APPENDIX: TEXT PASSAGES CLAUSE-WISE

KEY: 1, 2, 3, .... Sentence numbers,
i, ii, iii, .... Clause numbers,
Embedded clauses [[shown within double brackets]]
Inserted clauses < >
Double slashed lines // indicate clause boundaries within embedded clauses.

CHAPTER 3: SUCH A LONG JOURNEY

PASSAGE I:

1.i.Sohrab turned in his sleep, 1ii.and Gustad stopped humming. 2.i.The room was dark like the others in the flat, 2ii.with blackout paper taped over the glass panes of the windows and ventilators. 3.Gustad had put it up nine years ago, the year of the war with China. 4.i.How much happened that year, 4ii.he thought. 5.i.Roshan’s birth, 5ii.and then my terrible accident. 6.What luck. 7.In bed for twelve weeks, with the broken hip between Madhiwalla Bonesetter’s sandbags. 8.i.And riots in the city – 8ii.curfews and lathi charges and burning buses everywhere. 9.What a dreadful year 1962 had been. 10.i.And such a humiliating defeat, 10ii.everywhere people talking of nothing but the way [[the Chinese had advanced]], 10iii.as though the Indian Army consisted of tin soldiers. 11.i.To think 11ii.that till the very end both sides had been proclaiming peace and brotherhood. 12.i.Especially Jawaharlal Nehru, with his favourite slogan, ‘Hindi-Chinee bhai-bhai’, insisting 12ii.that Chou En-lai was a brother, 12iii.the two nations were great friends. 13.i.And refusing 13ii.to believe any talk of war, 13iii.even though the Chinese had earlier invaded Tibet, 13iv.positioning several divisions along the border. 14.i.’Hindi-Chinee bhai-bhai’, 14ii.all the time, 14iii.as though [[repeating it often enough]] would verily make them brothers.

15.i.And when the Chinese came pouring over the mountains, 15ii.everyone said 15iii.it confirmed the treacherous nature of the yellow race. 16.i.Chinese restaurants and Chinese hair saloons lost their clientele, 16ii.and the Chinaman quickly became the number one bogeyman. 17.i.Dilnavaz used to caution Darius, 17ii.’The wicked Chino will carry you off’ 17iii. if you don’t finish your food’. 18.i.But Darius would defy her, 18ii. he was not afraid. 19.He had made his plans after discussions with his first-standard classmates about the yellow fellows [[who collected children // to make a stew, along with rats, cats, and puppy dogs]]. 20.i.He said 20iii.he would get his Diwali cap pista, 20iv. put a roll of toati in it 20v. and 20vi.<bang-bang>, 20vi.kill the Chino 20vi.if he ever dared come near their flat.
21. But much to Darius’s disappointment, no Chinese soldiers approached Khodadad Building. Instead, teams of fund-raising politicians toured the neighbourhood. Depending on which party they belonged to, they made speeches Praising the Congress government’s heroic stance or denouncing its incompetency for sending brave Indian Jawans, with outdated weapons and summer clothing, to die in the Himalayas at Chinese hands. Every political party unleashed flag-emblazoned lorries to crisscross the city with banners: weaving together support for the party and support for the soldiers, while the fund-raisers shouted themselves hoarse through megaphones, exhorting people to be as selfless as the Jawans who were reddening the Himalayan snow with their precious blood to defend Bharat Mata.

And the people were moved to staunch the flow of the yellow invaders. They threw blankets and sweaters and scarves out of their windows into the open lorries that passed below. In some wealthy localities, the collection drive turned into a competition, with neighbours trying to outdo one another in their attempts to simultaneously seem rich, patriotic and compassionate. Women removed gold bangles and earrings and finger rings from their persons and gave them away. Money – notes and loose change – was wrapped in handkerchiefs and tossed into the fund-raisers’ grateful hands. Men tore shirts and jackets off their backs, yanked shoes off their feet, belts off their waists, and flung them into the lorries. What a time it was, and it brought tears of pride and joy into the eyes of everyone to see such solidarity, such generosity.

Afterwards, it was said that some of the donated goods had turned up for sale in Chor Bazaar and Nul Bazaar and in the stalls of roadside hawkers everywhere, though not much attention was paid to that nasty allegation; the glow of national unity was still warm and comforting.

PASAGE II:

Dinshawji’s hands shook as he opened the newspaper. He folded it and gave it to Gustad, along with the bulky white envelope. Gustad recognized it and flared up. ‘Are you crazy? You did not deposit?’ ‘Please read,’ he implored, close to tears. ‘You will understand.’

The piece was fairly short, titled ‘CORRUPTION RIPE IN RAW’, which made Gustad snort:

Acting jointly on the basis of an anonymous tip, the CBI and city police yesterday arrested in the nation’s capital an officer of the Research Wing, Jimmy
Bolimoria, on charges of fraud and extortion. He turned disbelievingly to Dinshawji, feeling as if the paan’s numbness was returning to lay its icy fingers on his brain.

11. 'Impossible!

