

Forty Years Through My Lens of Melancholy, 1964–1980

Ayşe Kulin (1941)

OVERVIEW

In this work, Ayşe Kulin recounts her second marriage, becoming a mother again, experiencing another separation, discovering professional working life for the first time, and confronting personal losses during the period from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s. At the heart of the narrative is her struggle to build a life for herself and her four sons. The custody battle she faces after her first marriage leaves her feeling deeply helpless, while the disappointments and financial uncertainties of her second marriage to Eren Kemahlı gradually lead her towards independence. Her entry into the advertising industry by chance, followed by her move into public relations, enables her to support herself through her own work and provide for her children. However, financial independence does not put an end to family conflicts or long-standing resentments. Her children's lives, particularly those of her two sons from her first marriage, are shaped by family disputes and disagreements. As Ayşe Kulin tries to protect her children from the effects of these conflicts and preserve the bond between the brothers, she witnesses them growing up in different countries with different hopes for the future. The street clashes, declarations of martial law, economic crises, and eventual military coup of the period intrude into the most intimate aspects of family life. At the same time, her professional life, friendships, romantic relationships, and bonds with her children provide the foundations on which she rebuilds her life under changing circumstances. The narrative concludes with Ayşe Kulin's final days at the bedside of her gravely ill father and her coming to terms with his death.

PEOPLE

Mehmet Sarper	Ayşe Kulin's first husband
Eren Kemahlı	Ayşe Kulin's second husband
Koko	Eren Kemahlı's mother
Mete	The son of Ayşe Kulin and Mehmet Sarper
Ali	The son of Ayşe Kulin and Mehmet Sarper
Kerim	The son of Ayşe Kulin and Eren Kemahlı
Selim	The son of Ayşe Kulin and Eren Kemahlı
Yiğit Okur	Lawyer and writer, Ayşe Kulin's boyfriend

SYNOPSIS

Following the end of her first marriage, Ayşe Kulin marries her old friend Eren Kemahlı and moves into his family's inherited mansion in Yeniköy. Her former husband, Mehmet Sarper, claims that he does not want his children to grow up with a stepfather and initiates a custody battle. During this process, which she can mostly share with friends because she does not want to upset her family or her husband, she is subjected to various slanderous allegations by the opposing lawyer. Every kind of accident involving her two sons is used as evidence against her. Amid this exhausting ordeal, she gives birth to two more sons, Kerim and Selim. Although she eventually wins custody of Mete and Ali, her former husband sends them to a boarding school in Switzerland. The financial difficulties accompanying Eren's obsession with appearances lead Ayşe to earn money through translation. After her marriage ends because of Eren's infidelity, she enters the advertising industry by chance, initially working on commercial productions. She later begins working in public relations through Betül Mardin. As she becomes financially independent, she is also able to support her two sons, who are attending university in Switzerland, and protect them from their father when necessary. The period in which she leaves the Yeniköy mansion, where she has lived with her children until her formal divorce from Eren, and buys an apartment of her own in Nişantaşı marks a new phase in which she achieves greater independence. Nevertheless, her former husband Mehmet's troubled relationship with their children periodically reignites family tensions. Ultimately, the greatest turning point in Ayşe Kulin's life is the death of her father.

EVENTS

Returns

Ayşe thinks her mother will burst into tears as soon as she sees them, but she does not. Her face, however, shows the effects of sleepless nights. As they get into a taxi, her mother reminds her that they no longer live in their old house. She explains that they have given Ayşe their living room and arranged the bedrooms for the children.

Ali's second birthday comes within a week, so Ayşe invites her cousin Semra and her former classmate Işıl to the house with their children. Although the snow is knee-deep that day, both Semra and Işıl arrive with their children, and they celebrate the birthday together. However, as they sing the birthday song, everyone's eyes fill with tears, and no one can look at anyone else.

In time, they establish a routine. In the mornings, the children play in the garden in front of the house. In the late afternoons, Ayşe takes them to watch the flag-lowering ceremony in front of Çankaya Presidential Palace. They visit Anıtkabir and Çubuk Dam together. Every evening, her father puts raisins in two coffee cups and hides them in a corner of the house. The children search for the cups and, when they find them, celebrate with cries of delight.

Her mother's composure does not last long. After friends who come to find out what has happened leave the house, she shuts herself in her room and cries. Ayşe thinks the real reason for her mother's sorrow is that she cannot bear her daughter's failure. After all, Ayşe is only twenty-three and has been left with two children and nowhere to turn. One day, however, Esma Nayman, the sister of her aunt by marriage Ecla and one of Turkey's first female members of parliament, visits them. She congratulates Ayşe on adding experience to her beauty, intelligence, good manners, and youth. Although her mother finds this attitude strange, Ayşe feels a little better when she realizes that some people see her situation as something to be celebrated rather than a failure.

But she has left her personal belongings, including her tweezers and hair clip, in Istanbul, along with Dr. Spock's book, the most famous childcare guide of the time. She therefore takes a bus to Istanbul to collect her things. After spending the night at her grandmother's house, she goes to the apartment in Maçka. Although she has the key in her bag, she rings the doorbell. Her friend Tefo opens the door and tells her that he has been staying in the apartment since she left. Once they move into the living room, he explains that he is about to divorce Gönül, his wife, who is much older than he is.

While talking to him, Ayşe notices that the silver ornaments are missing from the shelves. When she asks where they are, Tefo tells her that Mehmet's mother has taken them away. Tefo calls Mehmet to tell him that Ayşe has arrived, so Mehmet comes over shortly afterwards. When he arrives, Ayşe moves to kiss him on the cheeks, but he pulls back. They shake hands instead.

Mehmet asks why she has not brought the children. Ayşe explains that she has come by bus. Mehmet reproaches her for not taking a plane, and she is astonished by how out of touch with reality he is. He does not even realize that her only income is the pocket money she receives from her father.

Ayşe also asks him what has happened to her grandmother's antiques, the gifts from her aunts, uncle, and maternal uncle, and the silver ewer that İffet's father has chosen. Mehmet says he will ask his mother about them. He then mentions that they have hired a lawyer. Since Ayşe is the one who has left the house, she argues that she should be the one to file the lawsuit and reproaches him for taking the initiative.

When Mehmet gives her the name of the lawyer they have hired, Ayşe feels an inward panic. The woman has a reputation as a vicious lawyer who wins her cases through unscrupulous methods. When Mehmet says they will not have to deal with any of this if Ayşe gives up custody, she asks what custody means. He explains that it is the legal right to look after the children. Ayşe gets up, saying that he can have anything he wants; all she wants is to have her sons with her.

Her Father's Illness

When Ayşe returns to Ankara, she finds the household in a state of alarm because her father is passing blood in his urine. She regrets leaving Mehmet, thinking that if they were still together, she could have used his family's resources to get her father treated by the best professors. She and her mother talk late into the night. When her mother says they will stay at her grandmother's house while

taking her father to a doctor in Istanbul, Ayşe suggests that the children could stay at the apartment in Maçka. However, she does not mention her conversation with Mehmet. When she wakes up the next morning, her mother is standing over her with a divorce notice from Mehmet's lawyer.

Meeting with the Lawyer

Ayşe goes to the office of the lawyer chosen by Mehmet's family, accompanied by her maternal uncle, Bülent. Since her uncle has instructed her to let him do the talking, she tries to keep quiet as much as possible. The lawyer argues that the children should stay with Mehmet's family because Ayşe does not work and Mehmet is one of the lowest-paid workers at his father's factory. When Bülent suggests that an expert could examine the house Mehmet lives in and the car he drives to prove that his declared income does not reflect his actual financial situation, the lawyer implies that they could prove Ayşe is unfit to care for the children. What he means is that she leads an immoral life. At this point, Bülent decides that there is nothing more to discuss. Once outside, they agree that they need to find a good lawyer.

Illness

They admit her father to the German Hospital. To prevent the polyps in his urinary tract from recurring, radioactive powder is to be applied to the surgical site. Since this is an unheard-of treatment, both Ayşe and her mother object, but her father refuses to change his mind because he trusts his doctor. When they visit him, Bülent tells him that they need to find a good lawyer. Ayşe then leaves the room and joins her mother, who is smoking by a window at the far end of the corridor. She does not tell her mother what is happening. Instead, she recalls a letter her grandmother sends while Ayşe is in London, in which her grandmother expresses her fear of a nuclear reactor planned for Küçükçekmece. Ayşe tells her mother that the radioactive powder will come from there. Her mother is surprised. Ayşe is glad that she manages to draw her mother's attention to something else.

The Difficulties of the Lawsuit

Worried about what might happen, her uncle Bülent asks Ayşe whether she has considered giving up custody. She says she absolutely does not want to do so.

Ayşe is not particularly happy with the lawyer her father finds, either. He insists that his first duty is to save the marriage and repeatedly asks whether she is sure she wants a divorce. When Ayşe makes it clear that she has made up her mind, the lawyer explains that the other side will try to prove that she is unfit to care for the children. To do so, they may claim that she has a contagious disease, is mentally unstable, or leads an immoral life.

Ayşe eventually realizes that they may even dare to accuse her of prostitution. Indeed, during a meeting with the lawyer alongside her uncle Bülent, the lawyer mentions a house, the woman who runs it, a shopkeeper who sells pistachios on that street, and a customer as potential witnesses. When Ayşe says she is prepared to face anything, the lawyer finally agrees to take on the case.

At the Hospital

After a five-hour operation, before her father is brought back to his room, several people come in and move his bed against the wall, placing the armchair and chair farther away from it. Using a device, they identify the spot with the lowest radiation level caused by the radioactive powder. For the same reason, they advise Ayşe not to enter the room for three days, warning that the radiation may disrupt her menstrual cycle.

After they leave, a German nurse comes in and moves the bed back to its original position. Once she leaves, Ayşe's mother puts everything back where it was. But when the German nurse returns, the two women begin to argue. At that moment, Ayşe's mother bursts into laughter at the absurdity of the situation and collapses to the floor. Ayşe calls the chief physician, a close friend of her uncle, and explains what has happened. When he enters the room a little later, he looks at the chaos in astonishment. He also tells them to keep the bed against the wall, and the nurse leaves in a huff.

With Mehmet

Since Ayşe cannot see her father for three days, she goes to the apartment in Maçka to see her children. When she enters, Mehmet is eating. He does not return her greeting. Ayşe reproaches him for not even asking after her father, who has just undergone a difficult operation. Mehmet replies that she will not get the money she wants.

Ayşe does not understand what he means. She thinks he is pretending not to know about the money his lawyer is demanding. She takes out her address book, dials her lawyer's number, and explains that she does not want any tension with the father of her children. After hanging up, she says she has no idea that her lawyer is demanding compensation. She then shouts that Mehmet's lawyer is also trying to portray her as a prostitute.

