

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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ESKİ AHBAP / THE OLD FRIEND (1917)

RESAT NURI GUNTEKIN (1889 – 1956)

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Apropos

The first story written by Resat Nuri Guntekin, who started his literary life with his curiosity and interest in theater, titled *Eski Ahabap* (Old Friend) was published in Diken Magazine on September 8, 1917. In the following years, this story was published by Inkilap and Aka Publishing House together with the story *Boyunduruk* (The Headlock) and the novel *Harabelerin Cicegi* (The Flower of the Ruins). The story *Boyunduruk* was later re-published with minor changes under the title *Madalyonun Ters Tarafi* (The Reverse of the Medal).

THE OLD FRIEND

People

<i>Mr. Hilmi</i>	He is the protagonist and also the narrator of the narrative. He is a wealthy man who lost his wife.
<i>Tin Mahir</i>	He is an urban swindler who graduated from the Faculty of Law. He is Hilmi's friend from the faculty.
<i>Mariz</i>	She is the woman wearing green who earns her living as a belly dancer in Istanbul.
<i>Mrs. Sevkiye</i>	She is the daughter of a pasha who is asked to marry Mr. Hilmi by her uncle, a cannery manufacturer.
<i>Mr. Hadji Ismet</i>	He is Mrs. Sevkiye's uncle who was a cannery manufacturer.
<i>Acorn Merchant</i>	The rich man who wants to marry Sevkiye.

The names of other figurative characters in the narrative are as follows: Mr. Hilmi's late wife, Mr. Hilmi's children, Two men at Haydarpasa Train Station, Doctor etc.

Elaborative Storyline

Mr. Hilmi lost his wife Mr. Hilmi, who is thought to be in his forties despite being in his fifties, lost his wife a while ago. He mentions that the pain of losing a wife psychologically devastates everyone, regardless of age. Being young or old does not matter at all. Although he thinks about remarrying like most people who have lost their wives, he thinks that marrying someone older than himself is an unnecessary effort and marrying someone younger than himself would be a big mistake. Learning from the experiences of those around him who have married for second time, he decides not to get married.

Hilmi goes Istanbul and meets Mahir Two years after his wife's illness, Mr. Hilmi decides to leave his farm in Bursa for a short time to go to Istanbul for a change of air. He is aware that his children are afraid that he will spend all his savings there and lose them. Mahir, who can imitate the sounds of some vehicles and the sound of water flowing through a can, is nicknamed "Tin". Mahir offers his condolences to Hilmi for his loss. Hilmi has heard that Mahir was involved in some illegal activities during his time as district governor and earned large sums of money. Wanting to offer Hilmi a job, Mahir takes him out.

Mahir wants to make a business partnership with Hilmi and marry him off After wandering around Taksim and having dinner in a restaurant at the seaside, Hilmi sees an advertisement on the wall that catches his attention. The advertisement states the time and place where a beautiful woman will dance in the evening. Hilmi knows that bandits force the girls they kidnapped to mountains to dance, but sees that city dwellers make them do the same for money. Hilmi wants to watch the belly dancer's show. In the evening, they go to a place where belly dancers dance. Mahir wants to become a partner with Hilmi and start a new business. But Hilmi is interested in a woman named Mariz, sitting next to him. But, remembering his deceased wife under the influence of alcohol, Hilmi falls ill. Realizing his friend's problem, Mahir tells him that he should remarry and that he knows a suitable candidate for him.

The marriage process of Hilmi and Sevkiye The daughter of the deceased pasha lives with her mother and with her merchant uncle. Mahir becomes an intermediary for Mrs. Sevkiye to marry Mr. Hilmi. Although he is not in favor of marrying a girl much younger than himself, Mahir tells Hilmi that the farm atmosphere in Kesisdagi keeps him young. Mr. Hilmi meets Mrs. Sevkiye and sees that she is a very Western and modern personality. Although he is an open-minded person, Hilmi, who is attached to his traditions, is not in favor of marrying Mrs. Sevkiye. But during an invitation Sevkiye asks Mahir about Mr. Hilmi. Mahir asks Sevkiye if she would like to marry Hilmi. Sevkiye tells that she can marry Hilmi if he wants. Mr. Hilmi, whose prejudices are broken and softened by the attention shown to him, starts to look favorably on the subject of marrying Sevkiye.

The factory sales process turning into an obstacle to marriage Finally, an agreement is reached between the two to marry and one day there is a hard knock on Mr. Hilmi's door. Mahir tells Hilmi in anger and sadness that he cannot marry Sevkiye. Because an acorn merchant, who was a suitor to marry Sevkiye, bought the factory of Sevkiye's uncle, who was a canning factory owner, for ten thousand liras, but when he learned that Sevkiye had been given to someone else he became angry and reneged on his deal. Therefore, Sevkiye's uncle wanted Hilmi to be informed that the marriage could not take place. Hilmi, who is so used to the idea of marrying Sevkiye, tells Mahir not to worry and that he has decided to buy the factory. Mr. Hilmi, who sees the acorn merchant as his rival and is jealous of Sevkiye, solves the problem by spending some of his fortune. At the same time, he can no longer swallow his pride of manhood to lose Sevkiye.

