


December 2001



I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975. I remember the precise moment, crouching behind a crumbling mud wall, peeking into the alley near the frozen creek. That was a long time ago, but it's wrong what they say about the past. I've learned, about how you can bury it. Because the past claws its way out. Looking back now, I realize I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years.

One day last summer, my friend Rahim Khan called from Pakistan. He asked me to come see him. Standing in the kitchen with the receiver to my ear, I knew it wasn't just Rahim Khan on the line. It was my past, of unatoned sins. After I hung up, I went for a walk along Spreckels Lake on the northern edge of Golden Gate Park. The early-afternoon sun sparkled on the water where dozens of miniature boats sailed, propelled by a light breeze. Then I glanced up and saw a pair of kites, red with long blue tails, soaring in the sky. They danced high above the trees on the west end of the park, over the windmills, floating side by side like a pair of eyes looking down on San Francisco, the city I now call home. And suddenly Hassan's voice whispered in my head.

For once, a thousand times over, Hassan the hare-lipped kite runner.

I sat on a park bench near a willow tree. I thought about something Rahim Khan said just before he hung up, almost as an afterthought. *There is a way to be good again.* I looked up at those two kites, I thought about Hassan. I thought about Baba. Ali. Kabul. I thought about the life I had lived until the winter of 1975 came and changed everything. And made me what I am today.



December 2001

I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975. I remember the precise moment, crouching behind a crumbling mud wall, peeking into the alley near the frozen creek. That was a long time ago, but it's wrong what they say about the past, I've learned, about how you can bury it. Because the past claws its way out. Looking back now, I realize I have been peeking into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years.

One day last summer, my friend Rahim Khan called from Pakistan. He asked me to come see him. Standing in the kitchen with the receiver to my ear, I knew it wasn't just Rahim Khan on the line. It was my past of unatoned sins. After I hung up, I went for a walk along Spreckels Lake on the northern edge of Golden Gate Park. The early-afternoon sun sparkled on the water where dozens of miniature boats sailed, propelled by a crisp breeze. Then I glanced up and saw a pair of kites, red with long blue tails, soaring in the sky. They danced high above the trees on the west end of the park, over the windmills, floating side by side like a pair of eyes looking down on San Francisco, the city I now call home. And suddenly Hassan's voice whispered in my head: *For you, a thousand times over.* Hassan the barefooted kite runner.

I sat on a park bench near a willow tree. I thought about something Rahim Khan said just before he hung up, almost as an afterthought. *There is a way to be good again.* I looked up at those twin kites. I thought about Hassan. I thought about Baba. Ali. Kabul. I thought of the life I had lived until the winter of 1975 came and changed everything. And made me what I am today.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] today [REDACTED]

I remember [REDACTED] crumbling and wall, peaking into the
[REDACTED] near the frozen creek. That [REDACTED] but it's wrong [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Because [REDACTED] its way out. Looking back now, I
realize [REDACTED]

Hassan

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was [REDACTED]

on the [REDACTED] edge [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Then I glanced up and saw [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the trees [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] like a pair of eyes [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] And suddenly [REDACTED] in my head:

[REDACTED]

Amir

[REDACTED] I thought [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There is a way to be good again. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I thought of the life I had

[REDACTED] and changed everything. [REDACTED]

