



Gafur Gulom

A Naughty Boy

STORY



YANGI ASR AVLODI
TASHKENT
2017

UDK: 821.512.133-3

KBK: 84(50)6

G - 79

Gulom, Gafur

A naughty Boy. Gafur Gulom / Translators: I.M. Tukhtasinov,
U.R. Yoldoshev. – Tashkent: Yangi asr avlodi, 2017. – 128 pages.

ISBN 978-9943-20-274-0

Gafur Gulom (1903-1966) is one of great writers and poets in Uzbek literature. He was born in Tashkent city on May 10, 1903. His parents died when he was a teenager. The story "A Naughty Boy" is about his childhood. The writer described hard times of that period, the effect of the war in ordinary people's social life. Travelling through the villages by the main character of this story on the purpose of earning money gave the opportunity to feel the hard time in life at the period of the war. Gafur Gulom used the genre satire in describing these features of the story.

The story is translated with the aim to provide a unique opportunity for English speaking readers to get acquainted with the social life of the mid - XX century in the history of Uzbek people and for students who are eager to enhance their understanding and knowledge by comprehending Uzbek culture and humor. We hope that all the members of the world community will have a chance to admire the cultural heritage of Uzbek people.

UDK: 821.512.133-3

KBK: 84(50)6

Translators:

I.M. Tukhtasinov,

U.R. Yoldoshev

ISBN 978-9943-20-274-0

© Gafur Gulom, "A naughty Boy". "Yangi asr avlodi", 2017.

FOREWORD

Gafur Gulom (1903-1966) was an Uzbek poet, writer, and literary translator. He was one of the great writers in Uzbek literature who had a great share in developing Uzbek satire, humor and comedy. He described different events in 20-30 years of the XIX century and at the period of World War II.

The genre of humor was the specific importance in Gafur Gulom's works. According to his character, Gafur Gulom was interested in humor, loved people's humor in his heart, and felt the social and aesthetic value of laughter. These features of the writer's character were expressed in his humorous works. Interesting words, stories like anecdotes reminded of people's wit, and Afandi¹ anecdotes express national humor.


Gafur Gulom wrote humorous stories, funny feuilletons and critical poems which were loved by people in the last years of the war. He wrote some prosaic stories: "My Robber Son" (1965), "The Most Scandalous Asr² Namoz³" (1965), "Pirmuhammad and His Grandchildren and Great-grandchildren" (1965); and poetic satiric and humorous words: "We Laugh" (1957), "What Happened to Whom" (1961), "There are Some People Among Us" (1964).

¹ Main character of Uzbek national anecdotes

² The third prayer of Islam

³ Islamic ritual pray

SamDCHTI ARM
№ 57751(4)



He is best remembered for his stories "A Naughty Boy" and "Yodgor". The story "A Naughty Boy" is about hard times of the period of the war.

Gafur Gulom is also known for translating the works by many acknowledged foreign authors such as Alexander Pushkin, Vladimir Mayakovsky and William Shakespeare. He translated "Le Mariage de Figaro" by Pierre Beaumarchais, "Othello" by William Shakespeare and others into the Uzbek language. He is one of the most recognized Uzbek writers of the 20th century.


The translated book under the title of "A Naughty Boy" has a great role in Gafur Gulom's creative work and in the history of Uzbek humorous literature. The main purpose is to introduce this precious work, the pearl of humorous stories of Uzbek literature to the people of English speaking countries, as well as those who comprehend English as a whole.

The group of highly qualified translators from Uzbekistan State World Languages University, together with the International Relations and Literary Translation Council of the Writers' Union of Uzbekistan has translated the book "A Naughty Boy" by Gafur Gulom directly from original Uzbek into English.

The author's group expresses its sincere gratitude to Elise Brittain, English Language Fellow, for her invaluable assistance in reviewing the translation of this book. We look forward to the readers' comments on the quality of the translation.

We'll greatly appreciate it if you contact us and share your opinion at: ilhom_tuhtasinov@mail.ru

PART I



he rows of the stalls are clean. At the corner of the sour-milk market, next to the office, there is a big teahouse of Ilhom samovar-maker and a gramophone is playing there all the time. On different disks, Tuychi singers, Hamrakul, Hoji Abdulaziz, and woman singers from Fergana sing their songs. The tearoom is full of people. The rich of long rows, haberdashery rows and other rows gather there at the table served with lumps of sugar, nuts, jam, hot-bread and oil-bread, and they are having endless chattering. There are also bottles of cognacs on the tables of some rich men.

But the poor people, peasants, and other poor citizens couldn't afford to enter this teahouse.

Asra, the owner of the tea house, was a bald, thin, and prompt man. He wore a yaktak⁴ on his shoulder, leather-shoes on his legs, and a glittering blue belt on his waist and covered his shoulders with a shawl. He was a kind man. Some clients of the teahouse would say:

Asra!

Or:

- Hey baldy!

And as soon as they would say it, he would reply:

- Yes, dear brother, would you like some tea or hookah? - he would say and at once would bring a small teapot and two Chinese cups in one hand or a hookah in the other one. One of things that attracted me was beautiful amulets which hung on the ceiling at the entrance and edge which were decorated with

⁴ Oriental robe

a lags and a parrot inside it; it was a live parrot. Its feathers were shining like a tailor's different silky threads. Every color of the world such as blue, red, yellow, white, pink, brown and others were on this parrot's feathers. This parrot was very piper; it talked in a tone of a three year old girl: "Asra, Asra, and look at the guests, one tea and one hookah. Come brothers, come rich men." Barefoot, dirty boys like me would come to listen to it and say:

- Parrot, parrot...

- Parrot, Parrot... - we cried out. Then Asra the Bald rushed before us, and if he caught us, he would beat us. The parrot would shout behind us:

- Damn your grandmother...

Very interesting amusement for the trampled boys like us in the market were the mad men of the markets and streets. At that time, there were a lot of mad men; they were as follows: Malla Crazy, Mad Karim, Mayramkhan Stupid, Khol Parang Idiot, Tojikhon, Pair of Doves, Olim the Mad, Eshon Mother, Avaz and others. Each of the mad men had their features. They humiliated everybody, even God or the Prophet.

A woman called Eshon Mother was also crazy. She was forty or forty five years old. She was a beautiful woman. She used to be Mittikhan Eshon's wife, but when she caught him with her sister having love affairs, she had gone mad.

"Pair of Doves" had gone crazy by the help of the government. He humiliated Nikolay, Kaufman, Mochalov, the thief Nabi Parang and others without thinking.

There was also insane Holparang from Kokand. He used to produce velvet in Kokand. But when his shop was burned down he became mad as well.

Avaz was an amateur mad man.

Once, crazy Tojikhan was carrying a hoe and driving away everybody and swearing: "Everybody, in one direction, don't drive away! Keep the order!" – He doesn't said. No one could calm him down. At that time Olim Stupid came and asked:

– Hey, hey, why do you shout like that, you idiot?

– Why don't people walk in one direction? During the reign of Nikolay we need order here, they have to walk in one direction!

Then Olim Stupid said:

– You are foolish, Toji. The Earth needs balance, if everybody walks on one side, the Earth will sink to one side and we will fall down into the Khurdum River, – he said.

These words said by the Mad suited the Stupid and he calmed down.

But the haughtiest mad among the others was Mayram. His real name was Mamatram, but the people called him Mayram. He didn't eat food with his hands. The people would feed him.

So, there were a lot of stupid people in Tashkent then. We disturbed these mad people and did not notice that it got dark. We came home, had dinner and again ran out. We gathered in the street and played some games. We had many games such as: "Wrestling", "Botman-botman", "White poplar or Blue Poplar", "The Head of My Bird", "Ride-ride", "A Thief Came" and so on.

All of these were played at night. In the daytime we played other games: "A Nut Game", "A Ball Game", "Enemy-enemy", "Horses' Thieves" and so on.

Our fathers were simple workers, so we could not learn their work. Our fathers couldn't find a job for themselves, how could we find one? We were camp children. In the Ramadan month, our game was

walking from door to door and singing a Ramazon song. Especially, at nights, we played enjoyable games. We played in the street in summer, autumn and spring, but in winters we moved our places to a sheltered place. The lamps were in every street but they didn't light well. Could we play under those lamps? Even the old would go into their houses before it got dark after prayer. Only we stayed in the streets and played hiding games.

"My Bird's Head" is played like this: the children are separated into two parts, among them two boys were "head-mothers". They made a bird from fabric. Two head-mother boys whispered to each other saying the bird's name. They hid any bird's name. Then they showed to other children the bird made by the fabric:

- Find what kind of a bird this is? - They described the bird and asked us questions.

The children hurried to answer and made lots of noise:

- Eagle! - they cried.

- No, you couldn't find it.

- A hen?

- No.

- A small owl?

- Yes, you are right! - the head mothers admitted.

At that time, the conqueror group rode the guys of the defeated group. They took them to the assigned place. In this game we had special songs as well like:

Jug-jug, majesty jug,

Umarali king Madalibek.

At the period Madalibek

Play well, play, enjoy.

Our "Naked Race" game was the best one. We lighted two hats on our heads, made a tail of a bird and ran far to get the farthest first.

And also we had wrestling, and you know it.

If I describe all of our games to you, it will take a long time.

Even though our village was too small, it was always crowded. There were some rich men such as Yokub Pumpkin, wax seller, Abdullakhoja, paint seller, Karim, clothes seller, and the rest of them were ordinary workers. There were two mosques, one tea house and two shops in our village. One of the mosques was situated in Tikonli cemetery and another one was named Yettimachit in Kurgontagi. Both mosques had schools beside them. The imams of the village were also teachers. Shamsi teacher worked at the mosque and at school in Tikonli cemetery as a teacher. Hasanbay teacher worked as a teacher in Kurgantagi.

I was taught by Hasanbay teacher. He taught us not by "Haftiyak", but with the book called "The First Teacher". And we were able to read and write very quickly.

My friends in our village were Omon, Obid Dog, Obid, Turob, Yuldosh, Husni, Solih, Abdulla, Pulathoja, Miraziz and others.

Omon's father Tursun made knives. His wife had already passed away. Omon was his only son.

Obid Dog's father Zohid was a yakanchi (a man who gathered old things and sold them).

Another Obid's father Rasulqori used to make sheath. Turob's father Ziyamat brother was a cotton-seller.

Yuldosh's father Buvaka had passed away when he was a child and Yuldosh was an orphan. Our many discussions would be held in his house.

Solih's father Yunus was a singer.

Husni's father Omonboy was a tailor.

Abdulla's father Aziz was an oil seller.

Pulatkhoja's father was a merchant of a castle and he used to travel to Kashgar and Irbit, and during one of his trips, Pulatkhoja got stuck in his mother's stomach and was born three months later when his father came back home.

Master Miraziz was a shoemaker, and he was also my teacher. His father Salim was Yakubbek's soldier in 1860, and he brought a Chinese girl from the rebellion in Kashgar and married her. He changed her Chinese name into Bahtibuvi. Miraziz was Bahtibuvi's third youngest son. These were our neighbors in our street as far as I can remember. If I remember any others I will tell you later.

So, that tragic accident was initiated by Yuldosh. We were playing oshik (the name of a game) at the Laylak Mosque. I won so much that day. My pockets were full of oshiks then.

- Boys, well, all oshiks are in my pocket, -I shouted joyfully. At that time, Yuldosh interfered into the game and ruined everything. He said:

- Boys, let's do clubbing, shall we?

- All right.

- Where?

- At the yard of Rizki halfa.

- All right.

We were going to make palov⁵. Husni, Masavur's grandson, and Omon's son were going to be cooks. We gathered dishes and products: rice and carrot were supposed to be brought by Yuldosh, meat was on Abdulla, and oil was on me. The rest of things were on Pulat. Everybody went in different directions. I also went home to bring some oil. My mother was

⁵ Uzbek national dish

cooking pumpkin pies in the kitchen. Our food used to be kept in the basement behind our house. My younger sister was looking after my little brother at the terrace. I couldn't enter that room passing her. So, I had to find some tricky way out for that.

- Shapag, - I said to her, - where is your big ball?
- It is among my toys and dolls. What happened?
- It is not here!
- Yes, maybe you have taken it, give it back to me, idiot!

I kept smiling. She ran toward her dolls leaving my brother alone. At that time, I entered the room and took some butter, and hid it in some paper. After that, I entered the woodshed. There our grey hen was laying eggs. I took the egg and ran away.

I wanted to bring the egg together with butter to boast in front of my friends. I began to run to the street. At that time, my mother saw me because our kitchen was on my way to the gate.


- Are you going out again? Come here, turn on the fire. I am getting blind from it.

I stayed involuntarily and put the egg under my hat. Then I came up to my mother. My mother began to investigate me. I was silent and began to turn on the stove.

I didn't notice the oil melting and coming out of my legs by the heat of the fire. My mother hit me slowly on my head with a stick.

- You are an idiot, you are big boy now and if you marry, you will have your own children, and you are robbing in such a sacred place?

When my mother hit my head with the stick, the hidden egg got broken. Its yolk mixed up with the white and was coming down off my face. My mother got frightened thinking that she had broken my head. I escaped to the street being embarrassed of stealing.



I didn't want to go to my friends because my products had been spoiled. It was hard to return home in the evening. What I should do, where shall I go? I started thinking.

At last, I found the way out of the situation. There was my aunt in Savan. I will go here. She didn't have any child of her own. Both her husband and she liked me very much. Their house was very silent because they did not have any children. Besides that, they had everything in their house. They had different birds, many dogs and pets. And also they had many flowers. My brother-in-law and my aunt liked them very much. So I would not get bored there.

My aunt and brother-in-law welcomed me very kindly.
- Come, my sweetheart, how you have decided to visit us, I thought my brother got healed and came back, -aunt said.

- Well done, my son, I had been waiting for you for some days, - brother-in-law said.

I was very happy with their attitude towards me.
My brother-in-law gave me money every day. I took them and ran to street. I had made some new friends there too, and we played together. Once I took my brother-in-law's dog to the street and made it fight with other dogs. The dog's one leg broke and it was lame till the end of its life.

In summer, my brother-in-law's friends invited him to melon-holiday. He went there and before he left, gave me three Bukhara coins and said:

- Look after the birds, feed them, - he said. I was very happy, -now I had become a big boy and adults had begun to believe in me.

I entered the birds' nest. I thought maybe birds eat sour-milk. I entered the kitchen and looked for the big jug. Then I went to the market. I bought sour-milk and came back home. I gave sour-milk to the

birds. These birds didn't eat that sour-milk. I went out and after some time I entered again. These birds hadn't eaten the sour-milk yet. I entered, and then I began to feed them by force. They got full and then I did the same thing to the other birds.

And so I had fed birds for three days in such way without telling my aunt.

When I entered here on the third day, all birds were lying without movement.

– Yes, it is a good job, – I thought. – One gets bored of sitting in such a dark room. It is better for them to lie at such a late time. In the morning, the birds had sour-milk again. In the evening, I was going to change their food. When I entered there, all the birds had already died.


Everything began to be clear to me. Now, what would I say to my brother-in-law? He liked these birds very much. Then I thought that I was to leave. When my aunt was cooking a meal for the cats, I left their house. I had the money which my brother-in-law had given to me and I had a cage with the birds inside. So I went to the city.

*I will go and you rest crying burst
Like bird's child both of us waiter
I haven't rest or strength in my body
Like walking fly I haven't rest patiently*

I walked too much and reached Achchabod city. There several boys surrounded me. Among them there were some wrestler boys as well. I told them that I was going to sell my birds, and if I didn't sell them they would take them away with force.

Then I sold it. They pleased me to exchange it.

Then I left the city. I came across a great desert. I saw a person at a distance. I went toward him and



he also approached me. At last, we met each other. He brought me very good happiness, because that man was from my village; it was my friend Omon. He carried a heavy hoe. He was working very hard. He got very surprised at my things that I exchanged for the birds. Then we sat along the street and talked.

Both of us looked at each other happily. We decided to work together. He also went back toward his way with me. Towards the evening, we reached a big city. This city's name was Kukterak. We had some coins, and with the money, we lived there for two or three days. On Friday evening, we came to the market as it had been appointed.

It was a very big market. Maybe a human's child hadn't seen such a market. The rows of stalls were full of products, and there were a lot of people there. Look at the merchants wearing colorful clothes.

Here you go. Look through it! It is a haberdashery. Several haberdasheries were spreading their products on the ground. There one can find any product he likes.

Here is the second row of stalls! One side is for pottery, the second side is a soap market. And there you can find everything, like pipes, pumpkin-dishes and others.

On one side, round soap, wax, candles and dead cow's intestines in the bag were sold. There bees were flying. To buy some soap you should cover your nose or put it under the collar. Some sellers offered a cup of tea to the customers to attract their attention to their goods. They don't smell bad except the soap in the world. Who likes that smell? But Omon liked the soap market.

To my mind, the most famous market among them was "the louse market". There you can find everything: soldier trousers, leather-shoes, different colored clothes by tailor girls and many other things.

And if you ask me about sellers' faces: they were dirty and unshaved faces. If you ask any goods' price, they would greet a client first and then say the goods' prices. We heard about the place named "America", maybe America is this place!

At this market, I met my friend Husni from my village. He had changed his job and now he was an assistant to a merchant. Big traders sold clothes and the rest of the colorful clothes would be sold by assistants. These clothes had many purchasers, because those clothes were cheaper than a big roll of clothes. It was useful for the poor. Husni carried one bag of clothes:

- Come purchasers, there is every kind of clothes here. Such as: poplin, knushvakh, your body will enjoy, them and so many others are here! - He was shouting like this.

Suddenly he saw Omon and me. He was very happy to see us like he met Imam Hasan and Imam Husan:

- Wow, is that really you, guys? - He said looking at me. Are you the assistant to a gypsy? And what about you, Omon? I thought my father's job was useless for me. Then I changed my job. My benefit reached three and a half sums. Look at these goods; they are not available even in the Yusuf Davidov's shop. Then he looked at me and spoke:

- Where have you been for the past seven days? Your poor mother is looking for you. Why don't you tell her that you are alive, huh? Then your brother-in-law came and calmed your mother down. He said that you stayed at their house for about five days and then you went to Koplombek to his uncle's place. He told her that you were going to help him till autumn and earn some money. After that your mother stopped crying. Go to your house and say hello to your mother at least for once.

- I want to earn some money and buy some new clothes. Then I will go back home.

- Hey, you, silly, what did you do to your brother-in-law's bird?

- What did I do?

- You had sold it to a gypsy!

- I did not sell it, I exchanged it for something.

- Look at your goods; you have become really "rich", you little gypsy. Don't worry, your brother-in-law took Nabi sheriff and took his bird back for two sums.

- Very good, he will be more careful after that. Who told him to show his birds to everybody? All right, stop that; tell me about our village and the news there.

- What can I say about the village? Jalil's cow's food was burned down on the ceiling. Pulatkhoja had stolen his brother's gun and he was imprisoned for one day. Two police officers and Mochalov himself came for the investigation. Everybody hid in their houses, and Solikh and I watched them.

- Hey sart⁶, - Mochalov said, - it is so bad, very bad, you will go to Siberia.

- It is very dangerous. Pulatkhoja's brother released him by giving some money to Mochalov.

Since then, Pulatkhoja was proud among his friends, saying that he didn't get frightened of police or of Mochalov.

- I will speak to him when I go to the village, - I said.

Omon said with an allegory: "Please, do so".

- Please, say hello to my mother and brothers, don't worry about me. Just give this money to Yuldash, I was defeated the other day at a game. All right. See you!

We went in a different direction. We brought Omon's hoe and my goods to the market. Lots of

⁶ Uzbek settled population

people wanted to buy our goods. Especially, they asked me about my goods, about what they could be used for in their house.

After some time we managed to sell our goods by the help of a broker. But we were able to sell only Omon's hoe and one of my goods.

We began to play our bumb⁷ to draw purchasers' attention.

After much effort we managed to sell them.

We got tired and Omon suggested eating something.

- Let's go, what will we eat?

- Something cheaper and good and with high nutrition.

- Then we will eat guja⁸.

- Let's go.

We bought bread and went to the food-market. There were different meals there.

People were sitting around sellers and cooks were serving them. A customer found something in the meal and said:

- What is a fly doing in my meal?

- No, it isn't. It is an overdone onion, - The cook said and took it and put it into his mouth. We also bought that meal because it was a cheap meal. We had it happily. Omon was wiping his sweat on his forehead while he was having the meal.

After lunch, we had a rest. The rest of food, eggs and bread, we put into our bag. Omon started acting like a rich man.

- "Let's go", - He said to me, - "We will go to the sheep-market."

- "Why?"