Mr. Hilmi learning that he was deceived After the wedding ceremony, Mrs. Sevkiye's stagnation starts to make Mr Hilmi think and worry. Hilmi begins to think that Sevkiye regrets being engaged to him. Hilmi gets tired of buying too many things during wedding shopping and Sevkiye eating too much junk food. At one of the places, Hilmi is addressed as if he is Sevkiye's father. But even though Hilmi gets angry, he manages to keep his calm. One day, Hilmi finds a note in his house and learns that Sevkiye has been seeing a young doctor for a long time. Realizing that he has been deceived, Hilmi throws a tantrum and goes to the house in Sisli to impeach. But Hilmi calms down and returns home and decides to break up with Sevkiye. There is a disagreement between Sevkiye's family and Hilmi. The family refuses to pay Hilmi back. However, after Mahir's intervention, Hilmi compensates most of his losses, leaves Sevkiye and returns to Bursa.

Hilmi finds out Mahir's deceit Returning to Istanbul after two years, Hilmi hears two men at the Haydarpasa Train Station talking about a fraud in which Mahir was involved and he listens to them. They mention that Mahir received a commission from the sale of the factory and that marriage between Sevkiye and Hilmi was all part of the plan. However, they also say that upon Hilmi discovering the truth, he struggled greatly to reclaim what he had lost and managed to recover most of his losses. Mr Hilmi, who had resented being called a gypsy and a blackmailer, accepted these epithets when he was not told that he was a sucker.

Themes

Dishonesty After graduating from the Faculty of Law, Tin Mahir, who has served in various government positions, has tried to earn easy money and become rich through illegal means. The illegal activities he was involved in during his time as a district governor were heard even in distant sanjaks. When he learns that Mr. Hilmi, whom he knows to be a wealthy man who owns a farm in Bursa, has come to Istanbul, he decides to help a wealthy family who asks for his help by defrauding his old schoolmate. Mahir manages to deceive Mr. Hilmi by using his male weaknesses and loneliness and makes him to buy a cannery, from which he receives a commission. Mrs. Sevkiye, the daughter of

a deceased pasha and the niece of a cannery owner, agrees to a sham marriage with Mr. Hilmi due to financial concerns, even though she loves and is seeing someone else. The pathetic situation of the bourgeois, who has become worthless and reified in the face of capital, property and the commodity he produces, is revealed to the reader through realistic techniques.

Loss The pain experienced by Mr. Hilmi, who has recently lost his wife, is conveyed to the reader through his own words. Mr. Hilmi, who is both the protagonist and the homodiegetic narrator, expresses that the greatest pain a man in his fifties can experience is the loss of his wife. Mr. Hilmi, who is also spiritually lost after the loss of his wife, thinks of getting married to alleviate his pain, but he knows that this would be a big mistake. He thinks that marrying someone older than himself would be meaningless and marrying someone younger than himself would be a difficult and tiring affair. Trying to resist the pain caused by his loss, Mr. Hilmi turns into a traumatic character. Especially when he is emotionally vulnerable, his wife comes to his mind and he experiences a deep inner depression. Although he does not think of getting married for the second time, he starts to look favorably on this idea due to some events and the nervous breakdown he experiences.

Introspection We see Mr. Hilmi, who has recently lost his wife, as the homodiegetic narrator in the narrative. Therefore, we see that Mr. Hilmi's inner world is conveyed to the reader through narrative practices such as internal monolog and stream of consciousness. Through the internal monologues of Mr. Hilmi, the protagonist and the narrator, we read first-hand how he feels about the death of his wife, how he looks at a new marriage, how he consents to marry a woman much younger than himself, the anger he feels when he realizes that he has been deceived, and what he thinks when he realizes that man is a creature full of dilemmas and incomprehensibilities. In this literary work of Resat Nuri Güntekin, who especially analyzes human psychology in his literary works, what a man who has lost his wife and is in need of attention thinks, feels and reacts to the abuse of his weakness by a bourgeois friend is revealed.

