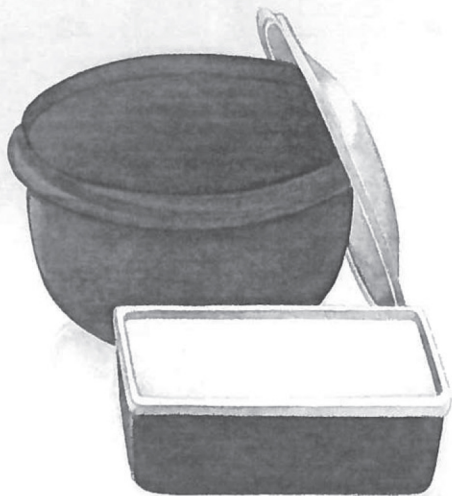


**zarf**

**(containers)**

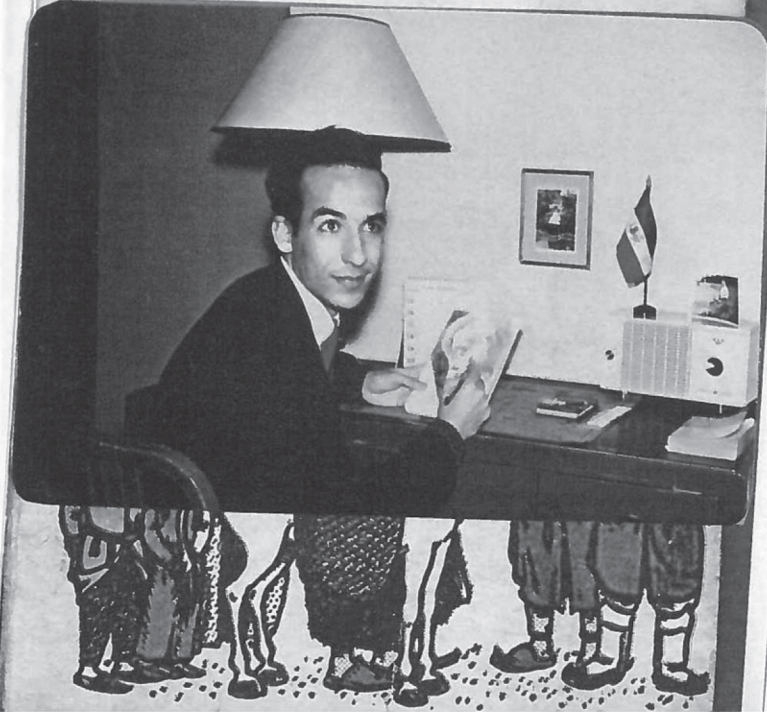
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ظرف

Once the Mullab

ملا نصر الد آیب







*Persian enamel cigarette case ca. 1950's*



## Too Heavy

ONCE the Mullah rode his little donkey to the vegetable bazaar. His own garden did not grow every kind of vegetable that Fatima wanted for her stew. The market was colourful with its piles of purple egg plant, green cabbages, and yellow melons. It was fun bargaining with the farmers who were his good friends. Before he knew it, the Mullah had bought more than Fatima had ordered. The vegetables stretched the bag he had brought. He loaded the heavy beets and melons in the bottom, the medium-weight egg plant and cabbage in the middle, and the tender herbs on top. He stooped under the weight of the bag as he dragged it towards his sleepy donkey. For a minute he stood beside the donkey, looking at her and thinking.

She braced her small feet, expecting him to load the saddle-bags as usual. Instead he whispered into her long twitching ears, 'How tiny you are!' Then he climbed on the donkey's back, holding the bag of vegetables out at arm's length. He sat, as he often did, facing backwards to be polite to the friends he was leaving behind in the bazaar. He clucked to the donkey and started jogging through the village streets towards home. His legs swung

loosely at the donkey's side. He held the vegetables stiffly at arm's length, first with one hand, then with the other, and then with both. He rode so awkwardly that women peered at him from behind their chuddars and boys laughed heartily.

His pupil Shoja the baker's son stared at him.

'Why are you carrying your bag that way?' he asked.