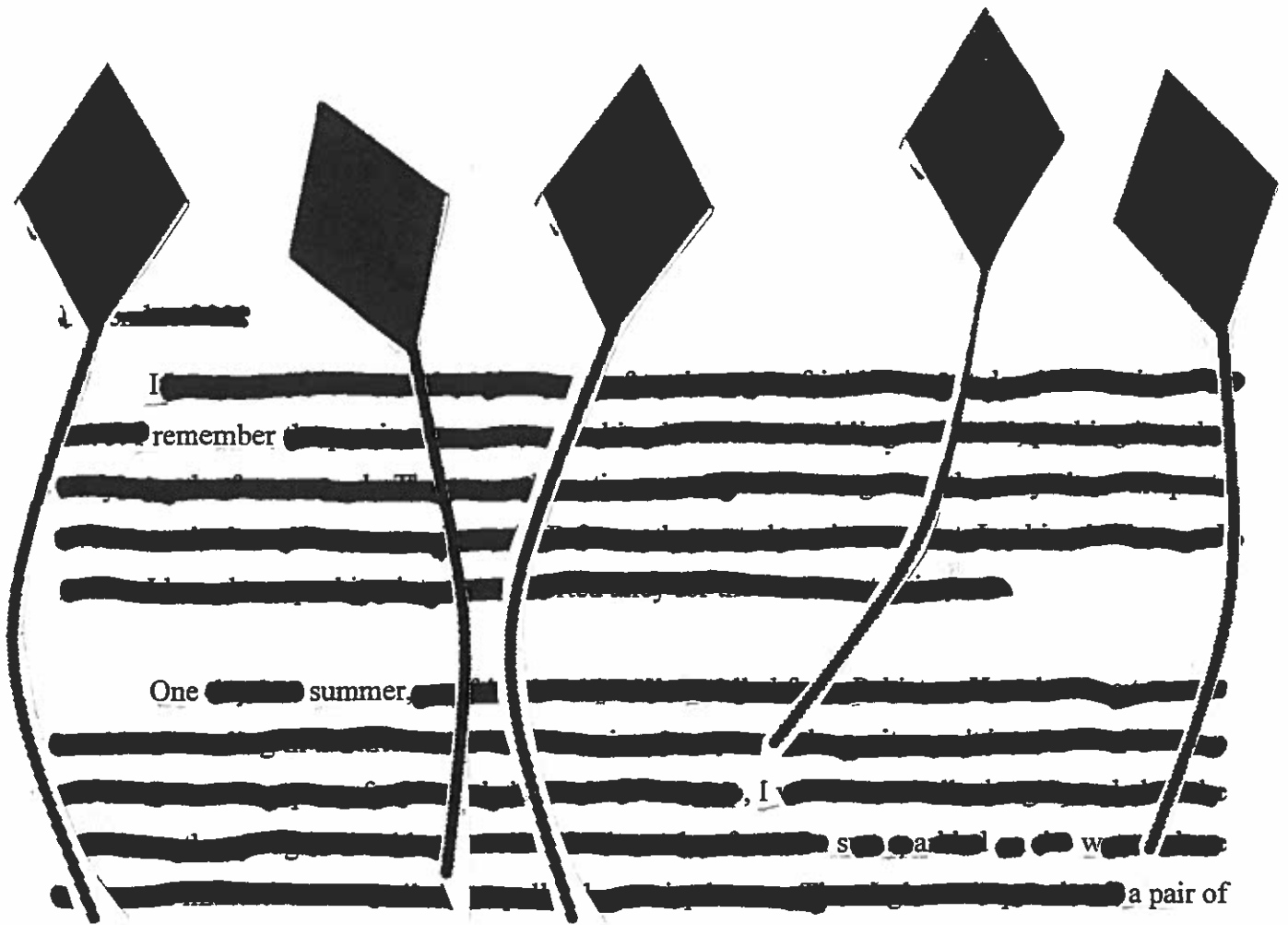
Kite
Runner



I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975. I remember the precise moment, crouching behind a crumbling mud wall, peering into the alley near the frozen creek. That was a long time ago, but it's wrong what they say about the past. I've learned about how you can bury it because the sea blows it from you. Looking back now, I realize I have been peering into that deserted alley for the last twenty-six years.

One day last summer my friend Hassan came to see me. Standing in the kitchen with the receiver to his ear, I knew it wasn't just Rahim Khan on the line. It was my past of unmonitored sins. After I hung up, I went for a walk along San Francisco's Lake on the northern edge of Golden Gate Park. The early afternoon sun sparkled on the water where dozens of miniature boats sailed, propelled by a stiff breeze. Then I glanced up and saw a pair of kites, red with long blue tails, soaring in the sky. They danced high above the trees on the west end of the park, over the windmills, looking side by side like a pair of eyes looking down on San Francisco, the city I now call home. And suddenly Hassan's voice whispered in my mind: *For you, a thousand times over.* Hassan, the bare-lipped Khe runner.

I went to a park bench near the lake, and I thought about something Rahim Khan said just before he hung up the other afternoon: *a way to be good again.* I looked up at the twin kites, I thought about Hassan. I thought about Baba Ali, Kabul. I thought about the life I had lived since the winter of 1975 came in like a heavy storm. And I became the what I am today.



I

remember

One summer,

I

saw a pair of

kites, soaring in the sky, danced high above

, floating side by side, looking down on

, the city I call home.

