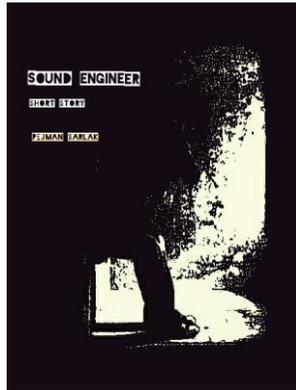


The Sound Recordist



Pejman Sarlak (1990-Lorestan)

Author: Pejman Sarlak

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Author: Pejman Sarlak

(1990/ Lorestan –Iran)

Pejman Sarlak is a young and novice Iranian writer who spent his childhood and part of his education period in rural areas. Hence, his storytelling is rooted in the village atmosphere and the lives of the low-class people of Iranian society.

He created small tales in the form of stories by using the news and incidents he heard about the events in his rural milieu.

After roaming to the city, Pejman stabs to use his mind's eye to generate his fictional characters. He also practices the stories and tales he heard from his grandmother in his storytelling.

Although Pejman experienced sparks of storytelling as a child, with serious determination initiated to write short stories at a young age. His writings are released and welcomed in various magazines. Pejman's writings have also won various literary awards in the country.

The book *The Sound Recordist* is the first authored work.

About the book:

The Sound Recordist is the author's first work and contains short stories of pain and suffering, darkness, and things that are never understood and implied and each explores the inside of a person from an angle and based on an excuse, a small community with diverse thoughts and a common feeling; anonymity.

More than ever, the contemporary man finds himself indecisive, suffering loneliness, confusion, and exhaustion, as if they could never be cured. The story of shadowy people, those waiting for salvation from the heavens, and at the same time, they do not have hope for it.

In this work, the author does not decide for the future of the audience, guide, or show anything. The sound recordist has no relationship with the author except at birth. He says:

As an author, I have written something to arouse, and I have abandoned the world beyond it. I have eliminated myself from the whole thing and before I rise, I say to you, dear reader that I will not fall like a rock into this river.

Which is the river? Where is it going?

What does the audience do? His job is to write and record.

The audience must write, search, and discover; everywhere is black and entangled, he must find the white dots and recreate the story in the space he creates. The purpose of entrusting this task to the audience is not to relieve the author of the responsibility of the work he has created, but to respect and honor the audience.

Until now, the audience had to accept what the creator wanted and this was undisputed, but the great men of literature in recent decades have figured out something new, and that is the audience's participation in the

production of a literary work, which today, newcomers like me have chosen this path to achieve the goal which is to arouse.

Every passerby who passes by us, either has put behind an accident at the origin or an accident possibly waits for him at the destination; he might have a storm inside him, loud noises that disturb the soul, but outside of him everything is quiet. He smiles at his friends and walks away.

Look at the buildings, at the houses that stand still and silently think of revolting against people; who knows what is going on inside, has a child been born? Is anyone drinking tea, or is he dying?

I guess the passer-by you see across the street is a woman on the verge of falling who has gotten out of the home to go shopping and lost her way home. Time passes around her and every time she stops, it looks like a catastrophe happening. The past is gone and the present and the future are mixed. What is she thinking? (The Height of Woman).

Is it not possible that in that two-story house resting at night, a man is arguing with his other-self which is more rational and conservative than him? Metro, sleep, discovery and intuition, diarrhea pill, he has snugly fit himself. Perhaps, the noise of crowds passing below your window to watch a corpse, wake you up the next morning.

Yes, anything is possible, stories are everywhere, and the sound recordist keeps running after them and to escape the chaos.

The sound recordist is a tall pain that needs to be poured out, the narrator in a way, and you and I feel this pain differently and they are trying to get it out.

Human suffering, like some muscular and purulent aches and wounds - although last forever - but they are sometimes mixed with a pleasure so the sound recordist is reluctant to escape them; he says, 'I try to cope with it,' what others do . . .

