

Senem's Journey to a New Beginning
Modified Version
Barbara Vaille and Jennifer QuinnWilliams

Chapter 9

Senem's Journal, Monday, March 27

Today I am very happy. We received invitation by Easter dinner from my American friend, Ruth. In Turkey, we do not celebrate Easter because we are Muslim. I think it is a feast. I can not eat a lot! There is something in my stomach already, and I have no room.

Karen laughed out loud when she read this. "Here we say, 'Now you are eating for two.' Everyone loves to see a pregnant woman. Don't be surprised if people reach out and touch your belly, now that you're showing."

"Showing, what is this?" asked Senem.

"When the baby grows and people can see that you are pregnant." Karen gestured with her hands.

Senem's journal continued:

The second reason is my old sister, Hulya, will come near end of May. She will stay until July and be with us when we return to Turkey.

Senem didn't have morning sickness anymore. She told the English class what happened at her check-ups every other week.

“The nurse take my blood pressure and weigh me. Then she listen to my breath in my chest and back. Then she listen with special tool and she hear heartbeat of my baby. And I listen, too. It is so exciting.”

Hulya arrived in May. Senem enjoyed her long talks with her sister. They cried and laughed as they talked and talked. Hulya was trying to decide whether to get married. Senem remembered how Hulya used to advise her about boys. Now Senem felt she had lived a lifetime in the past year. She shared her insight.

“Just listen to your heart and wait until the answer comes to you.”

“You are a wise woman,” said Hulya. *“I will wait.”*

On a warm spring day, Senem, Hasan, and Hulya decided to take a walk. Hulya said Ruth wanted to go on a walk, too. They decided to meet her at her house. Ruth’s front door was open, so they went in. All of a sudden, many voices shouted, “SURPRISE!”

Senem was stunned. She looked around. There was Karen, and Martha and her husband, Flor, Carmen, and nearly her whole class. Tarkan and some of their other friends were there, too. Everyone was laughing. It was a surprise baby shower!

Ruth said, “Karen, Martha, Hulya, and I planned this. It was so much fun.”

The party was fantastic. That night in bed, Senem said to Tarkan, “We have wonderful friends here. I am going to miss them. I don’t know how I am going to say goodbye.”