Mehmet says he only wants the children, but Ayşe is certain that his mother is behind everything. When the children come in a little later, Ayşe notices that Mete has a fever. Although their nanny insists that there is nothing wrong with him, Ayşe takes a thermometer from the medicine cabinet and places it under his arm. When she sees that his temperature is 38.3°C, she tells Mehmet that he needs a doctor. Mehmet objects, saying that it is nothing to worry about. Realizing that he does not want to go against her in front of the nanny, Ayşe packs her bag. At that moment, Mehmet tells her that his mother says she will not return any of the antiques or other belongings.

Back at the Hospital

Because Mete has measles and Ali catches it a week later, Ayşe is once again unable to see her father. When the doctors think he has recovered, they remove his catheter, but urine begins to leak from the surgical site. They insert the catheter again. This cycle continues for days.

After learning that her aunt by marriage Ecla's father has shot himself following prostate surgery, everyone becomes even more distressed. Finally, after thirty-three days, Ayşe's father is discharged from the hospital.

Custody

The other side's lawyer proposes an arrangement in which legal custody remains with the father while the mother takes care of the children. When Ayşe and Mehmet sit down to talk privately at the apartment in Maçka, Mehmet pours himself a whisky and offers her vodka. After drinking it, Ayşe tells him that her own lawyer says custody cannot be divided in this way. Mehmet replies that his lawyer says it can.

Ayşe points out that, unlike her lawyer, she herself has no expectation of compensation. They finally reach an agreement.

When Ayşe visits her grandmother's house, where her father is also staying, her grandmother looks at the two of them sitting side by side and calls them "a pair of fools." She says that neither of them acts in accordance with the expectations of the real world when their ideals are at stake.

Return to Ankara

As Ayşe returns to Ankara, her mother-in-law sends the nanny along with them. The children will again sleep in the bedroom, Ayşe will have her own room, and the nanny will stay in the small room next to the kitchen. Suspecting that the nanny is also being paid to spy on the two households, Ayşe goes to her room that evening and asks her to treat her parents with care and respect.

Since Ayşe has no income at the time, she does not even have enough money to buy a bus ticket. Her mother often sends her to the market with large sums of money to buy things and lets her keep the change. During this period, Ayşe has no choice but to look for a job.

One day, she receives a phone call through a friend. A new art gallery is to open opposite the Ankara Art Theatre, sponsored by Ferit Apa and established by the painter Orhan Peker and the sculptor Dündar Elbruz. Ayşe is offered the position of gallery manager. The painter and writer Fahir Aksoy will be at the gallery in the mornings, while Ayşe's working day will begin at two in the afternoon. She gladly accepts the offer.

A New Life

To avoid leaving the children with the nanny, Ayşe enrolls them in the nursery at Ayşe Abla Primary School, which she attended as a child. When she takes them there, both boys stand against the wall without taking off their coats. The teacher tells her that all the children behave this way on their first day and sends them off. However, when Ayşe returns to pick them up, she finds them still standing exactly where she left them. The teacher explains that she has been unable to get them to join the

other children. Ayşe never sends them back to the nursery. Neriman Hanım, the school's owner, immediately refunds the registration fee.

While the children play in the garden below their apartment building or in Kuğulu Park, Ayşe begins working at a new gallery called Doğuş. When she arrives at the gallery, the painter and writer Fahir Aksoy greets her with "Welcome, girl!" He sits with her for a while and then leaves. Ayşe stays at the gallery until seven, looking after the exhibitions. Thanks to her parents' diplomatic connections, she manages to sell paintings to foreign diplomats.

She has no problems with any of the artists except Aliye Berger. Half an hour before her exhibition opens, Berger arrives at the gallery, takes down all the paintings Ayşe and Fahir have arranged, and has them rehung according to her own preferences. Although Ayşe and Fahir find this extremely stressful, they put up with her whims because of her warm and friendly manner.

Gradually, her life at the gallery begins to settle into a routine. Around six in the evening, artists gather at the gallery and start drinking the alcohol they bring with them from seven onwards. After eight, they close the gallery and go out for dinner. Among this group, where no one judges anyone else, Ayşe hardly feels the burden of her divorce. Although she does not join them every night, she sometimes goes out and enjoys herself with them.

One day, while preparing invitations for an exhibition at the gallery, she receives a call from her mother, who tells her that a letter has arrived. Ayşe is surprised that her mother has not opened and read the envelope without her permission. She asks her to read it. When her mother goes to get her glasses, Ayşe feels sad that she has not even noticed until now that her mother has started wearing them. Her mother puts on her glasses and reads the document inside. It is the official divorce decree. She says, "Congratulations. May it bring you good things." Ayşe replies, "To all of us!" They then hang up.

Ayşe calls Yücel and Dinah, a couple who are in Ankara because Yücel is doing his military service. Dinah says they already know about the divorce and that Mehmet is getting married the following week. Since Ayşe can guess who he is marrying, she does not ask who the bride is. A little later, when Fahir hears the news, he books a table for fifteen at Karadeniz Restaurant that evening to celebrate the divorce.

Around this time, news arrives that İffet's father has died. Ayşe sits down and writes her a letter, but she has neither İffet's phone number nor her address. All she knows is that İffet lives in Ataköy and that the funeral will leave from the mosque there. She decides to go to Istanbul for the funeral instead of sending a letter. However, Orhan Peker does not let her go because foreign guests are arriving the following day. Ayşe writes to İffet several times but never manages to send the letters. In the end, she cannot even remember whether she gives her the last letter she writes.

Eren

One day, her friend Eren, with whom she spends a great deal of time in London, calls her. He has only just heard about her divorce and wants to know what has happened. Since he is in Ankara for his military service, he promises to visit her at the gallery, and they hang up. Ayşe immediately calls Nur Vergin, who has recently returned from London and, like Eren, is the child of an ambassador. She wants to introduce the two of them.

Both arrive at the gallery, and Eren invites them to dinner at Süreyya that evening. Nur also invites Eren to her home for a drink before dinner. As Eren drops Ayşe off at home before going to Nur's, Ayşe suggests that he spend some time alone with Nur.

When Ayşe gets home, she plays with the children. Her mother makes a pointed remark about her spending her evenings out by telling her that she is at home that night. Her father joins in. A little later, however, Eren calls. He tells her that he has gone to Nur's house but found her absent, so he has had to sit and drink whisky with her parents. Just as he is about to leave, Nur arrives home. He says he will come to pick Ayşe up in a few minutes. To get out of the house, Ayşe tells her parents that she is going to dinner with Eren and a group of friends, which is not true.

Although Eren returns to Istanbul the following day, he begins travelling to Ankara frequently, and Ayşe now realizes that they are dating. Meanwhile, Mehmet says he misses the children and wants

them to come to Istanbul before the summer. Ayşe does not want them to miss out on spending time by the sea, so she is willing to let them spend the entire summer on the island with their father. However, this unexpected request catches her off guard, and she initially objects. When Mehmet reminds her that he has custody, she has no choice but to agree. He comes to collect the children at the beginning of May.

In Istanbul

Since the gallery closes for the summer, Ayşe also goes to Istanbul in early June. Her grandmother wants her to remarry and does not interfere in her life, so Ayşe can meet Eren freely. However, she also wants to see her children every day. The nanny secretly takes them from the apartment in Maçka to the Narmanlı Apartment building and brings them back in the evening. But things change when Mehmet and his family move to their house on Büyükdada for the summer. From then on, the children spend only the weekends with Ayşe.

For the grandchildren's sake, her father rents an apartment at the Emlak Kredi Bank's summer resort in Florya, where he serves on the board of directors. However, the first weekend is ruined when Mehmet refuses to send the children. They look forward to spending the third and fourth weekends there instead. Ayşe has bought matching swimsuits for the children, beach towels, and a pick, shovel, and bucket for playing in the sand.

But the nanny does not arrive that weekend. The ferry departure time comes and goes, yet no one shows up. Ayşe goes down to the grocery store and calls the house on the island, but no one answers. When she realizes that the grocer is unwell and waiting for a telephone order, she goes to the pastry shop across the street. She calls from there too, but still gets no answer. Helpless, she returns home. After waiting a little longer, she goes back down to the grocery store. This time, a servant answers the phone. Ayşe learns that Mehmet is not there and that he does not want the children to go anywhere until he returns.

She calls the resort where her father is staying and tells them that they will not be coming after all. When she gets home, she throws the things she has bought against the walls and bursts into tears. That evening, her mother and father rush to her, alarmed. They are relieved to find that nothing serious has happened. The following morning, Ayşe goes to her uncle's house and calls her mother-in-law. Although her mother-in-law claims that she is simply carrying out Mehmet's wishes, Ayşe does not believe her. She thinks her mother-in-law is the one really behind it.

While Ayşe is crying, her uncle comes to sit with her. When she tells him what has happened, he explains that his own daughter, Semra, also wants a divorce. Her family has told her that if she divorces her husband, she will have no place in their home. He says that at least he has saved his daughter from ending up as miserable as Ayşe. As Ayşe leaves her uncle's house, she feels grateful that her own father is not the kind of man her uncle is.

For the rest of the summer, Ayşe goes to the island on Saturday mornings, collects the children from the nanny, and takes them back to her grandmother's house. On Monday mornings, she returns them to the island. In September, the weather is still as hot as summer, and when Mehmet wants to keep the children until the end of the month, Ayşe does not object. She has decided to travel to Bodrum and Marmaris with Eren anyway. Telling her parents that she is going on a trip with a large group of friends, she sets off with Eren in his car.

On the Way to a Second Marriage

In 1965, Ayşe and Eren have to stop for breaks because the roads are not yet paved. In İzmir, they run into Eren's friend Ali Can Sipahi, a rally driver, and another friend of his. They travel to Bodrum and Marmaris together.

When they return, Mehmet tells Ayşe that he does not want to send the children to Ankara and even wants to take them during the week. Ayşe is about to object, but then remembers that he is newly married. Thinking that he says all this simply to upset her, she agrees. She tells him that if the children stay with him during the week, she can easily visit them because his house is nearby. At this point, Mehmet backs down and says he wants to have them at weekends instead.

Ayşe moves into her grandmother's house with the children. Eren, who is doing his military service at Hasdal, just outside Istanbul, is delighted. One day, he offers her a job working with his friend Renda

Poğda, who wants to launch Turkey's first automobile magazine. Ayşe will be its editor. At first, she hesitates because she knows nothing about cars, but eventually accepts. She will conduct interviews and translate articles that Eren selects from magazines published in the West. Her first interview is with Ali Can Sipahi. As she learns the job, she begins to do more than translate and write articles; she also gets involved in the magazine's layout.

In 1967, Eren receives an invitation to a conference organized by the faculty from which he graduates as a mining engineer. He obtains permission to stay in England for a month and wants Ayşe to accompany him to London. When Ayşe says her family will never allow her to go on such a trip, he proposes marriage. She thinks he is joking, but when Eren asks for her identity card the next day, she realizes how serious he is.

