

**Translation**

Azgar Lal

**Alas\***<https://doi.org/10.33063/os.v73.644>

**Introduction:** We are pleased to present the English translation of a short story written in Balochi, together with an introduction to the life and work of the author. We also include the Balochi text of the story in Latin and Arabic script. It is our hope that this story will be a wake-up call to many who want to see change in Balochistan, but are reluctant to sacrifice their own comfort to help bring about that change.

Azgar Lal was born in 1987 in Boleda, Kech, Balochistan. He completed his primary education up to grade 10 in his home village and graduated in 2007 after finishing a two-year course in Political Science, equivalent to an A-level. He now lives in Karachi, Pakistan.

Azgar Lal began his career as a writer in 2006. His publications include *Zémeráni Bálád* [The Statue of Melodies]<sup>1</sup>, a study of the life and art of the renowned Balochi singer and musician Abdul Sattar Baloch, and *Nyád gón Zeray Chawlán* [Meeting Ocean Waves]<sup>2</sup>, a collection of interviews he conducted with Baloch literary figures. He worked as an editor of the literary journal *Sáhél* [Shadow]<sup>3</sup> between 2013 and 2014, and of *Emróz* [World]<sup>4</sup> in 2013.

All of Azgar Lal's writings are in Balochi, and his short stories often deal with social issues. In the story presented and translated here, he criticizes activists who claim to be working for social change and the betterment of people's living conditions, but who are unwilling to sacrifice even an ounce of their personal comfort to meet the needs of a fellow human being.

10 June 2024

*Taj Baloch and Carina Jahani*

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Summer had lost its temper, packed up and left for a few months. Winter had spread its wings over the land. Some people had taken out their coats from among their stored clothes, others their shawls and sweaters.

Chakar, Noroz, Pakir and Dad Jan were sitting at the back of Baloch Han's cafe as usual, discussing political and social problems.

'Waiter! Bring four teas', said Dad Jan. He reached into his pocket, pulled out a packet of cigarettes, and placed it on the table for the others to help themselves.

'Yesterday I happened to see a report from an international agency that said our country is ranked number one in the world for unemployment', Pakir said as he pulled a cigarette from the packet and lit it.

'It may well be true. Ever since the new government came into power, prices have gone up and unemployment is increasing', Dad Jan said, puffing out the cigarette smoke.

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1 *Zémeráni Bálád*, Karachi: Mestág Foundation, 2017.

2 *Nyád gón Zeray Chawlán*, Karachi: Mestág Foundation, 2021.

3 *Sáhél*, Hub, 2013–2014.

4 *Emróz*, Karachi: Rozhn Labzánki Chágerd, 2013.

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'Hey there, hand me the packet, let me have a cigarette and pollute the air and my lungs a bit', Noroz said, looking at Dad Jan.

'It's because of this inflation and unemployment that there are more and more beggars in this country. It looks like the country is going straight to hell', Pakir said.

'Begging has a bad reputation but it's good business. Actually, the prime minister even said that begging is a good thing', Dad Jan said and laughed loudly.

The other people in the cafe started looking in their direction.

'Don't laugh so loud. All the people are watching us', Noroz said, putting the cigarette ash on the table.

'Let him laugh. It prolongs his life. Anyway, there are too few opportunities to laugh here', Pakir said. He smiled and looked at Noroz. The waiter brought the tea and left.

Chakar broke his silence. 'Buddy! There was a time when we Baloch took pride in not having any beggars among our people. Now not only are men begging, but even women are beggars', he said.

'No, those who wear Balochi dress and beg are not actually Baloch, they're foreigners', said Dad Jan, throwing his cigarette on the floor.

'Sure, right, they aren't Baloch, but these days Baloch women see them and start begging as well. And we're getting tired of telling our womenfolk not to give their beautifully embroidered dresses to beggars. We still see beggars wearing Balochi outfits', Chakar replied to Dad Jan.

'Buddy! Something must be done', Noroz said and looked around the cafe.

'Yes, something needs to be done', the other three said with one voice.

'Sure buddy! We must do something for our people and our society', said Noroz.

'Of course we want to do something, but there's nothing we can do.' Dad Jan pulled out another cigarette and lit it.

'Dad Jan! It's not right for those of us who regard ourselves as knowledgeable and educated to be discouraged. If we want to, we can do many things.' While Noroz was saying this, Auntie Shamsi staggered into the cafe, coughing. She looked around. When she saw the four, her face lit up and she came over to them.