- "I will buy a sheep and lead it to the city."

⁷ National musical instrument

⁸ made by corn and sour-milk

- "What?" - I asked. "Has the money influenced on you so fast? You cannot feed yourself up, what will you do with the sheep?"

But he didn't agree. He took me to the market. We put our bags at the gate and asked the guard to look after them, and then we entered the market.

The market was like Mashkhar. Lots of sheep and goats were crying here. On one side, cows, bulls... and then there were also horses there. The day was very hot. It smelt very bad everywhere with the sweat of the animals. There was man selling water there, and one barefoot boy was selling a cold sour-milk. There were sheep sellers there too.

We hadn't even asked the price of any sheep, when suddenly a quarrel began in the market.

- "Hit him!"

- "A thief, thief!"

The scandal started. Everybody ran toward them. Two police officers also arrived. We also went there and ran into Sul-ton from our village. At that time he pretended as if he had lost his money and he caught one poor boy.

- "People!" - he said. "I have had my money stolen. This boy was following me, I suspect him in stealing my money."

The boy got pale and his lips were shivering.

- "Oh my God, save me from slander!" - He shouted.

- "How much money did you have?" - The police officer asked Sul-ton the Thief.

- "I had eight sums. It was in my pocket. And I had a silver ring in it. I'm a poor man, I was going to buy sheep."

At that time Sul-ton saw Omon and me.

"Here, these boys are my witnesses!"

Omon got astonished at everything and ran away. But I stayed there.

- "How much money did you have?" - The police asked the shoemaker guy.

- "I also had the same bag as his and I was also going to buy sheep. I had eight sums and thirty coins."

The police said that they did not need any witnesses and took both of them away. We didn't follow them.

I found Omon at the Tuya Inn in the evening. He escaped having heard Sulton's words. He was still very frightened.

- "How did it finish?" - he asked.

- "It turns out you are the companion of the thief, the police are looking for you", - I said to him.

- "Really? What shall I do now?"

- "What could we do? They will send you to prison."

- "Where will we spend the night then?"

We went to several tea-houses. All of them were full with traders and merchants so there was no room for a night for us.

- "Where shall we go now?" - Omon asked.

- "Don't worry, last year my uncle and I stayed here in an old woman's house. She knows me. We will stay there."

Omon being very scared followed me. We went to that old woman's house. We found her house. Her house was clean. And one pot was on the stove. And there were other dishes. Maybe there was some sour-milk and milk there. One calf was running in the yard. One old dog welcomed us with barking. Having heard the dog barking, the old woman came out. She was more than sixty years old, and she was wearing a shawl over her fair hair.

"Good afternoon."

Before greeting us, the woman calmed the dog down. The dog stopped barking.

“Come in, boys, sit here”, – she offered us.

I gestured to Omon. He gave the bag to her.

– “A little bit of shopping from the market”, – I said.

– “I did not need that, guys”, – she said and looked at the bag and went inside.

After some time she came out:

– “Boys, would you drink some alcohol? Shall I cook some soup with meat?” – She asked.

– “No, aunt, we are not going to eat or drink anything, only cook ten eggs for us and give us a room for a night.”

– “All right”, – the old woman said, – “It will cost you one coin. I have a place for you.”

– “No, aunt, we will give you only a half of a coin”, – I said. The old woman began to prepare dinner for us. Till her meal was ready we spoke about the plan of our trip.

When we were about to finish having dinner, five men came in making lots of noise. We saw Sulton among them. Having seen them Omon got scared and looked at me. I gestured to him that we would run out of that place. We stood up and hid under the poplar-tree.

Sulton the Thief said:

– “Are you here? Are you all right, my dear aunt?”

– He said. – “You will host us tonight. Do you have a good wine?”

Then he saw us:

– “Ah you villains, what are you doing here? Come here!” – He said.

He and his friends went to the platform and they invited us, too. We came in as they wanted. The old woman brought some bread in a tablecloth and put at the middle of table.

– “What kind of vodka do you drink?”

– “Bring us the best one”, – said Sulton.

The old woman entered the tent and Sulton looked at us:

– “What were you doing at the cow – market?” – said he.

– “We were playing.”

– “Ha-ha! What kind of game was there? Or will I take you as an assistant? – He gestured at Omon. – “He can be rubber, but not a thief, he is rough”, – he said.

Using the chance from the joke I asked him:

– “Sulton aka, how did the quarrel finish?”

“The event happened like this, brother”, – said thief Sulton. The thieves of Kokterak used to swagger about their skill, bravery and cheating. And I had spoken that I can rob people’s money if they would agree with it. I bet with my colleagues for organizing a party by me. I entered into the sheep market. I had met the shoe maker guy whom you saw. I took his wallet quickly and I counted his money in it. There were eight sums and two tinges in this wallet. I added two tinges from my wallet. I put also my ring into the wallet and put it in a person’s pocket. Then I started shouting. Policemen brought us to the judge. Having heard my complaint the judge began to count the money. The judge took money from the wallet and put on the table. The boy became thief because of my complaint was right. They gave me the wallet, ring and money. But I had to pay one and a half tinge as the chotal⁹. So, I won with my friends.

“So, the poor guiltless boy had lost his money?” – said I.

“No, he got into a prison for a little time. Then I felt sorrow for him and gave one sum to a policeman and

⁹ Money of that time

he became free. The poor boy embraced and kissed my forehead from his happiness.

"Thank you, aka, I will never forget your goodness. I consider you are my brother. My address is Toqlik jallob makhalla. My name is Abdurayim", - thanked he.

"Clever, this is a male's manner, aka", - said I.

Sulton Pickpocket smiled as he meant it is right.

Hearing this story, all of us laughed. Sulton was leaning on the pillow and a tall man was standing near the table. A religious man was bowing down and was sitting with smiling to Sulton Pickpocket's words. The other two guys were playing false gambling with matches.

The old woman was still preparing the meal. The green smoke from the fire used to spread around.

It was afternoon and the sun was setting. The old woman appeared at the fire and then went into the tent. She brought buza (a type of alcohol in the bottle). She brought several big jugs. The tall guy took off his belt quickly and he opened it on the table.

The old woman began to prepare soup. Then she brought water. One man drank this water and then passed it to Sulton (usually buza was drunk with making it warm, but this buza was warm because it was under the sun.).

There is the rule of pouring buza. It is poured with wiping.

The tall guy drank a little buza from the jug and passed the first jug of buza.

- "Pour to everybody", - Sulton said.

The tall guy passed the second and third jug of buza to the other two guys and looked at Sulton.

"Don't pour to children now, pass it to domla¹⁰, - said Sulton

¹⁰ Teacher, spiritual mentor

"No, no, you can drink it, I will not drink it. Though, it was said in Koran..."

"Don't speak about your Koran and how long have you not drunk", – Sulton became angry. – "You used to relax with our party."

"Though, though...We decided not to drink again."

"The confession of a pickpocket and a thief is not confession. Did you hear that not anybody can be busy being a thief? Last year people might have killed you if I had not protected you in Kappon near Salor. People say that the thief becomes a religious man when he is old, and a prostitute becomes a healer when she is old. I repented my faults. And now are you training with being murid when you were in villages? Look at him!"

Mullah lost his control and he took the jug.

"When you enjoy with alcohol you will even sing. Eh, the heir of prophet."

Mullah felt useless and drank alcohol quickly.

He didn't make us drink more. "Then you will drink well", – said Sulton.

The old woman brought alcohol again. She brought soup which was not cooked completely. Mullah had already tied his *salla*¹¹ as a belt. He was going to drink with remembering sayings by the prophet.

Almoyi-aljoyi alyorlar:

Bu tog'larning yonboshida otim yurgan,

Quyishqoni sag'risiga botib yurgan.

Sendek-sendek nomardlarni men ko'p ko'rgan.

Oq tomog'im, yo'rg'alang, alyor bo'lsin.

Onasini boyvachchaga sotib yurgan.

Alyor-ey-alyor, alyor bo'lsin-ey.

¹¹ A kind of head-dress tied around the head, usually made of silk.



*Tog'dan quyon qochirdim, iyagi yo'q,
Qizlar ko'ylak kiyadi jiyagi yo'q.
Jiyagi yo'q joylariga qo'lim solsam,
Qo'sh kaptari hurkib qochar, suyagi yo'q.
Alyor-ey-alyor, alyor bo'lsin.
Oq tamog'im, yo'rg'alang-ey, alyor bo'lsin.¹²*

Discussion at the party began to change into ridiculous words. I stood up and looked at Omon. We asked for one little carpet and pillow from the old woman. We passed behind the tent. We slept on our made bed. Although it was midnight, people became louder and tipsier. Again some people came and joined them. Somebody was laughing. Maybe they beat somebody, he cried swearing to God.

"I swear to God, I have no other money. If I don't tell the truth, Imomi Azam¹³ will punish me."

"Search all his pockets of this pander!"

They were pick pocketing Mullah. The old woman Yaxshiqiz who had seen such kind of condition many times was serving between the tent and the fire.

Then we went to sleep. I don't know how long we slept. In early morning somebody pushed me and I woke up. The mullah was standing at our heads. He had put on his salla¹⁴ and his eyebrow and face were red and green.

"Wake up, brother, all of them is sleeping. They punished me. They took all of my money. I hope that we will not have trouble again. I have a great headache."

¹² Meaning: I walked on the coast of these mountains; I saw such kind of poor-spirit people like you. Girl's dresses are without sleeve, when I touch girls breasts they lose their control

¹³ An ecclesiastic

¹⁴ Turban

I made Omon wake up, and we washed our faces and hands with water of the canal. Then we wiped our faces with our cloth.

"Well, where do we go?"

"We can go anywhere. We will go to Kingiroq Tepa."

When we were going, the old woman Yaxshiqiz crossed our road:

"Where are you going, give me money for service?"

Omon gave fifteen Bukharin coins to her.

"This is money for bread and egg from your service."

"Well", - said the old woman while taking money, - "come again."

So, we continued our way in the early morning.

PART II

We walked for about three hours and reached Tepaguzar. There was an old man who had just opened his shop. We bought things for a trip from that man. It was one packet of salt, two packets of dried apricot, six loaves of breads, thread and a needle. Everything cost seven coins. Mullah paid half of the cost and the rest we paid. Then we continued our way. After walking an hour, we sat under a poplar and had breakfast. During breakfast he introduced himself.

- "I'm really from Bukhara. My ancestors had been very great religious men. My deceased father had ability: if he said "kuf", water flowed in contrary directions, if he said "suf", the blind's eyes opened. Lots of people were dedicated to him. Our relatives from mother's side were well-educated people. My mother nowadays predicts by playing the tambourine, beats with the wind, and does magical things between sweethearts. Many years ago I couldn't obey my father and did some bad things. In the beginning I made the youths to earn money. And I smoked hemp. Then I did the purse cutting thing. But it was not appropriate for purebred people like us. Once, I was nearly left in the crowd in Kappon. No, thank God, I found my way, and I continued my father's job. I am living well by performing intrigue or magic in villages. It seems because of continuing my father's job I am getting rich.

Although I did not study at a madrasah, I am an educated person. Although I did not study, I understand. I can write amulets bringing success and

names of lots of people from the village are dedicated to me. Some people call me "ehshon brother-in-law" and some call me "Kori aka" and "Mulla aka". My real name is Mullamhammad Sharif, the Son of Mullamhammad Latif, the son of Gavsil Azam.

And now three of us must unite to do all work with one advice, if you call me my holiness in front of people in a respectful way, and I will also call you apprentice. I will teach the rule of Islamic rules, and until autumn we will earn a lot of money; it would be good if we go to the city of honorific people.

"It must be like this you may call me "Mulla aka" or "Sharifjon aka" if there is no one. If we find anything, it will be placed in the middle, and divided into four. Two parts will be mine and two parts will go to each of you. If anyone does not follow the promise he will be traitor. Amin, Allohu Akbar", - said he.

We all prayed together.

After a while, something from the dust appeared in front of us. It approached us. Then we recognized it. It was the man from the village. The horse exhaled. The edges of his cloth were flying in the wind. He stopped his horse roughly.


"Hello, brothers, where are you going?"

We also greeted him.

"Guys!" - said the Uzbek guy, - "is there anyone who knows the rules of shariat, and deals with burring of dead?"

Domla looked at us and we looked at him with bowing.

"We may find what kind of service we can do. We are from Tashkent. We are Eshon's people according to ethnicity. We are mullahs who studied in the madrasah. Now it is holiday time, we are sightseeing for fresh air. These are two students of Eshon", - he said.



After these words, the Uzbek guy became happy.

“Voy, my dears, voy! God sent you to me. Let’s go. There are people who train with farming near here. One guy of our people had died. There is not anyone who could wash and do a funeral ceremony for him. Voy, voy, respected people, God sent you. Let’s go.”

Omon packed up the tablecloth. The Uzbek guy got off the horse and mullah got on the horse. The three of us on foot and the mullah on horse began the trip. The distance was very long. So we stopped and had rest two times. After we reached a highland we saw a stronghold and two tents there. The Uzbek guy showed that side:

“That is our stronghold which you see. Soon we will reach there.”

We reached there in the afternoon. This nomad people’s real residence had been left in the desert which was one hundred kilometers away. Their cows, families and wives had been left there. Because of the death they had to stop there for the purpose of washing the dead body and burying him there.

All of them stood up and bowed to us. Mullah asked “Where is the dead body?” The dead body was inside of the stronghold. The stronghold seemingly used to be some rich person’s shed for sheep according to the structure inside of it. The walls were strong and there were doors with two folds. But the strength of them was poor. There was a pond with water in the middle of the stronghold. The edge of pond was covered with old grass. The dead body was in the animal shed of the stronghold.

I should tell the truth. Not one of us had washed a dead body before. Especially, I was afraid of even a cat’s dead body and you can imagine my condition. Mullah showed himself as though he was busy with washing the dead body. During the washing he

shivered and said "kuf-suf" while praying. But we used to know that it were simple words. All of it was done for money.

With the indication by Mullah Omon was ordered to go out from the stronghold and ask for a shroud. They brought old material six meters long. Then he ordered that no one could enter and look until the dead body would be washed, because if they looked, it would be sinful. People would have troubles.

All of them went out. We closed the gate. We put a big stone behind the gate.

Mullah looked at us. We looked at him.

"What will we do? Had one of you washed the dead body?" – asked Mullah.

"No", – we said.

"I also haven't washed. But I agreed with Uzbek people for ten sums. We should wash it. I will take five sums and you will take five sums."

"Well, in this case you will wash it", – I objected.

With fear we went to the shed where the dead body was. The bottom of it was open. There was a piece of old material on his face. I think he had laid there for several days because they hadn't found a person who could wash it. There was a bad smell there.

We approached to the dead body turn by turn slowly. We came close to the dead body with fear. Omon who was going in front of me said "giyq" and lost himself suddenly. Mullah went back and stood up near the door. I understood the reason of Omon's losing himself looking at the dead body. I couldn't believe in my eyes. The dead body which we were going to wash was alive. He began to raise his head moving his feet.

I feared very much. I had beaten Omon who was lying on the ground and I fell down. I looked at Mullah. He was afraid of the dead body. He prayed saying

something. I couldn't breathe and hardly stood up. I looked back as the dead body was coming after me. Having jumped outside, I began to cry.

People heard my voice and tried to open the gate, but they couldn't manage, because we had closed the door tightly. I had no power to take the stone and open the gate.

The teacher was sitting aside the pond and washing. Two men came over wall and opened the gate. Others also entered the room. I told them about the event. They were surprised more than we; because they were closer than us.

Now we had to care for Omon. I began to enter the room with others console. I was afraid of it very much. In every breath I tried to find the way which I could leave.

When we were entering the shed with noise, a cat ran out under the material, and then it went out the tent passing through our feet. Then we understood how the dead-body had become alive. The cat had eaten the dead body's nose. The owners of the dead-body pitied to him and they laughed at our "braveness".

The cat went out with the material. Everybody went out again. We locked the gate again. We brought Omon aside the pond and I splashed water on his face. But he had still sat sadly.

- "Stop, brother, stop. I will pray for him. Then he will come to himself", - the teacher said and began to pray.

- "Well, you feel you well. We should believe in prayer."

- "Stand up. Don't sit as a boy who did a shame thing", - I said to him.

- "No, my work is finished. You will do the rest", - Omon said.

- "Three of us have to stay there according to the rule of shariat", - I said.

We begged Omon and stood him up. Three of them went near the gate ordering to wash the dead body to each other and looked inside. Omon smiled looking at me and Mullah.

"Well, let's begin to wash. How do we wash? We should wash well", - said he.

The leader of washing of the dead body became our Mullah. Both of them poured the water. If he washed the dead body, not making trouble to the dead body and being careful, all goodness would be saint.

"Hey", - said Mullah, - "people said that the youth makes service and the old people have a rest. You will wash and I will pour water. I will also pray."

"You will need to pray to yourself. Wash the dead body as we said. If not we will call the owners of the dead body and shame you."

- "That is", - said Omon.

- "Oh my God", - said Mullah. - "Is it supposed to be a partnership? You'd better lift his head and I will lift his legs."

- "No, you will hold his head and we will hold his legs."

We were whispering to each other so that the owners of the dead body could not notice that we were quarrelling and from time to time we kept looking through the hole in the door. And the people outside were getting a tomb for the body. After quarrelling Omon told me:

- "If we had two meters of rape it would be very great."

- "What will you do with that?"

- "I have found a way out", - he said happily, - "Let's go and find one."

We both looked for a rape in the shed and at last found one. We brought it to the shed where the body was. Mullah was slowly walking along the pavement. This time Omon was much braver maybe because of his smart idea. The teacher asked us to lift the body. The teacher was reluctant to hold the body's legs and then he agreed to do so. Omon tied the dead body's legs and pulled him to the pond. If he had been alive he would have complained to us about the scratches on his back.

We stopped at the shore of the pond. Omon started to talk.

- "The best way is to put him into the pond and wash him up there for two or three times and he will be all right."

- "Inshaallah", - said Mullah, - "he will be all right. Even Allah said to do so."

- "You'd better die", - I said to him.

We all laughed. We liked the suggestion very much actually. We were interested in washing the dead-body with the rape. Then we began pulling him to the shore of the pond, but the body didn't move. The teacher kept pulling the rape. I was going to cry, but I thought it was useless. Maybe Omon noticed it and said:

- "Stop, silly", - he said, - "what are you going to do?"

- "Maybe I should cry, huh?"

- "No, pull the rape instead."

Three of us began pulling the rape. We did our best. The body even widened a little bit.

At that time the door was knocked. The teacher ran and answered:

- "Wait a minute; we have not finished washing the body yet. We will call you when we are done." Then he returned. And we started pulling him again. Suddenly the rape was torn and we all fell down.

The time was passing by. It was dangerous to waste time. We had already gotten used to the dead body as if it was our own. Omon threw himself into the pond and began seeking the dead-body.

- "Mister, you also get into the water, or you will not just take the five sums", - I said.

- "What will happen, if I don't get in there?"

- "In that case I will tell the owners of the body and they will kill you."

The teacher looked at me angrily and threw himself into the pond. After some time they found it and they tried to get it out. I helped them. At last, we took it out of the water. But now the body did not have its head! Omon threw himself again into the pond and found his head. We began sewing his head on with a large needle. The teacher was really a master of his job. Then we even covered the dead-body with a shroud. We tried to cover the body as much as possible. But we did not manage to cover his legs and one could see the spots of the rape there. So we opened our travel bag and emptied it and put the things in it into the shawl and covered the body's legs with the bag.

Omon got dressed again. The teacher also put his clothes on, and he stood at the body whispering something.

I went to the door and unlocked it after finishing the work. I opened the gate and called the people. The tomb had already been prepared for the body outside. The relatives of that dead body began to cry and they were patting his face. At that time, one of them noticed that his head was upside down. It turns out; being in a hurry we had set up the body's head incorrectly.

- "Why is his face upside down?" - That man asked.

The teacher got a little bit astonished but was able to pull himself together. He answered:

– “It has been made by Allah. I guess he had done many sins when he was alive”, – he answered.

At that time I was surprised by the teacher’s knowledge and thought that his knowledge worked out here very well.

But the secret was revealed anyway. They found out that the body’s head had been cut off and then sewed back again.

The people surrounded us. Everybody was staring at the teacher because he was older than we and he was the master of us. Omon and I escaped. Two riders started chasing us but they were not very good at running as they had spent most part of their lives on horses. In such cases people must run away separately, and so I shouted to Omon to run to the left and I myself ran to the right. Then we separated and ran to different sides. I don’t know where Omon ran to, but I ran away very quickly and disappeared. And I don’t know what happened to the master too. He stayed in the crowd. Two riders lost me and they went back. I began to walk but I was worried about Omon and the teacher.

