

The Voice of a Pragmatic Moralist: Slavery, Marriage, and Doppelgangers in P. Fahriye's Turn-of-the-century Novella *Dilfikâr* (*The Brokenhearted*)

Pragmatik Bir Ahlakçının Sesi: P. Fahriye'nin Yüzyıl Başı Romanı Dilfikâr'da Kölelik, Evlilik ve Kötü İkiz (Doppelgängers)

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Abstract

Dilfikâr (1317 [1901]) is an Ottoman novella by P. Fahriye serialized anonymously in one of the most popular women's magazines of the time, *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* and subsequently published in book form. This article offers the first English translation of a novella that was banned by the Hamidian censors; and discusses how the defining qualities and controversial nature of *Dilfikâr* as a pro-female-slavery text propagate questions about the book's place in the romance canon, and its place within the women's writing of the time.

Keywords

Ottoman literature, Turkish literature, nineteenth century, serial novel, female slavery, women's magazines, censorship

Öz

Dilfikâr (1317 [1901]) P. Fahriye'nin yazmış olduğu, dönemin en popüler kadın dergilerinden olan *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*'de isimsiz olarak tefrika edilen ve daha sonra kitap olarak yayımlanan bir Osmanlı kısa-romanıdır. Bu makale, Hamidiye sansür kurulu tarafından yasaklanan bu kısa romanın ilk İngilizce çevirisini sunuyor. Bunun yanında yazı, kadın köleliği yanlısı bir metin olarak *Dilfikâr*'ın tanımlayıcı nitelikleri ve tartışmalı doğasının kitabın aşk romanları kanonundaki yeri ve dönemin kadın edebiyatı içindeki konumu hakkında nasıl soru işaretleri ürettiğini tartışıyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Osmanlı edebiyatı, Türk edebiyatı, 19. yüzyıl, tefrika, kadın köleliği, kadın dergileri, sansür

The Background of the Publication of P. Fahriye's *Dilfikâr* (1317)¹

Dilfikâr is a late work by P. Fahriye and the only published book under this name. It was serialized in *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (hereon abbreviated as *HMG*) in 1317 over four issues. The story was serialized in *HMG* at a time when the magazine was published once a week only, on Thursdays, and during what Reyhan Tutumlu and Ali Serdar call the second peak in the serialization of novels.² The first part was published on May 24, 1317 and was numbered as part one, and all other remaining parts thereafter published on May 31, June 7, and June 21, respectively, were marked as part two, indicating either an oversight or a deliberate two-part construction by P. Fahriye. The book version was published by the *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* Publishing House in 1317. The book version starts with chapter one; however, there are no consequent chapter divisions.

We can neither establish the real identity of P. Fahriye nor argue with certainty that the author was a woman writer. What we can say, however, is that s/he seems to be a contributor to the *HMG* from the start. P. Fahriye's first story, entitled "Madelen," was published during the magazine's first year, in 1311, in the December 9-12 issues, a few months after *HMG* was first published in the September issue of the same year. In 1311, s/he published another story, "Perseverance," and in 1312, "The Female Victim" which takes place in Paris, appeared in *HMG*. The last story before *Dilfikâr* is an incomplete story entitled "Rakibe," published in 1315.³

Today, *HMG* is a repository of fiction and non-fiction for the thematic study of women's writings during a period that's broadly associated with modernization. This systematic approach can often lead to categorizations of women's writings such as women's education and marriage, with a caveat, that these were at times auto-censored narratives, preserving the traditional roles of women within the bounds of Islamic ethics, family life, and ultimately reiterating an essentialist

¹ I would like to thank Mr. Yunus Emre Şebin for his help in the archive weaving.

² Tutumlu, Reyhan, "A Distant Reading of the Ottoman/Turkish Serial Novel Tradition (1831-1908)," in *Nineteenth-Century Serial Narrative in Transnational Perspective, 1830s-1860s: Popular Culture-Serial Culture*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 106.

³ These four stories were transcribed in a recent volume entitled *Hanımlara Mahsus Hikâyeler*. See Kolektif, *Hanımlara Mahsus Hikâyeler*, haz. Fatih Altuğ (İstanbul: Turkuvaz Kitap, 2021). Hüsnüye Koç, notes that P. Fahriye also has two other short stories published in *HMG*: "Pakize" ve "Nahide" but she doesn't mention *Dilfikâr*. See her discussion of P. Fahriye's short stories in "Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete'deki Hikâyeler ve Temaşa Fikri," *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi* 59, no. 2 (2019): 333-361.

view that meant women could be educated only to serve within the family.⁴ While we can argue that most of P. Fahriye's stories in *HMG* center on the theme of marriage, *Dilfikâr* is as distant to modernism as it is to women's modernization.⁵ It argues in favor of the pragmatic value of female slavery half a century after the slave trade was banned in the Ottoman Empire, and it favors arranged marriages. But it rejects the idea of a singular object of desire, a trope dear to the romantic writers of the time while overplaying some of the generic elements in romance. These defining qualities and the controversial nature of *Dilfikâr* propagate questions about the book's place in the romance canon, and its place within women's writing at the time. Elizabeth Frierson notes that

⁴ See Aybala Arı, *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete (201-300)* (Unpublished MA Thesis, Erzurum: Atatürk University, 2004); also see Tülay Demircioğlu Gençtürk and Fatma Yılmaz Büyükkarcı, *Kadınlar Dünyası 1.-50: Sayılar, Yeni Harflerle (1913-1921)* (İstanbul: Kadın Eserleri Kütüphanesi ve Bilgi Vakfı, 2009); Ayşe Zeren Enis, *Everyday Lives of Ottoman Muslim Women: Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete (Newspaper for Ladies) (1895-1908)* (İstanbul: Libra, 2013); Elizabeth Frierson, *Unimagined Communities: State, Press and Gender in the Hamidian Era*, (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Princeton: Princeton University, 1996); Hale Gürbüz, *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (Unpublished MA Thesis, Erzurum: Atatürk University, 2001); Hüsnüye Koç, "Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete'deki Hikâyeler ve Temaşa Fikri," *Türk Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi* 59, no. 2: (2019): 333-361.

⁵ P. Fahriye has written six other serialized pieces for *HMG* before *Dilfikâr*. In four of these stories, the main characters are between fifteen and twenty, girls usually younger; and are what the narrator considers to be of marriage age. They all experience a first love or a powerful attraction to the opposite sex, but the storyline favors, almost without exception, marriage of reason. In "Madelen," Gaston, Madelen's cousin, is a well-educated, decent, reasonable man. Her infatuation with the factory worker Henri would violate P. Fahriye's view of a marriage between equals. The fifteen-year-old Madelen thus miraculously and maturely realizes that she needs to sacrifice her own happiness to let Mart the seamstress and Henri the factory worker live happily ever after. The 1311 story in *HMG*, "Perseverance" takes place in the world of the upper class, too, this time in Şakir Bey's mansion. This time Neşever, the seventeen-year-old slave girl in the household is at the center of the love story. She and the adopted son of the household, Cavit, who is twenty-one years old, secretly love each other; however, the chief female servant, Emine, is bribed to convince the owner of Neşever to marry her to Nihat, a relative and a Casanova. When Nihat, Neşever's so-called owner/husband, complains to her aunt that she had taken Neşever from him, the aunt finds a solution by immediately replacing Neşever with Şulever, another female slave.

The third story of P. Fahriye published in 1312 in *HMG* is entitled "The Female Victim" and takes place in Paris. Mari and Nina are two young girls and best friends. Nina is in love with Mari's brother Rene, but unfortunately, her father, Monsieur Didier, is opposed to this marriage and arranges for her to marry a wealthy wine seller, Jules Bramonieux. Nina begs her father to let her marry Rene instead. Furious that his daughter is not loyal to him, he pushes her away and she hits her head on the sharp edge of a sofa, falling into a long coma. Both lovers die in the end.

The last story before *Dilfikâr* is an unfinished story entitled "Rakibe," published in 1315. This story is about a love affair between the thirteen-year-old Vedia and her nineteen-year-old cousin Ziya.

Women's magazines, produced by both men and women for a female readership, were written for wives and mothers, or to train young girls to become modern wives, mothers, teachers [...] While the founding goals of most Turkish-language women's magazines in this period were to enable women to continue their education after leaving school, and more fundamentally to train women to be good Muslims, wives, and mothers of loyal Ottoman subjects, their scope rapidly exceeded this goal, or perhaps expanded the parameters of what being a good Muslim or good mother entailed. Writers and readers of the women's press gave themselves legitimacy as public figures by tying questions about women and the family to the most vexing and pressing issues of the late-Hamidian era.⁶

Although such a view may be supported by the writings of Nigâr binti Osman, Fatma Aliye, Emine Semiye, or Halide Edip, it is harder to reconcile P. Fahriye's works, particularly *Dilfikâr*, with Frierson's perspective on women's press in the late-Hamidian era. If anything, *Dilfikâr* makes one wonder if *HMG* was a hodgepodge of serialized fiction writers, some of whom were proponents of literature for literature's sake, while others occupied a more liminal space as they negotiated their role as advocates and writers. And still others were writers such as P. Fahriye who existed in a women's magazine without intersecting with the evolving ideas of women's education or modernity.

Dilfikâr's history as a book also matters for two reasons. The first reason is that even though the press laws monitored all print media, including women's magazines, the banning of *Dilfikâr* seems to have occurred after its publication in book form. The second question pertains to the selection of *Dilfikâr* for publication. Other serialized stories such as Fatma Aliye's *Levayih-i Hayat* (1315) and Güzide Sabri's *Münevver* (1321) were also published by the *HMG* Publishing House but amidst a wide spectrum of other publications, thus it's hard to trace a consistent set of criteria as to why *Dilfikâr* was selected for publication.⁷ Was it its literary merit, connections to the editorial board, or simply the ability to publish? Whatever led to the book publication of *Dilfikâr*, it is clear that proper licensing procedures were violated, and the book was eventually labeled as indecent, and ordered to be destroyed by the Hamidian censors. *Dilfikâr*, in this sense, crosses paths with both the golden age of women's publishing in the Empire and the era of imperial surveillance and censorship of literary texts.⁸

⁶ See Elizabeth Frierson, "Mirrors Out; Mirrors In: Domestication and Rejection of the Foreign in Late-Ottoman Women's Magazines (1875-1908)," in *Women, Patronage, and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), 181-182.