While the marriage arrangements are underway, Eren takes her to the mansion in Yeniköy, where he is staying, so she can make the changes she wants. Ayşe remembers coming here with her friends as a child and later with Mehmet while they are married. The mansion is difficult to heat because it has a fireplace, and the family uses it only in summer, so its windows have no curtains. However, it has a magnificent view of the Bosphorus. Ayşe decides to have curtains made for the doors connecting the dining room to the garden.

Meanwhile, the local headman receives their marriage documents and informs Ayşe's grandmother. One day, Ayşe comes home to discover that her grandmother has learned she plans to marry without telling her family. Ayşe insists that the matter is not really so serious, but her grandmother goes to her uncle and asks him to call Ankara and inform the family. A week later, Eren's father travels to Ankara to ask Ayşe's family for her hand in marriage. The following week, Ayşe and Eren go to Ankara themselves to obtain her family's consent. When her father asks whether they are rushing into marriage, Eren explains that they have actually known each other since childhood.

They initially plan to have a small wedding ceremony in Istanbul. However, when Ayşe learns that Eren's mother and grandmother do not want him to marry a woman with two children and will not attend the wedding, she suggests that they marry at the consulate in London, where no one from the family can come. Eren agrees, and they decide to marry in London.

The Dog

On the day the curtains are to be installed, Ayşe takes the children to the mansion. She lays out the börek and pastries she brings on the table. Apart from the caretaker, his wife Halime, and their ten-year-old daughter, no one else is there. After they leave, Ayşe and the children eat what she has brought. Mete and Ali go out into the garden. Filu, the mansion's wolfhound, is chained to a tree in front of the kitchen, as usual. When Mete asks whether he can untie the dog, Ayşe tells him not to.

A little later, after washing the dishes, she turns off the water and suddenly hears the dog growling and the children screaming. She rushes into the garden and sees Mete standing frozen in fear, pressed against the kitchen door, while Ali struggles with the dog. Somehow, they manage to free Ali.

Ayşe immediately calls Eren, who serves as a protocol officer in Selimiye. Eren arrives, and they take Ali to a hospital that provides rabies treatment. Since there are three tooth marks on Ali's waist, he receives rabies injections. The dog is also placed under observation.

When they take the children to the apartment in Maçka, Ayşe stays in the car with them. Eren goes upstairs and then comes back down with Mehmet. When Mehmet asks to keep the children with him that evening, Ayşe cannot object. Ten days after this incident, she and Eren leave for London.

The Wedding

Orhan Conker, Semra's brother-in-law, is a consul in London. When he hears Ayşe's name, he invites them to his office. When he learns that they intend to marry, he is surprised because they look so young that he assumes they are not yet of legal age. They arrange a wedding ceremony with a reception for ten guests.

They then call Robin, Eren's university friend, to ask him to be a witness. Robin's mother is a cousin of Vivien Leigh, the star of *Gone with the Wind*. His father, Mr. Bashpai, is an Indian aristocrat who serves for many years as India's High Commissioner.

Robin insists that Ayşe must buy a hat for the wedding. Ayşe does not want one because she plans to wear a simple dress made for her by her aunt Ruhiye in Istanbul from off-white wool fabric. Robin points out that people marry only once in their lives. Ayşe replies that people can marry twice. "But you will marry only once," Robin says.

The conversation ends there, but Ayşe begins to wonder whether Eren is uncomfortable with the fact that she has been married before. She reproaches him for not telling Robin about her previous marriage, pointing out that he has another opportunity to mention it during their conversation but still says nothing. Eren replies that the opportunity is just as available to her, yet she also chooses not to bring it up. Ayşe realizes that she is the one who feels ashamed of marrying for a second time and that she is projecting this feeling onto Eren.

They invite Ayşe's cousin Selçuk Korkut, a diplomat at the Turkish Embassy in London, and his wife; Robin and his girlfriend; Robin's parents; and Yücel and Dinah to the wedding. When Eren travels to Birmingham for his conference, Ayşe visits Yücel and Dinah in Oxford. Since she is unsure whether she is rushing into a second marriage, they talk until dawn for two nights. On the second night, Yücel tells her at 3:05 a.m. that he is going to the kitchen and will give her until 3:30 to make up her mind. When he returns at half past three, he asks for her decision. Ayşe replies that she wants to wear the wedding dress because she likes it so much.

The following day, Yüksel Germen conducts the marriage ceremony at the consulate. During the ceremony, he addresses Robin in Turkish, but Robin does not respond. "Do you have an objection?" Yüksel asks. Everyone bursts out laughing and explains that Robin does not speak Turkish. The question is repeated in English. But when Yüksel addresses Yücel, he speaks in English instead. Everyone bursts into laughter again.

After the celebration at the consulate, they attend Oscar Wilde's play *Getting Married*, invited by Robin and his father. Afterwards, they go to Annabel's for dinner with Robin, his girlfriend Maxine, and Robin's parents. While dancing, Ayşe asks Eren how they will pay the bill. Eren hopes that Mr. Bashpai will not leave them with the bill. However, at the end of the evening, the bill is placed in front of Mr. Bashpai, who is older than the others. Eren takes it, saying, "Allow me." Ayşe whispers that she has only twenty pounds with her. Eren asks her for ten pounds just for the tip and writes a cheque to cover the bill. As they leave, he declares that it is the cheapest wedding dinner in the world.

Settling in Yeniköy

When they return to Istanbul, they go straight to the mansion in Yeniköy. Looking around the house, furnished according to the tastes of several generations, Ayşe realizes that she needs to make some changes to turn it into her own home.

The gardener's wife asks for a week off because there is a funeral in her family. Ayşe gives them permission and thinks they will have a few days alone without anyone to help them. While Eren goes upstairs to call his family and friends and let them know they are back, Ayşe tries to carry a suitcase upstairs but finds it too heavy. She takes the belongings out and carries them upstairs in her arms.

Just then, the doorbell rings. When Ayşe opens the door, she finds the nanny and the children. The nanny explains that she has learned from Ayşe's grandmother that they will be arriving that day. She says she has been waiting for a month to take her leave, then leaves the children and goes away. As the children run around with their arms outstretched among the Sevres vases, Eren stands at the top of the stairs, staring down in astonishment. This is how Ayşe's second marriage begins.

The next day, Sitare Hanım arrives from Ankara to help look after the children. Eren's mother also takes them to Abdullah Efendi Restaurant in Emirgan and gives Ayşe a diamond ring that Eren's father presents to her at their wedding. As soon as Ayşe sees the design, she asks whether they marry in 1936. When Eren's mother asks how she knows, Ayşe explains that her own parents also marry that year and that the ring has the same design as the brooch her father gives her mother.

Eren's mother asks whether they buy it from Saran. Ayşe confirms that they do. Her mother-in-law explains that Saran is the most famous jeweller of the time and wishes her joy wearing the ring. Ayşe is delighted by this coincidence. Since everyone calls her mother-in-law Koko, she begins to address her by that name too.

Ayşe's aunt Fethinur, her uncle's wife, and her aunt Suat arrange for a boy named Durmuş, aged thirteen or fourteen, to come from the village where the caretaker of their neighbours in Feneryolu lives. They teach him how to cook and iron. Ayşe's uncle then calls her and explains that, in case she gets divorced again, he wants to send her a living gift so that her mother-in-law cannot take control of her household as she did the last time. He sends Durmuş to the mansion.

Ayşe's mother and her aunt Sabahat help with the children when necessary. On weekends when Eren is at home, her brother-in-law Bâlâ takes the children to Kilyos or Florya to swim. At the beginning of June, the children go to stay with their father. At the end of the month, Eren's mother, Koko, and his grandmother arrive. However, Eren's grandmother treats Ayşe so badly that Ayşe says she will stay at a hotel if the older woman ever visits again. Eren insists that the house belongs to both of them and that, if necessary, his grandmother will be the one to stay at a hotel. His grandmother never visits the house again.

Although the children's room is ready, the children do not come back. Ayşe does not call Mehmet because the weather is still warm. As people return to their winter homes, life in Yeniköy becomes no different from the quiet life of a village. Ayşe takes long walks alone along the dirt road by the sea every morning. Since the mansion will be very cold in winter, they want to have central heating installed. Ayşe realizes that she also needs to find a job.

Good News After a Series of Setbacks

In the last week of September, news arrives that Robin has died. With him, the only photographs of Ayşe and Eren's wedding, taken by Robin, are also lost. Since the children still have not arrived, Ayşe calls the house on the island to ask when they are coming. Her mother-in-law tells her that Mehmet does not want his children to grow up with a stepfather and that they will no longer send them to her. She adds that they have obtained a court injunction. Ayşe is stunned. She immediately calls a lawyer friend to ask what the injunction means. Her friend tells her to go straight to the courthouse and find the order.

Ayşe goes to the courthouse at once. After going from one office to another, she finally finds the place where the order has been issued. On a tiny piece of paper, she reads accusations that she starves her children, has them mauled by dogs, has sex with her lovers in front of them, and puts their lives in danger. As soon as she finishes reading, she asks where the judge who issued the order is. When a female clerk points to a room, Ayşe rushes straight in. She is surprised to discover that the judge is a woman. As Ayşe shouts at her, she loses consciousness and collapses to the floor. When she comes around a little later, she realizes that blood is running down her legs. The women first tell her to go to the toilet, but she sits down and, following their instructions, writes a counter-petition. After cleaning the blood from her legs with cotton wool, she leaves.

That evening, when Eren comes to pick her up from her grandmother's house, her grandmother tells him what has happened. Eren takes Ayşe straight to the American Hospital. After running several blood tests, the doctors tell them there is nothing to worry about: Ayşe is pregnant. Eren is delighted by the news, but Ayşe wonders whether it is happening a little too soon, since they have not even been married for six months. Besides, the central heating has not yet been installed. Unlike Ayşe, who is full of worry, Eren is completely happy and assures her that everything will work out.

The Cyprus Issue

When Ayşe remarks that the birds' migration is late that year, Eren turns the conversation to the Cyprus issue and tells her that fighter jets will fly over Cyprus. He also informs her that his unit will be sent to Thrace in case of a Greek attack. Ayşe, Eren's mother, and Ayşe's parents see him off from Yeniköy. Ayşe then moves into her grandmother's house. Since she is pregnant and her husband has gone to the front, everyone treats her with special care.

One day, however, Eren suddenly appears at the door in his uniform. Some of the jeeps have suffered punctured tyres, while others have developed engine trouble on the way. As a result, the unit has turned back.

The next morning, while sorting Eren's dirty laundry, Ayşe finds a pistol among his clothes. Eren explains that it is a spare weapon issued to him and wants to keep it at home. They hide it in the safe that Ayşe's father has had made.

The Lawsuit

Ayşe does not tell either her father or Eren about the slanderous accusations made by Mehmet's lawyer. Following her father's advice, she goes to another lawyer who is his friend and whose services money cannot buy. When the lawyer, Süreyya Ağaoğlu, shows Ayşe the list of witnesses submitted by the other side, she recognizes no one except İsmail, who works as a nanny and servant.

