



Item Code:

951

Participant Code:

103

I was going to the one place I thought I would never have to see again... A light shower was drumming rhythmically on the window panes. The droplets, looking like tears raced each other down the glass.

He let his head lull on the window staring at the vision of the passing fields. A book kept open on his lap. His mind drifted to a noisy street, children running to buy sweets... people bargaining with the street vendors... and in the midst of all, there was a little boy looking over the busy street from the window of that small house on hope street.

"Hey, Amir..." somebody called out to him. He looked down to see his friend waving his hands on the air. He waved back gesturing him to come in.

"I've been waiting for you for too long... what took you so long?" Amir asked as the boy climbed the stairs.

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"I went to get you this..." The boy said handing him a sea shell.

"It's a lucky shell. Ali uncle gave this to me and I wanted to give it to you, since you're leaving."

Amir rubbed the shell with his fingers.

"To... will you miss me if I leave?"

He didn't spoke and looked around the room. Everything was packed.

"You can't stay, can you?"

Amir's eyes filled with tears. He opened a chest and carefully put the stone in it.

"I must go. I can't stop my parents from leaving..." He breathe shakily. "I want you to look after this house and take care of the little kittens downstairs. I'll surely comeback to see you."

Tears rolled down To's cheek.

"I know" he said shakily. "I'll take care of everything"



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Amir was waken up by the railway announcement.

The dull sound of the rain grew to a roar as the door swung open and a man shuffled in, water dripping from his oversized coat.

"Heavy rain, huh?" he said as he sat beside him. Amir nodded slightly and pretend to read the book on his lap.

He have never imagined he would be going back to that street, until he recieved a letter from Ali uncle saying To passed away. After twenty years he was going back to his home..

The train stopped.

"Leaving?" the man beside asked as I took my luggages.

"Yeah" I said struggling a smile.

The street was no more busy. The sign saying 'Hope street' hanging upside down. The window of his house half open, he could see a shadow of an old man. He climbed up the stairs.

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"Ali Uncle?"

The old man turned, "Ah, you reached."

He took a <sup>set</sup> pack of letters from his coat pocket.

"Here, these are from To. He was writing you letters all time but couldn't post it as he didn't know your address."

Amir's hands were slightly shaking as he hold the letters.

"He only found recently that I know your address and asked me to post it for him. His wife died due to delivery complications and he was diagnosed with cancer. He was working as a servant in a house on the town. After his death the landlord took his <sup>only</sup> son's guardianship."

A feeling of guilt burdened his heart. He looked around the house.

"To, came here on every weekend and cleaned everything. He kept everything as it was. I won't stay long... come home when you're done."

The old man left

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Amie looked around, his feet trembling,  
he kneeled down. The letters scattered on the  
ground and among them, one said,

"Hopefully, To"

Amie couldn't breathe, his heart filled with  
heaviness. He felt a great silence shadowing  
around him dragging him into the darkness  
of guilt and grief. Tears were rolling down his cheek.

"How come I could ever forget you?"

A kitten cat jumped in front of him, it's  
sharp eyes stabbed his heart as a knife. He felt  
the pain in his chest.

He opened the letters filled with hope, To be  
read by a hopeless man.

The house on hope street, for him felt like  
cursed for the first time in his life.