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Sadegh Sarouy

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Sadegh Sarouy the author of the book, who has kind of experienced the ordeals of the story, is an unknown Iranian novelist. He is a graduate of political sciences, but his main interest is literature and novel writing. Sarouy began writing with penning some short stories. The present novel, which is the first sequel of the trilogy book series, is his first full-length fiction.



About the book:

In the late 1980s or early 1990s, in a desert area in a country in the Middle-East, a boy who has abandoned his past, haunted by the nightmare of working at the brickworks (his parents, like other parents, had handed him over to the brick factory) on the way to escape from the factory - along with his stepbrother, who was a freak - takes refuge in an inn that was a remnant of the Silk Road's glorious days. The innkeeper, who was a childless old man, considers his arrival a good omen and believes the boy is his savior. A son, fellow, and heir.

The boy is introduced to a new world. The inn is a place to meet new people, and in fact, to get acquainted with other worlds. The family's brutality towards him, severing all relationships with the acquaintances and relatives, and finally his curious mind, pave the way for him to step into a marvelous and spiritual adventure. At the inn, he meets a Dervish called Parishan. He also meets Faraz, an unlucky and lonely guy who has lost everything. He hangs around with a disabled stand-up storyteller. His curious mind and his sensation seeking soul render him restless. He is gradually coming to terms with living in an inn in the desert, but suddenly, a tall and charming stranger comes into his and his buddy's lives and changes everything. The arrival of the stranger is not unintentional. He is looking for something, something that is related to the boy . . .

In the years of the collapse of values, the beginning of transformations in the traditional-modern society and the outbreak of cholera and measles in the backward rural communities. In the crises of death, identity and cognition. The inn becomes a place for contemplation and isolation. The characters, each with an obscure and vague past, are searching for truth and peace in life. Each of them has chosen a lifestyle and lives accordingly.

The piecemeal opening narrative of the story, like small streams, gradually merges into a large sea. The sub-narratives run into a mega-narrative and the outlooks of the characters are gradually directed toward a great and hidden truth.

The inn is the first book of a trilogy. An independent and complete book with subtle connections to the two other books. It is a simple but complicated novel. Dark, but bright. A tragicomedy. In this story, along with the story's hero, we get prepared to begin a long and forbidding journey; we go down the road and welcome its hardships.

But "does it really worth the trouble?" and "What if the last piece of the puzzle could not be found?"

This is the question posed in the story, part of the answer is in the story, and the other part is in the mind of the audience.

The novel makes use of a fluent and eloquent storytelling style. The narrator of the story tries to engage the reader in the challenges of the story's main character and to contribute to the shaping and directing the fate of the young boy.

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Expert of the Book:

It All Began by the Breaking of the Jar

The inn is located on the edge of a sand sea. It stands strong like a lighthouse. If someone looks at the east from the inside, he will see the Obliso. On the other side of Obliso, another mountain has soared high, the Third Mountain.

Behind the Third Mountain, the plain extends to far aloofness, up to the point where the gray silhouette of the town seeps into the mirage.

The lands on the north of the inn are covered up with a forest of the salt tree, tamarisk, and Alhagi¹, maurorum bushes.

On the south, a narrow and long road twists and turns like a snake between the nameless sand dunes and branches into three other pathways right before the inn;

An asphalt paved road to the harbor,

A dirt road to Zakaria,

And a faded out pathway to nowhere!

At the locus of this arid geography, in the recess of a sad plain, under the roof of an old inn, facing the empty window stands a lonely boy.

In order to know more about his situation and to understand what is concealed in his eyes, we have to travel to the past. The journey to the past lands is like gathering up

¹ . Alhagi is a genus of Old World plants in the family Fabaceae. They are commonly called camelthorns or manna trees. There are three to five species.

spilled water and returning it to the broken jar. It is not impossible but very difficult!

However, we will do it. We will restore the precious broken jar to its original state with our magic and we will pour the spilled water inside it to the very last drop.

Well, let's cut it short and cautiously go back to the shattered jar and the spilled water.

The last missing piece

The sun rises in a large gap in the middle of the mountain. It shines on the clothed wall. It crawls down its length and shows up on the window pane, this is the beginning of the day and it is accompanied by a promise for me.

It stepped into the room like a transparent ghost. It cast itself over the brown wall, passed by the metal folding chair, walked slowly on the rug, then went around the room and sat on the plastic stool next to the bed. It whispered in my ear, "You had promised to tell me about it."

I need to restore it to its first day conditions right now.

Something that has missed its path, its memory does not recall the subject matter and now, every piece of it has been thrown to a corner.

I need to collect tiny crystal pieces from all corners of the room.

Some of them have fallen on the carpet, several pieces behind the chair, under the stool and at the corner of the room. . . and other hidden places.

I find something on every corner and I feel happy.

Of course, one is always concerned about what if the last piece could not be found?

The Silk Road

Traveling with me – perhaps – could be a bit boring and troublesome. I am afflicted with arthritis disease. To the extent that sometimes it is difficult for me to walk. The occasional headaches have driven me and the people around me up to the wall. But . . . with all these misfortunes, I am a frequent traveler.

