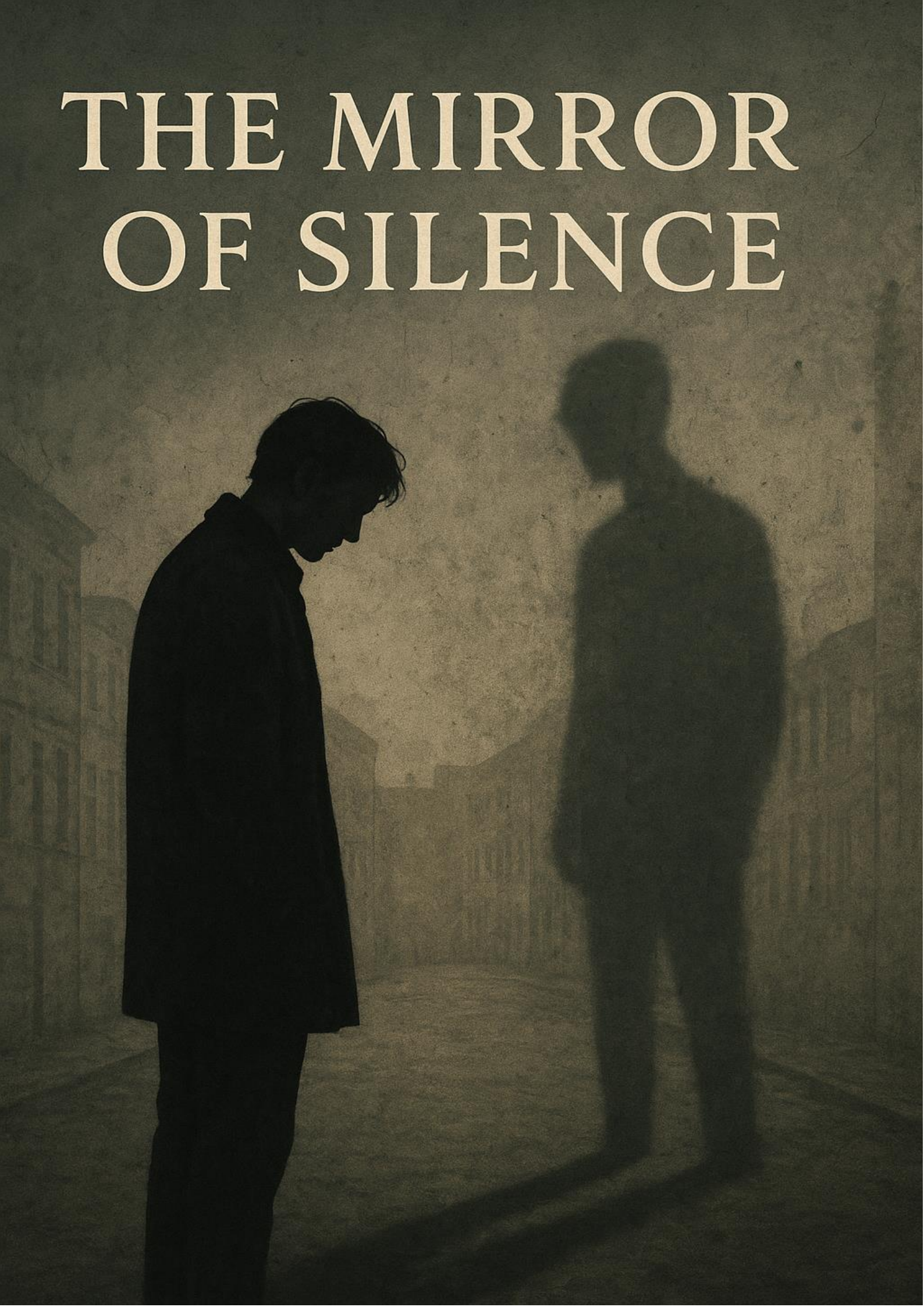
THE MIRROR OF SILENCE



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Sevgili okur,

Bu kitabı elinize aldığınızda sıradan bir hayatın nasıl yavaş yavaş sessizliğe gömüldüğünü okuyacaksınız.
Küçük, gri bir kasabada yaşayan Elias isimli genç, ailesi için çalışan, hayalleri ertelenmiş bir adamdır. Ancak bir gün, içindeki sessizlik dışarıya taşar ve Elias, adım adım bir insandan çok bir gölgeye dönüşmeye başlar.

