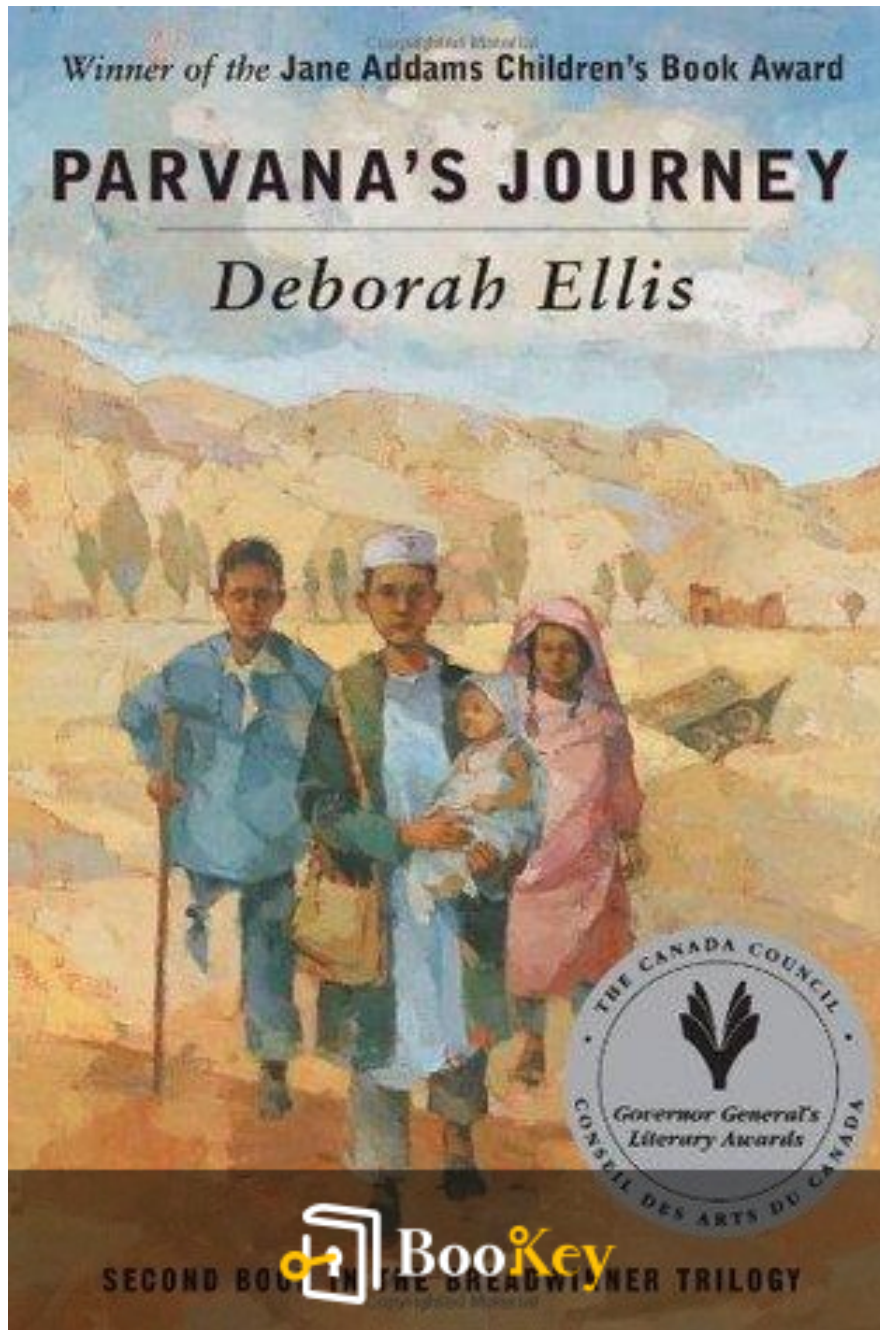


Parvana's Journey PDF (Limited Copy)

Deborah Ellis



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Parvana's Journey Summary

A Girl's Courage Amidst War and Loss

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About the book

In "Parvana's Journey," Deborah Ellis takes us on a harrowing yet inspiring odyssey through war-torn Afghanistan, as we follow the resilient young protagonist, Parvana, on her quest to find her family amidst the chaos and destruction left by the Taliban's regime. Abandoned by the only life she knew, Parvana must navigate treacherous landscapes and confront the harsh realities of a society where hope seems lost. Through her unwavering bravery and determination, readers are invited to witness the strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity. This poignant tale not only sheds light on the complexities of survival but also encapsulates the profound bonds of love and connection that transcend even the bleakest circumstances, encouraging us to reflect on the power of hope and the importance of family.

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About the author

Deborah Ellis is a renowned Canadian author and activist, best known for her poignant and thought-provoking children's literature that often addresses the challenges faced by young people in war-torn regions. Born in 1960, Ellis has dedicated much of her writing career to raising awareness about the plight of children in conflict, drawing on her experiences while traveling and meeting those affected by war. Her most famous work, "The Breadwinner" series, including the widely acclaimed "Parvana's Journey," showcases her ability to weave compelling narratives that resonate with readers of all ages, providing insights into the resilience and courage of individuals in dire circumstances. With her profound empathy and commitment to social justice, Ellis continues to inspire readers to engage with the world around them and advocate for change.

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Chapter 1 Summary: ONE

In Chapter 1 of "Parvana's Journey" by Deborah Ellis, we meet Parvana, a young girl mourning the recent death of her father in an Afghan village. The chapter opens with Parvana at her father's grave, surrounded by men who try to comfort her while she silently grapples with her loss. She feels a deep connection to her father, recalling his life as a teacher and the struggles they faced together. In a country ravaged by the conflicts imposed by the Taliban, Parvana finds herself alone, forced to disguise herself as a boy named Kaseem for her safety.

After the funeral, a kind man, recognizing her plight, offers to take her home, and she reluctantly agrees, knowing she has no other options. On the way to his house, she reflects on her previous hardships, recalling how she and her father struggled to find food and safety amidst the war. Parvana eventually arrives at the man's home, where she is accepted graciously by his wife and children. Although she finds some comfort in their care and the camaraderie with the girls, the pain of her father's absence looms large in her heart.

