

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE  
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# THE HOUSE WITH PURPLE BUNCHES OF GRAPES

HALIDE EDIB ADIVAR

## Synopsis

In this work, Halide Edib Adivar narrates her memories from her childhood days to 1918. After the death of Bedrifem Hanim, her mother, she spends her childhood at the houses of her grandmother and her father's two wives. Thanks to her father's close interest in her education, she is home-schooled for a while and then continues to study at the American High School. She accepts the proposal of Salih Zeki Bey, her private math tutor, and then has two sons. Due to her writings, she has to escape from the reactionary leaders of the 31 March Incident. When she returns to Istanbul, she works at the Ministry of Education. She separates from Salih Zeki Bey when he wants to marry a second wife. During the Balkan War, she volunteers for the Society for the Advancement of Women. After the Committee of Union and Progress recaptures the administration, she resigns as she cannot agree with the new minister of education. However, she takes on an influential role in the scholarly works of Cemal Pasha in the province of Syria, and during this time, she gets married to Doctor Adnan Adivar.

## Important Terms

Bey It is an honorific for men, equals to Mr. in English.  
Hanim It is an honorific for women, equals to Ms. in English.

## People

Adnan Adivar	Physician, politician, writer
Ali the Tutor	A relative of Halide Edib's grandfather
Ali Samil Bey	The first wife of Halide Edib's mother
Bedrifem	Halide Edib's mother
Cemal Pasha	Politician and soldier
Hamdullah Suphi	Politician, teacher, writer
Havva Hanim	Servant at her grandmother's house
Hayri Efendi	Sheikh al-Islam (1914-1916)
Huseyin Kâzim Kadri	Lexicographer and statesman
Kemal	Halide Edib's uncle
Lütfi Kırdar	Physician, statesman, soldier
Mahmure	Halide Edib's step sister
Nakiye Elgun	Educator and politician
Nakiye Hanim	Halide Edib's grandmother.
Nevres the Sister	Halide Edib's wetnurse
Nuri Bey	Writer, thinker
Rasim the Nanny	Halide Edib's nanny
Reshe	Halide Edib's slave
Riza Tevfik	Poet, philosopher, politician
Salih Zeki Bey	Mathematician, astronomer
Sayeste	Halide Edib's childhood friend
Sukru Efendi	A scholar from the Ottoman Ulema
Vedi Sabra	Composer, musician
Yusuf Akcura	Writer and politician
Ziya Gokalp	Sociologist, writer, poet and politician

## Events

### *Her Grandmother*

Halide Edib narrates fragments of her early experiences from the third person singular perspective. The house that gives the book its name is her grandmother's house in Besiktas, where she was born.

This house is a big one with a beautiful view. Her grandmother, Nakiye Hanim, waters the trees and flowers in the garden every morning and feeds the pigeons. The person who influenced her character the most is her uncle, the tomb keeper of the Mevlevi lodge in Eyupsultan. That's why she is always calm. She doesn't show her anger towards anyone and prays regularly. But she never flaunts her religion. She always dyes her hair with henna because white hair is considered a characteristic of fancy women.

#### *Her Mother*

Her memories of her mother are different. While she sleeps with her mother, her mother's two long braids scare her. Her pale face doesn't look like her grandmother's face at all. So even though she wants to be closer to her mother, she is afraid of her. She only feels peaceful with her mother when her mother trims her fingernails.

For a while, they live in a separate house near the Tesvikiye Mosque. Neighbors often visit them at night and sing songs. When they move from this house to another one close to the Yildiz Palace, her mother is more ill, so she is carried on a stretcher with yellow curtains. Whenever she pulls the curtains to see her mother's face, she is convinced of how sick her mother is and struggles to look at the color yellow all her life.

#### *Her Father*

The new house is more spacious and bright. Her first memories of her father also begin in this house. In the morning, her father rides a horse to go to the palace. However, her mother becomes pregnant in this house and dies with the child after birth. After her mother's death, her father always cries in the evening. There are three people in the house beside her father—Ali the Tutor, his brother Mustafa, and Rasim the Nanny. Halide hears Rasim the Nanny and Ali the Tutor talking almost every evening. The nanny thinks that because Halide's mother has died, she can do whatever she wants with her.

Moreover, because Halide has seen her with Ali the Tutor, she constantly advises her not to tell anyone. Still, not knowing what not to say, Halide cries out that she will tell everyone to provoke the nanny. Finally, one day, while Rasim the Nanny is stuffing pepper in Halide's mouth, Nakiye Hanim sees and kicks her out of the house.

There is no longer Ali the Tutor and Mustafa at home. There is an older woman responsible for the order of the house and a Circassian boy named Mehmet, who goes to high school during the day. One night, when her father is on duty at the palace, Halide wants to see him and starts shouting. Greek and Armenian neighbors come first and try to calm her down. They even pour water over her head to silence her. But it doesn't help. Finally, Mehmet takes her to the palace. He tells every guard he sees that she wants to see her father, and her mother has just died. Halide finally goes to the room where her father sleeps. There are three beds inside for Edib Bey, Ibrahim Hakki Pasha, and Hasan Sirri Bey. When her father takes her to his bed, she falls asleep quickly.

#### *Her Relatives*

What she remembers after that is that they move to a new house. For the first time, she recognizes her relatives in this house. The first is her uncle Kemal. Kemal is a clerk who likes to paint. The second is Refet, the seven-year-old son of her uncle Hayri, who died before she was born. The third is Apti. Apti is a water seller and carries their water every morning and calls her "Little granny" whenever he sees her. The fourth is Mahmure. Bedrifem Hanim's family separates her from Ali Samil and marries her to Edib Bey. Edib Bey treats Bedrifem Hanim's daughter from her first husband, Mahmure, as his daughter. After a while, Ali Samil Bey takes his daughter, but he leaves her to her grandmother when he has to leave Istanbul.

#### *In the House with Purple Bunches of Grapes*

After that, Halide finds herself in the house where she was born again. This time, a woman has settled upstairs. After working as a teacher in the palace for many years, she was permitted to leave and settled in Halide's grandfather's house. During the day, her grandmother reads books translated from French aloud. Her grandfather is fond of religious books. Her grandfather, who served long in the palace, is not a rich man. The house belongs to her grandmother. He always knocks on the door when he comes from the *selamlık*, which is used only by men to the *haremlık*, where both men and women

of the family socialize. He uses polite language even towards slaves in the *haremlük*, although he constantly curses in the *selamlük*. Halide prefers this abusive language to the polite one. There is also a helper at home named Havva Hanim. However, she is treated like one of the family.

Except for her grandfather, Halide has no one close to her. Girls over the age of ten are considered adults and supposed to wear chador. Therefore, a twelve-year-old is regarded as the same as a sixty-year-old.

#### *Her Father's New Order*

Her time in this house ends when Mehmet takes her to her father's new home close to the Yıldız Palace. Her father has married the daughter of the woman who looked after his house. As soon as Halide sees her father's new wife, she hugs and kisses her. She is a beautiful blonde woman with blue eyes. However, as her relatives visit her, they make a mockery of Halide's appearance. Halide wants to arouse the warm feelings of beautiful children in the people around her, but she is disappointed because, she believes, she is not blue-eyed and has fair skin.

Her father wants to raise her as the British raise their children. He closely watches what she wears, what she eats, and drinks. He makes her wear short dark blue dresses in the winter and white clothes in the summer. Since it is not possible to wear a hat, she wears a calpack in the winter. However, Halide admires her peers' brightly colored and ribboned clothes and the junk food they eat.

In those days, she starts a kindergarten run by a Greek woman named Eleni with her sister. Halide is the only Turkish child in this nursery, which Christian children usually attend. Halide loves Eleni so much that she memorizes Greek poems to make her happy. Thus, she starts to speak two different languages at home and in the nursery. One day, when she is about to read a poem in Greek again, she gets sick. Eleni carries her home. After being sick for days, Mehmet takes her back to her grandmother's house.

#### *Fear and Mercy*

Halide Edib experiences fear for the first time while playing under the cypress trees in the cemetery around the house. Together with other children, she jumps into a ditch. As she watches the branches of the cypresses, the servant who takes her there suddenly shouts, "He is coming!" When other children run away, Halide is petrified with astonishment and wet with sweat. On the way home, the servant says that the cypresses look like trees in the daytime but walk around at night. At night, thinking that the cypresses are wandering around, she feels nervous.

