

# Saturday

In the chapter titled "Saturday," Cyrus Shams wakes up in a hip Brooklyn hotel where he shares a single room with his roommate Zee. They've created a bond that goes beyond a simple friendship; it involves shared intimacy that remains mostly platonic, often expressed through comforting gestures rather than overtly sexual acts. Cyrus reflects on his history with thumb-sucking and how it translated into using Zee's thumb as a substitute.

The narrative takes a turn as Cyrus ventures into New York City, intending to visit the Brooklyn Museum to speak with the artist Orkideh. Although he finds himself lost and disoriented, he arrives and observes a long line curiously forming outside the exhibition. Cyrus feels resentful towards the other attendees who appear to be there for mere voyeurism rather than genuine interest.

Upon finally meeting Orkideh, he shares his appreciation for her work, though he worries he might overwhelm her with his admiration. She redirects the conversation to focus on their connection rather than his reverence. Orkideh discusses her experiences in New York, drawing comparisons to Tehran and commenting on universal experiences of poverty and wealth.

Cyrus, reflecting on his identity as an Iranian and artist, invokes the concept of double-consciousness by W. E. B. Du Bois, considering how marginalized individuals navigate societal perceptions. Their discussion deepens into the complexities of art, life, and mortality, as Orkideh shares her thoughts on Persian mirror art, which symbolizes broken identities and fractured lives being crafted into beautiful mosaics.

As Cyrus expresses his desire for his life to matter more intensely, Orkideh reassures him about the significance of their interaction. The chapter ends with Cyrus stepping out into the cold February air, profoundly impacted by the conversation with Orkideh and contemplating the meaning of their fleeting connection. The themes of intimacy, identity, and mortality loom large, as do the rich, layered references to art and culture throughout the dialogue.