As she spends more time in the village, trying to adjust and heal, Parvana becomes attached to the family, sharing moments of playing with the children and helping to care for her father's grave. Yet, she is determined to find her family—her mother and siblings—who are scattered somewhere in

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Afghanistan. Her growing bond with the villagers makes her desire to stay stronger, but she knows she must continue her search for her own people.

Tragedy strikes when Parvana learns from one of the girls that the men in the village are planning to hand her over to the Taliban for money. Faced with this threat, she decides to leave the village under the cover of night, unable to take the girl with her, despite her longing to help. The chapter ends with Parvana finding a moment of solitude in the stunning Afghan landscape, feeling the weight of her loneliness but also preparing to write to her friend Shauzia, symbolizing her hope and the enduring human spirit amidst despair.

This chapter presents themes of loss, resilience, and the struggle for identity, as Parvana navigates a world filled with danger and hardship while clinging to her memories and the hope of reuniting with her family.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: Resilience in the face of adversity

Critical Interpretation: In the depth of sorrow, as you reflect on Parvana's journey, realize that her resilience amidst overwhelming loss teaches you the true strength of the human spirit. Just as she navigates her grief and uncertainty while being forced to disguise herself for safety, you too can find moments of courage in your struggles. Embracing the challenges life throws your way will empower you to seek out connections, create new memories, and ultimately remain hopeful, just as Parvana holds onto the hope of reuniting with her family despite the daunting circumstances.

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Chapter 2 Summary: TWO

In Chapter 2 of "Parvana's Journey," we find Parvana walking through barren hills, reciting multiplication tables as her father taught her. These lessons are a way to pass the time as they search for their family after the turmoil that has separated them. Parvana's father, a former history teacher, fills her mind with knowledge about subjects ranging from science to poetry, using their journey as a classroom. They often reminisce about their family, discussing how much her siblings have changed, maintaining a facade of hope that keeps despair at bay.

As Parvana walks, she grapples with hunger; her meager rations have run out after several days. To distract herself from her physical discomfort, she continues reciting her multiplication tables, trying to focus but finding it challenging due to her emptiness.

Suddenly, she hears a strange wailing sound that she initially mistakes for the wind. Curiosity compels her to investigate, and she climbs a nearby hillside. There, she encounters a woman whose face is visible under her thrown-back burqa, but she is lost in her sorrow and doesn't respond to Parvana's attempts to communicate. The woman's wailing is haunting and relentless, and Parvana, feeling a mix of frustration and empathy, tries to engage her more vigorously, hoping for some form of help or connection. However, as she looks into the woman's vacant eyes, she recognizes the



signs of deep despair – a hopelessness that mirrors the suffering she has witnessed in refugee camps.

Recalling her father's advice about the futility of trying to save someone who has given up, Parvana chooses to step away from the woman's grief. She understands that while she cannot help the woman, she must protect her own hope and spirit. Leaving the area, Parvana continues on her path, leaving the haunting cries far behind, a poignant reminder of the struggle for survival that defines her journey. Through this chapter, we see Parvana's resilience and growing understanding of the human condition, as well as the complex emotions that come from facing both personal suffering and the suffering of others.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The importance of maintaining hope amid despair.

Critical Interpretation: Just like Parvana, when you find yourself in challenging situations, it's essential to hold onto hope, even when faced with overwhelming despair. Life can present us with moments that strip away our comfort and joy, much like the hardships Parvana endures. However, by anchoring ourselves in the belief that things can get better, we create a mental space that fosters resilience. This chapter inspires you to cultivate your own inner strength, to keep the light of hope alive in your heart, and to use knowledge and personal growth as tools to navigate through the darkest times. Remember, just as Parvana can only aid her own journey if she preserves her spirit, you too can uplift yourself and those around you by choosing hope.

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Chapter 3: THREE

In Chapter 3 of "Parvana's Journey," we find Parvana in a desolate village, exploring its ruins after a war has ravaged the area. As she surveys the damage, she feels the haunting emptiness that follows the bombs, recognizing the remnants of families that had to flee for their lives, much like her own. While searching through the debris, she hears a faint cry and discovers a baby abandoned in a demolished house, covered only by a piece of cloth. Parvana's heart aches for the little one, and after finding the baby's deceased mother beneath the rubble, she hurriedly takes the child outside, vowing to care for him.

She names the baby Hassan and embarks on a mission to feed and clean him, sharing a stale meal she'd scavenged. Their bond begins to grow as Parvana talks to him, despite her uncertainty about whether he can understand her. For a brief moment, their shared existence cuts through the grimness of their reality. Parvana cares for Hassan tenderly, washing him in a stream, dressing him in clean clothes, and facing the challenges of parenthood, however temporary, with a brave heart.

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Chapter 4 Summary: FOUR

In this chapter of "Parvana's Journey," we join Parvana as she seeks shelter for herself and the baby, Hassan, in a cave near a small stream. The weight of carrying a baby proves to be much more challenging than carrying her bundles, highlighting her struggle and fatigue. Parvana attempts to sneak into the cave quietly, but her efforts are thwarted when Hassan squeals, prompting her to step inside.

Inside, she finds a cozy space until a child's voice demands she leave. Parvana's initial fear pushes her to run, but she quickly gathers her courage and decides to confront the voice. The child, who introduces himself as Asif, threatens her with a gun. However, Parvana, discerning that he is just a scared boy like herself, tries to negotiate. Though he initially shows aggression, throwing stones and cursing, Parvana stands her ground.

As the two continue their tense exchange, Asif reveals his vulnerability: he is physically disabled, missing a leg and clearly suffering from neglect and hardship. Parvana's compassionate instincts kick in, and she reluctantly shares her food and water with him, despite his rude behavior. The interaction reflects themes of survival, empathy, and the complexity of human relationships amid war and chaos.