In this period, she also experiences mercy so much so that she gradually moves away from people. On a Friday, while strolling with her tutor, she sees a dog trapped under a collapsed wall. As the dog cries due to the pain, a boy next to them throws stones at it. Having described this scene as a moment that embarrasses her to be human, she adds that after this incident, she learned that no animal harms another creature just for fun except for humans. Even though she begs her tutor to save the dog that day, her tutor takes her away. With the shock of this event, she stays in bed for days, and her grandmother tells their neighbors that she got sick because she was afraid of a dog.

#### *Her First Friend*

She makes her first friend these days; Sayeste. She is the daughter of an old neighbor. Halide overcomes her inferiority complex caused by not measuring up to her stepmother's family, consisting of blonde and blue-eyed people with dark-skinned Sayeste. Sometimes when she sees their hands side by side, Sayeste's darker hands give her pleasure. Secondly, it is good for Halide that Sayeste does not ask any questions. Since she is an introverted child, she is very uncomfortable with each question asked. But Sayeste doesn't want to learn anything about her. Thirdly, Halide does not find Sayeste intelligent. She says that although she considers the friendship of ideas beautiful, it is tiring.

Moreover, she has an imaginary friend named Aleksis and speaks with him in Greek. But Sayeste does not care about any of these as well. Finally, although Halide is a fragile child, Sayeste is robust and hard-working. Halide likes to spend her time with Sayeste due to her qualities.

## *Stories of Women*

Havva Hanim, who is responsible for cooking and cleaning at home, is treated as a relative. Havva Hanim's father and ex-husband are both tradesmen. Her husband married his brother's widow, after that a fire broke out in their house, and he went bankrupt. After the bankruptcy, he and his son started to live in a dervish lodge. Then, he attributed what happened to him to the injustice he did to Havva Hanim and apologized to her many times. Havva Hanim tells about these events with a sense of victory, but these events make her miserable. Knowing her situation, Arziye Hanim found this job for her.

Arziye Hanim is a well-known name in Istanbul in those days. Whenever Halide gets sick, she sees her at her bedside. She is a fortune-teller, and it is told that she got involved in demons during her postpartum days. Since then, she, whoever gets sick, promises that demons release the sick in exchange for a rooster, a lamb, or gold, depending on the person's economic situation. In addition, women ask her for help with their marital problems. Thanks to Arziye Hanim, Havva Hanim settled in Halide's grandmother's house. Her grandmother gives Havva Hanim a salary, provides her with tobacco and clothes, and makes her feel like a lady at home.

Halide never forgets the story of the evening when Havva Hanim became a bride. When Havva Hanim gets married, the brides usually have two long braids, but she has forty braids. So, when the groom lifts her veil, he calls a woman and asks her to undo her braids. When the woman says that only a hammam expert can undo them, he brings a hammam expert. When the expert undoes her braids, the groom believes that the hair is real. Then, to see if Havva Hanim's cheeks are painted, he spits on his handkerchief and rubs her face with it. Halide Edib states that this story taught her that every married woman undergoes a physical examination like an animal.

### *Her Uncle's Hopeless Love*

Halide Edib's uncle Kemal falls in love with the daughter of a Circassian family living in the mansion opposite their house and urges Havva Hanim to ask for the girl's hand. Havva Hanim first asks if Nakiye Hanim knows about this, but Kemal prefers to keep it a secret because he is afraid of his mother. One night, Havva Hanim goes to Nakiye Hanim's room to explain the situation because she is afraid of keeping a secret from her. Nakiye Hanim demands that she tell Kemal that she has learned that the girl is engaged. However, as Havva Hanim sees that Kemal is miserable, she cannot stand it and visits the girl's family. Since the family speaks Circassian, they do not understand each other very well, but she learns that the man she believes is the girl's father is her husband. Afterward, she explains the truth to Kemal. After Nakiye Hanim, too, asks Havva Hanim to ask for the girl's hand because of Kemal's miserable condition, Havva Hanim tells her what happened. She even says, "Kemal cannot live; he dies before the age of twenty-five." While listening to these events from Havva Hanim, Halide remembers that one day she entered her uncle's room and saw a beautiful blond woman in the window of the opposite mansion. Since that day, she has always struggled to see that beautiful woman again. But as Havva Hanim said, her uncle dies before his twenty-fifth birthday.

### *Nevres*

When Ramadan comes, Nevres, Halide Edib's wetnurse, comes to take her to her own home. She is a former Arab slave freed by Nakiye Hanim. While taking Halide home, she has a porter carry her on the way. The porter is a tall, dark Kurd. Halide is disturbed by the smell of sweat and ashamed of being in his lap.

The first night at her wetnurse's house does not go well either. She is disturbed by the smell of sweat because her wetnurse lays her in her bosom. She is also afraid of the dark because there are no lamps in the room. In the morning, she sings with Ahmet Agha, the second husband of her wetnurse. The second night goes better. The lanterns in the hands of men and children walking on the street are reflected on the room's curtains. The drummer passes by to wake people for suhoor. The next day, Nevres takes her to the Suleymaniye Mosque. They listen to the Qur'an there, and Halide is very impressed by what she hears. However, when the preacher talks as if no one can deserve heaven on earth, religion becomes something scary for her, and she immediately hides in Nevres' chador. In the

evening, they go to the Suleymaniye Mosque again to perform the tarawih prayer. While the voices of Allahu Akbar rise from the minarets, hundreds of people with lanterns walk towards the mosque. She prays in the women's section with Nevres. This visit ends in the middle of Ramadan, and she returns to her grandmother's house.

### *A Play*

One evening, Nakiye Hanim invites all the neighbors for iftar. While the adults eat upstairs, the children eat in the dining room for children downstairs and start playing in Havva Hanim's room. Vasfiye Hanim, one of the neighbors, asks them to play with her son Rifat saying that he can take on the role of an odalisque playing house. Halide does not like boys, but Rifat's meekness intrigues her. Once Mahmure offers to play the bridegroom, one of the girls becomes the bride and the other the groom. Rifat takes on the role of an odalisque responsible for the dowry, but he is happy about it. The bride and groom sit opposite each other, and the groom asks, "What's your name?" but gets no answer, then says, "Open your veil" three times. But the bride yells, "You're making fun of me; I won't be a bride!" No one can understand why. However, after years, Halide Edib believes that since Binnaz, who plays the bride, has a crippled eye, she was afraid that she would never get married.

After this evening, Rifat often comes to play, but Halide does not play with him anymore after he starts school because he turns into a noisy and rude boy like others.

### *A Prank*

In those days, people play pranks on little girls. When her father's groom comes to take her to the palace on a feast day, he tells her that she is a slave and knows the slave trader who sold her. Halide is very much affected by what the groom says and goes to the palace thinking about her possibility of being a slave. She finds a dark-skinned dwarf in her father's room in the palace. When the dwarf asks who she is waiting for, she says she is waiting for her father. This time the dwarf asks who her father is. When he learns that it is Edib Bey, he says that Edib Bey is his father and that Halide was a black girl found on the street. As she was at home, she magically turned herself into a white child and him into a black one. Upon hearing this, Halide starts to cry in fear. Then her father comes and calms her down by holding her in his arms.

### *School*

As Nakiye Hanim insists that Halide should start school immediately, Edib Bey is convinced to let Halide start school after five, although he does not want her to study before seven. Those days, girls who start school wear fancy dresses, hang a bag around their necks to carry an Arabic Alphabet Book and are put in a carriage. Other children walk behind the carriage and hymn together. As they walk the streets like this, other children join them and go straight to school. After this ceremony, dessert and money are distributed to the children. The next day, the journeyman of the school comes and takes her to school along with the other children. This ceremony is significant for families, so they spend as much money as they can. Halide never wants to be a center of attention, and to her relief, her father decides to homeschool her. A banquet is held for the male neighbors with all of her father's friends from the palace. Her grandmother prepares a long champagne-colored dress and a headscarf in the same color. Hand in hand with Mahmure, she enters the hall, a young hafiz reads the Qur'an, and they kneel in front of the hodja and read the Arabic alphabet out loud.

