

COLLECTION TEXT

SEZGIN PRESENTS WHEN THE SUN HASN'T REACHED US YET

It was winter, when we were staying with my Grandmother and Grandfather in the village in Kurdistan. The village lies on a slope, on one of the many mountains.

I had been here once before when I was younger. Back then, everything was a little different. As a child perception is naturally more intense. Burning temperatures, roads barely existed, electricity was unreliable, and the toilet, a wooden hut with a hole in the ground.

The car felt like the only predictable, safe place. A remnant of the West, which even at a young age made me grateful for our comfort. The drives on the narrow roads were tricky though. On one side, endless depth, on the other, large rocks that seemed ready to fall at any moment. In the middle, me and my family, hoping that no cars would come toward us on this narrow, single lane path.

When I was older and returned to Kurdistan, the infrastructure in our village had developed. There was stable hot water, mobile reception. The windows had mosquito screens, and there was a functioning bathroom. Still, the nearest supermarket was kilometers away, and people lived off what they harvested and grew themselves. Less was more. The people here are happy.

That winter evening, we got ready to drive an hour into the city to eat well, maybe go out. And just as we always had done it in the West, we had to get into the car and leave the place where we felt most at ease to enjoy ourselves.

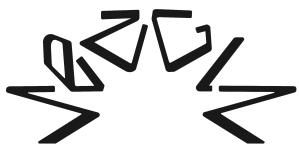
After some time, we gathered in the hallway, each of us more dressed up than the next. Even Although Grandma doesn't like dresses, she had put one on for my mother's sake. When my father finally came, we all put on our jackets, when Grandma said a storm was coming.

The weather had been fine, but unlike my family, who trusted the weather forecast, I trusted her. Old people from this region have something about them, they sense things, they know things. Grandma was right.

Like in an old tale, where the story builds toward a lesson, a loud thunderclap is heard. My grandmother smiles almost imperceptibly, as if she had planned this unbelievably loud sound, satisfied with her staging. Shortly after, it begins to rain, at first lightly, then it is pouring rain. Everything is pouring once something has been released.

Grandma says how dangerous it would have been to drive through the mountains in this weather and calmly sits down in the living room. We followed her. My mother was visibly disappointed. Her perfect family evening before departure had, quite literally, gone under. The rain intensified, the wind grew stronger, the windows rattled.

But she too learned that evening that you don't need much to be happy. She always had known but forgotten over time. When you have nothing, you are content with little. When you have a lot, you can no longer do without. It is hard to come to the West, build an existence, and keep your old values. When you work day and night your entire life for yourself and your family, of course you want to enjoy what you have built. You want comfort. But comfort, to come back to that, is not about owning a lot, but about making use of what you have.



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As time passed, one by one we changed into relaxed clothes. My grandmother had an impressive collection of floral trousers and knitted cardigans. We cooked, played board games, laughed, talked, started dancing. Time passed, and eventually my parents said goodnight, then one by one my grandfather and my siblings, until in the end only my grandmother and I were left. It was a moment of appreciation and silence when the sun hasn't reached us yet. We waited for the rays of the sun that would soon shine into our faces. In the end, the sun always rises.