**Every Man in This Village is a Liar**

**Prologue**

**Chapter One - Every Man in This Village is a Liar**

“Afghanistan where the soil is rich with poppies and land mines, in a house awash in guns” pg. 5

“They said he was ruthless in war, that his skin was scarred by an arrow.” Pg. 5

“He was an enemy of the Taliban, funded y the US government, making a play for power in the vague, new order that had begun when American soldiers toppled the Taliban government (mohammad Zaman” pg. 5

“I liked it, all of it, enormously – the poetry of the placem the intrigue of war, imagining myself veiled in the back of a clopping carriage, bringing secrtets to a bootlegger” pf. 6

“we set off to war” pg. 7

“On the edge of Afghanistan, stars crowded the sky, dull and dense. We crossed the border and plunged into the enormous uncertainty of this new American war” pg. 7

“If America was serious about this war on terror, the terrorists needed to be flushed out. He (Zaman believed) could do the job; he only needed guns, money and equiptment” pg. 7

Pg. 8 A conflict: “Some of the reporters had set of for Kabul in a convoy...Afghan bandits stopped the first car and shot the passengers dead…it pulled us further into war. Now we…were rendered survivors, the ones who hadn’t died”

Pg. 8 (about the conflict) “I feel empty. I have no reaction. It is a gap inside of me, like putting your tongue where your tooth used to be. I know that I should feel something; to feel something is appropriate and human”

“America is at war, and we are all here too, at the edge of death, just like that, in a few weeks.” Pg. 8

“…the road are a place to die” pg. 8

“Every man in this village is a liar’. It was the punch line to a parable…If he’s telling the truth he’s lying. If he’s lying he’s telling the truth” pg. 9

“Afghanistan was meaning washed about in floods of colour, in drugs, guns, sexual ambiguity, and Islam. Pg. 9

“Catching Osama Bin Ladin was the first important thing the United States set out to do after September 11. The job was bungled so thoroughly that the war never really found its compass again. Here in eastern Afghanistan, the Americans would begin to lose the plot” pg. 10

“They tossed enemies into moldy jail cells, and sold them to the Americans…”He’s a terrorist”. Maybe it was true, and maybe it wasn’t…” pg. 10

“There were no other airplane [other than fighter jets] in the Afghan skies; there was only the war” pg. 10

Pg. 11: Conflict anecdote – “The Americans were killing peasants…they must be using old maps…Do these look like AlQuaeda to you?” pg. 11

“An American reporter fell on the ground and lay there crying. Intellectually, I knew here reaction was appropriate, but I felt disgusted by her weakness” pg. 11

“The dying were worse than dea” pg. 11

Pg. 11: Conflict anecdote – extremely vivid imagery of dead children “All of it coming down from those American planes”

“I didn’t really mean to see these things. I didn’t know how it would be” pg. 12

“Defense Secretary Donal Rumsfield said (about the US bombing in Afghanistan)…one ought to be sensitive about how diffiuclt it is to know…what may have happened in any given situation in Afghanistan, where we lack access and we’re dealing with world class liars” pg. 12

“They looked at his white hair (a French reporter) and slowly lowered their weapons in defence to his age. Like lion cubs, they responded to shows of dominance” pg. 13

“For a long time, it didn’t matter what happened. I was high on Afghanistan” pf. 13

“War cannot be innocent, but sometimes it is naïve. At first the fight in Afghanistan felt finite and comprehensible. There had been an attack, an act of war, and America responded with conventional warfare against an oppressively violent and repressive regime. You could disagree with the choice to invade, you could question the sense and bravery of bombing a country built from mud, but at least there was an internal logic, the suggestion of a moral thread, of cause and effect” pg. 13

“I was acutely aware that in witnessing war I was experiencing something both timeless and particular. I expected awful sights and I accepted them when they came. The war was an adventure and an exhileration, an ancient human force that had found its shape for this country, in this age” pg. 14

“Afghans lived on the edge of mortality…If death would come to us all, the Afghans couldn’t be bothered to duck” pg. 14

Vocabulary

Lechery - lewd and lustful behaviour, especially by a man, that is regarded as distasteful

**Chapter Two: Chasing Ghosts**

“American newspapers brimmed with self-congratulatory features: women taking off their burqas, fathers and sons flying kites…But the war was not gone” pg. 17

“ ‘The Taliban was 95 per cent of out country’ an Afghan friend told me…’Look around you. We didn’t kill everybody” pg. 19

“There husbands were doctors and merchants and engineers, but none of these women had the equivalent of a middle school education” pg. 19

“…[Women waited] for permission to show their faces in public, and for the right to walk out the front gate to the mud road [because of the Taliban]” pg. 19

“We knew they hated women [the Taliban” pg. 19

Pg. 20: Conflict anecdote – about the old woman who didn’t wear the burqa

“There was music here all along [in Naseer’s house with the women” pg. 21 (then they all dance as if liberated – this is there way of quietly fighting against repression)