Now the hodja starts to come in the evenings to teach them. Mahmure went to a school run by a woman named Cavide, where she concluded that nothing could be learned without a slap. But since this hodja has never resorted to violence, she becomes more and more mischievous. Halide, on the other hand, tries to read the Qur'an by candlelight every night as much as she can. After being able to read, she goes to the court lady living upstairs and tries to read the African Travel Book in her library. However, Ottoman Turkish is more complex than the language of the Qur'an. While she is trying to read this book, Fikriyar, the slave of the tenant, constantly wants to tell her how they came to Adapazarı from the Caucasia and how she was sold to an Egyptian family in Istanbul. Mahmure brings her a book called *Serencam-ı Mevt*. That is an easier book to read, and she finishes it quickly. However, she begins to have nightmares every night because the book tells all details of what happens to the souls from the moment Azrael comes to take them. The resurrection of the dead in the time of apocalypse impresses her very much. The appearance of every sinner group is depicted as

terrible. But Mahmure, to scare Halide, mention specifically the troublemakers whose tongues stick out of their necks. She does this because she does not want Halide to tell anyone that she smokes.

### *Class Difference*

One day, a ceremony is held for a child who has just started school. Because the child is from a poor family, she does not have a carriage. She walks in front of the regiment towards the school. When they arrive at the school, a pot full of ashura is placed in front of them, and a wooden spoon is given to each child. When Halide is about to eat it, Mahmure advises her not to. The resentment on the hodja's face and the division between the poor children and her deeply affect Halide.

### *The Sacrificial Sheep*

One morning, when Halide wakes up, she sees that her grandfather prepares to slaughter eight sheep in a hole he has just dug in the garden. The eight sheep are to be slaughtered for the sake of people in the house. Halide asks her grandfather not to slaughter the sheep he bought for her, but her grandfather yells at her, asking how she can cross the bridge of Siraat and then tells the story of the prophet Abraham. When it's time for dinner, an argument breaks out between her uncle Kemal and her grandfather. Her uncle doesn't want to slaughter any animal because he can't stand the sight of blood, but her grandfather says every man has to sacrifice an animal.

The following day, she wakes up to men's voices saying Allahu Akbar and is horrified when she realizes that the sheep have been slaughtered. She visualizes different groups of sinners going to hell as described in the book *Serencam-ı Mevt* and devoted Muslims going to heaven by cutting the throats of sheep.

### *Her Uncle's Death*

One morning, she gets up to find that her grandmother's bed is untouched. After a while, her father takes her and Mahmure to his own house. He has another daughter named Nilufer from his second wife. But Halide likes to spend most of her time with her father's dog, Flora. However, no one in the house likes Flora. Her father's mother-in-law does not let it into the place where she prays, and Roza, the housemaid, drives it out of everywhere. Thus, Flora waits outside for Edib Bey's return, and Halide remains with it whenever she gets the chance to get outside.

As the days pass like this, one morning, she learns that her uncle has died. Her grandfather dies the same week too. After returning to her grandmother's house with Mahmure, her grandmother decides to move to Uskudar, and they move as soon as they find a new house.

### *Revenge*

The night before they move out of their house in Besiktas, Mahmure accidentally kills their grandmother's canary and forces Halide to tell their grandmother that they found the bird dead. She drags Halide into their grandmother's room and lies as she planned. Their grandmother asks Halide if what is told is true, but she cannot say anything. The following day, she wakes up with a grudge against Mahmure for pushing her into lying. She runs to the garden, grabs a worm, and then asks Mahmure to close her eyes and open her mouth. Since candies are given to children like that, Mahmure does what Halide asks immediately. As soon as she opens her mouth, Halide puts the worm in her mouth and runs away.

### *Ahmet Agha*

They rent the *selamlık* or the harem of Ibrahim Pasha Mansion in Selimiye. Ahmet Agha replaces Süleyman Agha, who is her grandfather's friend, as tutor. Ahmet Agha is the person who introduced folk literature to Halide. He always reads stories to her. Thus, she listens to the stories of Battal Ghazi, Abu Muslim, and Ali ibn Abi Talib. She is most affected by Ali because he could not gain a politically powerful position despite his heroism in the wars. However, he is known as someone who behaved bravely and humanely towards his enemies.

### *Mahmure*

Mahmure turns eleven in this house. They want to make her wear chador outside, but she goes out to the street to play whenever she gets the chance. Still, women sent to see a marriageable girl appear before she turns twelve. When the women come, they force her down from the top of the walnut tree. She wears the dress of Halide's stepmother, as she has no nice dress to wear. She enters the room behind Fikriyar, who holds a serving tray and then sits down on a chair in the middle of the room so that the women can examine her. The women both size her up and give information about the position of the groom.

### *Ali Samil Bey*

After changing a few houses in Uskudar, they rent a part of the Semsî Pasha Mansion. After moving to this house, a letter arrives from Mahmure's father, Ali Samil Bey. The story of Ali Samil Bey is as follows: His father, Bedirhan Pasha, comes to Istanbul from Kurdistan with his ten wives and forty sons. Ali Samil, the youngest of his sons, marries Bedrifem Hanim, then fifteen years old, and settles in his in-laws' house. However, as his brothers visit him often to drink together and sometimes even fire the gun into the air, they disturb Bedrifem Hanim's family. So, at the end of three years, her family separates her from Ali Samil to marry her to Edib Bey, Halide's father. Afterward, a commission is formed to investigate a disorder in Mecca and replace the sheriff with Abdullah Pasha. Ali Samil Bey is the aide of the new sheriff, and Halide's father, Edib Bey, is the clerk of the commission. When Ali Samil Bey gets cholera in Mecca, Edib Bey looks after him. Although Edib Bey knows who Ali Samil Bey is, Ali Samil Bey does not know that he is Bedrifem Hanim's husband and asks Edib Bey to pass on his belongings to his ex-wife Bedrifem Hanim, in case he dies. Edib Bey takes off his coat, covers him up with it, and waits. Ali Samil Bey keeps this coat for years. When he returns to Istanbul, he and his brothers are exiled to Damascus for attacking the Rufai sect's sheik. He marries nine times after Bedrifem Hanim, but he never forgets her. The letter is to inform them that his exile is over. When he comes to Istanbul, he visits them regularly.

### *Cultural Activities*

One day, Havva Hanim takes Halide to the theater of Abdurrezzak Efendi, the star of Turkish improvisational theatre. The theater is packed, but the women are in a private section. Ahmet Agha takes her to Karagoz and Hacivat, a shadow play. Through this show, she sees the caricatured versions of some of the characters in society. Hacivat is a know-it-all person from Istanbul, while Karagoz is an ordinary person who is stupid but can find a way out of every difficult situation.

### *Her Father's Third Marriage*

Halide witnesses quarrels between her grandmother and the court lady, whom she addresses as "aunt." Being affected by these discussions, she wakes up at night and wanders around the house. Upon that, they take her directly to Arziye Hanim. Arziye Hanim says that the evil eye attacked her and advises rest. One evening, her stepmother, whom she calls "sister," stays overnight with a friend, and her father marries the "aunt." After that, peaceful relations at the house slowly deteriorate. Although the two women can manage the situation, Havva Hanim, who had the same experience before, Fikriyar, the "aunt's" slave, and Cemile, the "sister's" slave, constantly fight each other.

Halide is convinced that two women in a family are not healthy and refers to the Chinese script to explain this. In Chinese writing, she expresses that two women standing in the open-air symbolize peace, and two women standing under one roof represent war. As a matter of fact, in the end, his father moves to the house with purple bunches of grapes in Besiktas with the "sister" and his two little girls, Nilufer and Nigar, while the "aunt" and Nakiye Hanim move to another house in Uskudar with Halide and Mahmure.

### *The American College for Girls*

The reason for moving to a new house is to be closer to the American College. Halide's father issues a new ID with false birth date to enroll her in school because the college does not accept children under eleven. The college principal does not accept her as a boarder because he is aware of the new ID. Halide attends this college for one year. But during this time, Ahmet Agha cuts the eyes out of all pictures in her books because they look exactly like real people created by Allah.

On the other hand, the "aunt" gets angry when she sees Halide read the Bible as a requirement of her classes, and Halide's three Bibles somehow disappear. Each time, she feels humiliated in class because she can't prepare her homework. After a while, when the "aunt" has a daughter, she forgets about this Bible issue.