As they interact, Parvana shares her backstory, explaining why she

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pretended to be a boy, particularly underscoring her father's significance and the pain of losing him. This moment reflects her grief and the harsh realities that forced her into challenging circumstances, which is mirrored by Asif's own suffering and inability to express genuine gratitude due to his anger and fear.

Ultimately, as night falls, despite their disagreements, Parvana finds a moment of kindness in covering Asif with a blanket while he sleeps. This small act represents a flicker of humanity amidst their struggles. Parvana is determined to focus on her journey to find her family but recognizes the complexities of her situation, wrestling with the idea of leaving both boys behind. Her thoughts reflect her dilemma between compassion and the hard choices she must make to survive, setting the stage for her continued journey and the emotional challenges ahead.

Key Elements	Description
Setting	Parvana seeks shelter in a cave near a small stream.
Challenge	Carrying the baby, Hassan, is difficult for Parvana, leading to fatigue.
Initial Confrontation	A child named Asif confronts Parvana with a gun, initially threatening her.
Character Dynamics	Asif reveals his vulnerability; he is a disabled boy going through hardship.
Themes	Survival, empathy, and the complexity of human relationships amid

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Key Elements	Description
	war.
Parvana's Backstory	She explains her disguise as a boy and shares her grief over her father's loss.
Acts of Kindness	Despite disagreements, Parvana covers Asif with a blanket, showing compassion.
Emotional Conflict	Parvana struggles with the decision to leave both boys behind while focusing on finding her family.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The importance of empathy and understanding towards others, even in difficult situations.

Critical Interpretation: In your journey through life, just like Parvana's, you will encounter individuals who might seem hostile or difficult to approach. Parvana's experience teaches you that behind each tough exterior lies a story of pain and struggle. By choosing to empathize and understand others, you create a bridge of connection that not only helps them but enriches your own humanity. In moments when you feel challenged or threatened, remember that showing kindness and compassion can transform fears into understanding, creating opportunities for healing and collaboration in a world that often feels divided.

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Chapter 5 Summary: FIVE

In Chapter 5 of "Parvana's Journey," we find Parvana and Asif in a tense and humorous exchange. Parvana chastises Asif for his foul smell, leading to a playful, yet biting, banter between the two. Asif, begrudgingly, is dealing with his own discomfort, compounded by a severe cough and physical pain evident from his ribs, which he tries to hide with bravado. Their dynamic shows the friction between them, but beneath it lies a burgeoning understanding of each other's struggles.

Amidst their arguing, Parvana turns her attention to her baby brother, Hassan, who needs cleaning. Her nurturing instincts shine through as she attempts to bathe him, demonstrating the protective role she embodies as a big sister. Asif, despite their conflicts, unexpectedly becomes involved, showcasing a softer side when he gently interacts with Hassan, revealing his vulnerability and exhaustion.

Parvana takes a moment to notice Asif's scars while helping him wash, which suggests a painful backstory that hints at the trauma he has endured. There's a quiet moment of compassion from Parvana as she helps him despite their tense relationship; she mirrors the caring gestures her mother used to perform for her, illustrating her growth and resilience in the face of trying circumstances.



After the washing episode, Parvana reflects on her past life in Kabul in a letter to her friend Shauzia. She struggles with fading memories of comfort and normalcy—school, friends, and simple pleasures like ice cream—contrasting sharply with her current reality of survival amidst dust, rocks, and the burden of searching for her mother. This poignant introspection not only highlights the theme of loss but also encapsulates the harsh transformation from childhood innocence to the grim realities of war.

Throughout this chapter, we see key character developments: Parvana emerges as a strong caretaker, while Asif grapples with his internal and external battles. Their initial antagonism gradually reveals layers of complexity, hinting at the potential for camaraderie born from shared hardship. Themes of resilience, growth, and the scars—both visible and invisible—of war resonate strongly, shaping the narrative's emotional landscape.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The importance of compassion and understanding in relationships

Critical Interpretation: In Chapter 5, as you witness Parvana and Asif momentarily set aside their differences to care for baby Hassan and acknowledge each other's pain, you're reminded that empathy can bridge divides. Just like Parvana, you, too, face challenges that can strain your connections with others. This chapter inspires you to embrace kindness and compassion, as understanding the struggles of those around you can not only strengthen your relationships, but also foster a sense of unity and resilience in the face of adversity.

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Chapter 6: SIX

In this chapter of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana finds herself alone in a cave, which she takes pride in keeping tidy, even if it's just dirt. Imagining the cave as a treasure chamber, she daydreams about fixing it up for her family, a hopeful thought given the hardships they've been facing. A conversation with Asif and Hassan leads her to share her thoughts about Alexander the Great, whom she admires for his conquests and supposed treasures. This playful banter showcases Parvana's imagination and determination to remain optimistic despite her dire situation, while also illustrating her youthful spirit.

Asif, a more cynical character, dismisses her ideas, focusing instead on his desire for tangible riches such as horses. Their playful argument about treasure culminates in a spontaneous digging expedition in the cave. The camaraderie between them hints at a budding friendship, with Parvana stepping into a supportive role to help Asif, who struggles with crutches.

Their digging proves fruitful as they uncover a small, green metal box,

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Alex Walk

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Chapter 7 Summary: SEVEN

In Chapter 7 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana reveals her ambitious plan to leave the cave in search of her mother. Determined yet uncertain, she chooses a direction and insists to Asif that she has a plan, even though deep down her plan mainly consists of wandering in hope. Asif, embodying both a skeptical companion and a source of irritation, questions her choices and suggestions that they should stay put. He predicts that the search will be futile, sparking a flicker of doubt in Parvana but ultimately frustrating her.

Despite her earlier wish to be free of Asif's presence, she finds herself strangely relieved when he insists on joining her journey. As they prepare for their departure, they face the harsh reality of their situation, especially regarding food. With limited supplies, they decide to cook the remaining rice, leading to a tense moment when they accidentally drop the pot, spilling precious food. This incident heightens their stress, highlighting the fragile nature of their survival as they gather the salvaged rice with care.

