

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Throughout one long summer, each member of a family in a provincial town tries to solve his/her personal crises as their daily lives flow by at their own slow pace. The film follows the lives of Mustafa, his wife, Güler, his two sons and his younger brother Hasan living in Silifke, a southern town in Turkey.

Mustafa is a hard-working and ambitious agricultural merchant who is cold and austere towards his family. One day he has a brain hemorrhage on a business trip and goes into a coma after the operation. Güler, who has been suspecting that her husband is having an affair, is now convinced of it. Veysel, their teenage son, wants to leave the military academy and start a civilian life of his own. Ali, their 10 year old son, has to cope both with his bully classmates and the chewing gums he has to sell. Hasan, Mustafa's brother, chose to live a life in solitude after divorcing his wife and has always been an outsider to the family. But now he finds himself involved in his brother's family after his brother goes into a coma. Hasan has to solve the mystery about his brother's mistress and the money lost during his trip. Even though he solves these mysteries, he keeps them secret.

Ali is given a workbook called "Summer Book" at school, at the beginning of summer holiday. Though he is supposed to learn lots of things from the book, he never has the chance to use it because his bully friend takes it from him. Instead Ali learns lots of things from his experience throughout this long summer; he somehow has his own practical summer book.

Mustafa dies. The summer ends. Life goes on. Veysel leaves for Istanbul for a civilian life. Hasan takes over Mustafa's business. His apprentice continues to open Hasan's butcher's shop everyday. Güler has only Ali left with her now. Ali starts to go to school again after a long summer holiday.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Mustafa: In his fifties, agricultural merchant, Guler's husband, father of Veysel and Ali, Hasan's elder brother.

Guler: In her forties, housewife, Mustafa's wife, Ali and Veysel's mother.

Hasan: In his forties, butcher, Mustafa's younger brother, Ali and Veysel's uncle.

Ali: 10, primary school student, younger son of Mustafa and Guler.

Veysel: 17, military academy student, elder son of Mustafa and Guler.

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Throughout one long summer, each member of a family in a provincial town tries to solve his/her personal crises as their daily lives flow by at their own slow pace. The film follows the lives of Mustafa (in his fifties), his wife Güler (in her forties), their two sons Ali (10) and Veysel (17) and Mustafa's brother Hasan (in his forties) in Silifke, a southern town in Turkey.

The film starts at dawn, the sun has not yet risen. Mustafa, with his pickup truck, collects labourers from their houses and takes them to his apricot orchard. Later in the morning Mustafa's brother Hasan opens his butcher's shop. Mustafa's younger son Ali leaves home in order to go to school and his mother Güler sees him off. Mustafa's elder son Veysel gets off an intercity bus from Istanbul at the bus station. He is dressed in the uniform of a military academy.

At school in Ali's class the school reports and the summer books are being handed out. (The summer book is a kind of student workbook with exercises, stories, puzzles, games and colourful pictures.) It is the last day of school, meaning the beginning of the summer vacation. After school, Ibrahim, a bully classmate, approaches Ali, and takes his summer book by force. Ali borrows some money from his uncle Hasan to buy a new summer book, but finds out that the only stationery store in town does not have any. Disappointed, Ali gives the money back to his uncle. Back home, Ali sees that his brother Veysel has arrived. That evening, Veysel tells his family that he wants to leave the military academy and register to a regular university; however they have to pay a compensation fee to the academy. His father strongly objects to Veysel. Veysel does not step back, he leaves the house furious and spends the night at his uncle's place.

In the morning, Mustafa takes his younger son Ali to his office to work with him during the summer vacation. Ali sits in the office all day with Mustafa's assistant without doing anything. In the evening Ali indicates to his mother that he is not happy about going to his father's office. Güler talks to Mustafa; she accuses him both for Veysel's situation and making Ali work at such a young age. After she suggests that he is seeing another woman, the discussion turns into a quarrel. In the morning Mustafa drives Ali to a wholesaler where he buys Ali a box of sweet chewing gums. He asks Ali to sell these chewing gums in crowded places to earn his pocket money and drops him off in the city centre. Ali walks around on the streets holding the chewing gum box next to him, but he is too shy to sell the chewing gums. He sits close to a tea garden and watches the people there. He approaches one of the tables to sell gums but at the last moment he notices a waiter looking at him and changes his way. He sits under the shade in front of a mosque where he sees some other kids selling stuff across the road. When they look at him he feels uncomfortable and leaves the place. He goes home and hides the chewing gum box behind the sofa.