Her father visits them every week. Sometimes he takes Halide with him to his house in Besiktas. However, no matter where Halide stays, she is always treated as the spy of the other household. In the end, her father wants her to live with him in Besiktas, and she leaves the college.

### *An Earthquake and a Wedding*

While sitting in the room of the "aunt," who is pregnant with Edib Bey's last child and only son, during her visit to the house in Uskudar, the chandelier and windows start to shake. They run downstairs—the walls in the garden collapse. Suddenly a whistle is heard. Halide thinks that the apocalypse has broken out, as described in the book *Serencam-ı Mevt*. When Mahmure says that the servant is the one who is whistling, she is relieved. After this earthquake in 1895, many families begin to sleep in the backyard of their houses. Halide also swears not to sin again and wear fancy clothes. However, this oath is broken at the end of the year. Because Mahmure gets married and all women of the house make themselves fancy dresses. When Halide sees Mahmure as a bride, she believes that she also has left her childhood behind.

### *Reshe*

When she returns to Besiktas, she learns that two female slaves were brought from Yemen for her and the "sister." Hers name is Reshe, and she is eight or ten years old. The first night, Reshe sleeps in Halide's room that she shares with her sister, Nilufer. In the middle of the night, she raises her head to find Nilufer and Reshe looking at each other. She asks Nilufer why she is not sleeping; Nilufer does not want to stay in the same room with Reshe because she is afraid that Reshe is a cannibal. Since Halide has listened to many cannibal stories, she bends down and looks at Reshe. When Reshe smiles at her, she tells Nilufer that her teeth are like human teeth. This time Nilufer asks Halide to check if she has a tail. However, Halide cannot do this.

After Reshe starts to speak Turkish, she narrates that she waited to be slaughtered and eaten that night because one of the slave dealers in Yemen told her that Istanbulites eat Abyssinians. Thus, whenever Nilufer looked up, Reshe said to herself, "She is waiting for me to fall asleep. If I close my eyes, she will inform the grown-ups, and they will come and kill me, then they will eat me up." Since Halide is very upset about Reshe's story, she writes a manumission paper and tells her to hide it.

### *The "Sister"*

Since Halide and the "sister" are sick, Edib Bey takes care of them for days, but one evening he goes to the house in Uskudar because the "aunt" gave birth. Although he usually goes during the day and returns in the evening, he does not return at night. The "sister" feels terrible for not having a son like the "aunt." Despite her headache, Halide listens to her for hours and realizes how destructive polygamy is and how it makes a woman miserable. In the end, the "sister" has a nervous breakdown in front of her eyes because of jealousy. She doesn't know what to do as the "sister" cries out. She crawls out of bed, but the dark streets are empty. Since there is no man at home, she cannot decide whom to ask for help. Finally, she sits down and begins to read the Qur'an aloud. Then the "sister" calms down with the sound of the Quran and falls asleep.

In the morning, Halide goes to their neighbor Peyker's house. Peyker is a woman who worked in the theater team of Sultan Abdulaziz. Unlike other women, she chats like a man with the friends of her husband, Hamdi Efendi, a pantheist, and her son, an officer. For the first time, Halide has learned from them that Abdulhamid is a cursed person because the intellectuals always gather at their house and talk about freedom. When Peyker sees Halide, she scolds her for going out despite her fever, but Halide is relieved that she has handed over the matter to her, the powerful woman.

### *Nuri Bey*



Nuri Bey is a poet under the influence of Namık Kemal and lived in Paris in his youth; and is a neighbor like Peyker. Edib Bey takes Halide to his house to take piano lessons. Halide sits at the piano, and everyone in the hall pays genuine attention to her. After that evening, she becomes the youngest regular of the meetings held there. There she also meets Rıza Tevfik.

### *The House in Sultantepe*

Edib Bey buys a house with a beautiful view in Uskudar, Sultantepe. Halide likes this house very much, but the unrest caused by polygamy continues in this lovely house too. Finally, the "aunt" wants a divorce. Halide swears that she will never marry for the rest of her life.

She has many tutors these days. An old prima donna named Madame Liverdali gives music lessons, and Sukru Efendi teaches Arabic to her. An English woman, abandoned by her second husband after her first husband died in India, settled in their house with her child. This woman makes her read English literature and inspires her to be a novelist. Moreover, she makes Halide John Abbot's book *Mother* translate into Ottoman Turkish. This translation is published and sent to an exhibition organized on behalf of the families of those who died in the Turkish-Greek war. For her contribution, Halide Edib is awarded a medal. However, being honored by Abdulhamid makes her feel distressed. Her last teacher in this house is Rıza Tevfik. He lectures about Herbert Spencer for hours. However, since his Arabic and Persian are excellent, he also teaches her the philosophy of Eastern literature.

Since Ali Samil Bey is the commander of Uskudar, he also visits them frequently. Ali Samil Bey has two wives, a Syrian and an Abyssinian. He married the Abyssinian woman because she was the slave of his deceased wife. Sometimes Halide stays with them. Since Mahmure lives in one of the three houses that Ali Samil Bey built next to his mansion, they all have fun in the evenings; Mahmure dresses his children in Kurdish clothes, and they sing Kurdish songs and dance together. However, when one of Ali Samil Bey's brothers says Mahmure, "Come with us, you will be the queen of Kurdistan" while leaving Istanbul, Mahmure says, "I am a Turkish woman born under this flag. I lived here, I will die here". One of these days, when Halide is at Ali Samil Bey's house, Edib Bey enrolls her in college again.

### *In High School*

Being at a boarding school eliminates the influence of older people on her. Thus, she is convinced that people's normal development is possible as long as their environment does not overwhelm them.

She is too religious for a fifteen-year-old but cannot give up on the "why" questions. She prays regularly but still has questions that she cannot answer. In particular, she cannot comprehend the idea that all non-Muslims are condemned to eternal torment in hell. That's why she starts researching religions. As she reads the books in the college library, she figures that Christianity, not different from Islam or even more strictly, has conservative views against other religions. The religion that influenced her the most in those days is Buddhism. Still, she enjoys reciting the Quran in her language and reads the first sura before sleep.

Miss Fensham and Dr. Patrick impact her very much. Miss Fensham's Bible lessons develop her not only religiously but intellectually as well. For the Bible has had a more significant impact on English literature and art than the classics. Dr. Patrick introduces her to critical thinking as a philosophy teacher.

Her grandmother and wetnurse, Nevres, occasionally visit her at college. One day, while chatting with them in the guest room, her conversation with the Bulgarian hostler without hijab disturbs Nevres so much that she quits visiting her.

One day, Miss Prime, the managing director of the college, suggests they visit an American yacht that came to the Bosphorus. After spending a day with the Mott family, Halide gets on a boat to return in the evening. After a while, another boat coming behind them orders them to stop "in the name of the law." At that moment, Halide realizes that an informant has reported on her because she visits a foreign yacht as a Turkish girl. But that it happens before Miss Prime hurts her national pride. She asks the boatman to speed up, and they avoid being caught by the police.

When the American educator and diplomat Philip Brown, the French theologian Hyacinthe Loyson, and the famous Hindu cleric Swami Vivicananda come to the college, Halide listens to their speeches and is impressed by them all.

During the summer vacation of 1900, she starts taking private lessons from Salih Zeki Bey due to her failure in mathematics. In time, she gets rid of her mystical inclinations thanks to the conversations she has with him. Because, according to Salih Zeki Bey, who is fond of Auguste Comte, only scientists can understand people. When she returns to college after the holiday, she starts receiving letters from Salih Zeki Bey and finally accepts his proposal and marries him as soon as she graduates from college.

### *Marriage*

After marriage, they settle in a part of Edib Bey's big house in Sultantepe. They are accompanied by Salih Zeki Bey's son from his first wife. Since Halide knows how life divided into two separate dwellings affects a child, she has compassion for this child because he lives both in their house and in his mother's. She also takes her housewife role very seriously. She helps Salih Zeki Bey write a book as his assistant. She considers it a duty to read Conan Doyle's stories aloud in the evenings for her father and husband. In doing so, she improves her ability to translate an English book instantly into Turkish. She focuses on French literature since she cannot become a mother for two years.