Önce aynada gördüğü yabancı yüzle sarsılır, sonra ailesinin korkusuyla yalnızlaşır, ardından komşuların fısıltılarıyla toplumdan dışlanır. İşini kaybeder, dostlarını kaybeder, en sonunda da kendi bedenini kaybeder. Elias artık sadece sessizlikten oluşan bir gölgedir.

Kitap boyunca göreceksiniz ki bu dönüşüm sadece fiziksel değildir. Asıl dönüşüm, unutulmuş bir insanın toplumun sessizliği içinde yok oluşudur.
Ailesi onu reddeder, kasaba onu unutur. Ama Elias, kaybolsa bile ardında bir iz bırakır: sessizliğin kendisi.

Bu hikâye bize şunu soruyor:
“Eğer kimse seni dinlemezse, sen kime dönüşürsün?”

The Mirror of Silence

In a grey town, there was a young man who lived with his parents and his younger sister.
His name was Elias, a quiet boy who always tried to work hard to help his family.
He lived in a small apartment which was dark, **cold,** and full of **silence.**
The windows looked on the empty street, and the walls kept the secrets that nobody wanted to hear.

Elias worked in an office that belonged to a company which sold numbers more than ideas.
The boss, who shouted every day, told Elias to finish endless lists quickly.
He never asked Elias what he wanted, or how much he could do.
The other workers, who sat at their desks like machines, never spoke about what they truly felt.
They only talked about money, which was the only thing that seemed to matter.

Every morning, Elias woke up early to catch the train.
He left the house quietly, because he did not want to wake his family.
He walked through streets which were always wet, even when there was no rain.
While he was walking, he thought about what his life had become.
He felt that every step was another chain that kept him **prisoner.**

At home, his family expected more than he could give.
His father, who was once strong, now depended on Elias to pay the bills.
His mother asked him every evening to bring food from the market, food which was never enough for everyone.
His sister, who was still young, wanted books to study, but she never asked where the money came from.
They never wondered who Elias really was inside.
They never cared about what his heart wanted.

Elias never told them what he truly felt.
He wanted to speak, but **silence** was easier, because nobody listened.
He wanted to scream while his soul was breaking, but his lips remained closed.
At night, he lay in bed staring at the ceiling, dreaming of another life in which he could

breathe freely.

But every morning, when the alarm rang, he returned to the same world.

His mind was full of questions:

What am I living for? Who am I working for? Which future is waiting for me?

But there were no answers.

Only **silence.**

And then came the night when everything began to change.

It was the night that would break the mirror of his life.

The town itself was a place which never changed.

The streets were full of old buildings that looked tired, just like the people who lived inside them.

Shadows covered the corners, and **silence** spread from house to house.

Elias often wondered what kept people alive in such a place.

Was it hope, or was it only habit?

Every day, Elias walked past a bakery which sold bread that he could not always afford to buy.

The smell of fresh bread reminded him what it meant to be human—to eat, to laugh, to share.

But he usually turned away, because he had no money left for himself after giving everything to his family.

Sometimes, while sitting at his desk in the office, Elias looked outside the dirty window.

He saw a sky which was always grey, and children who played without knowing what kind of future was waiting for them.

In those moments, Elias felt both envy and sadness.

He asked himself silently, "Which life could have been mine, if I had chosen another path?"

At home, **silence** was not peace—it was pressure.

His father sat in a chair, reading old newspapers that repeated the same lies.

His mother cooked soup with almost nothing, and she reminded Elias every evening that it was his duty to bring more.

His sister studied her books, whispering questions which she could not answer.

No one asked Elias who he wanted to become, or what dreams he had.

Elias carried the weight of a family that depended completely on him.
He felt trapped in a circle which repeated endlessly:
wake up, go to work, return home, give money, sleep, and repeat.
He believed that his life was not chosen by him but forced upon him by others.