Amidst these struggles, Parvana reflects on her behavior and wishes for better self-control, contributing to the theme of personal growth under distress. Writing to her friend Shauzia, she expresses her frustrations and dreams for a better life, revealing her longing for stability, food security, and some peace away from daily chaos. As Parvana and Asif set off, carrying Hassan and their meager belongings, the chapter closes with a sense of



urgency and uncertainty, echoing both the weight of their past and the hope for a brighter future as they embark on this new chapter of their lives.

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Critical Thinking

Key Point: The power of determination and hope

Critical Interpretation: As you face your own life's challenges, let Parvana's unwavering determination to find her mother serve as a powerful reminder that hope can fuel your journey, even in uncertain times. Embrace the courage to move forward, despite the doubts and fears that may arise, just like Parvana, who continues to pursue her goals with a sense of purpose amidst chaos. This key point encourages you to take bold steps toward your dreams, believing that each step, whether planned or instinctive, brings you closer to a brighter future.

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Chapter 8 Summary: EIGHT

In Chapter 8 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana, along with her companion Asif and baby Hassan, continues their difficult trek, suffering from hunger and exhaustion. After two days without food, Parvana feels both physically and mentally drained, sharing the burden of their situation with Asif, who is also struggling but refuses to admit it. Their journey leads them to a small village where they encounter old men watching them and decide to seek water. Asif is initially hesitant about asking the unfriendly adults but approaches some young boys playing soccer for help.

Finding a tea shop, Parvana and Asif attempt to secure food and water through work. Despite Asif's reluctance to beg, the two children manage to persuade one of the men to provide Parvana with a task—cleaning a chicken house—in exchange for a small bowl of rice and water. While working, Parvana finds forgotten eggs but struggles with the moral dilemma of stealing from the chicken house. Ultimately, she chooses not to take them, adhering to the values instilled by her father.

After completing the task, they receive just enough rice to share but are still unsatisfied and angered by the man's lack of compassion towards them. Fueled by their hunger and righteous frustration, they devise a plan to return at night and steal the eggs they initially left behind. They even manage to nab a chicken when Parvana helps Asif as he quietly catches it.



As they leave the village, Parvana reflects on the cruelty of adults who abandon children in need. Despite their hardship, they find moments of joy in their small victories, sharing laughter and hope for a better future. The chapter highlights themes of survival, the innocence of childhood amidst despair, and the moral choices that come with hardship. Through it all, Parvana and Asif's bond strengthens, showcasing their resilience in the face of adversity.

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Chapter 9: NINE

In Chapter 9 of "Parvana's Journey," we find Parvana struggling with hunger and discomfort as she lies awake at night. Their recent meal of chicken and eggs had brought temporary relief, especially for her younger brother Hassan, who was unable to chew the chicken properly due to his few teeth. Parvana shows her nurturing side by cooking soft eggs for Hassan, sharing the food with her brother Asif, and finding joy in the brief moments of connection over their meal. However, the reality of their situation sinks in when the food runs out, leading to an overwhelming feeling of hopelessness as Parvana grapples with the monotony of hunger, reflecting on the pointless cycle of eating only to be hungry again.

Despite her physical discomfort, Parvana's spirit shines through as she tries to find solace in her imagination, envisioning herself as "Parvana the Protector" looking after her sleeping family. In her solitude, she begins to hum a song learned at school, and her music seems to bring a touch of magic to the dark night, making the stars twinkle brighter. Asif soon joins her, breaking the silence with a gentle tug on her blanket. The siblings share a

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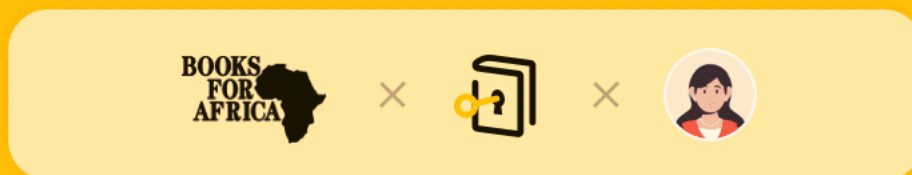
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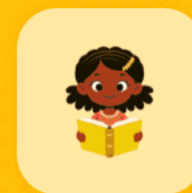
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Chapter 10 Summary: TEN

In Chapter 10 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana continues her struggle for survival alongside Asif and their frail companion, Hassan. As the children press on through exhaustion and sickness—recently exacerbated by unboiled water—the story underscores their dire circumstances. Parvana reflects on her father's words, "If we stop, we die," compelling her to push forward despite her fatigue.

Hassan's condition visibly worsens, and Parvana realizes that the milk they drank without boiling has made them all ill. As they navigate their harsh reality, Parvana attempts to escape their suffering through her writing. She imagines a beautiful, vibrant place she calls Green Valley, where food is plentiful and everyone is happy. Her detailed descriptions show the depth of her longing for a better world, and she secretly hopes that by visualizing it, she might somehow make it real.

When she shares her imaginative vision with Asif, his dismissive attitude temporarily crushes her spirit. This stirs feelings of frustration, leading Parvana to tear up her letter and hurl it away, overwhelmed by the harshness of reality. In a moment of lightness, she and Asif engage in a playful challenge of throwing stones, but this turns disastrous when Parvana accidentally sets off a landmine, unleashing panic and anger from Asif.



His rage reveals his deep fear and frustration, especially as he struggles with the loss of his leg. In this climactic moment, the tension culminates in an emotional outbreak as Parvana and Asif hold each other and their suffering friend, weeping in despair. This chapter encapsulates key themes such as the resilience of hope in the face of despair, the burdens of responsibility, and the harsh realities of war that can shatter dreams in an instant. Through their journey, Parvana's imagination serves as both a refuge and a source of conflict, illustrating the delicate balance between dreaming of a better life and facing the cruel truths of their existence.