Auntie Shamsi lived in their village. She was a widow with no children to care for her. She had been dependent on others all her life. Now her days were numbered.

'My boys! Look at this piece of paper. I got it from the doctor. I have to buy some medicine, but actually I have no money for it. Can you please buy this medicine for me? God will reward you.'

Noroz took the prescription from her and read it. 'Auntie! This is not only a prescription for medicine, there are also tests you need to take.'

'Son! I need the medicine right now. My fever is not going down and the cough...'

Chakar took the prescription from Noroz's hand and read it. Then he said: 'Auntie! This is a lot of medicine, we don't have that much money on us.'

'If you can't buy it all, just buy the fever and cough medicine. I can't even breathe because of the cough.'

All four looked at each other and lowered their eyes. Chakar gave the prescription back to Auntie and said: 'Sorry, we don't have the kind of money to buy your medicine.'

She took the prescription and left the cafe in despair.

After she went, everyone was silent. Then they too left the cafe and each one went home.

The night with its pains and sorrows turned into day. At dawn the birds began to sing their soothing songs.

Noroz, Chakar, Dad Jan and Pakir were sleeping comfortably in their beds. Suddenly they were startled by a loud voice. It was an announcement from the loudspeakers of the mosque.

'Listen to this announcement. Auntie Shamsi has passed away. Her funeral will take place at ten in the morning at the mosque in the cemetery.'

## Drégatén Azgar Lal

Garmágá wati murk mojéntagat o pa lahtén máhá laddhetag o dur shotagat. Zemestáná wati bánzol zemínay sará tálán kortagatant. Kaséá wati kóth cha poténkán kasshetagat, kaséá cháder o suthar.

Chákar, Nóróz, Pakir o Dád Ján modámién warhá Balóch Hánay hóthalay tahi némagá korsiy sará neshtagatant o syási o chágerdi jérhaháni sará gapp o trán kanagá atant.

“Hóthál! Chár cháh byár,” Dád Jáná dast kissagá bort o segréthay párkitth démá ér kort o gwasht.

“Zi mani démá myánostománi edárahéay rapórhé gwast ke may molk donyáay tahá bérózgáriá awali nambará ent,” Pakirá cha párkitthá segréthé kasshet, rók kort o gwasht.

“Buta kant. Chéá ke hamá ent ke é nókén sarkár átkag, molkay tahá gráni o bérózgári gész bayán ent,” Dád Jáná segréthay dutt bál dátant o gwasht.

“Párkitthá kammé é némagá kan, dutté gwátá dayán o poppé pólunga kanán,” Nóróz Dád Jánay némagá cháret o gwasht.

“Hamé gráni o bérózgáriay sawabá molkay tahá pendhók ham gész bayán ant. Molk gwashay dém pa kórchátéá rawán ent,” Pakirá gwasht.

“Pendhagay nám bad ent bale náni baz ent. Padá, molkay mazanwazirá ham gwashtag pendhag sharrén chizzé, háháháhá,” Dád Jáná thahk dayáná gwasht.

Hóthálá neshtagén á dega mardom esháni némagá chárágá laggetant.

“Ástá kand. Dráhén mardom mára chárágá ant,” Nóróz segréthay por thébalay sará chandetant o gwasht.

“Belli kandit, hóné géscha kant. Chónáhá edá kandagay móh báz kamma rásit,” Pakirá bechkandet o Nórózay némagá cháret o gwasht. Bárwáláyá cháh ér kortant o shot.

“Yár! Yakk wahdé butag má Balóchán pahr bastag ke may kawmay tahá pendhók nést. Annun may mardénán bell, janén ham pendhagá ant,” Chákará wati hámóshi prósh o gwasht.

“Na, eshán ke pandóli pashk gwará o pendhant, é Balóch naant, darkawm ant,” Dád Jáná segréth boná dawr dát o gwasht.

“É wa haw, Balóch naant bale maróchán Balóch janén ham eshán gendagá ant o pendhagá ant. Padá má wati janénáni gwashagá dam bortag ke wati dóchién godán pendhókán madayét. Angat má gendén, eshán Balóchi god gwará,” Chákará Dád Jánay passaw dát.

“Yár! Chizzé kanaga lóthit,” Nóróz hóthalay chárén némagán cháret o gwasht.

“Chizzé kanaga lóthit,” sayénán pajjiá gwasht.