And yet, inside his heart, there was still a small voice which told him to search for something else.
He did not know what it was, or where it could be found,
but he knew that a man cannot **survive** only to work and **suffer.**

That night, when he closed his eyes, he felt something strange.
It was not the usual dream which left him empty.
It was a feeling that **whispered** to him,
"Your **silence** will not last forever. Something is about to change."

One morning, Elias woke up earlier than usual.
The room was **cold,** and the window was covered with fog.
He tried to stand up, but his body felt heavy, as if it belonged to someone else.

When he walked to the mirror, he froze.
The face that looked back was not the same face which he had seen the night before.
His eyes, which were once tired but human, now looked darker, almost empty.
He **whispered** to himself, but the voice that came out was not his own.
It was deeper, heavier, and full of echoes, as if many voices were speaking together.

At first, Elias thought, "Maybe I am dreaming. Maybe what I see is not real."
But he touched his skin, and it was **cold,** like stone.
He moved his hand, and the mirror showed a shadow that did not move at the same time.
The shadow seemed alive, like another being who wanted to escape from him.

His sister knocked on the door.
"Elias, are you awake?" she asked.
He wanted to answer, but his new voice sounded strange.
His sister paused, confused by what she had heard, but then she left.

Elias sat on the bed, his mind full of questions:

What is happening to me? Who am I becoming? Which truth hides behind this change?

There was no answer. Only **silence.**

That day, he tried to go to work.

While walking through the streets, he noticed people staring at him.

They looked afraid, as if they could see something different.

One man, who sold bread every morning, refused to look him in the eyes.

A child asked his mother, “Who is that man? What is wrong with him?”

Elias lowered his head, **ashamed,** but he could not hide what he was.

In the office, the boss shouted as usual.

But when Elias entered the room, the boss stopped.

He looked at Elias with **fear,** as if he was staring at something inhuman.

“What are you?” the boss **whispered.**

Elias could not answer, because he did not know himself.

From that day, Elias began to understand that he was no longer the same person who had lived quietly before.

He was becoming something else, something that even he could not explain.

That evening, Elias returned home slowly.

His steps were heavy, and the walls of the house seemed higher than before, as if they wanted to keep him inside.

At dinner, his mother looked at him carefully.

She noticed his pale face, the strange shadow that moved differently from his body, and the voice which sounded deeper than usual.

She asked, “Elias, are you sick?”

He wanted to answer, but he could not explain what was happening.

He only said, “I am fine,” but the words came out like whispers that frightened the others.

His father, who was tired and silent, placed his spoon down.

“There is something wrong,” he said.

He did not ask what it was, because **fear** stopped his mouth.

The sister, who usually laughed during dinner, stared at him with wide eyes.

She **whispered** to her mother, “Who is he? Is he still my brother?”

Elias heard every word, and pain cut him deeper than any knife.

While they were eating, the room grew colder.

The light from the lamp shook as if the air itself was afraid.

Elias felt the **silence** pressing on his chest.

He wanted to scream to break it, but he stayed quiet, because he did not want to lose his family completely.

That night, Elias closed his door and looked again into the mirror.

The person that looked back was a **stranger** who carried his face but not his soul.

The shadow behind him grew larger, covering the walls.

He asked himself, “What am I becoming? Which part of me is still human? What will happen when they can no longer accept me?”

The next morning, when he entered the kitchen, his mother stepped back.

She dropped a glass which broke into pieces on the floor.

Her hands were shaking, because she was afraid to touch him.

His father looked at him with anger, not only **fear.**

“You must not go outside,” the father said.

“You must stay here, hidden, so that nobody knows what you are.”

Elias wanted to ask, “What do you see when you look at me? Who do you think I am now?”

But the words stayed locked in his throat.

From that day, Elias was no longer part of the family table.

He ate alone, in **silence,** while his family avoided his eyes.

The sister left food at his door but never entered.

The mother prayed softly, asking that the **curse** would end.

The father worked harder, **pretending** not to hear the strange sounds which came from Elias’s room.

Elias began to realize that his change was not only his own **burden.**

It was becoming a shadow which covered the whole family.

Days passed, and Elias could no longer hide.