Alright! We are going to travel to a specific place at a specific time. We are going to find the thing that was left behind - maybe due to distraction and hurry – on the metal chair of the railway station waiting for hall. From the loudspeakers, the last warning about boarding the train trots around the hall like an invisible horse. It goes through the hall and finally vanishes into the train hull:

“Dear passengers! The train is leaving the station. Please get on the train instantaneously!”

A noisy hubbub fills the hall. The last warning is always followed by a hubbub.

The train begins to move like a black, sleek and experienced horse. Its big wheel rotates slowly. The water steam gushes out from both sides of the locomotive and the entire station drowns in a thick fog; the stone steps, metal chairs, huge luggage carriers who are waiting for the next train, luggage and cargo carts, shiny and slender metal beams that at their highest point end with a large cubic lamp whose four rectangular glass sides cast its yellow light to the surroundings on four directions. Gray stone platforms and the large clock in the middle of the railway station hanging from its high ceiling.

The light approaches from the opposite side. It brightens up all corners. Sparks fly out in the battle between the iron wheel and the iron rail, they pass through it and instantly diminish.

We pass by the window of the last settlements in the present time and also pass in front of the large title engraved on the metal plate.

There is no lasting scenery on a journey. The sound of change in the nature of epoch makes one's body to shiver.

We reach the magnificent extension of the silk. That great old road. The passageway that in the past times, caravan after caravan of camels was flowing on its bulk. Once, the smell of its spices and the perfume of its aqua rosé made delighted the people. The camels have held up their noses, pushed out their chest, and have gradually disappeared in its historical dust – due to the horror of a dark and daunting plain.

No sound mixes with the other, the time passes, time passes, time passes. . . and oh! I found another piece. On it, an image is painted that looks like a caravanserai. . . or. . . a. . . an inn!

The Inn and the Silence

The sun illuminates the gray-blue sky and pours light on the ground. Its sharp and shiny rays force the old man's wrinkled and burned eyelids to close. He blinks repeatedly and his pale gray and sleepy eyes go undercover.

Niaz, drawn into himself and bent forward, is sitting on a smooth boulder located on the short and old hill. The landscape in front of him consists of a long, narrow road that twists and turns behind nameless hills, and after a monotonous extension along the edge of the sand sea, branches into three pathways in front of his hereditary inn; a road to Zakaria, the other one to the harbor and the third one to nowhere.

The third road, which in fact – just – a faded out path of a forgotten past, extends from the back of the inn to the forest. After a brief passageway through the salt tree

and tamarisk shrubs turns toward Obliso and then fade away just before reaching Obliso.

Niaz and the people of that area believe the third road is cursed.

The dull look searched for something in the distance. Niaz's deep-set eyes were accustomed to the bright sunlight, to the sand and soil and to being expectant. His eyes are desert's eyes.

The inn is his enclave and refuge. He returned to the inn. He poured tea for himself and drank it while still hot to avoid delay in the daily work. He swept clean the vacant place of his guests, that is, all of the inn's lobby. Then he dusted his royal chair and the small decorated desk that he had inherited from his father. He wiped the glasses and panels with a piece of a soft cloth.

After doing all of that, he retreated to his secret hideout.

The chamber at the end of the coffee shop - a secret door - [after that] the narrow and short corridor, and finally the den!

He kindled a fire in the brazier, put the wire over it and shortly afterward, the old innkeeper, wrapped in the opium's gray-white smoke, and was reeling in nothingness. The euphoria's spider web spun around his frail body and his hands sunk into goo.

Outdoors.

The sky was spreading to eternity in an unpleasant brightness. Smooth and flawless. Free of clouds and dust. There is no traveler in the desert area whose arrival could make us feel good, like seeing a dark spot at the remotest parts of the boundless sea that would make one expectant. A traveler who bangs on the coffee shop's door or anything else that breaks this monotony and hush.

However, we have not come here for this, to watch Niaz and his frailty, or sand dunes and endless territory and the silence of the sand sea . . . We are here to find the last piece. So, we leave Niaz and the hideout and other things to themselves. From among the three routes, we choose neither the road to the harbor nor to nowhere; but we will choose the one that leads us to the beginning of the story.

The Secret of the Gypsies

(The Unwanted Gift of Fate)

“Satan himself deceived a woman called Hobart(Lilith). He slept with her and made her pregnant. The Devil named the child that was born from that intercourse, Obel II.”

For years, the Gypsies, according to an old tradition, went from one village to another and from one oasis to the other. They could do with a piece of bread, a bucket of yogurt, a bowl of butter and a jar of *dough* (yogurt mixed with water).

Most of them were middle-aged men and middle-aged women. Sometimes, one could spot a young man among them, and more or less an old man or an old woman. The natives said they would never die.

What were the secret of their loose red shirts, long green shawls, and blue and yellow skirts and pants that expelled death?

Up to that particular day, no one had ever seen Gypsies with a newborn baby. But this time, the baby’s cry could be heard before they stepped into the village. The red, green, blue and yellow colors encircled the well. They took bucket after bucket of water out of it and filled their flasks. Then the colors turned toward clay and straw plastered houses and some houses to get various items. By the way! Other than the usual things - things that could be eaten to survive - they asked for milk.

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