Character Analysis

Mr. Hilmi (Open/Social/Conscientious/Emotional) Mr. Hilmi, who lost his wife two years before the time of the synchronic narrative, is in his fifties, but he tells those who ask him his age that he is forty. The character, who resides in a farm close to Kesisdagi (Uludag) in Bursa, is a wealthy man and a law graduate. He has two children. Mr. Hilmi, the protagonist and homodiegetic narrator of the narrative, is analyzed and revealed in the light of realistic techniques in terms of his nervous and spiritual depression caused by the loss of his wife. In order to forget the pain of his wife's death and to relax a little, Mr. Hilmi goes to Istanbul and starts staying at the Sahinpasa Hotel, where he meets his friend from Faculty of Law, Tin Mahir. Mahir swindles Hilmi as a result of the agreement he made with Mrs. Sevkiye's family. Receiving attention from a young woman much younger than himself, Mr. Hilmi softens and thinks that he will regain his peace of mind. Through internal monologues and streams of consciousness, Mr. Hilmi's emotions and thoughts are closely observed.

Grieved Mr. Hilmi, who had recently lost his wife, was affected by the painful event: "If anyone asks my age, I say forty, but I'm almost fifty. There is no greater disaster for man of this age than the death of his wife" (R. Güntekin 2000, 5).

Pessimist Even though, he thinks about getting married for a moment, due to his age and the current spirit of the time, he thinks that he will not be able to find someone he desires: "How many good eggs are there in this time? Let's say we come across such a person. Isn't it true that she will be faithful to you because she is religious and has good morals?" (R. Güntekin 2000, 5).

Bewildered When he unexpectedly sees an old schoolmate, he is surprised: "And what do I see when I look closely? Isn't he 'Tin Mahir', one of my old friends from the Faculty of Law?" (R. Güntekin 2000, 7).

Indifferent When he goes to Istanbul, he loses himself under the influence of alcohol: "Right oh... There's life... Why should I spend my mortal life in sighs and wails or smelling the smell of dung on the farm?" I was saying. I was so light that I thought if I stood up, I could walk around in the red and green smoke, hugging and playing with each other in the air" (R. Güntekin 2000, 10).

Traumatized The pain of losing his wife caused him to become a traumatized person: “My stomach turned upside down. I wanted to cry my heart out. The people in the loggia were all surprised. Mahir took me by the arm and led me to a dark and cool stony place. He washed my face with plenty of water” (Güntekin 2000, 12).

Modernist Although he is actually a person who adheres to traditions, he is open to innovations: “why did I like knowing new aspects of the birds and the bees, such as meeting the woman I would marry beforehand? Since I was going to enter into relations with a Westernized family, I wanted to get closer to the wealthy people of Istanbul, both in terms of dress and appearance” (Güntekin 2000, 14).

Proud He sees the acorn merchant who wants to marry Sevkiye as a rival and enters into struggle with him: “ – Are they being stubborn, are they trying to compete with me? I throw down the gauntlet the one who challenges me?” I shouted” (Güntekin 2000, 17).

Victim At the end of the narrative, he realizes that what he has been through is completely fake and that he has been deceived: “Man is a very incomprehensible creature... He even accepts epithets such as blackmailer, gypsy, etc. accordingly. Just so that they don't call him a sucker...” (Güntekin 2000, 23).

THE HEADLOCK

People

<i>Celil Hifzi Araman</i>	The chemistry professor, who is forty-five years old, is the protagonist.
<i>Sadiye Araman</i>	She is Mr. Celil Hifzi's sadistic, hedonistic and narcissistic wife in her forties.
<i>Rifki Araman</i>	He is the nine-year-old primary school student son of Mrs. Sadiye.
<i>Zarif</i>	He is the son of Mrs. Sadiye's uncle. He is manipulator who works in menial jobs.
<i>Mr. Sefa</i>	He is the friend of Mr. Celil Hifzi, who attended the same school and became a lawyer.
<i>Mrs. Hafiz</i>	She is his aunt who raised Celil Hifzi as a religious and traditional person.
<i>Ahmet Nizami</i>	Celil Hifzi's milk sibling who lives in Mudanya. He is a retired major.
<i>Nazik Dudu</i>	She is a friend of Celil Hifzi of Armenian origin who lives in Samatya.

The names of the figurative characters in the narrative are as follows: Dishwashing woman, Retired major, Hadji Melik (Celil Hifzi's never-seen relative), Zulkadir Pasha (Celil Hifzi's never-seen relative), Nasira (Celil Hifzi's never-seen relative), Sister Felek (Celil Hifzi's never-seen relative), Arab bagger, soldier, retired customs director (Mrs. Sadiye's father), neighbor (the one who sends Celil Hifzi to Galatasaray), Mrs. Hanife (the one who delivers Zarif's letters to Sadiye), fishermen, etc.