“Haw yár! Wati ráj o chágerday wástá chizzé kanaga lóthit,” Nóróz gwasht.

“Del wa lóthit bale dasta narasit,” Dád Jáná dega segréthé kasshet, rók kort.

“Dád Ján! Má watá é chágerday sarpad o wánendahén mardoma gwashén, mára zéba nadant ke má delprósh bebén. Má belóthén, báz chizz korta kanén.” Nóróz gappá at ke Mási Shamsi kollán o tatarán hóthalay tahá potert, é némag o á némagá chárágá lagget. Esháni gendagá áiy chamm rozhná butant. Hamingor átk.

Mási Shamsi hamesháni métagá neshtagat. Janózámé at o chokki ham néstat. Másiá wati sarjamén zend pa chamdári gwázéntagat. Nun omray goddhi bahrá at.

“Mani chokkán! É kágad maná dáktará dáttag. Dawá geragi ant. Maná choshén zarré nést ke dawáyán gept bekanán. Hamé dawáyán gerét o bedayét. Alláh shomára esháni mozzá dant.”

Nóróz cha áiy dastá kágad zort o wánt. “Mási! É kágaday tóká tahná dawá naant, thesthi ham mán.”

“Mani chokk! Maná annun hamé dawáyáni zalurat ent ke mani tap sedagá naent o kollag...”

Cha Nórózay dastá kágad Chákará zort o wánt, gwashti: “Mási! É dawá báz ant, mára inchok zarr gón nést.”

“Á dega dawáyán agan zorta nakanét, hamé tap o kollagaygán bezurét ke bázén kollagá mani sáh porr bayagá naent.”

Chárénán yakdomiay némagá cháret o chamm jahl kortant. Chákará kágad Másiay némagá shahárt o gwasht: “Máp kan. Mára choshén zarré nést ke tai dawáyán begerén.”

Áiá pa náométi kágad zort o cha hóthalá dar at.

Másiay rawagá pad, á ham hámósh butant o cha hóthalá dar átk o wati lógán shotant.

Shapá wati ranj o gamay bazén cháder mán póshet o shot. Bámá, gón morgáni táhirbakshén tawará, darái kort.

Nóróz, Chákar, Dád Ján o Pakir wati gandaláni sará washwáb atant. Masitay lawdhán járéay tawár chest but. Járay tawará á cha wábá pach larzetant.

“Yakk ayláné gósh dárét. Mási Shamsi bérán butag. Sohbay dah bajá kabrestánay masitá áiy janázaha bit.”

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## دریگتین آزگر لال

گرماگا وتی مورک مُجینتگات و په لهتین ماها لَدَتگ و دور شُتگات. زمستانا وتی بانژل زمینے سَرا تالان کرتگاتنت. کسِیا وتی کوٹ چه پُئینکان کَشْتگات، کسِیا چادر و سوئَر.

چاکر، نۆرۆز، پکیر و داد جان مُدامیین وژا بلوچ هانے هۆتلے تھی نیمگا کُرسیے سرا نشتگاتنت و سیاسی و چاگردی جیژھانی سَرا گُپ و تران کنگا آنت.

“هۆتل! چار چاه بیار،” داد جانا دَسْت کیسگا بُرت و سگرئے پارکیٹ دِیما ایر کرت و گوشت.

“زی منی دِیما میان اُستمانی اِدارهئے رپۆرے گوشت که مئے مُلک دنیائے تها بیروژگاریا ائولی نمبرا انت،” پکیرا چه پارکیٹا سگرئے کَشْت، روک کرت و گوشت.

“بوت کنت. چیا که هما انت که اے نۆکین سرکار آتگ، مُلکے تها گُرانی و بیروژگاری گیش بیان انت،” داد جانا سگرئے دوٹ بال دانت و گوشت.

“پارکیٹا کَمے اے نیمگا کن، دوٹے گواتا دِیان و پُپے پۆلنگ کنان،” نۆرۆزا داد جائے نیمگا چارت و گوشت.

همے گُرانی و بیروژگاریے سئوبا مُلکے تها پندۆک هم گیش بیان انت. مُلک گوشتے دِیم په کورچاتیا رثوان انت،” پکیرا گوشت.

“پندۆکے نام بد انت بله نانی بز انت. پدا، مُلکے مَزَن و زیرا هم گوشتگ پندگ شَرین چیژے، هاهاهاهاه،” داد جانا تَهک دِیانا گوشت.