⁷ To give an idea about the spectrum of *HMG* Publishing House's catalog during the same decade: they published in 1321, *İpekli Çarşaf* (*The Silk Bedsheet*); in 1320, Mark Twain's short story *The Million Pound Bank Note* in Ottoman translation; in 1321, Jules Verne's short story *A Winter Amid the Ice*, and in 1317, Alfred Fournier's seminal medical text *Syphilis and Marriage*.

⁸ See Ebru Boyar, "The Press and the Palace: The Two-Way Relationship between Abdülhamid II and the Press, 1876-1908," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 69, no. 3 (2006) for a discussion of Abdülhamit II's 1888 modification to censorship laws *Matbaalar Nizamnamesi* (The Printing Houses Regulation), page 422.

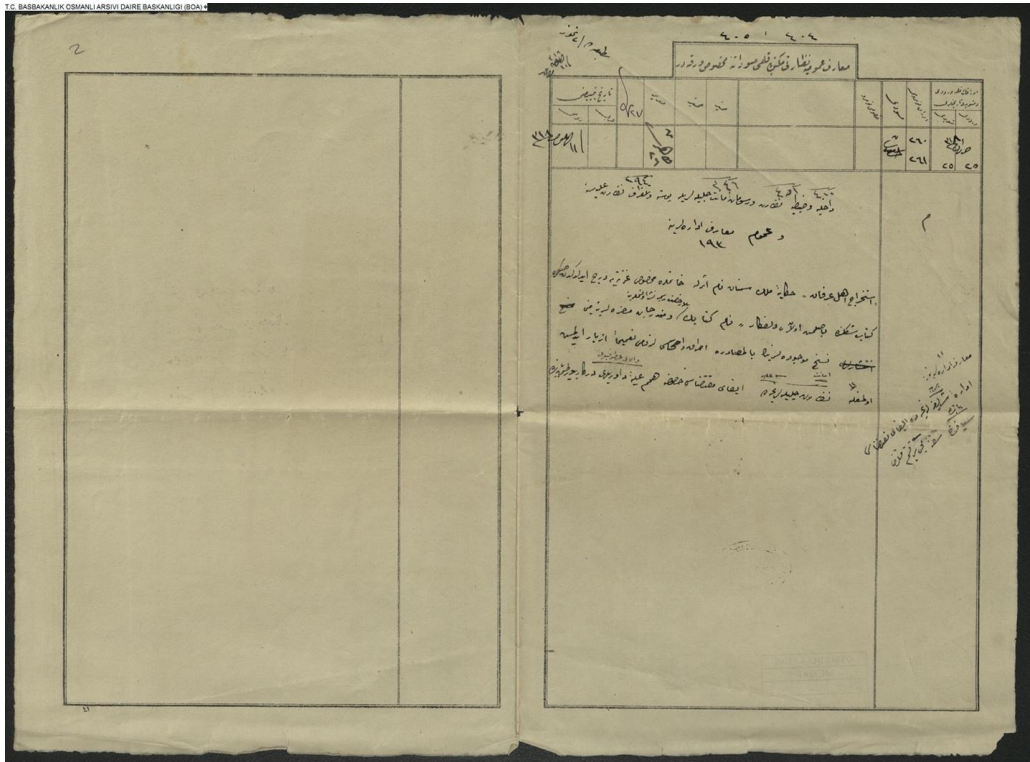
In 1318, two edicts from the government were issued against *Dilfikâr*. The first one is entitled in the collection of Ottoman Archives in Istanbul “*Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*’de tefrika olunduktan sonra risale şeklinde ruhsat almadan basılan *Dilfikâr* isimli eserin intişarının engellenmesi ve gazetelere tefrika edildikten sonra risale şeklinde neşredilmek istenen eserlerin basımına nasıl ve ne şekilde ruhsat verileceği (Banning the distribution of the book version of *Dilfikâr* which was previously serialized in *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* and further clarifying how serialized works will be evaluated and issued permission.)”⁹ The second one is entitled “Ruhsat almadan basılan *İstihrac-i Ehl-i İrfan Hikaye-i Melik-i Semman* isimli eser ile *Dilfikâr* isimli kitabın sakıncalı olmaları sebebi ile toplattırılarak imha edilmesi (Ordering the confiscation and destruction of *İstihrac-i Ehl-i İrfan Hikaye-i Melik-i Semman* and *Dilfikâr* on the basis of their inappropriate content.)”¹⁰



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⁹ COA (Cumhurbaşkanlığı Osmanlı Arşivi) MF.MKT, 647-65.

¹⁰ COA MF.MKT, 662-10.



MF MKT 00662 00010 003

The first edict from the government makes it clear that the publication of *Dilfikâr* was in violation of press law. The law seems to have been rather straightforward. As Palmira Brummet notes, “The Press Law required government authorization for all publications: domestic (regulated by the Ministry of Public Instruction) and foreign (regulate by the Foreign Ministry). A copy of each issue of every publication had to be sent to the Press Bureau (founded in 1862) for approval.”¹¹ In such a climate, then, what could have compelled the publishing house to publish *Dilfikâr* in a rogue fashion, i.e., without seeking the licensing approval of the state? Did they suspect that a license would not be granted? If so, was this because of the text’s defense of (female) slavery, a practice that had been outlawed half a century earlier? Or was it a mere oversight that no state licensing was secured before the book went to press?

¹¹ See Palmira Brummet, “Censorship in Late Ottoman Istanbul: The Ordinary, The Extraordinary, The Visual,” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 5, no. 2 (2018): 75-78.

Dilfikâr's plight, however, did not end with the first edict and the procedural sentence seems to have led to a harsher one about the content. Though the story had already circulated to a wide audience of readers in 1317 via *HMG*, copies of the book were ordered to be collected and destroyed due to its content being against the principles of sharia, the story being nothing but مالايعني (*malayani*; foolish) سفسطه (*safsata*, sophistry). *Dilfikâr* in this manner, seems to have shared the fate of various other banned books during the Hamidian era¹² but now that we have an extant copy in front of us, the question is perhaps what to do with the content and literary style of *Dilfikâr*.

Reading *Dilfikâr* After a Century

I stumbled upon *Dilfikâr* while going through the archives in search of late nineteenth-century songs (*şarkı*). After I finished reading it, I had two immediate questions: Who was this P. Fahriye, and how would such an absurd, underdeveloped story that outrageously defended the benefits of female slavery get published in book form by the *HMG* Publishing House? With its inexplicable revolving cabinets, fur coats, blood spitting horses, and Doppelgängers, the story is a whirlwind of absurd narrative turns and various *deux ex machina* stratagems that perplexes the reader. In addition to the story's narrative and structural issues, the pragmatic moralist's subversion of the typical romantic trope of *Liebested* is problematic. The writer suggests that brokenhearted men can avert tragic endings by acquiring a white female slave who looks identical to their beloved. The interchangeability of women serves hardly any purpose in the story other than the fulfilment of a male fantasy, and the whole plan of the parents is a bizarre trick veiled as parental wisdom. In fact, it is so bizarre that one cannot help but wonder if the censors' comments about *malayani* and *safsata* could be referring to the female slavery in the story.

Let's look together at the plot. *Dilfikâr* takes place in Istanbul in the late nineteenth century. Naşit Bey, the protagonist, is introduced to us as a nineteen or twenty year-old (the author prefers a range to precision when it comes to age) handsome young man, the only child of an aristocratic household. He lives in a big mansion with *selamlık* and *haremlık* sections, stablemen, *ayvaz*, *kahya*, and Ahmet Ağa, and expensive horses. The story begins around the time when Naşit Bey reaches the age of marriage, and the parents' concomitant desire to have grandchildren. Yet he falls in love with a French girl, Mari, whom he cannot marry. He meets Mari, the daughter of an expat family, at a ball; they date for seven or eight months (again, P. Fahriye chooses not to be precise in the story), meeting in secret, until finally one day, in the climax of the story, they are discovered by Mari's brother and her father's hunting dogs. In all their secret meetings, Naşit steals his father's

¹² Boyar notes that "between 1305-1311, the government seized 1264 detrimental books and documents which filled 32 sacks. According to a report of the commission responsible for burning detrimental papers were burned over six days in the stokehole of Çembertaş Hamamı, near the Ministry of Education," 417-432.

horse and tricks his mother by sneaking out of the house through the revolving cabinet--because his mother locks all the doors of the mansion at night--details indicative of the underlying effort to emulate a formulaic romantic ethos with its emphasis on forbidden love, chivalric effort, and secrets. The revolving cabinet detail is interesting because it allows the protagonist to cross between the womens' and men's sections in the house in secret and is likely a trick that is morally controversial. At the same time, it provides comic relief. Given that these were actual architectural devices built in upper-class Ottoman households which allowed for food to be transferred from the men's section to the women's section, the inclusion of this detail might be a part of the writer's cautionary tale design or an emphasis on the gallant effort of a true lover. Unfortunately, Naşit's nightly adventures come to an end as Mari is sent away on a Lloyd Company boat and Naşit Bey suffers from a twenty-seven-day typhoid fever and a two-year heartache that eventually gets cured when his parents' search for a female slave that looks exactly like Mari ends in success. They acquire Peyker – presumably a white female slave because she can get married, bear their grandchildren – for Naşit's service and wait for their trick to work. In the end, he decides to marry her; they have two children, and, as the author emphatically tells her female readers (*karie*), Naşit lives happily ever after. The pseudo-melodramatic tone that dominates the early part of the novella thus dissolves into a didactic, pragmatic one at the end.

Dilfikâr, in this sense, overplays romantic clichés about forbidden love, lovesickness, and young love while subverting the tragic romance element with what the writer intends to be a pragmatic discourse purporting to be an alternative to heartache. As the title suggests, the story turns on the pivot of the broken heart theme, however unfulfilled that tragedy is at the end of the text (as the young boy's broken heart is healed). Unlike the tragic and overly romantic stories of the period, *Dilfikâr* renders the emotive issues of romance resolvable through female slavery and arranged marriage and remains tragedy-averse. The questionable moral premise of the story is thus that tragedy can be avoided because there is never a singular object of desire. Love doesn't have to be impossible for men, and a woman's Doppelgänger always exists (as is the case with Peyker in the story) provided that one's parents search the repository of slave women well.