Elaborative Storyline

Celil Hifzi's preparations for the invitation organized by Mrs. Sadiye Mr. Celil Hifzi, a professor who has reached the age of approximately forty-five, quickly walks home despite his athlete's foot immediately after the end of his lecture at the faculty in order to prepare the food to be served at an invitation organized by his wife. When March came, Celil Hifzi contacted athlete's food and while all his colleagues and fellow doctors were searching for the formula for cancer or eternal life, by smiling he searched for a cure for athlete's foot. Despite all his efforts, he could not find a formula to relieve his discomfort. Although he hires servants to keep his wife Sadiye happy and comfortable, they change every few months because his wife is not satisfied with the servants or because the servants do not want to put up with his grumpiness for a very small amount of money. When there is no maid working in the house, Mr. Celil Hifzi takes care of the kitchen and usually takes care of the housework for six months of the year. This is because Mrs. Sadiye has not done any housework since the day she got married. But despite all these negativities, Mr. Celil Hifzi enjoys cooking very much. Especially when the food is cooking in the pot, he sits and reads any book he wants. He also gets rid of his wife's nagging and grumpiness by cooking. Because Mrs. Sadiye hates the kitchen, even when she wants to fight with her husband, she does it from the stony place outside the kitchen.

Mrs. Sadiye having fun with the guests and Celil Hifzi working in the kitchen While Mrs. Sadiye is visiting her neighbors, Mr. Celil Hifzi prepares dinner and reads books on history, philosophy and literature, which he is interested in despite being a chemist. Celil Hifzi, who usually has a very clam temperament and does not interfere with the order of the house, cannot tolerate his slippers

being worn by others or even being touched by anyone other than himself. Therefore, he always puts his slippers at the bottom of the wardrobe. However, in order to annoy Celil Hifzi and test his patience, Mrs. Sadiye gives the slippers to the visiting guests and beats Rifki with them from time to time. She even kills insects with these slippers. Mr. Celil Hifzi, who has been suffering from chills for a while, starts wearing a skullcap in the kitchen. Since he is ridiculed by the students at school, he gives up wearing it outside. Despite all the negativities, he tries to fulfill all the needs of the house without complaint. Because according to him, working in the laboratory is very similar to working in the kitchen. Celil Hifzi even brags about the coolness of the kitchen, preferring the coolness of the kitchen to the warmth of the laboratory. Mr. Celil Hifzi, who loves to be at home and work, sees that the vegetable seller has left all the necessary ingredients in the pantry, except for the ingredients for lalanga, which is added to the menu at the last minute. Celil Hifzi decides to solve this problem by sending Rifki to the grocery store. Because Mrs. Sadiye had specifically asked Mr. Celil Hifzi to cook lalanga. Celil Hifzi, who realizes from the pile of dishes in the kitchen that the dishwashing woman has not come home, does not know what to do. As his wife tells him, it is strange that he does not like washing dishes, despite the fact that he studies and experiments on urine and other much more disgusting things. Seeing that the water is also cut off, Celil Hifzi remembers seeing fire trucks and that there is a fire somewhere. He decides to go to the fountain to get water and manages to get there by getting covered in mud and tripping over nettles.

Celil Hifzi sees that Rifki is left out on the street again because of Sadiye Mr. Celil Hifzi fears that there will be some vagrants at the fountain, but his fears are not realized. There is only a private filling a gas can with water and an Arab beggar waiting in line to drink water. The private who fills the gas can with water gives his place to the beggar who wants to drink water in return for a prayer. While the beggar is drinking water, the private mistakes the professor, who is sitting on the fountain wall and wearing a turban-like headdress, for the cook of the mansion he came from, and asks him some questions. Mr. Celil Hifzi, who does not want to be disturbed because of the cloths he is wearing, starts to chat with the soldier without saying that he is the owner of the mansion. Through this conversation, he realizes that although he has read a lot, he does not know enough about agriculture and animal husbandry. While telling a story that takes place in the village to the soldier from Sinop who is on duty at the Major's house, he compares the sound coming from the empty land behind the wall to that of his son Rifki. Mr. Celil Hifzi, who looks behind the wall, gets upset when he sees his son playing with the vagrant children. Disturbed by the fact that Rifki is playing with them and learning dirty things from them, the professor calls him to his side and prepares himself to get angry with him. Even though Mr. Celil Hifzi wants to be angry with Rifki, the child is left on the street because his mother is not at home. He wanted to fill his free time by spending it with the children playing on the street. The professor is inwardly angry with his wife who becomes more irresponsible and crankier as she gets older. Although he accepts what is done to himself, being an irresponsible mother to his own son makes him angry inwardly.