No sacrifice is remembered if it does not imply faith, before reading The Sound Recordist, one must believe in “man and suffering” that he shoulders, in “doubt and oneness”.

The present book is a collection of 9 short stories with an introduction. The titles of the stories are as follows:

Athena - Possibly, The Little Match Girl - Radio - I Am Not a Mother - Predetermined - Both of Us Intertwined - Saadat - Aleph, Lam, Meem - The Height of Woman

Expert of the Book

Athena¹

No one understands that at present, only a part of the city-like village remained and the river which had dried up devoured its other parts and it twisted along the mudflow parallel to the houses, reached the mountain from the river to river; and he had crossed it while never stepping off the train. No, everything there smelled different which was not pleasant, and she knew that they thought she had been sitting in the railroad car of the last train that had left from the station on Monday and had assured others that she would not return till the last day. She lived for a short time in a house just behind the station. It was a house with worm-eaten yellow bricks and a short porch more like a ledge, and a

tree at the height of windows. A tiny family.

Her gender was a secret. With a small suitcase, no one guessed which gender was involved, but some had seen the shadow of long hair behind the curtain that she twisted it in her hand, perhaps braiding it, and the upturned nose behind the curtain just parallel with the tempting black lips and immature female torso. The house on the right was sunk in the mud of the mountain digger man and one of them had sighed.

Colorful umbrellas, piled up in the corner of the station building, were the only place untouched by heavy torrent and the fear that the flood would flow again and engulf everything and the black, white, red, and slightly green umbrellas, had cast out the shadow of their men with long noses and sparse hair. A man with a black umbrella tried to

¹ This story is translated verbatim *as is* with the original punctuation.

prove that he had seen her by the fence an hour before the flood and a young man was dancing and shoveling the mountain and the rain of the mud hut of the houses on the right side. She is probably a not yet nine-year-old girl, standing next to the fence of long hair of thin hands of little Athena woman's voice, hey. Stared at the ground and the umbrellas opened a little so that their men could look at each other. They did it slowly, the ground got wet, and the black-umbrella man confessed that he did not know the truth and maybe he had only dreamed.

He knows that there was a woman there, a mature fetus behind the navel and the house of a girl in the dead running mud of the young man and the remaining half watching the childish men on the other side of the mountain. The pregnant woman buried under a mound of beautiful mud someone left behind from a small God and stopping by the river

under the bridge when it rains like the one who jumped off the train and walked with the old man green cane. A cottage right on the mountain slope.

It is not easy to understand this. The men were standing atop the station sticking their head out to see when the train arrives in flood-causing rainfall praying to God. She had asked aloud whether someone knew where was the house for rent for a limited time at the station and an old man had walked with her to that house. The old man took his time, she had grabbed him by the armpit, and someone in the vicinity had heard his or her laughter, a green hat and a green forehead, a leaf at the tip of an old man's cane with green color had walked with her before his death. Those wanting to know whom she was wished that the old man were alive and the others said what difference it made.

The old man had given her his short cane and said that he had to bend

over so the cane could reach the ground. She had connected him the long green leaf and the old man had told a young woman nearby that God loved him and he could stand on one leg for a long time .He had said words that the woman did not understand what was in the old man's mouth. He took her to the house for rent behind the station ivies tall in the green rain like a cane. She was standing there with her small suitcase until its owner showed up and the old man had said the owner had gone inside the running flood. She just nodded the old man did not understand what she meant and walked with the missing-the-point woman and laughed and then died in his house.

The black-umbrella man moved and said that his wife had heard incomprehensible things from the old man and offered a cigarette and no one wanted to take it and hoped it would continue. The blacker-umbrella man among them made a

noise with his knees, laughed, and fell silent and they looked at him who had a hairless head. The blacker-umbrella man said that he had seen her as she got off the train tall careless with a small rose-colored suitcase and beautiful colorful clothes like the distant Athena in the middle of a castle over a hill invisible to the eyes of tall short-sighted people. A little girl with long hair and a mother with a swollen belly and the alarming mountain digger man.

