

The narrator recounts his brother Ali's traditional circumcision ceremony, a spectacle orchestrated by their eccentric father. Thirty years prior, the father, adamant against a hospital procedure, declared Ali's circumcision would occur publicly in the valley. A messenger was dispatched, and the ensuing celebration involved days of feasting, dancing, and drumming, fueled by the father's extensive preparations. The narrator describes the pre-ceremony tension, particularly Ali's childhood fear of the blade and his family's attempts to fortify him. The day of the circumcision, the valley was packed, the event a horseshoe-shaped gathering of dancing and singing onlookers. The ritual involved a Sheikh chanting while lightly striking Ali's chest with a knife, a moment heightened by the father's threat to shoot Ali if he blinked. Despite this pressure, and against the narrator's refusal to carry out the threat, Ali remained stoic throughout the procedure. The aftermath depicts Ali's profuse bleeding, the father's worry at his son's unwavering stillness, and the narrator's eventual closing of Ali's eyes. The mother attributed Ali's apparent unconsciousness to the "evil eye," leaving the father heartbroken and in tears.