12. What kind of rubbish is this?

13i. ‘Please read,’ he pleaded again, but Gustad had already lowered his eyes:

14i. The police report stated that, based on the accused’s confession, the facts were as follows. Some months ago in New Delhi, Mr Bilimoria impersonating the Prime Ministe’s voice telephoned the State Bank of India and identified himself as Indira Gandhi. He instructed the Chief Cashier to withdraw sixty lakh rupees from the bank’s reserves for delivery to a man [[who would identify himself as the Bangladeshi Babu]]. The next day, Mr Bilimoria, this time in the persona of the Bangladeshi Babu, met the Chief Cashier and took delivery of the sixty lakh rupees.

18i. The police report goes on to state that Mr Bilimoria has admitted he perpetrated the fraud in order to expedite aid to the guerrillas in East Pakistan]. The Mukti Bahini are brave and courageous fighters, the RAW officer is said to have written in his confession, ‘and I was growing tired of watching the bureaucrats drag their feet.’ He claims the idea was entirely his own, and his zealousness in helping the Mukti Bahini is blame.

21. A Footnote: While the alleged facts of this case are certainly unique, are the circumstances surrounding this highly imaginative crime? For example, assuming that Mr Bilimoria has the talent of voice impersonation, is it routine for our national banks to hand over vast sums of money if the Prime Minister telephones? How high up does one have to be in the government or the Congress Party to be able to make such a call? And was the Chief Cashier so familiar with Mrs Gandhi’s voice that he accepted the instructions without any verification whatsoever? If yes, does that mean that Mrs Gandhi has done this sort of thing frequently? These questions cry out for answers, and till the answers are heard, clearly and completely, the public’s already eroded confidence in our leaders cannot be restored.
28i. Dilnavaz handed Gustad the second cup of tea 28.ii as he finished reading. 29. It slipped through his fingers to the floor. 30i. The cup shattered, 30ii. the hot liquid splashing his right foot and ankle (194-6).

PASSAGE III:

1i. If this was the only problem [[besetting the clerk]], 1ii. he might have endured without [[turning embittered and suspicious]]. 2. But, of late, luxury high-rises [[proliferating around Doongerwadi’s green acres]] had blighted his life.

3i. ‘Your vultures!’ 3ii. the tenants complained. 4. ‘Control your vultures!’ 5. Throwing rubbish on our balconies!’ 6i. They claimed 6ii that the sated birds, <6iii. flying out from the Tower 6iv. after gorging themselves>, 6vi. invariably snatched a final bite 6v. to savour later. 7i. And if the tidbits were lost in mid-flight, 7ii. they landed on the exclusive balconies. 8i. This, 8ii. <said the indignant tenants>, 8i was absolutely intolerable, 8iii. considering the sky-high prices [[they had been charged for their de luxe flats]].

9i. Of course, no one had proved conclusively 9ii. that the morsels from the skies were human flesh. 10. But before long, relatives of various deceased parties heard about the skyscraper scandal. 11i. They protested 11ii. that they were not paying funeral fees 11iii. to have [[their dear departed ones anatomized // and strewn piecemeal on posh balconies]]. 12i. The bereaved insisted 12ii. that the Punchayet do something about it. 13i. ‘Train your vultures properly,’ 13ii. they said, 13iii. ‘or import more vultures, 13iv. so all flesh can be consumed in the well. 14. We don’t want a surplus [[which can be carried off // and lost in impure, profane places]].’

15. Meanwhile, the debate was also raging between the reformists and the orthodox. 16. These two camps had a history of [[battling lustily in newspaper columns, in letters to the editor, in community meetings—any forum [[where they were welcome]]]]. 17. For a while they had engaged in rhetorical combat over the chemical analysis of nirang. 18. Then there had been the vibration theory of Avesta prayers. 19i. When the vulture controversy erupted, 19ii. the orthodox and reformists heartily joined the fray, 19iii. Delighted 19iv. to sink their teeth into something after long inactivity.

20i. The orthodox defence was the age-old wisdom 20ii. that it was a pure method, 20iii. defiling none of God’s good creations: earth, water, air, and fire. 21i. Every scientist, local or foreign, 21ii. <who had taken the trouble // 21iii. to examine the procedure, 21iv. using modern hygienic standards>, 21i. sang its praises. 22i. But the reformists, 22ii. < who favoured cremation >, 22i. insisted 22iii. that the way of the ancients was unsuitable for the twentieth century. 23i. Such a ghoulish system, 23ii. < they said >, 23i. ill became a community with a progressive reputation and a forward-thinking attitude.
24i. The orthodox camp (or vulturists, 24ii. <as their opponents called them) > 24i. Countered 24iii. that reformists had their own ax [[to grind]] in [[legitimizing cremation]]—24iv. they had relatives in foreign lands without access to Towers of Silence. 25i. Moreover, the controversy was a massive fraud [[cooked up by those [[who owned shares in crematoria]]]], 25ii. they charged: 25iii. the chunks of meat were dropped on balconies from single-engined aeroplanes [[piloted by shady individuals on the reformist payroll]].