Meanwhile, Emile Zola impresses her the most. She perceives Zola's portrayal of people's weaknesses so strongly as a kind of punishment for those who have these weaknesses and sees that her weaknesses, which she encounters in his books, are gradually extinguished. So she accepts Zola as a strong teacher with this aspect.

In 1903, his first son, Ali Ayatollah is born. Sixteen months later, she gives birth to her second son, Zeki Hikmetullah. She names his first son inspiring from a dream. When his second son is born, he is called Togo, like many children, because of the victories of Japanese Admiral Togo in the Russo-Japanese War.

When Zeki is fifty days old, they move to the residence reserved for the director of the observatory in Beyoğlu. Here she often retires to a small room of her own, where she writes and reads Shakespeare. And she begins to translate *Hamlet*.

### *Exile*

Abdurrezzak Bey, the nephew of Ali Samil Bey, detains the servant of the mayor of Istanbul, Ridvan Pasha because his street has not been maintained. Ridvan Pasha informs Abdulhamid about the situation, and he orders them to reconcile. However, Abdurrezzak Bey does not release the servant. The case is closed after a skirmish. But after a while, Ridvan Pasha is found murdered near the house of Ali Samil Bey. But Abdurrezzak Bey releases the imprisoned murderers. That night, Ali Samil Bey and the entire Bedirhani family are exiled to Tripoli, including Mahmure's husband, because he is their groom. Mahmure, pregnant with her fifth child, is left alone. Since a policeman is always waiting in front of her house, no one can visit her. After a while, her husband is transferred to Jerusalem, and she moves there with her children.

### *The Constitutional Monarchy*

Halide Edib's former neighbors, Peyker and her husband Hamdi Efendi's son, had to flee the country because he joined the Young Turk movement. They visit Halide frequently because they correspond with their son through an American friend of Halide. One day, while Halide is at their house in Burgaz, the third largest of the Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara, with them and her grandmother, Salih Zeki comes in with a newspaper to announce that the Constitutional Monarchy has been reinstated. Peyker and Hamdi Efendi start to cry in the hope of seeing their son again, while her grandmother asks what that means. Stating how alien the term "constitutionalism" is to them, Halide Edib asserts that although the Abdulhamid regime can exile people, it cannot banish ideas.

The Young Turks, who declared the Constitutional Monarchy in Resen, Skopje, and Bitola on July 15, sent a telegram to Abdulhamid to inform him that if he does not restore the Constitution, the Third

Army, consisting of Enver, Ismail Hakkı, Niyazi, Mustafa Kemal, Eyüp Sabri, and Cafer Tayyar, will be sent to Istanbul. Halide Edib says this is the story of the declaration of the Second Constitutional Period on July 24, 1908.

The next day, she goes to the heart of Istanbul and watches the crowd on the Galata Bridge, and the ministers swear to be loyal to the new regime in front of the ministries. At the end of a period in which everyone was turned against each other by the network of informants, she finally sees a divinely purified human excitement on people's faces.

During this period, she begins to write for the first time for the literature section of Tevfik Fikret's *Tanin* newspaper. However, she receives many anonymous aggressive letters from conservatives who find the new regime's stance on women against religion. However, when she and her family return to the city at the end of the summer, they move to a house in Nuruosmaniye, where she starts to receive signed letters. She shares her opinions on the social, political, and personal questions in these letters one by one. Many women of different ages visit her in person for advice on matters related to their private lives. Thus, Halide Edib realizes how complicated the difficulties faced by women in the family and society are.

When the elections are held, she sees from the window of her house that the ballot boxes are decorated with flowers and flags. While imams and priests follow the boxes in carriages sitting side by side, Turkish and Greek children sing together. The scene overwhelms her grandmother in such a way that she cannot stop her happy tears.

Another unsigned note arrives these days. The message reads, "You will not write for *Tanin* again! If you do not obey this order, your punishment will be terrible!" However, Halide continues to write both for *Tanin* and other newspapers. Despite everything, Salih Zeki continues to support her.

### *Isabel Fry*

Thanks to an article she writes for an English newspaper, Halide Edib catches the attention of Isabel Fry, who lives in London, and they begin to correspond. When Salih Zeki Bey goes to London, he meets Miss Fry, and when he is back, he tells Halide that Miss Fry will be stunned when they meet face to face. Because Halide is both a younger and overdressed woman than she thinks, although she does not wear colored chador outside, she is very fond of bright and colorful dresses at home. Finally, Miss Fry comes to Turkey in 1909 for three weeks and meet with progressive women and visit some schools, but mostly spends time with Halide.

### *The 31 March Incident*

In the morning, she wakes up to the sound of gunfire from afar. After a while, Huseyin, the servant, knocks on the room door and happily announces that the army has revolted. Although Huseyin learned to read from Halide Edib, he harbors a grudge against the Unionists because he believes they are anti-religious. First, he says that Huseyin Cahit, a writer of *Tanin* newspaper, was killed. However, Halide Edib and Salih Zeki learn that the person who was killed was a deputy. Afterward, Huseyin starts to talk about a religious man named Dervish Vahdeti. This man declares that the Unionists are anti-religious, and it is necessary to kill them. He even claims that Russia and England are genuine guardians of the Sharia.

After Salih Zeki goes out to find out what's going on Edib Bey comes with his friend Doctor Cemal Bey. Peyker's son, who returned to the country after the restoration of the Constitution, told Edib Bey that Halide's name is on the blacklist, so she has to disappear immediately. As Halide learns this, she decides to go to her father's house in Uskudar. Just after getting off the boat, suddenly, a crowd of soldiers walks towards them, and one of her children is stuck to a wall while the other is thrown into a coffeehouse. That is the first time Halide Edib encounters a violent crowd.

The following day, as two people are watching the house, a man from the Uzbeks' Dervish Lodge, opposite the backyard, sneaks into the house to advise her to shelter in the lodge because an important soldier is looking for her. She hides in the lodge with her children at midnight. In the morning, she goes to the American College with her children. To do this, she puts on her grandmother's chador and dresses her children in the old clothes of the gardener's children. They stay

in college for four nights. However, when the turmoil in the streets increases, her American friends think it would be good to get her away for a while. So, she sets out for Egypt with her children.

### *Egypt*

She and her two children arrive in Alexandria after a five-day cruise. A few Armenians living in Alexandria, whom Salih Zeki Bey reached through an Armenian acquaintance, take them to a hotel run by a French woman. However, nobody speaks English. The most common foreign language is Greek. Because of epidemics of scarlet fever and measles in Egypt, her younger son suddenly falls ill. Since she still remembers Greek, she immediately calls a Greek doctor to the hotel. She collapses when the doctor says her child has scarlet fever and needs to be hospitalized. The doctor feels sorry for her and admits the child to the hospital on the pretext of treating influenza. However, he asks Halide not to get him out of bed in the hospital and keep him away from her other child. Halide does whatever the doctor asks her to do. A week passes with anxiety. She does the laundry herself in order not to run out of money. She wonders if her family in Istanbul is still alive. Three weeks later, a letter arrives. Afterward, she sends a telegram to Salih Zeki to inform him that their son is sick. When Salih Zeki comes, their son is still ill, but they are more comfortable as it is understood that his disease is not scarlet fever but measles.

Salih Zeki tells her that Abdulhamid was dethroned, replaced by Mehmed V Resad, and a new cabinet is in charge. Since Miss Fry knows that she is in Egypt, she invites her to England. Thus, Salih Zeki Bey, stating that he will take care of their children, persuades her to go to England.

### *Conservatism*

During the travel, she meets a black woman. She is a singer working in Istanbul and has a 16-year-old daughter from a Frenchman. Since she could not marry her lover, she has another French partner. She helps Halide Edib and her sons throughout the journey. However, when Halide Edib comes across her walking arm in arm with her lover in Egypt, she ignores her. She tries to figure out the reason for her behavior, asking herself whether it is because of the man or her red lipstick but cannot find a satisfying answer.