In the evening, I reached the “big city” again. There were some old men waiting for the evening prayer at the mosque, and I greeted and joined them. After the prayer everybody went back to their houses. But I didn’t leave the mosque. The imam and his assistant looked at me suspiciously because there had been stealing of things there before and that’s why sufi¹⁵ asked me:

– “What is up, my son, why don’t you go, the prayer is over.”

– “Father, I’m a stranger here”, – I said, – “If you let me I will stay here till morning. I have lost my way.”

Imam interfered into our conversation:

¹⁵ The call to prayer in the mosque and advising people

- "Where are you from, my son?"

- "I'm from Tashkent."

- "What are you doing here?"

I started using Omon's tricks there.

- "I used to study at madrassah and now we are having holidays so I was going to earn some money." (And at that moment, I thought I wish no one asks me to wash a dead body again.)

- "Which Madrassah did you study at, and who was your teacher there?"

They got me. There are so many madrassahs and teachers in Tashkent.

- "Master, I studied at that big madrassah and my teacher was also a very great teacher."

The Imam laughed and said:

- "Yes, yes, you say that you are a student, huh? It turns out you studied at lie-telling school instead of madrassah, huh. Then you will go with me. Are you hungry or what?"


I got ashamed and looked at the floor.

"Let's go to our house then and serve to us. And we will find you something to eat too."

I came to the teacher's house. He gave me a meal there. I enjoyed the meal very much. Then he brought one big knife, an ax and a rape. And he came up to me. I got very scared of seeing them. And I got ready to run away and cry out. The teacher noticed my state there, I guess, and calmed me down and said:

- "Don't worry. I don't want to kill you. I have got one request, my son. I have one bull but it has been sick for several days already. You will have to keep these tools beside you and be alerted. If something happens to the bull, you will have to slaughter it at once. Be careful, don't fall asleep."

- "All right, master", - I said, - "could you give me some tea?"



- "What? Do you say that you want to drink some tea? Tea is too expensive nowadays. There, the water is running in the ditch. Get that and drink or you may drink some from the jug over there too."

I got very happy having heard the master's request because it was very easy for me. The master went inside. Then I lied on my bed which had been brought out by the master. I watched the sky for a long time. The yard was a very scary place. But I couldn't sleep till morning. But towards the morning I was about to fall asleep. At that time something fell down and started moaning. I heard that.

I thought it was the bull and I ran into the cowshed with the knife and the ax. There was an animal lying on the ground in a dark room. I thought it was the bull and I slaughtered it. I left the rest of the job for tomorrow and I went to sleep.

In the dawn I was fast asleep and woken up by the strike of a hard shoe's heel. The teacher was standing over my head angrily. I tried to get up but the teacher began to hit me with the handle of the ax. I got very angry.

- "Why do you hit an orphan like me? Is that your gratitude towards me?" - I shouted and cried out.

- "You are a big idiot!" - said the teacher. - "You have slaughtered the donkey instead, stupid! I used to buy that donkey for three sums in Bukhara. It was a very good donkey, oh my God!... Oh..."

And the teacher, being sorry for his donkey kept hitting me.

It turned out that on mistake last night I had slaughtered his donkey instead of his bull. And the bull had already died before that event. I tried to escape. And at that moment I saw the ladder leaned against the roof of the cowshed. So I climbed up to the wall and escape through the roof. The teacher

kept chasing me. Then maybe he got ashamed of the people and went back to his house. So I got rid of that event luckily. I continued to escape, but at that time I fell down and I fell into the kitchen shelf. There was a baker's stove; I fell down straightly into that.


At that time, I was going to get revenge from mullah. I took revenge on mullah by taking hatchling. But it was very pitifully a big hatchling which was waiting for me to revenge because I killed its owrier. There was I appeared with this hatchling. I was not injured from falling down the roof because I fell down on the hatchling from the first side and my skin didn't feel an ache for the second. I couldn't think why I had fallen down.

The teacher who had become angry because of my bad manner had come with rope which was brought to tie the legs of cow and beat me. I escaped again by standing up. Again I climbed the roof by the ladder. Having climbed the roof, I began to escape roof by roof.

It was good all roofs were built very close to each other. There were narrow streets, but I used to skip as a hen which was escaping from a fox. Some people who wake up early in the morning looked at me. The teacher was chasing me. The teacher stopped because he hadn't tied his belt and his trousers went down to his feet as he hobbled.

But many people had climbed up the roof because of our panic. I was still escaping. Having looked back, I fell down in the kitchen of a house. I was in the chimney of the kitchen. I went down the tandoor¹⁶ because of the chimney was set on it. In tandoor, my feet were on my chest. My left hand was under my body and I couldn't move my right hand. I tried to move it but I couldn't do it. People who chased me saw that I disappeared quickly and they feared.

¹⁶ Uzbek traditional oven



They said "astagfirullo" seeing me. And they went back hopeless. How did you think about me? Maybe they thought me "Devil", "soldier of Abdurahmon from Kohiqof". I lied in the tandoor until the evening without saying anything. In the evening, the door was opened and a woman came into the kitchen. She began to make fire next to the tandoor. Then one woman entered there. She began to cook a meal.

The woman was cooking moshkichiri¹⁷. The dish's smell began to open my appetite. At that time, it was difficult to stay in the tandoor while smelling the meal which was being prepared in the kitchen, because I was very hungry. There was much wood because this country is situated in the desert. Besides the meal, moshkichiri had been prepared for a long time. The woman also was making fire more. Beside it the bakers' stove began to become hot from fire. If this woman continued to burn fire, I would be ready meat in the baker's stove. The cooking of every mung bean was equal to my every opening eyes. The woman put food in the pot on two plates. Then she took one of them and left the second one. There was also no fire left. But she fired my hungry heart. I took a breath, smelling the moshkichiri. After the woman went out, I took the straw of the tandoor as I was making different plans for being free from these troubles. It was the evening. In the evening, the prayer "Xufton¹⁸" is prayed. But I lied in a prison. After the time of praying "Xufton", I decided to lie looking at the chimney which gave an opportunity to see the world.

This is the tail of the star balance, this is the star of the head of seven pirates. When it appeared above

¹⁷ Uzbek national dish – lentil soup

¹⁸ The fifth prayers before bed

me, the donkey was throated. This is the way of stars. When it appeared in the west place, the teacher had kicked my side.

When I was looking at these stars, the door was opened and a man entered the kitchen. I put the straw on the tandoor. The man sat near the tandoor and began to whistle.

It was good music. I do not disagree with it. I can hear it anywhere in a calm place. But, imagine what kind of right does he have to standing on the tandoor if there is somebody in it? Is it possible?

After a little time the woman entered the kitchen. She came close to the man. I heard the sound of a kiss. Maybe they kissed each other. And they talked to each other.

- "Haven't you waited for me too much? My husband went to sleep very late because he was busy with counting. He just went to sleep."


- "Not at all, dear", - that man said, - "your husband may have felt our attitude. Well now, do you have any dish? Yesterday I went him to buy nos¹⁹, but he looked at me as though he saw the man who doesn't like him. And he gave little nos for nine sums but others would give more nos."

- "He is a very selfish man who likes money very much", - said the woman. "He didn't pay attention to even me. He thinks only about money."

- "Let's have supper, I am very hungry."

- "Yes, it happened rewarding work", thought I. The guy was brave and smart. He had a great appetite. The woman opened the cover of the pot and put food in the straw. The man thanked and stood up from the tandoor with stopping to make trouble. He sat near the tandoor and began to eat with appetite. Brave

¹⁹ Type of chewing tobacco



was eating the meal and the woman was picking meat from the meal, and giving them to the man.

I had great trouble in the tandoor. I couldn't endure. I took a plate slowly and began to pass my hand toward the plate. The straw began to be free. It was darkness. The lovers were busy with each other.

But the guy suddenly noticed that. He waited for me to move again and caught my arm. He looked at his lover and said:

- "Hey, hey, hey, stop! Whose arm is this? This is your arm and this one is mine and what about this one, huh?"

The woman got scared. If they hadn't had their own affair I would have been killed that night. The man pulled me out of the baker's stove. I felt revealed a little and I enjoyed it very much. I wished the guy had given me some massage.

- "Have you got matches?"

The woman took the matches out of her clothes and handed them to the guy. The woman was shivering. The guy turned out to be very brave.

- "Well, who are you?"

I also repeated his words.

- "And who are you?"

- "I'm asking you!"

- "And I am asking you!"

- "Do you want to live, hey guy?"

- "And do you want to live?"

- "Oh my God!"

- "Oh my God!"

The woman interfered into our conversation.

- "Hey, my dear brother", - she said, - "look at me, who are you and what are you doing here? Are you insane or a devil or something else? Why did you come into somebody's oven without any permission at night?!"

- "And what is he doing in somebody's house at night, huh?"

I asked pointing at the guy.

- "How does he dare to say that, huh?"

At that time I noticed that the guy was going to do something to me and I thought that probably, he would get the revenge of the donkey which had been slaughtered by mistake.

So, I also wanted to use my old trick then.

- "He...y!!!"

The woman covered my mouth immediately with her hand.

- "What are you going to do?"

- "What could I do but crying out, huh?"

Both of them couldn't make me stop crying and then they decided to make a pact with me.

- "Stand up and go away then!"

- "I'm hungry."

- "I guess I will have to pay some "taxes" then", - said the woman.

She went towards the house and brought two loaves of bread. I took them, but still I did not want to leave.

The guy said:

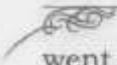
- "And now go away!"

- "Give me some money!"

The guy got angry. But he gave me some coins involuntarily and also humiliated me with some bad words.

Then they asked me not to tell anything to anybody and even made me swear about it.

I went out in the darkness with two loaves of bread and some coins. It was getting late. I walked along the street for some time and then came to the yard of a big market. It was the place of that dirty Kalas market. I had neither a place to go nor to stay somewhere so I



went to a corner, put two bricks under my head and started to sleep...

This time I was woken up by some noise. When I opened my eyes lots of people had surrounded me there.

- "He is the one", - one of them was saying.

- "What happened? Who is the one and what has that one done?" - I was surprised.

They forced me to stand up and tied my hands. They made me walk through the market and forced me to say that I was a sinner and I was supposed to be killed by the people.

In fact, the event had happened like this: that night some thieves robbed one rich man and then they even killed him afterwards. In the morning people saw the blood on my clothes and thought that I was one of the thieves.

When they finished making me ashamed in front of people they wanted to kill me with stones.

They wanted to gather more people, and so two boys were ringing bells and I was really exhausted so I fainted.

After some time I got my consciousness back, and I could still hear the noise of the bells. So I opened my one eye being very scared. But there was nobody there. And then I opened both my eyes and again I could see no one there...

It turned out to be like this: one of the guys said:

- "My dear friend", - he said, - "this guys is very young to kill someone and then if he had been one of those killers, they would not have left him here like that and besides, I don't think he is completely healthy. I guess he has got epilepsy. And thieves do not become friends with such kind of idiots like him."

- "In that case, why are his clothes covered with blood?" - Asked one of them suspiciously.

- "Wow, wow, wow, I know him. This boy is Ashur butcher's son from Yukori Korasuv. The other day on Sunday he told me that his son had ran away and he was looking for him. And this is that guy..." -he said.

- "Yes, yes, you are right. Even I heard a crier shouting in the market that a fifteen year old boy had been lost and whoever found him would be praised... - said another one. After that it turned out that they went back and left me alone.

PART III

I am completely healthy. I can move my hands. My feet walk according to my wish. My eyes can clearly see. I do not really look at the prohibited things. My mouth, jaw and teeth can take out unnecessary food. However, I have a refractory organ in my body. I can't manage it. I fulfill what it wants. I can never take control over it. I want uninformed people to get to know about it. It's only faithful for several people; it is – a stomach. It sometimes rules my body instead of me. Then other organs also follow it. My eyes start to look at the sinful and banned food according to the wish of my stomach. My hands unwillingly try to get the food even of the poor. My feet lead to unfamiliar place.

Then I shed tears and told this ghazal²⁰ which I always keep in my mind:

*These black eyes cry under eyebrow
The world seems bad under the eyes of mine
I am a wanderer I need kindness and treat,
I need a little squint, brick and ground to sleep.*

*Oh my heart, don't worry, happiness lives short,
Even the pearls don't live forever inside the shells.
This is just a mini test given by God,
Even with a slice of bread, I'm full with patience.*

Navoiy says "Happy is a person who leaves the world before the world leaves him". Should I commit suicide? No, I'm too young. I didn't even enjoy my life

²⁰ Sonnet, poem

which was devoted to me. Sadiy says, "If you are under bad conditions and humiliated in another country, leave that place". In this big city like Kukterak, the stones which were thrown to me were more than the tears I shed.

I told myself "Don't think of grief opinions, go near the stream and try to relax a little bit". I went near the brook, found a secluded place, cleaned with alkaline fire the shawl which was bound to my waist instead of shirt and pants, cleaned it many times and hung it on a willow tree. Then I washed myself till I became clean. It took me about an hour. I wore my clothes, patted myself and went to the bazaar as usual. I could even manage to eat some food. Perhaps my friends remember that I had 2 coins which that lover boy had given.

Today's Friday. Sheep are bleating, camels are lowing, horses are neighing, salesmen are swearing, the hands of brokers are tired of "blessing". I was alone in that crowded place like an ant which was lost in downpour I was wandering, grieving...

Seven Kalandars²¹ who were dressed in broad clothes, robes and turbans were coming from the city towards the bazaar and singing a chant with foam in their mouth like camels...

*Today's a trade day
Orphans suffer and cry
Hey my dear friend Allah
You are a real friend of mine
If you ask "how's the orphan"
Perhaps, he doesn't have a dog
Hey my dear friend Allah
You are a real friend of mine.*

²¹ A kind of hermits

From ancient times, Kalandar was coming beyond. He had a big kachkil²² on his shoulders, a different type of cloth on his waist, holding a stick (As Nazar ota says this stick had been a cousin of the stick of Muso). Devoted people kiss this stick with tears in their eyes. They even bind a piece of cloth to it. An old aged Kalandar, who is holding the stick, is given money, bread (seven if Bakhoviddin's type, and eleven if Gavsulalazim's type), a goat, hens, and even camels by the inhabitants of the city. People who are coming behind Kalandar are busy with picking up the foods and placing them to the carriage. The rumor has spread all over the city Kukterak. Then Kalandar of Eshon visited bazaar. They say angel Jabroil²³ brings revelation from the sky to the room which these Kalandars live, Khazrat Eshon shares everything with them. The cavalry man who was coming beyond, whose mustache looked like a dog which bit a rope, with a sword which was hanging till the belly of his horse was moving his whip and making people give way to Kalandar.

I couldn't tolerate it. It seemed to me as if a beam came to me from the sky. My heart suffered. I approached the leader of Kalandars unwillingly, held his hand and wept. Kalandar patted my head with kindness, helped me to stand up and asked: "Hey, my son, what do you want? I'll wish for your good outcome". I stuttered, complained to him about my problems and asked him to accept me as a Kalandar.

Having heard this, peasants and women started to roar. The leader of Kalandars raised his hands up and wished for my good outcome.

So, I was appointed as a guard to the organization of "God" from that moment. I really liked that job of

²² Wood / Pumpkin container

²³ A devil, an angel of death

mine. I could eat delicious food whenever I wanted. The only thing you need to do is to learn by heart the poem "Hey my dear friend Allah". The proverb "you can get food for your song" matches here.


I was unconscious from the moment I had been accepted to the chain of Kalandars. I was coming beyond the Kalandar with bare head, torn clothes and reading ghazals:

*The horse is clip clopping
Hey my dear friend Allah
Go and see who is that?
Hey my dear friend Allah
If you ask about my love
She is nice slim Zebo
Hey my dear friend Allah.*

In the evening, we hired camels, sat by two people and went towards Eshonbazaar. Because Eshonbazaar city was the home of Mister Eshon. That's why it was considered as a sacred place of Tashkent, Chimkent and Sayram. Usually light comes to cities from the sky, but light goes to the sky from this city.

We reached Eshonbazaar and lifted the luggage from the camels. The leader of Kalandar wished for the owner of the camel good outcome. They say this wish of Kalandar is worth of a horse in other cities. The house of Eshon was next to a divine service. The house of Kalandars was also situated there.

First, we visited the interior chamber of the mosque. The leader of Kalandars stepped slowly towards the room. He should have announced to mister Eshon about our visit. Kalandars were sitting on the terrace. An obedient little Kalandar was holding my hands and ready to serve them.



The preaching was continuing. The servants of the interior chamber of the mosque were placing the things which we had brought. There were 2 doors at the divine service. One of them was near the ward of Eshon. After a while, the preaching stopped. The grandchildren of Bibi Oishai Kubro, the ninth wife of Mukhammad, who were dressed in long golden broad cloth and white turbans, holding rosaries with beams on their faces, came from the interior side.

I don't know whether the other people have seen it or not but I saw 1500 angels following them when they were coming.

We stood up, bowed and greeted with them. Perhaps Eshon asked Kalandar about today's income. So, the leader of Kalandars put a lot of money and some coins near him. Mister Eshon took all the paper money, put them inside his robes and said:

"No, no I will never touch the money. The wealth is sinful "addunya jifatun va tolibuho kilob" (Wealth is litter, people who seek it are dogs) and pushed the coins towards the leader of the Kalandars. At that time, he suddenly saw me and asked gently:

"Who is this boy?"

The leader of Kalandars started to describe me. He praised my epilepsy till the Eshon had drunk a pot of tea. He described my character positively. Thus, Eshon gestured to go near him. I felt a little bit shy and came up to him. He patted my forehead with his great hands and said:

"Ah, ah, ah my son, you are a lovely boy of Allah, look at the sky my son."

At that time, I saw 71 paradises among his 5 fingers.

So, the meeting finished. I slept in the corner of that ward. I was imagining different things. For instance: Does this place have a third door? Has Eshon eaten

palov? With which of his wives has he slept? Is there tea near him? Is he thirsty? Etc...

In the evening, I saw myself neither in paradise nor in hell. I was in the middle of the road. I saw a dream, but it was incomplete in my dream. I saw a dog standing in front of me and barking. Then I turned into that dog...


In the morning, the servant woke me up. There was going to be a meeting or something like this in that place. People started to turn up one by one. I was also kind of ritually washed. A lot of people came. They started to tell their sufferings, women, children, the blind, the paralyzed, people without kids, the diseased, borrowers and others came here to ask help from Eshon. Eshon read some holy words from the Koran devoting to those people. Eshon sent kalandars to Nazarbek bazaar. I was also going with them, but Eshon said:

"You stay here my dear son. You look very active and strong. So you will work here." I couldn't object to him and stayed at home. But I didn't want to. It's a pity that I gave away the chance to earn money. It's true that singing in the bazaar and earning money's much better than working there under pressure.

After Kalandars went, Eshon called me gently. I came up there and said:

"Yes, your majesty."

He held my hand and led to the room. I knelt near the reed mat. But I was amazed. He took the Koran from the shelf and gave it to me. I kissed it 3 times. Eshon closed his eyes, whispered something, then looked at me and ordered me to repeat these words: "I am the son of somebody...devoted servant of Eshon. I promise to fulfill all the wants of my chief. Even if the people are going to kill me, I'll be faithful to my chief and never cheat him. Especially, I'll look up to the



four wives of my chief. But I'll never look at their face. Furthermore, I'll never tell internal secrets to anyone. If I don't keep my promise, I agree to die, to be blind paralyzed and pass away, "Allahu Akbar".

After saying these words, I realized what I had said sitting on the white reed mat. Since that day, I worked inside and outside without stopping.

The fourth wife of Eshon is about 17. She is very pretty. Sometimes I wish to fulfill some things and imagine. Then I remember the day when I had sworn on the white reed mat, and kissed the Koran and I try to control my feelings. When I walked from side to side, I kept on telling the chanting:

*Nice slim Zebohon
Hey my dear friend Allah*

One day, Eshon called me again and said:

"Dear son, you served us much. You have been informed almost with everything. You know clearly that I have wives, children, neighbors, servants... I ought to feed them all. I must supply all of them with food and clothes. If we only wait for the income of Kalandars and mine, we will die. I tested you, observed you. You are a very hardworking and active boy. I advise you to earn your living with other ways my son."

I first thought of another thing. I mean "with other ways". What did he want to say? Aha, I found. He explained to me indirectly. After a while, I realized what the "other way" was.