26i. Everyone (including a few orthodox backbenchers) agreed 26ii. this was a bit far-fetched. 27i. Surely, they said, 27ii. someone in the buildings would have seen 27iii. or heard an aeroplane [[making a low run // to deliver its payload]]. 28.(Gliders were not considered in the argument.)

29i. But the vulturists produced written guarantees from world-famous ornithologists 29ii. stating 29iii. that vultures, as a species, were unable to fly after a heavy meal 29iv. or if their talons and beaks were loaded. 30. The beleaguered clerk greeted the experts’ pronouncements with relief. 31i. Though not one [[given to controversy]], 31ii. he at once seized on the document 31iii. to make photocopies for high-rise tenants [[who came // to complain]].

32. But none were satisfied. 33i. Aeroplanes were not involved, 33ii. that much was certain. 34i. However, if the ornithologists were right, 34ii. they demanded, 34iii. could the clerk tell them the origins of the balcony meat? 35i. If not human, 35ii. what was it supposed to be? 36. Beef? 37. Mutton? 38i. Were they to believe 38ii. that goaswallas had suddenly(Ac) become airborne, 38iii. plying their trade in the skies, 38iv. flying over the city with their butcher knives and cleavers? 39i. Were they riding their bicycles among the clouds, ii. making deliveries through balconies instead of back doors?

40. The poor clerk no longer had any answers. 41. He heard reproach and censure unceasingly in the speech of his fellow men, blame and reprimand even [[where none was intended]] (316-18).

CHAPTER 4: A FINE BALANCE

PASSAGE I:

1i. Throughout the day, at intervals, they were flogged 1ii. as they hung naked by their ankles from the branches of a banyan tree. 2i. Drifting in and out of consciousness, 2ii. their screams grew faint. 3. Thakur Dharamsi’s little grandchildren were kept indoors. 4i. ‘Do your lessons,’ 4ii. he told them.

5i. ‘Read your books, 5ii. or play with your toys. 6. The nice new train set [[I bought you]].’

7i. ‘But it’s a holiday,’ 7ii. they pleaded. 8. ‘We want to play outside.’
9. ‘Not today. Some bad men are outside.’ 11. He shooed them away from the rear windows.

12. In the distance, in the far field, his men urinated on the three inverted faces. 13i. Semiconscious, the parched mouths were grateful for the moisture, 13ii. licking the trickle with feeble urgency. 14i. Thakur Dharamsi warned his employees 14ii. that for the time being the news should not spread, 14iii. especially not in the downstream settlement. 15i. That might disrupt the voting 15ii. and force the election commission 15iii. to countermand the results, 15iv. wasting weeks of work.

16. In the evening, after the ballot boxes were taken away, 16ii. burning coals were held to the three men’s genitals, 16iii. then stuffed into their mouths. 17. Their screams were heard through the village 17ii. until their lips and tongues melted away. 18. The still, silent bodies were taken down from the tree. 19. When they began to stir, 19ii. the ropes were transferred from their ankles to their necks, 19iii. and the three were hanged. 20. The bodies were displayed in the village square.

21i. Thakur Dharamsi’s goondas, 21ii. ‘freed now from their election duties,’ 21i. were turned loose upon the lower castes. 22i. ‘I want 22ii. those achchoot jatis to learn a lesson,’ 22iii. he said, 22iv. distributing liquor to his men before their next assignment. 23i. ‘I want 23ii. it to be like the old days, 23iii. when there was respect and discipline and order in our society. 24i. And keep an eye on that Chamaar-tailor’s house, 24ii. make sure 24iii. no one gets away.’

25. The goondas began working their way towards the untouchable quarter. 26i. They beat up individuals at random in the streets, 26ii. stripped some women, 26iii. raped others, 26iv. burned a few huts. 27. News of the rampage soon spread. 28i. People hid, 28ii. waiting for [[the storm to blow over]].

29i. ‘Good,’ 29ii. said Thakur Dharamsi, 29iii. as night fell 29iv. and reports reached him of his men’s success. 30i. ‘I think 30ii. they will remember this for a long time.’ 31i. He ordered 31ii. that the bodies of the two nameless individuals should be left by the river bank, 31iii. to be reclaimed by their relations. 32i. ‘My heart is soft towards those two families, 32ii. whoever they are,’ 32iii. he said. 33. ‘They have suffered enough. 34i. Let them mourn their sons 34ii. and cremate them.’