### *England*

As she sails to England, she wears a hat, albeit with difficulty. She feels nervous throughout the entire journey. However, since Miss Fry has already introduced her to her circle in England, they have a nice program for her. They attend many meetings together. In these meetings, Halide meets Henry Wood Nevinson and John Edward Masefield. Masefield wrote *Pompey* but has not yet published it. Halide reads this work during the few days she stays as a guest in his house. Later, she becomes also a guest of Edward Granville Brown, a professor at Cambridge University. One day, when she goes to university with him, she witnesses a discussion between professors and Irish nationalist politician John Dillon about the autonomy of Ireland and is very impressed by it. The fact that such a topic can be discussed at a university makes her cry. Then, Bertrand Russell, a professor at Oxford University, hosts her. As Russell is immersed in the women's movement, he has many conversations about gender equality with many women of different ages at his home, and Halide joins them too.

Meanwhile, her money runs out, but she can't say anything to anyone. As leaving London, she asked Miss Fry to send any letter written to her to Oxford, but she has received no letter yet. Since she has no money for a train ticket to go to London, she decides to kill herself if she does not receive any money by the day of her departure. But on the morning of departure, the money arrives in an envelope.

### *Istanbul*

When she returns from England, she finds her son sickly. At night, she hears him repeat, "Don't kill my mother." The following day she learns that he has typhoid. She writes the novel *Seviyye Talip* during the sleepless nights waiting for her son.

A while later, she receives an invitation from Prince Abdulmecid Efendi, who lives in a mansion in Camlica. She sees that he and his wife are happy because they can meet with whomever they want, thanks to the new regime. And he describes his situation as "I feel like a baby unboxed."

### *In the World of Education*

The articles she writes about pedagogy in those days attract the attention of Gelenbevi Said Bey, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, and he asks her to visit the Girls' Normal School and give an opinion on what adjustments should be made. She conducts research and prepares a report with Nakiye Elgun, one of the pioneers of the Ottoman women's movement. The school focuses on Arabic, Persian, and religion, but Halide Edib reports the need for Western languages and a modern education method. She also argues that the power of the teachers should be diminished for the students to cooperate with their teachers; otherwise, it creates a system that accustoms students to tyranny. That year, she performs as a supervisor in the Girls' Normal School and writes her book, *Talim ve Terbiye*, meaning *Education and Morality*. Two years later, when a high school for girls and a normal school are opened, she starts teaching.

### *A New Order*

When Salih Zeki Bey wants a second wife, Halide, with her children, goes to her father's house in Greece. She returns to see that Salih Zeki has not changed his mind, and his nine-year marriage comes to an end.

She spends the first days of a long-lasting illness in Nakiye Elgun's house in Fatih and then moves to a place his father found in Fazlipasa. There, on her sickbed, her interest in street sounds begins. Street vendors and beggars constantly pass through the street, and the day is finished when her children arrive from school in the afternoon.

### *New Friends*

When she returns to the school, she meets new names such as Ziya Gokalp and Yusuf Akçura. Ziya Gokalp often visits her at home. Since he attempted suicide at the age of twenty, he has a star-like mark on his forehead, and Halide Edib always sees him as someone who is alienated from his environment.

### *England*

For the second time, she goes to England, rents a two-bedroom flat in Cambridge, and is busy only writing. The members of the Quaker sect inspire her to write her book called *The New Turan*. Isabel Fry is the daughter of a family belonging to this sect, and Halide begins to grasp what the sect is like when she is a guest in Miss Fry's father's castle in Bristol. On Sundays, they take her to the church, which is simpler and quieter than other churches. There is no pastor inside. Everyone sits down and prays, and anyone who wishes can go up to the pulpit and read a passage from the Bible. Accordingly, *The New Turan* depicts a liberal and democratic Turkey appreciating labor and simplicity.

### *Association for Raising the Status of Women*

After the Balkan War breaks out, she works in the Association for Raising the Status of Women. Some women and teachers found the Association, and its center offers classes in different areas like French, English, child care, and housework. When the war starts, they set up a small hospital with thirty beds. They only admit the soldiers because the slightest gossip can cause a big scandal.

Every morning, she walks to this hospital from Fatih to Sultanahmet and stays until late at night. In the deserted and muddy streets, she sees no one except wounded soldiers and shivering refugees from the Balkans. She never forgets one of the soldiers in the hospital. After completing his military service in Albania, this man was sent to Yemen, where he came to the point of losing his mind during the seven years and was sent to the Balkan front three months ago and eventually hospitalized with both legs injured. The surgeon wants to operate to save him without amputating his legs. Still, because his heart is too weak to handle the chloroform, he undergoes surgery awake. Since he forgot his mother

tongue in Yemen and could not learn Arabic, he lays down like the dead without making a sound and only holds Halide Edib's hand tightly. Finally, his legs are saved from amputation, but he has to struggle with malaria this time. When he overcomes that, his memory improves, and he has Halide Edib write letters to be sent to his village.

One day, she receives a letter signed "New Turan officers" from six soldiers. The initial signature is Isildak. She is affected by the letter in such a way that she writes a piece called Isildak's dream. Then she realizes how effective *The New Turan* is. Some stores have this name, and she receives other letters about *The New Turan* from many other places. In his last letter, Isildak asks her to distribute ten copies of it to ten young officers if he becomes a martyr.

The Association holds a rally to protest the persecution of the civilian Muslim Turks in Macedonia. Six well-known women writers and poets give speeches. During the rally, many women pile their diamonds and furs in front of the table. The two female delegates inform the queens about their protest through the embassies.

Halide Edib gets so tired after all this that she is admitted to the German Hospital. One day, while she is in her room, the nurse rushes in, looks from the balcony, and talks to herself. When Halide asks what is happening, the nurse says that the Unionists raided the Sublime Porte.

### *Resignation*

After the minister of education is changed, she cannot agree with the new minister, Sukru Bey, and resigns from her teaching position. For Sukru Bey, she says, values quantity more than quality. A week later, Talat Pasha, Doctor Nâzım, and Ziya Gokalp visit her. Talat Pasha, with his usual humorous attitude, asks her to withdraw her resignation. He takes her resignation out of his pocket, saying, "The stamp is missing." However, Halide Edib resigns three months later.

In those days, Hayri Efendi, the shaykh al-islam of the Unionists, starts to make reforms in education. Since the primary schools attached to the mosques only teach the Qur'an, he combines twelve of them into a single building to modernize them. The girls' school is in a separate building in Sultanahmet. Nakiye Elgun becomes the principal of the school, and Halide Edib the inspector.

### *Death*

Meanwhile, life at the house also changes. Now Mahmure, his husband and children, and Halide's sister Nigar, from her father's second wife, are staying with her. The seven children in the house have changed the whole atmosphere of the place. On the other hand, her grandmother lives among these young women, criticizing their new customs. However, she wants to be in a bigger house, so she and Halide have house tours even though they know they cannot afford a bigger house.

One morning, Halide gets up to find her grandmother lying on her bed without moving. As Halide enters the room, her grandmother raises three fingers of her right hand. At that moment, she remembers what her grandmother told her about not living longer than three days in case she gets sick. As soon as she leaves the room, she calls Doctor Adnan. When the doctor comes, a discomfort appears in her grandmother's eyes, but as Adnan Bey finds a headscarf in the room and puts it on her head, she is relieved. After the third day of her illness, she becomes restless because Halide Edib says she thinks that she is a burden to the people around her but dies on the ninth day.

### *After Her Death*

Since the next day is the first day of Eid al-Adha, many visitors come both for condolences and for the feast. When Ziya Gokalp leaves, Doctor Adnan comes in, but Halide Edib feels a pain in her stomach as she attempts to meet him. Doctor Adnan smiles, saying it's probably because of appendicitis. Fifteen days later, when she starts to recover, Doctor Nazım and Talat Pasha visit her in the hospital. Talat Pasha is thrilled because Edirne was taken back two days ago. So, he tells Halide Edib about his childhood days in Edirne at length.

When he revisits Halide Edib six months later, he says that he invited Miss Fry to Istanbul to consult her ideas on education and that he expects her to persuade Miss Fry to accept the job. Halide Edib hosts her as she promised, but Miss Fry cannot get along with the minister and returns to England a month later.

### *The Girls of Arasta*

Halide Edib states that if the reforms that Sheikh al-Islam Hayri Efendi aimed to realize in education had not been interrupted, the following secular reforms of the Republic of Turkey would have been more effective. For Hayri Efendi would have raised many deep-sighted and modern religious men. She recounts an adventure that happened on one of those days when she visits Hayri Efendi frequently.

