

FERESHTEH AHMADI

Writer . literary Critic . Editor

Fereshteh Ahmadi was born in Kerman in 1972. She graduated from Tehran University College of Fine Arts in 1999 with a degree in Architecture. For years she was active in the two fields of architecture and writing, until she finally put architecture aside to devote herself full-time to several writing. Her first published story was a children's work published in 2003 entitled "**Nameless**". Her collection consisting of twelve short stories entitled **Everybody's Sara** was published in 2004. The two novels entitled **The Forgetful Angel** and **The Cheese Jungle** were published consecutively in 2007 and 2008, and established her place in Iranian literary society. She added another collection of short stories to her list of literary works, entitled **Domestic Monsters** published in 2016 subsequent to **Heatstroke**.

In the past twenty years, Fereshteh Ahmadi has come to be known as a literary critic, as her articles and critiques have appeared in various publications. She has been on the literary prize jury for three years for the **Golshiri Award**, six years for the **Once Upon a Time Award**, and three years for the **Bahram Sadeghi Short Stories Award**.



Domestic Monsters | 8 Short Stories Collection

Fereshteh Ahmadi | Sāless Publication | 2016

1. SUMMER GHOSTS

It is narrated by a woman who returns to her hometown to join a gathering of 1500 ex-residents of a town that was left deserted after an earthquake. The regional TV channel shows their happy celebration but the narrator tells the story behind the scenes: the loss of youth, childhood loves, and...

2. HARRY IS ALWAYS LOST

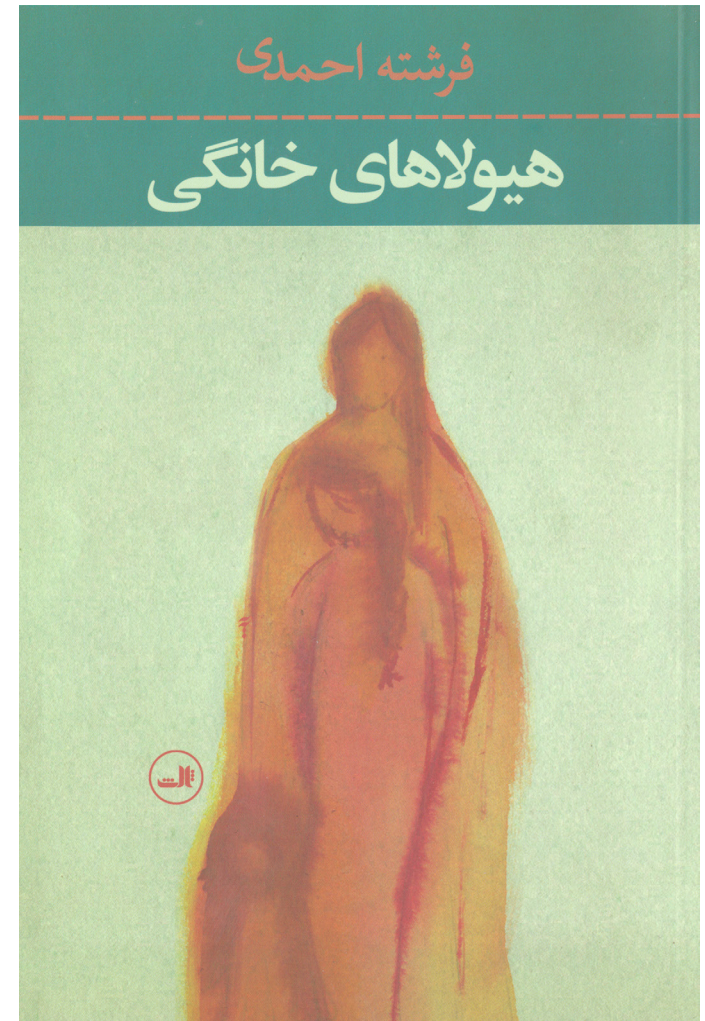
'Harry always gets lost' traces the process of becoming detached from an emotional relationship. A relationship which in its early stages only reveals beauty, over time is unsettled by the seemingly unimportant details.