Key Themes	Summary
Struggle for Survival	Parvana, Asif, and Hassan endure exhaustion and illness from unboiled water, driven by Parvana's father's advice.
Impact of Illness	Hassan's condition worsens due to the milk they consumed, highlighting their dire situation.
Imagining a Better World	Parvana creates a vision of Green Valley as an escape from their suffering, showing her longing for hope.
Conflict and Despair	Asif's dismissive reaction to her vision leads Parvana to destroy her letter, showcasing her frustration with reality.
Accident and Tension	A playful moment turns sour when Parvana triggers a landmine, eliciting panic and Asif's anger.
Emotional Climax	Parvana and Asif's emotional outbreak emphasizes their shared suffering and the harshness of their reality.
Overall Themes	The chapter explores resilience, responsibility, and the devastating effects of war on dreams and hope.



Chapter 11 Summary: TEN

In Chapter 11 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana and Asif find themselves in a dire situation as they sit in a potentially deadly minefield, grappling with their uncertainty and despair. Parvana reflects on the danger that surrounds them, feeling the weight of their possible fate—either stepping onto a hidden landmine or succumbing to hunger and thirst. Just when they feel their hopes are dwindling, a girl named Leila appears, dashing towards them in a green chador and brimming with unexpected energy.

Leila's enthusiasm is infectious, and despite their initial hesitance, Parvana and Asif are drawn to her vibrant spirit. She seems to have little fear of the landmines, claiming that they won't hurt her if they follow her lead. Leila takes them to her home, which turns out to be a dilapidated mud shack surrounded by the remains of animals and litter, giving off an unpleasant odor. Parvana soon learns that Leila lives with her grandmother, who is severely ill and unable to rise.

As they settle in, Parvana is reminded of her own mother, who had also withdrawn into sadness. Leila, endearing and talkative, manages to coax food and clean water for them, reviving their spirits, even as Hassan, the baby, struggles. They share a meal, with commendable efforts from Asif to feed Hassan, and get a glimpse into Leila's life.

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Through her stories, Leila reveals that her mother left in search of her brother and father, who were reported dead in the fighting, and has not returned for many months. Asif and Parvana exchange glances, realizing how similar their situations are. They all carry their own burdens of loss and abandonment, yet Leila's vibrant personality brings a flicker of hope into their grim circumstances. By the end of the chapter, Parvana feels a sense of companionship and a desire to listen to Leila share her stories, illustrating the theme of resilience in the face of adversity and the importance of human connection in desperate times.

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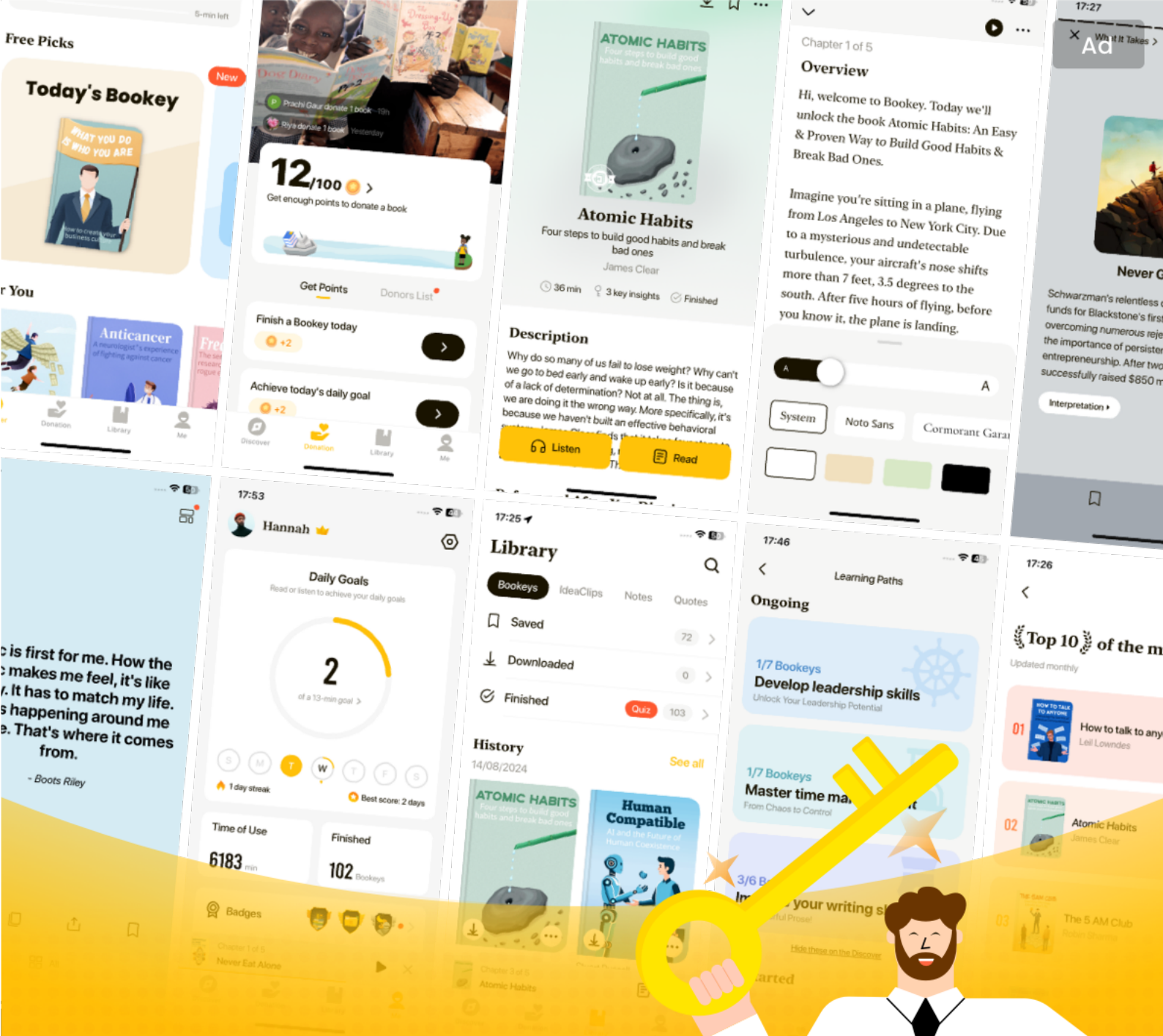
Chapter 12: TWELVE

In Chapter 12 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana wakes up in a small house, sharing a mattress with her new friend, Leila. As the morning begins with the annoyance of flies and flea bites, Parvana comes to a realization: she wants to stay in this place for a while. Wandering outside, she discovers a secluded clearing surrounded by hills, with remnants of a previous garden and a rusty pigeon cage. Here, she learns from Leila that they can eat the pigeons and harvest apples in the fall, despite having to dodge a few worms.