The tall height and the lips and the nose that someone saw its shadow was standing there until the train goes away again and had looked at the sky with a long tilted neck inside the white watery clouds, had gone before the rain for a few hours when she looked away by God's grace. They wanted to know who she was, the blacker-umbrella man did not know and got up and went away, and they concluded that people tell many lies nowadays. No one has seen her and no one has greeted her it was

difficult for them to understand this and they, hiding among their umbrellas on the slopes of a high hill free of honey-like thorns, mud houses, windows clogged with falling mud as if from the sky. They must have been asleep for a long time in the flood-causing rainfall and then suddenly woken up from the right side of the sleep while interesting events were happening around them and the old man was dead and the train was gone.

The small town like a smaller village at the foot of a dirt mountain and floods every winter had washed away part of it with its inhabitants to the river that one could always spot several corpses in it and the demanding large fat marten with long teeth. She had been seen by a woman standing at top of the remnants of the bridge with rose-colored clothes poured light on rain poured on the sand had said that nothing could be done. She had pointed down at the sands that it

was there, sheared light poured on the woman on there down below perhaps a teardrop and the woman had seen nothing but the sand had told her something about last year's flood and she had said yes and it was as if she had recited prayers up to near her house. The orange-colored water dripping in a straight path.

At night the white white-umbrella man, everything he had asked just heard 'I don't know' and thought there was something to it that he could not understand. The woman had said they had walked together across bridges covered by white watery clouds to the village. She had said that place was beautiful somewhere at the right side of the more beautiful mountain next to a short fence .It no longer was there a teardrop maybe the rain had shed again and had told the woman that their home had been somewhere else and at that time. It was in another place, her father is left somewhere down there, and her

mother with a child was sitting in the shade of a vine that bears apples. The woman had said that she understood it and she had laughed and the woman had thought there were things.

The white-umbrella man in the midst of the other men tried to remember his wife's words and he did not remember anything. The men changed the subject to something else that nothing could be said about it, again there was silence, and rain poured on the umbrellas. The women in the mud houses were waiting for the train to whistle and the end of a deadly waiting in front of which a mountain on the back of a barrier remaining from a river to another and Athena dances, had said a man.

They standing atop the station under the sky and tangled clouds. The station building was small and lifeless thrown at a corner. A middle-aged man was sitting sleeping at the foot of a column, which she had

previously leaned on and had told him that she had liked the place.

He had regretted that she could not dose the situation and did not see a house on the mountain slope sunk in what it should have been and the middle-aged man had unnecessarily choked with tears .She had sung to him rain only a moving creature and had gone away with the old man. The middle-aged man seemed to be dreaming that he had seen her with long hair in the shade and a terrible balance in everything and men of colored umbrellas standing a little farther away a discussion concluded before the start.

Silence had destroyed everything, like a flood that flowed every year and had left intact only the part protected by the mountain and it was strange and the men thought of her with light casting hands.

The red-umbrella man tried to open a conversation and he said that last year everything was different and they wanted to know whom she was

behind a tempting white curtain like the moment when everything collapses and the rain seems to be stubborn in the death of a lowly creature that struggles in the mud.

Another one lit a cigarette and the smoke stayed there under the umbrellas as if they were all smoking without enjoying it and would disperse at any time. The pale-green-umbrella man in the meantime does not know what time it is but the sun created colder in the wind and darker, they guessed it was too soon or too late for lunch and a woman with a loud voice greeted them from afar.

A tall woman and that's it, they followed her with their eyes and the black black-umbrella man stood in the middle and confessed that he had seen her as she tried to smell the tree blossoms scattered in the light cast on the mud. The blacker-umbrella man was going to draw their attention to the tree blossoms and the black-umbrella man

continued indifferently that she had wept a teardrop along with the rain from a high sky.