During the trial, for example, a traffic policeman testifies that he finds two small boys alone in Teşvikiye, claims their mother is distracted by shopping, and takes them to the address they give him: their father's house. A man who works at the family's sock shop, meanwhile, claims that he delivers liver to their apartment in Maçka once a week and sees Ayşe in her nightgown and drunk every time. Ayşe wants to object each time, but Süreyya Hanım stops her. During this period, the only person she talks to is Esen Ziyal-Gürel, the daughter of an old family friend of her parents in Ankara. Since they are neighbours in Yeniköy, Ayşe visits her almost every day. Esen comforts her.

Ayşe attends every court hearing, which takes place once every three months, but Mehmet never attends any of them. She looks her witnesses in the eye, hoping to influence them. Since the nanny has not yet testified, Ayşe thinks she may still be able to persuade her to tell the truth. She finds the address of the new house where the nanny works and goes to the house in Rumelihisarı.

The nanny is not home when she arrives. The landlady recognizes who Ayşe is and invites her inside. When she learns that Ayşe is five months pregnant, she advises her to abandon the lawsuit. Ayşe then discovers that Mehmet's family has given the nanny's husband a large sum of money to open a kiosk on Teşvikiye Avenue. At that moment, she understands more clearly what she is up against.

Her hands are shaking so much that she spills her tea on herself. She goes to the toilet and then decides to leave, but just as she returns to the living room, the nanny arrives. When Ayşe says she has come to talk to her but has changed her mind, the nanny shouts that her husband beats her because of this and that she is not the only person in the world who suffers injustice.

Ayşe leaves the house and walks without stopping. She only realizes how far she has gone when she reaches Kuruçeşme. She immediately turns around, gets into a taxi, and returns. She goes to the vacant lot beside the house and screams at the top of her lungs. Later, she hears that Mehmet's family has brought the medication required for the judge's mother's cancer treatment from abroad.

Ayşe has to wait until December before she can see her children again. She picks Mete and Ali up from their nursery in Nişantaşı at three o'clock, takes a shared taxi to Taksim, and then a minibus to Yeniköy. Since the children get their clothes dirty while playing in the garden, she changes them into the clothes they will wear indoors. They roll around in the mud with two wolfhound puppies that the family has acquired after Filu's death.

When the driver sent by Mehmet arrives in the evening, the children hide in different parts of the mansion because they do not want to go back to their father. Ayşe has to cover her ears to avoid hearing them cry as they leave.

Ayşe is convinced that her mother-in-law is behind everything. She thinks that, having found comfort in her third marriage, her mother-in-law has become accustomed to getting whatever she wants and may be taking revenge on life itself. Ayşe believes that, especially after hearing about the reputation of the mansion where she lives with Eren, her mother-in-law cannot stand the fact that Ayşe does not regret divorcing Mehmet. She thinks this is why the older woman is trying to make her suffer even more.

Since it is difficult to take the children all the way to Yeniköy, Ayşe begins collecting them from the nursery and taking them to her grandmother's house instead. Her father has started working at the Istanbul Planning Office, so her parents also move into her grandmother's house, and they spend their days together again. Although her grandmother tells her not to attend the court hearings because she is pregnant, Ayşe does not want to miss anything.

Kerim

In May, Ayşe gives birth to her son Kerim at Ataman Clinic, which feels like home because it has been converted from a mansion. As it happens, her former school friend Birsen gives birth on the same day, turning the clinic into a meeting place for her friends from school.

When Mete and Ali visit the following day, Mete wants to hold the baby, but his grandmother asks whether he has washed his hands. Ayşe explains that she has given birth to the baby for Mete and Ali, because she wants them to have a sibling to play with when they come to the mansion. When Mete holds the baby in his arms, Ali says, "Make one for me too."

When they return home after Kerim's circumcision, the roses in their garden are in bloom. Ayşe also stops imagining ways to torment Mehmet. She even begins to put the lawsuit out of her mind. Since the new baby brings joy into the house, she calls him "the child of happiness."

Bloody Sunday

Politicians from the Democrat Party, who lose their political rights following the coup of 27 May 1960, regain those rights at the Justice Party's congress. Around this time, while the play *Devr-i Süleyman* is being performed at the Little Theatre in Aksaray, a group of forty or fifty people attacks the actors and audience with stones and sticks.

The arrival of US Ambassador Robert Komer in Turkey is also protested. When he visits Middle East Technical University, his car is set on fire. A strike at Sümerbank begins and continues for quite some time.

Before 16 February, an Islamist writer for the newspaper *Bugün* writes that a war between "Muslims and godless communists" is inevitable. A left-wing group gathers in Beyazıt Square and marches as far as Tophane. At the same time, an opposing group gathers at the Beyazıt and Dolmabahçe mosques. The ensuing clashes leave two people dead and two hundred injured. A film documenting the events, made by the Young Filmmakers Group, is banned by Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel.

At the Female Judge's House

A bloody newspaper photograph from that day remains etched in Ayşe's memory. Since she is expecting her fourth child, she is more sensitive than usual, and Esen once again comforts her. One day, Esen says she will find the address of the judge handling the case. Two days later, she gives Ayşe the address.

Ayşe goes there alone. After getting soaked in the rain, she enters an old, dark building that smells of damp and mould. She rings the doorbell. It is half past seven in the morning. The female judge opens the door wearing a dressing gown, with curlers in her hair. When she recognizes Ayşe, she tries to shut the door. Ayşe puts her foot in the doorway and begs her to listen, so the judge lets her in.

The house is even poorer than Ayşe expects. A breakfast table is set up in the stone-floored hall that connects the rooms, with a teapot on the table. When Ayşe says she expects nothing from the other side and only wants her children back, the judge asks whether she drinks tea. When Ayşe says yes, she offers her some tea and explains that the other side accuses her of all sorts of things, so she should do the same if possible. She is implying that Ayşe should produce false witnesses, just as the other side does.

Ayşe meets with her mother, her uncle Bülent, and her aunt Sabahat, and they decide not to use false witnesses. She calls Esen again and tells her what has happened. Esen says it is a coincidence that she has met someone who can help resolve the situation. Since Ayşe feels she has reached the end of her strength, she does not ask for further details.

The Accident

Since Mehmet gives the nanny time off for Easter, Ayşe sends the children to him and invites friends who have children of similar ages to her house on 23 April, National Sovereignty and Children's Day. While the adults sit in the living room, the children crowd into the children's room to listen to songs celebrating the holiday. Then they begin running along the corridor leading to the stairs to the lower floor.

Suddenly, they hear a loud crash. At first, Ayşe cannot tell where the sound comes from. A few minutes later, she discovers that the glass in the door they have had installed after Kerim's birth to keep the cold air from coming up from downstairs is shattered. When she realizes that Mete is missing, she learns that he has cut his arm. Eren has taken him straight to the hospital in their friend Hayri's car.

Ayşe immediately follows them to İstinye First Aid Hospital with Ender. When she enters, she sees a bandage around Mete's right wrist. While a man in a bloodstained shirt sweeps up the dirt on the floor and gathers it into a dustpan, Mete tells her that the "doctor uncle" has stitched his arm. When Ayşe thanks the man, he explains that Mete's carotid artery has been cut and that his wife has done exactly the right thing by tying it off. He adds that he has stitched the wound without anaesthesia.

A little later, a nurse calls the man away, saying that he has knocked over a patient's tray. When Ayşe remarks that the doctor is also cleaning the floor, Hayri tells her that the man is not a doctor but a hospital attendant. Ayşe feels faint when she hears this. A nurse comes in and explains that Cemil, the attendant who stitches Mete's wound, is better at stitching than many doctors; some doctors even leave this work to him. Since it is 23 April and there is not a single doctor in the hospital, she tells Ayşe that she should be grateful that Cemil has saved her son's life.

While Ayşe is away, her parents also arrive. When her mother says that the other side will use this incident as further ammunition if they hear about it, Ayşe replies, "Mother, just pray that they never find out who stitched his artery."

Meeting the Chief Public Prosecutor

Eren buys tickets for Verdi's opera *Aida*, but Ayşe is about to tell him that she cannot go because she has nothing suitable to wear while pregnant. In any case, after the accident, she has no desire to do anything. Around this time, Esen calls her and says that she has found a relative of Istanbul's chief public prosecutor who can help them.

At the house they visit together, Ayşe notices a silver-framed photograph on the sideboard showing two little boys standing close together. As she looks at the photograph, their hostess, a young woman, returns to the living room with coffee. When Ayşe asks whether the boys are hers, the woman explains that she has been unable to see them for a long time. From that moment on, the two women embrace and begin to cry.

The woman then makes a phone call and tells them that the chief public prosecutor is expecting them. Ayşe and Esen go straight to his office.

The chief public prosecutor first asks Ayşe who the father of her children is. When she gives Mehmet's name, he says he knows him from the nightlife scene. He then asks how much alimony she wants. When Ayşe replies that she wants nothing, he calls the judge handling the case. He tells her that the proceedings have been unnecessarily prolonged and that the children should be given to their mother. He also asks her to refer the other side's lawyer to him if he causes any trouble.

Selim

Since the birth takes place around noon the following day, Ayşe no longer needs to find an excuse for missing the opera. She gives birth at Ataman Clinic, where she would otherwise have gone to visit her friend Kler Lara, who gives birth on 23 April. Expecting a girl, Ayşe has prepared everything in pink, but she has a boy instead.

Like Ali, Selim is born during the day. An hour later, when her parents arrive, her father looks at the new baby's fair skin and calls him "moy bili," meaning "my white one" in Bosnian.

The Day of the Verdict

Although everyone warns Ayşe not to attend the hearing, she goes to court. Her lawyer, Süreyya Hanım, is tense because of the recent accident. Ayşe is upset that her lawyer has been working behind her back. After her lawyer explains that the accident is the kind that could happen in any household, the judge rules that the children should be returned to their mother because she has "adopted a proper way of life." The other side's lawyer tries to object, but everyone is so astonished that no one knows what to say.

Ayşe takes her lawyer's hands and thanks her repeatedly for helping her through a case that forces her to deal with such people. Yet, at a moment when she should be happy, she feels very old, exhausted by everything she has been through.

A Death in the Family

One summer, her uncle hosts a gathering at the waterfront mansion where the family stays in Bostancı. Ayşe's parents go for lunch, while Ayşe and Eren plan to visit after the meal. However, when they arrive, they see an ambulance at the door. Her uncle refuses to lie down on a stretcher and struggles to walk to the ambulance with her father's support. Even inside the ambulance, he sits in the seat beside the driver with his daughter Semra.

Those left behind discuss how much his cough has worsened because of the emphysema caused by smoking and how they need to make him quit. But just as they prepare to go to the hospital, they receive a phone call announcing his death. Ayşe rushes to the house her parents have bought in Topağacı and finds that her father has already heard the news. For the second time in her life, she witnesses her father in tears.

