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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Crossing Continents: Navigating The Self and The Mother - Child Relationship in Nadia Hashimi's *When the Moon is Low*

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ABSTRACT

Nadia Hashimi's piece - de - resistance W*hen the Moon is low* is a chilling portrayal of displacement, loss and cultural upheaval suffered by the novel's protagonist, *Fereiba.* In war - torn and Taliban - led Afghanistan, a widowed mother of three navigates life and struggles to reach London with the dream of securing a better life and livelihood for her children. A convincing foundation for examining geopolitical displacement, intergenerational trauma, and maternal identity intersect in the narrative is achieved by drawing on the works of trauma theorists such as Cathy Caruth, Judith Herman, Veena Das and John Bowlby. The study explores how Hashimi portrays the fragmentation and reconstruction of the self and familial relationships within a context of war, patriarchy and exile. The paper specifically focuses on the shifting dynamics of the mother - child bond — fereiba and her deceased mother, her stepmother KokoGul, and her son Saleem — demonstrating how these relationships serve as conduits for both inherited suffering and resilience. While the text has been examined through various critical lenses - including gender, displacement, and migration - no study, so far, has specifically investigated the psychological trauma of its characters through the framework provided by aforementioned trauma theorists. This paper unearths emotional realities and relational patterns that may have long existed within the narrative but remained unexamined or obscured. The study's methodology employs a close textual reading of the novel alongside theoretical insights from trauma studies to trace the psychological impact of forced migration and the gendered experience of displacement. The findings reveal that trauma in the novel is systemic, not merely individual, manifesting in legal, cultural and familial ruptures. The paper concludes that *When the Moon is Low* provides a critical literary lens through which to comprehend the emotional complexities of identity reconstruction and the human cost of displacement across continents. In doing so, it not only adds to existing scholarship on Afghan literature but also foregrounds how trauma functions as a formative force in the formulation of identity within oppressive sociopolitical contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

In her 2015 novel, ***When the Moon is Low***, Nadia Hashimi sensitively weaves a tragic narrative that describes the physical and psychological path of Fereiba, an Afghan mother who is compelled into exile with her children post the death of her husband under the Taliban regime. The novel centers on a multi-faceted dialogue between geopolitical displacement and the construction of identity, specifically in terms of maternal relationships. A trauma studies-based analysis of the novel attempts to determine how Hashimi's narrative engages the mother-child relationship under the context of intergenerational trauma and sociopolitical turbulence, highlighting the transformation of the protagonist as an individual and as a caregiver within the context of the fragmentation of family and national borders.

Inayat Ullah (2020) identifies Afghan literary texts as acts of trauma witnessing, wherein narrative becomes a means to re-frame historical and personal violence. This insight supports the paper's application of trauma theory to ***When the Moon is Low,*** not just as a personal story but as a document of transnational, gendered suffering.

Set against the backdrop of Taliban Afghanistan, the novel is steeped in the socio-cultural impacts of war, patriarchal practices, and polygamous domestic arrangements. Fereiba's childhood is drastically affected by the traumatic loss of her biological mother at birth, her emotionally troubled relationship with her stepmother KokoGul, and her later role as mother to three children—most significantly her eldest son, Saleem, whose adolescence is rudely terminated by precarious adulthood. These mother-child relationships are the prism through which the novel interrogates loss, recovery, and reformation of self. Adopting the paradigms — but not limited to — created by trauma theorists Cathy Caruth, Judith Herman, Veena Das, this study employs trauma theory to examine how the individual dislocations of Fereiba's narrative reflect broader collective traumas of war, gendered displacement, and fractured memory.

Fereiba's narrative is characterised by a tortuous path from Afghanistan, through Iran, Turkey, Greece, Italy, and France to the ultimate destination of London. Each change of border is not just a physical shift but also a location of psychological negotiation, identity construction, and cultural tension. Through these lands, the novel reveals the multifarious realities of Afghan migration, specifically the hostility and structural exclusion of Afghan refugees in host nations.

The novel grounds this coerced displacement in the details of Afghan society—polygamy, religiously mandated gender roles, and spiritual superstitions about fate and the evil eye, which deeply shape women's experiences of motherhood and marginalisation. Fereiba's internalised guilt about her mother's death, her disenfranchisement from formal education, and her eventual resilience as a mother traversing dangerous terrain across continents, all underscore the interplay between the personal and the political. Grounding the analysis in the details of trauma studies, this paper examines how identity, memory, and maternal relationships are negotiated with the terms of war and displacement. Further, it examines how Hashimi's representation of migration disrupts the cultural narratives of femininity and filial obligations in Afghan society, while tracing the psychological landscape of survival that crosses national borders.