35i. That was the end of the punishment, 35ii. but not for Narayan’s family. 36i. ‘He does not deserve a proper cremation,’ 36ii. said Thakur Dharamsi. 37. ‘And the father is [[more to blame than the son]].’ 38. His arrogance went against everything [[we hold sacred]].’ 39i. What the ages had put together, 39ii. Dukhi had dared to break asunder; 39iii. he had turned
cobbler into tailors, 39iv. distorting society’s timeless balance. 40i. [[Crossing the line of 
caste]] had to be punished with the utmost severity, 40ii. said the Thakur.
41i. ‘Catch them all – the parents, wife, children,’ 41ii. he told his men. 42i. ‘See
42ii that no one escapes.’
43i. As the goondas broke into Narayan’s house,
43ii. Amba, Pyari, Savitri, and Padma screamed from the porch 43iii. to leave their friends
alone. 44. ‘Why are you harassing them? 45. They have done nothing wrong!’
46i. The women’s families pulled them back, 46ii. terrified for them. 47i. Their
neighbours did not dare to even look outside, 47ii. cowering in their huts in shame and fear,
47iii. praying 47iv. that the night would pass quickly, 47v. without swallowing any more
innocents. 48i. When Chhotu and Dayaram tried to sneak away for help to the district
thanedar, 48ii. they were chased down 48iii. and knifed.
49i. Dukhi, Roopa, Radha, and the daughters were bound 49ii. and dragged into the main
room.50i. ‘Two are missing,’ 50ii. said Thakur Dharamsi. 51.‘Son and grandson.’ 52i.
Someone checked around, 52ii. and informed him 52iii. that they were living in town. 53i.
‘Well, never mind, 53ii. these five will do.’
54i. The mutilated body was brought in 54ii. and set before the captives.55. The room was
dark. 56i. Thakur Dharamsi sent for a lamp 56ii. so the family could see.
57. The light tore away the benevolent cloak of darkness. 58. The naked corpse’s face was
a burnt and broken blur. 59. Only by red birthmark on his chest could they recognize
Narayan.
60. A long howl broke from Radha.61i. But the sound of grief soon mingled with the
family’s death agony; 61ii. the house was set alight. 62. The first flames licked at the bound
flesh.63i. The dry winds, 63ii. < furiously fanning the fire >, 63i. showed the only spark of
mercy during this night. 64. The blaze swiftly enfolded all six of them (146-47).
PASSAGE II:
1. Everything disgusting about the hostel [[that Maneck had learned to live with]] began to
nauseate him with a renewed vengeance. 2i. As an antidote, he developed a morning waking
routine: 2ii. when his eyes opened, 2iii. he shut them again 2iv. and, head still on the pillow,
imagined the mountains, swirling mist, birdsong, [[dogs’ paws pattering on the porch]], the
cool dawn air on his skin, the exited chatter of langurs, [[breakfast cooking in the kitchen]],
toast and fried eggs upon his tongue. 3i. When all his senses were thus anointed by home
imaginings, 3ii. he opened his eyes 3iii. and got out of bed.
4i. On campus, a new group, Students For Democracy, 4ii. < which had surfaced soon after the declaration of the Emergency >, 4i. was now in the ascendant. 5i. Its sister organization, Students Against Fascism, maintained the integrity of both groups 5ii. by silencing those [[who spoke against them /or criticized the democracy]]. 6i. Threats and assaults became so commonplace, 6ii. they might have been part of the university curriculum. 7i. The police were now a permanent presence, 7ii. helping to maintain the new and sinister brand of law and order.

8. Two professors [[who chose to denounce the campus goon squads]] were taken away by plainclothesmen for anti-government activities, under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. 9i. Their colleagues did not interfere on their behalf 9ii. because MISA allowed imprisonment without trial, 9iii. and it was a well-known fact 9iv. that those [[who questioned MISA]] sooner or later answered to MISA; 9v. it was safer 9vi. not to tangle with something so pernicious.

10i. Maneck worried about Avinash; 10ii. as President of the original Student Union, surely he was in grave danger from the new groups on campus. 11. At night, he listened for sounds from the room next to his. 12i. [[The door shutting softly]], the clatter of the metal cupboard, wheeze of the spray pump, the thunk of the bed revealed 12ii. that his friend was fine, 12iii. that he had not been assaulted 12iv. or taken away into secret detention.

13i. Maneck hurried between hostel and college 13ii. without stopping 13iii. to watch the daily farces of bullying, toadying, and submission. 14i. The office of the campus newspaper was attacked, 14ii. the writers and editors roughed up 14iii. and sent packing. 15i. The paper used to indulge in light satire 15ii. and occasionally poke fun at the government or university administration, 15iii. although satire had become increasingly difficult in recent times, 15iv. for the government was practising the art in its own reports to the censored media, 15v. better than the campus paper had ever done.

16i. After taking over, 16ii. Students For Democracy released a statement in the next issue 16iii. that the publication’s new voice would be more representative of the college population. 17. The rest of the paper was filled with a model code of conduct for students and teachers.

18i. One morning, classes were cancelled 18ii. and a flag-raising ceremony was organized in the quadrangle. 19i. Attendance was compulsory, 19ii. enforced by Students Against Fascism. 20. The president of Students For Democracy took the microphone. 21i. He appealed to the figures of authority 21ii. to come forward, 21iii. prove their love for the country, 21iv. set an example of patriotic behaviour.
22. On cue, lecturers, associate professors, full professors, and department heads approached the dais, en masse, in a feeble show of spontaneity. 23i. The organizers tried furtively to slow them down, 23ii. to make it look like a genuine outpouring of support. 24i. But it was too late 24ii. to improve the choreography. 25. The entire teaching staff had already lined up at the table, like customers at a ration shop. 26i. They obediently signed statements26ii. saying 26iii. they were behind the Prime Minister, her declaration of Emergency, and her goal of [[fighting the anti-democratic forces [[threatening the country from within]]]].