He still tried to go to work, because he thought routine could save him.

But every morning when he stepped on the train, people moved away.

Mothers pulled their children back, men **whispered** to each other, and women refused to look at his face.

In the office, the boss, who once only shouted about papers, now refused to enter the same room.

Colleagues, who sat beside Elias every day, began to move their desks away.

They spoke about him in whispers, asking what he had become, asking which disease or **curse** had touched him.

One morning, when Elias arrived, his boss gave him a letter.

“You must not come back,” the boss said coldly.

“This office is not for people like you.”

Elias held the paper in his hands, but he did not know what it meant anymore.

Work had been his chain, but also his identity.

Now, he was free from it, but the freedom tasted **bitter.**

Back in his street, the neighbors had already started their whispers.

The woman who sold vegetables refused to take his money.

The man who fixed shoes closed his shop door when Elias passed.

Children pointed at him, shouting, “Look! That is the man who has no shadow like ours!”

But Elias knew that his shadow was still there—only darker, only **stranger,** like another **creature** living with him.

While he walked, he heard the same questions again and again:

“Who is he now? What has he turned into? Which **curse** is living inside him? What will happen to us if he stays here?”

At home, things grew worse.

His mother cried every night, his sister refused to enter his room, and his father shouted more than before.

“You are not my son,” the father said.

“You are something else that came from **darkness.** You must leave us.”

Elias stood in **silence,** unable to answer.

He wanted to scream, to tell them what he felt, to show them that he was still the same soul.

But words betrayed him.

All that came out was a sound, heavy and broken, which made them turn away with **fear.**

And so, Elias understood:

He was not only losing his work and his neighbors—he was losing his family.

He was becoming a **stranger** in the place which had once been his only home.

One night, Elias woke up suddenly.

The moonlight entered through the window, and he looked at the wall.

There was no body lying there—only a dark figure that moved with him.

He touched his arm to be sure, but his hand passed through **emptiness.**

He had become nothing but a shadow.

The mirror showed the truth.

It was no longer Elias who looked back.

It was a moving **darkness** that had no eyes, no skin, no voice.

Only **silence** filled the room, **silence** so deep that it seemed to swallow every sound.

Elias **whispered,** "What am I now? Who can recognize me? Which part of me is still human?"

But the shadow did not answer, because it was him.

When his sister opened the door in the morning, she screamed.

She saw only a black form which stretched from the floor to the ceiling.

"Who are you?" she cried.

"I am Elias," the shadow tried to say, but the sound came out like a **cold** wind, not words.

The mother **fainted,** the father shouted in terror.

"This is not my son! This is a **curse** that has entered our house!"

He tried to strike the shadow with a stick, but the stick passed through air.

The shadow only grew larger, covering the walls, the ceiling, the floor.

Neighbors rushed in, hearing the noise.

They saw the same dark figure which swallowed the light.

They asked each other, "What is this? What has he become? What should we do to protect ourselves?"
Nobody dared to come closer.

At that moment, Elias realized the truth.
He was not a man anymore.
He was the **silence** that had lived inside him all along—
the **silence** which came from years of being **ignored,**
the **silence** that grew while nobody cared what he felt.

He had not turned into an animal or a monster.
He had turned into his own shadow.

The room was filled with screams, but Elias could not scream back.
He tried to speak, to tell them that he was still Elias,
but the only sound that came out was a whisper colder than the wind from the graveyard.

His sister hid behind the table, covering her face with her hands.
His mother cried, "This is not my son! This is something else that wants to destroy us."
The father raised his stick again, trying to hit the black figure which spread across the floor.
But every strike failed, because the stick went through the shadow like air.

The neighbors, who stood outside the door, **whispered:**
"What is this thing? Who could live with such a monster?
Which **curse** has entered this house? What will happen to us if it spreads?"
Nobody dared to enter, yet nobody dared to leave.
They were **frozen** between **fear** and curiosity.

Elias moved closer to the mirror, hoping to see what he truly was.
The reflection showed no man—only endless **darkness.**
He touched the glass, and the glass turned black.
The mirror seemed to swallow his image, leaving only a **cold emptiness.**

Inside his mind, Elias heard voices.
They were not his family's voices, not his neighbors' whispers,
but echoes that came from deep inside his soul.