- "All right, your majesty". I'll sacrifice my life for you. Eshon patted my shoulders, wished for me a good outcome, winked his sly eyes and smiled. I was inspired. At that moment, Eshon stood up making

a sound, said "wait for me here" and left the room. After some minutes, he entered with a little sack in his hands. There were clothes of his dead son who had been ill with epilepsy and sunk in the stream. There was an old shirt, pants and a skull cap.

- "Omin, may he live in paradise."

- "If God will..."

After three days, I was walking alone in the evening. I saw a calf herding near our house. I thought that it had missed its flock. It was lost, and there was nobody by its side. I took off my belt, bound it to his horn and brought it to the house.

Eshon was very happy to see it. "You are a very smart boy. Has anyone seen it? Great my son, great". He was contented with my job and praised me. He said: "In this manner you will succeed in your life". In the evening, we slaughtered the calf, and sorted it. Eshon decided to make boots from the leather and fur.

The owner of the calf was a salesman who lived in this village. Even though he came near the gate of Eshon searching for his calf, he went back thinking that doubting from Eshon was a sin.

After that, Eshon started to like me. When he met me, he would say:

- "My dear son, do shopping yourself and in bazaars find me some income and money."


Once this story happened.

Eshon was satisfied with my job. One day he called me and said:

"My son I want you to find me a donkey."

I was amazed and gazed at his eyes. Eshon got angry and shouted:

"Why are you staring at me? Find me a donkey and bind it to the tree." I was wondering why he needed the donkey? So I went to the village, rented



the donkey of the salesman who shouts in the streets antimonies, eyebrow liner and belt” for an hour and gave him 2 pumpkins.

I brought the donkey and bound it to a mulberry tree in the center of the yard. The third wife of Eshon was very happy to see it and ordered me gently to sweep that place and lay carpet. I was shocked by the great respect of the granddaughter of Bibi Fotimai Zakhro towards that donkey. After laying the carpet they kicked me out and locked the gate from inside.

My imagination about the donkey was mingling in my mind. I also entered the divine service and closed the door, making a loud sound. I took out the stake from the wall near the yard and looked inside to observe the treatment of the donkey through the hole which remained after the stick.

The wife of Eshon cut the ears of the donkey and it shed some blood. They laid on the carpet on pillows and watched the donkey.

After a while, flies alighted to the bloody ear of the donkey. Poor donkey didn't know what to do and shook his head and ears. The wife was about to hug the donkey. She was walking on air.

“Oh my lovely donkey. I like the way you move your ears. Look at this. how handsome and nice it is...”

Other wives of Eshon didn't enjoy watching the donkey. On the other hand, they were making fun of the third wife and laughing at her strange actions. Then I found that she had been pregnant, and wanted to see the donkey moving its ears. I was watching this scene through the hole.

Suddenly, somebody pushed my shoulders hard. I fell down.

“What are you doing stupid boy?” He kicked my waist two times. Eshon, who had seen me watching his wives through the hole, got very angry. He thought

badly about me. I only wanted to watch the strange actions of his pregnant wife. Now I was not allowed to stay here anymore. He damned me. Oh, it's such a pity that I could not get into paradise. I said good bye and started my journey. The sky was high and the earth was hard.

I didn't know where I was going. I didn't even have any purpose. I was suffering from being alone and wandering. If I had been calmer and well behaved, I wouldn't live the way I do now. I would have everything, including clothes and food, and I wouldn't have hardships and problems. All right, I shouldn't regret. It will not help.

I faced a big river between the forth and third prayer times. I didn't know what kind of river it was and I didn't even know the name. Swimming in this river was too complicated. It was impossible to go back. I sang the song of famous travelers who had faced to huge rivers:

*River's flood, the water's wavy
I can't pass, yor-yor²⁴
My destination's far from here
I can't reach yor-yor
My horse became thinner
Because of these stones yor-yor
The only reason of my sadness is
That charming face of girl yor-yor
Oh my dear love, help
My beloved girl yor-yor
Your house is seen on the other shore yor-yor
I can see your beautiful face yor-yor
What have you been dressed in
Is that silk or fabric yor-yor
Please, inform me yor-yor*

²⁴ Name of wedding song



*Not everybody can pass river
Hey poor wanderer yor-yor*

I drank some water and saw dust. Then I saw an old aged man riding a horse behind the dust. I came up to him and asked him to allow me to sit on the horse. He said: "My horse is young and thin. It would be hard if two huge people ride one horse". But I asked him again and he didn't have another choice. So, he decided to drop me to another shore.

The name of this river is Kalas. The village was called Kuri Kalas, devoted to the river. I neither had a house to go nor friends to talk to. The old man realized my wandering and gave me a piece of advice. There was a rich man named Sariboy in this village. He always needed workers for his very big apple orchard. Now, it was a season for apples to ripen. So the rich man needed workers like me. I decided to stay in the servant's shelter of that man. The old man showed me the direction to get there. The old aged servants of the rich man were gathering in one place. There were about twenty servants.

I entered saying "Assalomu alaykum!" They accepted me with a great kindness. I told them about my problems in my life and my intention. The one who was older than the others advised:

"You will waste your life in vain at Sariboy's. You are too young my brother. All right, you can work here about 10-15 days till you feel better. But then you'll earn your living yourself." They gave me pudding to eat. I enjoyed eating that food with two slices of bread.

I slept among them. I put two boxes together which were used to carry good apples to other countries and made a bed for myself. I put wood shavings which are used to cover apples under my head and slept with enjoyment.

This sleep was more comfortable than at the house of Eshon. In this place, no one would bother you in the morning with preaching and tilovat²⁵. In the morning, I went to the managers, for planning my salary. The rich man decided to give me seventeen sacks of apples per month. At that time, I got angry decided and to tell him my drawbacks so that I could prosecute myself if something happened in the future: "My rich dad, we have planned our salary. People say that we must tell the negative side of the product when we sell it, right? So, I also have my drawback? It is better to warn you beforehand."

"All right, what's your negative habit? Are you sick with epilepsy or ..."

"No, this is not my problem. My fault is... I got used to it from my childhood. I sometimes lie unwillingly. If I lie, do not punish me and I will agree with that salary."


"Oh you are... child ass. You seem cunning. All right, all right, but do not lie too much, ok?"

My work was not difficult. I would put struts under the apple trees, pick up the fallen apples, and dry them. I guarded the orchard. I sometimes placed the apples into the sacks, took them to the villages of Darvoza and Sariagoch and sold them when my boss needed money. I exchanged one sack of apples for two sacks of wheat for peasants. Even the cows do not like eating this kind of apples.

Sariboy manager was the cruelest and greediest boss I have ever known.

When you came up to him with some kind of problem, he would say "and then". If you couldn't answer his "and then", he would kick you out and shout at you. He would take his whip and beat your shoulders. For example, if you went and told him "the lusture apple has ripened", he will ask you "and

²⁵ Praying



then". You'll answer "we have to pick that apple." Again that bloody man would ask "and then". You'll say we must sell them. He'll ask again "and then". You'll see that there were no words left to say. And there is no need to say "and then".

In that case, you'll not answer and you'll be beaten by him.

Sariboy gambled with Yusuf who was from Chuvalachi. He won and took his orchard, barrows and areas. Our boss liked that garden very much, and immediately married a Kyrgyz girl who lived there. He came back after fifteen days when he visited the garden. The apples had ripened, and they had fallen down. But no one could dare to pick them up without the boss's permission. There was no herd left for the horses. The servants were very hungry; however, they were all afraid of talking to him. They were afraid of the question "and then" which he usually asks after each sentence.

One day we, the servants discussed about how to call a rich man home. We exchanged opinions on how to call and who would go. We planned to make the rich man give up saying the word "and then".

My name was on that paper. So, I rode a horse towards the house of our boss. In the morning I thought a lot on my way. How can I answer to his "and then"? I reached and got off the horse. The rich boss was eating meat in the field-camp. I greeted him and knelt.

"What do you want?"

"I just missed you and decided to see you."

"Well great. Maybe you have something to announce to me? Why did you come?" That time I recalled my words before being accepted to the work. So, I decided to tell a lie like I had warned before. I started to speak:

"Hmm, your knife was broken. I've come to announce this news."

After that he kept asking "and then". "Why did you use my knife?"

"We were slaughtering your dog. It stuck to the bone and was broken down."

"What? Why did you slaughter the dog with my knife?"

"We were in a hurry. We thought it would die and did like this."

"Why did it die?"

"It had eaten the meat of a dead horse."

"How did it die?"

"It had eaten the meat of the dead horse a lot. And died."

"Where was the meat of the horse?"

"It ate the meat of our horse, not a strange one."

The rich man was shocked.

"Hey, hey, child. Do you know what are you saying? You said my horse died? Well how did it die?"

"It was not powerful. So it died."

"What did it do?"

"We made it carry water. It had never done this kind of job. So, it died."

"What did you say, son of a bitch! I have many horses which carry water. And you used my only beloved horse?! Oh, you bloody hell!"

"When the fire spread all over the house, we had to wait for the horses to bring water. So, we took yours and made it carry water." He even couldn't swallow the food in his mouth. He spit it up and looked at me.

"Are you crazy? What did you say about fire? What burned?"

"I'm not crazy, my boss. First, the stable burned and all horses died!"

"What, what happened in the stable?"

"I also thought of this a lot. Other servants are also amazed. Maybe the fire came from the store-house."

"Why? There is rice, wheat, and oil in the store-house. How can they burn?"

"Do not hurry without knowing anything, my boss. The barrow and the fire of the stable came through the store. Thus, they caught flame to one another."

"What, you mean the barrow was on fire?!"

"Yeah, the barrow, the store-house and the stable were on fire. All your horses died and your knife was broken."

"What was the flame of the barrow resulted from?"

"It was caused by a candle."

"Hey, my son, I'm sure you have become crazy. There's no need to light a candle in my house. I brought many lamps and electric torches from Tashkent. Besides, I brought a huge amount of kerosene. Why did you use a lamp?!"

"Oh my boss, I'm fed up with you. How can we use lamps for lightening of a corpse instead of candles? How can the ghosts dance without a candle? We must fill the cup with water and put the branch of a tree upon it. The ghost will sit on that branch and after relaxing a little bit they start to dance in the beam of the candle."

The rich man was shocked by my silly words. He asked in a low voice as if he was afraid of something and did not want to ask.

"Who died?"

So, at that moment I behaved myself as if I was suffering and cried artificially.

"Your youngest son climbed on a tree to catch a sparrow. And at that time Buriboyvochcha fell down from the tree, cried "Father!" and died!"

I don't know whether he heard the last lines of my words, but he struck the cup to his head, broke his

temple, pulled out his beard and started to cry. I also cried with him.

After a while, I stopped crying, so the rich man did. I made him cry. So, I was going to spin a tale so that I could console my boss.

"My dear boss, do not be upset. This is a wish of God. Your son died, your house was on fire, your horses perished and your knife was broken. But I have good news that will make you happy."

The rich man became angry:

"I don't need any good news. Bloody hell, what kind of news?"

"Your daughter gave birth. Sister Adolat's new born son is very wonderful.

The rich man opened his eyes widely and said:

"What!?? Adolat is not married yet!"

"We are also surprised, my boss. If God wants, everybody can give birth without getting married. If you ask me about your grandson, oh, he looks like your carter. They are two peas in a pod."

The rich man couldn't tolerate it anymore. He lost his consciousness and fell down. I was afraid of being beaten by whip and left there. After an hour the rich man came on his horse crying and moaning. I was scared a little bit and went a little farther. Having seen the rich man crying the people inside the house thought something bad had happened and cried. They hugged each other and wept long.

After some time, they all tried to figure out what had happened. They found that the dog and the horse were alive, the barrow was not on fire and the knife was not broken. Buriboyvochcha was coming towards them safe and sound.

That day, I tried not to be seen by my boss. The next day, the rich man sought for me twenty times with his whip. And then he asked:



"Hey, son of a bitch, what have you done?"

"But I told you before that I could tell lies sometimes, my dear boss."

"Is that the lie that you warned me about before?"

"But, it was half of my lie."

"If you had lied till the end, you would have killed me, son of a bitch. Go away. Kick out this liar!"

They wanted to kick me out. Before leaving, I demanded my salary from the rich man, because I had worked in his house for a month and nineteen days. He even took back the twenty two coins tip and gave me a sack of rotten apples.

I'm still a wanderer and homeless. I was walking like a child of an owl which was separated from the flock. I was walking beyond Kalas.

I went to the field and saw a wedding tent from a far distance. I approached to it. I knocked the door of the tent and said: "I need a place to sleep". I asked them to allow me to stay the night there. They looked at me with doubt and then allowed. Perhaps, they thought that I was thief having seen the luggage on my back. I opened the sack and gave 2 apples to their children. They were very glad. They treated me with milk and some food. They put a half of baked bread near me. After having supper, I put the sack near my head and went to sleep. I got up in the morning, said good bye to the owners of the tent and started "my journey" saying "where are you Sariogoch!". Those days, I was very unlucky. Whichever village I went to, I would appear only near bazaars.

Unfortunately, today was the trade day in Sariogoch.

There were a lot of salesmen who had brought apples, and I praised my apples.

"Come here, buy my apples. I'll sell and go. People who eat these apples will prefer it to bread."

So, I was able to sell my apples. Then I counted my cash; it was six coins. I had only this money that month.

If you have money, you'll not have grief. I looked around the bazaar and wanted to buy many things. I was going to buy a bath of a tin seller, but I asking his thing very cheap, than certainly he abused me. I asked low price and he quarreled with me. I went to the shop where clothes were sold. I asked the price of the coats with a beaver collar.

When I was walking at the bazaar where sheep were sold, I suddenly saw a familiar face. He was watching sheep. Who was he? Where had I seen him?

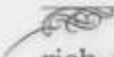
The eyes under the dusty eyelashes were very familiar to me. The face which had become like a felt-rug because of the dust of the soil was very familiar. But his chakmon²⁶, upside down fur hat, and the stick in his hand were unfamiliar to me. I gazed at him without closing my eyes. He was also looking at me.

Suddenly, I shouted:

"Omon!"

We hugged each other, kissed and greeted. I narrated to him what I had seen and where I had been. My adventure ended with six coins which I had put near him, making a loud sound. He also told me what he had been through. He escaped from the nomads who made him wash the corpses. He thought that he would meet those kinds of people and be in trouble again. So he walked in the streets begging and went to Chimkent for seventeen days. There was his uncle in Chimkent. However, he was dead. So, he was hired as a herdsman to a poor boy who was from Tashkent. He was paid two sheep and four goats for two years. He planned to become a herdsman if they each gave birth. Today he brought the sheep of this

²⁶ Uzbek traditional robe



rich man to Tashkent. Today in Sariagoch bazaar, they were going to sell these sheep if they agree to the price.

I liked the job of Omon very much. I wanted to do the same job with him.

"My dear friend, tell your boss to accept me as a herdsman." I promised him to work honestly if he asked from his boss. I begged him. He agreed:

"When I go to Kukterak, I'll talk to my boss." I helped Omon till the evening. In Sariogoch, on this day people would buy goats. All goats were sold except seventy three sheep. In the evening the boss rode his amber and said:

"Your friend seems like a good boy. Only a few sheep are left. My brother Omon, take the sheep to Kukterak bazaar till the morning with your friend. I'd better go before you."

Then he left. We put the sheep in the store-room and had dinner. Furthermore, we relaxed and laid for some minutes. At midnight, when the moon rose to the sky, we started our journey to Kukterak whistling and saying "qurey qurey".

The sheep, bloody hell, are very stupid and silly animals. The goat leads them. If there's no goat, they walk wherever they want and without direction. If there is no goat, people ride a donkey and go beyond to control sheep. But we had neither goat nor donkey. I was a new amateur herdsman and could not bleat very well.

We were walking in the moonlight at night, under a breath of fresh air of the field. The sheep bleat rarely. The wires of telegraphs near the railroad were making a sound. The life was enjoyable, and I suddenly wanted to sing. Omon said:

"Sing my brother. I have not heard an enjoyable and pleasant voice for a long time."

I was motivated and delighted. I wanted to shake the borders of the sky. The sheep were walking not properly along the railroad. We really needed goats.

We reached a little village. Its short mud bricks were seen. We were leading the sheep on the street which was connected with the railroad. Omon pointed at the railroad and said:

“People who go by train will enjoy their time. If only we could go by train and head to another place.”

“Yeah, you are totally right, my fellow. If only we had an unlimited amount of money. If only we could go to Govunchi, Turkiston, Chinoz, and Moscow and no one prohibited us, and we traveled, traveled, traveled. It would be very enjoyable.

We were describing the train. Omon said:

“You are right. If only we could fulfill this dream. At that time we saw a train which was lighting its lanterns and coming. I was scared to death like these sheep by the loud sound of the train. The train was coming very fast. We saw carriages passing one after another. Then we saw the red lamps of the backside of the train. The street became very dusty and resulted in the sudden movements of the sheep. We couldn't see anything because of the dust. We heard some sheep coughing in the dusty air. I heard the crying sound of Omon in the dust:

“Querey, hey bloody hell, querey.” I asked:

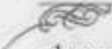
“Where are you, Omon?”

Omon didn't answer and was busy with saying “querey, querey”²⁷. After fifteen minutes, some objects were able to be seen.

“Where's the sheep?” – asked Omon.

“Where's the sheep?” – I also asked. There were only five or six sheep which were going to walk. If you say “hayt” near the mud brick wall. But healthy

²⁷ Cattle



sheep were not there. Having been scared by the loud voice of the train, the sheep walked through the walls and spread to different places. Omon took off his rope on his waist. We paired those sheep. This work was as if we were searching for the black eyes of black ant on the black carpet at midnight. We searched the sheep about three hours. We found five of them in the barrow, three of them near the walls and among the planting and paired them. We were exhausted. Finally, we counted the sheep that we had found seven of the sheep were lost. Omon looked at me, and I looked at him. His eyes were glittering because of the dust like the pearls on the mud brick wall. "What will we do?"- Asked Omon. I cried.

"Even if we work for two years, we won't be able to earn seven sheep."

"Let's go, we'll search again."

We started to search. We saw the droppings of the sheep and followed them until we found two sheep near the stream alongside the railroad. Searching for five sheep was as difficult as searching for two beads. We gave up our hope. We started our journey with those sheep. I don't know why, but 1 sheep was looking behind, coughing and bleating. We tried to add it to the flock, but it didn't want to. He stretched his jut and wanted to sit. Then we met a Kazak horseman on our way. He said: "Hey guys, your sheep seems to be giving birth, don't make it go."

Really, we looked at it attentively. It was pushing and exerting to give birth after the terrible sound of the train. We stopped the sheep and Omon and I started to be midwives. The eyes of the poor sheep were sad and it was exerting. Omon was also exerting together with the sheep.

After sometimes it gave birth. The mother sheep licked its baby and felt jealous. But there was no

need to love of the family anymore, because we had to reach the bazaar. I took off my waistband and bent to the baby sheep. I lifted it. The mother sheep was following me looking forward seeing its baby. Sometimes I bleated instead of the mother sheep, when it was looking to another place the baby lamb didn't know how to bleat yet. That time, we didn't even need any goats. Sheep are animals which follow one another. Other sheep followed the sheep which had given birth. We didn't have any difficulty. Omon had been thinking since yesterday, "How can we handle a flock of sheep?" But, we could reach the river Kalas. We needed to pass another shore and then, there would not be any problem. We were almost in Kukterak!

Well, how would we cross the river? None of the sheep agreed to walk first. We had to use the love of the mother sheep. Omon took the lamb from my hand and went into water naked. He stepped slowly, showing the lamb to the shore., but couldn't tolerate it. It followed Omon and started to cross the river. Other sheep followed her. I was pushing the coward sheep from the back. The sheep were swimming like the mice in the milk. Sometimes, the current would make them swim down. Even though we had problems and horror, we were able to cross the river.

It was getting dark. We could see Kukterak. The sheep were tired and extremely hungry. We also suffered more than them. It was not good to sell the sheep in this condition. They had to eat a little bit. We decided to herd them in a meadow. We needed to relax a little bit. We put the robes under our head, lay and watched the sheep herding. We both were thinking about what we would do for the lost sheep and "how will we explain?" I don't know how much time I slept, but I woke up from a loud swearing

voice. There was a man riding a horse, his beard was stripped, and his nose was like a button on a stump. He was staring at us and moving his whip. He beat Omon with his whip for six times. We opened our eyes and found out that all sheep had gone towards the cotton field. The man who was beating us was the owner of this area named Azim Snub-Nosed Rich. He was watching his cotton and saw this disaster.

We ran towards the cotton field to stop the sheep. The sheep had been messed with the majority part of animal. The rich man Snub Nosed Azim ordered us to lead the sheep towards the barrow. Then we begged him, holding the uzangi²⁸. "Please, rich father, accept us as workers, we are very poor, please help us".

