day that was very important for the court ceremonies. He ordered the new machine to be put into operation. Mr. Amini had promised to For the first time, that route will be completed in one night until morning because the speed of the machine could be increased. Of course, the quality of the line drawing would deteriorate with greater speed, but the important thing was that the line drawing would definitely be done that day, and it

was done. All the line drawing staff and Mr. Amini were all happy and had a special pride.

This work was considered a national invention for us, but don't let your eyes see a bad day. Soon our eyes started to cry because suddenly two days later, three tough security guards came to the workshop to get Mr. Amini. He hadn't arrived yet. They decided to wait. About two hours later, the engineer came to his office. Those people also came to the engineer's service. At that time, apparently, the engineer had been told that no one should be present at that meeting, not even his secretary, who we later found out was a Baha'i and an information planter. Without Mr. Roustaei being present, they had talked to Mr. Engineer Kelley and had taken Mr. Amini with them. However, before Mr. Amini got into the car, those people had told Mammad Kashi, the mechanic at the workshop who was in charge of servicing Mr.

Amini's car, which was an American Buick, to park my car at the back of the workshop. I will be gone for a few days.

The next day, two more guards came to the workshop that day, I was there too, and they took the engineer's new drawing machine. Mr. Roustaei, with a handkerchief in his hand, was ready to really dislike it without realizing it. He ran forward and showed the car. They called him to the engineer's office and they sat down. They had ordered Roustaei that the car must be broken into pieces and its parts buried in the workshop's mechanical pit and filled with stones and cement. In the meantime, no one has the right to look at it again or talk about it. His Majesty's orders were carried out.

There was no news from Mr. Engineer for a few days. This absence was running through my mind. Every time I wanted to get news from a villager, he wouldn't answer me. I was indirectly planting seeds of doubt in my heart. It seemed as if there was a secret and he knew about it. A few more days passed and there was still no news from the engineer. A compressor that we had bought for the workshop a

while ago had developed a technical problem. I needed a warranty receipt for its service. I went to Mr. Handkerchief in hand and said I want a warranty receipt. Most of these documents were filed in the engineer's office and I had access to it, but now the key to the engineer's office was only with him. I asked him for the receipt and he said I didn't know where it was.

He gave me the key and said find it yourself. I went to the office and picked up the first binder, which was the newest and all the papers in it had not yet been properly filed and registered. But I don't know why I was clumsy like a clumsy person. The entire binder fell out of my hands. The papers were scattered on the floor. I started to quickly check the scattered papers, but before I found the warranty receipt, my eyes fell on an official letter written in the name of Mr. Amini by the mayor of the district. Two gentlemen, you remember, wrote that this letter had come from different administrative hierarchies.

A letter from the German Foreign Ministry was sent to our own Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a question and a kind of complaint, stating that our press service had informed us that your technical staff had made changes to the machines you had purchased from us without our knowledge and then used domestic paint instead of our own paint. We are now waiting for your clarification to our Ministry of Foreign Affairs as soon as possible. The above letter was written in the name of Mr. Nik P, the mayor of Tehran at the time. He also asked Mr. Hedayati, with a note under the same letter, to read the above letter as soon as possible and inform him of the result. Mr. Hedayati also referred the letter to Engineer Amini. Mr.

Amini also proudly and proudly informed us that we had made a number of innovations to improve our work, as a result, we used domestic paint, which was cheaper. When I read the copy of these letters, I immediately found the receipt and left the office. I was in chaos inside. Of course, there was a chatter in the workshop. I am sure that all this The news reached the security officers through

handkerchiefs. After about a month, the engineer came to his office, but he came and went like a snake, he had nothing to do with anyone. He was very upset and uncomfortable with me, who had a good relationship with him. I secretly went to his office when he was not in the village.

Before he could ask me a question, he rudely and violently told me to go out, go out, I quickly left his office so as not to make him feel uncomfortable anymore. What is hidden from you? I never saw the engineer again. In fact, I think he had been here for a few days, so that the atmosphere of suspicion and suspicion had been created. Remove it

I was very upset about the engineer. Instead of applauding him, they beat him on the head. They had done something to him that made it seem like he didn't know anyone there. The smile on his face was frozen.

