

shows how Farid has become immune to the extreme poverty of Kabul, whilst Amir feels inclined - perhaps due to his guilt or desire to know more about his mother - to give him 100,000 Afghanis (this also highlights the poor state of Afghanistan's economy, as it is clearly suffering from hyperinflation). Dr Rasul, the beggar, knew Amir's mother as he was a university teacher from 1958-1996. Sofia Akrami (Amir's mother) and Dr Rasul used to share cake and tea whilst chatting after class. He remembers her, visibly pregnant with Amir, stating that she was "*profoundly happy*" but found this scary. This foreshadowing reintroduces the theme of gut instinct in the novel.

Zaman initially refuses to speak to or see Amir and he also denies any knowledge of Sohrab twice. This immediately appears suspicious, until Farid reassures Zaman that they are not Taliban. Amir desperately gives Zaman all the information he has about Hassan and Sohrab before confessing that he is his half-uncle. The orphanage is presented as a microcosm of Kabul - it has no heating, a lack of food, has been corrupted by Taliban paedophiles and is located in one of the most shelled neighbourhoods in Kabul.

The orphans live in horrific conditions amongst "*dim, grimy hallways*" with no carpet, windows, heating or water supply. The orphanage is filled with fatherless children whose mothers could not afford to feed them. The Taliban also claim to have no money to invest in the orphanage, whilst summing their rosaries. This is deeply ironic, as the Taliban cannot see the ungodliness in their abusive actions and neglect of the country's children. Now, there are no mattresses on the steel bed frames and children have died from exposure due to the shortage of blankets in the winter.

Zaman reluctantly tells Amir that he has sold Sohrab to a Talib official a month ago. He visits once every month and usually pays for an orphaned girl in cash. This enrages Farid, perhaps exacerbated by the loss of his own daughter, who attempts to strangle Zaman to death. The only thing that stops Farid is Amir telling him that the orphaned children are watching him. Zaman justifies his actions by saying that he has sacrificed his life savings and worldly possessions to run the orphanage and he insisted on staying in Kabul (even though he could have run to his family in Iran or Pakistan like many others did). Zaman also sadly remarks that "*if I deny him [the Talib] one child, he takes ten*". He directs Farid and Amir to Ghazi stadium, although he appears hopeless that Sohrab will return alive (let alone unharmed).