

MEIN ONKEL, DEN DER WIND MITNAHM

My Uncle Jamshid Khan



Mein
Onkel,
den der Wind
mitnahm

Author: Bachtyar Ali

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A weightless, touching, and also tragic story about getting lost, starting over and the question of where we are actually heading. Ali's style connects magic realism with a brave description of the contemporary Kurdish society, confirming himself as one of the greatest writers in his generation.

Jamshid Khan, imprisoned by the Ba'ath regime, has become thin behind thick prison walls. He lost so much weight he became as light as a feather, so that one day a gust of wind catches him and carries him away, beyond the walls of the prison and out into the wide world. Time after time he is blown away, and every time he begins a new life. In the army, as a ghost, as a prophet, as a lover, as a flying attraction – countless winds carry the man away until he himself no longer knows who he once was and where he belongs. Only his nephew Salar is looking for him, and for something that will return his uncle to his roots. After flying to many different countries and living several different lives, the uncle (*He Who Has Always Been Taken by the Wind*, as stated in the subheading, finds himself back home in Kurdistan, pushing the reader to reflect on the difficulties of a life under a regime and our relationship with our family and our homes, lives and wishes.

«Each of us carries within him or herself a Jamshid part and a Salar part. One part of us flies, the other part sticks to the ground because we lack the courage to move.»

Bachtyar Ali in an interview with Gerwig Epkes

Bachtyar Ali was born in Sulaymaniyah in Iraqi Kurdistan in 1966. He has established himself as an influential novelist since the mid-1990s. His books have become instant bestsellers in both Iraq and Iran. In 2009 Ali received the first HARDI Literature Prize, awarded by the largest cultural festival in the Kurdish part of Iraq. 2014 he was awarded the newly-founded Sherko Bekas Literature Prize and 2017 the prestigious Nelly-Sachs-Prize. Today, Ali is one of the most famous contemporary Kurdish writers. He has been living in Cologne since 1998.