Even though we begged the rich man, he didn't stop swearing us. Omon was holding a lamb in his hand, and we led the sheep. We reached the barrow, and Omon begged him again.

"Please, rich father, today's the trade day. We must sell these sheep. If we do not go to bazaar, boss will kill us. Perhaps, you know our boss?"

The rich man asked:

"Who is your boss?"

"Our boss is Gorakhyja boy from Beshyagoch."

"In that case, I'll talk to your boss. Why you were not attentive? You treated the matter too lightly. I must give a just punishment to you. Take your sheep to the bazaar quickly. It is afternoon, and you are sleeping instead of taking the sheep to the bazaar, damn you!"

Thank God we were able to reach the bazaar with our sheep.

We met our boss when we were almost at the bazaar. He shouted at us for being late. We led the sheep inside the bazaar. The rich man ordered us to

²⁸ an object for feet while riding a horse

pair the sheep. We both were trembling from horror. When we paired the 4th to 10, customers surrounded us. This day, in Kukterak, there are much need for sheep. If we paired the rest of the sheep, the boss would find the number. What should we do? I paired the sheep and hit Omon's waist.

"What will we do Omon?"

"Keep silence, we'll escape."

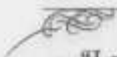
The boss was busy with selling the sheep to customers. Omon acted as if he was going to take the escaped sheep and joined the crowd of people.

I also followed Omon and ran away. If you join the crowd of people, that means you realized! Pickpockets also join the crowd of people and free themselves.

Omon reached another part of the bazaar, and took off his fur hat and jumper. We walked fast, looking sometimes backwards. In a moment, we were able to reach the highway which led to the city. We were running through narrow streets and paths because we were afraid of going alongside the highway. We thought that we were realized by the boss and decided to relax in one barrow. We were hungry. We were afraid of going somewhere and buying something to eat. I don't know how many hours we laid, an hour or more, but as I mentioned before at the beginning of the story, my stomach was ruling my body. We had to get up and find something to eat. I was very delighted even though we lost five sheep and escape from the boss. I felt as if I was free from everything, Omon got up. He looked menacingly, and was very stubborn. He ignored me.

"It happened because of you. Everything was ok in my life. Who'll give a calf in this time? I gave up the opportunity to have two sheep and a goat. You always bring misfortune."

I was also angry.



"I was not eager to see your cold face. If I were not with you, you would lose half of your sheep. I came through walls and searched borrows. I helped you to find your sheep. I helped you being midwife. What kind of unfaithfulness towards me? My friend?"

But we didn't argue much. We made up again. But I saw some sadness through Omon's acting. It was afternoon. We saw about 4 people when we were going to reach the highway.

"Hello!"

We approached them. We were going to ask the direction. These men were digging carrots. They saw our poor and dirty clothes. One of them said:

"My sons, why are you spending your time in the city in vain? Help us to dig the carrots! If you work for two days, I'll give you some money."

At that time, he seemed to us a very sacred man. We thought "Oh my God, how did he know that we were wanderers"? Omon said:

"We don't have anything to do in the city. We are searching for a job."

"Oh my sons, you don't have to search for a job, it'll find you itself. If you lift a stalk from the ground, it also works. Come here help us, I'll earn, you'll also earn."

We both agreed to this advice. We put the robes and fur hats to the ground and started digging carrots. After some minutes, we took carrots, cleaned them and ate. It was very delicious, maybe because of being hungry. So, we filled several sacks with carrots. In the evening the boss came, riding a horse. The boss greeted with us and the old man started to describe us:

"God gave us these brilliant boys. They are well-behaved boys. They did what I said and dug many carrots."

The rich man looked at us with kindness:

"In that case, take these boys to the barrow, and cook something. Everybody can judge this kind of faithful guys."

We worked for a while after he went. We placed the carrots in the carriage and went to the barrow. Omon was patting his stomach. We had dinner and ate soup with lentil. The rich man brought us a big pot of lentil soup. We ate with big wooden spoons. We ate very fast and emptied the pot. The people who worked with us were the neighbor of the rich man. After dinner, we stayed at the rich's. He showed the room near the stable. Omon, who had been wishing to lie on a bed for a long time, laid on the bed and put his clothes under him. I was younger than him, so I laid on the floor. But I could not sleep because of the sound of the bed. After a while, he cried and went outside for some minutes, maybe his stomach was aching because of the carrots he had eaten. But I didn't feel anything bad, because my stomach got used to eat various food. Omon went to the toilet for many times till the morning. We got up early, washed our face and hands and were ready for work. Omon looked pale.

The boss brought us jiyda²⁹ tea and two loaves of bread. When we had eaten the boss asked:

"Well, guys what are you going to do? In this barrow I have 2 servants except you. If you want to stay here, I'll supply you with food and clothes, besides in winter time. All you need to do is to light the fire and take care of cows. Each week, I'll give your money...."

Omon said:

"Ok boss, we'll think of it."

The boss had gone and we have decided what to do. Actually, the boss was right. The winter was coming

²⁹ Oleaster

and we did not have any place to live. Besides, it was very difficult to find better work. It would have been very complicated to live in winter with my six coins. We decided to stay there. The boss said:

“In that case, do not spend much time on drinking tea my brothers. One of you will stay here and another will take care of my cow, bring it to the meadow and herd. Who stays here will bring food and tea to guest.”

Omon wanted to stay at the house, because he liked the sound of the samovar and listening to the conversation of guests. Besides, it would be very difficult for him to go to the field because of his stomach...

So, I had to feed the cow. He had to stay at home. The boss showed the cow in the stable and ordered me to bring it out. I led it to the meadow, it followed me. When we were going through the paths, it suddenly started to walk slowly. I thought the cow was tired and hit it with the whip. It fell down. It opened its eyes very wide, it was trembling and shaking its legs. I was shocked. I did not know what to do and walked around the cow. There was nobody to call for help...

After a while, the cow stood up, shook its tail and ran away, chasing the only heritage of the boss which his daddy had given him. It would herd till I reached it and after seeing me it would run away again. I spent my time chasing the cow till the evening. I could not hold it. I was exhausted. When the sun set, I gathered my power and was able to tie it with the rope. It pushed backwards, but I pushed it forwards. I put it to the stable of the barrow with great difficulties.

I approached Omon with a pale face. Omon was lying on his lovely bed. I greeted with him:

“How are you doing, my friend Omon?”

“Oh, do not ask my friend, I ate too much today.”

“Why?”

“When you went, some friends of the boss visited. The wife of the boss is a good cook. She brought different meals and sweets: manti³⁰, kabob³¹, lagmon³² and etc. I ate too much my friend. Then the guests went to their home. Some neighbors of the boss are borrowers for him. So, we visited the house of borrower peasants. They all treated us to delicious food and drinks. I ate palov, soup, don't make me continue, my dear... so, I ate too much today.”

I only heard the names of the majority of meals which he ate today. I was thinking of eating delicious foods the next day and making Omon herd the epileptic cow. Omon asked:

“Well, how are you?”

“Oh, my dear, I enjoyed my day today. This cow is so calm, so calm, I led it to the place and it did not go anywhere except that place, as if I put a stack and tied it. After eating the grass of that area, it looked at me as it was saying “Can I go further?” I said: “Oh my dear cow!” and led it to another side. You know, it is not a cow, it is a joy and relaxation. Thus, I led it to the place where there was much grass, and slept under the shady tree near the brook. I slept very well and relaxed. I'm very happy that I didn't stay here. I'd have to serve the guests and would be very tired.

I think Omon believed me. He was saying “aha, aha” while I spoke.

In the evening, the boss gave ayron-soup³³. I didn't like the food and looked at Omon. Omon understood what I meant. He said:

“I like this kind of meal; today I have eaten the best meals. I'll eat this also, it will help me digest. Then he started to eat that. I said:

³⁰ Steamed dumpling

³¹ Pieces of mutton roasted on a spit – shashlik

³² Noodle

³³ A kind of Uzbek traditional soup cooked from sour milk

“Oh, I have to eat it. After sleeping too much, it’s very difficult to eat a good meal.” And I also started to eat.

We got up early again and the boss brought us two loaves of bread and jiyda³⁴ like yesterday.

“Well, guys, what will we do today? Who’ll do what?”

Omon said: – “Boss, let’s us decide.”

The boss went back in the room and Omon said:

“Honesty is the best policy. Let’s you stay at home, and I’ll herd the cow. But I have a piece of advice for you my brother. The boss will give you bread and sour milk. Do not eat that. That means “If I go with him somewhere, he’ll be full and make me feel uncomfortable among hosts”. You say thanks to the boss, but don’t eat the bread and the sour milk.”

I also gave some advice about feeding the cow:

“Omon, in my view, it’s better you take your cloth bed. Yesterday, I laid on the moisture and my waist is aching. Now it is autumn, the ground is wet. You’ll put the bed and sleep.”

I agreed to Omon’s opinion and vice versa. Omon went to the stable. He took the cloth bed also. The boss turned up after a while.

“Where is Omon?”

“My boss, today he’ll feed the cow.”

“All right. Did you drink your tea? In that case, go with me.” He led me to the back side of the barrow and showed a big stump:

– “Well, dig these big stumps and take them out. You’ll light a fire in winter. Yesterday, Omonboy dug two stumps. You are very faithful boys. Great, my dear.”

I thought, “I’ll dig one till the guests come”. I started to work with energy. In the afternoon, the boss brought me sour milk and bread.

³⁴ A special sort of dates, usually grown in the territory of the Central Asia

"Oh, great, my son, great. Take these and eat. It seems that the guest won't come today".

"No, my boss, I'm full. I don't want to eat anything." The boss said: - "All right, you are too young and took back the bread and sour milk."

I thought we would go to ask for our money from the peasants or be the guests at some houses. I waited for it long, but there was no news about it. I thought about being a guest and eating different kinds of food and continued to dig the stumps. The stumps were very rooty and difficult to dig.

I was able to dig the second stump till the sun set. I was exhausted. I said "ohh", and laid. At that time Omon came. He was holding the bed and his face was pale. He didn't even greet with me, put the bed to the ground and went to the stalk to tie the cow.

We both were ashamed of telling lies to each other. Omon told lies because he was angry with me. I told lies to him just for fun. I guess that crazy cow acted worse than yesterday. When he wanted to feed the cow, he was afraid of it being stolen. When he planned to keep an eye on the bed, the cow disappeared in a moment. So, poor Omon held the bed and chased the cow. He hurt his shoulders, and his feet were injured by thorns.

He didn't speak to me. I tried to console him:

"Be thankful, my friend. It's good that your bed was not made of iron." We kept silence for a while knitting our brows. Then I spoke:

"We have been friends since our childhood, Omon. It is not good to cheat each other. Let's not get angry with each other. Let's plan before doing something. I also ate various, delicious meals today. To tell the truth: I am fed up with the tasks of the boss."

Omon said: "Well, let's go to the city, my brother. We won't die of starvation. This boss seems a forbidden person. Today, in the evening we'll escape".



"Without money?"

"Yes, what will we do here?"

"Maybe, we'll get some money before going. I got used to being a thief living at imam's and Eshon's. I got used to using the proverb "an object without the owner belongs to Afandi". I intended to steal things of the rich man with Omon.

After some arguments, Omon agreed. We decided to slaughter the stupid cow, which made us grieve for two days, and sell the meat of it.

In the evening, the boss brought us a meal with pumpkin. He told us its advantages, praised, and we ate.

After the dinner, the boss locked the gate and went inside. We went to bed again...

At midnight, Omon woke me up. We went on tiptoe to the stable. I killed the donkey once. We brought down the cow and tied its feet. Omon gave me the knife. I said "Biismillo, Allohu akbar!" and cut the neck of the cow.

We emptied the sack in which there was cotton-cake and filled it with good and boundless parts of beef. I cut some stumps. Omon went up to the roof. He planned to pull the beef in the sack.

It was dark, the moon shined. We acted without making a sound. Omon was on the roof. But I doubted. Perhaps, this time, he would take revenge from me, and I would be locked here as a mouse in a large jug. So I emptied the sack and sat inside the sack myself. I ordered him to pull the rope. Those times, I was very heavy. Omon thought that I had a temperature. Actually, I was right. After pulling the sack, he looked down and said:

"You have been captured. You'll explain everything to the boss, villain", - and pulled the sack with difficulty. He pulled the sack to the ground. When he

was pulling, he found the shorter side of the roof and jumped.

So, we couldn't get a part of the beef. On our way, he put down the sack several times, sighing, and relaxed for a while. I don't know, we were going to the village. Even though I was inside the sack, I knew that it was dawn. Then, we faced a dog. It tried to bite Omon. Then one of the dogs bit the sack. The teeth of the dog seemed to me as a knife. I could not help crying:

"Oh my God, Omon, lift me higher." Omon was scared to death. He thought the beef was speaking, put down the sack, and ran away. I fell down. Omon was shocked and didn't know what he was saying:

"Is that you or beef? If you are beef, where are you, and if you are yourself where's beef?" Having seen us, the dogs started to go back.

"Let's go, I'll explain to you then", - Omon said. We were walking in the morning without looking at each other.

PART IV

Omon was so angry that he couldn't control himself. He broke the branch of the cherry tree in the street and cut the bottom and upper part of the branch and made a stick. I was also going to make a thicker stick. Perhaps, he would beat me with this stick. I broke the branch of an apricot tree and said:

"My friend, give me your knife, I must sharpen it."

Omon said:

"Damn you, you'll ruin the knife."

"Will I, bloody hell? I have lived with you for many days and have never seen you take a bath. You hardly wash your face. If you touch your armpit, you'll catch thousands of lice. I took a bath last week in Kalas. I even washed my clothes there. You are dirty, but not me."

Omon said: "All right, all right, you are not dirty. But you are a troublemaker and very stupid."

"We'll go to the city without anything, right? We worked many days and are going to the city putting our fingers to our nose. You are a dirty and stupid boy. I have been having trouble since I met you. If I had not met you, I would have a sheep, a goat and a camel."

I said: "I have a piece of easy advice for you. If you work with a rope-walker, he'll give you velvet trousers. If you work in bath room, you'll be near the fire and you'll not need a fur hat. Sheep, goats, camels – these are problems and misfortune. Where will you find hay for them? On top of that, your house is very small. You'll have to build a big stable for them. Forget all of these and go to the bazaar on Saturdays and Thursdays. Be arrogant; imagine that bazaar is your

private stable, and all these animals are yours. If they are not enough for you and you need an elephant, you could find the hippodrome of Yupatov. Of course you won't have money for purchasing a ticket. You could sit at the top of the trees near there and enjoy watching. But be aware of the whip of the guard. Ok, no need to speak much; we must go to the city and watch the things that you want".


Omon listened to this advice smiling, which even his daddy couldn't advise. At last, he got angry again:

"Having beef is better than having two stupid friends like you. Good bye. I don't even want to see your cold face in Judgment day." He said these words and went back.

Where will he go? If he goes back, the workers of the rich man whose cow was slaughtered will catch him and call police. He'll live in Siberia then, not withstanding he'll come back to the city wandering. I was not sad, and I was full and shouted to him.

"Mulla Omonboy, don't you have any letter for a horse-breeder, the rich and friends in the city? Shouldn't I remember you to Orifkhoja Eshon, Mahsud xon and judge Gulom?"

Omon was walking without speaking. Even though the argument was resulted in an insignificant thing, we were both very stubborn. He was ashamed of coming back, and I was also arrogant. Who am I? Should I be dependent on Omon? Ok, now it was my turn. I mean, what would I do in cities like Kukterak, Eshonbazaar, Koplombek, Sharobkhand. I did each job there, and everybody knew me now. If I went to my family, to see my mom, my clothes were dirty and I was barefoot. Poor mother feeds my sisters alone. If I join there, maybe they won't like it. But still, there was one way for me. This was going to city. Besides, I'm famous in the cities which I have just mentioned.



When I was close with Omon, he taught me one thing. That was city, no one would be able to find me. It would be as if seeking something in black fur.

A city of salesmen, policemen, beggars. The river was running after a heavy rain. I could sink in this big river. But I hated the city.

The city was very stinky with the smell of marijuana. The seller didn't even ritually wash himself. Lazy rich men hold their products and wait for customers in the departments of the bazaar. You can see a group of beggars with glittering eyes. Thus, I was disgusted by the city.

Having watched, the haberdasher's son asked his dad: "Daddy, what do these people do?" The daddy answered:

"Oh my son, these salesmen cheat people on weekends, other days, they will cheat one another."

But these people cheat the country every day, every minute.

What would I do? The sky was high and the ground was solid. The winter was also coming. I couldn't open my mouth and yawn all the years. One hen needs corn and water too. The ground which was very hot in summer became cold at the end of autumn. There was no dust in the street and the water was very pure. Some morning, you could see dew, and the brooks became a little bit gluey. I thought of my widow mom and my sisters many times, I felt sorry for them...

Why am I such a hopeless boy?... I asked everybody to hire me, so that I could help my mom. I begged them, I cried and sometimes scolded myself.

But I couldn't go back home in this condition.

I was gazing at Omon and thinking of childish philosophies. The ground was cold. I was putting my feet to the ground one by one. We even did not feel the cold in the evening.

I heard the sound of a caravan bell from afar. The sound of the bell somehow was consoling me in the darkness.

*When caravan passes the desert
Even dawn goes to meet it
The bell which say "good day"
Will bring good fortune one day?*

The caravan approached me. The old man and a young boy were coming with fifteen camels. The hays on the camels and the beard of the old man were a little bit similar. I approached the caravan and said:

"Happy journey, brothers?"

But my sudden greeting scared them. Instead of answering my greeting, the dog of the old man who was riding on the donkey was going to bite me. It was my good luck that the old man had tied the dog to the carriage of the donkey. It's clear that I'm afraid of dogs. About half an hour before, I had met with dogs inside the sack. My body was still in pain because of the teeth of the dog. The old man asked:

"What are you doing here, my dear?"

"I was going to the city, but I started my journey early. I was waiting for a fellow-traveler. Thank God that I met you..."

"Someone is going to the top of the field. How many people are you, tell me my dear, or should I untie my dog?"

"You are a very strange person. I don't like dogs. I don't know the person who is going to the top of the field. I'm a slave of God who didn't even hurt a fly. If you don't want to be my fellow-traveler, I can't do anything. I'll go alone behind you."

The old man said:

"Oh really, in that case why is the boy who is walking in the field swearing you?"



"I don't care. I don't listen to him."

"You don't know him, yes?"

I didn't know what to say. I followed him, keeping silence. People looked at me and felt suspicious. I was going to change the topic. Thus I asked from the old man.

"What's the name of this bright star, granny?"

"Ha, ha, ha, you look cunning. Why do you need the name of the star? Will you forecast the weather?"

He looked at the star which was thinking in the East and said:

"Is this a star? It's called "Venus"; in reality, it was a daughter of a poor man. When her parents passed away, the king proposed to her. Zukhro (Venus) had a lover. She was going to marry him. The king found the lover of the girl and hanged him. The wood of the robe was very long. The girl came at night and planned to reach up part of the rope. And at last she was able to reach and was almost near the sky. She peeps from the sky in the morning. Sleeping people are not able to see this star; only people who walk at dawn can see it..."

The old man drew different shapes in the sky with his fingers.

"Can you see that star in the North? That's called "Oltinkozik". That's the shoot of the sky. If you walk watching that star, you will never lose your way. This broad way is called Samonchi. Our ancestors walked on this road for 1000 years. I also walked on this road and got old. Do you understand me, sly boy?"

When you are conversant, the road will shorten. Thus, we didn't even feel that we had reached Chigatoy gate. The bells on the camel's neck were making sounds. The sounds of the bell which was heard in the narrow streets in the city were hitting the walls and fell down to the ground.

When we reached the mosque of Tuhtajonboy, we heard the voice of a snuffling sufi.

"Hayna hanan hola... hayna hanan hola."³⁵ The dog of the old man which had never heard a pleasant voice like this was scared. It also sang with sufi. The old man hit the dog with his stick.

"What is he saying, my son?"


"Poor sufi has two misfortunes given by God. He is snuffling", - The sufi joked.

When shoes were sold, I said good bye to the old man. The dog of the old man was afraid of the selling booth and me. He was putting his tail between his feet and was scared. I felt sorry for the dog. I was fed up with the word "who are you?" of the guard who would yawn every time and smoke. Thus I turned to the butcher's. In that selling booth, a big mongrel was walking with a group of dogs. They saw me and barked. I turned to the soap market. The dogs of this area were also like others; if I ran they would chase, if I stopped, they would surround me. I walked very fast and went toward pottery. I didn't know myself where I was going. The blind fate was leading me.