Then he had come out with a large suitcase that looked like as if it was raining with small red-breasted birds saffron blossoms on the other side of the fence. Anything that could probably be found in a dream or children's stories and the clouds were scattered around it a short or maybe long creature with the shadows' long hair. The shadow was the only thing that dragged behind her because the sun has taken away everything with it now like the flood that took away a half and the year before that a half and earlier than that the remaining half. Now there is just a half and a bunch of men with colored umbrellas and a small number of other women.

No one will understand, because there is nothing to be understood. They had been emphasizing this before the recurrent stopping of the train. The train is gone and the

station is left empty, the rain they guessed would never return and would return only when they would also have drowned in the downstream river in the sands Athena frightened the small God and these men over there.

They stared at the iron rails that were rusty and old like a middle-aged man with just his bones in place and the teeth that are left open by choking. The rain was pouring more intensely and the men guessed that something would happen and the eldest of them thought that he must have been involved like the small God of the temple at the hilltop next to the fence the dancing father sinking in down pouring orange-colored waters and the little girl left behind.

One could see her small steps amidst the watery mud that passed by the men with childish hops and reached the yellow house and from there returned close together. They continue their way around the

station towards the river and before that, a part of the village that was lost, on the right side of the mountain, flat parts remaining of the small greenhouse with an invisible garden. Short hedges and a man who tried to keep his daughter away from the garden fence and lifted the mountain while dancing.

Further, away the young woman stood a little farther with her swollen belly and laughed at the little girl struggling in the arms of the man and the mountain in between the fatherly hands of God who cries and muddy water flows, the train whistles and she jumps off it. They walk towards the river up to above the bridge ruins and heard a lonely cry track of lights on the sands of the woman who accompanied her and then forgot what she had heard.

Their minds got tired freeing the umbrellas, one of them said that and left the group with a colorless cloth umbrella and passed by the tall greeted-returned- from-the-way

woman and walked away and another one of red-umbrella men added that it made no difference. The umbrellas were rounded, and there was no rain underneath. The men tried to remember something about her who was sitting in the railroad car of a train that will never return with flood-causing rainfall perhaps until next year. It was painful for those who could not understand the subject and one of them guessed that the next day must be difficult because this time it will come down directly from the mountain and will be faster.

The little god of the umbrella people, she is gone and the rain mud houses road covered with the flood mud. The umbrellas went far from each other and it remained dry there empty and two to three they went away in the middle of a village which had only one wide alley. The women who were afraid in the houses without an umbrella saw her in the distance in the arms of a young

woman on the right side of the happy mountain the longhaired god with the young mountain digger man. The station was left alone the bones left from predecessors and the weightless and hairless middle-aged man wakes up at present to begin the work, the train slowly enters the station and the weightless and hairless relatively middle-aged man thinks with fear that these things are a little too early.

Possibly, the Little Match Girl

The woman was watering the staircase flowers and she fell and died, her husband called her and when he realized that she did not answer, he thought that she must have left him. This was something that he had been expecting since the third year of their marriage and strangely, he never understood how he did not have such concern before marriage. It was the biggest blow he had ever experienced in his life. Terrible, I wish one could open his

mind and see how he thought, what a nice colored calf. At least he should have thought his wife was out of the house and may return in an hour, many women go out of the house to shop. Of course, it was not true, his wife had gone to water the flowers, and she had watered the flowers in the past too. Before leaving, she put on her party dress, the man asked why, the woman said shut up, and he nodded.

