

**Levantine Arabic transcript:**

إحنا كانت عيلتنا عليه كبيرة و عيلة بسيطة مكونة من ثمان أنفار. كان دخل الوالد قليل جدا. كان دخل الوالد قليل جدا جدا. كانت إمي هي الي تشتغل وتجبب للبيت, تسرح على السهل, تزرع الفول, وتزرع القمح, وتزرع الحمص, وتزرع العدس, وتلقط الزيتون, تلقط المشمش, وتلقط اللوز وتبيع من هاي الأشياء اللي بتسرح عليها وتربينا تا كبيرنا. وقت كبروا أخوتي شوي صاروا يشتغلوا وإشي, يسرح على شغل إسرائيل, يشتغل في إسرائيل ويجيب للبيت ويساعد الأسرة لحتى كبروا شوي صاروا يلقطوا تين ويبيعوا تين على الشوارع وفي الطرقات لحتى كبروا وصاروا وبعدين كبروا وراحوا تعلموا. كان زمان بلادنا في عندها فقر كثير كثير كبير, ما كنتش عنا شغل ولا كان عنا مجالات يعملوا فيها ولا إشي, صاروا وين فتحت شغل بالكويت, صاروا الناس يطلعوا على الكويت بطريقة مهربة, مفش يعني وسيلة يطلعوا فيها, ما بيسمحولهمش يطلعوا. كانوا يحملوهم بالتركات (trucks) ويطلعوا فيهم من عمان على العراق ومن العراق يروحوا على الكويت, يمشوا في الصحاري, يوخذهم واحد بيسموه الدالول إالي بدل على الطرق. في منم ناس يضيعوا وما يوصلوش الكويتو. يموتوا في الطريق بالصحراء. وفي منهم كانوا يوصلوا وبعد ما يوصلوا يمسكوهم في الكويت ويردوا يرجعوهم. كانت حياة بدائية لا في مواصالات مثل الناس ولا في إشي على أجريهم يوصلوا الكويت مشي مسافات طويلة طويلة.

**English translation:**

**Sana:** Our family was large and humble. It consisted of eight children. My father's income was very, very little, so my mother was the one who used to work and bring things home. She used to work in the fields, and plant broad-beans, wheat, chick peas, and lentils. Also, she used to pick olives, apricots, and almonds, then sell them to make money to raise us. When my brothers got older, some started going to Israel and working there to help the family. Also they started to pick figs and sell them on the streets and roads to make money for their education.

In the past there was so much poverty in our country, and there were no jobs for the people. At that time there was a need for workers in Kuwait, so people started traveling there illegally, looking for jobs. They were not given permits to travel there. People used to go by truck from Amman to Iraq, then walk through the desert to get to Kuwait. They used to hire *dallol*<sup>1</sup> to guide them through the desert, but many of them would get lost in the desert and die. Also, many of those who would make it to Kuwait would be caught by the government and get deported back to Palestine. At that time life was very simple, and there was no transportation, so people had to walk very long distances to get to places such as Kuwait.

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<sup>1</sup> *Dallol* – a guide.

**About CultureTalk:** CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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