This year was the dogs' year, I don't know. At the pottery also, the dogs disturbed me. All right, the dogs of butchers feel jealous. The dogs near the soap makers' can think that I'll share their porridge that the dogs of pottery don't want to share with me? Will I eat an empty jug, the plate without pilov and the pump without water?

I was angry and went on walking. I approached Hasti Ukosha mosque near Makhkama bazaar. Ukosha is the name of one person. He came as a military leader when Arabians conquered and was shot by our ancestors. Then the governors of Arabians built around his tomb and celebrated his death ceremony.

³⁵ The religious song of the sufies



There is a proverb: "Marry your mom to the man who killed your dad". Ukkosha destroyed our cities, killed our ancestors and made our people slaves. However, his tomb is considered as a holy place, nowadays. There was a spring under the tomb, too.

Our people admired this tomb and the spring. They believed "the people who pray here, drink the spring's water and wash their body, will find remedy for piebald skin and walk if they are paralyzed."

If you go until sunset from Khasti Ukkosha, you will be near bakers. There is a riddle: "a wide mouth with red hell". It is a tandir³⁶.

The fire was burning in a big tandir. Men who were dressed in light summer robes with open collars were taking breads from tandirs, as if the moon was being made in the sun's enterprise. The breads which were freshly baked were very hot. If only I sat near this brook and I had a lot of bread. However, I dipped to the water and ate with enjoyment. If only the bread in the basket and water in the stream were unlimited. If only when I was full I yawned and no one asked me for money. Then I said "thank you" to the baker and went back.

But, in this kind of condition, the smells of breads were enough for me. I smelled bread near the door. An old man who was about 60 years old bought a packet of breads. When he has coming, he peered at me and said:

"Hmmm, can you carry my breads, please?" I said ok, and took the bread, I followed him. The old man was tapping the walls with his stick. I had fresh bread. I thought, "Can I get a slice of the bread or not?". What will the old man do with bread. Perhaps, he has a wedding party. But it's not enough for a wedding party, and it's extra for a household. Where will he lead me? We turned towards valley and were

³⁶ An earthenware stove for baking flat cake or bread

going alongside the stream. The old man was very kind and nice.

"Why are you wandering in the morning? What did you lose my son?"

"I have come from the field."

"Yes, my son. A sparrow which eats the corn of Tashkent will come back from Mecca. Do you have parents, my son?" I didn't want to talk much and said that they were dead.

"You are a very active boy. You'll find father for yourself. When you find a father, a mother will come herself. You walked through Bog Chorsu in safety. You are a winner. Nowadays, there are many bad people. Well, you are barefoot, my son. You will find shoes for your feet one day. The first thing is being healthy. Yes, my son!"

"The war began a year before, everything became expensive, and the price of shoes was also increased. Yes, my son. Our white king could enjoy his life and hang the bad. What does he need? His citizens are very obedient like meat, his polices are very active. If he says "hey" they'll be near him. Each eshon and imam asks from God good fortune for him. He doesn't need money. What does he need again? If he fights, the people will die. He will he be the king of mud?" The old man was mumbling. I didn't say anything. There was silence for a while. After 10-15 steps, the old man started to sing:

*Whose father is alive
Whose mother is alive
Who has never been a wanderer
In another land at once?*

"My deceased daddy had been to Mecca twice. He took me with him the second time. We also have been

wanderers, my son. The people say, a person who hasn't been a wanderer cannot be Muslim. Yes, it is right. Where are you from?"

I was angry and answered:

"From Uchkurgan."

"Well, see your mom in Uchkurgan. Have you studied disciples of imams?"

"I ran away when I was reading the middle of "sufi Allayar" book."

"Oh, you ran away at the interesting part. You ran away from the hell, right, my son?"

"Yes, you are right."

The old man started to sing the kasida³⁷ of the book "Sufi Allayar":

*There is a bridge above the hell
That bridge is called sirot
It's thinner than hair and sharper than sword
People will regret on this day for what?*

I wanted to escape from the old man, and said:

"Father, can you hold the bread for a while, I want to drink."

"What, I want to drink? Did you eat the meat of a horse or the oil is boiling inside of you? Do not stop my son. Now you will drink tea. In this kind of cold weather, people even don't wash their hands with this water, but he wants to drink. Strange. Oh my God, were your parents geese, damn you? What is it?"

The old man was holding me. We reached the house. I hesitated and stopped near the door. The old man looked at me.

"Why are you standing there? Come in, my son."

I doubted again.

³⁷ A triumphal poem praising a person or event

“Why are you staring like a calf? This isn’t a cage for birds. This is madrassah. You’ll be educated here.”

I bent and entered through the short door timidly.

Everywhere was messy. The samovar³⁸ was boiling. Six people were sitting on the wooden bed which was 40 centimeters high from the ground. There was a fire in the center and the broken tea pots were put around the fire. Even though the sun was shining, there was a lamp here. A yellow beam was coming through the oily paper which was stuck on the pipes. A man whose beard was not brushed and who wore glasses was sitting near the lamp opening the book. Other people were listening to him. The snub-nosed man who was mixing the embers became happy when we came.

“Mister Khoji has come, we’ll ask him.” The man who was reading a book raised his head:

“Khoji, we are doubting about one thing in the book. When Abu Muslim Sohibqiron fought with Nasiri Sayyori Bear in Khuroson. Nasiri Sayyori hit the head of that mister with a very large and heavy cudgel. At that time, did that mister fall down to the knee or waist? It was written till the knee on the edition of the last year. In this year’s edition, it was written till the waist.” Khoji said:

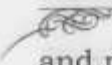
“The right version is till the knee, because there were three blows. First – till the knee, second – till the waist and the third – till the ears. If he was able to fall down till the waist, in one blow, he would become a mythical hero.”

Yes, it is like this. One of the men said:

“The host is totally right.”

These men were reading the book named “Jangomai Abu Muslimi Sohibqiron”. The old man took the bread

³⁸ A metal urn for making a tea, in which the water is heated especially formerly by charcoal held in an inner container or nowadays usually by electricity



and placed it on a small chest near the samovar. He put the eight flat cakes on the serving tray and put some jiyda on the cakes. Then he gave the tray to the men one by one. He also joined them. I was still standing, leaning on the column. Khoji said to me:

“Hey, why are standing there? Greet with your uncles and join us my son.” I felt a little bit shy and greeted with them:

“Assalomu aleykum!”

Khoji ordered me to sit by his side. He put one of those flat cakes near me. He gave me a cup of tea.

“Eat the bread, drink the tea my son. Don’t hurry, chew much, everything is yours.”

These people didn’t know what politeness was. Everybody drank his own tea and ate his own bread. No one would give his part to another person. The man who was wearing a blue turban and had spoken in Persian before asked the Khoji:

“Mr, who was this boy?”

“I found him at the bakers’. This boy has no father and he is an orphan. He is very active. He can speak very well, perhaps he will serve you.”

“Yes, very good. Great, Khoji.” Everybody welcomed Khoji.

This place was a marijuana smoking one. In my view, I’d have to carry the tea for the drug users, or I’d be a cleaner for these men. I’d have to buy bread and necessary things. Perhaps, I could earn some money. In this manner, the winter would pass fast. Besides, I couldn’t visit my house. I was thinking about making money and going to see my mom.

They were still drinking tea. That black man was about to stand up: “Today is a trade day, I have to go to the bazaar and sell my products.”

“All right, all right, you can go.”

“Of course.”

I didn't pay attention to him before. When he was wearing his shoes, I looked at him. There was a red spot between his eyebrow. He left. I asked Khoji:

"Bobo, who is this man? Where is he from?"

"What? Damn you, I'm Khoji Bobo? Bloody hell! Moreover, I don't have to answer for you, who these people are, what do they do, what are their parents' name. He is a Muslim man. He is Indian, from Rishavur. He sometimes takes bribes. When Indians have more than a lira, they will burn the gold and put it to the forehead. As a result the forehead becomes red."


"This man is very rich. There are salesmen who work for him. Everybody is afraid of him. Everybody owes him. Stand up. Prepare us a hookah. If you serve me till the evening, I'll give you shoes."

I liked this place. I worked hard. Even though Khoji Bobo was tedious and read proverbs in each word, he was a very kind and merciful man. For example, when he counted six things in a row, he would make a mistake after four and would call me to help him. I liked this habit. Sarrof Indian was my favorite person. When he came, I served very well and fast. There were two reasons for that: the first, he would speak about Indian wonderful stories, for instance, the pearls lie on the streets. Indian kids lie on the pearls, the bread is cooked on the trees, when men reach 500 years, and breads will grow. The most interesting one is men and women are always naked. There is no winter, the sheep are free of charge, elephants cost about four coins, etc...

I heard the one part of these from my friends. I was eager to go to India and would say "Oh, beautiful India" inside.

Second, Sarrof Indian was very generous. He did not smoke nos³⁹ of Tashkent, he smoked the nos of

³⁹ A kind of smoking chewing blend, made of tobacco and other special ingredients



Bukhara. I would always find him that nos and bring it. He would say:

“Oh great, great!”

Furthermore, he would give me a coin. On weekends, he would bring a sack of golden coins, order me to bring hot tea, sit in the corner and count the money. Sometimes, he would fall asleep while counting, then wake up and again count again. I don't know why he kept telling this, maybe it was because of the less money than he had thought. So, I like Indian Sarrof. The people who visited here, except Khoji Bobo and Indian were very kind, open hearted and sociable. They would tell different jokes and laughs which had happened throughout the world. They read books: I mentioned the samples above.

When I lived here for about three weeks, the war had been continuing for fourteen months. The cold affect of the war influenced this place also. The drug users spoke about politics:

– “Nikolay is at one side, German is at another side. They were fighting with each other. German was a wing man who had six eyes. He destroyed a lot of cities of the white king. He made a ball. No one could fight with German except heroes like Abu Muslim, Kahromoni murderer and Rumday. Some warriors of the white king said:” We won't fight, we won't be officials of the white king to fight”. The head of these warriors was Masterovey...

When I was wandering in villages, I had heard about the war. Now I knew that was true. So, the topic about politics changed to poultry raising. They talked about how they taught a parrot to say “silly”, to chirp the sparrow, to hatch an egg from the month and etc. After a while they discussed the cause of an earthquake. Thus, this place was not boring for me.

Khoji Bobo liked my job. He kept his promise. At that time the price of leather slippers was increased

in Tashkent. Shoe makers and the poor bought only oporkas⁴⁰. Oporka are the shoes of dead soldiers. The military organizations would collect those oporkas. One rich man who heard this in Tashkent got on the express train and went near the area where there was a war. He bought eight carriages and brought them to Tashkent. Now, he is selling them gradually. Khoji Bobo bought me big oporkas.

On Thursdays and on Fridays, our rest house was very crowded. Except 20-25 permanent clients of the rest house, some people visited there for cooking palov and smoking marijuana. The majority of these guys were shoe makers. Sometimes rich boys would also visit there.

As a rule, every Wednesday Khoji bobo read some sacred words for me. On this day, I helped Khoji Bobo with shopping and looked around the bazaar the rest of the time.

My weekend was Wednesday evening. In the morning, he gave me some money and said:


- "Take it, my son. Relax a little bit and come back early. Don't talk with everybody like a monkey of the seller, don't stop near each shop like the horse of a broker, do not quarrel with everybody like a dog at the butchers'. Do not eat the things which you see, don't be intemperate. Follow my advice my son."

- "Hey, stop, go to the tobacco shop and buy Bukhara nos from the boy from Bukhara for your Indian uncle."

- "Don't give me money, I have enough for nos."

- "All right - "Har kujo pul ast anjo dil kusho". You are very close with Indian Sarrof. When it comes to Indian, you even refuse the money. Why are you looking at me like that? Go, go! You are free. Freedom is good."

⁴⁰ A kind of boots worn during the war



Khoji Bobo mumbled again and said something when I was leaving. I went out. Today was Wednesday-trading day. I went to the melon bazaar at the back of Majjomi. Water-carriers poured water to the ground and made it calmer. There were clovers on the tree. The peasant who brought a lot of melons placed yellow and red stoned melons to the ground in a proper way. The peasant who brought a lot of pomegranates from Kuva, Margilan, Fergana and Oltiarik placed their pomegranates at the bazaar.

I met the boy of my age and asked:

"Hey boy, what is your name?"

"Why do you need? My name is Otaboy."

"I would share your melon, but I do not have money."

"What are you doing here without money?"

"Maybe I'll help people who are placing the melons. Perhaps, they will give me an unripened melon."

"Go away. You aren't my type."

I bought a red boned melon and started to eat. It is very enjoyable to buy a melon for your own money and eat. Even though I lived with men, I had never seen fruits there. Men who smoke didn't like fruits. Once I gave a peach to Khoji Bobo. He tasted and said:

"Hey buster, what is it? You praised it too much. Peach is around water, right? I gave back the peach."

So, the drug users had never brought fruits such as plums, cherries, pomegranates and milk, sour milk and etc. to the relaxing house. They would shudder themselves hearing even the names of these things.

I ate the melon with great enjoyment. I was going to eat pomegranates. So, I gave money to the peasant. He looked at me attentively and said:

"Do you want to eat pomegranate? Put your money to your pocket. I have not sold pomegranates yet. So, I'll give them to you. Take these pomegranates. Eat one yourself, and give the other to your sibling."

I looked up to the old man very much I was going to say praising words to him. However I only said "Thank you, my dear" and finished. I tied my waist band over my neck and placed the pomegranates there.

When I was coming from the melon bazaar, near the cereal market I saw the head of the guards, named Rakhmatullo.

"Oh my brother, you grew since I saw you. How's Mirza aka?"

"He has died."

"What? I feel sorry. All right, may God keeps him. How's your mom how many children are you now?"

"My mom is well. I have 3 sisters."

"Ah, ah, ah you all are too young."

He gave me a little quail: - "Take it and put it in the net. It'll be a good singer."

I said thank you and put that inside my waist band.

"I am wondering, my brother. I just fought for fun with Goriboy. His waist was broken and he was taken to the doctors'. I am worrying he has not come yet."

"How he broke his waist?"

"He promised to the rich man of haberdashery to carry the very heavy luggage to the barrow and broke his waist. Can we argue with the rich? Notwithstanding, they will win."

The majority of the guards in Eski Shahar were Tajiks. Those would guard the selling booth, pour water to the ground and carry the luggage of salesman and the owners of the shops.

Rahmatullo Commander gets big respect among people. Everybody followed him.

"When you will be empty, come to us. You will play with brothers", - Rahmatullo Commander said.

I said good bye and went toward the institution. I heard the sounds of carnais⁴¹ - surnai's voice when

⁴¹ An Uzbek national trumpet

I was going towards the cool castle. Small bared children were running to this place. In the middle of Chorsu (market's name), Yupatov's circus actors were crying on the two wooden carts.

One surnai performer was on the cart, two carnai performers were on another cart. Clowns who wore different hats and had colored faces, put long red noses, and yellow hair, were performing and laughing at people.

One of them swallowed egg by mouth and took it from the ear, another was is pulling a band from the nose. On another cart, the Russian woman, with three - four dogs and dressed in short clothes, was singing:

*"Love, love you mother,
Love you
Looked from Akushka
Love my mother
Drink tea in class
Love my mother"*

On the third cart, a half naked woman was dancing. One wrestler was playing four stones, throwing them up and taking back. One person greened on the circle with his horse.

The familiar Rafikh clown:

"Known people will know, unknown people say to another."

"Sartia nation's old friend Yupatov and his daughter Mayram built a horse play in the cool castle. Tickets are cheap. Come, don't be regret!" - He was crying.

I was showing them in the first row. At that time I wanted to eat a pomegranate. I began to eat the pomegranate, taking from my bosom, with a big appetite. The moist pomegranate's water flew from my chin. Carnai- surnai's voice was heard not fast

but low. The tired surnai performer stopped to play and wiped his mouth with a kerchief.

– “Look at me, vile boy!” – he said.

I looked around interested in with whom he speaking.

– “I’m telling you”, – he said showing me, – “go out from the circle, eat pomegranate at another place!”

I didn’t know that I must not eat pomegranates, peaches, and sour things between carnai and surnai performers.

Seeing it carnai and surnai performers couldn’t play because of their salivation to the sour things. One clown came and pushed me from the circle. The play was stopping. I departed. So, I was going to cut my hair because of it had grown much. I stopped at the old barber’s shop in front of the Mosque. There was hung short trousers (for Barber shops it will be known if short trousers hung at the street instead of a announcement.). There were four people. One of them had zuluk⁴² on his face. One of them had khorikh. Khorikh is an equipment which was made of bull’s or cow’s horn. With them the barber took blood from people who has got a headache. A man who put khorikh on two sides, was like a bull. An old barber was pulling somebody’s jaw teeth. The old man saw me.

– “Are you going to have your hair cut? It is price one pakhir. Do you have money?”

– “Yes.”

– “Then, wash your hair in the pond.”

Barbers are “wise” people who can do everything. They shave hair and beards, color beard-moustaches, and except these they do doctor’s tasks.

Taking blood from people with headache, putting zuluk, putting khorikh, pulling out teeth were also considered their tasks. Especially doing circumcision of children is considered very fertile work.

⁴² Medical leech

They ordered us to wash our hair from the pond like us.

I entered the yard and began to wash my hair. When I finished, I went to the barber's shop. Master had finished pulling out teeth. That poor man was crying aside, sipping his blood.

Master was again busy. He was cutting an old man's beard. He showed me a chair with his eyes and gestured to sit.

"Rub your hair, don't let it dry!"

I carried out his order. Master put on my neck dirty red trousers. Putting hand on my head: "You didn't wash well, bad boy!" – He said and began to rub my head with hands which were wet. How he stripped off my skin! Especially, barber shops star flay! He hurt me such, I could hardly help myself.

Then master began to cut my hair. When he was using his equipment I jumped as though he was cutting me with a saw.

Master: "You are an impatient boy, keep silence!" – he jerked me. Maybe he cut my head's my skin. He stuck cotton on it.

When cutting of hair was finished, a loud shout was heard from the rows. All people began to run toward that place. I threw off the trousers and stood up. Master touched my forearm.

"Give me money, this is Salmon's place, I can't cheat him, child" – he said.

"Equipment is sharp, isn't it, from the dirt of trousers", – I said.

"Don't touch on it, mischievous boy!"

I gave barber's pay one pakhir⁴³ and ran in a hurry towards the row following the crowd. At one side there was a book market, at other side was shoes market, one at another side was the knife market, carpet

⁴³ A coin

markets were full of people. I was going among people towards the centre of the market. When I reached the centre of market:

"He is brought, brought, here is the ill-fated Hoji, pander Hoji!" – such voices were heard. I looked at the kettle-drums yard. There wrestler fellows dragged out a man of forty years old who wore a jacket made of Chinese wool, a belt on his waist made of pink silk, a golden chain watch was hung on his bosom, American leather-shoes, flowers on his hat, and a thick, black moustache like a bird's.

The yard belonged to the famous singer Oysha, and that man was her husband – Rahmat hoji. People were going to kill him by throwing stones, because he was blamed in pander.

Four fellows among them lifted him and then fell down.


Because of the heavy stroke, Hoji could not stand up. He lifted his right hand to people:

"Muslim people!" – He only said such.

A wide and tall butcher boy of thirty years old came and kick him down with his head. "Hit this panderer!" – Such voices were heard from everywhere.

People tied Hoji's legs and brought him in the centre.

No any power could stop those angry people. Each Muslim considered requital for good deeds to hit or kick him. No one recognized each other among the scandal like a hornets' nest. Everybody's attention was at Hoji, who lied in the circle like dead. Hoji's clothes were covered by mud. He was in an unrecognizable state. His eyes were crashed by heeled shoes and jaws were pressed. On his body there was not any healthy place, he turned into a bag of meat, and he had already given his soul to God. Because of people's anger hadn't found comfort yet, they were continuing to hit him.



Mochalov was coming. The horse police came and they were going to drive away people with shot guns, whistling, but it was useless.

“What happened? Whom they were going to tie?”

If they checked the first hitting men.

The essence of the event was following: Rahmat Hoji had gone to Fergana this summer. He introduced himself to everybody that he has many men and he wanted to marry. Then they married him to the boot-maker's widow's daughter, called Larifakhon. They lived for several days in Margilan and then he brought his wife to Tashkent.

He didn't bring Latifakhon to his home but begged his first wife Oysha:

“Dear, I did such bad work, but I will send her after satisfying my will. Till that you will turn to my sister, please, won't shame me, after that I will serve you as your dog till my death. If I find much money I will bring you to Hadj with me. We will watch the world and return being pure from sins. Dear wife, don't do me shame, I will drink tea made from water that you washed your legs with”, -he begged her.

