

## Kite Runner: Chapter 11

Element	Notes
<b>Plot summary</b>	<p>It is now the 1980s and Baba and Amir have lived in Fremont, California for 2 years. Baba is both mentally and physically unwell due to the pollution and fast food, suggesting that he is struggling - or refusing - to adapt to his new environment. He is also now working long, back-breaking hours in a gas station. In contrast, Amir enrolls in high school and decides to study creative writing - he loves the freedom of America. When Baba is asked for ID at a convenience store, he flips out. Later, Amir receives a car from Baba when he graduates and the two of them trek around garage sales in a van, looking for bric-a-brac to sell at an Afghan flea market. Here, we are introduced to the noble General Taheri and his beautiful - but disgraced - daughter Soraya.</p>
<b>Characters</b>	<p><u>Baba</u>, Mr and Mrs Nguyen (Fremont shopkeepers), Mrs Dobbins (San Jose benefits officer) and General Taheri (Soraya's father).</p>
<b>Themes and features</b>	<p>Baba's pride is shown through the fact that he refuses to go to English classes, contrasting Amir's desperate desire to integrate. He also works a hard, manual job and now smells of "dust, sweat and gasoline" showing how the mighty have fallen. He also only invites Afghan around his house. Baba's disgust and furious outbreak at the Nguyens asking him for ID shows that he hates the lack of trust and respect in the US. He states that "no one trusts anybody" while smashing up the shop, which reverses the roles - this time it's Amir being ashamed of and apologising for his father, instead of the other way round. The juxtaposition of the simplicity of Kabul - where a tree branch is used as a credit card - with the distrust and fear of California is prevalent here. Baba clearly cannot cope with the fact that he has fallen to the bottom of the hierarchy and he misses the sense of community and belonging in Kabul: he is in mourning. Baba has made a huge sacrifice for Amir's future and education.</p> <p>Baba's pride is also suggested through his refusal to accept food stamps, which highlights his past life as a man of wealth and status who used to make loans to his community. Amir remarks that "<i>Baba walked out of the welfare office like a man cured of a tumour</i>", suggesting that he finds it humiliating to accept charity. This is despite the fact that Baba has developed a stomach ulcer from his long, stressful days and change in diet.</p> <p>Amir is trying to forget his past life in Kabul by fully embracing the American dream. One of Baba's rare moments of pride in Amir is shown at his graduation, where he turns up with a</p>