Leila's spirited nature shines through as she proudly shows Parvana her "treasure house," a hidden stash of items scavenged from the aftermath of a peddler's explosion in a minefield. Parvana is taken aback by Leila's bravery and resourcefulness; she treats the dangerous situation lightly, believing that offering crumbs to the ground keeps her safe. Asif, another companion, criticizes Leila's risky antics, suggesting that her actions show a reckless side of her character. Parvana defends Leila, hinting at her own appreciation for the girl's tenacity.

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Chapter 13 Summary: THIRTEEN

In Chapter 13 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana takes a cautious approach to her new living situation, preferring to keep her plans under wraps while she and Asif attend to young Hassan and help little Leila acclimate to their group. With a sense of responsibility, Parvana starts to clean up their environment, attempting to deter flies by covering animal remains with dirt, teaching Leila a practical lesson in hygiene along the way. Leila's innocence shines through when she expresses her desire to do things correctly, and Parvana offers gentle encouragement, fostering a bond between them.

As if sensing a need for cooperation, Parvana and Asif work together to treat Leila's festering sore, showcasing teamwork and highlighting Parvana's nurturing side. Despite feeling an inkling of jealousy as she observes their connection, she shakes off her negativity and focuses on the task at hand: transforming their neglected space, dubbed Green Valley, into a more habitable area.

Through hard labor, they eliminate unsightly remnants of their past and set about creating a more structured household. Parvana remembers her mother's teachings on cleanliness, drawing on her earlier experiences and instincts to guide the children. Their camaraderie strengthens as they share tasks, with Asif exhibiting newfound authority when he confidently leads their efforts to secure food supplies from pests.

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Leila's youthful optimism surfaces when she fantasizes about reuniting with their mothers, a notion that Parvana eventually indulges, if only to humor her. As the children begin to revel in their slight improvements, they also attend to the growing Hassan, who's showing signs of vitality and curiosity. His spirited antics bring levity to their hard work, though a moment of panic arises when he crawls toward danger near a minefield. They ingeniously devise a solution to keep him safe, illustrating their adaptability.

Asif's character unfolds further, showing both strength as a leader and sensitivity towards Leila and Hassan, while Parvana balances her nurturing instincts with moments of frustration toward him. They also share quieter moments of reflection, planting flowers as symbols of hope and returning life to their surroundings, despite Asif's more pragmatic stance.

In her moments of solitude, Parvana writes letters to her friend, expressing wishes for a better life filled with comforts like vegetable seeds and chickens, simultaneously revealing her longing for normalcy and connection. With this letter-writing, she reflects on the harsh realities of her world, realizing that her desires are inherently tied to the suffering of others. Ultimately, the chapter emphasizes themes of resilience, companionship, and the yearning for a brighter future amidst the struggles of war and survival.

Key Theme	Summary
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Key Theme	Summary
Living Situation	Parvana keeps her plans to herself while adjusting to her new environment, focusing on caring for Hassan and helping Leila acclimate.
Hygiene and Responsibility	Parvana teaches Leila about hygiene by cleaning their surroundings, promoting responsibility and health.
Teamwork	Parvana and Asif collaborate to care for Leila's injury, highlighting their cooperative efforts and nurturing qualities.
Transformation	They work to improve their living space, inspired by Parvana's mother's teachings and their need for a structured household.
Camaraderie	Shared tasks strengthen their bonds, with Asif emerging as a leader in their efforts to secure food and safety.
Childhood Innocence	Leila expresses hope for reuniting with their mothers, reflecting the children's desire for normalcy amidst turmoil.
Safety and Ingenuity	They develop strategies to keep Hassan safe from dangers, showcasing their adaptability and resourcefulness.
Personal Reflection	Parvana writes letters expressing her longing for a better life, acknowledging the connection between her desires and the suffering of others.
Themes	The chapter highlights resilience, companionship, and the hope for a brighter future amid the struggles of war.



Chapter 14 Summary: FOURTEEN

In this chapter of "Parvana's Journey," we see Parvana and Leila step up to care for their Grandmother, who remains mostly quiet and detached. The girls adapt to their routine, and the focus on Grandmother fades slightly as they engage more in daily life and each other's company. Parvana discovers some materials to sew, and she attempts to enhance Leila's dress, showcasing her desire to provide care and beauty amidst their hardships.

As time passes, Parvana feels a longing for her family, reminiscing about how fulfilling it would be to have everyone back together. A pivotal moment comes when Parvana and Leila decide to clean their living area, driven not only by necessity but also by a sense of responsibility and love for their home. They take proactive steps to improve their living conditions, like airing out the mattresses and ensuring a clean space. The sisters bring Grandmother outside, hoping the change of scenery would benefit her, and this leads to a routine that brings warmth and laughter, especially when young Hassan begins to play more actively around them.

Days turn into weeks, and the atmosphere shifts toward positivity as the children bond over shared moments. Parvana reflects on how Grandmother has her good days and bad days, symbolizing the complexities of hope amidst uncertainty. The chapter highlights themes of family, responsibility, and resilience. Parvana's determination to find her missing family remains

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strong, even while she nurtures her immediate family unit.

A touching scene occurs when Parvana decides to teach Leila how to read and write, a gesture emphasizing the importance of knowledge and connection. It solidifies the bond they share as sisters, even if their circumstances are less than ideal. Furthermore, when Parvana gifts Grandmother a book, it symbolizes a deeper connection to her past and aspirations. This act not only gives Grandmother a sense of purpose but also signifies Parvana's commitment to preserving her father's legacy through education.

