

## **The Key**

**By Faran Esmail Moradipour**

Whenever he heard the clanging of bits of metal, the boy knew his father was home. He had memorized every one of his father's keys and chains and he had associated them with maturity and adulthood; after all, the only difference he saw between himself and his father was that of possessing the keys and what they opened.

Having no schooling yet, the boy had not learned the true use of the keys. He did not necessarily understand that the keys were used to unlock and open other objects (usually with metal frames). The boy had not learned that the importance of the key wasn't having the actual key, but rather possession of what it opened as well as access to its innards.

Having no school to go to on a Monday, the boy was sitting inside his home on a sunny morning, when his father decided to take him to the beach. Every step his father took left an imprint in the sand. The boy would then make a game of the prints, hopping into each one, rhythmically. As he hopped along the beach, a glimmer in the sand caught the boy's eye.

Deviating from the path, the boy reached over, sunk his small hands into the moist sand and pulled out what he longed to hold. The key was small, with grids coming out straight instead of from the side. It was held at the hilt by a small metal band and a ring of rust. Three small holes adorned the end, a hoop to the left and right and a double-diamonded in the center. It seemed to have passed much time lying in the sands, exposed to much moisture.

Now standing at the tides, in the footsteps of his father, the boy was faced with an important decision; for a moment he contemplated taking the key and with it, the fast-route to adulthood and maturity.

“Would it count if I cheated?” After thinking for a few moments, the boy had made up his mind. He realized that he was not yet deserving of the knowledge to discover an unknown secret; he wasn't ready to possess a key to the unknown. When the boy was ready to unlock secrets, he would be presented with both the key and the lock.

He looked up to see his father, waiting ahead. With much haste, the boy ran up behind his father, still stepping in his prints, leaving the key to decay in the Sands of Time.