

A stylized illustration of a person in profile, holding a large branch with green leaves. A blue bird is perched on the branch. The person is wearing a white shirt and a dark skirt or pants. The background is white with a black border.

Disillusionment

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"From the captives inside the walls of fear to the freemen in prisons."

Disappointment

Mahmoud was driving the car heading back home dreaming of spending a quiet holiday with his family.

Although he is happy to perform his military service in Egypt's most beautiful and pure spot, Sinai, he is counting the days to be done with it. Because despite being a healthy and organized lifestyle, the military life is so tiring and that's why he and his colleagues are always eager to get a holiday and spend it with the family discussing their plans for the future.

While he was on his way to Ismailia, he heard a muffled explosion followed by a steering wheel lurch but he was able to control it and stop the car, then he furiously said "damn, not now" and got out of the car to check the tires. He was so surprised to find one of the tires completely shredded. The car and its tires were in a good condition, he always checks on them, as he knows that he is travelling for long distances and at night so he should make sure that the car is good to go. After looking back on the road, he noticed some sharp objects that were thrown on purpose.

He immediately realized it and took out his phone willing to make a call before hearing a sound coming from behind the trees that covers both sides of the road, the treetops intertwined that it blocked any rays of light.

Then he heard a hoarsely voice saying: "step forward and switch off the phone."

He went back to the car but the voice became closer and clearer, from behind the trees appeared a number of bandits pointing their cold steel at him, "give us all the money that you have" they said.

One of the bandits walked towards him, Mahmood stuck his back to the car and tried to count them in the darkness that hung over the place.

One of them came closer, took the phone from his hand, was about to search him but Mahmood startled him, and tried to punch him.

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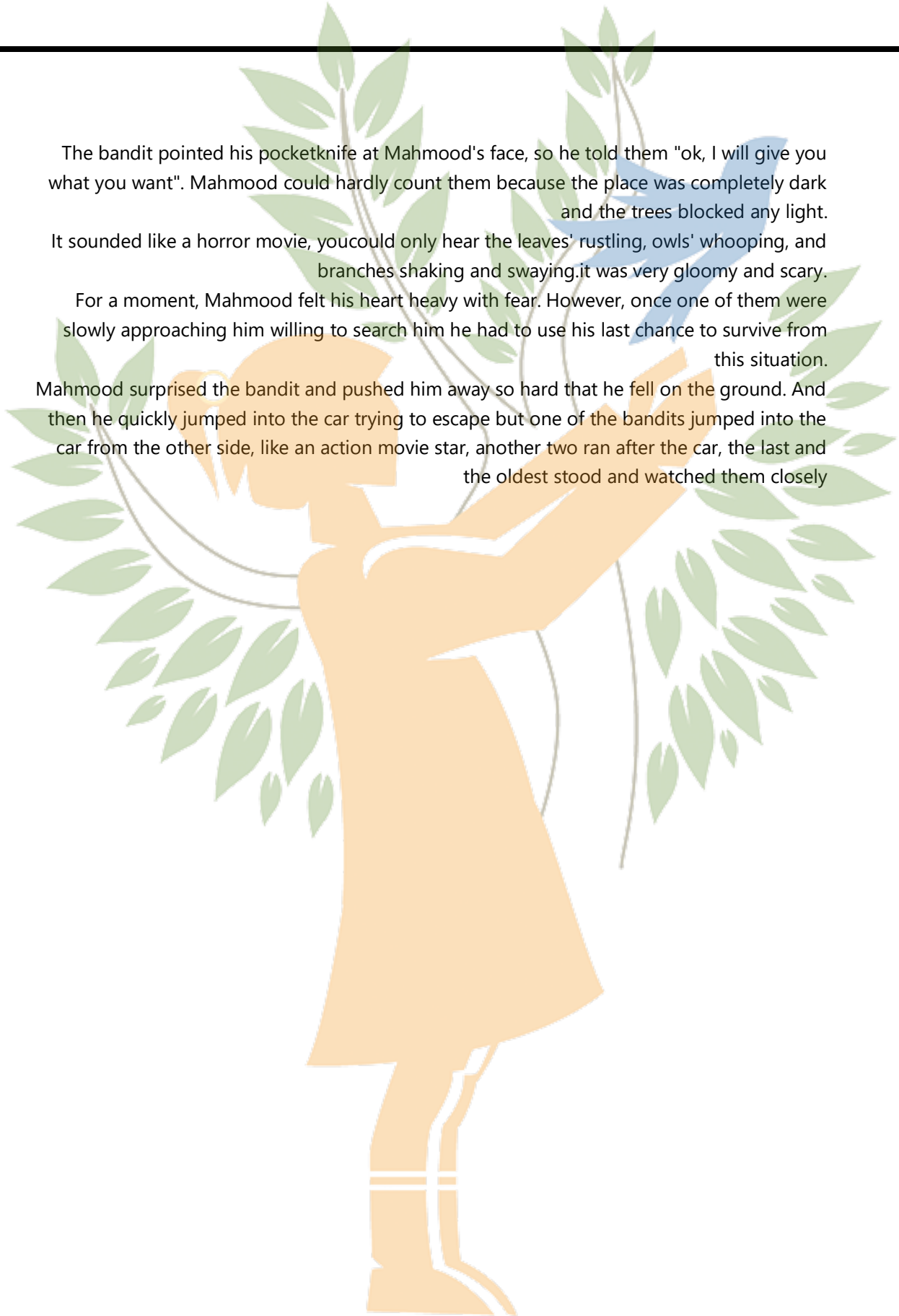
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The bandit pointed his pocketknife at Mahmood's face, so he told them "ok, I will give you what you want". Mahmood could hardly count them because the place was completely dark and the trees blocked any light.

It sounded like a horror movie, you could only hear the leaves' rustling, owls' whooping, and branches shaking and swaying. it was very gloomy and scary.

For a moment, Mahmood felt his heart heavy with fear. However, once one of them were slowly approaching him willing to search him he had to use his last chance to survive from this situation.

Mahmood surprised the bandit and pushed him away so hard that he fell on the ground. And then he quickly jumped into the car trying to escape but one of the bandits jumped into the car from the other side, like an action movie star, another two ran after the car, the last and the oldest stood and watched them closely



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