3. LEGENDARY HORSE WHISPERER

'The Legendary Guardian of Horses' shows the different characters of two friends: one is pragmatic, active, influential, and determined to change the world, whilst the other only observes, preferring to keep a distance from the course of things so he can fantasize about them.

4. THE BLINDS

'The Blinds' is a story of a woman who tries to give meaning to her life and makes it look simple by telling a simple story using simple line drawings like



a Shel Silverstein story. However encountering reality, the story loses its function.

5. BEGRUDGING OUR OF RESPONSIBILITY

'begrudging our of Responsibility' is a story of an old lost love. In all the years since what was just a short relationship, the narrator has been thinking of this relationship and waiting for an opportunity to call her ex-lover and tell him that years previously she had lied about something. Now that it is time to call, as she reflects back on the story herself, she is angry at herself for having pretended to be indifferent about something that had obviously become so important.

6. EXAMINING LIFE BY THE CANNES RIVER

'Examining Life by the Cannes River' is the story of a group of young people who based on a psychological test try to get to know themselves but opposite to the test's anticipations, their actions proves to be unexpected...

7. WETLANDS

'Wetlands' is a story of a city that nurtures madness. The narrator talks about a few of the mad people around their neighbourhood and then focuses on one who according to the local kids has pretended to be mad to escape the military service.

8. DOMESTIC MONSTERS

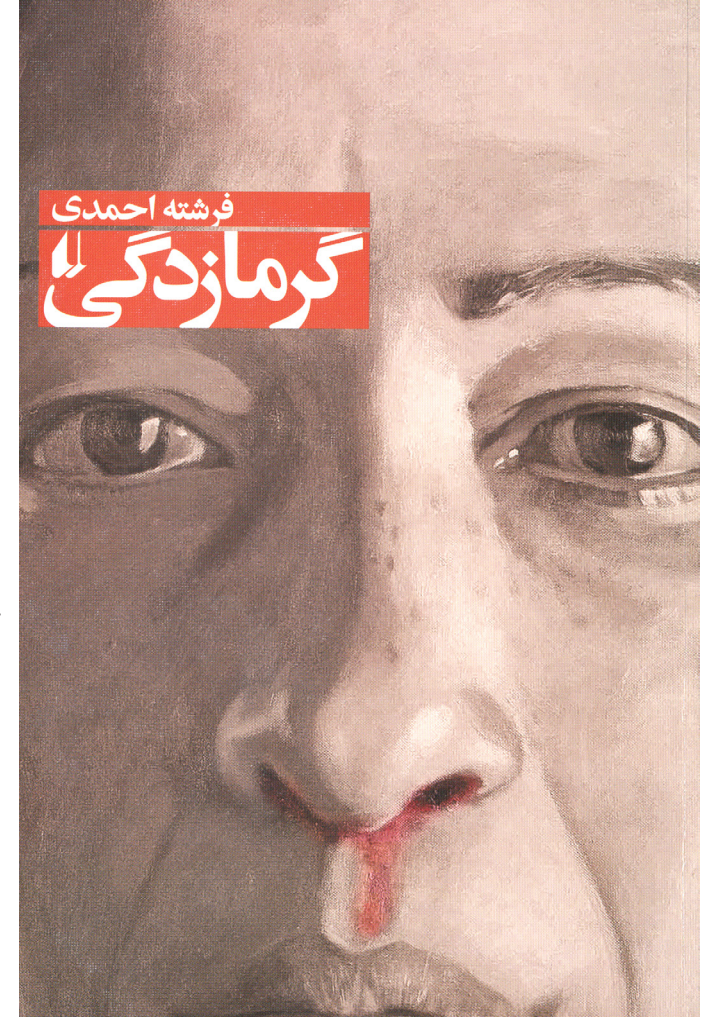
'Domestic Monsters' is a long letter from a niece to her aunt who by remembering the past and their memories together tries to free herself from the weight of the past. It is now exactly two months since all those things that, for years, I had tried to relegate to the closets of my mind and forget, have resurfaced again. This time I decided to be brave and enter the mire whose stench is bugging me, plunge my arm into its mud, find the plughole and hopefully let the stagnant waters sink into the bowels of the earth. I thought that, over time, the heat of the sun would evaporate them but now, that I am knee deep trying to find the plughole, I see that time has only made the stench worse. I set aside the meaningless, sweeping statements. Let me begin at the beginning: . . .

