

Foreword

In the foreword of "The Breadwinner," author Deborah Ellis reflects on the long history of conflict in Afghanistan, spanning thirty-six years since the Soviet Union's invasion. This time includes the civil war that erupted after their departure, the rise of the Taliban, and the consequential events following September 11. Ellis expresses her concern regarding the impact of war, highlighting how decisions made by those in safety lead to devastating consequences for the innocent people of Afghanistan.

She emphasizes that wars are often fueled by individuals who profit from weapon manufacturing and who fail to seek peaceful resolutions, instead opting for violence. Through her experiences, Ellis portrays the stark realities of war: the destruction of families, loss of infrastructure, and the pervasive suffering of refugees who await basic necessities like food and shelter.

Amidst the chaos, Ellis identifies extraordinary individuals who embody hope and resilience. She recounts encounters with teachers, librarians, health workers, and everyday heroes who strive to nurture childhood, build communities, and offer care despite overwhelming obstacles. These acts of kindness serve as a powerful reminder of human decency in the face of adversity.

Ellis illustrates the tragic statistic that civilian casualties constitute ninety-five percent of war-related deaths, urging readers to recognize the humanity in those whom war affects. These individuals share our lives in fundamental ways, experiencing the same joys and struggles, such as pondering daily meals and caring for their loved ones.

Books become a vital tool for fostering empathy and understanding human connections, something Ellis strives to achieve in her writing. In the fifteenth anniversary edition of "The Breadwinner," she expresses deep gratitude towards readers who have embraced the journey of Parvana and her companions. She acknowledges the role of educators and caregivers in sharing the story and conveys heartfelt appreciation to the people of Afghanistan, emphasizing their right to peace.

Deborah Ellis' words resonate deeply as she invites readers to reflect on shared human experiences amidst the despair of war, reaffirming the enduring spirit of kindness and compassion.