

Balloons of the Lost City

My name is Elif and I am a four-year-old girl. I am the youngest of the four children of my parents who are as rich as Croesus and also happy as much as that. My mother's name is Esma and my father's name is Kadir. Actually, my father's full name is Abdülkadir. But he did not like long words. He introduced himself as Kadir to everyone. He is a tradesman. He is one of the most respected tradesmen of the city we live in. My mother is a housewife mostly participating in social activities. I haven't been able to understand since four years how all four floors of the house would fill with people at each meeting.

I have many fours in my story. For example; my mother had four bracelets around her wrist, my father had four cars, and I had only four friends and four cities I have been to... Everything was made of four in my life. There were four streets on my mind where I spent my childhood. I had the best days of my life on these four streets. Of course, these were the most beautiful side of my story and it all ended four months ago... Now, I will tell you about the last four months of my life.

I got used to waking up with the sound of bombing without getting to know the bird sounds. I used to like balloons. I thought that a balloon popped each time I heard a gunshot. Who had so many balloons? The most balloons I had was on the day when my father came home with four colourful balloons with smiling faces on them. My happiness did not last long. One of my balloons popped on the right side of my father. He was thirty-four years old. I knew that he did not like long things but his lifetime shouldn't have been so short.

I could not get enough of my father. I could not get familiar with his scent yet. I was going to count the wrinkles on his face. Actually, I asked him how much he loved me once. He said he loved me more than anything. He meant everything to me. My concept of everything was my father. He did not love himself so much. I could not even realize that he was dead. It just hurt me when I saw my mother's tears dripping on my father's scar. When my mother stopped crying, my father was covered with tears. They buried my father the next day. I saw and understood everything. My father was gone. I was an orphan. One month after my father's death, I fell asleep on my bed and woke up on rubble. Our house was bombed. Our four-story house was only a wreck but we were alive. My mother and me... It was just, my mother no more had a right arm she could wear her four bracelets. I could not realize it at first. I could not realize it until I asked my mother to hold my hand while I was on her right side. We were neither rich nor happy anymore...

My four friends were also buried. I guess they went to the same place with my father. I asked my mother about the place my father went to. Only for once. I saw her crying. I could not dare to ask once again...

We set off on a journey two or three weeks later. A group of people. We were going far from where I was born and lived. There was no coming back...Everybody was saying that the place

we were going to was the heaven on this earth. Everybody was talking about a dreamland... called the European Union.

The other day I overheard conversation of two elderly boys. They said there were no balloons there. There were only love, unity and solidarity, rights, righteous people, law, justice and lots of birds...There was no argument over "I"; justice of "You"; there was only "Us". "Wealth" was born out of "Poverty" and "UNITY" out of peace...

Rumour has it that everybody was rich there like my father. Everybody was happy. There were not wrecked houses but parks and gardens for children on the streets. Children woke up when it was time for school, not because of the sound of bombs. Rumour had it that it was the heaven of my child world.

A long and narrow road... Here we go...to the land of the European Union. Hello European Union, my name is Elif...