A Troublesome Neighborhood Conflict and SAVAK's Arrest of My Younger Brother

My mood was bad, I didn't feel like working. It was Thursday. I opened a Pepsi for myself, gave myself a day off. There were a few scattered chores around the house that I hadn't had time to do. I attached two rows of ropes behind the balcony mat so that Nasrin could hang Ali's clothes. Our alley door didn't have an electric door opener. Whenever no one was downstairs, Nasrin had to go downstairs to open the door. I had thought a little about it. I invented an electric door opener by using a thin but strong rope, tying the door latch to the rope, passing the rope through the hole in the latch, installing a ring on the top of the door, passing the same rope through the hole in the ring, and from there tying the other end of the rope to the balcony bars. Nasrin was satisfied with the simplest task.

Every small task I did made me feel good and useful with her gratitude. The next day was Friday, we woke up a little later, of course there was some noise, as if there was a fight on our street. Our place was inhabited by the Shah Sonha. In fact, there were people from the Saveh tribes who had ethnic fights with each other and often caused many conflicts. But this one was something else. I went outside to take a look around to see what was going on. I saw a beautiful girl, who was a local thug and a tough guy, running like the wind towards our street. There were three young men in a Zhiguli standing there, playing one-on-one with the local kids. One of the kids who had been bitten by the lion jumped up and hit her hard. One of the jackals bled out.

Another one of the jackals was yelling, but it was unclear what she was saying. In short, hearing the yelling was considered an insult, and they also got hit hard. The jackals were scared, so the three of them came together to get each other's attention. The first boy who was getting hit shouted at them from a high position and told them, "Come to our place, girls, play, we'll tear you to pieces. " Their answer was unclear. The jackal tried to find out what the fight was about. It turned out that one of the girls who had recently come to our place was drunk. Apparently, her legs were crooked and she had run away from these jackals, but they didn't give up and had come here after her, but they had lost her trail. They wanted to find her.

Suddenly, all three of them took out a knife and boxing gloves from their pockets. The jackal's patience was exhausted, and for warmth, they grabbed one of the relatively young plane trees that had been planted next to the sidewalk. She bent down and broke the tree trunk and attacked the Zhiguli and beat them as much as she wanted. The rest of the locals each took their share of the task and let their hearts be filled. The beating continued for an hour or two. Suddenly, several cars of the gendarmerie and Gendarme Maha arrived and surrounded the neighborhood and collected the torn bodies of the Zhiguli. They sent an ambulance to the hospital on the spot and arrested a number

of children, but the main person disappeared. Of course, the place was under surveillance and guard for several days.

Gradually, news leaked out that these people were not Iranians but employees of the Israeli embassy. Of course, they officially did not have an open embassy in Iran, so security sensitivity had increased. Apparently, local investigations had continued due to fear of protests hidden under the ashes. These days, sporadic protests have been taking place in various neighborhoods due to the high cost of food. Of course, it is said that the SAVAKs have also become more active in the neighborhoods. One of the locals secretly told you that the grocer and Majid, the fruit seller in our neighborhood, are both SAVAK informants. From this search, we also got wind of it. My younger brother, who sometimes played with the local children, was arrested and my mother was informed that your child had been arrested by the agents of the 12th Police Station.

My mother gave me the news of Younes' arrest with tearful eyes. I was completely shocked. Oh my God, I was confused, what could I do? I walked aimlessly for twenty meters on the way to her. I thought to myself, I had no other refuge but God. On the one hand, I could not bear to see my mother's tears. I don't know who or what she was saying. But for a moment, I felt like someone was activating my mind. She was not doing her job, she was ordering me to go step by step. I listened helplessly. I got on the bus. I felt like the other person was riding with me. It was with me the whole way, like when we were little, when we went out with my mother, she was always there for me. Sometimes, when she was in a hurry or nervous inside, she would walk faster.