27. As much as fear, Maneck felt a loathing for the entire place. 28. But for his teachers he had only pity. 29i. They slipped away from the flag-raising ceremony, 29ii. looking guilty and ashamed (246-248).

PASSAGE III:

1i. He decided 1ii. to take them upstairs 1iii. and browse through them. 2. [[Reading old newspapers]] seemed a fitting way [[to spend the gloomy, rain-filled afternoon]].

3i. He settled in a chair by the window 3ii. and opened the yellow, dusty sheets of the first issue in the pile.4. It was from the period after the post-Emergency elections [[that the Prime Minister lost to the opposition]]. 5. There were articles about abuses during the emergency, testimony of torture victims, outrage over the countless deaths in police custody. 6i. Editorials [[that had been silenced during her regime]] called for a special commission 6ii. to investigate the wrongdoings 6iii. and punish the guilty.

7i. He skipped to another paper, 7ii. impatient with the repetitious reportage.8. The new government’s dithering over [[how to deal with the ex-Prime Minister]] did not make stimulating reading either, except for one article [[which quoted a cabinet minister/ as saying: // ‘She must be punished,/ she is a terrible woman, wicked as Cleopatra’]]. 9i. And the only unanimous decision of the paralysed government was [[to expel Coca Cola from the country]], 9ii. for refusing 9iii. to relinquish its secret formula and its managing interest; 9iv. with a little twisting and turning, the action suited to all ideologies in the coalition brew.

10i. Not many newspapers later, the coalition had vaporized in endless squabbles, 10ii. and fresh elections were to be held. 11i. The ex-Prime Minister was poised to shed her prefix 11ii. and return to power. 12i. The editorials now reined in their rhetoric against her, 12ii. adopting the obsequious tone reminiscent of the Emergency. 13i. One groveling scribe had written: 13ii. ‘Can the Prime Minister have incarnated at least some of the gods in herself? 14i. Beyond doubt, she possesses a dormant power, 14ii. lying coiled at the base of her spine,
14iii. the Kundalini Shakti [[which is now awakening/ and carrying her into transcendence]].
15i. There was no sarcasm intended, 15ii. it being part of a longer panegyric.

16i. Fed up, 16ii. Maneck looked for the sports pages. 17i. There were pictures from cricket matches, 17ii. and the statement by the Australian captain about a ‘bunch of Third World beggars [[who think /they can play cricket]].’ 18i. And then the jubilation and fireworks and celebration 18ii. when the bunch of beggars defeated Australia in the Test series.

19. He began going more rapidly through the newspapers. 20.After a while even the pictures looked the same. 21i. Train derailing, monsoon floods, bridge collapse; 21ii. ministers being garlanded, 21iii. ministers making speeches, 21iv. ministers visiting areas of natural and man-made disasters. 22. He flipped the pages between glances out the window, at the theatre of weather – the lasting rain, windswept deodars, bolts of lightning.

23. Then something in the paper caught his eye. 24. He turned back for a second look. 25. It was a photograph of three young women. 26i. Dressed in cholis and petticoats, 26ii. they were hanging from a ceiling fan. 27i. One end of each of their saris was tied to the fan hook, 27ii. the other round their necks. 28. Their heads were tilted. 29. The arms hung limp, like the limbs of rag dolls.

30i. He read the accompanying story, 30ii. his eyes straying repeatedly to the scene 30iii. that floated like a ghastly tableau. 31i. The three were sisters, aged fifteen, seventeen, and nineteen, 31ii. and had hanged themselves 31iii. while their parents were out of the house. 32i. They had written a note 32ii. to explain their conduct. 33i. They knew 33ii. that their father was unhappy 33iii. at not being able to afford dowries for them. 34i. After much debate and anxiety, they had decided 34ii. to take this step, 34iii. to spare their mother and father the shame of three unmarried daughters. 35i. They begged their parents’ forgiveness for this action [[which would cause them grief]]; 35ii. they could see no alternative.

36 The photograph dragged Maneck’s eyes back to it, to the event [[that was at once unsettling, pitiful, and maddening in its crystalline stillness]]. 37i. The three sisters looked disappointed, 37ii. he thought, 37iii. as though they had expected something more out of hanging, something more than death, 37iv. and then discovered 37v. that death was all there was. 38i. He found himself 38ii. admiring their courage. 39i. What strength it must have taken, 39ii. he thought, 39iii. to unwind those saris from their bodies, 39iv. to tie the knots around necks. 40i. Or perhaps it had been easy, 40ii. once the act acquired the beauty of logic and weight of sensibleness.
41i. He tore his eyes away from the photograph to read the article. 42i. The reporter had met the parents; 42ii. he wrote 42iii. that they had suffered more than their fair portion of grief – 42iv. they had, during the Emergency, lost their eldest under circumstances [[that were never satisfactorily explained]]. 43i. The police claimed 43ii. it was a railway accident, 43iii. but the parents spoke of wounds [[they had seen on their son’s body at the morgue]].