Chronologically, *Dilfikâr*'s publication coincides with both a boom in serialized fiction in the Empire and the publication of early masterpieces of Ottoman fiction such as *Aşk-ı Memnu* (Forbidden Love, 1316) by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil and *Eylül* (September, 1317) by Mehmet Rauf. *Dilfikâr*, however, presents an awkward engagement with marriage that remains at odds with some of the modernization claims inherent in other Turkish novels. Its defense of arranged marriage and female slavery particularly set it apart from the Tanzimat novels, most of which offer varied negotiations with the emotional emancipation of women. Kandiyoti notes that

Starting with Şinasi's play *Şair Evlenmesi* (The Poet's Wedding, 1860), which is a satire on the arranged marriage system, a veritable spate of new writing from prominent figures of the time, such as Namık Kemal, Şemseddin Sâmî, Ahmed Mithat Efendi, attacked one aspect or another of marriage and divorce customs and woman's place in society in general. At this stage, woman's plight could be identified as the best indicator of stifling conventions and archaism, and the modernist reformers could readily identify with her to voice their own restiveness with the more oppressive aspects of Ottoman

society. The slave girl was the most extreme example of debased humanity and sexuality. Male reformists' rejection of the slave girl (their mother's choice and response to male sexuality) and a hankering for more companionate and romantic relationships is a persistent theme.¹³

In *Dilfikâr*, female slavery is presented as an antidote for heartache and emotional turmoil and it exists as a pragmatic vehicle in maintaining the familial and matrimonial status quo. In the *fin de siècle* Ottoman Empire, at a time when romance writing was distancing itself from outdated ideas of female slavery and arranged marriages, *Dilfikâr* seems to offer its readers an absurd interplay of romance and comedy, perhaps perplexing even Hilmi Bey, the censor. The seemingly nonsensical elements which might have led to the moral ambiguity of the story, however, can also be points of departure for scholars who are willing to explore a story that sits at the junction of women's press, censorship, marriage, and desire, with the caveat that P. Fahriye may not be a woman writer at all.

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¹³ See Deniz Kandiyoti, "Slave Girls, Tempresses and Comrades: Images of Women in Turkish Novel," *Feminist Issues* 8, no. 1 (1988), 40-41.

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Dilfikâr

Muharriresi: P. Fahriye

Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete'ye tefrika suretiyle derç olunduktan sonra kitap şeklinde de tabedilmiştir.

Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete Matbaası 1317, İstanbul

1318 senesinde toplatılarak imha edilmesine karar verilmiştir.

I

“Haydi hop. Biraz daha gayret. Göreyim seni. Sola... Ufak bir hendek. Bilâ-muhatara geçelim. Süratli atlamalı. Haydi hop... Bravo benim baba Meşkûr’um.”

Dinç, tûvâna bir Arabistan hayvanına süvar olmuş on dokuz yirmi yaşlarında kadar tahmin olunan güzel bir delikanlı tarafından bu sözler tefevvüh olunuyor idi.¹⁴

Sert bir poyraz rüzgârı şiddetle vezan olmaksızın da delikanlının kalın kürklü paltosundan içeri nüfuz edemiyordu. Berf esen şiddetli rüzgârın tesiriyle kasırga gibi dönerek, savrulmuş zemine sukut etmekte, o koca ova büründüğü renk-i sefid ile nuranî bir heyet arz etmekteydi. Süvari, ovanın sol cihetinde gecenin zulmüne rağmen uzaktan hayal meyal gözükken cesim bir karaltıyı tefrik ederek “İşte geldin Baba Meşkûr; sen de, ben de muvakkaten olsun istirahat etmiş oluruz. Gayret iki gözüm...” diye hayvanın yelesini okşadı. Hayvan, sahibinin sözünü anlamış olmalı ki süratini daha ziyade arttırdı. Artık Meşkûr, bir kuş olmuş uçuyordu. Bir çeyrek sonra biraz evvel gözükken o cesim karaltıya yaklaştılar. Bu yer ormandı. Hayvan geldi, geldi, tam orman yolundan içeri gireceği vakit arka ayaklarının üzerine kalktı, durdu. Süvari hayretle “O ne ya, korktun mu cicim? Altı yedi aydan beri her geceki yolunu unuttun mu? Burasını da geçeriz, haydi kuzum, biraz yer kaldı. Haydi hop, gayret, korkma...” diye teşvik ediyorsa da hayvan, ormanın mahuf iniltisinden ürkerek orman derinine giremiyordu. Süvari her ne kadar çalıştıysa da bir semere hasıl edemedi. Şiddet-i şitaya rağmen nasiyesinden iri iri¹⁵ ter damlaları tereşşuh edip yanaklarından süzülüyordu. Birdenbire aklına bir şey gelmiş gibi hayvanın başını koruya çevirdi. Hayvan avdet emrini alınca süratli bir gidişle yola düzöldüyse de zavallı hayvanın bu memnuniyeti pek çabuk mübeddel-i meyusiyet oldu. Çünkü biraz gittikten sonra süvari tekrar hayvanın başını orman tarafına çevirdi. Mahmuzları hayvanın karnına bastı. Dolu dizgin hayvanı salıverdi. Zavallı Meşkûr böyle bir eza ve cefayı¹⁶ hiç görmemiş olduğundan fevkalade hırslanmış ve gemin tazyikinden ağzından kanlı köpükler saçılmaya başlamıştı. Süvari “Daha çabuk Meşkûr, daha

¹⁴ *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*'de “teveffüh edilmişti” şeklinde yazılmış. (h.n.)

¹⁵ *HMG*'de “iri yarı” şeklinde yazılmış. (h.n.)

¹⁶ *HMG*'de “eza” şeklinde yazılmış. (h.n.)

çabuk! Yıldırım gibi şu ormanı geçmeli, biraz darılıştık ama zararı yok,” diye teşvikte devam ediyordu. Bu sefer Meşkûr, efendisinin emrine itaatsizlik etmedi. O süratle ormanın içine daldı, orman derinini mahuf bir karanlık ihata etmişse de hayvan altı yedi aydan beri her gece gidip geldiği yola alışmış olduğundan yolları tanyor, bilâ-müşkülât geçiyordu. Bazı yerlerde ağaç dalları süvarinin yüzüne çarpacak derecede sıklaşıyor, ağaç tepelerinde biriken karlar, kar kümeleri birdenbire kurtulup zemine sukut ediyor, derinden derine işitilen çakal sedaları ve esen şiddetli rüzgârın tesiriyle ağaçların iniltisi delikanlıya dehşet veriyorsa da kalbindeki bir emel, bir arzu, o dehşete ehemmiyet bile vermiyordu.

Dağları, tepeleri, hendekleri çöl kuşu gibi süzülüp geçen delikanlının önüne böyle bir orman mı hail olacaktı?

Artık ormanın ağaçları seyrekleşmeye başlamıştı. Biraz sonra da orman derininden bilâ-muhata çıktılar. Şurada burada karlarla mestur köy evleri gözükmeye başladı. Süvari, hayvanın süratini tahfif etmek için dizginleri kıstı, kubbe-i sema her ne kadar sehab parelerle mestursa da ara sıra yırtılan bulutlar arasından mehtap, kâinata nurlar saçıyordu.

Süvari, tırıs bir gidişle uzaktan heyula gibi gördüğü köy evlerini geçti. Çam ve söğüt ağaçlarından müteşekkil ufak bir ormancığın önünde birdenbire hayvanı durdurup atladi, yere indi. Meşkûr’u bir ağaca bağladıktan sonra kendisi ağaçların arasına daldı, kayboldu. Biraz yürüdüktan sonra genişçe bir meydancığa çıktı. O meydancıkta büyük, beyaz boyalı bir köşk vardı. Delikanlı pencereden bakan olursa kendisini görürler havfiyla hemen geriye atılıp ağaçların arasında ihtifa etti. Tabakasını çıkarıp bir sigara alarak şem’alî kibritlerden birkaç tanesini çakıp bin zahmetle sigarasını yaktıktan sonra gözlerini köşkün kapısına dikti. Sigaranın yanmasından iki dakika geçmemişti ki kemal-i ihtirazla köşkün kapısı açıldı. Siyah başlık giymiş ve mantoya sarılmış bir şahıs yavaşça kapıdan çıktı. Mermer merdivenleri¹⁷ indi. Delikanlının ihtifa etmiş olduğu ağaçların altına doğru yürüdü. Delikanlı iki üç adım yürüyüp gelen şahsı istikbal etti. Bu şahıs on yedi on sekiz yaşlarında tahmin olunur genç bir kızdı. Ufacık elini delikanlıya uzatıp:¹⁸

“Ne fedakârlık! Bu havada ta şehir gibi yerden buraya kadar gelinir mi?”

Delikanlı: “Ah iki gözüm, her gece çıkmıyor muyum?”

Kız (Dargınca): Her geceyle bu geceyi bir mi tutuyorsun? Görmüyor musun bu gece o kadar soğuk var, kar da o kadar şiddetli nüzul ediyor ki nehirlerde sular donacak... Ah Naşid, Naşid, dün gece sana o kadar yalvarmış, muhabbetin namına and vermişim gelme diye de yine niçin geldin? Ah sen böyle müşkülâtlara, bu soğuklara alışık mısın? Şimdi sıcacık odacığında kemal-i istirahatle uyuyacak değil miydin? Bana öyle vaat etmedin mi? Öyle söz vermedin mi? Ya maazallah hasta olursan... Beni düşün Naşid, beni düşün, ben ne olurum, bir kere tasavvur et. Sen bir gece gelemeyecek olsan ta bisabah mahzunane dolaşıp duruyorum, ya hasta olursan ben nereden haber alacağım? Senin ne olduğunu nereden istihbar edeceğim? Kendine acımazsan bana acı, bana

¹⁷ HMG’de “Merdivenleri” şeklinde yazılmış. (h.n.)

¹⁸ HMG’de “uzattı” şeklinde yazılmış. (h.n.)

merhamet et; düşün, düşün ki hayatım, senin hayatına merbuttur. Hiç olmazsa kendini benim için muhafaza et.”

Kız, derinden kopup gelen bu tazallümü bu feryadı müessir ihtizazlı ve heyecandan kısıp bir sedayla söylüyordu.

Naşid Bey: “Mari, sevgili Mari! Seni mütemadiyen kırk sekiz saat görmemek mümkün müdür? Seni görmemekle ölmek bence müsavi olduğunu bilmiyor musun? Her gece hiç olmazsa bir saat olsun seni görmekten beni menetme, bana merhamet et!”