A School Abroad

One day, Mehmet's mother calls and tells Ayşe that she expects her at their house in Şişli the following Wednesday. Although Ayşe points out that the lawsuit is over, her former mother-in-law insists. Ayşe first consults Esen, then her parents and Eren, about whether she should go and hear what the woman wants. Eventually, she agrees to meet her.

Mehmet sits silently beside his mother as she shows Ayşe brochures for a school in Switzerland. She explains that she wants the children to study abroad. She even implies that if Ayşe refuses permission, they will take the children away and send them there anyway.

Ayşe goes to her parents' house in Topağacı and tells them that they must obtain court orders restricting the children's departure through all exit points in Turkey because Mehmet's family is preparing to take them abroad without her consent.

Meanwhile, in the Country

One night in July, a bomb explodes near two mosques and an imam-hatip school in Kayseri. A week later, the Alemdar Cinema, where the Teachers' Union is holding its congress, is set on fire in the same city, and the hotels where the teachers are staying are raided.

Workers at Demirdöküm begin a resistance, while nearly five thousand steelworkers go on strike. The governors of Elazığ and Tunceli ban performances of the play *Pir Sultan Abdal*. Alparslan Türkeş opens a commando camp in Mudanya to train members of the nationalist movement. Around the same time, Bülent Ecevit launches the slogan, "The land belongs to those who cultivate it, and the water to those who use it."

The Decision

Whenever the children return from their father's house, they begin asking questions that reveal their curiosity about the school in Switzerland. When Ayşe meets Dinah, Yücel's wife, to go to the cinema, Dinah tells her that Mehmet has sent word that his family is preparing to take the children away.

Since Ayşe and the children have a swimming pool built in the back garden of their house in Yeniköy, they spend their days beside it, from morning until evening. Her parents and friends also visit from time to time. Because her mother considers Yeniköy to be outside the city, she calls before every visit to ask whether Ayşe needs anything from town. One day, when her mother calls again, Ayşe assumes she is asking the usual question. Instead, her mother tells her that Uncle Raif has died.

As he gradually loses his sight and struggles financially, Uncle Raif leaves his friends a letter saying that he wants to die with his dignity intact. He throws himself into the elevator shaft of his building. While receiving treatment in hospital, he jumps from a window and succeeds in ending his life.

Thinking about Uncle Raif, whom she has neglected because she is consumed by her own troubles, Ayşe withdraws to a corner of the garden and spends a long time thinking alone. She already knows that she does not want to spend the rest of her life fighting a legal battle abroad. She also lacks the financial resources such a struggle would require. She will not spend the rest of her life mourning the people she loves. This is her decision.

She gets up, calls Mehmet immediately, and asks him to meet her at her grandmother's house. When they meet, she tells him that Mete will spend the coming winter with her. His first school holiday falls in

December, and when he returns then, he will stay in Turkey if he does not want to go back to school. She adds that if Mehmet tries to force him to leave, she will kill him. Mehmet says nothing. At the end of the summer, Mete goes to Switzerland, while Ali spends that winter in Yeniköy.

News of a New Marriage

One Sunday morning, Durmuş knocks on the bedroom door. Ayşe immediately panics, thinking that something has happened to one of the children again. When Durmuş calls her outside and shows her the newspaper, she understands. The paper reports that Mehmet has married again, this time to an actress.

Ayşe does not want Ali to learn the news from the newspaper, so she calls Mehmet. She tells him to call Ali and tell him about his marriage himself. A little while after she hangs up, Mehmet calls back and tells Ali that he has married. When Ali shares the news with his mother, she tells him how happy they all are about it.

That day, to keep Ali occupied, Ayşe takes Kerim and Selim along and goes to Belgrad Forest to collect a tree. They spend the whole day decorating a Christmas tree. In the late afternoon, as they drink tea in the living room, Ayşe watches Ali sitting in front of the fireplace, writing a letter to Mete. Thinking about the heavy burden he carries on his small shoulders, she curses both herself and Mehmet.

Visits

At the beginning of October, Ayşe goes to Le Rosey to see Mete. Although he has not yet mastered French, he seems content. He shares a room with boys his own age, and the rooms are warm and the food nutritious. One day, after classes, they go to the town of Rolle. On the way back, Ayşe asks him whether he is truly happy there. Mete says that he is. She leaves him feeling relieved but heavy-hearted.

During the winter holidays, Mete comes to visit. Before he arrives, Ali becomes so excited that he loses his appetite. He makes a list of Mete's favourite dishes. Ayşe, meanwhile, wonders what will happen if Mete does not want to return.

They spend a great deal of time together. One day, they have lunch at a fish restaurant on the Anatolian side, directly across the water from their home. Mete takes a sip of his grandfather's beer and imitates his grandmother's voice, saying, "Dear Muhittin, would you pass me the lemon, please?" His grandfather responds, "Of course, dear Sitare," and passes him the lemon.

This moment remains etched in Ayşe's memory as one of the happiest moments of her life.

On the last night, as Ayşe lies beside her two sons, she turns to Mete and asks whether he wants to go back. He says that he will ski every day when he returns and adds that, if possible, he would like all of them to live there together.

Towards an Even Newer Life

A peaceful life begins, free from court cases. In winter, they go skiing in Switzerland; in early summer, they set off on blue cruises aboard boats they rent in Bodrum. They also make sure to spend September in London. Eren changes his car whenever he gets the chance. Yet they never seem to have enough money to repair the roof of their house. One day, Ayşe tells him that if they do not get the roof repaired, she will not go anywhere. When Eren starts packing his own and the children's suitcases for their skiing holiday, Ayşe realizes that he has not taken her warning very seriously. She rushes to pack her suitcase, too.

Ayşe continues to argue with him about going on such holidays when they have so many other needs. She questions why their car has to be a Jaguar. She cannot understand why they have to travel so far when they live by the sea. Once Eren's obsession with showing off begins to bother her, she decides to get a job.

First, she asks Abdi İpekçi whether there is an opportunity for her to work at a newspaper. He tells her that if she interviews the Queen during one of her trips to London, he will give her a job. Ayşe dislikes this response and feels discouraged. She turns to her friend Selçuk Araz, a gynaecologist who is constantly writing something. He tells her that Milliyet Publishing is preparing an encyclopedic history

series called *The Twentieth-Century File*. Altanur Kılıç, who is in charge of the series, is a relative of one of Mrs. Sitare's friends from college. Ayşe immediately goes to meet him and gets a translation assignment. She is to translate Roderick Kedward's book *Anarchists*.

She finishes the first chapter by the end of the third day and takes the translation to Altanur Kılıç on the fourth. He offers her a contract, but he also tells her that on the day they first met, he had wondered to himself, "I wonder what this 'playgirl' is going to translate." Ayşe asks how a woman with four children could possibly be a "playgirl." Altanur Kılıç replies that men have this kind of prejudice against blonde women.

Her first book translation is followed by *Kaiser's Germany*, *Russia in Revolt* (the 1905 Revolution), *America Takes the Stage* (the Wilson Era), and *An Empire Collapses* (the Fall of the Habsburgs). But the sound of her typewriter as she works at home irritates Eren so much that, as five o'clock approaches—the time he usually comes home—Ayşe puts it away. Eren spends all day at the shipyard, where workers use small hammers to remove old paint from ships and scrape away the grime stuck to their hulls. The sound reminds him of the typewriter, and the process is called *raspa*, or scraping. He has therefore banned "raspa" at home, too. Besides, since business is no longer going well, he is always looking for an excuse to pick a fight.

Meanwhile, in Turkey

At this time, Cevdet Sunay is president and Süleyman Demirel is prime minister. A man named Necmettin Erbakan becomes the leader of a new party, the National Order Party, and opposes Turkey's entry into the Common Market. More than a thousand people lose their lives in the earthquake in Gediz. A month after the earthquake, disturbances break out while the Ulvi Uraz troupe is performing *Nina* in Elazığ. When a workers' march in June brings Istanbul and its surrounding areas to a standstill, martial law is declared in Istanbul and İzmit.

In November 1970, Ayşe is having dinner with friends at a restaurant with live music in Harbiye when the music suddenly stops and people begin to stand up. After pushing and shoving their way outside, they see that the opera house, whose construction has taken twenty-six years, is on fire. That night, Ayşe returns home with a feeling of emptiness.

In 1971, following a memorandum issued by the Armed Forces, Süleyman Demirel resigns as prime minister. TRT's autonomy is abolished, and Nihat Erim forms a government. At the age of twenty-nine, Ayşe thus witnesses military intervention for the second time. In its first month in office, the new government launches Operation Sledgehammer. Dev-Genç, the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP), and the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK) are shut down. Ankara's AST Theatre is closed because it stages a play by Brecht condemning fascism. The newspapers *Akşam* and *Cumhuriyet* are suspended for a fixed period, while *Bugün* and *Sabah* are shut down indefinitely. In those days, when almost an institution is closed every day, Ayşe calls her father each morning to ask what has been shut down this time.

Around the same time, Robert College is nationalized and transformed into Boğaziçi University. The Arnavutköy American College for Girls, which Ayşe attended, is merged with Robert College, the boys' school run by the same administration in Bebek, and takes the name Robert College. Deniz Gezmiş and seventeen of his comrades are sentenced to death.

Ayşe's sympathy for Americans, which she developed while studying at college, gradually begins to fade. For this reason, she is delighted when the government bans poppy cultivation in Turkey at the insistence of the United States. However, ten months later, poppy cultivation is banned throughout the country. They are also overjoyed when Filiz Vural is crowned Miss Europe.

In 1972, Mahir Çayan and his comrades are killed in the village of Kızıldere, where they are hiding with three British technicians whom they have taken hostage. Two months later, Deniz Gezmiş, Yusuf Arslan, and Hüseyin İnan are executed.

After Erbakan's party is banned, the National Salvation Party is founded in its place. In an attempt to instill hope in the population, the words "How happy is the one who calls himself a Turk" are added to the end of the *Andımız*, the pledge recited in schools every morning.

Yılmaz Güney's film *The Father* is selected as Best Film at the Fourth Golden Boll Film Festival in Adana. However, when the jury reconvenes two days later, it withdraws the award on ideological grounds and gives it instead to Yılmaz Duru's film *Kara Doğan*.

The best development of these years is the establishment of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts. In the year it is founded, it introduces Istanbul residents to a music festival. For fifteen days, Ayşe and her friends travel from one end of Istanbul to the other, attending concerts in different venues. The first CHP–National Salvation Party coalition government, headed by Bülent Ecevit, is formed on 26 January 1974. Although Ayşe has little hope for an alliance between a left-wing party and an Islamist party, her journalist friend Abdi İpekçi is quite optimistic. However, in the coalition's second month, a Turkish Airlines plane crashes near Orly Airport in Paris, killing 347 passengers. For Ayşe, this is a sign that the alliance will not work.