44i. According to the reporter, the injuries were consistent with other confirmed incidents of torture: 44ii. ‘Moreover, in view of the political climate during the Emergency, and the fact [[that their son, Avinash, was active in the Student Union]], it would appear 44iii. to be one more case of wrongful death in police custody.’

45i. The article proceeded to comment on the parliamentary committee’s inquiry into the Emergency excesses, 45ii. but Maneck had stopped reading.

47. Avinash (593-94).

CHAPTER 5: FAMILY MATTERS:

PASSAGE I:

1. They thumped his back, 1i. shook his hand, 1ii. hugged him 1iv. while he cringed 1v. and wished 1vi. he hadn’t stayed home that evening. 2i. But he knew 2ii. he would have to face them at some point. 3i. He heard Soli 3ii. Uncle’s wife, Nargesh Aunty, ask his mother, 3iii. “Tell me, Jeroo, 3iv. is it sincere? 4. Has he really given up that Lucy Barganza?”

5. “Oh yes,” 5ii. said his mother. 6. “Yes, he has given us his word.”

7i. Now Mrs Kotwal scuttled across the room, 7ii. pinched his cheek, 7iii. and said, 7iv. “When the naughty boy at last becomes a good boy, 7v. it’s a double delight.”

8i. He felt like reminding her 8ii. he was forty-two years old. 9. Then Nargesh Aunty beckoned from her seat on the sofa. 10i. She was the most softspoken of the group 10ii. and usually drowned by its din. 11i. She patted the place beside her 11ii. and bade him 11iii. sit. 12i. Taking his hand in hers, 12ii. which was shrivelled from burns in a kitchen accident during her youth, 12iii. she whispered, 12iv. “No happiness is more lasting than the happiness [[that you get from [fulfilling you parents’ wishes]]]. 13. Remember that, Nari.”

14i. Her voice came to him from a great distance, 14ii. and he had neither will nor energy for argument. 15i. He was remembering the week before, 15ii. when he and Lucy had watched the tide go out at Beach Candy 16i. Some children were dragging a little net in pools of water among the rocks, 16ii. searching for [[sea life forgotten by the amnesic waves]]. 17i. As he watched them [[[splash //and yell]], 17ii. he thought about[[ the eleven years he and Lucy had struggled to create a world for themselves]]. 18. A cocoon, she used to call it. 19i. A cocoon was [[what they needed]], 19ii. she said, 19iii. into which they could retreat, 19iv.
and after their families had forgotten their existence, they would emerge like two glistening butterflies and fly away together...

20i. The memory made him weaken for an instant – was he making the right decision? ... 21. Yes. 22. He was. 23. They had been ground down by their families. 24. Exhausted by the strain of it. 25i. He reminded himself how hopeless it was now – 25ii. Lucy and he had even reached the point [[where scarcely an evening went by // that they did not quarrel about something or the other]]. 26i. What was the purpose in continuing, 26ii. letting it all crumble in useless bickering?

27i. Then, while the children nearby squealed with excitement at a creature [[caught in their net]], 27ii. Lucy tried one last time to convince him: 27iii. they could turn their backs on everyone, 27iv. walk away from the suffocating world of family tyrannies, from the guilt and blackmail [[that parents specialized in]]. 28. They could start their own life together, just the two of them.

29i. Struggling to maintain his resolve, 29ii. he told her they had discussed it all before, 29iv. their families would hound them, no matter what. 30. [[The only way to do this]] was [[to end it quickly]].

31i. Fine, 31ii. she said, 31iii. no use talking any more, 31iv. and walked away from him.

32. He found himself alone beside the sea.

33i. And now, as his parents and their friends discussed his future while sipping Scotch and soda, 33ii. he felt he was eavesdropping on strangers. 34i. They were delightedly conducting their “round-table conference,” 34ii. as they called it, 34iii. planning his married life, 34iv. having as much fun as though it was their whist drive or housie evening (13-14).

PASSAGE II:

1i. Such a monumental waste of time and energy the lawsuit had been, 1ii. he thought, 1iii. as he remembered the religious controversy [[that had fuelled the feud]]. 2i. A priest had performed a navjote ceremony for the son of a Parsi mother and non-Parsi father – 2ii. an absolute taboo for the conservative factions. 3. The event had ignited one of those periods of debate and polemics and bickering [[that infected the Reformists and the Orthodox from time to time, like the flu]].

4i. So his father, 4ii. < famous for his letters to the editor >, 4i. wrote one 4iii. condemning the priest: 4iv. that for the misguided dustoor in question, the sacred investiture ceremony of sudra and kusti had no more significance than [[tying an ordinary string around one’s waist]], 4v. given the cavalier way [[he was bestowing it on all and sundry]]; 4vi. that it was renegades like him 4vii. who would destroy this three-thousand-year-old religion; 4viii. that
Zoroastrianism had survived many setbacks in its venerable history, 4ix. but what the Arab armies had failed to achieve in A.D. 652, 4x. priests like him would accomplish; 4xi. the purity of this unique and ancient Persian community, the very plinth and foundation of its survival, was being compromised. 5i. Ignorance may be bliss, 5ii. he wrote; 5iii. however, the ignorance of mischief-making priests was anything but—5iv. it was poison for the Parsi community.

