– Quiz

– Chapter 5, Gypsies
  – BJ and Bob driving with Jabbar and his dense sister Khadija
  – they perform juggling and acrobatics, women as background
  – abayas used provocatively - BJ is shocked
    – why? What is happening to her that she should respond this way?
  – leader asks Jabbar if they would like one of the girls to dance
    – Khadija says yes, Jabbar says "that's enough"; Khadija sulks
    – why these reactions?
  – later, Abdul Razzak (engineer friend of Jabbar) invites them to come visit the camp
    – he is to deliver gifts to his mistress Fatima (!)
    – Khadija does not go, reasons not explained...?
    – Abdul brings Fatima hashish, among other gifts
    – dismal scene; everyone tired, dirty, some sick...
    – sick, fat, malnourished child

– Chapter 6, Housekeeping in El Nahra
  – daily ethnographer's routine
    – BBC
    – Arabic drill, newly learned phrases
    – Bob goes off for interviews
    – BJ does housekeeping
    – both do visits in afternoons
    – evenings together, reviewing, writing in journals, reading, playing chess
  – heavy laundry done in Diwaniya, El Nahra people won't do Christians' laundry
  – only very low-status women go to the market
  – description of the food... general interest and ethnographic duty!
    – "local bread...healthful and good when hot, but usually it was dry and often tasteless."
      (they will think similarly of hers!)
  – water buffalo do better than cows; herders prosperous, but low status
    – a cow confers status, a water buffalo does not
    – arbitrary cultural construction of meaning...
  – BJ getting nowhere with the women after two months
    – thinks they are talking about her, giggling at her, but can't be sure, so can't respond
      – classic paranoia of culture shock
      – even if it was true
    – why isn't she making any friends?
    – "I felt very strongly that we must have some common humanity between us, although we
      were from such different worlds. But how to find it?" [sounds like Middleton!] p. 71
  – Bob to be gone two days; Sheik Hamid sends servant Amina to stay overnight
− neither looking forward to it
− finally, at bedtime, she asks "Is your husband kind to you?", cries, launches into life story
  − at 15, married to a 65 year old man (she was one of 12 children, poor)
  − almost died with stillbirth
  − husband dies, leaving nothing
  − husband's family mostly dead, remainder don't want her
  − Hamid buys her, gives her to Selma
  − now gets all the food she wants, Selma gives her cigarettes, Hamid is wonderful...
  − hasn't seen family in seven years
  − Amina: get a lot of gold jewelry from your husband while you are young!
− next day, the Sheik's women visit
  − they ignore her, refuse her tea
  − BJ points this out sharply: shocked silence.
  − Selma makes excuses and takes some tea
  − all then accept cigarettes
  − why doesn't she do laundry with them at the canal?
  − we never see much laundry hanging... BJ must be lazy...
  − she cooks - brings out Western bread to try
    − Sheddir spits it out
    − claims she can't cook rice, so Bob eats at the mudhif
  − BJ admits that she can't cook this rice; it is different from American rice
    − "Rice? Rice is the same everywhere" ... "I was obviously slow-witted as well as lazy"
    − notice any naïve realism here?
    − Fine for the anthropologist to be a cultural relativist, but what if no one else is?
− start to tease about sleeping with Bob
  − BJ sees them out and cries
  − "I would not have believed that I could be so upset at being acussed of laziness and
    incompetence by a group of illiterate tribal ladies...it was a real and very terrible snub
    now..."
  − BJ feels indignant, "they are nothing but a group of curiosity seekers"
    − Of course, what are BJ and Bob?
    − self-righteous, hurt... next day, unreasonably depressed
− next morning, Laila and two others come teach her how to cook rice
  − "We don't want your husband to beat you...After all, you are here alone without your
    mother."
    − What are the assumptions here?
    − Would BJ have thought of herself this way?
− that afternoon, visits Sheik's family, accidentally unannounced (Mohammed forgot)
  − sees Selma in daily clothes, making Sheik Hamid's bed
  − Samira (Kulthum's daughter) asks if she embroiders, suggests she embroider Bob some
    pillowcases
  − Laila to lend patterns
  − BJ has been sitting on the floor - not a chair
– Selma too busy to think about entertaining her
– Selma: the Sheik wants to meet you; here or your place?
  – "I must ask my husband" - the right answer!
– Purdah = Seclusion of women

– Chapter 7, Problems of Purdah [Sheik Hamza]
– Sheik Hamza arrives in car with driver to visit when Bob is gone
  – BJ does not open the gate; "my husband would be glad to see you"
  – anger, gate rattling, leave
  – Bob describes him as a wastrel, absent, spending "sharecropper's" money
– embroidery working
– Laila traced pattern
– BJ brings it everywhere
  – "the women all remarked on it" [apparently not quite typical behavior] but then forget her strangeness and talk freely
  – BJ doesn't have to talk constantly
  – could pick things up by listening
– Hamza had invited Bob to visit him through Jabbar; repeats, inviting BJ to his harem
  – Hamza's 3-story "palace" (p. 85)
– Hamza takes a large share from his fellahin, so they are poorest in the area
– Jabbar: he has to go when the revolution comes, as expected in the countryside - but not by diplomats in Baghdad
  – Ethnography is actually a good way to learn what is going on
  – Lynn Maners, grad student studying traditional dance in Yugoslavia: predicted the war in Bosnia based on changes he saw in the dancing
  – US consulate staff in Lima not allowed to leave a few neighborhoods of the capital, clueless about the country
– Hamza has sent his women away to Karbala, they have no choice but to go in with BJ
– "Trying to be as dignified as possible with two menservants, Hamza and his teenage son standing by goggling, I took off my abayah..." p. 87
  – [BJ has really internalized the modesty rules in just a few months]
– BJ refuses liquor, asks for tea
– excruciating decor... "vulgar"
  – petrified pastries, canned cookies, weak tea with condensed milk
  – plaster cake!
– beautiful gardens and view; Hamza unmoved, says he is bored and will leave soon
– "Mambo Italiano" and Elvis Presley
– gives them four armed guards as they drive two hours to next tiny town - Hamza is not too popular...
  – is anyone being ethnocentric here?
  – What standards is BJ applying to Hamza? Is this fair?

– Chapter 8, I Meet the Sheik
– Bob invites the Sheik the day after visiting Hamza
– Hamid plus brother Abdulla and oldest son Nour
- elaborate menu
- BJ wants to prove that she can cook... p. 96
- Mohammed reassures or distracts Bob when he is harassing BJ (p. 96, 97) - BJ finds him an ally as well as a servant!
- BJ declines a cigarette, Abdullah says "It is better for a woman if she does not smoke" (just like Kulthum, who said Hamid prefers women not to smoke...)
- Sheik Hamid impressed by her industry, having cooked all that food "by herself"