

# Short Story: Those Whispers Were Not Meant For Me

Level: A2-B1

I am lost.

The ground is hot.

My lips are parched.

The sun is out again and I fear I cannot walk.

My shadow follows me, or am I the one following it? What is this place? There is no sound and no one in sight. I should have stayed at home.

No time for regrets. Regrets are for fools and I am not a fool. I will see my wife. My child will call me 'Dad!' and he will nestle in my arms— once again. My parents will still have a child. I am their child. I am a father and a husband, a colleague and a friend. I will see my home again.

My feet are betraying me. I am dragging them but they will not move. The pain is unbearable. I cannot move. I drop my bag. It is a burden. My body is betraying me. I fight the tears that will not come.

I sit down and take off my shoes. I put them on again. I hoist myself up. My wobbly legs pull me to the ground. I stay there.

Time passes.

The sun's fiery rays descend on me.

I cannot fight them.

I wait.

I wait.

I wait.

I see moving shadows. I see them. They draw closer. A baby is crying. There are men. There are women. They are shouting and I can hear them. I can hear them well. There is life in this place. There is life. The group of people gets nearer. The men, women and children are finally here. They stop.

"What's your name?" I am asked. A man is asking that question. I am surprised that he speaks my language. I cannot speak his. "What's your name?" he repeats. I tell him. He tells me his.

He gives me water. The ridges on my lips start to disappear. I cry.

"Where are you from and what are you doing here?"

I tell him. He tells me. They are nomads. They move from one place to another, looking for food and water. They have been walking for days. Resources are getting scarcer.

My head is lifted. More water finds my mouth.

The child starts crying.

“He is hungry,” he says, pointing at him. “My wife doesn’t have enough milk,” he explains, pointing at her. She smiles.

I smile.

The child is still crying. They let him cry.

Tomorrow, they will find food. They will also find water.

“We found this.”

It is my bag.

I look inside. My passport is still there. My wallet is not gone. I pull it out and take out some cash. I give it to the man. He shakes his head.

“It’s useless here. Keep it. You will need it after you are back on your feet.”

He wants my watch though. I give it to him.

They hoist me onto the back of the camel.

We are leaving this place. I am safe. I have been saved. I will see my wife. My child will call me ‘Dad!’. My parents will still have a child. I am a father and a husband, a colleague and a friend. I will see my home— once again. I am safe.



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