1. NO HEAD ON HER SHOULDERS

A girl finds in an orchard in their neighborhood a white marble statue with no head and no legs below the knee. It is the statue of a beautiful female body that has perhaps been thrown away for its nudity. She shows the statue to a boy with a special interest in strange statutes and they agree that he will take the statue away with his car at an appropriate time. Days pass one after another but the boy does nothing. The girl considers different ways of taking the statue to the boy and surprising him, but one day she realizes that the statute is missing. She is worried; what if the boy asks about the statue? She wants to forget all about it but she can't.

2. SQUATTER NEST

The narrator is watching a film of a visit to her childhood hometown together with her mother. When preparing to see the film, she recalls memories of that home most of which are related to her deceased father. He was the driver of a mechanical digger called squatter and mother says he used to dig pits in certain places. She has filmed the pit and wants to persuade her mother to take a look at the town after so many years, but the film disappoints her. The pit is too petty like a pit in a carious tooth – all that is remaining from twenty years of her father's drudgery.



3. SIMPLE CLERK

The employee's only charge is to compose contract letters, yet he complains that all he does is imitate his superiors and is treated like a doormat. In his last letter, he decides to write in pompous prose a letter based on what he considers to be right regardless of the boss's instructions. As he completes the letter he starts for home with an ebullient feeling, but halfway he loses all his self-esteem and rushes back to replace it with a letter according to the will of the boss.

4. BLIND SPOT

A night watchman at a hospital asks his manager to take some tools from the large warehouse over a hill to furnish his cozy rented house. The warehouse keeper lets him in and shows the beds, chairs and tables, but warns him not to touch the items on the wooden carpet; as his brother needs them. The night watchman decides to pick those things, too.

5. CORRECTION TABLE

Adele Z. has made her mind to change society as much as she can, and in order to make a model of herself for the forthcoming generation, she keeps track of the changes she makes in a table of records. But the more she tries, the more disappointed she becomes and finally she decides to satisfy herself with minor changes of a more limited kind. As time moves on, she limits her area of correction further and further until she has to take refuge in the fridge, the only clean and white spot of the house.

6. HEATSTROKE

A woman is so absorbed in playing the computer game Life – virtually purchasing houses, studying, getting married and pregnant – that she feels like her life is being played in fast-forward. Fear of losing the game and losing everything in her virtual life intensifies until a power cut occurs, the PC unexpectedly shuts down, and she feels finally released.

CHEESE JUNGLE | A Novel

Fereshteh Ahmadi | Qoqnoos Publication | 2009

CHEESE JUNGLE

To discover the real cause of her father's death, a girl embarks on a journey back to her hometown where she had been raised. During the journey she retells her memories of the town and its inhabitants, mostly mine workers, and realizes that hometown life has a deep and lasting effect on its inhabitants by turning them into cold, intrinsic, misanthropic or perhaps heartless persons. The next chapters trace the girl's life in Tehran, who is now a passionate young and energetic figure by appearance, but there is still a bitter coldness in her manners.

Before the journey, the girl visits a dervish to gain mental peace and balance. The journey unlocks the mystery of his father's job and why he was killed.

The following chapters respectively portray the main character's life traveling and in Tehran, her mind usually engaged with the question of whether she needs to see the dervish again. In the last chapter we find her in a train travelling again, while in a former chapter she was portrayed on the same train returning home. In a surreal scene the two trains pass each other on the railway and the girl can see herself sitting in the other train, at the threshold of a new beginning.