6i. Though the bombastic tone of his father’s rhetoric was amusing, 6ii. it had left Nariman [shaking his head in despair]. 7. The Jam-e-Jaamshed dedicated a special box each morning to the controversy. 8i. And each morning his father sat back 8ii. and enjoyed the letters, 8iii. for and against, instigated by his missive, 8iv. his face lighting up with satisfaction 8v. when he opened the paper over breakfast 8vi. and read choice bits aloud to his family.

9i. Invariably, his father would find a way 9ii. to connect the controversy with Lucy. 10i. He would cite examples in it 10ii. to illustrate 10iii. why intermarriage was forbidden. 11i. Extracts from the correspondence would be presented as unshakable arguments 11ii. for prohibiting relationships between Parsi and non-Parsi.

12. Nariman tried to use the openings [offered by the breakfast discourses]. 13i. He pleaded with his father 13ii. to invite Lucy to lunch or tea, 13iii. talk to her 13iv. before making his mind up. 14i. But his father refused --14ii. it would be unfair, 14iii. he said, 14iv. to raise the poor girl’s hopes. 15i. Sometimes, his mother suggested timidly 15ii. that there was no harm in [finding out [what kind of person she was]] 16i. His father said 16ii. she might be a wonderful person, as gracious and charming as the Queen of England, 16iii. but she was still unsuitable for his son 16iv. because she was not a Zoroastrian, 16v. case closed.

17i. How naïve, 17ii. to have kept hoping 17iii. his father would change his mind, 17iv. or that a passive stance would avoid unpleasantness, 17v. improve the chances for Lucy and himself. 18. He had underestimated his father’s stamina, his willingness [[to trade familial happiness for narrow beliefs]].

19i. Then Mr. Arjani’s scathing letter appeared in the newspaper, 19ii. and his father’s morning entertainment ended abruptly. 20i. Coming from the ground-floor neighbour, 20ii. it felt like an attack from a traitor in his own camp. 21i. And though he had decided at the outset 21ii. that he would restrict himself to just one letter, 21iii. taking the high road thereafter 21iv. and ignoring the yip-yap of the rabble, 21v. he lifted his pen 21vi. to fire a second salvo.

22i. He called Mr. Arjani a prime example of the substandard mind [whose cogitations were clearly worthless]], 22ii. unable to grasp the simplest tenets of the religion and the
supreme significance of the navjote. 23i. Mr. Arjani’s views, 23ii. <he wrote>, 23i did not
deserve the dignity of debate.

24 Mr. Arjani joined the battle with vigour. 25i. The exchange became more vitriolic, 25ii.
ending with the letter [[that took them to court]]. 26i. In it, Mr. Vakeel was accused of
[[being a rabid racist]] 26ii. who, in his maniacal quest for purity, wouldn’t think twice about
[[eliminating the spouses and offspring of intermarriage]].

27i. His father was advised by his Sunday-evening group 27ii. that it was time 27iii. to sue
for defamation of character. 28i. Mr. Arjani was offered the chance 28ii. to withdraw his
statements 28iii. and apologize. 29. He refused. 30i. A group of Reformists financed the
defence 30ii. and, though they lost, 30iii. were pleased with the ensuing publicity.

31i. His father gave a party 31ii. to celebrate the victory. 32i. The Sunday-evening group
presented him with the page from Jam-e-Jamshed, 32ii. framed behind glass, 32iii. featuring
the full retraction and apology.

33i. They were behaving 33ii. as though they’d won a cricket match, 33iii. thought
Nariman. 34. For them, the ruling was a validation of their beliefs rather than a technicality of
libel law. 35i. While the case was before the court, 35ii. his emotions had been mixed. 36i.
He didn’t want 36ii. his father to lose; 36iii. at the same time, he had hoped 36iv. that if those
bigoted ideas were scrutinized in public, 36v. his father might recognize them for [[what they
were]] (131-133).

**PASSAGE III:**

1i. My father has emerged from the bathroom, 1ii. and is doing his kusti by the cabinet.
2i. His expression is always very tense 2ii. when he prays. 3i. He finishes tying the knots 3ii.
and sits with his prayer book before the electric afargaan, in the wooden chair [[no one else is
allowed to use]]. 4i. He sits 4ii. as though he is carrying a secret burden, 4iii. whose weight is
crushing him. 5i. He frowns a lot, 5ii. his face contorting in pain. 6i. He doesn’t just close his
eyes, 6ii. he clenches the eyelids shut, 6iii. the cheeks rising, 6iv. the brows pressing
downwards 6v. to squeeze out [[whatever it is //that haunts him]]. 7i. His Avesta recitations –
the various Yashts, Gehs, Nyaiishes, 7ii. < depending on the hour -> 7i. are like a rebuttal, a
protest. 8. He is locked in a struggle.

