

DEPICTION OF FEMALE COURAGE IN “A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS” BY  
KHALED HOSSEINI

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**Abstract:** The article discusses the hard life of people in Afghanistan described in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini. For all characters of novel have been given information. The real events, suffers, sorrows of people are shown.

**Key words:** woman life, courage, war, fair, love, peace, family, friendship, faith, salvation

Afghanistan has a wild ongoing past. The country has been ruled by militant groups and the notoriously oppressive Islamic Taliban for the past three decades, as well as by communist Soviet troops and international forces led by the US. Women's rights have been used for political gain by various groups throughout Afghanistan's changing political landscape over the past fifty years, sometimes being improved but frequently being abused. There were numerous alternate ways their privileges were denied to them. Because they were confined to their homes, women were virtually invisible in public. In Kabul, occupants were requested to make their progress and first-floor windows so ladies inside remained invisible from the road. In a burqa (full body veil), a woman would leave the house with a male relative: She lacked self-reliance. Punishments were severe if she disobeyed these discriminatory laws. If a woman was found guilty of adultery, she could be stoned to death, beaten, or flogged for trying to study while wearing a full-body burqa<sup>1</sup>. There was a lot of rape and violence against girls and women. Afghan ladies were mistreated in the law and in essentially every part of their day to day routine.

The famous American-Afghan writer Khalid Hussaini's work, which caused a lot of noise, mentions true events that happened in the recent past, just a few hundred miles away from us. When we get to know the tragic fate of the heroes of the work, feel sympathy for them at the same time, we will realize how precious blessings such as peace, tranquility, well-being are. The heart swells with great gratitude for the time and space in which we live.

Khaled Hosseini, an Afghan-American author, published “A Thousand Splendid Suns” in 2007 following the huge success of his bestseller “The Kite Runner” in 2003. After a family tragedy, Mariam, an illegitimate teenager from Herat, is forced to wed a shoemaker from Kabul. Laila, who was born a generation later, has a relatively privileged life. However, a similar tragedy forces her to accept a marriage proposal from Mariam's husband, which brings her life into conflict with Mariam's. In contrast to *The Kite Runner*, which he views as a “father-son story,” Hosseini has stated that the novel is to him a “mother-daughter story.” It continues some of his earlier works' themes, like family dynamics, but focuses more on female characters and their roles in modern Afghan society. When *A “Thousand Splendid Suns”* came out on May 22, 2007, it was widely praised by critics including *Kirkus Reviews*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, and *Booklist*. It also rose to the top of the *New York Times* bestseller list for fifteen weeks after its release. Over a million copies were sold in its first week on the market. In 2007, Columbia Pictures acquired film rights to the book. On February 1, 2017, a theatrical adaptation of the book debuted at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, California.

A line in the translation by Josephine Davis of the Persian poet Saib Tabrizi's 17th-century poem “Kabul” serves as the inspiration for the book's title: Each road of Kabul is exciting to the eye

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/womens-rights-afghanistan-history>

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through the marketplaces, troops of Egypt pass one couldn't count the moons that gleam on her rooftops and the thousand unbelievable suns that take cover behind her walls". Hosseini made sense of "I was looking for English interpretations of sonnets about Kabul, for use in a scene where a person wails over leaving his dearest city, when I tracked down this specific stanza. The phrase "a thousand splendid suns," which appears in the stanza following the previous one, struck me as not only the appropriate scene line but also an evocative title. Hosseini provided the following response when asked what inspired him to write a novel about two Afghan women: "I had been engaging composing an account of Afghan people for quite a while after I'd wrapped up composing *The Kite Sprinter*. That first novel was a male-overwhelmed story. Every one of the significant characters, with the exception of maybe for Amir's better half Soraya, were men. When I went to Kabul in the spring of 2003, I remember seeing these burqa-clad women sitting at street corners with four, five, or six children, begging for change. This was a whole aspect of Afghan society that I hadn't touched on in *The Kite Runner*. I felt like it was fertile with story ideas. I remember wondering how life had brought them to that point as I watched them walk in pairs up the street with their ragged-clothed children. I spoke with many of those women in Kabul. Their biographies were genuinely heartbreaking...When I started composing *1,000 Marvelous Suns*, I ended up pondering those versatile ladies again and again. Although neither Laila nor Mariam were inspired by any one woman I met in Kabul, their voices, faces, and incredible survival tales stayed with me, and their collective spirit was a significant source of my inspiration for this book"<sup>2</sup>.