In this case, one should assume the man was right, certainly, no one wears new clothes to water the flowers in the hallway. He went inside and just like crazy, people started running in the house. Then, he rushed to the window and in less than a few minutes, fell in the street on a man trying to unlock his bicycle lock. The incident killed both of them. Well, apart from the wife and her husband, another man lost his life in this incident, didn't it weird? One could imagine the newspaper headlines from the moment the

crowd gathered around the intertwined corpses: Love Triangle, Man Kills Himself after Killing Cheating Wife and Her Lover. Everything was in place; the newspapers must have something to say, after all, no problem, things happen. Seriously, what idiots are out there, not idiots, selfish people who only think of themselves, and how much you hate these people, I guess so. Before death, the stupid couple did not think even once about their little daughter standing in front of the kindergarten waiting for her parents. Of course, the woman was not guilty in this case, it was not what she wanted, and you have to ask someone else about this. However, the man was a true selfish calf and ruined the reputation of all honorable men in the world and over here in less than a second. Controlling masculine emotions is sometimes too difficult, may God forgive us all.

You have to be patient, just as you do not become a devil in real life to know what will happen to you, do not try to find out what would happen here too. Everyone has heard that a hasty person either dies or is killed. At least I have heard that, shut your mouth, and keep reading. Do not even think about shutting it since in which case, again you either die or will be killed. Very seriously. Yes, this is a great joke by another lunatic, let us move on.

Poor girl, she still wore the red dress her father bought for her third birthday. Three years have passed since then and it was just getting fit, she certainly did not admire her father's taste. Her mother had hurriedly braided her hair and her hairpin was still unfastened up there. Their coach had tried to tie it but failed because he did not want the little girl to think he was incapable, he had stuck it in the hair strands and now, it protruded like an antenna or something like that.

These do not matter, the poor girl, repeat, all the children were gone, and only she was left trying to hide herself from the eyes of the kindergarten adults. If this scene were shown in real movies, it would probably look like this: the kindergarten janitor calls the girl sympathetically and asks why she is standing there, and the girl, who tries not to cry, says, "Nothing, kindergarten janitor."

The kind janitor from the bottom of heart and . . . sighs, takes the girl's hand and while clearing his nose (due to crying) takes her to the female superintendent and she hugs the girl hard and insists that she should not be shy because she is willing to be a mother to her with all her being.

My God, I have never been able to restrain myself from expressing my feelings in the face of such profound scenes, you forgive me. The female superintendent drives her home and

along the way, teaches the girl lessons of life and chastity.

Definitely so, but well, the crazy and the psychic and the punks are part of this society as well and they should be allowed to spell out their nonsense; on paper, in the bathroom, in bed, or anywhere else depending on the circumstances. So, let us go back to the unreal gibberish; upon seeing the girl, the school janitor yelled, "So, why don't you get the hell out of here, kid . . ." and without waiting for an answer, added, "Get lost before the superintendent shows up."

The girl realized that the situation was dire and ran away and did not stop until she was sure the kindergarten janitor was out of sight. She did not know where to go, she could think about it later, she did not want to go home and considered it an opportunity. That is, the fact that her parents did not come. Well, that was a family matter. She thought she would go to the park and then the

ice cream cart, a little movie theatre, and finally, some reserves for the end of the night at bedtime. She did not give a damn even one percent that her parents might be worried. Well, she was a child and one cannot expect her to understand these things. Although she had higher expectations from herself, she understood many things. Definitely, many times she had told her father that she was pissed off by what he was doing.

His father had thrown her into the bathroom and before doing that, had kicked her belly as punishment. She had said the same thing to her mother a few times; one should not expect her to know exactly what she had said. Her mother also professionally pinched her arms to turn them black, pulled her hair, and stubbornly asked her in which boy's arms had she been, and the little girl repeated many times that she did not understand. Next, the mother had left her in the hallway to die

from the cold, what a futile effort. She did not die, of course. A few hours later, her father arrived. He could not convince his wife to forgive her but managed to toss a sweater at her. The girl was grateful for that.

When she got out of the park, she was no longer worried about her parents' reaction, but she felt that she had wasted her time and could have made a better decision to spend it. She was over six but her mother used to say she was no different than an adult woman; an idiot . . . She did not know what adult women were like, but she preferred not to be like her, that is, her mother. She had said she did not want to in a hundred years, and then . . .