Ultimately, this chapter weaves together themes of hope, familial love, and the power of kindness, illustrating how Parvana and Leila create their makeshift family while still holding onto hope for the reunification of their larger family.

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Chapter 15: FIFTEEN

In Chapter 15 of "Parvana's Journey," time slips away for Parvana and her companions as they find themselves in a precarious situation, grappling with dwindling food supplies and the ominous threat of war. As the transition from summer to autumn begins, Parvana reflects on their dwindling provisions, realizing that they have too little to survive the winter. Asif, who has taken on the role of managing food supplies, shares the discouraging news that the last sack of flour is nearly gone, which adds to Parvana's anxiety.

As Parvana climbs to a lookout point, she talks with Leila, sharing a moment that illustrates both their innocence and the heaviness of their reality. Rains and sunny days are accompanied by the distant sounds of military planes and explosions, a constant reminder of the violence surrounding them. The conversation turns darker as Leila curiously questions the nature of killing, invoking a sense of bleak understanding for their young ages amid such an adult conflict.

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Chapter 16 Summary: SIXTEEN

In Chapter 16 of "Parvana's Journey," we find Parvana and her small group back on the road, grappling with the harsh realities of their situation.

Parvana reflects on the comforts of their time in Green Valley, contrasting them with their current hardships. The return to wandering is especially difficult for her because it feels like their previous life has become nothing but a painful memory.

Parvana, along with Leila, Asif, and baby Hassan, struggles with hunger and exhaustion as they navigate their new reality. The chapter delves into the emotional turmoil of the children; Leila is distressed about possibly losing her mother and ends up leaving a note for her, while Hassan's constant crying pushes Parvana to her breaking point. Frustrated by her inability to comfort Hassan, she lashes out, only to feel guilt afterward for her reaction.

The group's situation worsens as they run out of food and water, forcing them to forage for rice spilled on the ground and rely on muddy stream water. The physical discomfort is intense, with Parvana struggling to cope with the cold, the stench of the baby, and the weight of her responsibilities as a girl expected to conform to societal norms. Asif's snide remarks only add to her frustration, exposing the tension and blame that builds among them as they face their desperate circumstances.



A moment of relief comes when they stumble upon a stream, but lacking the means to boil the water, they decide to risk drinking it in order to stave off thirst. In a moment of practicality, Parvana washes Hassan's clothes and uses Asif's shirt to wrap him up, showcasing her dedication despite the challenges. However, their reliance on each other is tested, leading to bickering and accusations about food between Asif and Parvana.

When Parvana reveals her notebook and the book "To Kill a Mockingbird," it suddenly becomes a source of light-hearted banter amid their dire situation, as they jokingly discuss the potential ravages of hunger. Parvana's act of tearing pages from the book to share becomes a poignant moment of solidarity amongst the children, revealing their desperate yet inventive coping mechanisms under extreme stress.

The chapter wraps with a newfound sense of purpose as they decide to follow the stream, spurred on by the hope of finding something to eat. Parvana's momentary weariness as a leader gives way to the recognition of their collective need for a plan, demonstrating character growth and a shifting dynamic in the group where every voice becomes significant in their fight for survival. It's a vivid portrayal of resilience, teamwork, and the struggle for hope, amidst the despair of their journey.

Key Points	Details
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Key Points	Details
Setting	On the road, facing hardships, contrasting with their time in Green Valley.
Main Characters	Parvana, Leila, Asif, baby Hassan.
Emotional Turmoil	Leila worries about her mother, and Parvana feels overwhelmed by Hassan's crying.
Physical Struggles	They struggle with hunger, thirst, cold, and societal expectations placed on Parvana.
Conflict	Frustrations rise leading to bickering between Parvana and Asif regarding food and responsibilities.
Moment of Relief	Finding a stream, though they risk drinking contaminated water.
Symbol of Hope	Parvana shares pages from "To Kill a Mockingbird," fostering solidarity and light-heartedness.
Character Growth	Parvana transitions from weariness to recognizing the group's need for a plan, highlighting teamwork.
Themes	Resilience, teamwork, hope amidst despair.

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Chapter 17 Summary: SEVENTEEN

In Chapter 17 of "Parvana's Journey," the relentless sound of bombing invades the children's nights, creating an atmosphere of tension and fear. Huddled together for warmth under a single blanket, Parvana, Leila, Asif, and Hassan grapple with the harsh realities of their situation. Leila's innocent questions about the bombs and the people affected by them provoke deep thoughts in Parvana, who tries to comfort her sister by emphasizing the protective bond they share. Their conversation shifts from the horrors surrounding them to fond memories of their grandmother, when Leila sings a song that evokes a sense of connection and hope amidst despair.

As days pass, the children struggle for survival, drinking water from a dwindling stream that makes them sick and foraging for leaves and scraps. Hassan's condition worsens; he becomes increasingly unresponsive, unable to eat or communicate. The group, fatigued and disheartened, continues on their arduous journey, hoping for a sign of help.

One day, they encounter a man and woman with a broken cart. Despite the bleakness of their situation, the adults share a glimpse of their own despair, revealing that their baby is also in distress, and the man paints a grim picture of their farming land transformed by war. He points them toward a nearby camp where hope lies in the numbers of others trying to escape the violence.



The children continue their journey toward the riverbank, where the once-thriving land now lays desolate and barren. As they navigate a steep slope, they encounter the smell of smoke, which leads them to a devastated orchard, a reminder of life destroyed by the bombings. Asif reflects on his past, revealing the abuse he faced from his uncle, which provides a deeper insight into his character and resilience.

In the orchard, silence reigns, and the absence of birds intensifies their sense of loss. Parvana encourages Leila to sing their grandmother's song to soothe their fears. The moment is poignant, a small act of defiance against the overwhelming darkness surrounding them. Their voices rise against the desolation, serving as a reminder of their humanity and the fragments of joy still alive within them. As they leave the orchard behind, Parvana feels a sense of relief, but the journey ahead remains uncertain and fraught with challenges, encapsulating the themes of survival, familial bonds, and the impact of war on innocent lives.