Celil Hifzi's questioning his family history and his marriage While waiting for the food to be cooked, Mr. Celil Hifzi reads a book in the kitchen and Rifki makes an oven out of pieces of tiles in a corner of the garden. Celil Hifzi's favorite moments are when he is reading in the kitchen and his son is playing in the garden. The professor, who is angry with Mrs. Sadiye, who is irresponsible and not a good wife nor a mother to her child, begins to review his life. He has never known his mother and the only memory he has of his father is of being caught by him half-naked on top of a wall and beaten by him. For twenty years, the professor was raised by his great-aunt Mrs. Hafiz with an understanding that the Franks call *Culte des morts*. Mrs. Hafiz, who had almost no interest in the living and never spoke to anyone in the neighborhood, constantly told Celil Hifzi the memories of her dead relatives. He was amused when he heard how Hadji Melik was robbed by the Arabs while circumambulating Bethlehem and saddened when he heard how Zulkadir's right arm was amputated by the Russians. The story of sister Felek, who ran out of the bathhouse naked in fear during the earthquake, is also one of the memories worth remembering. He has heard so much about people he has never seen in his life that their faces come alive in his mind. A neighbor of the father, who wanted to save the boy from being raised as a Sufi dervish, took the initiative to enroll him in Galatasaray. In this way, Celil Hifzi became a professor instead of a hafiz. Although Mrs. Hafiz cursed those who enrolled Celil Hifzi in school at every opportunity, Celil Hifzi came to his aunt whenever he could and continued to behave and live as she determined. At a time when she was getting old and sick, Mrs. Hafiz asked Celil Hifzi, who was thirty years old, to find a suitable girl and marry her. Although he did not think of marriage, Celil Hifzi marries Sadiye, the daughter of a retired customs manager in Findikli, on the condition that she dyes her hair blonde, in order to fulfill the wish of his sick aunt. Thinking that she will receive love

and attention from Sadiye, Mrs. Hafiz experiences her biggest mistake and regret. Even though Mrs. Hafiz wants to act as mother-in-law to Sadiye, she violently rejects her every request and order. Sadiye, who is stronger and more vigorous because she is still young, has the upper hand over Mrs. Hafiz in every argument. Sadiye is indifferent to Mrs. Hafiz, who pretends to be ill or dying. Six months after the marriage, Mrs. Hafiz dies of an unknown reason. Celil Hifzi blames both his wife and himself for Mrs. Hafiz's death. Afterwards, he tried to adapt to Sadiye's vibrant and colorful life, but he was unable to do so. Because of Sadiye, he was in danger of losing his job after he beat up a man who made fun for falling asleep during a party. After that day, Celil Hifzi returned to the life he knew and the two became neighbors living in the same house.

Celil Hifzi learns that Sadiye is with Zarif Rifki tells Celil Hifzi that he wants to play with the chef's set that was bought for him years ago when Celil Rifki went to a conference in Berlin. Mrs. Sadiye, who takes pleasure in upsetting Celil Hifzi, forbids his son to play with the chef's set because she knows that she can only punish him with his son. During the conference in Berlin, Celil Hifzi, who had fled the conference at every opportunity to buy the expensive and luxurious items his wife wanted, made every sacrifice in the hope of gaining her love and compassion. But no matter what he did, he could not succeed in pleasing her. Celil Hifzi decides that he will no longer be patient with his wife's insolence and goes to the attic where the chef's set is hiding to retrieve it. The attic is full of the family's antiques. While rummaging through the old things and recalling memories that bring both sadness and happiness, a letter with Sadiye's name is found among the old documents. Reading the letter, Celil Hifzi realizes that it is a love letter written by Zarif to Sadiye. At the same time, the letter reveals that Zarif is Rifki's real father. Celil Hifzi found joe jobs such as weigher and clerk for Zarif, who had no merit other than knowing how to gamble, and eventually sent him to Mersin. However, Zarif either got himself fired or quit his job because he did not like it. Zarif, who stayed at his brother-in-law's house during his unemployment, had a relationship with Mrs. Sadiye during a period when Celil Hifzi was away from home for a while and a child was born as a result of this relationship. The last branch that Mr. Celil Hifzi, who had endured all of his wife's ill-temper only because he thought she was honorable and loyal, was broken. It is time to get rid of the headlock around his neck.

Celil Hifzi's liberation from the headlock He realizes that the fact that he is referred to as "Nitwit" in the letter emphasizes that he is unaware of what is going on around him. However, Mr. Celil Hifzi, who has not looked into Sadiye's eyes for a long time, thinks that it is impossible for him to be aware of what is going on behind his back. Mr. Celil Hifzi, coldly attends to the burning food, is surprised that he could have thought of this in such a situation. However, after a short period of reflection, he comes to the conclusion that people do not give a damn about what is called honor and are actually afraid of financial loss or having their names sullied. He is also glad that he finally has the opportunity to get rid of Mrs. Sadiye, whom he sees as a nuisance, without any problem. During the invitation, Celil Hifzi laughs, has fun, talks and sings like never before. After the guests leave the house, Mr. Celil Hifzi remains calm and decides to take care of his wife in the morning. However, Mrs. Sadiye starts to complain to Celil Hifzi for his behavior at the party and says that everyone looks at him as an idiot. Celil Hifzi cannot bear Mrs. Sadiye's shamelessness any longer and asks if Zarif is the one who called him a "stupid man". Then he takes out the letter from his pocket and gives it to Mrs. Sadiye. After reading the letter halfway through, Mrs. Sadiye faints. After a while, Mrs. Sadiye comes to her senses and pretends to have a nervous breakdown when she remembers why she fainted. Mrs. Sadiye begs Celil Hifzi's pardon. She tells him that she will kill herself if he leaves her. But Mr. Celil Hifzi tells Mrs. Sadiye that there is no need for her to kill herself because he knows that she is incapable of doing so, otherwise, he would have already killed her himself and goes to this his room to sleep.