CROSSING CONTINENTS

Hashimi tells the gruelling journey of Fereiba and her children fleeing Afghanistan, under Taliban rule, through many countries in search of asylum. This outward journey across continents is a mirror of an inward journey of trauma, disintegration of identity, and a constant search for belonging. The geopolitical context of each country traversed—Iran, Turkey, Greece, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom—adds to the psychological toll of displacement, showing how structural barriers and aggressive policies further enhance the trauma of refugees.

The family's journey starts in Afghanistan, a country plagued by persistent conflict and political unrest. The Taliban government's comeback to power in 2021 brought stringent curbs on civil rights, with a devastating impact on ethnic minorities and women. The Afghan nationality law, primarily *jus sanguinis* based, offers little scope for the acquisition of citizenship, while the absence of international acceptance of the Taliban

government makes it difficult in terms of the legal identities of Afghans and their right to rights (UNHCR 2022). Such legal insecurity leads a large number of Afghans to become stateless or go into a state of limbo, thereby enhancing their state of vulnerability and dislocation.

The initial asylum of the family is Iran, where Afghan refugees have been the target of systematic discrimination and marginalisation. Although Iran hosts a significant number of Afghans and had an open - door policy that granted Afghans refugee status on a prima facie basis, it had stringent policies that restricted Afghan nationals' access to education, employment, and medical care. Fereiba cannot extend her stay in Iran because of the illegal nature of their entry into the country as well as the discordant sentiments towards nationals of her country. Due to the sudden migration of Afghan migrants because of the Taliban regime, armed conflicts and bombing by the United States, the Iranian government made strenuous efforts to repatriate Afghans (UNHCR 2022). Turkey is also a host country to numerous Afghan refugees. There are 7647 refugees and 133,062 asylum seekers from Afghanistan in Turkey (UNHCR 2022). Similar to the majority of Syrian refugees, Afghan refugees and immigrants are originated from the Middle East, and the lack of security and safety in their countries are strong drivers for migration to Turkey (Alemi et al., 2018). These refugees were forced to migrate to the neighbouring countries (e.g., Iran and Pakistan), Western Europe and the U.S. because of the invasion of the Soviet Union of Afghanistan and the civil war in Afghanistan. However, attitudes towards Afghan refugees and immigrants by the host society continue to be, on the whole, negative (Ozden Melis *et al.* 2023). When they reach Greece, refugees face an overwhelmed asylum system and difficult living conditions. Although there is a high recognition rate for Afghan asylum claims—98% between September and November 2024 (EUAA 2025)—the process is still burdensome, with long waiting times and inadequate support. Saleem's estrangement from his kin in Greece shows how the life of a refugee causes breakdown in familial relations, a masterful representation of the way in which trauma disrupts human relations.

When traveling throughout Italy and France, the family encounters bureaucratic hindrances and differences in degrees of openness. France, for example, granted recognition to Afghan asylum seekers to the tune of 68% in the same timeframe (EUAA 2025), indicating a selective policy. The uneven policy in European countries creates a fractured system of protection that compels refugees to run the gauntlet through intricate legal systems while trying to deal with the psychological burdens of uncertainty and displacement.

The United Kingdom is a beacon of hope for numerous Afghan refugees. The situation, however, is usually characterised by significant challenges. The UK resettlement programs, including the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), have been criticised due to their narrow scope and bureaucratic inefficiencies. As of 2024, around 29000 individuals received resettlement under these schemes, but many Afghans arrived via small boats, indicating gaps in the official resettlement pathways (Migration Observatory 2024). Moreover, strict immigration policies and contentious political discourse regarding asylum create a climate of uncertainty and suffering for refugees in pursuit of stability.

As Regin Sam argues in Fear of Predicament of the ***Afghans***, Fereiba's forced displacement reveals the burden of emotional care-giving during crisis, situating her trauma within the broader struggle of Afghan women navigating patriarchal and political marginalisation (Sam, 2023).