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Chapter 18: EIGHTEEN

In Chapter 18 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana reflects on her experiences as she travels with her brother Asif and their friend Leila, along with baby Hassan. They find themselves amid a landscape filled with other displaced people seeking survival, often begging for scraps of food. Their hopes of getting help for Hassan's illness remain unfulfilled, as they struggle to find doctors or any means of assistance. Parvana's inner thoughts reveal her fear of their uncertain fate, pondering the well-being of others they encounter.

As they navigate the chaos of war-torn Afghanistan, the children witness the harsh realities of life amidst bombings, with the sound of tanks and planes creating a terrifying backdrop. One day, while bombings occur, Leila breaks down and yells at the planes to stop, showing her innocence amidst the violence. Parvana instinctively rushes to protect Leila, demonstrating her fierce love and protective nature. Their bond strengthens in moments of crisis, as they cling to each other and their shared plight.

Once the immediate danger passes, the children are confronted with a

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Chapter 19 Summary: NINETEEN

In Chapter 19 of "Parvana's Journey," the story takes a somber turn as Parvana and her siblings find themselves in a makeshift clinic run by the Red Crescent. They are there to seek help for baby Hassan, who is suffering from severe malnutrition and dehydration after their long journey. The nurse, busy with a flood of patients, shares the grim news that Hassan is very sick but may recover with proper care. Through Asif's frustration and Parvana's quiet determination, we see the sibling bond deepening as they navigate their desperate situation together.

As the children are asked to leave the clinic due to overcrowding, Parvana's resourcefulness shines when she constructs a small shelter with plastic sheeting given to them by the nurse. This moment reflects Parvana's growing maturity and leadership as the eldest sibling, highlighting one of the themes of resilience in the face of adversity. The nurse, a foreign aid worker from France, provides a glimmer of hope by offering them bread rations and reminding them not to lose hope for Hassan's recovery.

Despite the harsh realities of their surroundings—crowded conditions, constant sounds of despair from fellow refugees, and the ever-looming threat of violence—Parvana tries to keep morale high among her siblings. Leila expresses a longing for the family's old home in Green Valley, while Parvana acknowledges the harsh truth of their current situation: they must



stick together and endure the winter in the camp.

As Parvana takes on the responsibility of earning food for the family, she finds herself caught in the despair of endless lines for supplies, a repetitive struggle that wears her down. Her reflections show the weight of her burden as she grapples with the overwhelming circumstances and the uncertainty of finding their mother. A notable parallel arises when Parvana reminisces about her childhood home, triggering thoughts about her old life and emphasizing her emotional struggle.

Although the refugee camp is filled with challenges, signs of improvement appear as Hassan shows small signs of recovery. This sense of hope amidst chaos encapsulates a core theme of the story: the enduring spirit of family and resilience. The chapter ends with Parvana's uncertainty about the future, yet her determination to care for her siblings remains steadfast, illustrating her growth from a scared girl into a brave protector as they grapple with their new life.

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Chapter 20 Summary: TWENTY

In Chapter 20 of "Parvana's Journey," time drags on in a cold and desolate camp where Parvana, now burdened with the weight of desperation, grapples with her circumstances. The food shortages become dire as convoys are bombed, and Parvana struggles with her frustration and anger toward the hopelessness surrounding her. Leila, her younger sister, dreams about food from the minefield, but Parvana harshly scolds her, revealing the harsh realities they all face. Lonely and overwhelmed, Parvana tries to distract herself by wandering through the camp, witnessing the horrifying conditions—the disease, hunger, and the mental breakdowns of the camp's residents.

Hope appears unexpectedly when a plane drops yellow parcels from the sky, which everyone immediately assumes could be a bomb. However, the discovery of food leads to chaos as the desperate residents scramble for the packages. Parvana finds herself in the midst of the crowd, struggling to keep Leila and Asif safe. In an impulsive moment, Leila believes she can venture into the dangerous minefield to retrieve food. Despite Parvana's desperate pleas to keep her close, Leila runs, leading to a tragic turn of events when a mine explodes.

Parvana's heart sinks as she searches for Leila, and when she finds her sister injured in the minefield, she disregards the danger and rushes to her side.



Struggling with the traumatic reality of Leila's injuries and the crowd's fear, Parvana tries to carry her sister back to safety. Unfortunately, after a brief moment of connection, Leila succumbs to her injuries and dies in Parvana's arms. This moment shatters Parvana, enveloping her in a grief that isolates her from the surrounding chaos.

As the camp reacts to yet another tragic loss, the pain of war and the loss of innocence resonate deeply, particularly as a woman calls out about the ongoing suffering of Afghan children. A powerful moment occurs when Parvana, amidst her despair, recognizes her mother beneath a burqa. The emotional turmoil culminates in Parvana's tears, signaling the deep grief and hopelessness that permeates their lives, while also hinting at the fragile threads of family that keep them connected even in dire circumstances. The chapter leaves readers with a profound sense of loss, illustrating the devastating impact of war on families and the innocent lives caught in its wake.

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Chapter 21: TWENTY-ONE

In Chapter 21 of "Parvana's Journey," Parvana writes a heartfelt letter to her friend Shauzia while sitting beside a cemetery in a refugee camp, reflecting on the challenges and small comforts of her current life. The chapter opens with a somber note as she has just buried her friend Leila, marking another painful loss in her life, though this time she has her family around her—her mother, sisters Nooria and Maryam, and her brothers Hassan and Asif.

Parvana reminisces about her baby brother Ali, who died from pneumonia, and the difficult circumstances surrounding her father's death, which she still struggles to share with her mother.

Parvana describes the serendipitous reunion with her mother, who was at the clinic when an explosion led them to find each other again. The family now participates in a women's organization that supports each other in the camp, running a small school and aiding those in need. Parvana finds solace in her sister Nooria's assertive personality—she appreciates that some aspects of normalcy have returned, like teasing and complaining about siblings.

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