As an inspector, when she goes to conservative quarters, she wears an old, long, and loose chador and keeps her face exposed. One morning, thinking she does not pass through such a neighborhood, she goes out in a modern outfit. However, as she leaves school later than usual, she rushes into a street called Arasta. She sees girls play on the road. One of them holds a baby half her age, and one of them has a fancy, probably stolen umbrella. As soon as they see her, they immediately start mocking modern-looking women by imitating them. When Halide Edib catches an expression on the girls' faces, ready to tear her veil and stone her, she realizes the danger that awaits her, and thinking that it is easier to attack someone with a covered face, lifts her veil and speaks to them.

Meanwhile, the girls try to pick up stones from the ground. However, when Halide Edib shows that she has no intention of escaping, they stop. The girl with the umbrella shouts at the girl who makes fun of Halide Edib's chador and says that her sister wears a tight chador too. As the quarrel escalates, the girl with the umbrella explains that the baby in the other girl's arms is from her sister's lover. This time, Halide Edib realizes that she has to keep the umbrella girl on her side and asks who is the lover of the other girl's sister. With this question, the girls start a battle of words, and then a grocer and a butcher show up with sticks and disband the girls. The butcher claims that he saved many women from being stoned and advises Halide Edib not to use the street in that outfit again.

### *Gomidas Vartabed*

A Turkish Hearth is a place where men and women watch plays or listen to lectures, and even women can give speeches. One of the people Halide Edib knows here is an Armenian priest and musician named Gomidas. Son of a poor Armenian family from Kutahya, Gomidas was the organist of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris for many years. Halide Edib maintains that if the Christian Turks had a separate church, many people would not have been exposed to the nationalist influences of the Greek and Armenian churches and that many churches used to serve in Turkish. The mother tongue of Gomidas is also Turkish. In 1915, the Turkish Hearth saves him from deportation, but in 1916 he loses his mental balance. With the permission of Talat Pasha, Doctor Adnan sends him to Paris for treatment, but he dies in a mental hospital.

Halide Edib states that she thought nationalism would create a country full of tolerance but later figured that any ideology could make a bloody and disastrous world. Referring to Kant, she states that the evil people do to each other is more than the damages nature causes.

### *A Meeting*

During the First World War, Yusuf Akçura invites all nationalist writers to discuss what to do if hostile states invade the country. The question of what nationalism means to everyone is discussed. Huseyinzade Ali Bey, who speaks first, says that everyone whose language is Turkish, whose religion is Islam and considers himself Turkish, is closer to him than a Christian Hungarian of Turkish origin. After talking a lot with each other, Omer Seyfeddin and Fuad Koprulu maintain that nationalism is to determine the essence of a nation and teach it to the nation. After that, it is discussed whether to stay in Istanbul or not. Someone, whose name Halide Edib does not reveal, argues that everyone must stay and even become a martyr.

### *Syria*

When a pro-French social mobilization is about to arise in Syria, Cemal Pasha takes drastic measures to suppress it and has forty people executed. After this, a letter written by Cemal Pasha arrives at Halide Edib. In the letter, it is written that he has to close the French monasteries and schools, that he wants to establish a school system in the province of Syria, and is waiting for her support in this regard. The first teacher who goes to Syria voluntarily is Nigar Edib, the sister of Halide Edib. She opens a school in Beirut, and families from all layers of society send their children to this school.

In a second letter, Cemal Pasha asks Halide Edib to prepare a plan to open schools in Damascus, Beirut, and Lebanon together with Nakiye Elgun. Halide Edib and Nakiye Elgun set out with Hamdullah Suphi Bey, who is invited to research Turkish-Islamic works in Syria. The aide of Cemal Pasha accompanies them. Halide Edib carefully examines the places she sees for the first time. When the train stays in Konya for more than two hours, they visit a nearby village. There are hardly any men in the village. They see some depressed old women in front of their houses, children play outside, and a group of young women returning from the field. The young women cry, asking them when the war will end. The loneliness of women, the dusty and hot weather turns into an indescribable memory for her. At the train station, the situation is not much different. Immigrants are sitting side by side, waiting for the train to arrive with blank eyes.

In Islahiye, they get on the truck to go to the train in Aleppo, but they do not want to leave the people waiting for the vehicle there, so they take as many people as possible. The aide objects to them because of cholera and typhus epidemics, but they still take Turkish and Armenian merchants to the truck. When they are around the Taurus Mountains, they hear a scream. A half-naked old woman is crying in the middle of the road, saying that her family left her there the previous day and did not come back to pick her up. Since they have to cross that road before it gets dark, they leave some bread and cheese with a jacket for the woman and continue their way. When the truck moves, Hamdullah Suphi suddenly starts to cry. Halide Edib says that whenever she and Hamdullah Suphi disagree, she remembers his crying like a child for this woman and feels close to him again.

Finally, they arrive at Cemal Pasha's house in Lebanon. Halide Edib is glad that the rumor about Cemal Pasha's living a luxurious life as people are in misery turns out to be false.

The next day, Halide Edib tells him that the Arabs know their needs best and that they should talk to them first, and suggests they make the plan in Beirut since the most Westernized Arabic culture in the empire belongs to the Lebanese. Cemal Pasha agrees, thinking that the French culture influences the Arabs through schools, and they have to provide a liberal and Western education with the Arabs.

### *Huseyin Kâzim*

She first meets with Huseyin Kâzim, one of the founders of *Tanin* newspaper and the former governor of Aleppo. When he tried to settle the deported Armenians in Syria with humanitarian methods, he conflicted with the government and resigned. He knows Arabic well, knows Arabs well, and advocates that the administration of all minorities should follow humane methods. After this meeting, Halide Edib thinks that he affects Cemal Pasha's approach to the Arabs. Afterward, she meets with the Arslans, one of the prominent families of Lebanon.

### *The Report and Some Ideas*

The report is prepared in two weeks. It suggests building a joint normal school in Beirut to train people in Beirut, Lebanon, Damascus, and schools to teach Arabic, Turkish, and French in three cities. Halide Edib states that instead of keeping the Arabs under control, it is better to work for an independent Arab country to cooperate. The Turks spend more money and effort on the Arab world than Anatolia. They shed a lot of blood. Still, the Arabs do not want the Turks because the Turks failed to impose their mindset on them.

### *"I am Dying for the Arabs"*

Halide Edib is visited several times by Colonel Fuad Bey during her stay at the hotel. In one of the visits, she asks him whether the Arab nationalists, who were sentenced to death, were preparing an



uprising to support a French rule or independence. Fuad Bey says that some were pro-independence and describes a man during the time of his execution. He calmly smokes until his turn, then picks the table he prefers to stand on, wraps the rope around his neck, and dies after declaring, "I am dying for the Arabs."

### *The Turkish Sergeant*

They go to Damascus from Beirut. After staying there for a few days and submitting their report, they set out for the desert. When they come to a station near Gaza in the evening, they see a military train. A tall Turkish sergeant with an angry expression is attending Arab soldiers moving into wagons. However, whenever a wagon is full, the sergeant goes to the other wagon, and the soldiers get off to run toward the women waiting. At one point, the sergeant whips these fleeing soldiers. Halide Edib immediately goes up to him. The sergeant complains to her about the soldiers, saying that two hundred soldiers get on the train at one station, except forty or fifty soldiers escape before reaching the other station. Halide Edib asks how many years it has been since he left his village. After the sergeant says, "Six years," he starts giving orders to the soldiers again.

### *Anna*

They tour Bi'r as-Sab under the guidance of Sinai Commander Colonel Behcet. At a hospital they are visiting, a white nurse catches their attention. This Turkish-speaking nurse is Anna, the daughter of a Protestant Armenian family. One day, when Nakiye Elgun gets sick, she takes care of her only at night and says that she cannot leave the soldiers alone during the day.

### *Erlinger*

They meet an air officer named Erlinger. When Halide Edib says she is curious about how people feel in the air, Erlinger immediately starts giving orders in German and takes her on a plane with Nakiye Hanim. When she figures that Erlinger will do aerobatic maneuvers to scare them, she smiles with a calm expression to show that she is not afraid; seeing this, Erlinger changes his mind and takes the plane down.

### *The Window*

While visiting the Church of the Virgin Mary, they see a man sitting on the dark staircase to avoid the sun, reciting the Qur'an. As they chat, they learn that he is an official who prevents people from different sects of Christianity from entering each other's territory. He tells Halide Edib a situation to exemplify the conflict between sects.