Then I had to run after her. We got off at Farabi Square, we quickly got there, we went to the next street, there we went to the bus stop towards Elizabeth Boulevard, I knew this route well because it was my father's former workplace. We had brought the first two-wheeled bicycle from one of the houses on that boulevard, next to the trash

cans in front of Colonel Bileri's house. Of course, to transport it, my father and I tried to take the Vahet Company bus to the Railway Square, but the driver wouldn't let us take the bicycle on the bus, he wouldn't even accept it in pieces, in pieces. We had to walk to Javadieh.

Don't worry, each of these thoughts was a pain that crossed my mind. Forgive me. The dream of the past kept me away from my day's work. He was standing next to me inside the bus so that I wouldn't fall behind anymore. We reached the intersection of Muniriyeh Police Station 12. We got off the bus and he came with me to the public telephone booth that was on the side of the street facing Police Station 12.

Inside the closet, there were various phone book folders hanging, all with phone numbers. I opened the first folder and took a pen and paper out of my pocket. Apparently, I wanted to memorize the phone number of Police Station 12, but my eyes fell on a few numbers, so I memorized them too. Chief of Staff, Lieutenant Khosrawan I was familiar with the name of Captain Khosravani. Yes, the head of the company that built the dormitories during my time in the army in Ravansar, they said that these were the ones that had asphalted the roofs without tar. I remembered the numbers and checked my pocket. I had two or three rials. Thank God they were intact. I was lucky. If the phone was tilted, it would have rejected it. I called the police station without hesitation. Someone answered firmly. I said, "I have business with the guard officer. I did it.

I said, "Quick, idiot, quickly connect. I have urgent business with that orphanage kid. It's a security issue. I didn't give the unfortunate person a chance to breathe. " He said, "Eyes, eyes. " The telephone operator conveyed the atmosphere so well that the guard officer turned around and said, "Hello. " I started to angrily yell at him from a high position until he completely broke his guard. Then, angrily, I counted and said loudly, "Orphanage kid. " Most of the orphans who

lived in government orphanages were hired as officers after they reached the age and educational level of the officer's school. That's why they were called "Orphanage kid. " They were calling me) With what permission and order did you arrest me without coordinating with us, a member of the secret operations team? Now my whole project is going to hell. Mother of So-and-so, with fear and trembling, asked for my details.

I said, "Today, you had a detainee. What news did we have? " I gave Younes' details. I said, "I will call you in ten minutes. I want this person's release. If you solve it, I will ask your commander for a promotion. But if you were a coward and a coward, I will give you those stars. I will give you suppositories. " I hung up the phone. Oh my God, I am still in awe of what those moments were and when it happened. I called ten minutes later. The guard officer himself picked up the phone and quickly said, "You will be released. You will be released. " Foroughi Prison was behind the Central Post Office building. I thanked him and said goodbye. I took a taxi to the Shahrbani Prison. But later, I learned that it was a temporary prison of the SAVAK.

It had a tall, double-leaf iron door, a small counter, and a metal frame. I called, "What's up? " He asked, "Please come. " I said, "I have come to pick up the prisoner. " I gave him the details. He opened the door in about five minutes and said that the prisoner above was released a few moments ago. I said, "Are you sure? " He said, "Yes, it was a tall, young man. " As soon as I heard this news, I felt like I had just realized that my companion was no longer with me, as if no one was there at all. I felt like I was dreaming. I couldn't believe that all of today's events had happened and that I had released a prisoner from the temporary prison of SAVAK. Of course, I still won't believe it unless Younes testifies and we hear Younes's account of what happened.

Mother's Prayer: The Answer to Closed Doors

I quickly went to the house. I just arrived twenty meters away from Fallah. I got off the bus ten meters away. I entered Habib Street, our street. I saw my mother walking barefoot. I quickly went to Fallah. When I reached her, she hugged me, crying, and prayed for me. One of her repeated prayers shook me. She prayed so deeply that my face turned red as if I had a fever. She said, "My son, may God not make you feel hopeless and confused behind any closed door. Turn your fist into gold. I love this prayer that was asked from the heart. "

Before I could ask, Mother told me that Younes had been released and had come home, but would not speak. I hurried ahead of her. The moment he saw me in the courtyard, he embraced me and began to cry. I held him until he calmed, then took him upstairs while Nasrin and Ali remained below and asked him what had happened.