Mari (Başını sallayıp): “Senin hayatın bence pek mukaddestir beyim... Ah olanları bilsen... Evet, evet, bilmelisin. Dün gece hafifçe yağan karda korucular senin ayak izini görmüşler. Pederime haber vermişler, pederim de korusuna bilâ-müsaade kim duhûl ediyorsa gözlenip tutuklanmasını, eğer kaçacak olursa bilâ-rahim arkasından köpekleri salıvermelerini emretmiş. Ah biliyor musun; eğer böyle bir şey olacak olursa sen de, ben de mahvolmuş oluruz. Çünkü artık bir daha beni göremezsin. Pederim gayet mutaassıp bir seksenliktir, bir daha bu yerleri bana haram eder.”

Naşid Bey (Birdenbire): “Benimle beraber şimdi gelir misin?”

Mari tevahhuşla “Kaçmak ha! Peder ve maderimden kaçmak, bırakıp gitmek... Ah hayır, hayır, bu şimdi olamaz, bu son çaredir. Evet senin için bu fedakârlığı da icra ederim fakat şimdi değil... O aralık arka taraflarından¹⁹ dal kırılmasından mütehassıl bir çıtırtı işitilince Mari, Naşid'in şiddetle elini yakalayıp işte tecessüs olunuyoruz. Git, kaç durma, Allah aşkına kaç...” diye ricaya başladı.

Naşid: “Kaçayım mı, niçin... Ben sana demedim mi seni görmemek, ölmekle müsavidir. Hayır, hayır, burada duracağım, hiçbir yere gitmem. Beni tutsunlar, öldürsünler, ne yaparlarsa yapsınlar... Senden ayrılmayacağım.”

Mari (Heyecandan kesik kesik söyleyerek): “Ah ah! Naşid muhabbetimiz namına burada durma, her şey daha mahvolmadı. Şimdi git de yarın gece gel, beni burada bulursun evet, Allah aşkına fakat şimdi git, rica ederim, git durma.”

Naşid Bey: “Pekâlâ! Öyleyse işte gidiyorum, seni Allah'a emanet ettim Mari... Gidiyorum, Allahaismarladım.”

Mari: “Hayır, hayır, gitmiyorsun, gitmeyeceksin... Ah korkuyorum, korkuyorum, bu son görüşmemiz olmasın. Ah, ondan korkuyorum. Birdenbire cesaretleterek budala gibi neler söylüyorum. Git beyim, git, Allah selamet versin. Yarın gece gel, beni yine böyle intizarda bulursun...”

Naşid, kızın elini sıkıp ne diyeceğini şaşırılmış olduğu halde “İşte gidiyorum Mariciğim,” diyebilirdi ve kemal-i teessürle Meşkûr'un yanına geldi. Eyere atladı, karla mestur evlere doğru

¹⁹ HMG'de “tarafından” şeklinde yazılmış. (h.n.)

hayvanı saldırdı, gitti. Acı muhrik bir ızdırıp derunini kavuruyor; muttasıl feryat etmek, muttasıl ağlamak, bağırarak istiyordu. Delikanlı şehre girdiği vakit memleket saati sekizi vuruyordu. Saatin son darbesi havada ihtizaz ederken Naşid Bey de konağın selamlık kapısı önünde bulundu. Daha tokmağa dokunmadan kapı yavaşça açıldı. Bey içeri girdi. Seyis tarafından istikbal olundu. Harem kâhyası da havluda beye intizar ediyordu. Beyi yüz göz mosmor, perişan bir halde görünce kâhya “Beyim, siz pek fena ediyorsunuz, şu günlerde bari gece seyahatini terk etseniz de ilkbaharda yine başlasanız fena mı olur sanki; vah, vah bakınız, Meşkûr da fena halde titriyor. Pederinizin sevgili hayvanı, maazallah bu hayvana bir şey olursa pederinize ne cevap veririz?”

Naşid Bey (Müthiş bir bakışla): “Sen hayvanı düşünüyorsun öyle mi? Ben ölümden eşedd ızdıraplar çekiyorum. Haydi gel, dolabı²⁰ çeviriniz de ben içeri gireceğim.”

Kâhya, beyin arkasından yürüdü. Haremlle selamlık beynindeki dönme dolabın kapısını açıp “Buyurunuz beyim,” dedi.

Naşid Bey arkasındaki kürklü paltoyu çıkardıktan sonra cesim dolabın alt gözüne bilâ-müşkülât girdi, kâhya da dolabın yüzünü harem tarafına çevirdi. Bey dolaptan atlayıp kemal-i ihtizazla odasına çıktı. Pek sersem, hem maddi hem manevi yorgun olduğu ve soğuktan titrediği halde odasına girdi. Bereket versin ki gece seyahatine çıkmadan evvel ocağa odun doldurmuş olduğundan oda hamam gibi sıcaktı. Soyundu, kendini karyolasına itti. İşte o vakit gözlerinden nebean eden yaşlardan boğula boğula ağladı, ağladı, ağladı. Kendinden geçercesine bir nevi baygınlıkla uyuştı kaldı.

Fırtına devam ediyor, kar kemal-i sükûnetle nüzul etmekte, birkaç köpeğin şikâyet-âmiz avavesi, uluması bu derin sükûtu ihlal etmekteydi.²¹

II

Naşid Bey'in pederi eşraf-ı vilayetten maruf ve muteber bir zattır. Kendisi her türlü germ ve serd alemi görmüş bir asilzade olduğu gibi hanımefendi bir tanecik oğlunun fena yola sülûk etmemesi için son derece de çalışmakta ve her çareye başvuruyordu. Hatta geceleri konağın orta kapılarını bekler, girdikten sonra hanımefendi kendi eliyle kilitler, anahtarlarını odasında saklar, sabahleyin erkence kalkar, kapıları açar, beylerin mürurlarına müsaade ederdi. Çocuk on dokuz yaşına gelinceye kadar validesinin ettiği ihtiyatlardan hiçbir şey anlayamadı. Bir gece gayet zengin bir tacirin ikametgâhında bir baloda bulundu, orada Avrupa asilzadegânından bir kıza takdim olundu. Zaten ufak tefek haşarılıklara başlamış olan Naşid Bey, o gece kızın tavr-ı kibaranesine ve hüsn-ü anına meftun oldu kaldı. Birkaç gece sonra bir baloda daha buluştular, hasil-ı tesadüfler sıklaştı. Kız, pederiyle beraber memlekete misafir olduğundan bir iki güne kadar kendi köşklerine gideceklerini Naşid Bey istihbar edince fena halde müteessir oldu. Hele şükür, kız imdadına yetişti. Adresini verdi. Bir mahal-i mülakat tayin etti, ikinci gece tam saat altıda orada bulunacağını kaviyyen vaat etti, kızla veda ettiler, kemal-i memnuniyetle eve avdet etti. Etti ama birdenbire

²⁰ Eski konaklarda harem ve selamlık arasında yemek ve eşya alıp vermek için kullanılan dönme dolap.

²¹ HMG’de “Mabadi var” şeklinde bitiyor. (h.n.)

ortada kapıların geceleri kilitli bulunduğunu ve anahtarların da validesinde hıfz olduğunu tahattur edince işte o vakit nasıl bir çareye tevessül edeceğini bilemedi. Zavallı çocuk ne yapsın, yirmi dört saat düşündü, düşündü. Vakit yaklaştıkça yaklaşıyor, buysa daha hiçbir plan kuramamıştı. Eyvah, ateş-i iştiyak bir taraftan, üzüntü diğer taraftan çocuğu üzdükçe üzüyordu.²²

Vakt-i muayyen yaklaşıyor, akşam olmuş, Naşid Bey de selamlık [h]avlusunda geziniyordu. Birdenbire ettiği nâbecâ hareketten, bu neticesiz aşktan daha bidayeteyken dönmek istedi. Bu gece gitmeyiverirse her şey bitmiş olacaktı, hemen hemen karar vermek üzereyken verdiği sözü tahattur etti. Vay bir kız yanında bunun gibi mert, asil bir delikanlı mahcup mu olmalıydı? Hayır, hayır, ne olursa olsun gidecekti. Ama nasıl? O aralık Ayvaz'ın başında yemek tablası olduğu halde geldiğini gördü. Ayvaz geldi, dönme dolabın önünde başından tablayı yere indirdi. Harem kethüdası dolabın kapısını açıp Ayvaz'ın sahanları dolaba sıraladığına nezaret etti. Ayvaz, yemek sahanlarını kâmilen dolaba koyduktan sonra boş tablayı başına koyup çekildi. Gitti, harem kâhyası da dolaba vurup gelen cariyeye “Yemeği alınız,” dedikten sonra kapısını kapayıp çekildi. Naşid Bey'in birdenbire gözlerinde bir şule-i ümit parladı. Yavaş yavaş kâhyanın yanına sokulup doğrudan doğruya sual etti.

Naşid: “Ahmet Ağa bu dolaba benim kadar bir insan sığabiliverip de öbür tarafa çıkar mı?”

Ahmet Ağa: “Şüphesiz beyim, dolap büyüktür, isterseniz iki insan bile sığabilir. Tecrübe etmek ister misiniz?”

Naşid: “Evet. Bu geceden itibaren saat tam beşte beni dolabın bu tarafında bekler, çevirirsiniz.”

Ahmet Ağa: “O kolayı ama, biraz dolap kirlicedir.”

Naşid: “Neme lazım, bana lazım olan gece saat beşte bu tarafa geçip serbest olmaktır. Tam o vakit Meşkûr da hazır bulunmalı, anlıyorsun ya?”

Ahmet Ağa: “Aman beyim, pederinizin kıymetli hayvanı hasta falan olursa başka hayvan hazırlasak olmaz mı?”

Naşid: “Sanane! Pederim işitecek olursa cevap verecek ben değil miyim?”

Ahmet Ağa: “Baş üstüne beyim. Emriniz icra olunacak.”

Naşid: “Bu iş de duyulacak olursa bilirsin ya sonra seninle bozuşuruz.”