In the evening Hasan comes to Mustafa's office to talk about Veysel's situation. Mustafa asks Hasan not to intervene. He reminds him about his bad decisions in the past, and accuses him of not listening to his or their father's advice. Since eventually he has come back to the town he once despised, and since he is now running his father's old butcher shop, Mustafa says that he doesn't

have the right to tell him what to do and better doesn't encourage Veysel. Hasan is offended and leaves Mustafa's office.

Next morning Mustafa drives to Ürgüp for business. Güler asks Veysel to come back home. She and her two sons have breakfast together. She tries to convince Veysel to finish the military school. Veysel points out that the only problem is the compensation fee he has to pay and that he found a way to pay it. Güler asks him how but he does not want to talk about it. Veysel leaves the house after breakfast. Wandering around the city centre, he runs into an old friend who invites him to a seaside cafeteria where they are going to play card games with some old friends. Veysel and his friend drive on a motorbike to the seaside. While his friends play cards, Veysel watches around and has several eye contacts with a woman sitting nearby with his little daughter. Veysel gets embarrassed and looks away when her husband comes. The woman leaves with her husband. Later Hasan and Veysel meet and talk in Silifke. Veysel explains his reasons to quit the army and says it would be easier if he could somehow find the compensation fee. Hasan encourages him to keep his decision. He implies that he will support Veysel if he would need it.

The following morning Güler's neighbour Hatice tells Güler's fortune. She foresees that Güler's family will receive money soon but there is a strong evil eye on them. She advises her to go to a hodja and get an amulet against the evil eye. Meanwhile Ali and his friends are chatting in the garden of Ali's house. An ambulance arrives in front of the house and the driver asks for Ali's mother. Ali says that she is not at home. The driver asks Ali to tell his mother that his father is in the public hospital and without any explanation starts to walk back to the ambulance to leave. Ali asks the driver to take him to the hospital. The driver doesn't accept, but Ali insists. On the way the driver explains to Ali that his father had a brain haemorrhage in a small town close to Silifke on his way back from Ürgüp. Because there was only a small clinic in that town, Ali's father was transferred to the public hospital in Silifke in the clinic's ambulance. Ali is able to see his father only briefly before they take him in for brain surgery. His father says that he left the pickup in that small town and that there is some cash hidden in the pickup, which may get stolen. They then take him in for the operation. Ali is left alone, he leaves the hospital. On his way back, a taxi stops suddenly next to him. His panicky mother and a neighbour woman get out of the taxi and question him. They push Ali into the taxi and drive to the hospital. When Ali's uncle Hasan and brother Veysel arrive, Ali tells them about the money in the pickup. Hasan decides to fetch the pickup and check if the money is still there. Ali wants to go with him. His uncle agrees. Veysel stays in the hospital with his mother.

Hasan and Ali take a bus to the small town where the pickup truck is left. They go to the gendarme station. Hasan mentions the money to the gendarme officer. The Officer orders the sergeant to pick up and interrogate the three men who helped Ali's father. Among these three men, there is also the ambulance driver whom Ali has already met. Hasan and Ali wait in the corridor while the ambulance driver comes to the station under soldiers' custody. Ali realizes that the ambulance driver is looking at him. Ali feels embarrassed about the situation and quickly looks away. Soldiers take the ambulance driver into the interrogation room and take one of the villagers who

helped Mustafa out. His face and eyes are red. He seems to have cried. Ali and his uncle return home with the pickup.

The next day Hasan checks Mustafa's suitcase in which he finds an organizer. He locks it in his drawer and leaves the shop. He goes to Mustafa's house to return the suitcase. Güler tells him that she does not believe that Mustafa went to Ürgüp for business; she thinks Mustafa has a mistress there and that he went to see her. Hasan carries out a small inquiry at Mustafa's office and questions Mustafa's assistant. The young man seems to know nothing about the money or the mistress. In the evening Hasan turns back to his shop, takes out Mustafa's organizer from the drawer and reads it. He decides to go to Ürgüp to find out what had happened.

The next morning Güler wakes Ali up. She says that Hasan drove to Ürgüp early in the morning and that she is going to the hospital with Veysel. After his mother leaves Ali realizes that a chewing gum has stuck to the side of his hair because he slept with it in his mouth. He tries to pull it out of his hair but it won't come out because it is dry like stone. Ali checks his hair in the mirror in the hallway. He takes a big scissor from his mother's sewing box and cuts that part of his hair. He has a funny gap in his hair now. He checks his appearance in the mirror and puts on his Galatasaray FC cap to hide the gap. Later he sits next to a rickshaw left on a street in their neighbourhood and places the chewing gum box in front of him with its cover open. Ibrahim turns up and bullies Ali forcing him to go and leave his box behind.