At school, an employee had told him that a stranger outside wanted to see him. A young man stepped from a car and called him by name: 'Younes, come here. We have some work with you. ' When Younes asked where they were going, the man said, 'The police station. ' He then seized his arm, forced him into the car, and sat beside him in the back, where another man was already waiting. The darkened windows revealed nothing outside, and no one spoke during the drive.

They covered his eyes with a cloth, tied his hands, and pulled him from the car. Unable to see, terrified and unsteady, he fell. Someone dragged him by the shoulders and took him up several steps. When one of the men shouted an obscene insult and ordered a chair brought, Younes protested against the abuse. That became the pretext for punches and kicks. The interrogator cursed him, called him an enemy of the state, threatened him with execution, and demanded the names of the members of a group Younes knew nothing about.

A kick to the chest sent both Younes and the chair onto their backs. He tried through tears to explain that he did not understand what they wanted. The beating continued until someone announced a telephone call. Before leaving, the interrogator ordered that he be put in a cell and told to think until he was ready to talk.

Younes did not know how much time passed. Still blindfolded and bound, he was eventually taken to another room and seated in a more comfortable chair. The interrogator now stood behind him, placed both hands on his shoulders, and spoke gently: 'I am sorry. I became angry, and this was hard for you. You are young; why destroy your future? We have nothing against you. We are looking for people who create disorder. Their punishment is death. Help us, or your case will become theirs. '

Encouraged by the calmer tone, Younes said they had made a mistake. He had few friends, he explained; he went to school and various classes and did not even spend much time socializing, let alone belong to a political group. The interrogator suddenly struck him again, shouted another insult, and ordered him taken to 'Room Eight. '

They dragged him away and resumed the interrogation. Before it had gone far, the interrogator was called to the telephone. He returned after several minutes of silence, removed Younes's blindfold, and even smoothed his hair, now acting regretful. 'You were fortunate, ' he said. 'We found the clue we needed. You are free. Try to forget what happened. '

The officers returned his belongings and papers. As he prepared to leave, one asked whether Mozaffari should sign the release form. The other said the exit guard would request it if necessary. In that way Younes learned the interrogator's name and stored it in his Hafezeh. At the gate, a guard gave him directions to the main street and the central post office. When Younes asked what the entire affair had been about, the guard replied that he did not know.

Two or three days later, three plainclothes officers came while neither Younes nor I was home. They showed Mother a paper authorizing a search of Younes's room. She told them he had no separate room: all of us lived together, spreading mattresses and quilts at night and stacking them behind a curtain each morning. The men searched the cupboard containing his notebooks and books, then left.

Mother told me about the search when I returned. I was worried, but no further incident occurred, and Younes came home from school safely. From then on, Mother worried about my books and asked more questions, while I continued my work with greater caution. Amid these troubles and the engineer's absence, my position at work had weakened. My contract was due to expire within weeks, and there was no sign that it would be renewed.

A few days before my contract was due to end, the brother of a municipal employee was hired in my place. They asked me to transfer all my responsibilities and information to them during the days remaining on my contract, and if the transfer was completed and a new person took over his responsibilities, I could no longer come to work and settle the accounts by receiving my full monthly salary.

With the loss of my job and the numerous problems that had occupied me, my motivation had practically slowed down, so much so that I was afraid for my future and that of my family, although I had not yet given up on passenger transportation, but I did not have a stable income.

My Younger Sister's Proposal That We Go to London

My younger sister Tohfeh, who lived in London, suggested that my wife, our child, and I join her family there. She telephoned the

butcher's shop at the end of our alley and asked me to return in an hour so that we could speak when she called again. I arrived early, not wanting to keep her waiting.

While I waited, I wondered whether to tell her about my circumstances. It would only distress her, I thought, and there was little she could do from a foreign city. When she called, we could not speak freely because the shop was busy. She asked how work was going. I told her that I was unemployed and earning what I could by carrying passengers in my car. Although Father's acquaintance had tried to help me, my contract had not been renewed; another man, apparently backed by stronger connections, had taken my place.