Ahmet Ağa, “Benden emin olunuz beyim,” dedi. Nasıl söyledilerse öylece icra ettiler. Naşid Bey şehvetle dolaba girdi. Kâhya selamlık [h]avlusuna beyi çevirdi. Hayvan da hazırlanmış olduğundan bey, Meşkûr'u yedeğe alıp yavaşça konaktan çıktı. Mevsim ilkbahar sonları

²² HMG'de burada paragraf başında ek bir cümle var: “Vakt-i muayyen yaklaşıyor, akşam olmuş, Naşid Bey de selamlık [h]avlusunda geziniyordu.” (h.n.)

olduğundan hava fevkalade latif, semada binlerce nücûm parıldamaktaydı. Naşid Bey, hayvana süvar olup beş dakikada şehirden çıktı.

Yeşil çimlerle mestur o vasi ovalarda atı koşturmaya başladı. Bir çeyrek sonra ormana dahil oldu. Vezan olan nesim-i ruhnevaz ilkbaharın latif rayihalarını etrafa saçarak ormanın, o cesim ağaçların yapraklarını ihtizaz ettirmekte, zaten ser-mest-i aşk olan delikanlıyı bütün bütün çıldırtmaktaydı. Şehirle kızın köşkünün arasında hayvanla tam bir saatlik mesafe vardı.

Naşid Bey mahal-i mülakat tayin olunan köşkün yanındaki ormancığın önünde durdu. Vukufsuzluk hissiyle ne tarafa gideceğini tayin etmeye uğraşırken kız serâpâ beyazlar giymiş olduğu halde ormancığın içinden çıktı. Naşid Bey, kızı görünce hayvandan atlayıp nezd-i canana koştu. Hayvanı bir ağaca bağladıktan sonra iki sevdazade ormanın içine daldılar. İşte o gecedен itibaren her gece burada, bu ormancıkta Mari ile buluşurlar, muhabbetlerinden bahsederlerdi. Derd-i derunlarını yekdiğerlerine anlatırlardı. Kemal-i saffetle birbirlerine merbut olan bu iki sevdazade izdivaçlarının ümitsiz olduğunu görüyorlar idi. Vakta ki kış takrip etti, bir gece Mari kemal-i ismet ve edeple Naşid Bey'in koluna girmiş olduğu halde ağaçlar arasında geziniyorlar idi. Mehtap nur-efşan bu iki bedbaht sevdazadeyi ağaç dallarının arasından nüfuz eden ziyalarıyla tenvir ediyordu. Birdenbire Naşid, “Ah Mari, siz ağlıyorsunuz ha,” dedi. Hakikaten genç kızın güzel gözlerinden süzülen elmaspareler yanaklarından yuvarlanıyordu. Ara sıra inikas eden kamerin ziyasıyla pırlanta gibi lemean eden bu gözyaşlarını Naşid Bey görünce birdenbire durdu.

Mari, “Evet ağlıyorum çünkü artık emin ol ki ayrılmamız pek uzakta değildir,” dedi. Zavallı çocuk kemal-i yeisle boynunu büktü. Bir cevap bulup vermek için düşünmedi bile.

Kız soğukların takribini düşünüyor, Naşid Bey gelip gidecek olursa hastalanacağından ve gelmezse tahammül edemeyeceğinden korkuyordu. Aradan epeyce bir müddet daha mürur etti; fırtınalar, soğuklar, yağmurlar başladı. Mari'nin ısrarına rağmen her gece yine devam ediyordu. Bir gün kar yağmaya başladı. Ah keşke o kar yağmayaydı! Bu iki sevdazadeyi gammazladı. Naşid Bey ile Mari'nin ayak izlerini korucular kar üzerinde görüp kızın pederine haber verdiler, pederinin koruculara ne türlü evamir-i kat'aya i'ta ettiğini yukarıda Mari, Naşid Bey'e söylerken işitmiş ve zavallı delikanlının o gece eve avdet edip kemal-i yeisle yatağına düştüğünü de söylemiştik!

III²³

Ertesi gün gözünü açtığı vakit bir kış gününün mağmum bir sabahıydı. Yataktan kalkıp sütünü içerken gözleri cam gibi parlıyordu. O gün akşama kadar odasından dışarı çıkmadı. Uzun bir sandalye üzerinde, ocağın karşısında müfekkiresi azalmış, mağmum, perişan bir halde bitap ü tevan olarak kendi za'mmınca cansız bir ceset gibi serpildi kaldı.

O gün dudaklarından hafif bir ah bile çıkmadı. Akşam olunca dadısının getirdiği çorbayı kemal-i iştahayla içti. Bir sigara yaktı, yine gündüzki gibi mağmumane sükuta daldı, gitti.

²³ III. bölüm başlamasına rağmen bu bölüm tefrikada yanlışlıkla II olarak numaralandırılmış. (h.n.)

Tam saat beşi çalışıyordu. Son darbesinden sonra Naşid Bey silkindi, kalktı. Herkes hâbegâh-i istirahatine çekilmiş, konağın derunine şiddet-i şitanın kasvetinden kederli bir sükut çökmüştü. Çocuk yavaş yavaş giyindi, kürklü paltosu selamkıyaydı. Redingotunu giyip mumu söndürdü. Yavaşça sofaya çıkıp odasını kilitledi ve kemal-i ihtirazla basarak [h]avluya indi. Dolabın içine girdikten sonra diğer tarafta bekleyen Ahmet Ağa'ya çevirmesini emretti. Dolap biraz çevrildi.

Naşid, “Ne duruyorsun, çevirsen a!” diye söylendi. Ahmet Ağa, “Dolap çevrilmiyor beyim, arasına bir şey sıkışmış olmasın,” diye dolabı tekrar zorladı. Dolap mihlanmış gibi duruyordu. Ahmet Ağa muavenet etmek için seyisi çağırdı. İkisi dışarıdan, İzzet Bey içeriden, ihtimali yok, dolap dönmüyor vesselam.

Naşid (Hiddetle): “Sonra ne olacak? Vakit geçiyor, saat altıya geldi. Miskin herifler elinizden bir şey gelmez.”

Ahmet Ağa: “Toplanıp oturduğunuz için redingotun etekleri filan sıkışmış olmasın. Bir bakıveriniz...”

Naşid Bey, redingotun eteklerini eliyle yoklarken hakikaten eteğin bir ucunun sıkışmış olduğunu gördü. Ahmet Ağa “Çıkarınız redingotu, çıkarınız bakalım,” deyince Naşid Bey redingotu kemal-i zahmetle çıkardı, redingotun çıkmasıyla dolap şiddetli bir tazyikle döndü. Naşid Bey hemen dolaptan atlayıp redingotu çıkarmaya çalıştırsa da bu kabil olamadı. Yalnız kürklü paltosunu giydi. Ahmet Ağa'nın “Üşürsünüz beyim,” demesini bile dinlemedi. Meşkûr'a atladığı gibi Allahaismarladık'ı çaktı, gitti. Berf kesretle yağmakta devam ediyor, soğuk da o derece şiddetliydi ki delikanlı nezd-i canana varamadan Meşkûr ile beraber dağlar başında donup kalacağına hükmetmeye başladı. O halde bile yine yoluna devam etti. Bin zahmet, bin eziyetle yollarda kardan birkaç kereler boğulmak tehlikeleri atlatarak mahal-i mülakata geldi, hayvanı ağaca bağladı, ormancıktan içeri girdi, Mari'yi taharriye başladı. Kız her zamanki yerde yine ona intizar ediyordu. Mari'nin elini eline almaya vakit olmadı, etraftan köpek avaveleri, hırıltıları işitilmeye başladı.

Mari: “Ah, artık kamilen ele geçtik, git beyim git, beni unut. Ben meşum bir kızım. Senin sebab-i mevtin olacağım. Ah Naşid, sen benim saadetim, hayatımdın... Git, kaç, kaç diyorum! Bak donmuşsun, hatta öleceksin, sen sağ ol Naşid, ben seni görmemeye tahammül ederim. Yalnız sen ölme, yaşa... (Gittikçe köpeklerin yaklaştıklarını avarelerinden anlayarak) Naşid, Allah aşkına diyorum, durma git ve bir daha buraya gelme!”

Naşid (Çıldırılmış gibi kızın ellerini tutarak): “Ne diyorsun, gideyim, senden ayrılalım, seni bir daha görmeyeyim öyle mi... Hayır diyorum, hayır, bu mümkünsüz şey. Bunun ihtimali yok, istemem.”

Mari (Müsterhimâne): “Evet, dur, gitme, seni tutsunlar, görsünler, evet görsünler. Senden kıymetli olan namusum da mahv ve berbat olsun.”

IV²⁴

Naşid: “Mariciğim, senin namusun bence pek mukaddestir. Şimdiye kadar iki sevgili kardeş gibi yaşamadık mı; pederin beni görecektir olsa namusuna zerre kadar helal getirmediğimi anlamayacak mı? Ah, ben sana ruhumun bütün kuvvetiyle merbutum...”

Mari: “Ah Yarab, çıldıracağım! Git Naşid. Görüyorsun ki köpekler yaklaştı. Seni paralarlar, seni yanımda görmelerini istemem. Git diyorum. Kaç, namusuna dehalet ediyorum, namusumu kurtar.”

Naşid: “Öyle mi, işte gidiyorum Mariciğim. Sen müsterih ol fakat yarın gece yine gelmek şartıyla. Adieu, işte gidiyorum.”