هۆتلا نشتگین آ دگه مُردم اِشانی نیمگا چارگا لگنت.

“آستا کند. ذُراهمین مُردم مارا چارگا انت،” نۆرۆزا سگرئے پُرتیبلے سَرا چنڈتنت و گوشت.

“بلی کندیت، هۆن گیش کنت. چوناها اِدا کندگے مژه باز کَم رَسیت،” پکیرا بچکندت و نۆرۆزے نیمگا چارت و گوشت. باروالایا چاه ایر کرتنت و شت.

“یار! یک وهده بوتگ ما بلوچان پهر بستگ که مئے کئومے تها پندۆک نیست. انون مئے مردینان بل، جنین هم پندگا انت،” چاکرا وتی هاموشی پروشت و گوشت.

“نه، اِشان که پندۆلی پشک گورا و پندنت، اے بلوچ نه انت، دَرکئوم انت،” داد جانا سگرئے بْنا دئور دات و گوشت.

“اے وه هئو، بلوچ نه انت بله مروچان بلوچ جنین هم اِشان گندگا انت و پندگا انت. پدا ما وتی جنینانی گوشگا دم بُرتگ که وتی دؤجیین گدان پندۆکان مدئیت. انگت ما گندین، اِشان بلوچی گد گورا،” چاکرا داد جائے پَسئو دات.

“یار! چیژے کنگ لوئیت،” نۆرۆزا هۆتلے چارین نیمگان چارت و گوشت.

“چیژے کنگ لوئیت،” سئیتان یَجیا گوشت.

“هئو یار! وتی راج و چاگردے واستا چیژے کنگ لوئیت،” نۆرۆزا گوشت.

“دل وه لوئیت بله دست رَسیت،” داد جانا دگه سگرئے کَشْت و روک کرت.

“داد جان! ما وتا اے چاگردے سرپد و واندهین مُردم گوشین، مارا زِیب نندت که ما دلپروش بیین. ما بلوئین، باز چیژ کرت کنین.” نۆرۆز گپا ات که ماسی شمسی کُلان و تتران هۆتلے تها پُرت، اے نیمگ و ا نیمگا چارگا لگت. اِشانی گندگا آییسه چَم رُژنا بوتنت. همینگر آتک.

ماسی شمسی همیشانی میتگا نشتگات. جنوزامے ات و چُکی هم نیستات. ماسیا وتی سرجمین زند په چمداری گوازیتنگات. نون امرے گدی بهرا ات.

”منی چُگان! اے کاگد منا داکترا داتگ. دثوا گرگی أنت. منا چُشین زَرے نیست کہ دثوایان گپت بکنان. ہمے دثوایان گریت و بدثییت. آلاه شُمارا اِشانی مُرا دنت.“

نوروزا چہ آییے دستا کاگد زُرت و وانت. ”ماسی! اے کاگدے توکا تھنا دثوا نہ انت، ٹسٹی ہم مان.“

”منی چُک! منا اتون ہمے دثوایانی زلورت انت کہ منی تپ سِدگا نہ انت و کُلگ“ ...

چہ نوروزے دستا کاگد چاکرا زُرت و وانت، گوشتی: ”ماسی! اے دثوا باز أنت، مارا اینچک زَر گون نیست.“

”آ دگہ دثوایان اگن زُرت نکیت، ہمے تپ و کُلگئیگان بزوریت کہ بازین کُلگا منی ساہ پُر بئیگا نہ انت.“

چارینان یکدومیے نیمگا چارت و چم جھل کرتنت. چاکرا کاگد ماسیے نیمگا شہارت و گوشت: ”ماپ کن. مارا چُشین زَرے نیست کہ تیبی دثوایان بگرین.“

آییا پہ نامیتی کاگد زُرت و چہ ہوتلا در آتک.

ماسیے رٹوگا پد آ ہم هاموش بوتنت و چہ ہوتلا در آتک و وتی لوگان شُتنت.

شیا وتی رنج و گمے بزین چادر مان پوشت و شت. باما، گون مرگانی تاهیر بکشین تھوارا، درابی کرت.

نوروز، چاکر، داد جان و پکیر وتی گندلانی سرا وشواب آتنت. مسیئے لٹوڈان جارئے تھوار چست بوت. جارئے تھوارا آ چہ واپا پچ لرتنت.

”یک ایلانے گوش داریت. ماسی شُمسی بیران بوتگ. سُهے دہ بجا کبرستانے مسیتا آییے جنازہ بیت.“