'What will you do now? ' she asked. 'Abji, I am frightened, ' I said. 'My mind seems frozen. ' She answered, 'Then pack your things and come to me. ' I protested that I could not simply leave Mother, Father, and Younes. 'You are not coming forever, ' she said. 'If it does not work out, you will have had a change of scene and can return. Do not worry about the expense. I am here. '

How precious a family is: in whatever way it can, it protects the interests of its members. Even an offer made from the heart is comforting. To keep the call from becoming too long, I told her, 'Sister, with trust in God, I will seriously consider your proposal. I will speak with the family and tell you the result. I will arrange a number where we can talk more easily. '

Tohfeh proposed that we travel to London under the pretext of study, then examine whether life there was possible for us and what the conditions were. I first consulted Nasrin. She had led a sheltered life, moving directly from her parents' home to her husband's family, who supported her whenever I was away. She had never lived independently or even travelled within Iran without family. Still, she was my wife, and I needed to begin with her.

Nasrin said, 'I cannot imagine it at all. I do not know what life is like there, and I do not know the language. So I place my trust first in God and then in you. I believe you will not leave your family without support. '

Tahereh answered with equal honesty: 'It is hard even to imagine being separated from a brother who has been such a refuge to us—in culture, finances, affection, and belief. The thought of not seeing you brings a lump to my throat. But I know what you are capable of. Wherever you go, you can succeed. Think of your own future. Do not worry about Mother and Father; they remain under my care, and wherever we go, we will go together. Even from far away, once you set your mind to something, you can move mountains. '

She added, 'Your absence will be hardest for Younes. At the height of his youth, when he needs you as a mentor and guide, you will be leaving. I will do everything I can not to let him feel alone. Perhaps, God willing, once you are established, you can bring him to join you. '

Father was deeply shaken by the news. I felt something break inside him. He asked only, 'Will you take the children with you? ' I said that I would, though we still had to see what would happen. Mother was distraught. Commander Begum felt she was losing a brother again: this time she would remain while her brother went abroad. Angry with Tohfeh, she complained, 'She left herself, and now she is taking away the staff we lean on. '

I spent more time with Mother and told her that I had made a vow to visit the shrine of Hazrat Masoumeh and ask her to intercede, so that her brother, Imam Reza, might protect me and my family. Mother dearly loved Imam Reza. Reluctantly, she agreed to come.

Before dawn, after the morning prayer, we set out together for the shrine of Hazrat Masoumeh. We arrived before noon, made our pilgrimage, and each found a corner in which to be alone with God.

After the congregational prayer, we went to a restaurant. Over the meal, I spoke to Mother plainly about my state of mind and the burdens on our family: the injustice she had endured, the pressure on Father and me, my responsibility for my own small household, my parents' advancing age, and Younes's youth. My sisters were married, but all of us knew that they still drew breath beneath Mother's protective shadow.

I told her that another burden had now been added to all our visible and hidden troubles. Poor Younes had been caught in a trap meant for me; only a fortunate mistake had caused the authorities to confuse the two of us, and someone informed had warned me that they were unlikely to let the matter rest. My dismissal, Younes's arrest, and Tohfeh's proposal had arisen separately, yet together they seemed to open a road before me. Dreams and signs encouraged me to choose it. 'Trust in God, ' I said. 'If you pray for me too, I will prepare for this migration before it is too late. ' I also recalled for her the essence of what Samad Behrangi's Little Black Fish had said to his mother. Mother gave no answer. I read her forced surrender to unwanted circumstances in the burning tear upon her cheek.

At the table, Mother raised her ritually washed hands toward heaven and pleaded aloud: 'Heaven, You know that I can bear no more grief. By the broken heart of the Stranger of Strangers, do not take this one from me. He is the staff of my old age and the fruit of a life lived in loneliness. I entrust Yusuf to You. Keep him safe from the pits of time. '

Then she embraced me, and we wept like spring clouds—without grandeur, but full of the fear of separation. The mother burned like a candle while the moth prepared to travel. Until the moth returned to the hut, a trembling light would remain in the half-burned candle; the final drop would fly through the sky like an arrow released from Arash's bow.

