• The country is quite covered by darkness, so that people outside it cannot see anything in it; and no one dares go in for fear of the darkness.

• Nevertheless men who live in the country round about say that they can sometimes hear the voices of men and horses neighing, and cocks crowing, and thereby some kind of folks live there, but they do not know what kind of folk they are.
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
In the Hotel
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
View from the Roof Top
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
View from the Car
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
View from the Car
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
View from the Car
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
View from the Car
Afghanistan
October/November 2006
Kabul
View from the Car
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
View from the Car
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul
View from the Car
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kabul Airport
Waiting for the Plane
• Heraut...stands in a fertile plain, which is watered by a river crowded with villages and covered with fields of corn. The inhabitants of the country around Heraut are for the most part Tajiks...a mild, sober, industrious people.

Mountstuart Elphinstone
• Genghis Khan laid waste to Herat in the 1220s and legend has it that the only people to survive were the 6 hiding in the Blue Mosque

• Built in 1200 on the sight of a 10th century mosque
• In the north of Herat stand 4 tall minarets at the corners of what was a madrassa inspired by Queen Gaward Shad, build shortly after she was poisoned at the age of 80 in 1457.

• In a country where the average lifespan today is 43 years, 80 remains an impressive age to achieve.

• The minarets are 300 ft tall but in sad repair.
Afghanistan
October/November 2006
Afghanistan
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Herat
at the sunset
Citadel of Herat
Built in the 7th-13th
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Kite Runner
Foundations: Alexander the Great, 4th BC
Arg of Herat
Restored: Timurids, 9th-15th
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Gudiparan Bazi – kite flying
Gudiparan – flying doll
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Citadel of Herat
Entrance to the Harem

2/15/2008
Citadel of Herat
Frescoes in the Bath

Side Wall

Ceiling
Afghanistan
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Citadel of Herat
Sauna

M.E. Rep

C.E. Rep
Holding for Dear Life
Citadel of Herat
180°
Musalla & Mausoleum
Citadel of Herat
Built in the 7th-13th
Remains of Old Citadel
As seen from the New Citadel
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Musalla
Demolished to clear the field for Artillery
Afghanistan
October/November 2006

Begum’s Mausoleum
Gowhar Shad Begum
Afghanistan

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Begum's Mausoleum

'Happy Pearl'
On the Takht
Chai only
Saturday Night in Herat
In front of the Hotel
The Famous Blue Glass of Herat

Candle Holders

Lady's Coal Jar

- Glass is still being made as in ancient times with nothing more than fire and water and a blowing tube
- Glass may be purchased at a store located on the north side of the Masjid-i-Jami’ where the glass blowers work and ply their trade
Ghazi, High School (Kabul)
Saleh’s High School
Old Friends
Lapis Lazuli – Stone of Friendship & Truth

• ‘lapis’ – Latin for stone
• ‘azul’ – Arabic for color blue
• The best rough stones are still mined in the Hindukush Mountains of Afghanistan
• Worshipped as a holy stone
• Finely distributed crystals resembling glimmer, from golden Pyrite, will increase the value of the gemstone
• Introduced to EU by Alexander the Great, the color was called ‘ultramarine’ – ‘from beyond the seas’
Weaving & Shopping

- **Afghan weavers**
  - Very good quality comes from: Herat, Daulatabad and Kunduz
  - Descendants of Turkoman types
  - Colors are usually red with ivory, black, and (sometimes) orange or green accents
  - Designs often employ rows of *guls* or small medallions

- **Balouch weavers**
  - Very good quality comes from near Herat
  - Usually somber and dark in appearance
  - Geometric designs with highly abstract floral patterns
  - Many prayer rugs are woven

- Attacking a pile of rugs in the Herat bazaar
- The most interesting rug is always on the bottom
Koh-i-Noor, Mountain of Light

- Given to Ahmed Shah Durrani, the founder of modern Afghanistan
- Ahmed Shah kept it in his capital at Kandahar as the central symbol of Afghanistan’s independence from Persia
- His grandson then carried it to exile in India, and gave it to the Sikh ruler of the Punjab

Whoever owned it would rule the world, provided it was worn by a woman.
Mountain of Delish Rice

- 1 lb basmati rice
- 6 tbs vegetable oil
- 2 medium onions
- 1 ½ – 2 lbs lamb on the bone or 1 chicken jointed
- salt & pepper
- 2 large carrots
- 2 oz black seedless raisins
- 2 tsp char masala or cumin
- ¼ tsp saffron (optional)
Grapes of Herat

- Heratis talk about 72-76 varieties of grapes in the valley, but there are 35 specific types.
- The way the grape vines are cultivated in Herat is unique by itself, and this method is not used anywhere else in the world.
- Instead of trimming the plant to a small size in a plain land which is common anywhere, in Herat the plant is allowed to grow as long as 5 to 10 m on a slope.
- The reason is due to the wind and other climatic and environmental factors unique to the Herat valley.
- Commercially, they may not be so lucrative; since they are so delicate, the grapes get spoiled in less than 48 hours.
The Numbers

- Written from the right to left as follow:
Dari Alphabet

Dari alphabet
الفبـاي درـي
ا ب پ ت ث ج ح ح
خد ذ ر ز س ش ص
ض ط ط ع غ ف ف
ق ك ك ل م ن و ه ی

Afghanistan
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32 letters
Next Chapter is yet to be Written

Special Thanks to
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