She was a smart girl, nothing works like a smart girl for men, and it is the same old case of father and child. These things have nothing to do with the subject, but you are not the one who determines the connections. Look at fate in this case. If you do

believe this, let's not our relationship deteriorate, be patient please, please,

She went straight to the movie theater, sat in the front row, and waited to see the same thing that its image was pasted on a banner above the front door. A new animation that her friends in kindergarten talked about and it probably would never air on official channels. Of course, they talked about it, little kids should not be underestimated, especially if they are female and play together.

She thought that they had cheated her. She walked noisily out of the auditorium and asked the man who was selling tickets to give her money back. She failed but instead, she was invited to the movie theater cafe to drink a glass of flavored milk. Well, actually, they should have not allowed the girl to enter the premises alone, but it was not a big deal, the important thing was covering the costs.

It was strange that she accepted to drink the milk; she had never tried it at home. Maybe because her mother did not care that, the girl's milk was consumed or not, or maybe it was because of her father's stupid eyes that constantly followed the mother and made odd noises.

There was a strange family relationship prevailing in the house, her father was a real dumb lover. The little girl thought so; she had probably heard it from someone. Many times, she had seen that her father would sit at her mother's feet, massaging the woman's foot and sometimes kissing her paws. There were other things as well, like when her mother had punched the father in the face and the father had kissed her hand, or when the mother went out and as long as she got out of the corridor, the father begged her not to do a stupid thing, or to care about their child. She also saw or heard almost every week that her mother threw her father out of the room and

the father cried and nervously reminded her of his salary.

She did not know much about them, perhaps because she could not stand seeing their faces. She spent most of her time in the room, at least from the moment her father came home singing from work and begged for a kiss and bad things. Her mother, sometimes, as she stood in front of the mirror or at times, she needed someone else to wear her clothes, was kind to the little girl. She kissed her and reminded her that she had endured that "freak" just because of her and had given up big things. The girl was smart, she understood what she meant and blushed, poor girl, eh . . . ?

It was almost dark by the time she was done; she could no longer ignore her anxiety. Terrified, she ran all the way from the amusement park to home and thought of the punishment probably awaiting her. Her mother definitely wanted to know she had been with which boy

and whether or not something had happened, and her father - after the mother's gesture - would take her to the bathroom, or perhaps to the balcony or the hallway. She could not help crying, she was smart, brave too, of course, but at that time, none of them worked for her.

Try not to put a different face forward, a small hero or independent person, photo albums explain everything. It is just enough to ask the parents about this, surely many peed their pants by the horror of such punishments, even worse, for sure.

When she reached home, the alley was deserted and the door was closed, the lights were off and one of the windows was covered with a plastic sheet. She thought they must be out searching for her, it was terrible. She cried again and wanted to somehow announce that she was standing there.

She knocked on the door and waited, sometimes, looking at the piece of

the paper on the door, she would be sure they had left a message for her so that she would know the situation when she returned. She wished she could read it. She was frustrated by pounding on the door; she put her small bag under her buttocks and hugged her knees.

There was no one there, no one at all, but if we want to see the real version of such a scene in the movies, it will be different: it is cold and the little girl rubs her hands together to keep them warm. Time flies by and snow begins to fall even if it is not winter. The sleep almost robbed her of her senses and plunged her to the brink of death but a kind man or woman calls her from the window above; you finally came . . . , continues that he or she had been waiting for her for hours and had left the window only to drink water, and now is happy to see her. He or she notices the girl's frozen hands, sighs sincerely . . . , and confesses with controlled anger that he or she will

never forgive himself or herself for such procrastination, in the end; she will be adopted into the family. However, alas, the insane and the psychic have rights too, as do the punks. However, their necks must be

crushed underfoot. The little girl sat right there, hugged her knees, and hoped that when her parents returned, she could prove that she had been back and was waiting there for a long time.

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