“But they believed in theuir bones that Afghans would dance again one day” pg. 22

“Many of the [the mujahedin] were young, and had spent their adolescence in a seamless stream of war” pg. 22

“I asked a twenty-two year old when he had learned to fire a rocket launcher. He let out a huff of laughter. “What do you mean? I always knew how. I learned when I was a baby” pg. 23

“ “I [a mujahidin] never went to school, and I don’t know how to do anything, Just fighting.” Pg. 23

“Even knowing the futility, the fighters didn’t flinch” pg. 23

“soldiers giggled over the three dead bodies of three dead Arabs. They had been shot to shreds by machine guns. The mujahedin thought it was hilarious” pg. 25

Anecdote: US ‘negotiating with AlQaeda’ pg. 27

“Negotiations were more than dead” pg. 27

“He [Osama Bin Ladin] was just a rumour, secreted in shadows, and sometimes a few bullets rained down from his heights” pg. 28

**Chapter Three – As Long as You can Pay For It**

“Coming home from war is a strange and isolating experience” pg. 30

“There was still trauma in the air, and the remnants of fear I had been too far away to feel in full force [in America]” pg. 30

“…it seemed like a lot of dead people, dead Americans and dead Afghans and me stretched thin in between them” pg. 33

“I dreamed about dead children and bullets on mountain passes. But then I was already nostalgic for Afghanistan, and for myself in Afghanistan, for the rush of sights and feelings, the crystal cut of every moment, sun so sharp it sliced newer, flatter surfaces. “ pg. 33

“From television screens and podiums, politicians urged America to be frightened, and the people nodded and agreed to be afraid” pg. 33

“I read that terrorism had inspired Americans to appreciate their families; to report suspicioius behaviour; to eat macaroni and cheers” pg. 33

“We were warriors abroad and victims at home, and it didn’t add up to anything coherent” pg. 33

Pg. 34 – Conversation between Megan Duc – very important about American attitudes post 9/11 – “They deserve [Afghan civilians] everything they get”

“Here at home, people still felt assaulted, they believed they had the moral high ground. But I had seen U.S warplanes drop bombs on villages of mud brick, and children kill and Bin Ladin vanish and the future of a broken land becoming the moral responsibility of my own country” pg. 34

“September 11 already seemed very far away, buried under the war it had called down” pg. 34

“I amlosing America, I thought…I go tcaught out on the other side, stayed there too long, and now I can’t get home” pg. 34

“What was the secret to putting war aside, I wanted to ask him [her grandfather who had fought in WWII]” pg. 36

“It’s the oldest story going: you head off to make a mark on the world, but in the end the world marks you, instead. It happened to me…and I believe it happened to the country too” pg. 37

**Chapter Four – Terrorism and Other Stories (2002 – Israel)**

“Armageddon is a place in Israel. In Hebrew, the name for Armageddon is Megiddo, and Megiddo is an ancient crossroads watered by centuries of blood.” pg. 38

“That was the first suicide bombing I ever covered, and it sticks there in my memory, the brightness and death of it…Seventeen people died…eighteen if you count the suicide bomber, and I think we should” pg. 39

“Violence fed violence. Blood washed blood”

“‘Break their bones’. That’s what Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin told the Israeli soldiers, or so the story goes [about the Palestinians]” pg. 41

“Israel is merciful; Israel is brutal…Most people believe one or the other, and believe it fervently. It is hard to find anybody who acknowledges that both might be true, and then some” pg. 41

Anecdote – about the Palestinian woman who was tortured and then one of the Israeli guards felt bad and at night fanned her wounds. Pg. 41.

“War suspended for no reason but that it cannot always, every minute, exist”. Pg. 43

“(Miri believes in being able to teach compassion in kids by humanising victims/animals)…They don’t know any better…But you can explain it to them” Pg. 45

“…I was an American taxpayer, that my family and I had been compelled to pay for his guns and tanks and jeeps, for his salary, to the detriment of schools and homeless shelters…that his country would surely have been overrun by hostile Arabs long ago without the billions of US taxpayer dollars pumped into the Israeli military.” Pg. 47

“I loved… the darkened streets…and sexiness of it all, the intensity of youth and desire against a bagdrop of war” pg. 49

“The bombings were huge and awful, but the sufferings of the Palestinians was chronic, dripping through the days like acid” pg. 49

“At the time the Palestinians drew my attention most of all, because their culture was the most foreign; because they were killed far more often and yet their slaughter was treated more casually, packing lower news value; because they were trapped by both Israel and by their own leaders, their own killers.” Pg. 49

Islamic Jihad

Zionist group

Sheikh

Intifada

Oslo Accords

Yassir Arafat’s Ramallah headquarters

Arafat

Innocuous

Vitriol

Dubious

Nablus kanafeh

Masada

Dead Sea

Petulant

**Chapter Five: Forgive Us Our Trespasses**

“The United States was determined to take Baghdad, and they did it fast…Saddam Hussein’s statue was off the pedestal, and the dictator himself had fled” pg. 52