Celil Hifzi leaving home The next morning, Mrs. Sadiye asks for Mr. Celil Hifzi's forgiveness again and lists the excuses for her misdemeanor. But Mr. Celil Hifzi feels ashamed for Mrs. Sadiye while listening to her. In the face of Celil Hifzi's insulting remarks, Mrs. Sadiye gets angry and starts to attack and insult. But Mr. Celil Hifzi ignores her and walks away. Although he thinks that he can only feel sorry for Rifki, he decides that this would be ridiculous since he has taken care of a child who cannot belong to him for years and has been deceived.

Celil Hifzi's distancing and listening to himself Mr. Celil Hifzi, who hires his lawyer friend, an old schoolmate, as an attorney to handle the divorce case, tells Mr. Sefa that he definitely wants a divorce. However, in order to save time for both parties and to make a better decision, it is decided that the divorce case will be heard at a future date. In the meantime, the two will live in separate

houses. After they start living in different houses, Mr. Celil Hifzi starts fishing. Celil Hifzi, who loves to eat fish, also enjoyed fishing for the first time. Approaching the summer vacation, he takes a leave of absence by using the excuse of a kidney problem and claiming that he will go to the hot springs, and he takes an early vacation by heading to Mudanya to visit his foster brother Mr. Ahmet Nizami. He stays there until the end of the summer, catches a lot of fish, drinks and chats. After an indecency committed against him by Mrs. Sadiye, Mr. Nizami considers her his enemy and gives full support to Mr. Celil Hifzi for divorce. During his stay with Mr. Nizami, Celil Hifzi realizes that he can actually be happy with very small things and questions why he has put up with Mrs. Sadiye all these years. Celil Hifzi, who had received love and respect from others during his stay in Mudanya, realized what a big mistake he had made.

Celil Hifzi's making Rifki his new headlock When he returns to İstanbul in September for the fall term exams, he goes to stay with his friend Nazik Dudu, a woman of Armenian origin, in Samatya to avoid encountering Mrs. Sadiye. One day, on his way home from the faculty, he comes face to face with Rifki, who is watching the beggar children playing. Celil Hifzi ignores Rifki and continues on his way, but Rifki chases after him and asks him what his crime is. When the same question is asked a second time, Mr. Celil Hifzi manages to push him away with stern tone. He realizes from his short clothes that Rifki has grown up, that the money he had given to Mrs. Sadiye was wasted and that Mrs. Sadiye continues to leave the child on the street. Feeling sorry for Rifki's situation and realizing that he would be miserable with Mrs. Sadiye, Mr. Celil Hifzi, is influenced by the conversation and the music at a drinking table where Nazik Dudu sits with her son-in-law Bedros, who has lost his son, and decides to take Rifki with him. He wants to divorce Mrs. Sadiye once and for all and take Rifki not as his son but as a friend. He is sure that Mrs. Sadiye will happily agree to this offer in return for a suitable alimony and one of his houses. Thus, he subjugates himself again.

Themes

Hatred The long story *The Headlock* tells the story of Mr. Celil Hifzi's marriage to Mrs. Sadiye, who saw it as his duty to fulfill the greatest wish of his great-aunt, who had raised him, at a time when she was old and ill, and the marriage they experienced. However, contrary to expectations, this marriage brings only unhappiness. Mrs. Sadiye behaves very badly to her family and her inner circle. Nonetheless Mr. Celil Hifzi endures all of Mrs. Sadiye's negativities both for the future of his son Rifki and because he has not been deceived by her so far. But after Rifki is almost ten years old, Celil Hifzi reads a letter he finds in the attic and learns that his wife has been unfaithful to him and that Rifki is not his son. Celil Hifzi takes this situation with great composure and decides to divorce without wasting any time. Mrs. Sadiye, who wants not to lose her privileges, tells Celil Hifzi that she regrets it and asks for forgiveness. However, after Celil Hifzi leaves Mrs. Sadiye, she continues her old habits in the same way. Mrs. Sadiye takes pleasure in making Celil Hifzi and her son Rifki suffer.