They said, “You are nothing. You are **silence** itself. You are the shadow that nobody wanted to see.”

His heart broke, because he understood something **terrible:**
he was not cursed by fate, but by **neglect.**
He had become the thing which his family, his boss, his neighbors always gave him—
silence.

When the father shouted, “Leave this house! Leave us forever!”
the shadow **trembled.**
Elias wanted to stay, to fight, to explain what he felt.
But he could not hold his shape.
The walls pulled him in, the floor absorbed him,
and his figure stretched **thinner** and **thinner** until it almost **disappeared.**

The last thing his sister **whispered** was:
“Who are you? Are you still my brother? Or are you only a shadow that wears his name?”
But Elias could not answer anymore.

After that night, Elias was no longer treated as a man.
His family closed the doors, leaving food for him far away, afraid to come close.
His mother **whispered** prayers to protect the house from the **curse.**
His sister refused to speak his name, because she believed that names could bring **shadows** back.
His father walked through the streets, telling neighbors that Elias had died.

But Elias had not died.
He moved quietly through the rooms, a shadow which followed the walls and the ceilings.
While the family tried to forget him, he stayed, watching, listening.
He wanted to speak, to tell them that he was still Elias,
but what left his mouth was only **silence.**

Outside, the town also changed.
The bakery which once sold bread to him refused even to look at his house.
The neighbors closed their windows when they saw his shadow moving in the yard.
Children, who once shouted his name, now asked their parents what lived inside that house.

The answer was always the same:

“Nothing. Only darkness.”

Elias realized slowly that he was becoming **invisible.**

When he stood under the sun, no shadow appeared on the ground.

When he passed by a mirror, the glass showed nothing.

He was no longer a person who could be recognized,

but an **echo** which had no body.

At night, he followed his sister secretly.

She sat with her books, studying words that she hoped to use one day to escape the town.

Elias wanted to whisper, “Take my courage. Take my hope. Live the life that I could not live.”

But his voice was gone.

Only the wind moved the pages, as if the books themselves were whispering.

The more time passed, the **thinner** he became.

His body was only a memory, his name only a sound that nobody wanted to repeat.

He began to wonder what would remain when even his shadow **disappeared.**

Nights grew longer, and Elias felt **weaker** each day.

He no longer knew what part of him was real and what part was only memory.

He wanted to believe that something human was still inside him,

but the **silence** which filled his chest told him otherwise.

While he moved through the house, he noticed the walls did not carry his shadow anymore.

The ground refused to reflect him, and even the wind forgot to touch him.

It was as if the world had decided to erase his **existence.**

He asked himself, “Who am I without a body? What am I without a name? Which part of me will remain when everything disappears?”

But no answer came, because there was no one left to answer.

Sometimes, he tried to remember when life had felt different.

He thought of the mornings when he had carried papers for his boss,

the evenings when his sister had laughed with him,

the nights when he had dreamed to live another life.

But those memories faded, one by one, like smoke disappearing in the air.

His family continued their lives without him.

His father worked again, **pretending** that Elias had never existed.

His mother prayed louder, to keep the house clean from **shadows.**

His sister studied harder, wanting to leave the town which had **forgotten** her brother.

Elias watched them silently, wondering who he had been for them:

a son, a brother, or only a **burden** that they wanted to escape.

Each day, he became **thinner,** lighter, almost **transparent.**

He could no longer tell where his body ended or what part of the air began.

The world around him looked brighter, but he was not part of it anymore.

One night, when he tried to open the door to the street,

his hand passed through the handle.

He realized that he no longer had the power to touch the world.

He was only watching, only drifting, only fading.

And so, Elias began to accept the truth:

He was not a man who lived, but a shadow that waited to disappear.

One morning, the sun rose above the grey town.

The streets filled with noise, but inside the small house, **silence** ruled.

Elias was gone.

There was no shadow which followed the walls, no whisper that passed through the rooms.

It was as if he had never been there.

His mother cleaned the table, saying, “It is better this way, because the **curse** has left.”