Delikanlı, genç kızın elini sıkıp giryan giryan ayrıldı, gitti. Bu esnada köpekler gelmiş, yetmişmiş olduklarından kimisi Naşid’in arkasından koştı. Kimisi de Mari’ye hücum eti. Fakat Mari’ye hücum edenler kendi hanımlarını tanıdıklarından Naşid’in arkasından koşuşan köpeklere katıldılar, Mari de köpeklerle beraber koşuyordu. Naşid Bey hayvana binerken köpekler etrafını sardı. Mari köpekleri teskin etmek için isimleriyle çağırıyor, onları Naşid’e iras-ı zarar etmemeleri için zapta uğraşıyordu. Köpekler Mari’nin sedasından Naşid’e hücum etmiyorlarsa da avaveleriyle kıyametler koparıyor ve bu sorunla oraya bir yabancı girdiğini ilan ediyorlardı. Bir de bu aralık uzaktan “Jup Jup Jup! Yakala, geliyorum, yetiştim,” diye kalın bir seda işitildi. Mari telaşla “Biraderimdir, geliyor kaç,” diyebilirdi. Meşkûr yaydan ok fırlar gibi öyle bir fırlayış fırladı ki Mari yalnız Naşid’in “Allahaismarladık Mari,” dediğini işitebildi. Dil-hıraş bir sayha attıktan sonra karların üzerine düştü, bayıldı. Mari’nin sayhasını işiten biraderiydi. Zaten pek uzaklarda olmadığından geldi, yetişti. O nazik vücudu bir ton gibi kaldırıp kollarının üzerine aldı. Bu namusperver adam, hemşirenin bayıldığına ehemmiyet vermedi, yalnız “Ah o çapkını yakalayamadım,” diye teessüfler ediyordu. Naşid Bey, konağa bir geliş geldi ki biçare Meşkûr’un ayakları diz kapaklarına kadar donmuştu. Dönme dolap vasıtasıyla içeri girdi, odasına çıktı, soyundu, elbisesini kaldırmaya vakit bulamadan karyolasına devrildi. Odada ocak kıvılcımlar saçarak cayır cayır yanmaktaydı. Bu hamam gibi sıcak odada fanila battaniyeler, yorganlar altında tir tir titriyordu. Sabahleyin dadısı beyin daha uyanmamasından endişe ederek kapıyı açıp içeri girdi. Naşid Bey dalgın yatıyor idi.²⁵ Dadısı seslendi, haykırdı, eliyle sarstı. Beyde gayr-i muntazam nefesten başka hiçbir şey işitilmiyordu. Büyük beyle hanıma koştı, birkaç hekim birden geldi, konsoltolar oldu. Humma-ı tifoydu; müthiş hastalık... Neden oldu, bilen var mı, yok... O kadar soğuk olmuş ki bey maazallah incimad ediyormuş. Sebebini de bilen yok, bir de bu aralık büyük bey, hekimlerle selamlığa çıkıp da kâhyanın “Efendim, Meşkûr ölüyor, bir hekim de ona getiresiniz,” demez mi.

“Meşkûr’a ne olmuş?”

Kâhya: “Bilmeyiz efendim...”

²⁴ IV. bölüm başlamasına rağmen bu bölüm tefrikada yanlışlıkla II olarak numaralandırılmış. (h.n.)

²⁵ HMG’de “baygındı ” şeklinde yazılmış. (h.n.)

Bey, “Nasıl bilmezsiniz oğlum, içeride birdenbire hastalanıyor, Meşkûr selamlıkta ölmeye yüz tutar da sizin bilmemeniz olur mu? Bu olanlar her neyse söylemeli yoksa hepinizi kovarım...” deyince kâhyada hoşabın yağı kesildi²⁶ ve “Mademki emir ediyorsunuz,” diye Ahmet Ağa, Naşid Bey'in yedi sekiz aydan beri devam ettiği gece seyahatlerini bir bir anlattı. Hele o dolap meselesine bey o kadar şaşıtı ve kendi kendine şeyler mırıldandı. Ertesi günü Mari'nin babasına kızını oğlana vermesini mütezammin bir haber gönderdi. Fakat gelen cevapta “Kızım dünkü gün Lloyd Kumpanyası'na²⁷ mensup bir vapurla seyahate çıkmıştır,” fıkrası yazılıydı.

Naşid Bey bu kadar dikkat ve ihtimam olunduğu halde tam yirmi yedinci günü biraz gözlerini açabildi. İlk sözü de pederinin yüzüne bakarak “Mari,” olmuştur.

Pederi: “Mari elimizde demektir. Hele sen kemalen şifayab ol bakalım.”

Zavallı peder, oğlanı çocuk oylar gibi aldatıyordu. Aradan iki sene mürûr etti, artık Naşid Bey, Mari'den kat'-ı ümit eylemişti. Mari seyahate gittikten sonra ailesi de çekilmiş, gitmiş, nam ve nişaneleri kaybolmuştu. Naşid'in pederi bir tanecik oğlunun mürüvvetini görmek istiyor fakat inatçı çocuk bir türlü razı olmuyor. Hanımefendi, oğlunun imdadına yetmişti. “Ben oğluma istediği gibi bir cariyeye alırım,” dedi ve o günden itibaren cariyeler gelmeye başladı. Çocuk hiçbirinin yüzüne bile bakmadı.

Büyük Bey, “Mari'ye müşabeheti olan bir kız bulursak kalbine defin etmiş olduğu hayali ihya etmek için belki kabul eder,” dedi. Büyük Bey, Mari'yi tanırdığından familyasıyla gizlice istişare etti. Bir gün bir vapura rakibe Dersaadet'e müteveccihen hareket etti. Naşid Bey, babasının Dersaadet'e ne için gittiğinden haberdar olamadı. Aradan yirmi gün kadar bir zaman mürur etmişti ki Büyük Bey de gelini olacak cariyeye vürüt etti. Cariye, Naşid Bey'in hizmetine tayin olundu. Bey evvela o kızın yüzüne bakmamıştı. Fakat sonralar mesela kaşında gözünde nasiyesinin Mari'ye müşabehet-i tammesini görünce nazar-ı dikkati açıldı, kızda terbiye ve nezaket tecemmû etmişti. Kıza baktıkça iki seneden beri matemini tuttuğu sevgilisini karşısında tecessüm etmiş zannetti. Yüreğinden doğru kabarıp gelen bir hıçkırığı güç zapt edebildi. Ah ne yapsın, iki seneden beri nam ve nişanı kaybolan, ne olduğu belli olmayan Mari'yi seviyordu. Senelerden beri ve kalbine yer etmiş kalmış olan o muhabbeti söküp atmak elinden gelmiyor, yerini gasp etmeye çalışsan şu ayakta duran kıza buğz ve adavet ediyordu. Aylar mürur ettikçe delikanlı Peyker'siz duramamaya başladı. Halbuki Peyker'i değil, Mari'ye olan müşabehetini seviyordu. Aylarca kalbiyle ettiği mücadelenin neticesini söylemek için bir gün dadısını çağırdı. Artık kalbine hüküm etmiş, onu üzmüş olan Mari'nin muhabbetini kalbinin en derin köşelerine saklamıştı. “Dadı, bey babama söyleyiniz Peyker'i bana akdetsin,” dedi. Zaten peder ve valide buna bu meserretli habere intizar ediyorlardı. Derhal o gün akd icra olundu.

²⁶ “Söylenecik söz, verilecek karşılık veya yapılacak bir şey kalmayacak bir duruma düşmek, yüzünde hoşnutsuzluk belirlemek, ortaya çıkan olumsuz durumdan üzüntü duymak” anlamına gelmektedir.

²⁷ Avusturya'ya ait olan, 1832'de Trieste'de kurulan, Avrupa ile Osmanlı İmparatorluğu arasında sefer yapan, Lloyd Tristino Kumpanyası olarak da bilinen; *Araba Sevdası*, *Sergüzeşt* gibi romanlarda da ismi geçen kumpanya. (h.n.)

The Voice of a Pragmatic Moralist

Bahtiyar oldu mu... Evet beş altı sene sonra iki tane minimini yavrulara malik olup sadakatli bir zevç, muhabbetli bir peder oldu. Zaten büyük peder ve validenin tek arzuları hafid ve hafidelerini okşamaktı. İşte bunlar da bu arzularına muvaffak oldular.

Mari'ye ne oldu? Kim bilir belki o da böyle mesut bir aile teşkil etmiş ve bahtiyar olmuştur.

The Brokenhearted

Writer: P. Fahriye

After appearing as a serial novel in *Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete* (Newspaper for Ladies) it also has been published in book form.

Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete Publishing House, 1317, Istanbul

It was ordered to be collected and destroyed in 1318.

I

“Come on, jump. A little bit more effort. Make me proud. To the left...a small ditch. Let's cross it safely. We need to speed up and jump over it. Come on, jump... Bravo, my Baba Meşkûr.”

These words were uttered by a nineteen or twenty-year-old, handsome young man who was riding a youthful, stalwart Arabian horse. Outside, a strong, north-easterly wind was blowing hard, but it could not penetrate into the fur coat of the young man. The snow, morphing into a storm in the hands of ferocious winds, was falling on the earth. The wide plains, clad in pure white, now looked sacred. The rider, barely able to distinguish the big dark shadow on the left side of the plains said “You have arrived Baba Meşkûr. Now, you and I can both take a quick break...come on, my dear friend” and stroked the animal's mane. The animal, as if he understood his owner's words, started to go faster. Meşkûr was now flying, as if he were a bird. Fifteen minutes later, they approached that big, dark shadow. This was a forest. The animal trotted on but right when he was about to enter the forest, he reared up. Astonished, the rider encouraged the animal, and said “Did you get startled, dear...have you forgotten the path you have taken every night, for the last six, seven months? Come on, friend, very little left. Come on, jump. Don't be scared...”. But the animal was startled by the scary sounds of the forest and dreaded going into its depths. No matter how hard the rider tried, it didn't work. Despite the heavy storm, big drops of sweat were running down his cheeks. All of a sudden, he turned the animal's head towards the forest, as if he remembered something. When the animal received his command to turn back, it sprinted but the poor animal's happiness quickly left its place to dismay because after a while, the rider once again turned the animal's head towards the forest. He pressed his spurs on the animal's belly and released the animal at full speed. Poor Meşkûr, not having experienced such torment before, had gotten extremely overworked. As the bit pushed further, it started foaming and bleeding in the mouth.

The rider continued to push the animal further “Faster, Meşkûr, faster...we shall cross this forest with the speed of lightening. Earlier we got a bit cross but that's alright” he said, trying to encourage him. This time, Meşkûr obeyed his master. He dived right into the heart of the forest. Though a thick darkness had veiled the depths of the forest, the animal could easily find his way around as he had been traveling there every night for six, seven months. In some places, the tree

branches were so thick that they almost touched the rider's face. Heaps of snow sitting on top of the trees suddenly broke free and fell to the earth. The deep cries of the jackals and the sound of the rustling trees in the storm horrified the young man and yet a certain desire in his heart wiped away his fears.

Could this forest ever stand in the way of a young man who could fly over mountains, hills, ditches like a desert bird? After a while, the forest no longer looked as thick and a little later, they safely got out of this dark forest. One could see here and there cottages covered with snow. The rider eased the reins to slow down the animal. Though the heavens were veiled with clouds, the moonlight spread its radiance to the universe whenever they tore away from each other.