One window of the church is filthy. However, no one from any sects dares to clean it; at the same time, each sect believes it has the right to do it. When Enver Pasha comes, he invites the sects' representatives and orders them to clean the window. However, they cannot decide who should carry water and who should hold the brush; in the end, he has the Turkish soldiers clean the window.

### *The Antoura Orphanage*

Before returning to Istanbul, Cemal Pasha shows Halide Edib, Nakiye Elgun, and Hamdullah Suphi the Antoura Orphanage. Built by the Jesuits as a college, it is now a government-owned building housing four hundred orphans. All children are Turkish, Kurdish, and Armenian who have been orphaned due to war and deportation. Halide Edib and Cemal Pasha discuss a lot about this orphanage. Halide Edib opposes naming Armenian children Turkish or Muslim names. Cemal Pasha explains that there is an orphanage in Damascus for Armenian children but can no longer accept any more children. This orphanage only admits Muslim children, Armenian children are named Turkish or Muslim names, but they are not forced to be Muslim. Halide Edib returns to Istanbul, thinking that religious and national identities are insignificant in the face of vital needs.

### *Syria Again*

When Cemal Pasha asks her to found schools in Lebanon and Syria, according to the report, and work as an inspector in the orphanage, which has eight hundred children now, Halide Edib accepts.

A high school and a normal school for girls in Beirut and two boarding schools in Lebanon and Damascus are established. Halide Edib finds the teachers herself; most of them are her former students. Since the building of the normal school in Nazareth was once a nun-run school for the daughters of high-class families, the army plans to place the nuns in a monastery in Jerusalem. However, Halide Edib convinces them to stay in Nazareth, thinking they can help them with the administration.

The abbess often visits her in her room and gives advice. Although Halide Edib's thoughts do not match hers, she listens to her carefully. For example, the abbess opposes students' taking a bath every week, as it can cause the girls to overvalue themselves and place too much value on their bodies. Likewise, she believes that three students should be left in each room, as she finds the close friendship between two students dangerous.

One hundred and seventy-five people apply for the entrance exams. Arab girls from French schools despise Arabic so much that one day when Halide Edib asks an educated Arab girl about the Arabic of cheese, the girl turns to the people next to her and asks if they know the Arabic of *fromage*. However, these newly opened schools give great importance to Arabic.

### *The Orphanage Again*

Those coming from Istanbul are startled as they see the filthy orphanage where eight hundred children live. The director has everything in the orphanage cleaned. Thanks to Doctor Lutfi Kirdar, they get rid of lice in the orphanage. However, children do not behave like humans. They defecate everywhere. Older boys bully the younger ones, steal their bread, and sell it in the village to gamble with the money. When the director wants to return to Istanbul, Halide Edib offers the directorship to Doctor Lutfi Kirdar, and he accepts.

Before going to Istanbul, the director says to Halide Edib that it is impossible to manage the orphanage as the children fight in the cafeteria for food. Halide Edib challenges him, stating that she will bring peace in a week. She opens different units for carpentry, shoemaking, knitting, and tailoring in the orphanage. Older children apprentice to the masters in the units. Every ten children under seven are placed under the responsibility of one older girl and an older boy. The day the children take a shower in groups of ten is unforgettable for everyone. Halide Edib visits the dormitories three times that night to see how the children, who are washed and dressed in clean clothes, sleep. However, only when she faints does she realize how tired she is after two months of intense work.

### *Jale*

While in the Syrian province, she gets married to Doctor Adnan Adivar in Bursa, with his father being a proxy. When Adnan Adivar comes to Syria during the summer vacation, they go to Istanbul together. However, she returns to Syria for a year. This time, the most important development in the orphanage is in the sewer, water, and electrical installations. However, despite everything, eighty children do not develop either physically or mentally. The youngest one especially impresses Halide Edib. Only when Nurse Ismet gets more and more interested in this child named Jale, who is at most five years old, does the child start to collect herself. However, after a while, Nurse Ismet gets sick and is appointed to a more suitable place for her health, and the child returns to her old neglected state. Halide Edib is very upset about her situation. When the child feels her interest, she says, "You will be my mother now," and does not leave her. Halide Edib starts to keep her in her room, and they begin to stay together.

When Halide Edib works with Wadia Sabra to adapt her play *Kenan's Shepherds*, which she had previously written for children, the scene in which his brothers attack Kenan affects Jale. As soon as she hears the line, "Let's kill, let's kill!" she begins to reenact a moment of disaster. At that moment, they realize that a Turkish couple named Hatice and Said were her parents, and they were killed by Armenians coming out of a church.

### *When Cemal Pasha Is Recalled*

While Halide Edib continues to work without thinking that the area is about to turn into a battlefield, she receives a letter stating that the situation in Damascus is critical and goes to Damascus. She meets with Cemal Pasha with a delegation of teachers. Since Cemal Pasha is recalled to Istanbul, he worries about the decline of the education system he is trying to establish but offers to take the teachers from Istanbul with him, just in case. Halide Edib expresses her gratitude and states that it is a duty of honor for them to stay there until the schools are officially closed.

The next day, she holds a meeting with the teachers in Damascus and conveys Cemal Pasha's offer. But they all state that they want to stay. Sleepless nights ensue, as it takes a lot of correspondence to get even two weeks of food. The food problem of both the schools and the orphanage is finally solved thanks to the district governor.

### *Art*

Arab children surprise Halide Edib by translating some of her works into Arabic and French and staging them. *Kenan's Shepherds* is performed thirteen times in Beirut. One evening, the minor actors are taken to the orphanage to perform. With the schools' holiday, the teachers, except the orphanage's teachers, return to Istanbul.

### **Themes**

**Psychological Homelessness** Halide Edib's mother's two marriages and Edib Bey's polygamous life lead her to live away from a permanent settlement since her childhood. Her sister Mahmure, from her mother's first husband, and her father Ali Samil Bey, her father Edib Bey with his two wives, and boarding school life point to different worlds in which she struggles to fit. The years she spends trying to keep up with different houses shape her relationship with the cult of domesticity. It is a kind of psychological homelessness that she experiences. However, this makes her an undomestic woman in such a way that she even considers her role as a housewife, a supporting person in her husband's scientific activities. When necessary, she is busy with her writings alone in England. Leaving her two young children, she goes to the Syrian province many times and works to build a new order in the newly established schools. Her father solemnizes even her second marriage as her deputy in Bursa while she is in Beirut. She owes her strong identity as a woman in the public sphere to her lack of belongingness in the private sphere, which prevents her from embodying the cult of domesticity.

**Fatherhood** Edib Bey is close to his daughter. When Halide is a small child, he welcomes her arrival at the palace one night, when he is on call, with love and understanding. Halide Edib sleeps with him many times in her childhood and as she gets older, her father determines everything she wears to what she eats to raise her in English style. These memories show how close they are.

**Polygamy** Halide Edib begins to witness the daily state of polygamy closely after her father's marriage to his second wife. When the conflict between his father's first wife, the "sister," and second wife, the "aunt," disturbs the peace of the house, his father has to sustain two separate places. However, the conflict between the two women evolves into friction between the two houses, damaging Halide. Since she finds this state of women pathetic, when her husband intends to marry a second wife, she does not accept this and ends her nine-year marriage.

**Class** Despite everything, Halide Edib cannot give up her class-conscious arrogance. When she is a child, she learns from her sister Mahmure that she should not eat the ashura served in the humble ceremony held when a poor child starts school from the same pot as the other children. When her wetnurse, Nevres, has a porter carry her home, being seen in that porter's lap makes Halide feel humiliated. Similarly, she ignores the black singer woman as she comes across her in Egypt. She knows how to relate to slaves and blacks in the private sphere because her wetnurse Nevres is also a black woman, but she doesn't quite know how to relate to people who aren't from her social class in public.

Slavery As a child, Halide Edib knows what it means to be a slave. When people trick her into thinking that she is a slave, she gets angry and feels nervous. However, she has a slave as a child. That the first night when her slave Reshe is home, her sister Nilufer fears that Reshe is a cannibal, and Reshe also fears that all the household members are cannibals sheds light on the tragic daily reality of slavery in the Ottoman Empire.

### **Bibliography**

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