Throughout the journey, trauma is not encountered alone; rather, it is shaped continually by the geopolitical frameworks in which the characters travel. The transcontinental flight is not simply a quest for security but an unyielding battle to rebuild identity in the face of overwhelming dis-empowerment. Hashimi's testimony demonstrates that the psychological trauma of displacement is not a secondary byproduct but a constitutive part of the refugee experience. Trauma, here, is not a discrete individual experience but a systemic reality—one performed at the nexus of private loss and geopolitical disregard.

NAVIGATING THE SELF

A nuanced description of the characters navigating their inner spaces within the context of political displacement and personal suffering is offered by Hashimi. The focus of this research is the notion of ***the self***—a self that is fluid, splintered, and reconstituted in terms of experiences of loss, travel, and transformed family forms. For Fereiba and Saleem, border crossing is a psychological experience that entails the crossing of existing notions of self and their redefinition.

Saleem's process of navigating this internal mapping is particularly exemplary. In early adulthood, he is suddenly thrust into manhood after the assassination of his father. This shift, while externally imposed, triggers an internal dislocation to his sense of being. He is to be the protector and provider; however, he is not emotionally prepared to take the responsibility. This internal conflict is in line with Judith Herman's theory that trauma deconstructs "the sense of self in relation to others and the community" (Herman 1992, 52). The conflicts of war and responsibilities externally placed upon him lead Saleem to construct a world in which his character is performative, based less on authenticity and more on survival.

Also, the experience of being a refugee undermines Saleem's self-esteem and belonging. Displacement is not only the loss of home but the loss of cultural and social signifiers that serve to constitute identity. Cathy Caruth's trauma theory, as an experience which resists complete understanding and incorporation, is specially apt here. Saleem is not able to narrate and completely understand his changing self; rather, he exists in a broken temporality in which past, present, and an imagined future converge without consummation (Caruth 1996, 5). His bewilderment, frustration, and final alienation are signs of this inner fragmentation, particularly as he confronts authority, resentment, and guilt in his interactions with Fereiba. For Fereiba too, selfhood is disrupted—though differently. Mother, widow, refugee, herself is split between roles not of her choosing. Her crisis is both historical and continuous: the death of her mother at birth, exclusion from her own family, and the sudden loss of her husband. Fereiba's resilience, her fierce maternal protectiveness, and her subdued mourning all indicate the ways in which trauma insinuates itself into the self—not by disintegration, but by insidious change.

Fereiba is compelled to renegotiate her mother role in a fractured family setting. Saleem's taking of responsibility initiates a role reversal that defies traditional norms, which forces Fereiba to redefine her authority and role. The affective distance that arises between them signifies more than teenage rebellion; it is a sign of a crisis regarding their relational identities. John Bowlby's theory of attachment comes to mind here: the fractures in their relationship produce misalignments that raise feelings of anxiety, resentment, and solitude (Bowlby 1982, 207). But it is in this fractured connection that both characters gradually reconstruct their identities—not individually, but in the hard closeness of each other.

Briefly, the ***'self'*** is not static, nor is it invulnerable to the effects of coerced displacement. Instead, it is constantly remade by such things as memory, psychological trauma, and the demands of affection. Both Saleem and Fereiba are revealed as remade selves-wounded, to be sure, but also attuned to the ethical and affective demands of survival.

CULTURAL AND DOMESTIC TRAUMA:GENDER,POLYGAMY AND PATRIARCHY

Long before conflict and displacement become the primary threads in *When the Moon is Low*, cultural and domestic trauma function as an insidious force. Born into a polygamous Afghan family, Fereiba's early years demonstrate how trauma can be normalised by patriarchal systems, silently impacting a woman's identity, agency, and sense of value. Though not overtly violent, the emotional neglect and hierarchy within her blended family create a deep psychological wound. The forced responsibility of rearing the first wife's children, specially when the woman in question could not be challenged, bred in KokoGul, contempt for children - especially Fereiba. KokoGul's coldness and preferential treatment of her own children cultivate in Fereiba an early sense of dispossession and self-doubt. The subtle but enduring emotional