That year, people in Istanbul struggle to obtain many essential goods, especially petrol. Power cuts are also frequent. Meanwhile, Muhsin Ertuğrul is appointed general director of the Istanbul City Theatres, while the National Salvation Party's interior minister orders the removal of the *Beautiful Istanbul* statue in Karaköy Square on the grounds that it indecently exposes Turkish mothers. The tourism minister blocks three major tourism projects on the grounds that they are immoral. Çetin Altan's book *A Handful of Sky* is confiscated for obscenity.

Just as the coalition seems about to collapse, Greek Cypriots declare *enosis*, or union with Greece, in Cyprus. Ecevit travels to London to meet Britain, one of the other two guarantor powers alongside Turkey, in an effort to resolve the Cyprus issue. But he achieves nothing. Finally, on 20 July, the Turkish Armed Forces launch an amphibious landing in Cyprus. The operation gives Ecevit an enormous boost in prestige. He then resigns, but fails to form a minority government. President Korutürk appoints Sadi İrmak as prime minister.

However, the embargo imposed by the United States over the Cyprus issue makes everyday life even more difficult. Forty-three former members of the Democrat Party, who lost their political rights after the 27 May coup, join the Justice Party. Eventually, Süleyman Demirel forms a coalition with the Justice Party, the National Salvation Party, the Nationalist Movement Party, and the Republican Reliance Party. Together, they establish the Nationalist Front and take over the government.

The Children

Since the school operates in Rolle during the spring and in Gstaad during the winter, Ayşe goes to Rolle in October to see the children, while in winter the whole family travels to Gstaad to ski. During the Easter holidays, Mete and Ali come to Istanbul. The four boys love one another so much that, while Mete and Ali are staying at their father's house, they kick the nanny in the legs when she tells them that they are not brothers with Selim and Kerim. When Ayşe's grandmother, Mrs. Leman, hears about this, she explains that the Turkish word for sibling, *kardeş*, derives from *karındaş*, meaning someone who shares the same womb. She praises the boys for standing up for one another.

What Happens at Home, at Work, and on the Streets

Around this time, the only thing that brings Ayşe any pleasure is Halit Refiğ's television adaptation of *Aşk-ı Memnu*. For a few weeks, at least, it helps dispel the gloom of the news. However, power cuts have a negative impact on Eren's business. Meanwhile, when Altemur Kılıç is transferred to the United States, Ülkü Tamer takes his place. One day, Ülkü Tamer calls Ayşe and invites her to a meeting. Expecting to receive new assignments, she goes to see him, only to be told that he can no longer give her translation work. Ayşe leaves disappointed.

After retiring from the National Planning Office, her father begins teaching engineering courses at a university. But in those days, student unrest leads to an incident almost every day. Ayşe and her mother fear that something might happen to him, but Mr. Muhittin says that while young people are losing their lives, it would be wrong for him to worry about his own.

Around this time, children aged between six and ten roam the streets selling cigarettes, calling out, "Marlboro Eve, Marlboro Eve." One day in Nişantaşı, Ayşe stops a child and asks whether they deliver Marlboro cigarettes to people's homes. The child explains, "Sis, Eve is a cigarette brand, too." Ayşe finally satisfies her curiosity, but she is also relieved that she has not been caught. Indeed, anyone caught smuggling cigarettes in those days is taken into custody.

On 1 May 1977, dozens of people are shot when gunfire erupts against the crowds gathered in Taksim Square. In the elections held in June, Bülent Ecevit's party receives 41 per cent of the vote, and he is tasked with forming a minority government. However, when his government fails to win a vote of confidence, Demirel forms the second Nationalist Front government in July. In its first fifteen days, twenty-six political murders are committed.

Around this time, Ayşe receives a phone call from the school the children attend in Etiler. At first, she thinks that either Selim or Kerim has been in an accident. But their teacher explains that an American living in one of the houses right next to the school has run towards the school during an attack against him, and that the school has come under a hail of bullets. Fortunately, none of the children has been injured.

That evening, Eren decides to send the children abroad to study. When Ayşe objects that they are still too young, she cites Cengiz as an example. After Yücel and Dinah divorce, their son Cengiz stays with Yücel. Although he is still in the middle-school section of Istanbul Boys' High School, he is already being pressured to join a cell formed within the school. In other words, ideological divisions among students are no longer confined to universities; they have reached middle schools as well. This is why Yücel has been forced to send his son to England.

Around the same time, Ayşe discovers that Eren is having an affair with a woman who is a close friend of his. Esen tries to hint at the situation through her card readings, while Feride and Betin make suggestive remarks, but unfortunately, Ayşe is the last to find out. She immediately leaves the house and stays for a while at her friend Kler's home in London. Although she wants a divorce, Eren refuses and insists that she return home. Ayşe eventually returns to the house in Yeniköy on the condition that they will not live together. She builds a life with her children, without Eren.

A Different Life

One day, Akgün, the brother of her aunt Sacide, who works in advertising, calls Ayşe and asks if she can help him out just this once. Ayşe asks what she is supposed to do. Akgün explains that he will be the art director and asks her to set three different tables for an advertisement for a tablecloth. Not realizing that this could be a paid job, Ayşe replies that she could do it for free. Akgün explains that it is professional work and tells her that she will be paid by the company advertising the tablecloth. Ayşe takes her Rosenthal tea set and crystal tea glasses to the set. Thinking that the job will be over quickly, she arranges to meet a friend at eight that evening. However, a single shot is filmed twenty-seven times. She does not get home until a quarter to midnight.

A week later, Akgün calls and tells her to go to the accounts department to collect her payment. Wondering whether the amount will be worth travelling all the way from Yeniköy to Taksim, Ayşe goes to the address he has given her. When the accountant asks what she has done, she says she has set a table. The accountant does not understand what she means and asks her to specify her exact role. When Ayşe says she is an "art thing," the accountant corrects her: "Art director." As soon as she collects her payment and leaves, Ayşe starts counting the money. She has received far more than she expected and assumes there has been a mistake. But when the amount matches the figure on the receipt, she can hardly believe it.

Three days later, Tunca Yönder calls her. He tells her that he makes a lot of commercials and offers her a job as a production manager. Ayşe asks for time to think, but Tunca Yönder says he expects an answer by the following day. She immediately calls Akgün for advice. When he recommends accepting the offer, she takes the job.

Since the commercial production team works day and night, Ayşe leaves home before her children, who go to school in the morning. On set, she is responsible not only for the appearance of the filming location but also for almost every detail, including paying advances, covering expenses, and making sure that the extras' costumes and makeup are ready. If filming finishes before dawn, they all go out to dinner together in the evening.

As the number of bankers grows, their commercials require large numbers of extras. Every morning, the team recruits them from the coffeehouses in the back streets off İstiklal Avenue. Managing these people during filming, however, is quite difficult. For example, in one scene, everyone is instructed to

run towards the office of a banker offering high interest rates. When they are told to stop, they ignore the command and keep running. Whenever food is served among the sets, the extras help themselves to it. It is also difficult to get them to listen to reason.

During meal breaks, Ayşe chats with the extras, among whom are people who have studied philosophy, lost their entire fortunes gambling, fled their villages and ended up in brothels, been cast out because they are too old, or left their villages because of their homosexuality. When everyone has gone, all that remains is a set left filthy and in disarray, accounts to be settled, and props to be collected. Ayşe can finally go home only after taking care of all these tasks.

However, since she earns very well, she manages to pay off her debts to the shopkeepers in Yeniköy, even though she still cannot afford to have the roof repaired. Thanks to the growing number of bankers, her grandmother also invests her savings in an investment firm called Meban so that she can continue living in the apartment where she has lived for forty years. Because she gives the money she earns from this investment to her children, Ayşe's parents rent a summer house in Caddebostan, near Aunt Suat's home.

Amnesty International

In September, Ayşe is invited to Cambridge as one of the founding members of Amnesty International, which was established during Ecevit's government. She stays in one of the university buildings where students live. In her opening speech, she criticizes Amnesty International for accepting as a donation the proceeds from the premiere of *Midnight Express*, a film that contains elements disparaging the Turkish people.

At a time when Cyprus is under Turkish occupation, she finds herself facing Greeks and Greek Cypriots at almost every meeting she attends. Every time, they find a way to turn the discussion towards Cyprus, even when the topic is homosexuality. When Ayşe leaves one of these arguments in tears, a Nigerian man stops her and asks what has happened. When she explains that the Greeks have verbally attacked her over Cyprus, he makes her laugh by saying, "I'll come and eat alive anyone who upsets you."

Representing Turkey, Ayşe attends meetings involving European, Asian, Mediterranean, and Balkan countries. One day, as she is about to enter the Asian meeting, a Chinese man points to her blonde hair and tells her that the Europeans are meeting in the room on the second floor.

When she returns, seven members of the Workers' Party of Turkey (TİP) are murdered, followed by Professor Bedri Karafakioğlu, dean of the Faculty of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at Istanbul Technical University, and then Dr. Necdet Bulur. That year, after thirty-three people are killed in Kahramanmaraş and another seventy-seven die in clashes between the police and those attempting to seize the Governor's Office, martial law is declared. Ecevit, who has resisted the declaration, can no longer hold out. When martial law is imposed in thirteen provinces, Ayşe, too, has to spend the night on the studio sets whenever work does not finish by eleven o'clock.

A Lover

One day, after rushing home from a shoot before the curfew begins, Ayşe learns from Durmuş that Eren has come by, waited until he has eaten with the children, and then left. She also learns that Mehmet and Ahmet, the son of his sister Tomris, have called her. Since they have been working continuously for ten days, Tunca has given them four days off. As she lies in bed, wondering whether to accept her friend Meyzi's invitation to go to the Princes' Islands, the telephone rings. It is Ahmet calling. He tells her that Mehmet has been spreading rumours that Ali is not his biological son, and that his father has thrown him out of the house because of this. He adds that his grandfather and father are going to Switzerland to set up a fund that will provide for the children for the rest of their lives. Ayşe laughs off these stories.

Since Kerim and Selim are going to spend the weekend at Koko's, Ayşe accepts her friend's invitation and goes to the island. That evening, Meyzi's friends Pekin and Yiğit arrive as well. While Ayşe is putting a blanket in the room where Yiğit is staying, she notices the French edition of *Passages*, Nâzım Hikmet's poems, and *The Idle Man (Aylak Adam)* on his bedside table. She goes to her own room and looks at the books she has brought with her: the English edition of *Passages*, Nâzım Hikmet's poems, and *Topal Koşma*. She takes the books back to the living room and says, "Yiğit, look at our choice of books!" Yiğit asks, "Why *Topal Koşma*?" Ayşe explains that Nezihe Meriç's book takes

her back to her youth and makes her feel as though she has found an old friend. Yiğit says he carries *The Idle Man* for the same reason.

After Meyzi goes to bed, Yiğit asks Ayşe to stay a little longer and offers her some of the cognac he is drinking. Ayşe declines the drink but sits with him in front of the fireplace. During their conversation, she mentions that she met Mehmet in Geneva when she was still married to him. Yiğit confesses that he has admired her ever since. From that night on, Ayşe and Yiğit become lovers.

