

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

The American Dream

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1.

Mama, I'm leaving Afghanistan. Mama, please don't cry. In America I'll be so happy! In America I'll be free!

Mama, we've walked too many valleys, and climbed so many peaks. My spirit's been lost in the cracks of this land and there's nothing new at the end.

My feet are so bored, Mama, in these old, flat leather shoes. They want to run in Nikes, along the straight flat roads of America.

I am leaving my burqa, Mama, and will change into jeans on the plane. When I get to U.S. I want long plastic nails, a different shade on each finger. Then I'll drive with a boy and the wind in my hair in a fancy car across America, Mama.

But Mama hollers a warrier cry. 'It's not all as it seems!' Through her mesh I see she's crying. 'It's really just a dream. Here in your tribe, we have danced and laughed for thousands and thousands of years. We have wiggled and spun through the valleys and peaks. We have sung with a love never-ending.'

Wish me luck,' I say to her, my eyes towards the door. So he glides like a ghost from the shadows, briefly flitting between her world and mine.

2.

Mama, I'm back for America. Mama, please don't cry! There was nothing new at the end, Mama. In America I wasn't free.

Take me down to the river, to bathe my blistered feet. They're sore from endless walking, along the straight flat roads of America.

I learned the law, Mama, and it was strict like it is here. To change it was impossible. No one changes the law in America.

I miss our walks in the valleys and our climbs over snow-capped peaks. I lost my spirit in the cracks of this land and have come home to find it again, Mama.