(About a standoff between US soldiers and “diehard Iraqi soldiers”) “US soldiers had wrapped the dead in body bags, dumped them down into the soldiers’ trenches, and bulldozed the dirt back over them. But the graves were, and after a few days the stink of decaying flesh rose from the ground, winding around the houses like lace” pg. 58

“Now the smell [of dead bodies] poured out of the earth as if they had drilled a hole into the rotten heart of the war itself” pg. 58

“ ‘There’s a few hand grenades lying around. My nephew picked one up the other day. These kids haven’t got a clue, they just think it’s an amusement park” pg. 59

“The bodies came and went fast. At first the staff has separated the Muslims from the Christians; the Iraqis from the other Arabs. But it has gotten too complicated; by now, the dead were jumbled.” pg. 60

“[A volunteer explains at the hospital] We try to reduce the fear and shock out of them, to ease the shock when they find the bodies…we don’t break bad news to them right away. We remind them to have some faith, he might be alive. Even if we know he’s dead, we don’t tell them straight off” pg. 60

“The desire to get out of Iraq broke over me like hunger. I felt revolted. The story line of the news reports-a dictator toplled; the hunt for the weapons of mass destruction; the officials in Washington wearing suits and uniforms and congratulating themselves on Operation Enduring Freedom-what did any of that have to do with the waste of these families? The invasion was a nasty, impersonal force, and people had been walloped.” Pg. 60

“I had come to church because I wanted to sit someplace that felt like home” pg. 61

“[This chapter ends with Stack in church repeating the rosary] ‘As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” pg. 62

Karbala

Unpropitious

tigris

corpus

**Chapter Six: The Living Martyr**

“ (Pilgrims going to Kabala) A thirteen-year old boy doggedly pushed his crippled brother ina wheelchair. Old men crawled along the road until their knees bled. Villagers sprayed water over the pilgrims’ head to cool them…” pg. 63

“We were tracing the path of the American invasion in reverse, and war still littered our way: stray cluster bombs, blasted craters, and burned-out cars framed the road. Nobody cared. They were going to Karbala, not slinking or sneaking, but proclaiming themselves all down the country’s main highway. After the US invasion, this was the first move Iraq’s Shiites made: they marched en masse to Karbala, to the tomb of Imam Hussein, the martyred grandson of the Prophet Muhammed. They marched because…tradition and faith demanded it. They also marched because, for the first time in recent memory they could”. Pg. 64

“…Every face was packed with some enormous emotion…pride tangled with rage” pg. 64

“Amina Abbas had been twenty-two years old when she died [a martyr] …was executed by the Saddam government in 1982…the government had ordered her to claim the corpse of her daughter. She picked up the body, and buried it herself, in secret. She had never told a soul” pg. 65

“Every family had scars, secret graves, people who got erased from the world” pg. 66

“If Raheem was the East, John was the West…Raheem talked about the pilgrimage of Karbala, the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the repressions under Saddam. John squinted at passing Iraqi women shrouded from head to toe in black abayas and hijab, and said, ‘Look at those ninjas! That’s a lot of ninjas’ “ pg. 67

“In Baghdad I had felt a heaviness hanging on me, seen every scene painted in the obscenity and confusion of a nightmare. It was a bad feeling, deep and dark, the collapse of a capital. But in the south…it was almost beautiful sometimes” pg. 68

“Something dark, strong, and tortured has been uncorked. As fat as the Shiites were concenred, America had shown up a dozen years too late. Nobody had forgotten what happened in 1991: The first Bush administration urged Iraqis to rise up against their government. The Kurds and the Shiites heeded the call and launched grassroots insurrection against Saddam, expecting the Americans to back them up militarily. But nobody came. Saddam’s government slammed down, slaughtering thousands, razing fields, tossing men and women into torture chambers. They filled mass graves, sacked shrines, and drained the storied marshlands” pg. 71

“…The Americans come, lofty and unscathed, cloaked in the power to spin dreams of freedom and break hearts” pg. 72

“Maybe the Shiites would never be America’s friends, and it was hard to blame them. They owed the Americans nothing, as far as they could see, except pyback for years of suffering. By toppling Saddam, perhaps the Americans has broken even-or perhaps not” pg. 72

“The man who survived the mass grave…Hussein Safar (from Najaf)…in 1991…Hussein never got his day of justice…Gunmen leapt from the taxi…and shot him dead. They dumped his corpse at the side of the road and drove on. They didn’t bother with the other passengers. They only wanted Hussein, to silence a voice that had spoken out .pg. 76

“[Hussein Safar] Had survived Hussein by a miracle, but the US invasion and resulting civil war swallowed his life down. Iraq gets you in the end, one way or another.” Pg. 77

“One after another, people we met during that ominous and heady voyage through the south have since been killed” pg. 77

Baathist

catharsis

Truculence

Shiite pilgrim

Kabala

Righetousness

Chapter Seven: The Leader