exclusion she experiences fits Judith Herman's concept of "chronic trauma", in which harm is generated by ongoing powerlessness and emotional neglect within personal relationships (Herman 1992, 74). The trauma is not spectacular or overt, but is embedded in daily life, passed off as discipline or duty. This muted and surreptitious trauma is a synthesis of the cultural structures that define womanhood in Afghanistan. In a society that demands submissiveness and blind obedience from it's women, fereiba finds her young desires of gaining an education and finding romantic love thwarted by the cultural inertia of patriarchy. Veena Das observes that "violence does not have to explode spectacularly to register its harm; it descends into the ordinary," becoming embedded in everyday social roles and expectations (Das 2007, 7). Fereiba internalises the invalidity of her desires, her life's pursuit in domesticity and endurance as the single virtue for women. Confirming and perpetuating these norms is KokoGul, instantiating the sustenance of patriarchy by the complicity of women within familial structures in conjunction to its practice by male dominance. Polygamy, while not depicted as explicitly abusive in the novel, becomes a symbol of normalised gender inequality and emotional fragmentation. The family structure in which Fereiba grows up may appear socially functional, but emotionally, it is fractured. Whether through KokoGul's insistence on needing fereiba's constant help with household chores that elude her the pursuit of academia, the ruse of babysitting her half - siblings when they are well past the need of being looked - after, or her comparatively affectionate treatment of her elder brother, Asad, who is the key to his father's heart - fereiba experiences maternal deprivation, isolation, and unwarranted grief. She is 'displaced' (emphasis, mine) long before it physically happens. Fereiba does not need to be 'haunted' (emphasis, mine) by an unremembered event; rather, her trauma is embedded in how she was raised—through coldness, exclusion, and the internalisation of cultural silencing. Judith Herman observes that survivors of prolonged interpersonal trauma often come to accept emotional deprivation as normal, leading to a profound loss of self-worth and voice (Herman 96). This illustrates why Fereiba seldom articulates her suffering explicitly; she has learned, from an early age, to view it as a part of her existence. As Veena Das argues, trauma in such contexts "becomes part of the ordinary," intertwined with everyday life and family practices, rather than surfacing as a significant disruption (Das 2007, 8). Consequently, it leads to a consistent pattern of behaviour - self-negligence, emotional restraint, and an overwhelming sense of duty toward others - that highlights trauma's profound influence.

MOTHER - CHILD RELATIONSHIP: INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND RESILIENCE

Fereiba and Birth Mother: Consumed with the guilt of killing her mother in childbirth, fereiba is perennially burdened with the weight of her existence. The notion finds permanence when she laments the fact that it had been several days before her father "could bring himself to the hold the daughter who had taken his wife."(Hashimi 2015, 7) Coupling this with Bowlby's findings on long - term impact of early attachment that postulates that the parent - child dynamic, since its conception, serves as the blue - print for a foundational understanding of relationships in general, lends proof to the dysfunctional bond between the father - daughter duo. Bowlby states, "A person's internal working model, formed during infancy and childhood, acts as a template for expectations about relationships throughout life" (Bowlby 1982, 203). For Fereiba, growing up without maternal warmth fosters a pervasive sense of loneliness, which she internalises and later unconsciously projects into her own caregiving.

Her memory of her mother is fragmented, reconstructed through sparse recollections from her father and grandfather. Cathy Caruth describes trauma as a wound that resists full representation, one that returns as an unprocessed echo of the original event (Caruth 1996, 4). For Fereiba, the cutting of the umbilical cord is both literal and symbolic—a severance from maternal continuity that marks her as permanently 'motherless' (emphasis, mine). Judith Herman identifies this form of relational trauma as one that damages the self by rupturing key attachment bonds (Herman 1992, 52).

In Afghan culture, protective rituals surrounding childbirth, such as whispering *Nam-e-Khoda* and the *Azaan* in the infant's ear, aim to safeguard newborns from misfortune. Fereiba's exclusion from this rite becomes emblematic of a broader belief that she is a vessel of ill fate. "My fate was sealed in blood on the day of my birth," she states, encapsulating the fatalism that governs her life (Hashimi 2015, 7). This internalised guilt is reaffirmed by societal events: the deaths of her birth mother, a suitor, and members of her husband's family. Herman notes that trauma often engenders shame and helplessness, especially when framed as cosmic or moral punishment (Herman 1992, 57).

The emotional neglect Fereiba endures under her stepmother KokoGul compounds this trauma. Though intended as a caregiver, KokoGul's emotionally distant parenting fails to provide the necessary conditions for secure attachment. Donald Winnicott's theory of the "good-enough mother" posits that emotional attunement is key to healthy development (Winnicott 1965, 10–11). KokoGul's failure in this role leaves Fereiba feeling unseen and unworthy, reinforcing a narrative of exclusion and abandonment. Yet Hashimi's narrative also allows space for emotional reclamation. Fereiba begins to reinterpret her mother's absence through symbolic acts of love and survival. Her father's gifting of her mother's bangles, her mother-in-law's warmth, and her decision to sell the bangles for the survival and protection pf her children become acts of transgenerational connection. In these moments, the imagined presence of her mother becomes a source of strength.