Love In addition to the theme of hatred, another theme in the story *The Headlock* is Celil Hifzi's love for Rifki. Mrs. Sadiye secretly has an affair with her uncle's son Zarif and becomes pregnant. As a result of the affair, Rifki is born. Mrs. Sadiye deceives Celil Hifzi for years that Rifki is his child. Upon learning the truth, Celil Hifzi wants to get away from and even get rid of everything that will cause him to remember this unfortunate event. However, Rifki is also aware of the incident along with Celil Hifzi. Months after the divorce, Celil Hifzi sees Rifki in a miserable state while watching beggar children and pities his condition. He realizes that the money he had sent for his care is wasted and that Mrs. Sadiye continues to forget Rifki on the street. One night, while chatting at the drinking table with Bedros, who has lost his child, he is influenced by the music he listens to and decides to take Rifki in as a friend, if not as a son. In order to take Rifki in, he agrees to pay alimony to Mrs. Sadiye and give her one of his houses.

Family Another theme that is treated at length in the story *The Headlock* is family. Mr. Celil Hifzi, who has never seen his mother and only remembers how he was beaten by his father, was raised by his great-aunt Mrs. Hafiz. Mrs. Hafiz, who is very faithful and tradition-bound character who does not meet or talk to anyone, has raised Celil Hifzi with a sense of tradition that the French call *Culte des morts*. Celil Hifzi, who has listened to the memories, personalities and temperaments of important people in his family throughout his life, has a Sufi temperament and is quite romantic and idealistic. Although he starts to study at Galatasaray with the initiative of a neighbor of his father, he does not deviate from the path his great-aunt has drawn for him. Mr. Celil Hifzi, who later marries and builds his own nest, is left alone after the loss of his aunt. Mrs. Sadiye has the opposite personality

traits of Mrs. Hafiz. Therefore, although Celil Hifzi and Mrs. Sadiye are married, they are actually two opposite worlds that are obliged to live in the same house. Celil Hifzi's family history full of turmoil is processed throughout the narrative. Although what life teaches him is to lose his loved ones one by one, Rifki gives him hope. In addition, Rifki, who is always seen with the vagrant children when he is under the responsibility of Mrs. Sadiye, makes an oven, plays with toys and the cook set when he is with Celil Hifzi. Celil Hifzi takes Rifki in and prevents him from becoming a character like Mrs. Sadiye in the future. Celil Hifzi accepts that he must have a headlock that binds him to life.

Character Analysis

Celil Hifzi Araman (Open/Social/Conscientious/Rational) The protagonist of the narrative, and in some parts the homodiegetic narrator, is married professor of chemistry who is about forty-five years old at the time of the synchronic narrative. He lost his mother when he was very young and remembers only a time when he was beaten by his father. Celil Hifzi was raised by his great-aunt Mrs. Hafiz and was raised with a traditional understanding of what the Franks call *Culte des morts*. As a result, he became a satiated, modest, domestic, hardworking, conservative, conscientious and prudent person. Although he is very interested in history, philosophy and literature, he is a chemistry professor. After completing his education at Galatasaray, he married Mrs. Sadiye, the daughter of a retired customs director residing in Findikli, in order to fulfill the greatest wish of his great-aunt, who had fallen ill due to old age. However, contrary to expectations, this marriage brought nothing but trouble rather than happiness and peace. Celil Hifzi, who has endured all the negativities of his wife for years only for Rifki, who is honorable and loyal, learns one day finds out that his wife has been cheating on him. It is also revealed that the child he had raised and cared for year in and year out was someone else's. As a very cold-blooded, logical, calm and self-confident character, he decides to divorce his wife immediately. However, realizing that Rifki will suffer the most from this divorce, he experiences a deep depression both conscientiously and emotionally and decides to take Rifki under his own protective care by making some financial sacrifices that Mrs. Sadiye cannot refuse.

Optimistic Despite all the negativity caused by his wife, he tries to think of the positive things: "In summer, the coolest summer place in Istanbul is surely my stony place" (R. Guntekin 2000, 28).

Docile He obeys every wish of his wife without question: "In a week or two until a man was found again, the professor would be the acting cook. This was more or less how it had been going since their marriage, and Celil Hifzi spent at least six months a year in the kitchen" (R. Guntekin 2000, 28).

Hardworking "The professor really enjoyed kitchen work, and although he always complained half-heartedly, the sweetest hours of his life were spent in the kitchen" (R. Guntekin 2000, 29).

Curious "It was not the custom of other science professors to read books, especially books on history, philosophy, literature and so on. But he loved them to a degree that it would be a shame for a man of science" (R. Guntekin 2000, 31).

Differential He does not want his son to play with street children: " – Look Rifki, is it good for you to play with cheeky street children in such ruins, in dust and dirt? Don't let me see this again! Otherwise, we'll have a falling out" (R. Guntekin 2000, 41),.