Hosseini admitted that writing "A Thousand Splendid Suns" was more challenging than writing "The Kite Runner", his debut novel. In contrast to "The Kite Runner", where "no one was waiting for it," he noted the anticipation for his second book while writing it. He additionally observed his second novel to be more "aggressive" than the first because of its bigger cast of characters; its dual attention to Laila and Mariam; Moreover, it spans nearly 45 years, spanning multiple generations. Nonetheless, he saw as the novel more straightforward to compose whenever he had started, noticing "as I composed, as the story hurried up and I ended up drenched in the realm of Mariam and Laila, these fears evaporated all alone. I was taken in by the story as it was developing, which allowed me to ignore the noise in the background and get down to the business of living in the world I was making. At this point, the characters "became very real for him," and they "took on a life of their own."

The manuscript had to be extensively revised, as did *The Kite Runner*; Hosseini ended up revising the book five times before finishing it. In October 2006, the novel's anticipated release was announced as a story about "family, friendship, faith, and the salvation to be found in love."

**Characters:**

**Mariam** is of Tajik descent and was born in Herat in 1959. She is forced to marry a much older shoemaker and move to Kabul after her mother's death. She is the illegitimate child of Jalil and Nana, his housekeeper. She suffered shame throughout her life due to the circumstances of her birth. Mariam was referred to by Hosseini as "isolated in every sense of the word." She is a woman who is removed from the norms of everyday life. Truly, she simply needs an association with another individual". Regardless of at first disliking Laila, she turns into a "companion and a hovering elective mother" to her through the "normal difficulty" of being hitched to the "oppressive, mentally forcing" Rasheed. Mariam kills Rasheed while safeguarding Laila, for which she is openly executed by the Taliban.

**Laila** is of Tajik descent and was born in Kabul in 1978. She is raised by educated parents who educate her, first at school and then at home when Kabul becomes too dangerous. After her older brothers die in the Afghan-Soviet War, she is the only child that Hakim and Fariba have left behind. Hosseini said that she "had a much more fulfilling relationship with her father, her , and her childhood friend, Tariq" than Mariam did. She hopes to complete her education and seeks personal fulfillment.

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Thousand\\_Splendid\\_Suns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Thousand_Splendid_Suns)

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Laila's and Mariam's lives become intertwined when Laila is forced to marry Rasheed in order to protect herself and her unborn child from the alleged death of Tariq and the deaths of her parents. Mariam initially feels resentful about this because she "feels her territory infringed upon." Despite this, "Laila becomes her daughter for all practical purposes" as a result of their marriage's difficulties and abuse. Laila returns to Kabul at the book's conclusion and works as a teacher at an orphanage.

**Rasheed**, a shoemaker from Kabul who is of Pashtun ethnicity, He had a son who drowned prior to his marriages to Mariam and Laila; The novel suggests that Rasheed was intoxicated while caring for him when this occurred. Rasheed is a distant father to Aziza, his so-called "daughter," but he is much more loving to Zalmai, his son. Mariam kills Rasheed with a shovel after years of domestic abuse, while he tries to kill Laila by strangling her. "Rasheed's the embodiment of the patriarchal, tribal character," Hosseini noted, "hoped to create a multilayered character with Rasheed." I didn't want to write him as a villain who could never be defeated. He is a terrible person, but he also has moments of humanity, like how much he loves his son. " Hosseini identified an encounter with an Afghan man who "had a very sweet, subservient wife" and had not yet informed her that he was planning to marry again" as the character's inspiration. Tariq, an ethnic Pashtun who was born in 1976 in Kabul and grew up with Laila. At the age of five, a landmine caused him to lose one leg. Before he and his family leave Kabul, they transform from friends into lovers; Tariq and Laila reunite in Kabul after a decade of separation, during which he lived as a refugee in Afghanistan and lost his parents, leading Laila to believe he had died. They leave Kabul after Rasheed's death and marry in Pakistan. At the end of the book, they return to Kabul and are expecting their third child.

**Nana**, an ethnic Tajik from a town outside Herat who recently filled in as a worker for Jalil. Mariam is the result of their affair, and Mariam is bitter toward Jalil because of his favoritism for his wives and legitimate children. The jinn are often mentioned by Nana; it is implied in the book that she in actuality encounters from emotional wellness troubles for which she won't be cured. Nana hangs herself after Mariam refuses to stay with her when she leaves the family home for the first time on her own to find Jalil on her fifteenth birthday.

**Mullah Faizullah**, a neighborhood Sufi imam who shows Mariam the Qur'an and upholds her and Nana. He passes away naturally in 1989.