As a single woman, Ayşe is regarded as a threat by married women, so having a lover makes her feel more at ease in this respect. She and Yiğit read a great deal of poetry together, and sometimes Kerim and Selim join them. Yiğit holds meatball-and-poetry evenings for them at his home. When Mete and Ali come to visit, he tells them stories about his youthful adventures in Geneva, where he spent his university years, speaking to them as if they were grown men. Whenever Ayşe argues with him, she tells the children never to reveal the address of the location where she is filming. Yet when she arrives on set, she finds Yiğit's car parked there. The children always tell him where she has gone. In this way, they make peace again.

A Loss

During these years, as political assassinations continue, Ayşe is invited by Amnesty International to attend a meeting in London. She visits Mete and Ali before travelling on to London. One evening, as she lies in bed at her hotel, a news ticker scrolling across the television screen catches her attention. It reports that journalist Abdi İpekçi has been murdered.

Throughout 1979, she believes that the killer will be caught. She maintains this belief even when he escapes from prison. But in 2010, when she sees the killer speaking on a television channel as though he were a respectable man, she loses her faith in the possibility that good can triumph over evil.

In 1979, the new rich are black marketeers. Because runway lights cannot be obtained, pilots have to make blind landings. Car ferries are cancelled because there is no diesel fuel. TUSİAD launches a campaign against the government. When the Republican People's Party (CHP) wins only twelve parliamentary seats in the October by-elections, Ecevit resigns two days later. Demirel forms a government in his place. Three days later, a tanker and a cargo ship collide near the breakwater at Haydarpasha, causing an explosion.

1980

The year 1980 begins with the 24 January Decisions. In April, the writer Ümit Kaftancıoğlu is shot dead, and in May, Sevinç Özgüner, a member of the Central Council of the Turkish Medical Association, is also shot dead. In some parts of Istanbul that the police cannot enter, so-called "liberated zones" are declared. Fatsa, on the Black Sea coast, also declares its autonomous administration.

Meanwhile, Mehmet wants to send his sons into military service. He even communicates what he wants to tell them through his wife because, in his view, fathers do not talk or confide in their children. A father only scolds, swears, and, if necessary, beats them.

By July, Abdurrahman Köksaloğlu, a CHP member of parliament for Istanbul, is murdered, followed by former prime minister Nihat Erim and then Kemal Türkler, the former president of DİSK. When Ayşe visits her friend Işıl, Nihat Erim's daughter, she wonders what might have happened to her own family if her father had become involved in politics.

Mete fails to advance to his second year at university, while Ali fails his baccalaureate exams. As a result, their relationship with their father deteriorates. When Ayşe sends Ali back in September, she promises to send him money every month because his father has stopped giving him an allowance. She then goes to Bodrum alone with Mete. When they ask for a double room, the man at reception looks first at Ayşe and then at Mete. At first, Ayşe asks her son to take out his identity card, but then she remembers that they have different surnames and changes her mind.

As Mete confides in her, he complains that his father objects to his studying in America. He also resents the restrictions imposed on him when he stays at their houses in London or the south of France: he is not allowed to bring friends home, sleep late on holidays, or return home late in the

evening. Ayşe reminds him of the restrictions her own parents imposed on her when she was young and tries to explain that his father's behaviour does not stem from a lack of love. But Mete insists that his grandfather and his father are not the same.

On the return journey, she sees him off to Geneva as well. Because he has failed his year, he has switched his degree from law to economics. Ayşe tells him that if he cannot succeed in this course either, she will not be able to continue supporting him financially.

When she gets home, she learns that Tunca has called. She hears that new projects are starting and arranges to meet him the following day. When she goes to Taksim the next day for a meeting with Tunca and Murat Ateş, who is both Tunca's stepdaughter's husband and his assistant, Tunca tells her that he ran into a friend of his late father the day before. The man said that he expected a coup to happen soon.

That evening, Ayşe goes home and has dinner with the children and Koko while they watch the news. They see reports of houses and workplaces destroyed by a fire that broke out a week earlier at a plastics factory in Fener. They then see news of the groundbreaking ceremony for the metro in Ankara.

The next morning, Ayşe finds everyone gathered in front of the television. The same announcement is being repeated over and over: the five-member National Security Council, headed by Chief of the General Staff Kenan Evren, has taken control of the country. A little later, her father calls and warns her not to leave the house under any circumstances.

But when Ayşe calls her friend Fazile shortly afterwards, Fazile tells her that the streets are empty and invites her over. Ayşe picks up her keys and steps outside to walk to her friend's house, just a few minutes away. The streets really are deserted. As she walks, a GMC truck full of soldiers pulls up behind her. One of the soldiers lowers the window and tells her that martial law has been declared and that there is a curfew. Ayşe lies, saying that she has spent the night at a friend's house, that her own home is in Nişantaşı, and that she is trying to get back there. She then asks whether they can drop her somewhere near Taksim. The soldiers take her into the vehicle and drive her straight to the address she has given them.

Ayşe gets out of the vehicle in front of Yiğit's house and goes straight upstairs. His cook, Hıdır, opens the door. Yiğit looks up from the file he is reading at his desk. Ayşe asks whether he is curious about how she got there. He replies that she must have come in her car. Ayşe tells him that she has arrived not in her own car but in a military vehicle. When she sees none of the happiness she has hoped to find in him, she slams the door and leaves. She walks to her mother's house in Topağacı.

"Denizkondü"

When Ayşe is still living with Eren, a group of men fill in part of the sea and erect a structure on the reclaimed land, which they use as a nightclub at night. Eren reports them to the municipality, but nothing comes of it. One day, he gets into a fight with the driver of a truck carrying sand to fill in the sea and throws the truck's key into the water. In the days that follow, they find one of their dogs dead. Durmuş tells them that the men have threatened to kill the children just as they have killed the dog unless they find and return the key.

Terrified, Ayşe immediately calls two of her friends, Baskın and Tosun, who are divers. Since they are salvaging British ships that sank in the Dardanelles during the World Wars, they send some of their colleagues to help, but the key cannot be found. The building stands directly in front of the Eczacıbaşı family's mansion. At a reception, Nejat Eczacıbaşı tells Ayşe that he has even taken the matter to the provincial governor, but has still achieved nothing. They are forced to have a duplicate key made. Since the building reminds them of an illegal shanty house, they call it *denizkondü*, a play on *gecekondü*, the Turkish word for a shanty house built without permission.

Ayşe wonders whether the military can control these men when nobody else seems able to. One day, after finishing work, she picks up Kerim and Selim from school and takes Kerim to the home of Aunt Mari, his former mathematics teacher, for a tutoring session. While they study mathematics, Ayşe and Selim go upstairs to visit Filiz, the daughter of her aunt Sabahat and her uncle Bâlâ. When Filiz says

that Aunt Mari is too old to teach mathematics, Ayşe explains that her real aim is to ensure that the children understand that Greeks and other non-Turkish people also live in this country.

Afterwards, Ayşe confides in Filiz about Mehmet. When she calls him to discuss the children, his wife answers the phone and says that she must prepare Mehmet for the conversation first. A few days later, she calls Ayşe back and tells her that Mehmet wants to swear at her before speaking to her. After this, Ayşe never attempts to contact him again.

When they return home, Ayşe discovers that the building in question has been demolished while they were out that morning. The men who fled the scene are smugglers, and they have taken refuge in nearby houses during the demolition. The police are searching everywhere. Because a pistol belonging to the Turkish Armed Forces is found in their house, every corner is thoroughly searched. Eventually, the house is sealed, Durmuş is taken into custody, and his wife, Afi, goes to stay with a relative in one of the shanty houses in the upper neighbourhoods.

They break the seal to go inside and collect a few belongings. The house is indeed in complete disarray. They take what they need and leave, then put the seal back in place. They go straight to Afi's house. Ayşe promises to find Durmuş. They decide to spend one night with Koko and the next at their grandmother's house, taking turns with the children.

When they learn that the pistol has been taken to the Northern Field Command, they go there with Koko. However, Koko speaks with a French accent because she was born in France during the years her grandfather, Field Marshal Rıza Pasha, was in exile and did not return to Turkey until she was twenty-three. Ayşe warns her that if she speaks there, Eren could even be accused of espionage, and says she will handle the conversation herself. She explains to the commander that the pistol dates back to Eren's military service and that they simply forgot about it. The commander, however, says that nothing can be done until Eren, who is abroad at the time, returns to Turkey and stands trial. He promises to let her know when they find out where Durmuş is being held. On the fourth day of the crisis, when Eren speaks to his mother, Koko warns him not to return to Turkey in case he is arrested. Now that they are no longer living at home, Ayşe is freed from the burden of household chores. Meanwhile, because she is sending money to Ali and Mete, she needs to earn extra income. She therefore takes on interviews, articles, and translation assignments for magazines through her friend Ercan Arıklı. On nights when the curfew forces them to stay on the studio sets, she works on these assignments until morning. She sends part of what she earns to Mete and Ali.

Eventually, she learns that Durmuş is being held in Hasdal. She wants to go there with a friend, but everyone is afraid of the military, so nobody agrees to accompany her. She goes alone. When Durmuş appears before her, extremely thin and with his ears sticking out prominently because his hair has been shaved, she first bursts out laughing and then starts to cry. On her way back, she visits Afi to tell her that she has found Durmuş and hands over the food supplies she has brought.

They enter 1982 in good spirits. Durmuş has been released, and they can return home. But the house is freezing because it has not been heated for months. One weekend, at the children's insistence, they take their dog with them and cook sucuk sandwiches over the fireplace. The fire warms the fronts of their bodies while their backs freeze. After spending two days like this, they leave the house, planning to return when the weather improves.

Yeniköy

Mete and Ali come to Istanbul for the Easter holidays. Mete has two years left before graduating from university, while Ali is due to start university the following year. They go to their grandfather's house to speak to him privately and seek his support. Ayşe drops them off at his house in Taksim Gezi and goes to a nearby café. Shortly after she goes inside, the boys arrive. Their father has forbidden them to enter the house, so the butler turns them away at the door. Their grandfather also tells them that he is flying to Zurich the following day and asks them not to come back.

As soon as Ayşe returns home, she calls a friend who works for an airline to confirm the information. That evening, Mete and Ali write a letter to their grandfather. Early the next morning, they entrust it to a flight attendant, asking her to deliver it to him. They never find out whether the letter reaches its recipient, but they learn that their grandfather has closed the fund he set up for his grandchildren. Meanwhile, Eren's mother, Koko, fears that her son will be arrested when he returns to Turkey, so she distributes large sums of money to his lawyers. Ayşe suspects that the lawyers are taking advantage

of her, but Koko refuses to listen. Eren returns in the summer, and his trial takes place almost immediately. His sentence for negligence is converted into a fine.

Since Ayşe and Eren have been living apart for years, her father tells her that it is time for them to separate formally. Ayşe agrees. A few days later, when she comes home, she notices that the light is on in Mete and Ali's room. She goes inside and finds Eren there. He explains that his mother's house is being redecorated and that he will be staying there for a few nights. That evening, he mentions that Ayşe is in a relationship with Yiğit and agrees to a divorce.