Oysha believed those words and agreed. Then Rahmat Hoji brought his wife home. He spent a small wedding there. Days passed, months passed. “When you see your new wife, don't look at the old one” – like such proverb he hadn't looked at Oysha. He even humiliated her before Latifkhon and ordered different tasks.

These attitudes slowly filled Oyshas's patience. Once when Rahmat Hoji hadn't returned home, she called Latifakhon to her:

“Follow me, queen Latifa, are you so simple or all Margilon's girls are so simple? You have been here for four months, haven't you felt anything yet? Your Hoji brother is my husband, not brother. You are my rival,

not sister-in-law. All house pays in this home are on my shoulders, I made your husband rich. I am a very famous singer of Tashkent. I go to weddings with my apprentices such as Savri yallachi, Fotima yallachi, Risol yallachi, and we play, dance, and sing up till the morning and return home with five-ten sums.

From this money our husband is living well. Can't you understand it?"

"Partner dishes don't eat dog" they say, dear Queen. I do not want your husband. If I wanted, there would be found ten on my step. How splendid Hotels are waiting for Oyshakhon! My forehead and face fills to golden. I hunt a flying bird in the sky with my only glance. Money doesn't matter for me.

And now your husband. You are young, I pity you. According to your sentences, you are the daughter of very good Muslim who is praying namaz five times a day. Hoji is going to violate upon you. Hoji is going to join rich men of Tashkent. For the one night with you, he will take fifty or hundred sums, it is his business.

You are from Margilan. Maybe you know about "bond beach in Margilan"? Your Hoji brother is going to turn you into "bond beach's girl. Be careful, Latifakhon, my sweetest. But, again you know yourself", – she said.

Latifakhon listened to Oysha's those words in surprise. Her face became pale and her lips shivered.

After finishing the conversation, she stood up shivering like a deaf quail. She entered her room and after a half hour she returned with a bag in her hand and covered with paranji⁴⁴:

"Thank you, sister Oysha, you gave me mind, I had been blind, I will go to Margilan. Forgive me if I did sins to you. I will go to my country Margilan."

⁴⁴ An Uzbek traditional women' robe, usually dressed as a cloak

They kissed, hugged and said good bye to each other. After passing five- six minutes Rahmat hoji returned home. He hadn't found Latifa and asked from Oysha:

"Where is Latifa?"

"Latifa left you and went to Margilan. She will ask for a repudiation letter from you standing there. She said that she wouldn't live with a rival",- Oysha said.

"Did you disclose?"

"No, not I. But how do you close people's mouth?"

"We have bid door, maybe one had told."

"It is bad. How long it passed since her departure?"

"Not five minutes yet. If you run, you can reach her. Everybody will tell if you ask her." Hoji hurried to street. He reached her by asking, at the butcher market.

"Stop, Latifal!"

"No, I don't stop, violator!"

"What did you say, you bitch?"

"I said violator. A thousand damnation to you! I'm sorry for my fortune. Ah! Muslims!!!"

They quarreled. Passengers and butchers crowded them. Hoji felt the condition was going bad and escaped home. Remaining in the circle, Latifakhon told everything to the crowded people. It was a good pretext for nervous people after a long continued war. Crowda joined to the crowd. The market and rows were full with people. Rahmat Khoji's death was covered up. Police led Hoji's death body to the raisin market and covered him with cloth. The head of police, Machalov and his men couldn't find Rahmat Hoji's killer or any witness. They also didn't know where Latifakhon went.

The day neared to dusk and thin people were getting in the market row. I bought a quarter of good lamps, nos for Indian Sarrof (a master at making things for horses and donkeys) for order of Hoji's grandfather. Again I bought a half kilo of halva (a paste of nuts, sugar and oil) for the poor, for aim to give them market food from me, and I continued on my way. When I reached the mouth of the earthen stove market, Badalmat's bath, I ran into Rasulmat's son, my dear friend Turobboy.


"Ha-ha-ha", - we embraced. "Are you alive, empty-headed? When did you come Tashkent? Your mother was going to mourn and thought your died. Are you such a hard love boy?"

"You are right, friend, but you see my clothes. How can I return home in such state. One week has been my coming (God forgive my lie). My owner seemed like an open-handed, generous man. After some weeks I will repair my clothes and find money, I will buy something for my little sisters and I'll return home. But I have one please from you, don't tell anybody of seeing me. Next week I will go. Dear friend, how are my mother, little sisters? What news are in the village?"

"Your mother and sisters are well", - Turobboy said, - "your uncle is helping them. What news could be in the village? Salimboy sufi's man goat calved. A prayer-rug was stolen from Mosque, some people said that the robe of Ismat crazy was made from that. Ziyod's grandfather became blind. Besid singer joined again a lapar (a kind of song):

If you sold row leather will be big.

If you can help desire you will be king.



“Like these words, friend. My father’s work is good. Cotton’s price increased. The rest of the news you will hear when you come to the village. I will wait for a week. If you don’t come by that day I will tell everybody about seeing you. The first I will tell your mother, then friends, and you will be ashamed.

“Then who is your owner?”

“I won’t tell him to you now.”

“Are you a dancing-boy?”

“Go to hell... you are the dancing-boy, because your brow and eyes are beautiful. I am the assistant of rope-walkers.”

“If you are a rope-walker’s assistant, where is your velvet trousers?” – We laughed.

“Where is Omon?” – I asked.

“He returned in a bad state two weeks ago. He said very bad gossips about you. But nobody believed him. “God hit me”, – he vowed such but we didn’t believe. Now, his business is well. He had been the assistant to Abdulla Black-Brow. He delivers water and looks after horses. He wore Abdulla brother’s old chrome boot and tied a belt. He delivered food to his owner to the market. He learned Russian swears. His father Tursunboy brother’s shop had fallen but we repaired it.”

“Well, I will know the rests when I go. Now, I’m hurrying”, – I said. I took the quail from my bosom and gave it to Turobboy.

“Take, friend, put it into a cage, it will be a good bird. Look at its beak, it’s down.”

Turobboy took the quail and shouted into its ear. He tested again once:

“Ah, it is a cock!” – He said.

“I can’t distinguish cock and quail how I walk in the field. Can you distinguish them, stupid?” – I said, but I had doubt.

We stopped a passenger:

"Brother, test it, it will be a piper or not", – we asked.

That boy took the quail in his hand and laughed;

"Yes, may her children be pipers, but not itself."

"Clear, it is a cock." I didn't open the secret and said to Turobboy:

"Well, take, may put it into palov", – I said.

Turobboy put his cock in his bosom. We parted and went.

I reached when Hoji grandfather and his other assistants were praying namaz. At once, I put a lamp, halvah, nos, and pomegranate aside and made new chilim's⁴⁵ water and cleaned the room.

I cleaned the samovar and took its ash and put it into a pail. I hung a towel on my shoulder, touched the broom; as if I saw nothing and I was serving. They finished namaz.

Hoji grandfather:

"Yes, my orphan foal, where had been you lost? They said that there are many orphans father. Yes, it is. Did you find any father? Ah, you are a polite broom!

"Don't damn at that time", – one of the drug addicts said.

"Self-willed, self-willed!" – Hoji Grandfather said.

"Well, what scandals did you see at the market?"

"Oysha's husband Rahmat hoji was killed by people by throwing stones, Grandfather Hoji", – I said.

"What!" – Hoji Grandy said. – "He was near to the eyes, a handsome beardless man. Ah God thanks him. If he died from stones, he will be punished for faith" Hell's fire is vile for such people."

"Then, speak it completely. Ah, you cut your hair. You look like Iran's king Ahmadali. I saw his photo. Well, speak!"

⁴⁵ A kind of tobacco pipe

"I told all events from beginning up to end with panic."

During the story there increased drug-addict people. Indian sarrof came back from the castle before namaz. This day his face is joyful. He listened to my story. Was it really interesting for him or not? Some drug addicts lost their minds, some forgot their drugs and took again drug during the story. Some of them were aware of this event. They also confirmed my words.

The drug addicts' society blamed both the singer, and sometimes Rahmat hoji, and his wife Latifakhon who came from Fergana, and the crowd, and even Machalov and his police.

"True", - master Mirsalim said, - "sometimes understandings also are happened. Last year, the event occurred at the ceremony of Zayni father (Zayni - saint's name). It was the middle of September, on Friday. There were crowded pilgrims from Magman and Mysara, Irokh and Badahshon, Iran and Turon, India and Turkey, China and all other cities of the world. From Tashkent even a baby in a cradle came. People occupied the ground and sky like ants.

There was a call for prayer to Friday namaz. People prepared for namaz fulfilling at the big Mosque's yard and around it. Everybody followed the imam (a Moslem clerk man). A man who was late to namaz walked to the first row between people. He saw a purse which was pulled and ready to fall from one person's purse. He touched that purse with the aim of putting it to its place. One person who stood at that row saw it and stopped namaz: "Ah, Muslims, a robber came to Mosque!", - he cried and began to hit that man, touching his collar.

Even the imam and other Muslims stopped namaz and began to hit that man.

“Ah, stop, stop, what happened?” – that man asked but nobody followed him. In a short time, they did him like a dead man and brought him to the yard of the Mosque. There they also hit him till their eyes were full of blood. After his death they became calm:

“What happened, who began to hit, who touched, who’s purse?” – like such questions began to go out. Then the owner of the purse came to the middle:

“Brothers, he was a friend, he was not a robber. He was going to help me, he was going to put my purse in place. He hadn’t sin, Aman said that, but his words then were useless.”

“He will go straight to Paradise”, – Hoji grandfather said- “yes, he will go to Paradise without question.”

After talking, Hoji grandfather imam continued namaz.

I made tea, turned on lamp, put tobacco in the chilim and put a teapot of tea, cup, bread, sugar, and raisins in front of each of them. Hoji grandfather gave them their wrapped “medicine” according to their dare. I brought a dish of poppy which was covered with a print shawl of the poppy. One tray of bread, raisins, and tea were put on them. The feast began. Oh, if you follow their joyful conversation after the drugs. They sat looking at line wild-sow to each other. These monks, who were stingy, didn’t want to give anybody even a raisin, prayed unwillingly namaz, and now were so joyful.

One complimented his garden, another didn’t reach his treasure’s count, one invited another to his house: “I will kill a sheep under your legs”, – he said. They passed to each other bread, tea, and drugs. They became very polite, very well mannered, and very affectionate. I was serving them. Any empty teapot wasn’t left without answer. Especially, my brother-in-law was so thankful.

– “Well done, well done, son, well done. I’m so happy. Today market is absent, my business had been difficult, I couldn’t do count, and I will do it tomorrow. Bring me chilim.”

I prepared it very good and took wrapped nos which I brought from the marker.

– “Here, mister, everything is ready”.

– “Well done, well done, my son.”

He smoked chilim twice deeply, it was very good Kharshi’s tobacco. The wrapped nos could impact him.

“Well done, well, done!”

He rummaged his pocket and gave me money.

“Take, it is prize for you.”

“Thanks.”

I gave chilim to the others with order. They talked till morning. Hoji Grandfather left me the shop and entered inside. The drug addicts drove out.

Sorrof Indian and master Salim as usually slept here. I also turned off the lamp and went to bed. The next day was Tuesday. That Friday night coming people would be of great plenty. I got up early and fired the samavor. Every place was cleaned. Master Salim prayed his namaz at the corner. After praying to dead people’s ghosts, his parent’s and future dead people’s ghosts:

“Is your tea ready?”

“Yes. I must go to bring fresh bread. Hoji Grandfather won’t let me leave the shop. I am ashamed to send master Salim.” At that time Hoji Grandfather came.

“Haven’t you gone to bread?”

“You didn’t leave money.”

“Yes, it is.”

He gave me money.

“Take very carefully, don’t bring undertaken. Cut a little, its pastry should be baked well. Don’t bring if they give anything. Look carefully, bring it carefully.”

I put a shawl on my shoulder and went to the bread shop.

In spite of the early morning, the Malla foolish was coming from old Koppon side with following several hungry dogs. He called one dog "poshshokhan" (king):

"You are better than all kings, you aren't frightened of anybody, you have no business to anybody..."- he began to speak.

He saw me.

"Boy, come here, kiss "poshshokhan"'s tail!"

I passed much time to show his tricks.

When I brought bread, Hoji Grandfather was in front of the samavor and waiting me with angry:

"You bastard, did you go to Tuytepa for bread? Why are you so late? Bring!"

There were seven – eight people in the room. We gave everybody their food. When everybody was busy with their meal, I opened the box, which kept sugar and other sweets, and took halvah, which I had brought yesterday and cut it into three. I put them in front of Hoji Grandfather, Indian sarrof and Master Salim. Hoji Grandfather's eyes shone:

"From where did you take it?" – He said.

"I gathered Friday money that you gave and brought it yesterday."

"Well done, you will be a human, son. It is a good feature to do economic in everything and think about tomorrow. If people are such, he will be rich soon."

Sarrof and Master Salim also were very happy.

The day passed usually. But after midday, near evening, for namaz slowly many familiar, unfamiliar purchasers gathered. There had new boat makers among them. They were coming and going passenger youths.

When they came to my market I had success. They paid spare money for tea, bread, wood, and salt. Of

course, I put them in my pocket. In spite of these, the remaining meals were also mine. Such Friday days I earned money for my own pocket. There had been good trade in takya⁴⁶. I gave twenty one sums to Hoji Grandfather. Hoji Grandfather's mouth reached his ears. After praying night namaz there were seven to eight people in takya putting their glasses on their nose. Others were sitting around him and listening to him. They complimented him.

He was continuing:

One wrestler took his mask from face and said:

"Abo Muslim Hurosoni, if you knew, I am that one who made you fail in this war. And majesty Abo Muslim also couldn't help himself and rode his horse and blocked his way. They both were very angry. Coming Nasri touched his belt and lifted him and crossed over head seven times, then threw him away. His body disappeared. Badar stretched hands to the sky and touched him. He put him on the ground and said: "Nasri sayor, don't do such rudeness to the Khuroson people's honor."

Nasri sayyor kissed his legs and prayed to God. This story was full with such worry sentences. But the audience was listening to such stories with impassion.

When the story was stopped at this chapter Ahmadali sufi from Tikonlimozor village, wiped his tears:

"Really braveness it is. "Brave be in field" is that."

"To disturb peace of people is atheistic work", – he said.

Everybody confirmed these sentences. Indian Sarrof also confirmed it.

Staying for several months here will bore me. A boy running in the wide field, if he enters such a small room, of course, surely gets bored. Instead, if you

⁴⁶ A cell, chamber

haven't any fellow or any friend, words are very boring. I was bored, and searched for any amusement. At that time a mountain partridge began to whistle, but they are also prisoners like me which were brought from the mountain. They also couldn't be patient to long amusement. But I like happened events like such: the burst of a dish and the death of one or two peoples, amazing-room's tiger would be free and attack of Valihoji brother, or event's in Indian jungle, fight with a lion, thought wild person, cutting the neck of forty eyed snakes, riding crocodiles.

And what was here? Going to sleep in the early morning and very pitiful drug addicts and their nonsense stories. Again I was surprised at my own patience. Why I was here? I planned to escape from here sooner. But two things in my heart said "it is not time yet". The first, I hadn't gathered enough money for a trip to India and I was still in the generosity of Indian Sarrof, open handed Hoji Grandfather, the mercy from boot maker. My money was only three-five sums, ten sums by a golden coin and other coins. When my money reached to one measure and became ready to exchange into gold, I got big ones from Indian Sarrof. This secret is known only to me, him and to God. I have 27 sums and two coins money. I had hidden my gold under the collar of my shirt. The rest I had put into Hoji Grandfather's box and had put it fifty steps far from takya, under an old willow. All of them were the result of my forehead's sweat. The second, if I asked permission from Hoji Grandfather he wouldn't let me easily, because my service was liked by him, I didn't let him put his hands into cold water. So, I had to be driven away doing any fault. I'm still quite like a desert frog and I hadn't pulled out my head from my hollow without permission of Hoji Grandfather.

I passed this week very quietly and obediently because I was busy with unripe plans in my mind or grief by orphans, or missing my home, and my friends.

Mischievous "naughty boy" was absent here. Hoji Grandfather was worried from my state and Indian, more than him. On Tuesday Hoji Grandfather called me with love:

"Child, this will stay between us, aren't you feeling shy from that "black?" – He asked.

"Who is black?"

"I meant we having "black".

"I see drug addicts' state, Hoji Grandfather, I don't take this poison in my mouth, God is my head."

"Well done, child, it will be such."

Hoji Grandfather wiped tears in his eyes and gave me one sum.

"It is tomorrow's market money. You did me so happy, child, I was worried that I thought maybe I ruined somebody's child."

I hid the money and said:

– "Don't worry", – I said.

– "Live with joy, if anybody frightens you, his head will be ten.

After yesterday's party, Hoji Grandfather and Sarrof Indian called me with love and said:

"Come here, child, how are you, aren't you ill?"

"Thanks, I am well."

"Why are you looking perplexed?"

"I'm perplexed with preparing a trip to India", – I joked.

We both laughed.

"Are you going to travel to India?"

"Yes!"

"It is difficult, India is too far."

"My generosity is high."

“Praise, praise.”

Also Indian’s generosity opened and he also gave me five sum golden coins from his bag.

“Take child, I have no family and children. God likes alms.”

That day, I might have gotten up on my right side, I had got six sums. If I knew the benefit of calmness and upset, I would be such from beginning. Till midnight I served with smile from my treasure. Wednesday morning Hoji Grandfather gave me two coins and said:

“Child, bring me bread and full jugs with water, be aware from quails’ corn and water. Then I will let you go to the market and play. You will return when you want. There are many bad people, time is bad, my child.”

I took my money and brought flat cakes. I carried out their service. Hoji Grandfather invited and we had breakfast together. Then I went to the market.

Under Hasti Ukkosh there was a sour milk market. I wanted to eat a cup of sour milk at the market. I saw my friend’s brother, Ibrohim wrestler’s son Ubay, who was sitting on the ground, putting his two jugs of sour milk on the ground.

We were embarrassed. I had been free of his questions from my lies. Then we passed the main issue. Till I finished sour milk, he sold his sour milk. Then we were going to see the coal market. We would eat ice-cream, fish, and enter Yupatov’s horse play. Ubay wouldn’t spend the money of sour milk. He had three miri⁴⁷. If he spende sour milk’s money, his sister-in-law would kill him. If he didn’t have enough money, I would give. I began to eat sour milk with hot bread. Ubay put his money into the sour milk’s jug. He came and accompanied me in eating sour milk.

⁴⁷ Currency of that time

We came to Chorsu market's gate and put Ubay's jugs at the shop of Thoroboy butcher. We were free like horses. That day was Sunday. The time was near to midday. The streets were very crowded. At the gate the way was blocked by camels which hung coal, wood and straw on the shoulder.

We passed through the camels and came to the stream's bridge. At one side the fish was cooked. Its smell covered over the weather. We passed through them. At the centre of the coal market in a circle of a big arch, Yupatov's horse game, which was built from blue-white tarpaulin stood. There were some clowns, surnai and carnai players stood in front of it. Among them, Rafikh clown was also there. They played different games and called people to the horse game.

"Alas, you do not have cherry fruits, Ubay."

"Why do you need cherry?"

"If you eat them before surnai players, they can't play their equipments. Last week I ate pomegranate before them, and they couldn't played." We laughed.

"No, we don't enter", - Ubay said.

"Why?"

"The first, it is expensive, second, Mayramkhan will appear naked, I am afraid of naked women. I am not interested in horse play. Our home is horses, my father is a rider. How they played horse couldn't play like our men. I had seen such a show thousand times and this show isn't worth to pay money."

"I also have seen once, it is enough", - I said.

"I don't think entering even Rafikh clown's show is very interesting. Because this game also will be showed inside."

We went to eat ice-cream. I took red ice-cream, Ubay took a yellow one. We bought them for nine moneys. They put them on a plate, and we ate it with wooden spoons with enjoyment, but it finished. At

the side of the coal market, a tightrope was built. The tightrope hadn't begun yet, but there were many people waiting for it. There were also carnai-surnai players, and bump player. Two jokers were walking with long wooden legs showing interesting plays. I recognized one of them from his hat. He was brother Bukhar. We decided to make a wooden leg with Ubay when we came to the village. Walking with a wooden leg is so difficult. Besides that, you will be taller than others and can see your neighbors' yard and their daughters.

Ubay:

"Won't we fill our stomachs; let's eat nokhatshirak⁴⁸?"

"No, we ate sour milk now. Instead, we will watch binoculars' picture", - I said.