Dori Laub's concept of "earing witness" offers a framework for this transformation. It is not through recovered memory but through lived experience that Fereiba begins to narrate survival (Laub 1992, 85). Caruth reminds us that trauma is not only about loss, but about transmission—where the pain of the past carries through generations, often in symbolic forms (Caruth 1996, 8). Fereiba, in this light, becomes both daughter and mother, navigating the liminal space between inherited grief and maternal resilience.

Fereiba and KoKoGul: Fereiba's relationship with her stepmother, KokoGul (formerly Mahbuba), is marked by emotional distance and a lack of maternal intimacy, shaped by intersecting traumas and cultural expectations. As the eldest of five siblings, KokoGul was a "parentified child", prematurely assuming caregiving duties—a role rooted in family instability and emotional scarcity (Chase 1999, 4). Entering the household as a substitute for Fereiba's deceased mother, she never transcends the status of 'second wife' (emphasis, mine), and her maternal role is structurally marginal. While she assumes the title of 'mother' (emphasis, mine), it lacks the emotional attunement Bowlby deemed vital for healthy development—a "warm, intimate, and continuous relationship" that enables the child's psychological stability (Bowlby 1982, 13).

Despite efforts to erase the physical presence of Fereiba's mother, her memory persists through Fereiba and her brother Asad, whose existence anchors the past in the household. KokoGul's emotional detachment and inability to fully embrace these children indicate a caregiving model driven by duty rather than affection. This imbalance becomes especially pronounced in her treatment of Fereiba, who, unlike Asad, is subject to restrictions, surveillance, and exclusion. Judith Herman notes that domestic trauma frequently manifests through chronic neglect and unequal emotional labour, especially toward daughters burdened with symbolic significance (Herman 102). Fereiba, as the child whose birth led to her mother's death, is viewed as a bearer of misfortune. KokoGul internalises and enacts this cultural stigma, limiting Fereiba's education and social exposure, assigning her value through service rather than personhood.

These daily denials reflect what Veena Das describes as the "inscription of violence into the ordinary" (Das 2007, 7). Fereiba is not subjected to overt abuse but instead to a subtler form of trauma—social erasure, muted aspirations, and the absence of unconditional care. Her early maturity is shaped by emotional scarcity, compounded by gendered expectations that frame her life through sacrifice and silence. Yet KokoGul is not depicted as a villain. Rather, she is the product of a system that denied her the space for self-definition. Raised in deprivation and prematurely inserted into caregiving roles, she reenacts patterns of emotional withdrawal. As Das argues, trauma often recurs in "slow poison" rather than dramatic rupture—it persists in the rhythms of daily life, especially for

women whose histories are steeped in service and erasure (Das 2007, 10).

This intergenerational transmission of trauma is not driven by cruelty but by structural and emotional limitation. KokoGul's relationship with Fereiba reveals a caregiving model formed under the weight of displacement and duty, where affection is a luxury, few can afford. The family home becomes a crucible of inherited grief, where maternal bonds are forged not through love, but through necessity, exhaustion, and social scripts. In such a space, Fereiba is not only denied maternal warmth but also a framework for understanding love outside of obligation. Her story underscores how trauma, especially for women, can become embedded in the domestic sphere —quietly, persistently, and across generations.

Fereiba and Saleem: Hashimi traces the enduring effects of intergenerational trauma through the relationship between Fereiba and her son Saleem. Their story — marked by loss, forced displacement and premature responsibility — illustrates how trauma can reverberate within familial bonds, silently shaping both behaviour and identity across generations.

Saleem's childhood unfolds amid the structural violence of Post-Soviet Afghanistan and the Taliban regime. His freedom is circumscribed not only by social constraints but also by his mother's deeply internalised fear. Fereiba's restrictions on Saleem's activities—prohibiting overnight stays or unmonitored play—stem from her protective instincts, but they foster in him a sense of confinement. This tension is rooted in a legacy of trauma that predates Saleem himself. As Judith Herman writes, trauma "impels survivors to testify, to proclaim the truth of their experience" (Herman 1992, 1), but in the absence of this testimony, trauma may instead be transmitted behaviourally—through hypervigilance, emotional distance, or overprotection.

