NEW BEGINNINGS

THE CHILDHOOD OF MUSTAFA KEMAL

The years is 1881. Salonika is a busy town by the sea. In 1881, it is part of the Ottoman Empire.

From salonika, roads go into Macedonia. There is railway, too. Farmers come to

Salonika from Nothern Greece and Macedonia. The buy and sell things in the market.

All kinds of people live there. There are Turks, Greeks, Slavs,Albanians and Jews.

The Turk lives on the hill behind the market. Some of the old Turkish houses are still there.

You can see one of them this picture. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was born in this house in1881.

It is spring. There are new leaves on the trees. Ali Rıza Bey is looking out of yhe window. He is thinking. His wife. Has anew baby.

‘ I must find a name fort he baby.’ He thinks. ‘My brother Mustafa İs dead now. We can give the baby my brother’s name’

He goes into the bedroom. ‘zübeyde ,’ he says. ‘I have got a name for him.

‘Mustafa’ What do you think? Do you like that name?

‘Mustafa yes That is a nice name.’ Says Zübeyde Hanım.

Ali rıza Bey goes and whispers in the baby’s ear.

‘Mustafa He whispers. ‘Your name is Mustafa.’

Mustafa is two now.

He is sitting on his mother’s knee. She is singing to him.

‘Sleep, little Mustafa.’ She sings

Mustafa has fair hair and blue eyes, like his mother.

Now Mustafa is six. His father and mother are talking about him. ‘We can send him to a new, modern school.’ His father says.

‘No’ His mother says. ‘ He must go to Hodj Effendi’s school. My son must be a good Muslim.’

‘ All right then.’ says Ali Rıza Bey.he thinks. I don’t like regilious schools. But I love my wife.

At Hodja Effendi’s school the boys learn Arabic. They sit on the floor. And write on their knees.

‘Repeat after me!’ says. Hodja Effendi.

‘Euzibillahiminesseytanirracim!’

All boys shout together: ‘Euzibillahiminesseytanirracim!’

Mustafa is not comfortable. His leg hurts. ‘please sir,’ he says. ‘Can I stand up?’

‘No you can’t says Hodja Effendi.

The other boysa re not comfortable, either. ‘Mustafa is right, Hodja Effendi,’ They say. ‘We can’t sit like this all the time. Our legs hurt.’

‘Be quiet!’ shouts Hodja Effendi.

All the boys stand up’ we can2t sit on the floor, Hodja Effendi,’ they say.

‘Listen to us!’

Ali Rıza Bey takes Mustafa Away from Hodja Effendi’s school. He sends him to Şemsi Effendi school. This is a new, modern school. Zübeyde Hanım does not say anything.

‘Mustafa likes Şemsi Effendi’s School,’ she thinks. ‘ he is happy now.’

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These are happy times for Mustafa. His sister, Makbule, is happy too. At home they play in the garden behind the house. Mustafa climbs the trees in the garden.

‘Be careful!’ says Makbule.

‘Don’t be freightened,´says Mustafa ‘It’s all right.’

Mustafa is very serious boy. He does not playwith other children. One day they are playing leap-frog. ‘ Come on Mustafa,’ they say. ‘Come and play with us.’

‘No’ says Mustafa. ‘No one must jump over my back!’

But life is not easy fot their parents. Ali rıza Bey is very worried. Business is bad

‘Things are going badly for me,’ he says to his wife. ‘I am losing Money.’

‘ Don’t worry,’ she says.

Ali Rıza Bey loses all his money. Then he becomes ill.

One evening the doctor comes to their house. He look at Ali Rıza Bey. Then he says,’Zübeyde Hanım, I want to tak you. Send the children away.’

Mustafa and Makbule leave the room. After afew minutes, the doctor goes. Their mother is still in the bedroom. She is crying. That night their father died.

Mustafa is only seven years old. Now he has no father. Zübeyde Hanım takes Mustafa and Makbule to Langaza, Langaza is in the country, Thirty kilometres from Salonika. Her brother has got a farm there. Anew life ias beginning for the family.

Mustafa and Makbule both like the farm. They help their uncle. İt is very hard work, but they enjoy it.

Hüseyin, their uncle, has two oxen in the autumun, they plough the fields. The oxen pull the plough. The plough open the earth Behind them, birds come and look for worms.

In the winter, there is not much work They do not go out. They alll sit in the farmhouse. Mustafa and Makbule roast chestnut on the stove.

Zübeyde Hanım looks at her son. ‘Mustafa is strong and healty now,’ she thinks. ‘this is agood life for us. My btother is very kind. But Mustafa must g oto school. There are no good school here. And we can’t go back to salonika because we haven’t got any Money.’

In the spring, Mustafa and Makbule go into the fields every day. They look at bean plants.

The plants are growing fast.