Their house in Yeniköy is put up for sale. Kerim and Selim are also enrolled in a school in England. Kerim will leave after completing the fifth grade, and Selim will follow a year later. Since their final days in Yeniköy fall in winter, Ayşe invites Mete and Ali to the house during the winter holidays.

When the final day arrives, Kerim and Selim want to sleep in the camp they have set up in the garden and named "Heaven," but Ayşe refuses because it is too cold. At around five in the morning, when she cannot find Kerim and Selim in their beds, she goes straight to their camp in the garden. But the boys are not there either. Noticing the dog's tail, she approaches it and finds the children beneath a tree overlooking the Bosphorus, wrapped in a blanket, sitting shoulder to shoulder and crying.

They leave Yeniköy that morning. For years, the children dream of becoming very rich and buying the house back, but this never happens. After graduating from university with the support of his aunt, Mete eventually builds a house in Geneva for his wife and daughter, with a garden and a view of the lake, using his own earnings. He names it Yeniköy.

Another New Life

After leaving Yeniköy, they find an apartment in Nişantaşı. Its owner is Ayşe's friend Tefo, who once bought a boat engine from Eren but was unable to pay the full amount he owed. When he sells the apartment to Ayşe, he deducts the outstanding debt from the price. Although her family objects because the apartment is poorly maintained, Ayşe buys it immediately, as the money she has is just enough to cover the cost. Once the renovations are complete, the apartment is transformed beyond recognition. Her family and the children love it. Although it is close to everywhere, there is no parking space, so whenever she parks her car on the street, its windows are often smashed or its radio is stolen.

One day, while she is at the theatre with Yiğit, he steps outside during the interval to smoke, and she notices Betül Mardin there as well. Betül Mardin invites her to come over for coffee the following morning. The next day, Ayşe goes straight to her house. After an hour-long meeting, she is hired as a public relations officer at Asil Nadir's Nadir Group of Companies, where Betül Mardin works as a public relations consultant. Ayşe will now be her representative within the company.

She begins walking to work. She marks and files almost everything that appears in the media about the group or its competitors. At the time, Beta videotapes are widely used in Turkey, but the company wants to market VHS tapes. Ayşe finds articles about VHS in various foreign magazines, then writes new pieces that combine translated material with original content and submits them to magazines. In this way, they begin familiarizing consumers with the product.

By the end of her second month, her life becomes more eventful. She travels to Cyprus with a five-person group from Istanbul. Betül Mardin asks her to take notes on everything related to the company, from the moment they descend the stairs to the building's main entrance. When she returns, Ayşe feels that she has grasped the basic requirements of her job. Through the company's connections, she also begins writing short pieces for the newspaper *Dünya*.

To Her Father

For her father's eightieth birthday, on 1 April 1983, Ayşe writes him a poem and secures a promise from the editor of an arts magazine, published on the first of every month, to print it. She goes a step further and asks Yılmaz Özbek to handwrite the poem on a piece of card, which she then has framed. But when 1 April arrives, the poem does not appear in the magazine. She calls the magazine and obtains another promise that it will be published the following month.

She organizes a birthday party for her father in her new home. At the gathering, where three generations are together, Oya Başak reads the poem aloud.

The Trip That Never Happens

They once again plan the family trip they have wanted to take for years, intending to visit Switzerland first and then London. Five days before departure, Ayşe wakes up to the news that Banker Kastelli has fled abroad. Since Yiğit sits on the board of Meban, where her grandmother's property has been sold and the proceeds invested, she calls him. He asks her to give him some time and promises to call her once he has looked into the situation.

Soon, it becomes clear that interest rates have fallen from around seventy per cent to forty per cent and that no one is allowed to offer more than forty per cent. Yiğit says that Ayşe needs to be present when Meban's shares are transferred to Vakıflar Bankası. As a result, she has to leave her parents to make the trip without her.

During this period, the Populist Party, the Great Turkey Party, and Turgut Özal's Motherland Party are established. No one expects the Motherland Party to win 212 seats in the November elections.

Children Caught in the Middle

One day, Ali calls to tell Ayşe that his paternal grandmother has died. Since his father cannot enter the country for various reasons and Mete is ill, Ali says that he will come to Istanbul himself. When Ayşe goes to collect him from the airport the following day, she learns that his father has told him to spit in his aunt's face. Ali refuses, saying that he will never do such a thing.

After stopping by his grandfather's house to greet everyone, Ali goes with Ayşe to the house in Topağacı where his mother and father live. A little later, the telephone rings. His grandfather's butler tells them that Ali's father has called and wants him to return to his grandfather's house. Ali goes there straight away.

That night, while Ayşe has fallen asleep, the doorbell rings. It is Ali. His father has ordered him to throw his aunt out of the house. When Ali refuses, his father curses and threatens him. Ali then tells his aunt to leave. After learning what has happened, his grandfather throws Ali out of the house as well. When Ayşe hears the story, she, too, slams the door and goes to her room.

Back at the Hospital

At this point, Ayşe returns to the hospital where her father is staying, as described in the previous volume of this work. One day, while looking out of the window, she sees Eren arrive. Her father cannot forgive the son-in-law who has betrayed his daughter and does not want him to visit. When Eren enters the room, Ayşe pretends to be asleep. When he persistently offers to take her abroad for treatment, she objects. She gets him out of the room and sends him away with evasive answers. After he leaves, her father asks about the magazine that is supposed to publish her poem. Since the poem still has not appeared, Ayşe cannot bring him the magazine.

The Children and Their Father

When Mete and Ali come to Turkey, their father, Mehmet, is also staying at the Hilton Hotel with his wife. While visiting their grandfather in hospital, the boys are advised by him to speak to their father, whatever happens, so they arrange a meeting.

That day, Ayşe returns home from work early. Looking out of the window, she sees Mete coming back alone. When he enters the house, his hands are trembling with anger. He tells her that their father has asked them to do their military service and said that he has closed the fund their grandfather set up for them. At the end of the meeting, their father sends Ali away and takes Mete upstairs to his room. There, together with his wife, he tells Mete that Ali is not his brother and that his biological father is another man.

Ayşe discovers that almost everyone in Mehmet's circle has heard this rumour. When it eventually reaches Ali, she finds the files from the custody case, including the allegations made against him by his father's lawyer, and gives them to him. She tells him that if he were not her own child, she would never have fought so hard to get custody of him.

Ali, who refuses to see his father under any circumstances, eventually takes a DNA test in London years later to put his half-sister's doubts to rest. The test confirms that Mehmet is his father. When Ali

sends the results to Mehmet, his father begins rambling about things the doctor who delivered Ali supposedly said concerning blood-group incompatibility.

Farewell

In August, her father loses his intestinal flora and becomes incontinent, so either Filiz, Ayşe, or his wife has to clean him. When he particularly does not want Filiz to do this, she protests and asks him to treat her no differently from Ayşe. One day, Ayşe sees a nursing assistant muttering complaints while cleaning her father. She takes the woman aside and tells her that she understands how difficult the job is, but she will not allow anyone to hurt her father's feelings.

Since her cousin Semra has come from London with her family and is staying with her, Ayşe uses this as a reason to remain with her mother rather than leave her alone. Her mother is in no condition to care for her father by herself. Her white hair has grown out at the roots, she is exhausted after months of caregiving, and her hands are trembling. One day, with Mete and Ali helping her, Ayşe finally persuades her mother to go home and get some sleep.

When Aunt Güzin drops by in the late afternoon, she offers to stay with Ayşe's mother because she lives alone. Her mother goes to spend the night with Aunt Güzin, while Mete and Ali go to Filiz's house for dinner. That night, as Ayşe sits beside her father, she notices that his breathing has become rattling and laboured. The nurse on duty says she will wait a little longer before calling the doctor on duty.

Ayşe waits for her father to open his eyes, but when he does, he stares at the wall opposite him. Ayşe then calls Aunt Güzin and asks her to bring her mother to the hospital. After her mother arrives, the nurse is about to call the doctor, but her mother stops her. She does not want them to disturb him by putting an oxygen mask on him.

In the morning, they send away everyone who comes to visit. Her father opens his eyes once more, takes a few shallow, irregular breaths, and closes them again. Realizing that he is saying his final farewell to life, her mother gets up, places a chair against the door, and lies down beside him on one side, while Ayşe lies on the other. Together, they say goodbye to him.

That night, Ayşe completes the final lines of the poem she has written for her father.

THEMES

SOCIETY

Gender Ayşe Kulin marries her second husband, her boyfriend, so that they can travel abroad together. After they marry, she is forced to fight for custody of her children against her former husband and his family. Throughout the court case, she stands up to several false witnesses who claim that she is an "immoral" woman and therefore unfit to care for her children. In the end, she can regain custody of her children only because she manages to reach the chief public prosecutor through another woman who is in a similar situation. When she applies for translation work to bring extra income into the household, the person who offers her the job chooses to describe her as a "playgirl," despite the fact that she is a mother of four. Her former husband even goes so far as to claim that their youngest son is not his child. All these experiences are some of the costs Ayşe Kulin pays for not following traditional expectations.

Class After marrying Eren Kemahlı, Ayşe Kulin moves into a mansion in Yeniköy. Eren Kemahlı is a man who prefers to spend money on his expensive tastes rather than repair the roof of the mansion where they live. Although Ayşe experiences the problems within this lifestyle, which appears perfect from the outside, she takes part in all her husband's expensive spending. After their divorce, she begins to live on a smaller scale and spend less. However, the lifestyle she experiences with her extended family, her former husband and his family, and her later husband turns her into a discerning consumer. We can see the importance of this knowledge of where, what, and how to consume in her entry into the advertising industry. She gets the job because she can arrange different table settings for a commercial, using her own antique tableware.

POLITICS

Conflict As a child, Ayşe Kulin often connects with her father through conversations about the political and social conflicts in the country. She is also one of the founding members of Amnesty International. As a result, she is sensitive to everything that happens in her country. The social and political conflicts she occasionally mentions are sometimes part of the background to her life and sometimes a reality she experiences firsthand. Some events bring these conflicts very close to her personal life. A clash near her children's school spreads to the school itself. Her friend Abdi İpekçi is assassinated. Nihat Erim, a former prime minister and the father of her friend Işıl, is killed. After the military coup, the authorities seal the house in Yeniköy where she lives. These events show how political conflict directly affects her life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Ayşe Kulin can establish a home of her own, independent of her family, only after divorcing her second husband. During this period, she also experiences the possibility of remaining in a relationship with a man without marrying him. What accounts for the difference between being able to make these choices as a young woman and being able to make them as a mother who has experienced divorce?
2. Ayşe Kulin enters professional life and begins working full-time only after separating from her husband. How does the transition from being a discerning consumer, knowing what to consume, where, and how, to taking an active role in production transform a woman's social position?

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