Güler goes to a hodja's house and gets an amulet against the evil eye. She visits Mustafa in the hospital where he is lying unconsciously in a coma. Güler reproaches him for becoming distant to his family, having a mistress and now leaving his family alone. Bursting into tears while talking, she takes the amulet out of her bag and attaches it under Mustafa's bed.

Hasan arrives at the warehouse in Ürgüp with the pickup. Hasan and the warehouse's old keeper can be seen from a distance standing and talking but they cannot be heard. Later Hasan goes to a small hotel and asks the receptionist if his brother stayed there. Later he sits in a coffee house packed with people. He seems thoughtful. He takes Mustafa's organizer out of his bag and opens it. Later he drives to a shanty house and knocks on the door. The scene is cut just before we see the person who opens the door.

Next morning Ali goes to the bakery to buy bread. There he sees Ibrahim sitting next to the entrance of the bakery. Ibrahim has placed the chewing gum box in front of him; he is obviously trying to sell the gums. They stare at each other. Ali enters the bakery and buys bread. After leaving the bakery he suddenly goes in front of Ibrahim, kicks the gum box and runs away. Ibrahim is surprised; he is late to react. He runs after Ali but cannot catch him. Later, while Ali and his friends are chatting in the shade, Ibrahim suddenly appears, catches Ali, and starts to beat him. One of Ali's friends runs away and returns with Veysel. Veysel drags Ibrahim away from Ali by pulling his ear and without leaving his ear asks Ibrahim why he is beating Ali. Before Ibrahim answers, Ali's friends tell Veysel that Ibrahim is always bullying Ali and that he stole Ali's chewing gums. Veysel leaves Ibrahim's ear, slaps the back of his head and tells him to disappear. He adds

that he will beat him if he disturbs Ali again. Ibrahim threatens Ali before running away. Ali's nose is injured in the fight.

In the evening while Ali and Veysel are watching TV at home, Hasan arrives. Hasan and Güler talk under the arbour in the garden. Hasan tells Güler that Mustafa's trip to the lemon warehouse in Ürgüp was for real; and that he could not find any trace of a possible mistress, or any information about the lost money. Güler, with a cold and distant face, listens to Hasan without even looking at him. She doesn't react at all.

In the morning Hasan and Ali visit Mustafa in the hospital. On the way back from the hospital, they stop by a gas station and Hasan goes to the toilet. While waiting, Ali sits on the driver's side and starts to play with the steering wheel. Then he checks the small pocket on the left hand side of the steering wheel. (It is like a hidden pocket, difficult to notice.) He finds a file in the pocket. There is a 100 USD note among the papers in the file. Ali has found the money that his father had mentioned. When his uncle comes back from the toilet, Ali shows him the money. His uncle is very angry because of Ali's father's concern for only a 100 USD note even on the verge of a coma. Thinking that they give a hard time to innocent people to find that money, Hasan decides to donate it to the mosque and asks Ali not to tell anybody about the money.

Later on, Hasan and Veysel are chatting under the shade in front of Hasan's butcher's shop. Hasan tells Veysel that he thinks it is not reasonable for him to leave the military school at the moment. He thinks there is no reason to put Mustafa again under stress after he gets out of the hospital. He adds that Mustafa's financial situation will worsen after the money spent on medical expenses and that there also is the unsolved matter of the lost money. Since the state is paying for his expenses at the military school, he thinks it is better for Veysel to go on with the military to secure his future. Veysel listens to his uncle without looking at him.

After a short time, there is a funeral in the mosque courtyard. Mustafa's coffin stays on a pedestal stone. The crowd lines up for the funeral ritual. Hasan, Veysel and Ali stand in the front line just behind the Imam. Güler is at home crying quietly while the neighbours are trying to comfort her.

It is dawn; the sun has not yet risen. Hasan, with Mustafa's pickup truck, collects the labourers from their houses and takes them to the lemon orchard. Later in the morning Hasan's apprentice is opening Hasan's butcher's shop. Mustafa's younger son Ali leaves home in order to go to school. The wound on his nose seems to have healed and the gap in his hair to have grown back. Ali's mother Güler sees him off. On his way to school, Ali passes by his uncle's butcher's shop and greets the apprentice. Veysel gets on an intercity bus to Istanbul at the bus station. He is dressed in civilian clothes.

At school in Ali's class the teacher is talking to the students. It is the first day of school, meaning the end of the summer vacation. The teacher asks them to write an essay about the following question: "Who knows most?: The one who reads more or the one who travels more?" Ali thinks for a while and starts to write.