The rider's horse trotted past the ghost-like cottages. All of a sudden, he stopped his horse before a little forest of pine and willow trees and jumped down. After tying Meşkûr to a tree, he delved into the forest and disappeared. After walking for a while, he got to an open space. There stood a big, white mansion. Fearing they would see him from their windows, the young man stepped back and hid behind the trees. He reached for his cigarette case and took out a cigarette. Using a couple of the match sticks he struggled to light his cigarette and then fixated his eyes on the door of the mansion. In less than two minutes someone wearing a black coat and a black head covering cautiously opened the door of the mansion, slowly walked out the door, went down the stairs, and walked towards the tree behind which the young man was hiding. The young man took a few steps and greeted the person coming towards him. This person was a young girl around seventeen or eighteen. She offered her tiny hands to the young man and said:

“What sacrifice! Who would travel here all the way from the city in weather like this?”

The young man said, “My dear, don't I do this every night?”

The girl (a bit upset) said "Are you comparing this very night to every other night? Don't you see how cold it is tonight. The snow falls so heavily that the rivers will soon freeze. Ah, Naşid, Naşid, I had begged you last night, made you swear on your love for me that you wouldn't ride here tonight. Why are you here? Oh dear, are you even used to these hardships, this kind of cold weather? You could have been sleeping peacefully in your warm bedroom now. Didn't you give me your word? Wasn't that your promise? What if, God forbid, you get sick...think of me Naşid, what would happen to me, think about it for once. Already when you don't visit me for a night, I find myself wandering around like a lost soul until dawn. What if you were sick; how would I even know about it? How will I know what happened to you? If you don't care about yourself then have mercy on me. Remember that my life depends on your life. At least try to protect yourself for my sake.”

The girl was uttering this deeply felt complaint, this heartfelt cry in a sad, shaky, and raspy voice.

Naşid Bey: “Mari, dear Mari! How can I not see you for forty-eight hours? Don't you know that not being able to see you and death are the same thing for me. Please have mercy and at least do not stop me from seeing you for an hour every night!”

Mari (nodding): “Your life is sacred to me, my *bey*... Ah, if only you knew what happened... Yes, yes, you must know. Last night, in the snow, the watchmen noticed your footprints and told my father about it. My father ordered that all trespassers on his property be caught and put in prison, and if they attempt to escape, that the dogs be sent after them. Ah, you know, if such a thing ever happens to you, we are both ruined as it would mean that you cannot see me anymore. My father is a very conservative eighty-year-old man. He would make my life miserable.”

Naşid Bey (suddenly): Would you run away with me right this minute?

Mari (with fear): “Run away! Run away from my father and mother... Ah, that cannot happen, not right now. That is the last resort. Yes, I would sacrifice myself for you and run away but not now...”

Right at that moment, Mari heard the cracking of the branches and grabbed Naşid’s hand, and begged him, “We are being watched. Go, run away, for the love of Allah...” she said.

Naşid: “Why would I run away... didn't I make it clear to you that not seeing you and death are the same thing to me. No, no, I will stay here. I am not going anywhere. They can catch me, kill me, do whatever they want... I will not leave you.”

Mari (panting as she spoke): “Ah, ah Naşid, our love is impossible. Don't stay here, not all is lost. Go now, come back tomorrow night and you'll find me here, yes. For Allah's sake, go now, go, please, don't stay here.”

Naşid Bey: “Alright then, I am leaving you in the hands of Allah, Mari. I am leaving. May Allah protect you.”

Mari: “No, no you are not leaving, you cannot leave... Ah, I am scared, scared that this may be the last time we see each other. Ah, that scares me (suddenly gathering her courage) but why am I talking like a fool... Go, my *bey*, go. May Allah give you health. Come back tomorrow night and you shall find me waiting for you here...”

Naşid held the girl's hand. Unsure of what to say to her, the only words that came out of his lips were “I am leaving, my dear Mari”. Then with a heavy heart, he walked towards Meşkûr. He jumped on the saddle and rode the animal in the direction of the snow-covered houses. A sharp pain pierced his bosom, he just wanted to weep. When the young man entered the town, the clocks were striking eight. As the last strike sent up tremors in the air, Naşid Bey was in front of the *selamlık*²⁸ door of the mansion. The door opened slowly, before he even touched the door knob. The *bey* went inside and was greeted by the stableman. The *kahya*²⁹ of the *harem* was also waiting for the *bey*. When he saw how terrible the *bey* looked, how his face turned blue from the cold, he said “My *bey*, you are making a mistake. Wouldn't it be better if you at least give up the nightly

²⁸ The section of the house reserved for men.

²⁹ Butler.

visits and take them up again in the spring? Oh dear, look, Meşkûr is shaking badly. Your father's dear animal. God forbid if anything happens to this animal, what would we say to your father?

Naşid Bey (with a terrifying look): “You cannot seriously be concerned about the animal...Here I am burning in hellish fires...come now, turn the cabinet, I will come in...”

The *kahya* walked behind the *bey*. He turned the door of the cabinet in between the *harem* and the *selamlık* and said “come in my *bey*.”

After Naşid Bey took off his fur coat, he squeezed himself into the lower part of the big cabinet without any difficulty, and the *kahya* turned the face of the cabinet towards the *harem*. The *bey* jumped down from the cabinet and went upstairs, shivering head to toe. He entered his room, confused, mentally and physically exhausted, and still shivering. Fortunately, he had stacked the stove with wood before he took off for his nightly visit, so now the room was as warm as a *hamam*.³⁰ He took off his clothes and collapsed on his bed. At that moment, tears started springing from his eyes, he sobbed and sobbed, and sobbed, choking on his own tears. Then he passed out and remained still.

Outside, the storm went on. The snow was falling peacefully, and it was only the howls and the restless barks of the dogs that disturbed the silence.

II³¹

Naşid Bey's father is a well-known and respectable person in town. He is a nobleman who has traveled to far corners of the world. When it comes to the lady of the house, she had dedicated herself to keeping her one and only son on the right path. She would even guard the middle doors of the mansion at night, lock the doors with her own hands, and hide the keys in her room. In the morning, she would get up early, open the doors, and let all the *bey* pass through the doors. Until he turned nineteen, the boy did not really understand why his mother took all these precautions.

One night, he attended a ball in a wealthy merchant's house, and there he was introduced to a girl from the European nobility. That night, Naşid Bey, who had already started acting naughty here and there, fell in love with the kind demeanor and the beauty of that girl. A few nights later, they met again in another ball and from then on, these fortuitous meetings became more frequent. When the girl informed the boy that she was a guest in town and they would be returning to their own house in a couple of days, Naşid Bey got extremely upset. Thankfully, the girl came to his rescue and told him where she lived. He thought of a meeting place and swore that on the second night, at six o'clock sharp, he would be there. They bid farewell to each other that day, and he returned home feeling elated. Yes, he had returned home but only to remember that the middle doors were locked at night and the keys were with his mother. He didn't really know what to do. Poor boy, what could he do? He deliberated on it for twenty-four hours. The hour of their meeting

³⁰ Turkish bath.

³¹ This is where the second part of the story begins in the serialized version of *Dilfikâr*. In the book version, the story opens with Part I, but no subsequent numbering exists in the text.

was drawing near, and he didn't really have a plan. Alas, desire, and longing on one hand, sorrow on the other made the young man grow more desperate. He suddenly wanted to quit this indecent act, this hopeless love affair before it started. If he didn't go to her tonight, it would all be over. Right when he was about to make up his mind, he remembered his promise. Should a brave and noble young man be embarrassed in front of a girl? No, no, he had to go no matter what. But how? At that moment, he noticed the *ayvaz*³² walking towards him with the food tray on his head. The *ayvaz* put down the food tray in front of the revolving cabinet. Then the *kethüda* of the harem opened the door of the cabinet and examined the pans that the *ayvaz* had placed there. After placing all the pans in the cabinet, he stepped back with the empty food tray on his head. After the *kahya* of the *harem* told the *cariye*³³ to “get the food,” he shut the door and retreated to his room. Suddenly, there appeared a sparkle of hope in Naşid Bey's eyes. He quietly walked towards the *kahya* and asked at once.

Naşid: “Ahmet Ağa, could someone my size fit in that revolving cabinet and still come out on the other side?”

Ahmet Ağa: “No doubt my *bey*. The revolving cabinet is quite big, even two people could fit in... would you like to give it a try?”

Naşid: “Yes. Starting tonight, wait for me by the cabinet every day at five and then rotate it.”

Ahmet Ağa: “That part is easy, but the cabinet is a bit unclean...”

Naşid: “Who cares. All I care about is to pass to this side at five o'clock and be free. Meşkûr has to be ready at the same time. You understand it, right?”

Ahmet Ağa: “My *bey*, what to do if your father's precious animal gets sick or something. Can't we prepare another animal for you?”

Naşid: “That's not your problem! If my father hears about it, I am the one to answer him, aren't I?”

Ahmet Ağa: “Yes, sir. We shall follow your orders.”

Naşid: One more thing. If this thing ever gets out, you and I will have a fall out.

Ahmet Ağa: You can trust me, my *bey*.

Things went as they had planned. Naşid Bey got into the revolving cabinet enthusiastically. The *kahya* turned the *bey* towards the *selamlık*. The horse was ready to go and so, the *bey* led the horse by its rope and left the mansion. It was late Spring; there was a soft breeze in the air and the sky was filled with a thousand stars. Naşid Bey got on the horse and left the town within five minutes. He started riding his horse over the wide plains clad in green. After fifteen minutes, he arrived in the forest. That soft breeze, shaking the leaves of big trees in the forest was spreading

³² Servant who is typically responsible for house and kitchen work in Ottoman times.

³³ Female slave.

the fragrance of the soul caressing springtime everywhere. All of this drove the already head over heels in love young man, crazy. Between the girl's house and town was one hour with the horse.

Naşid Bey stopped by the house in front of the forest, their designated meeting place. Right when he was trying to decide which way to go, the girl came out of the forest, dressed in white from head to toe. When Naşid Bey saw the girl, he jumped down from his horse and ran to his beloved. After tying the animal to the tree, the two lovers disappeared into the depths of the forest. From that night on, every night, he and Mari would meet in that forest and talk about their love for each other. They would share with one another their heart's troubles. These lovers who were united innocently, knew, however that there was no hope for marriage. Winter arrived. One night, Mari was holding Naşid Bey's arm in an extremely chaste and virtuous manner while they were taking a walk among the trees. The moon was shining on these two ill-fated lovers, its beams penetrating through the branches. Suddenly, Naşid said "Ah, Mari, you are crying". It was true, tears of sorrow were streaming from the young girl's beautiful eyes. When he saw the tears shining like diamonds under the reflection of the snow, Naşid Bey suddenly stopped.