I sat on a park bench. I thought about

the life I had

lived until the winter of 1975



I became [REDACTED] a frigid [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[illegible]

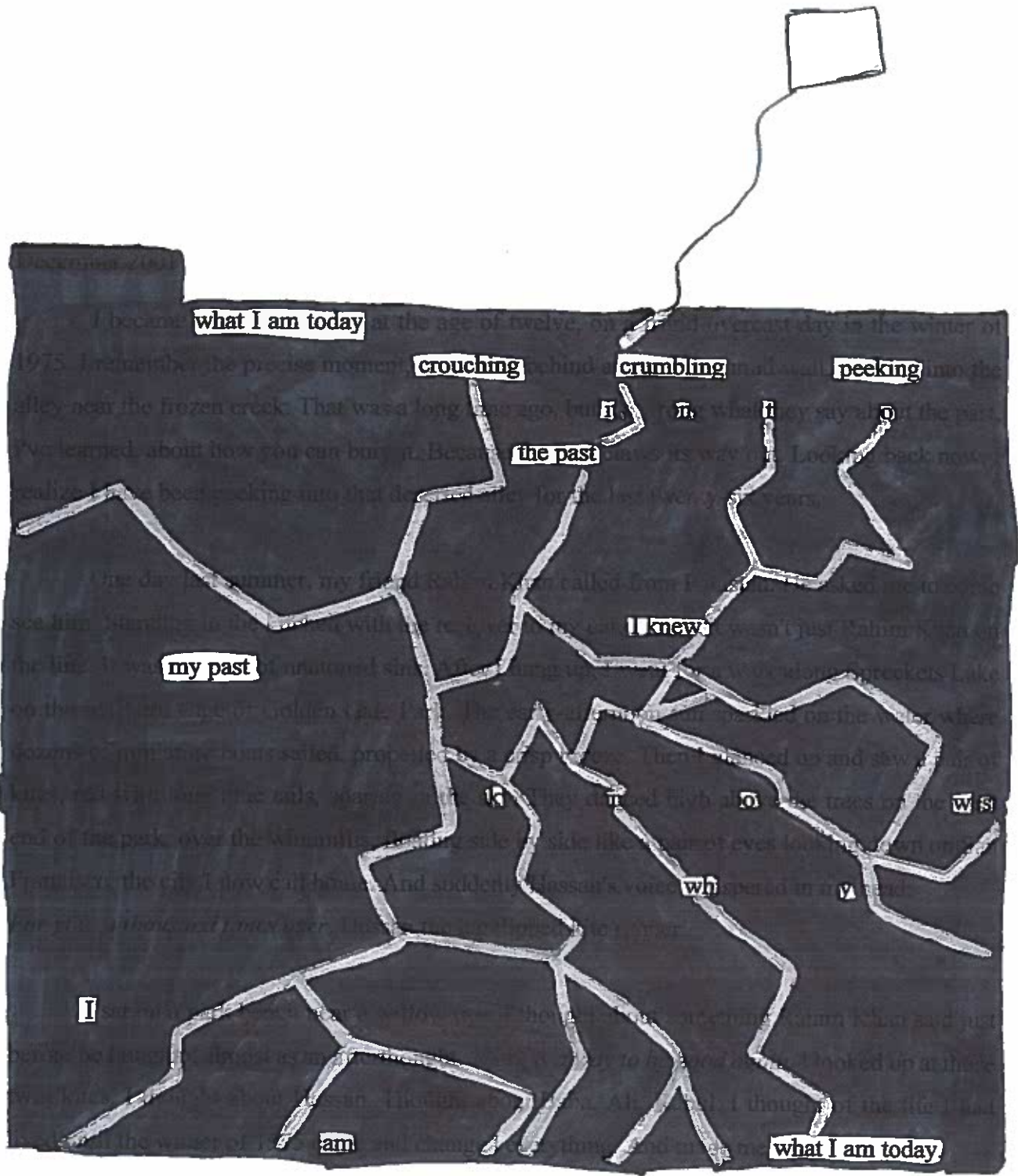
For you, _____

There is a way to be good again.

the life I had

changed everything. And made me what I am today.

_____ the life I had
_____ changed everything. And made me what I am today.



what I am today

crouching

crumbling

peeking

the past

I knew

my past

I

am

what I am today