'Why don't you put your vegetables in the donkey's saddle-bags where they belong?'

'Ohno!' the Mullah hurried to reply. 'These vegetables are heavy, and my donkey is small. It would be too much of a load for the donkey to carry the bag and me too. So I carry the vegetables, and the donkey carries me.'

Shoja stood scratching his head, trying to understand, while the Mullah rode on towards home, holding his bag of vegetables out at arm's length, and feeling very happy that he could save his good donkey the extra burden.





Parviz  
(dad)

zâ

zarf  
(containers)

'azim  
(enormous)

Hâfez  
(a famous Persian poet)

hefâz  
(fence)

READING

THE

MIGRATION

LIBRARY

2017

**zarf (containers)**  
by Jasmine Valandi

Reading the Migration Library is a publication project by Vancouver-based artist, Lois Klassen. It encourages public circulation of migration stories.

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"The secret of preparing eggplant well and preserving its delicate flavor lies in the removing of its bitterness, as the following recipe will illustrate."

tender. Meanwhile, put the yogurt in a double boiler and add egg and seasoning. Add meat and the beans to the yogurt mixture. Cook in a double boiler on a low fire for about 20 minutes, stirring constantly to prevent yogurt from curdling. Serve over chelo. *Makes 4-6 servings.*



## *Khoreshe Bademjan*

### *Eggplant Sauce*

When I first came to the United States I was very surprised to learn that people knew very little about the very delicate vegetable, eggplant. If they had eaten it, it had been dipped in batter and fried, and those who had eaten eggplants prepared this way claimed that they didn't care much for it. And no wonder! There are many ways of preparing eggplant, and the Persian housewife knows how to prepare it in at least a hundred different ways.

I love eggplants, and you will be amazed to know how many of my friends I have taught to appreciate this delicious vegetable. In order to compile this book, as I have already mentioned, I tested all the recipes with my American friends, giving parties, inviting my American friends to dinners, or preparing meals at their homes whenever there was an opportunity to do so. A couple of times I prepared dinner for a

group of eight Harvard bachelors residing in Washington, D.C. They came from eight different states and some of them had never heard of eggplants or, if they had, they had eaten only fried eggplants. On one occasion I prepared Khoreshe Bâdemjân for them. When I described the ingredients that went into this sauce, they looked aghast and couldn't believe that it could taste good, but since they had previously tasted some of my cooking, they let me cook this sauce for them. I will never forget their astonishment when they tasted chelo and Khoreshe Bâdemjân. In a very short time the dishes were cleaned and not a morsel was left.

The secret of preparing eggplant well and preserving its delicate flavor lies in the removing of its bitterness, as the following recipe will illustrate.

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 2 medium eggplants                            | 1/2 tsp. pepper           |
| 2 tbs. salt                                   | 1/4 tsp. nutmeg           |
| 2 tbs. butter                                 | 6 tbs. shortening         |
| 1 lb. stew beef or round beef cut in 1" cubes | 1 1/4 cups tomato sauce   |
| 1 medium onion (finely chopped)               | 1 3/4 cups water          |
| 1 tsp. salt                                   | 3-4 tbs. lemon juice      |
| 1/2 tsp. cinnamon                             | 1 large tomato (optional) |

Cut the peeled eggplants lengthwise into 1" slices. Wash, sprinkle with salt, and let stand for about 20 minutes. (This takes away the bitterness of the eggplants.) Melt the butter in a 3-quart saucepan. Add meat, onions, and seasoning and sauté. Add tomato sauce, water, and lemon juice to the meat and let simmer for about 1 hour on a low fire. Wash the salt off the eggplants and dry them with a paper towel. Melt the shortening and sauté the eggplants separately. 45 minutes before serving, add the eggplants and quartered tomatoes to the meat and let simmer. Serve this sauce over chelo. This recipe can be made without the tomato sauce and tomatoes. Just increase the amount of water and lemon juice. You can substitute chicken for meat. It is very delicious with chicken, and chicken cooked in such a sauce acquires a very delicate flavor.

*Makes 5-6 servings.*





O HEAVY

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THE GALLERY CASE CA. 1950's