In addition to Mariam, Jalil is a local businessman in Herat who has three wives and nine (later ten) legitimate children. She ends their relationship because he refuses to treat her like his legitimate children despite his love for her. Before his passing, he communicates lament for his treatment of Mariam through a letter that would have been given to her in the event that she had at any point gotten back to Herat by Mullah Faizullah, all things considered, it is given to Laila when she goes to visit Mariam's home village.

**Hakim, Laila's dad**, a college instructed man from Panjshir who works first as an educator and afterward at a processing plant after the conflict. He is progressive and wants Laila to be able to learn on her own and make her own choices in life. While preparing to flee Kabul, he and his wife Fariba are killed in a rocket explosion.[16] Fariba, Laila's mother, was originally from Panjshir. She is depicted as a cheerful woman and has a brief encounter with Mariam when she first arrives in Kabul. After her two sons, Ahmad and Noor, die in the Afghan-Soviet War, her disposition is forever altered. She spends her time in mourning in bed until the Soviets are defeated by the Mujahideen. Later, she and her husband Hakim are killed in a rocket explosion as they prepare to flee the city.

**Aziza, Laila and Tariq's illegitimate daughter**, was born in Kabul in 1993. Laila marries Rasheed to conceal Aziza's illegitimacy after learning of Tariq's alleged death. Aziza's skin colorations Laila's tumble from favor with Rasheed and prompts the fellowship among Mariam and Laila. Aziza is temporarily housed in an orphanage during a famine so that she can be fed.

**Zalmai, Laila and Rasheed's legitimate son**, was born in Kabul in 1997. Because he is Rasheed's biological child, Laila initially considers having an abortion. Despite his father's abuse of

Laila and Mariam, Zalmai idolizes him. Zalmai is led to believe that Rasheed has left Kabul, but she is still unaware that Mariam killed him. Zalmai does not respect Tariq, but by the end of the book, it appears that she has come to accept him as her father. "Heard so many stories about what happened to women, the tragedies that they had endured, the difficulties, the gender-based violence that they had suffered, the discrimination, the being barred from active life during the Taliban, having their movement restricted, being essentially banned from practicing their legal, social, and political rights," according to Hosseini, who visited Afghanistan in 2003. He was inspired by this to write a novel about two Afghan women.

Jonathan Yardley, a critic for the Washington Post, made the observation that "the central theme of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is the place of women in Afghan society," citing a scene in which Mariam's mother instructs her daughter, "Learn this now and learn it well, my daughter: The accusing finger of a man always finds a woman, like a compass needle that points north. Always. Mariam, you might remember that. In the book, both Mariam and Laila are constrained into tolerating union with Rasheed, who expects them to wear a burqa well before it is carried out by regulation under the Taliban. Later, he becomes more and more abusive. The novel consistently depicts "patriarchal despotism where women are agonizingly dependent on fathers, husbands, and especially sons, the bearing of male children being their sole path to social status," according to a review published in *Riverhead Trades Weekly*.

"*Thousand Suns*" is the second book of Khalid Hosseini, an American writer of Afghan origin, and in 2007, this novel became a bestseller all over the world. The work is about love. Love-love even before Khaled Hosseini. A lot has been written about it, and will be written more. But as soon as you start reading "*Thousand Suns*" you will plunge into another world. In a country dominated by evil, tyranny and tyranny, where humanism and religion do not seem to have a place, which looks blacker than the darkness of the night, from bullets. Buds of love will grow even in the hollow ground. Difficulties, darkness, injustices, life even after all the worries and sufferings. There is a place for religion and consequences in the hearts of people.

The main characters of the novel are two women who became victims of riots that disturbed the peaceful life in Afghanistan.

Maryam- the illegitimate daughter of a rich businessman, doomed to hardships, injustices and humiliations for as long as she can remember, accustomed to the idea that her fate would end like this gone Laila, on the other hand, is a beloved daughter of a close family who dreams of a happy life. There is nothing in common that connects these two women, they live in different worlds. If the destruction had not been a war, the paths of these two women would not have collided. As a result of the war, the two oppressed people whose paths and destinies are connected are neither enemies nor friends for each other. They know that they can survive only if they are united and united in the city where they lived and now drowned in blood and oppression. And they will do it: they will go through suffering together, they will rejoice together, they will cry together, but if only for a moment, they hope to reach a bright future. This novel is a representation of the reality of life on paper. The work not only reveals the horrors of war, but also has a great importance as it always reminds us that peace is a great blessing for people and how much it can cost if it is broken.

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