As agreed, I told Tohfeh that I had decided to go to London. Delighted, she guided me through the necessary preparations. I applied for a passport. To receive it and obtain permission to leave, I needed a guarantor willing to pledge a property deed. Emrah, the neighborhood butcher, trusted my character and immediately agreed. He accompanied me to the gendarmerie and signed the papers.

I sold my car for ten thousand tomans more than I had paid for it. The buyer told me that he genuinely wanted the car but would not set the price himself. Instead, he would accompany me to the Cheragh-Bargh district, show it to several dealers without selling, and bargain as though he were the owner because he understood their language better. He wanted to make sure I received the highest possible price. He kept his word and bought the car for a thousand tomans more than the highest offer in the market.

With the proceeds, I paid part of Father's debts, bought clothes for Younes, Nasrin, Ali, and myself, and gave Tahereh some money. Everyone accepted reluctantly, believing that life abroad would be difficult and that money would be needed to solve its problems.

At last, after paying the travel expenses and fares, I was able to buy one thousand British pounds for eleven thousand tomans. Those thousand pounds represented years of hard work—and the blows I had endured from extortionists while waiting in the queues for passengers.

I remember returning once from Shams-ol-Emareh toward Ferdowsi Square with Father beside me in the front seat. At an intersection I paused to take on two passengers. One of the extortionists opened the door and dragged me from behind the wheel. Before I had regained my footing, he struck my eyelid with his forehead and split it open. The passengers rushed at him and he fled. Despite the blood, I took the two passengers aboard. Throughout the journey, I tried to hide the beating from Father. I did not want his pride wounded again; it had

already been broken too many times in the struggle to provide for his family.

By God's grace, all the travel arrangements were completed. On Yalda Night, Ali, Nasrin, and I gathered with every member of the family at my parents' home. That night—the first of Dey 1355, corresponding to December 22, 1976—no one slept through the longest night of the year.

Before sunrise, as on a wedding day, several cars arrived to escort us to Mehrabad Airport and bid us farewell.

Before the flight toward an unknown destiny at Mehrabad Airport: my father holds Ali beside me, Nasrin, and Nasrin's friend.

شجره‌نامهٔ مادر بگم

سه ازدواج، نُه تولد و هفت شاخهٔ ماندگار در شجرهٔ حیات

شاه‌بگم

مادر بگم

محمد (ممد)

ازدواج سوم — چهار فرزند

- طاهره
- یوسف
- تحفه
- یونس

رسول

ازدواج دوم — دو فرزند

- گل‌آرا
- حسین
  در کودکی درگذشت

خان‌گلدی

ازدواج نخست — سه فرزند

- حافظه
- قهرمان
- شفیقه
  در کودکی درگذشت

حاصل زندگی مادر بگم

هفت فرزند، سی‌ودو نوه، شصت‌ودو نتیجه — در مجموع ۱۰۱ انسان

Mother Begum's tree of life: seven children, thirty-two grandchildren, and sixty-two great-grandchildren.

The image on the book's cover depicts Mother Begum's tree of life: its seven branches symbolize her seven children, and its thirty-two pomegranates symbolize her thirty-two grandchildren.

This tree of life was woven and hung in her room—a sign of a root planted in the soil of suffering that, through love, children, grandchildren, and later generations, finally bore fruit.

Mother Begum was not merely a mother within the bounds of her home. She was the root of a tree through which 101 human beings

were joined to life; every branch and fruit carried forward her breath, suffering, love, and endurance.

Yusuf today, years after the migration, at the threshold of the old house. This photograph is not from the day of departure; the journey from Mehrabad Airport to his white hair is the story we have retraced together in this book.

Parting from those we love is always bitter, especially when the destination is unfamiliar and no one knows when the traveller will return.

For now, may God protect you. At the first opportunity, I will record the days that followed and carry this story onward from the point at which this book ends.

Thank you for reading this story. I would be very happy if you would share your opinions with me.

Sincerely, Yusuf

An end with a new beginning