

comes. The sun rises but is invisible to our eyes, for it is hidden by threatening clouds which become denser, bluish black, and heavy. It will be wonderful if we escape them without danger. To the south, over Khur and Jandak, nay, over all the southern margin of the Kevir, and perhaps over part of the desert itself, the rain is pouring down. We can see the dark grey fringes streaming down over the earth. It blows half a gale; it is gloomy, raw, and uncomfortable in every way; a cup of warm tea would be good to set the blood flowing again.

We have been travelling more than fourteen hours, when at length I am delighted to find that the Yezd caravan, which is 100 yards in front, has halted, and is preparing for a rest. The stand and burkha are hardly set up before a pouring rain falls down on it, and it is pleasant to sit under cover, but sad to hear this sound, elsewhere so welcome, but feared and detested in the Kevir. The Yezd men seem uncertain, break off their preparations, and evidently think of setting off again. If the rain continues we may be exposed to great danger. But fortunately the shower passes over quickly and the clouds become rather thinner; the north-easterly wind blows as hard as ever. The Yezd men make up their minds to stop, and while Gulam Hussein makes tea I write in my diary, and after breakfast I resign myself into the arms of Morpheus and sleep as I have never done before. I sleep so soundly and heavily that they may very easily leave without waking me; I should lie there sleeping on for ever.

But at three o'clock in the afternoon Gulam Hussein stands over me, calling out, "*Sa'ab, bar mikunim*" ("Sir, we are starting"), and there is no respite, for the bells of the Yezd caravan are already ringing, and when I come out I see it making at a quick pace northwards through the endless desert. I have slept three hours. The sky is covered with dense clouds, and it still blows hard; but the temperature is extraordinarily high, quite 57° —a bad sign at this season. Here we are at a height of 2326 feet.

At our camp, where we stayed so short a time, the way divides, the western branch running to Husseinan