9i. Seeing my father like this, 9ii. I think of him 9iii as he used to be, 9iv. so jovial.
10i. Nowadays he hardly smiles, 10ii. let alone laughs. 11i. And he never whistles, 11ii. never
joins in with songs on the radio. 12. The last time [[I heard //him sing]] was for Grandpa, the
night before [[he died]]. 13i. And the radio is seldom played – 13ii. only while Daddy is out
of the house. 14i. When he is home, 14ii. he is either praying 14iii. or reading, 14iv. and says
14v. the music disturbs him.
15i. Mummy watches from the passageway, 15ii. smiling contentedly, 15iii. for things are back to normal after the haircut argument. 16i. She is pleased 16ii. to see him at prayer, 16iii. Happy 16iv. to arrange her routine around his requirements. 17. The housework, the servant’s comings and goings all revolve around Daddy’s prayer schedule.

18i. But there are times 18ii. I’ve noticed her 18iii. wringing her hands, 18iv. looking worried 18v. when he prays on and on. 19. Those must be her (465) moments of doubt. 20i. I’m sure 20ii. she wishes 20iii. he wouldn’t go to such extremes, 20iv. and occasionally she voices her anguish in my presence: 20v. “If only Dada Ormuzd could help me 20vi. understand! 21. Why must prayer and religion lead to so many fights between father and son? 22. Is that his will?

23i. When my father sits by himself, 23ii. gazing out the window 23iii. or pretending [[to read]], 23iv. I have seen her 23v. go to his side23vi. and put her hand on his shoulder. 24i. I have heard her 24ii. ask him tenderly, 24iii. “What is it, Zezdaa, 24iv. is something worrying you?”

25i. His answer is always the same: 25ii. “Nothing, Roxie, 25iii. I’m fine.” 26i. Then he pats the hand on his shoulder, 26ii. kisses it.

27. She strokes his hair. 28. “Are you happy, Yezdaa?”

29. He smiles a sad, melancholy smile. 30i. “As happy as [[a soldier of Dada Ormuzd can be]], 30ii. fighting against Ahriman.”

31i. This type of vague answer with a spiritual flavour is his way of [[avoiding serious Conversation]]. 32i. But she’ll never be able to bring herself to say 32ii. he should pray less.33. That, to her, would be blasphemous. 34. So she blames his extremes, his new beliefs and practices on his new friends in the societies [[he has joined]].

35. The league of Orthodox Parsis and the Association for Zarathustrian Education meet once a week. 36i. He returns from their sessions 36ii. to tell us in detail about the agenda [[considered]] and the action [[taken]], the petitions [[circulated]] and injunctions [[filed]], the campaigns [[to be waged against films or publications [[that have given offence]] ]]. 37. All this provides more fodder for Murad.

38i. Yesterday, Daddy told us over dinner 38ii. that the League had discussed the 1818 case of a Parsi bigamist – 38iii. married a non-Parsi woman in Calcutta, 38iv. then moved to Bombay 38v. and married a Parsi. 39i. “For his crime he was excommunicated by the Panchayat,” 39ii. said Daddy, 39iii. raising his hand 39iv. to signify the gravity of the punishment. 40i. “And his father was told 40ii. to disown him 40iii. or he, too, would be.”

41i. “That doesn’t seem fair,” 41ii. said Mummy. 42. “Why excommunicate the father?”
43. “Why not? I wouldn’t want to be known as the father of such a scoundrel. But the bigamist reacted by insulting the high priests and the Panchayat, who went to court against him. Then things became so serious, he got scared, and asked to make a formal apology to end the matter. An Anjuman was called, where he had to confess his crime and humiliate himself by taking a pair of shoes, one in each hand, and striking his head five times with them. Right before the assembly.”

49i. “Were they brand-new shoes or old dirty shoes?” asked Murad.

50. “That wasn’t noted in the Panchayat records. The point is, our committee members have agreed unanimously to challenge the Reformist Propaganda. We will campaign to reintroduce a strict policy of excommunication. Parsi men and women who have relations with non-Parsis, in or out of marriage, will suffer the consequences. Excommunication will be reversed if they repent publicly with the shoe punishment.”

54. There was silence around the dining table for almost a minute. Jal uncle fiddled with his hearing aid, looking as though he wanted to speak but dared not. Most of his day he spends in his room, only joining us for meals. He no longer goes to the share bazaar. Sometimes, when Daddy is out, he will sit in the drawing-room to read the newspaper. He tries to keep to himself as much as possible.

60i. He and I began to laugh now because Murad ducked under the dining table, emerged with his slippers, and started hitting the top of his head with them. Mummy pressed her lips tightly together, doing her best to smother her amusement. But her face could not remain straight for more than a few seconds.

63. For Daddy, hers was the ultimate betrayal. “Purity and pollution is not a laughing matter. Your son behaves like a jackass and you encourage him.”

66i. “I’m not laughing at you, Yezdaa,” she soothed him. “I’m laughing at this clown.”

68i. “Just practising, Daddy, in case I have to take the punishment someday.”

69. Murad’s jokes are like the ones Daddy himself used to crack when we were small. I remember once, long ago, we’d all gone to fire-temple on Khordad Sal, and after we came home Daddy imitated a man who’d seen sliding along the walls of the main hall], kissing every photo-frame and portrait. And I also remember conversations about the silliness of slavishly following conventions and traditions.