Bewildered "There was no evil that Celil Hifzi could not expect from his wife. But for some reason he had never thought about it" (R. Guntekin 2000, 67).

Emotional "Whenever Celil Hifzi went up to this attic, he was always a bit late; it was a kind of family museum. What wasn't there in it; from the family pictures piled on top of each other, decomposed like dead faces due to dampness and mold, to Zulkadir Pasha's broken samovar and Aunt Nasira's..." (R. Guntekin 2000, 64).

Cold-blooded Although he learns that he has been cheated on by his wife, he manages to keep his calm: " – I think it would be better if you don't kill yourself... If there was a need for such a thing, I would have killed you... What's the use of futile fuss!.. Let's say adieu for now" (R. Guntekin 2000, 76).

Sadiye Araman (Closed/Asocial/Unconscientious/Emotional) Mrs. Sadiye, the daughter of a retired customs manager residing in Findikli, was married off to Mr. Celil Hfzi when she was young. Although she had a reddish hair color with chestnut, her hair was dyed blonde upon Celil Hifzi's request. Although it is said by Celil Hifzi that she is almost forty years old, it is possible that she is over forty years old. Mrs. Sadiye, who had an arrange marriage with Mr. Celil Hifzi, became a serious problem for everyone from that day on. By treating the great-aunt Mrs. Hafiz very badly and disagreeing with her on every issue, she became one of the reasons for her death within six months. From the day she got married, she was neither a good wife to her husband nor a good mother to her child. She has spent all her time in the neighborhood, at parties, dances, invitations and game tables. She takes no responsibility for her own life or the lives of those close to her and enjoys making them suffer. It can be said that Mrs. Sadiye, who was probably married off to a man she did not know and did not love, enjoyed making him suffer. She does everything to hurt Celil Hifzi's pride and make him sad or angry. In the end, the secret of Mrs. Sadiye, who cheated on her husband with others and passed off a child by someone else as Celil Hifzi's child, is revealed. Not wanting to lose her financial and moral privileges, Mrs. Sadiye wants to reconcile with her husband. But this does not happen. When she is separated from her husband, she continues to live the life she knows with the money she receives and does not mother her child. This shows that the real problem is not that she is married to a person she does not love. Because one of the neighbors told Mrs. Hafiz that Sadiye treated her mother and father just as badly. Mrs. Sadiye, who got pregnant and gave birth to a child from her uncle's son, is suspected of having affair with other men. Mrs. Sadiye is a completely sadistic, narcissistic and hedonistic character.

Grumpy "Mrs. Sadiye was a grumpy woman. She would never keep a cook or a maid for more than a month; she would either fire them or do something to force them to run away on their own" (R. Guntekin 2000, 28).

Ungrateful "Oh well! If he hadn't been so righteous and had earned a skirt full of money like others, we would have had a couple of cooks and maids who looked us in the eye; he and I wouldn't have been in this trouble" (R. Guntekin 2000, 28).

Reckless "Mrs. Sadiye had a natural hatred for the kitchen. For this reason, she almost never set foot in the kitchen, and even when she had a fight with her husband, she would not cross this boundary and would shout and yell in the stone place" (R. Guntekin 2000, 30).

Spoiled "Then, when she saw that the poor man's nerves and male pride had calmed down, that he was beginning to regret what he had done and to be frightened, as most weak people are, she would counterattack. Then, depending on the time and place, she would start repeating her inexhaustible tricks one by one, sometimes for days, even weeks, sometimes crying and shouting, sometimes sobering up and fainting, sometimes complaining incessantly, sometimes attempting to climb on window sills, door bracelets, going out barefoot on the street, and so on" (R. Guntekin 2000, 44).

Greedy "(...) he had given the reins into the hand of Mrs. Sadiye and had never been able to free himself again. Mrs. Sadiye, who made good use of the little money she received from her father's pension with all kinds of grumpiness, brazenness and suicide treats, was astonished by her husband's vast means – like a state budget – and spent and squandered it for quite some time" (R. Guntekin 2000, 55-56).

Sadistic "Mrs. Sadiye's jealousy of the luxurious chef set that Rifki received was another matter. Knowing that it would upset her husband more than the child, she often complains about this toy, which she keeps in the attic. She raises one of her plucked, thin eyebrows and squints her nose" (R. Guntekin 2000, 62-63).

Unfaithful The following statements in Zarif's letter to Sadiye are important: "My soul Sadiye: I arrived safely in Mersin two days ago. Thank God, I'm healthy. (...) All of this is good, all is well; but how will I endure your longing and that of my dear son Rifki?" (R. Guntekin 2000, 66).

Unreliable "If she finds a fool like me again and marries, you can also assure her that this alimony will not be cut off... I am sure that she will gladly agree to these conditions because I know my chicken" (R. Guntekin 2000, 96).

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