Mari said "Yes, I am crying because believe me, our time of separation is drawing near."

Poor child dropped his head in extreme despair. He couldn't even think of a response.

The girl was worried about the cold weather and was thinking that if Naşid Bey were to continue these nightly visits, he could get sick. And yet, she could not bear the pain of not seeing him. Quite some time passed and then came the storms, the rain, and the cold weather. Despite Mari's opposition, nightly meetings continued as before. One day, it started snowing. Ah, if only it hadn't snowed. It unmasked the lovers' plan. The watchmen noticed Mari and Naşid Bey's footprints on the snow and informed Mari's father. We had already mentioned above during Mari and Naşid Bey's conversation what kind of orders the father had given the watchmen and mentioned how the poor young man had returned home that night and fallen sick out of his extreme despair!

III³⁴

The next morning, he opened his eyes to a gloomy winter morning. He had a glassy stare as he got up from his bed and sipped his milk. That day, he stayed in his room until the evening. He lied down on a long chair, across from the fire, like a corpse, dispirited and unable to think. That day, not even a faint sigh left his lips. At night, he had the appetite to finish up the soup his nanny had brought him. He lit a cigarette and like he did during the day, fell into a gloomy silence.

The clock stroke five. After its final strike, Naşid Bey suddenly got up. Everyone had already retreated to their sleeping chambers, and a woeful silence, caused by the bleak winter storm, had descended into the heart of the mansion. The child dressed up. His fur coat was in the *selamlık*. He put on his redingote and put off the candle. He locked his room quietly and shaking like a leaf,

³⁴ This is the beginning of the third episode. However, it is still given the number 2 in the serialized version.

went down to the *avlu*.³⁵ After getting into the revolving cabinet,³⁶ he ordered Ahmet Ağa, who was waiting on the other side, to rotate the cabinet. The cabinet was rotated only a little.

Naşid snapped, "What are you waiting for!" Ahmet Ağa pushed the cabinet again and said "The cabinet doesn't turn, my *bey*. Perhaps something is stuck. The revolving cabinet was indeed stuck. Ahmet Ağa called the stableman for help. The two of them pushed from the outside and İzzet Bey pushed from the inside, but the cabinet was not moving at all.

Naşid (angry): "What will happen now, you sluggish brats, the clock is ticking, it's almost six. You can't do anything right..."

Ahmet Ağa: "Perhaps the skirt of your redingote is stuck because of the way you are sitting in there. Perhaps you can check..."

As he checked the skirt of his redingote, Naşid Bey indeed noticed that the tip of the skirt was stuck. When Ahmet Bey told him to take off his redingote Naşid Bey first struggled but then managed to do it. Once the redingote came off, the cabinet span forcefully. Even though Naşid Bey immediately jumped off from the cabinet and tried to pull the redingote, he couldn't. The only thing he could wear was his fur coat. Ahmet Ağa said "You will get cold my *bey*" but he didn't pay attention to him, jumped on Meşkûr, bid a quick adieu, and left. The snow was falling hard, and the weather was so cold that the young man started to think that he and Meşkûr would freeze on the mountains before making it to his beloved's side. But he rode on. He overcame a thousand obstacles on this journey; many a time he almost got buried in the snow, but finally he made it to the meeting point. He tied his horse to a tree and went into the forest to look for Mari. The girl was waiting for him in their usual meeting place. Before he could reach for Mari's hand, he heard the loud barks and the growls of the dogs.

Mari: "Ah, my *bey*, now we are really caught, go, go, and forget about me. I can bring nothing but bad luck to you. I will be the cause of your death. Ah, Naşid, you were my happiness, my life. Go, I say, run away, away. Look at you, you are freezing. Naşid, as long as you survive, I will learn to live without you. What matters is that you don't die but live on. Hearing the barks of the dogs getting closer, Mari said, "Naşid, for the love of God, I say, don't stay here, go, and never come back here again."

Naşid, holding the girl's hand like a mad man said, "what are you saying, that I should go and break up with you and never see you again...no, I say, no, it's impossible. There is no way, I don't want to..."

³⁵ Courtyard in Islamic architecture.

³⁶ Dönme dolap: revolving door used to transfer food from the harem to the selamlık sections in Ottoman mansions, palaces, or similar big structures. *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* 5 (İstanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 1993), 515.

Mari (almost begging him) said, “No, wait, don't go. Let them arrest you and see who you are, yes, let my honor, which is more precious than you, be ruined...”

IV³⁷

Naşid: “My dear Mari, your honor is sacred to me. Haven't we lived like two dear siblings until now. If your father sees me, wouldn't he know that I never stained your honor. Ah, I am yours with my entire soul.”

Mari: “Oh, God, I will lose my mind. Go, Naşid. You see, the dogs are really close by. They will tear you up into pieces. I don't want them to see you with me here. Please, go. I trust your honor to save mine...”

Naşid: “Don't worry, my dear Mari, I will go but only to come back again tomorrow night. Adieu. here I go...”

The young man grabbed the girl's hand as tears were streaming down his cheeks and departed. In this instant, the dogs had arrived at the scene. Some followed Naşid and some attacked Mari. Those who attacked Mari recognized their lady and then they, too, joined the pack running after Naşid. Mari was now running along with the dogs. The dogs finally surrounded Naşid Bey as he was getting on his horse. Mari was calling the dogs with their names, trying to calm them down so that they would not harm Naşid. Even though the dogs were not attacking Naşid because of Mari's voice, they were causing a ruckus with their barks, announcing that there was a trespasser. In the meantime, a deep voice was heard. He was saying, "Jup, jup, jup, catch him, I'll be right there."

Mari could barely say "It is my brother, run away." Meşkûr sprinted like an arrow from a bow, and all Mari could hear Naşid say was "Goodbye, Mari." After a heart-breaking cry, she fell on the snow and fainted. It was her brother who heard Mari's cry. Because he wasn't that far, he came to her rescue right away. He lifted up that delicate body which felt like a ton in his arms. This honorable man did not care too much about his sister fainting, but he was complaining about how he couldn't catch the Casanova.

When Naşid Bey came home, poor Meşkûr's legs were frozen up to his knees. He climbed into the revolving cabinet and then went straight to his room. He took off his clothes but before he could put them away, he collapsed on the bed. The fire in the stove was crackling. Though the room was as warm as a *hamam*, he was shivering under the wool blankets and sheets. In the morning, when the *bey* did not wake up on time, his nanny got worried and went into his room. Naşid Bey was lying unconscious. The nanny called out his name, cried out, shook him by the shoulders but except for the irregular breathing, there was not a sound coming from him. She ran to the big *bey* and *hanım*. A couple of physicians came to the house for consultation. Their diagnosis was typhoid fever. Does anyone know what caused it? No. He was so cold that heaven forbid he almost froze to death. And nobody knows why. In the meantime, the big *bey* went out to

³⁷ The fourth and final part of the serialized version starts here.

the *selamlık* with the physicians. While they were out there, the *kahya* came over and said, sir, Meşkûr is dying, can't you bring a doctor for him as well?

“What happened to Meşkûr?”

The *kahya* said, "We don't know, sir..."

Bey: “How could you not know? All of a sudden, my son gets sick in the house, Meşkûr is about to die in the *selamlık*, and you claim to not know anything. You need to tell me the truth or I'll fire you all...When he uttered these words, the *kahya* realized that he had reached the end of the road. He obeyed the *bey's* orders and told him all about the nightly adventures of Naşid Bey for the last seven or eight months. The *bey* was particularly taken aback by the revolving cabinet trick. He mumbled something to himself. The next day, he sent a letter to the girl's father asking him to give his daughter's hand to his son in marriage. However, in the father's letter there was a section that said "My daughter left with a Llyod Company³⁸ boat yesterday.

Even with so much care and attention, it was only after twenty-seven days that Naşid Bey opened his eyes. His first words as he looked at his father were "Mari".

His father said "We have Mari. Why don't you fully recover first."

The poor father deceived his son like he would a small boy.

Two years had passed, and Naşid Bey had lost all hope about Mari. After Mari left with the boat, her family moved away as well. There was no trace left of them. Naşid Bey's father wanted to see his son get married, but the child refused to agree to it. The mother came to her son's rescue. I'll find my son a *cariye* of his liking she said, and after that, many a *cariye* started coming to the house. The child showed no interest; didn't even look at their face. The *bey* said: "If we can find a *cariye* who looks like Mari perhaps he will revive the treasure he buried in his heart and he will accept her. The *bey* knew Mari so he secretly communicated with her family and one day he took the boat to *Dersaadet*.³⁹ Naşid Bey never learned as to why his father went to *Dersaadet*. Twenty days or so had passed when the *bey* came back with the bride-to-be *cariye*. The *cariye* was given to Naşid Bey's service. At first, the *bey* didn't show any interest in her but later, when, for instance, he noticed how her eyes resembled Mari, he started to pay attention. The girl had nothing but good manners and kindness. When he looked at the girl closely, he thought that the lover he had been grieving for in the last two years was in front of him. He could barely contain the cry that swelled up in his heart. He couldn't help it. He loved Mari, who had disappeared from the face of the earth. He just couldn't get rid of the love that had occupied his heart for years. He was being hostile to this other girl who was trying to replace Mari. As months went by, he realized that he couldn't live without Peyker. In reality, it wasn't her that he loved but her resemblance to Mari. One day, he

³⁸ A nineteenth-century Austrian Company that operated ships between ports around the Mediterranean, including Istanbul.

³⁹ Another name for Istanbul.

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called his nanny to his room to tell her the outcome of his long emotional struggle. He had now buried Mari's love, which had caused so much suffering for him, to the deepest corners of his heart.

He asked his nanny to tell his father to have Peyker join him in matrimony. The mother and father were already waiting for this happy news. The marriage took place right away, on that day...

Did he end up being happy? Yes, after five or six years, he had two small children, a loyal wife, and he himself became a loving father. The grandfather and mother's only wish was to see their grandchildren anyway, and they got their wish.

What happened to Mari? Who knows, maybe she, too, ended up having such a joyful family, and found happiness.