Ilhom Samavor Boiller's brother Ibroy showed the binoculars' picture. Seeing two pictures costed one money. He recognized us. He agreed to show us for cheaper price because we were his neighbors in the village.

We took two binoculars and began to watch. Bald Ibroy commented to us about the pictures:

"There is the king of Rome, he is walking with his wife in the street. Here is Khalifa Rome's king Abdulkhamid Soniy. Here, he is going to Sofia Mosque to pray namaz on Friday. Beggars are crowded around the horse rider. This is Afghan's king Sultan Abdirakhmon. This is an Indian prince, the daughter of Farang's king. She is walking with majesty's wet nurse Valentine Federovna. She died recently from illness."

We paid eight coins and watched twenty pictures, and went from one corner of the world to another. When we came to the wax market, from the side of the institution, the beggars of Mittikhon were coming like drunken camels. We also followed them. Beggars took a way towards Matjomi. At the back of Matjomi

⁴⁸ A meal cooked from meat and peas

there was a great field. That day the speaker of Tashkent, not only Tashkent but all middle Asian's speaker Kusa Maddoh was supposed to speak his speech. Beggars were criers of Kusa Maddoh. Beggars stopped in front of the crowd. No one sat. Everybody stood bearing their cane. A chair was brought at the centre and covered it with wool carpet. Another chair was brought beside it. One teapot of tea, bread and sugar were put on it. After a moment an old man of seventy came here. He wore a brown oriental robe, big white salla on his head, and a colored shirt and he was small, fat, mustached, his face wrinkled and with a touching cane in his hand. He sat facing Kibla⁴⁹ and opposite to the beggars.

Two men joined the beggars order. One of them was younger, another was older. They also wore rido and white salla on their head. They were assistants of Kusa Maddoh. Kusa Maddoh drank a cup of tea and crossed the circle. At that time we came in front between the crowd. Kusa Maddoh returned to his place. He lifted his hand up, and spoke with dumb voice to people:

"People, don't stand up, sit in your place. Standing up is the feature of Budha God!"

Everybody sat. We also occupied the place. Two of his assistants confirmed his words. You could hear their voice from Shaikhantavur. Kusa Maddoh continued his speech:

"You came from many regions, from Samarkand, Bukhara, Kattakurgan, Uratepa, Fergana and Khojand. I'll introduce myself. I'm from Kuragaron village of Bukhara. My name is Hoji Najmiddin, the son of Salohiddin. My father had been the best speaker during the period of king Muzaffar. Our seven parents had been served from Temur to Khusain

⁴⁹ The side the Muslims face while praying

Boykharo's periods. Those periods were very good periods. The book "Ahlokhi muhsinin" is his. I'm the 17th grandchild of him. If anybody doesn't believe it, his face will be black like a dish and his heart will fill with fire! Amin!"

His assistants:

"Amin, will fire...!" – they said.

"Now we begin the issue. The God ordered to pray to three kinds of his slaves. The first, with the order of God, all nature was created. We must pray to God in each hour of time."

Others:

"Yes, friend, we must, well done..." – the crowd cried.

Beggars imitated after their words.

Kusa Maddoh stopped them by a gesture and continued his speech:

"The second, our prophet Muhammad Mustafo Sallolloho alayhi, vassalom is the last, and we must perform each of his sunnats and hadis. Be praise for his soul."

Companions:

"Be praise, amin!" – they said.

Beggars joined them. Kusa Maddoh lifted his hand and stopped the beggars, and then he continued on his speech:

"The third, the emperor white king Nicolay Soniy Romanov majesty who rules us, God said that kings are his shadow on the earth. His mercies don't leave us."

Companions:

"They are shadow, amin, they are shadow, amin..."

Beggars:

"I'm people of the king. The king gave me his mercy. Oh, oh!" – they said.

Kusa Maddoh again stopped them and continued his speech:

“Again, let our king Nicolay and his family, his ministers be healthy for thousands of years!”

Companions exclaimed:

“Amin, amin!...”

“At this time from the West the enemy named Olmon (Germany) is attacking our king. He spent his many soldiers, and weapons us and made calm to our people.

So, all of us must obey our king in spite of his religion. Our king and his ministers are Christians. When the Koran came to us, the Bible also came to Christ. So our king is not an atheist and his family also.

So our Muslim people have to help our king at this war period.

And nobody believes gossips. If anybody sees such indignant people on the street or market, he suddenly touches him and brings him to the leader of the city and to police. God will crush our enemies and a stone into intriguing people’s mouths!”

Companions cried out:

“Amin, stones at their mouths, stone at their mouths!...” – they cried out.

After that Kusa Maddoh passed to the Shariat⁵⁰ issues:

“Doing mustahab is now washing of back is true and how many times is sin? Should we wear the teacher shoes with the right leg or left leg? From which intention must we enter to honest? Horses should greet the donkey rider or not?

If rubbish is fallen into running water, for how many times being crossed it will be cleaned? Is a thief God’s slave or not? Are both drivers and barbers entering Paradise or not? Are potatoes forbidden? May we have a meal from a Russian’s dish?”

⁵⁰ Muslim code of religious criminal and civil laws based on the Koran

“I didn’t find any sense from maddoh’s speech, let’s go”, – I said to Ubay.

He also touched me:

“I also understood nothing. He compliments only the white king, ministers. Did he eat a bribe?” – Ubay said – “It is interesting Maddoh’s asking money from everybody. Is it reached at this time?”

“No, they don’t ask about this issue. They ask money when they told stories.” He began an interesting story and when this story is reached its top, he stopped it and asked for money.

Now also Kusa maddoh did such. He began a new story and when the story reached its top, he stopped it.

“Muslims”, – Kusa Maddoh said, – “we are Muslims like women. We have children. Now I asked from God for your treasure, child, wife and others and God will give what you want. I asked for seventy horses from seventy wrestlers for the way of God. I’m poor, what will I do with seventy horses in my seventy years? Only a horse is enough for me. And I asked from the remaining sixty nine generous men from half gold together sixty nine gold. Ah, I regret, I regret. I must not ask half of gold from you in such a bad period. And I asked the rest of the 69 people from one sulkavay (current name) together with 69 sulkavay. Majesty Muhammad Mustafo in his one hadis said: “Khayrul umur avstaho”. It means, it is good in the middle state, it won’t harm Muslims giving only one coin alms.

Well, won’t we wait, if you want to listen to the story’s end, seek their pockets?”

Two prayers touched hats and crossed the circle. A rich man led a horse to the circle and gave it to Kusa Maddoh:

“Majesty, I have no child, pray for me.”

Kusa Maddoh opened his hand towards the sky:

“Amin, Muslims, you join me and say amin. Again let’s say amin!...”

“Amin” words rose from everywhere.

“God will receive the all man’s wish. God will give him nine Khasan-Khusan boys, nine Fatima-Zuhra daughters. His head won’t go out from weddings, amin!”

Among the voices, the companions’ voices differed from others like a voice of a dish which was hit by a knife’s tip. The rich man gifted the horse to Kusa Maddoh but some people whispered to each other that they saw this horse before when Kusa Maddoh had ridden it. We don’t like to speak on one’s, their sins are on their own neck.

Gathering money people stopped long in front of better fate. I don’t know how much they collected. I’m not the accouter of Kusa Maddoh.

I was explaining to Ubay about Kusa maddoh’s lie about gathering money. Suddenly Kusa maddoh’s eyes saw us:

– “Beggars, drive away these two ill-bred boys from here. They are flies that fell into forbidden meal”, – he said.

Four big beggars came up, two of them touched my shoulders and others touched Ubay’s hands. They drove us away from the circle and hit on our head then threw us t the yard of the butcher market.

“Go away, you sons born from a dog!”

They swore again.

I said to Ubay:

– “I told you. If Kusa Maddoh’s speech is ruined, he will hurt the offenders.”

– “Ah!” – Ubay said. “What honor will do in you and me? Let’s go.”

While walking, I thought. What would it be if I spent three or four sums to buy rice, beans, oil and a little meat for my poor mother and little sisters and give it to them by Ubay? But what would happen if

my mother asked Ubay where he saw me, and ordered him to lead to my place? So, I thought a thousand dreams. At last: "Yes, I have walked for five or six months". People from our village knew that I was alive. They and I also endured forty one. I'm not going to stay at Haji bobo's education, then I will spend my completed moneys for them and go", – I consoled myself.

Then I gave Ubay one white coin:

"Take, friend, it is for you, but don't tell anybody about seeing me, I will return soon."

We told bye to each other and left.

The time passed from midday. I was hungry. "In the dull world, once there will be enjoyment" I thought and entered Ilhom Samavor Boiler's tea room. Bald Asra before was going to drive away me:

"Go-go, does your work like you can't eat anything here. Everything is expensive."

"Let me inside, Asra brother, I have not four pakhirs⁵¹, but one sum. Let me enter here if you don't believe", – I showed my money.

"Ah, what did you do, from where did you take it? Well, enter", – Asra bald said.

I entered and sat on a suri. They brought me a teapot of tea, sugar, and hot flat cakes. I began to drink tea listening to people's gossips and songs from a gramophone. One Uzbek, who came from the field to buy something, had seen for the first this gramophone. He was astonished. If he thought there was a person in it, it was a very small box, if he thought it was a demon, it said God's name.

He stood for a long time with surprise. I was also more uneducated than him to explain the gramophone's secret. It was a time of namaz. I needed to go fast to Takya.

⁵¹ Currency of that time

I bought a lamp, nos and halvah. I bought necessary things for Hoji Grandfather and Indian Sarrof. But, if I tell you the truth, I was bored from Takya. I didn't have my patient left to see their faces. At night, the first snow fell. I got cold and shivered during the whole night. In the early morning I got up and asked for a hat from Hoji Grandfather in the shine of the seventh lamp and wrote a snow letter on the back of Hoji Grandfather's paper which he wrapped drugs:

It is a snow letter.

"God has snowed this snow,

The letter will reach, clothes word.

Hoji Grandfather, you knew I have no clothes,

Without boot my legs remained bare.

I wore a hat but my head is bare,

I didn't refuse your order,

I'm walking from morning to night,

Like a broom I flight.

Dear grandfather will mercy to my state

Don't remain in my sin if I die.

Do something Hoji Grandfather,

May God gives you hats seven times.

It was written by your orphan assistant".

When Hoji Grandfather came out from his house to Takya, I gave this letter.

"What is it, child?"

"I don't know, somebody left it, this letter is from Namangan", he said.

"Yes, it is. May be it is from Mamatrizo. He was going to plant poppy this year", - he said. He gave the letter to one glassed man.

"Read it, master Salim, it was from my friend. I can't see well in the early morning."

Master Salim began to read the letter:

"It is a snow letter."

"Yes, it is", - Hoji Grandfather said like his eyes went out, - "ah vile, who gave you it, why didn't you hit him suddenly, we would sit him on the donkey and point black to his face and cross him in the market. Ah, who is he, jokes upon me in my age and wants first from me? Die like a cat. Continue, Salim."

Master Salim read the letter. When Hoji Grandfather listened to it with agreement "yes, it is," and took tears in his eyes after listening "God give you seven times of Hadj".

When he reached the signature "orphan assistant" he melted:

"Did you write it, child? You had such capability, you pressed my heart", - he wiped his eyes and stood up, then entered his room till he came, Master Salim explained to me the difficulties of literature science and complimented me. Hoji Grandfather came out. A dukhoba skull cap was in his hand, which I wore at night.

"Take, wear it, child, open your hands. May God give you the life like me! If your soul be healthy, guppi (a hot cloth) will find you.

After three days, Indian Sarrof gifted me his old chopon. It was long for me so I cut its edge. I began to serve with pleasure wearing these clothes.

I showed the first work at the day that they called the ninety: in early morning before gathering of people of takya, I burned fire. After fire I put a kettle on it. Slowly the clients began to gather and have breakfast. Everybody was here. The conversation was about the war.

"Germany is very master", - Master Salim said.

"Well done", - Sarrof said.

I thought the water in the kettle may be hot.

- "They are flying on the sky", - Sulton said.

- “My God!” – Indian said.
I thought that the water was boiling.
– They threw bombs on Farang city from the skies”,
– Master Salim said.

At that time, the dish with boiling water which stood on fire-stove, bombed like a burst dish. Takyaroom was covered with sparks and dirty ashes. When the dust lowered, Hoji Grandfather and Sul-ton were hardly moving from their place. Sarrof and Master Salim were lying unconscious. I sprinkled water on their faces. Indian awoke. Astonished Hoji Grandfather was swearing both German and Nicolay. Master Salim also awoke and moved slowly.

“What happened?” – he asked.

“Damn you!” – Hoji Grandfather cried out, – “Everything happened because of you. Didn’t I tell you not to enter to government’s work?”

Sulton had already gone out from takya.

Nobody could realize what happened and they went to the corner and were wiping their faces with a handkerchief. Everybody was upset. At last Hoji Grandfather looked at me.

“Why are you looking like a hen, go and throw this stove!” – He said.

When I took the stove and was cleaning the carpet, Sul-ton came following two policemen, and showed with his finger:

“A canon was bombed here”, – he said. And showed Master Salim; – “He shot”, – he added.

They began searching. They searched everywhere of takya. They cleared Hoji Grandfather and master Salim, not remaining even their dead aunts. They checked passports. They couldn’t find anything except poppy and opium. I saw one, an older policeman took a piece from poppy and put it into his pocket, but I didn’t say anything. At last, a young, beautifully moustacheed policeman said:

"Well, there was bombing not accepted by law. Children could have burned something." Everybody looked at me. Hoji Grandfather stroked his beard. The police continued:

"But Hoji Grandfather, you will go with us and explain these poppy and opium to the police."

"God will thank you, greats, greats", - Hoji Grandfather said, - "Don't lead me to the institution with my old age, it was someone's keeping..."

Master Salim, Sarrof and I entered fired.

"Don't touch, your great service is on our neck, God will thank you! The white king's life will be long", - we said. Hoji Grandfather searched in his pocket and found some money and then stretched them to the old police:

"Please, take it, use it for something."

The two policemen looked to each other.

"Well", - they said. "After this, don't make such events, we forgot you. You are an old man..."

"Thanks, thanks", - Hoji Grandfather bowed, policemen gave back "goods" and went.

Hoji Grandfather sighed like a tired man and sat on the supa⁵²:

"Oh, I rid off one accident. Ah, demon, how much money did you give me yesterday?"

"Seven coin miri."

"My God, I rid off easy! Now, answer me, did you do it?"

"No, I will die, if I did it!"

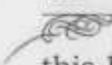
"Did any child enter the Takya?"

"I didn't seize!"

"Yes, it is", - Hoji Grandfather said, - "are you full, your body is dressed by clothes and then you began to play such game!"

He stood up and brought a stick and hit me twice. People separated us. I was crying in the corner. With

⁵² A kind of bedding



this began peace. Sarrof went to the market. Master Salim began to make flowers from different colored papers for the wedding of a rich man's son. Sulton didn't come here after that event. Right, everything was alright, but I doubt on my shoulder, they haven't gone yet. I was bored again. Once when people of takya were sitting on the bed and talking two cats fell down in front of them. They were frightened as if a tiger had come from a surprising room. They doubted me for this event. There was nothing bad to live in doubt. I was going to go. But money for travel to India wasn't gathered yet. As usually to spend well this Wednesday Hoji Grandfather prepared well. He had joy on his face. When he was happy he sang.

This event happened on Thursday evening. As usual, master Salim read his big book. At that morning Hoji Grandfather's mountain partridge suddenly pulled out "gid-gidok"⁵³. I awoke with a start. A short moment I lied listening to his voice with enjoyment. Then I stood up, went out and washed my face and hands, then fire the samavor. Master Salim and Sarrof also awoke. I prepared them warm water. They washed faces, I cleaned teapots and put them near the samavor. We cleaned everywhere and waited for Hoji Grandfather. Hoji Grandfather came out from his room with a cough.

"Good morning."

"Samavor is boiled, Hoji Grandfather, if you give tea I will pour."

Hoji Grandfather took a box's key and looked for the box. There wasn't box.

"Did you put the box under your head? "Keep yourself safe and don't make your neighbor a thief" they said, well done, son, well done."

⁵³ The sound of quail's singing *gaidok* to have A

“No, Hoji Grandfather, I didn't put it under my head, it stood in its place.”

“What?” – Hoji Grandfather said. – “Master Salim, did you see?”

“Last night I had seen. It stood in its place.”

“Not?” – Hoji Grandfather said ready to cry and looked at me :

“Ah, vile, think carefully. Maybe you put it anywhere?”

“Hoji Grandfather, I don't touch your things. It had stood in its place.”

“It is not a bird to fly by joined wings, it is not a frog to disappear in a hole. Find, damn your parents! It is shame to joke with old man.”

“Did I joke at you anytime, Hoji Grandfather?”

“Who entered here after me?”

“Even a bird didn't fly.”

The scandal began. Hoji Grandfather closed the door of takya and searched everywhere. But he didn't find. Then Hoji Grandfather took the wooden shovel and hit on my shoulder twice. Master Salim also joined and they hit me. I didn't know what I had to admit and I was crying. At last they got tired. Hoji Grandfather looked at me:

“Ah, villain, polite broom. Since your coming here, we lost peace. If you took this box, return it. Be aware, boy, I will tell it to the judge and he will fill with straw your skin.”

I answered with cry:

– “No, Hoji Grandfather, I will tell you to judge before you. I have done for a month your service, but I found only one oporka and the old hat. Besides it, both of you hit me even though I am an orphan. You don't pay me. It is shariat and what kind of law? Do you know without gates of White king's palace? No, I will tell you to the judge!”

From my words Hoji Grandfather stood up and looked at me with horror eyes:

- "Will you do such yet?" - said, - "Aren't you satisfied with my salt? You know such words. Go, go. At once go! If your pay left me, you will take it in judgment day. I put you to God."

Master Salim interfered in the quarrel:

"Keep peace, Hoji Grandfather, he will agree, - he said. Then he looked at me: - "Boy, keep your tongue. Tell your doubt. Who might take the box at night?"

There Sarrof was sitting at the corner and crying with pity of me.

"Oh, poor, unhappy orphan. Hoji Grandfather, I will pay all lost, how much is it?"

"Keep silent." - Hoji Grandfather said him and looked at me:

"Tell, whom do you doubt?"

"It is difficult to slander on somebody. My doubt is on the policeman who last day came. He is at odds with you and Master Salim."

"Yes, it is", - Hoji Grandfather said, - "We will check, don't escape from us."

At last, the quarrel ended with peace. I was going to drive away that day evening, finishing my today's services. Master Salim would look at me. Hoji Grandfather was going to pay me four sum and great prayer. I served till evening. But I frowned and I smiled to nobody. In the evening, I prepared for the departure. I cleaned my place and began to sew my treasure into my collar. Two ten sums, three five sums by gold. One three sum by paper money, the rests were coins. I didn't sew coins. All are together 42 sums and 62 coins. It was a big treasure. I could buy ten sheep if there wasn't war. I worried from this treasure. When I was near to finishing sewing money into my collar, Master Salim came:

“What are you doing, child?”

“I am going away, but how can I go out with these torn robe? I’m sewing.”

“Poor boy, – master Salim said, – “Sarrof may take back his robe.”

My heart bombed.

“He gave it to me.”

“No, he will ask. If he doesn’t ask, he’ll take your salary.” (Master Salim didn’t know the generosity of Sarrof to me. Sarrof never asked me for his robe. He gave me two money when he heard of my returning).

Master Salim said:

“Now it is night, don’t stretch words and go. It will be acceptable to Hoji Grandfather. I liked these words like butter. Under these words of Master Salim there was other meaning. I knew, Hoji Grandfather was feeding Master Salim as a parrot. Master Salim’s pity was not for me, but advice for telling me to hurry not asking for anything from Hoji Grandfather. So I told him:

– “If this advice is acceptable for you, well, I will go.”

I made hot water. For the honor of my going from here. I washed my hands, face and legs.

I went out from the stinky takya room and breathed with full lungs. Now I was pure, light as a bird and my heart was as clear as morning. I could go wherever I chose! But I thought, where could I go...?

From my work, I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone.

CONTENT

FOREWORD 3
 PART I 5
 PART II 26
 PART III 44
 PART IV 76

I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone.

I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone.

I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone. I had learned that the only way to escape the world was to go away, to go to a place where I could be alone.

Literary-fiction publication

GAFUR GULOM

A NAUGHTY BOY

Editor-in-Chief
O.M. MUMINOV

Editors

E. BRITAIN (USA),
A. KHAMIDOV,
A. ALIMBEKOV

Art editor

S. MUSAMEDOV

Computer specialist

O. BOTIROVA

Technical editor

U. YAKHSHIMOV