FORGETFUL ANGEL | A Novel

Fereshteh Ahmadi | Qoqnoos Publication | 2009

FORGETFUL ANGEL

A girl has a dual life on days and nights. In her dreams she is in love with a man, and they have free and enlivening conversations about interesting things like music. But every day she has to deal with her obsessive mother who is never herself and often masks her intentions according to the kind of person she is facing. In order to get rid of her troubled life, the narrator gets married to actualize her dreams.

In the second chapter we find the narrator as an active and sociable character. As we approach the end of the novel, the mother unmask herself and begins to speak up about her fears and anxieties mostly caused by her daughter. A new personality of her emerges quite the contrary to what the girl had envisioned. After the death of the mother, the couple move to her old house and try to start a new normal life but the narrator's last words reveal her unquenched thirst for forgetting the past.



EVERYBODY'S SARA | 11 Short Stories Collection

Fereshteh Ahmadi | Qoqnoos Publication | 2004

1. HALEH

A woman in raincoat and high heel boots is wandering in the street, infatuated with the reflection of her image on shop windows, wondering what others would see her and how she should walk or speak to beautifully impress other people. At the end of the day she goes back home, tired and overwhelmed by a man's remark on a dark street, only to find her reflection in the elevator's mirror far from what she had always desired to be.

2. MONSTER

After she sees bloodstains on bed sheets and her mother's disdainful reaction, Shahrzad goes back in time through few episodes. In each episode a slice of her life and moments of humiliation are shown and every time she is humiliated, we find her younger and smaller until she goes back to her mother's womb.

3. ARASH

A girl wishes his humpback brother were dead. Arash dies and now she is spending unbearable moments of heavy conscience as she thinks her wish has caused her brother's death. She begins to identify with her brother and his world and finally feels that she has become him.



4. EDIT

Having seen family pictures of her friend in a beautiful frame on their wall, the narrator desperately attempts to gather scattered family members to take a family photograph. An attempt which fails and she finally photoshops their personal pictures to make a family photo.

5. WHITE

The story is narrated by Arash, the humpback boy of the story of “Arash”. Mother has often blamed him for her Progeria and wrecked life. Arash whitens his hair and face with a can of white paint to look like his dead Father and white-haired mother.

6. TELEVISION

A man is sitting still on the sofa staring at the television and ignoring his wife’s word. To communicate with him, the woman suggests a new game: first, the man should speak of his dreams and problems, and then it would be the woman’s turn. During the game, the man recalls his lifelong desire to set up a studio and do painting. He suddenly leaves the game to see if the basement is a suitable place for that, and again, the woman cannot talk to him.

7. ZIBA

While opening an envelope sent to her husband without his permission, she recalls her teen years, her affection for a girl called Ziba, her stealthy reading of love letters sent to the neighbor girl, and now she has always liked to read or write a love letter.

8. THE GAME

A seven-year-old girl finds various images of herself in certain spots of a concaved mirror. She talks to these characters in the mirror and they inform the girl of the secrets of her life, the absence of her father and her birth as an unwanted child.

9. DARK BRIGHT

A man with a very suspicious mind is doubtful about his wife. Every sentence ignites a new doubt; he remembers his childhood when he had the same suspicion about his brother and his mother's response only added to his doubts. The man is all alone in doubt, while every faith he had struggled to keep begins to fade as well.

10. FORBIDDEN

A girl has locked up herself in her room in fear of the family's reaction to a forbidden deed. To find peace of mind, she thinks about a hundred years later, when she is dead and her grandchildren sit by her tombstone listening to the story of their unruly granny.

11. EVERYBODY'S SARAH

A woman named Sarah is dating a married man. She is tender, kind and quiet and seems to have stepped out of heaven in the man's life. His wife, Shahrzad, is the opposite: hysteric, impatient and sensitive. Sarah and Shahrzad agree to keep up this double life, whereas the man is unsatisfied and decides to dump Sarah. Shahrzad insists on the double game as she enjoys playing both roles of wife and mistress to defeat the boredom of their life.