Fereiba's own history of abandonment and marginalisation—her mother's death in childbirth, her father's emotional absence, and her upbringing by a stepmother—contributes to the fear she brings into motherhood. Her trauma is not openly communicated to her children, but, as Cathy Caruth argues, trauma often "is not fully owned at the moment of its occurrence," and is instead experienced belatedly, returning through repetition (Caruth 1996, 4). In this sense, Saleem does not inherit stories—he inherits symptoms. Fereiba's silence and anxious caregiving create a psychological environment where fear is ambient but unnamed.

Following the assassination of Saleem's father, Mahmood, the mother-son relationship undergoes a seismic shift. Saleem, still a boy, is thrust into the role of provider and protector. This premature transition exemplifies "parentification", a form of role reversal common in trauma-affected families, where children adopt adult responsibilities to fill emotional and practical voids (Hooper ***et al.*** 2011, 228). Fereiba must accept this change, though it fractures their connection. As she observes, "We lived in the same space, with the same thoughts, and yet, for the better part of our days, we were confounded by each other. We were a family beheaded and floundered around as such" (Hashimi 2015, 131).

Judith Herman notes that trauma often erodes one's capacity for trust and mutual recognition in relationships (Herman 1992, 56). Saleem's new responsibilities also alter his self-perception; he begins to speak with a sense of entitlement, testing the boundaries of respect with his mother. This is not merely rebellion—it reflects the psychic toll of trauma passed from one generation to another. Rachel Yehuda's research emphasises how trauma can be biologically and behaviourally transmitted, shaping stress responses and emotional regulation in children born to traumatised parents (Yehuda and Lehrner 2018, 244).

Qazi and Saeed (2024) emphasise that Afghan refugee narratives often embody trauma and resilience within intergene4rational family structures, especially maternal bonds. this aligns with Fereiba's evolving relationship with Saleem, where love and silence operate simultaneously as survival strategies and emotional inheritances. Veena Das's insights are also relevant here. In ***Life and Words***, she argues that trauma is often absorbed into the "ordinary" rhythms of domestic life, especially in the aftermath of political violence (Das 2007, 6). Fereiba and Saleem's emotional disconnection is not played out in dramatic confrontations but in quiet misunderstandings,

shifts in tone, and changing roles. Their suffering is etched not only in what is said, but in what is withheld.

When the family is separated in Greece, this layered trauma reaches a breaking point. And yet, what persists is not only grief, but resilience. Despite the emotional fissures and unspoken pain, both Fereiba and Saleem are sustained by their attachment—a bond forged in survival, shaped by trauma, and made durable by love.

CONCLUSION

Nadia Hashimi's *When the Moon is Low* exemplifies the intertwined coexistence of individual suffering and global catastrophic events. The novel depicts the violence of displacement as Fereiba and her children attempt to untangle familial relationships, identity and mental health. This inquiry, situated within trauma studies, analyses how Fereiba's shattered maternal attachments—losing a birth mother, estranging a stepmother, and transforming bonds with a son—are exacerbated through conflict, cultural dislocation, and exclusion on the margins of geography. These attachments are not purely maternal; they are subsumed under domestic and global constructs of warfare, patriarchy, and precarious migration.

Fereiba's journey from Kabul to Iran, Turkey, and Greece are a quest for safety and autonomy, both physically and mentally. Each crossing represents a challenge to not only national boundaries but also to identity-defining borders set by Afghan patriarchal society. With migration and its demands thrusting Fereiba's son Saleem into adulthood long before his time, he becomes both a reflection and a counterbalance to her trauma. His story of survival, separation, and eventual self-sufficiency illustrates the lingering consequences of forced displacement on and the resilience of subsequent generations.

NOTES

Citizenship law in Afghanistan is heavily based on the principle of *jus sanguinis*. Thereby, a child born to at least one parent who is an Afghan citizen will be considered as a citizen of Afghanistan, regardless of the place of birth. A child born within Afghan territory would be granted Afghan citizenship upon reaching the age of 18 given that he/she has an intention to permanently reside there, and does not take up any of the parents' foreign citizenships, subject to article 7 of the citizenship law.

Nam - e - Khoda; Persian for "In the name of God", praising God's name.

In Islamic tradition, it is a recommended practice to whisper the *Azaan* (the call to prayer) into the right ear of a new born infant immediately after birth. The purpose of this practice is to have the first sounds a newborn hears be the words of monotheism and the call to worship Allah.

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