After the border town, Tehran became the bombers’ main target. Together with the other people in our building, we turned the basement into a shelter. Every time the siren rang out, everyone would run downstairs...

**THE WINE**

Put your cigarette out. They say that the glow of a cigarette is the easiest thing to see from the sky. But we’re in the basement here!
AND ONCE IT WAS OVER....

WELL? WELL?

NO ONE'S ANSWERING!

I'M FINE!

OH THOSE POOR PEOPLE! LUCKY NOTHING HAPPENED TO YOU!

HE WANTS TO TALK TO YOU!

AFTER THE BOMBS AND THE INSTINCTIVE FEAR OF DEATH, YOU'D THINK OF THE VICTIMS AND ANOTHER KIND OF ANXIETY SEIZED YOU.
It wasn’t just the basements. The interiors of homes also changed, but it wasn’t only because of the Iraqi planes.

Mom, what’re you doing?

The masking tape is to protect against flying glass during a bombing and the black curtains are to protect us from our neighbors.

What neighbor?

You know Tinoosh’s dad?

Tinoosh, yeah, what about him?

The other night, two guardians of the revolution patrols paid them a visit.

Someone told us you were planning a party. You know that it’s strictly forbidden!

Um...

...they found records and video-cassettes at their place. A deck of cards, a chess set, in other words, everything that’s banned.

Get your ass in the car, move!

Excuse me, sir.

Shut up, slut!

...it earned him seventy-five lashes.

His wife cried so much that they finally let her off with a hefty fine, but he can’t walk anymore...now you see why I’m putting up the curtains. With the parties we have on Thursdays and the card games on Mondays, we have to be careful.
In spite of all the dangers, the parties went on. “Without them it wouldn’t be psychologically bearable,” some said. “Without parties, we might as well just bury ourselves now,” added the others. My uncle invited us to his house to celebrate the birth of my cousin. Everyone was there. Even grandma was dancing.

**Damn! Power outage!!**

**Awww! No more music!**

**Don’t worry about it! I’ll go get the zarb.**

**Be careful where you step!!!**

A zarb is a kind of drum. My father played it very well like a pro.

We had everything. Well, everything that was forbidden. Even alcohol, gallons of it.

My uncle was the vintner. He had built a genuine wine-making lab in his basement.

Mrs. Nagraíne, who was also his cleaning lady, crushed the grapes.

Good forgive me. God forgive me!
Suddently, sirens started to wail...

...and my aunt did too.

It’s alright, stay calm!

AAAA...

I found myself with the newborn baby we had been celebrating in my arms.

Her mother had already abandoned her.

Since that day, I’ve had doubts about the so-called “maternal instinct.”
After the alert, we went home.

She’s completely nuts! Did you see how she dropped the baby? That was pretty incredible!

My poor brother isn’t exactly spoiled.

Open the door and get out!

ID, registration and driver’s license.

OK, OK.

Go ahhh.

Ahh...

Been drinking, have we?!

No, absolutely not!

You think I’m stupid?!... I can tell by your tie! Piece of westernized trash!

I won’t take that from you. For twenty years I’ve worked for this country and you dare to talk to me like that?

Forgive him. Shut up!
For you. Listen, I could be your mother, how old are you? Sixteen?... my daughter is twelve... forgive him...

You're lucky to have this woman for your wife, otherwise you'd already be in hell!

Thanks, thanks so much!

You say you haven't been drinking, we're going to see what you have at home.

Grandma! Marty! When we're home, get out first, I'll try to stall him, flush all the alcohol down the toilet.

But how?

Don't worry, dear, I'm used to it. When your father was alive, I was always hiding his tracts.

They followed us all the way home.

Must you really come upstairs? Our elderly neighbor has a heart condition, if he's frightened by the noise, it could kill him.

Hurry up!

Where do you two think you're going?
I have diabetes, my boy. If I don't drink a little syrup, I'm going to faint.

Diabetes, just like my mother! So you understand it's urgent!

It was a miracle.

Hurry up! I don't know how much longer your father can stand them!

Hurry! Hurry!

And the final touch. Click!

Here they come!

Where's the guy?

Where indeed! Their faith has nothing to do with ideology. A few bugs were all he needed to forget the whole thing!

Hey, you didn't throw it all out?

Yep

No more?

Final?

My God! I need a pick-me-up...