The crows watch the plants, too. In aprıl , the plants are big and green. The crows coma and eat some of them.

Uncle Hüseyin is angry. ‘where are my beans? In the crows’ stomachs!’ he says. ‘you aren’t doing your job!’

‘yes we are, Uncle Hüseyin’ says Makbule. ‘we shout at the crows. But After half an hour, we getb could. So w ego back to the house.’

‘And then the crows come back again ?’ says uncle Hüseyin.

‘Yes’ says Makbule. But what can we do? It is very cold. We can stand in the field all day.’

Uncle hüseyin makes a hut in the corner of the field. ‘You can both sit in here and watch. Wait fort he crows. Then jump out and shout at them!’ he says.

It is summer. There is a lot of work on the farm. They work in the fields from morning to night.

One day Mustafa says to his mother. ‘Mother I like it here. Uncle Hüseyin is very kind to us. We have lots of good food. But I am not learning anything. We can I goto school again?’

‘I know my son’ said his mother. You are right I am thinking about that too.’

There is a small Greek school in the village. The teacher is a priest. Mustafa goes there for a week. But he does not like it.

‘Mother the greek school is like hodja Effendi’s school in salonika , he says ‘I don’t like regilious school- Müslim or christian! Please send me to real school Please Mother!’

Zübeyde Hanım writes aletter to her sister in salonika. ‘Dear Sister’ she writes. ‘I hope you and your family are well. Everyone is well here. I want to ask you something. Mustafa is eleven yearsold now…’

A letters comes from Salonika Zübeyde Hanım reads it.

Who is it from? Asks Mustafa.

It is from your aunt. She says. She finishes the letter. Then says Well Mustafa. I have got some good news for you. Your aunt says you can stay with her. You can g oto real school!.

So Mustafa leaves the farm and goes back to the town.

For a time everything goes well. Mustafa is happy because he is going to school again.

They one day there is a big fight in his class. All the boysa re shouting. They do not see the man at the door. It is Kaymak Hafız. Their Arabic teacher.

‘What is happening here’ says Kaymak Hafız.

The boys all turn and look. No one speaks. Everyone is afraid Of Kaymak Hafız. He points toMustafa. ‘Come here boy!’ He shouts. Mustafa goes nad stands in front of him.

‘It is you again! It is always you you start fights everday!’

‘No Sir I----‘

Quiet boy!’

Kaymak Hafız hits Mustafa very hard with his stick. He hits him again and again. The Other boys stand and look.

‘he hates Mustafa’ they think. ‘He wants to kill him.’

That afternoon Mustafa walks home very slowly. There are cuts on his face and all over his body.

‘Nobody must see me’ he thinks He wals through the back streets. He knocks on the door of his aunt’s house. She opens the door. Mustafa ! you are early! She says. Then she sees his face.

‘oh you poor boy!’ she says ‘ close the door’

‘All right Mustafa’ she says ‘But tell me…’

‘I am sorry aunt’ he says I don’t want to talk about it. But Ican say one thing. Iam not going to that school again!’

Zübeyde Hanım and Makbule come back to Salonika. Now the family is together again. But Mustafa’s mother is worried. There is a military school in the town. The boys at this school wear uniform. Mustafa sees these boys in the streets He thinks ‘I want to be like them.’

Mustafa’s mother watches him. Amother always understands her son…

‘Mother’ he says, ‘I want to ask you something. Can I…’

‘I know,’ says his mother. ‘ you want to g oto that military school. Am I right?

‘Yes’ says Mustafa. ‘Don’t get angry, Mother…’

‘Well, the answer’s ‘no’! Don’t talk about it again!’

There are wars in the Ottoman empire at this time’oh why does Mustafa Want to be a soldier?’ she thinks ‘Why? My husband is dead. I don’t want to löse my son as well!’

Mustafa Studies hard. His Mother does not see him with his boks at night. He does no tell her anything.

He takes the entrance fort he military school. Then he waits. His Mother still does not know anything.

‘What is wrong with Mustafa?’ Zübeyde Hanım thinks. ‘He is not talking very much. İs he ill?

A letter comes for Mustafa. He is very quiet. His mother and Makbule watch him. He opens the letter and reads it.

‘Well,mother,’ he says ‘I must tell you something.’

‘What?’ his mother asks.

‘Read this.’

Mustafa gives his mother the letter.

‘What is it Mother?’ Makbule asks. ‘ Is it bad news?’

‘No it is all right, Makbule,’ Zübeyde Hanım says ‘But it is a suprise.’

‘Go on Mother, tell me,’ says Makbule.

Zübeyde Hanım wants to cry. She reads the letter again very carefully. ‘I must not cry,’ She thinks. Then she smiles.

‘It is from the military school,’ she says ‘Mustafa’s passed the entrance exam.