His father closed the windows, telling the neighbors that the family was free again.

His sister packed her books, dreaming to leave the town that had **forgotten** her brother.

The neighbors soon stopped talking.

They no longer asked, “Who was he? What happened in that house?”

They preferred to believe that nothing strange had ever existed.

The bakery sold bread as usual, the shoemaker fixed shoes, the children laughed while playing in the street.

But sometimes, when the moon was high, a **cold** wind passed through the town.
It moved with a whisper, as if a voice was asking:
"What am I? Who remembers me? Which part of me still exists?"
The people closed their doors, **pretending** not to hear.

Elias had **disappeared,** but he had not been destroyed.
He had become **silence** itself—
the **silence** that follows **forgotten** names,
the **silence** which grows when voices are **ignored,**
the **silence** that waits to remind us what happens to those who are never heard.

And so, the town continued, unchanged.
But in the corners of every room, in the cracks of every wall,
a shadow remained, watching, waiting, listening.

Days turned into weeks, and the memory of Elias began to fade.
His family stopped whispering his name, because they were afraid that even a sound could bring the shadow back.
His mother prayed louder every night, thanking the heavens for removing the **curse.**
His father sat in his chair, convincing himself that he had never had a son who carried so much **silence** inside.
His sister studied harder, repeating to herself that she would one day leave the town which had buried her brother's **existence.**

The neighbors also learned quickly to forget.
At first, they told stories about the dark figure that had lived in the house.
Some said it was a ghost which had entered the family.
Others claimed Elias was punished because he had hidden secrets.
But while the weeks passed, the stories grew **weaker,** replaced by other gossip, other news.
The bakery sold bread, the shoemaker fixed shoes, the market shouted prices,
and nobody cared what had happened inside the silent house.

But **silence** has its own way to **survive.**

Sometimes, when a child cried at night, the mother **whispered,**

“Be quiet, or the shadow will come.”

Sometimes, while people walked home late, they felt something **cold** with them,

a presence that followed their steps without a sound.

Nobody dared to look back, because they feared what they might see.

Inside the house, Elias was no longer a figure, not even a shadow.

He was only absence, spread across the walls and the ceilings.

But even absence speaks in **silence.**

He became the space between words, the **echo** that waited to be heard, the **darkness** which reminded them what they had chosen to ignore.

And so, life continued as before, but nothing was truly the same.

The family, the neighbors, the whole town carried an **invisible** mark—

the mark of Elias, the man who had turned into **silence.**

Because **silence** is not nothing.

It is everything that remains when voices are **forgotten,**

everything that grows while nobody listens,

everything that survives even after names disappear.

📘 Vocabulary Practice – The Mirror of Silence

1. Match the Words with Their Meanings

Eşleştirme yapın.

a) whisper
b) shadow
c) curse
d) neglect
e) burden
f) echo
g) transparent
h) despair
i) faint
j) stranger

1) fısıldamak
2) gölge
3) lanet
4) ihmal
5) yük
6) yankı
7) saydam
8) çaresizlik
9) bayılmak
10) yabancı

2. Fill in the Blanks

1) The child _____ a secret to his friend.

2) The room was empty, only a dark _____ moved across the wall.

3) He felt his life was a heavy _____ he could not carry.

4) The woman almost _____ when she saw the ghost.

5) They lived in complete _____, without hope for the future.

3. Translation Challenge

1) Adam karanlıkta bir gölge gördü.

2) Çocuk annesine fısıldadı.

3) Sessizlikte bir yankı duydum.

4) Yabancı kasabaya geldiğinde herkes ona baktı.

5) O, hayatında büyük bir çaresizlik hissetti.

4. Make Your Own Sentences

Her kelimeyle kendi cümleni yaz:
- shadow
- burden
- neglect
- despair
- echo

📖 Reading Comprehension Questions – The Mirror of Silence

1) Why was Elias unhappy in his daily life?

2) What changes did Elias first notice in himself?

3) How did his family react to his transformation?

4) What did the neighbors say about Elias?

5) What truth did Elias understand in the climax of the story?

6) How did Elias slowly disappear in the end?

7) What does Elias symbolize in the story?