

the next destination of *Other Lands*. "Till we countrymen meet again!" the announcer said brightly.

Sunja got up and turned off the television. She wanted to head to the kitchen to boil some water for tea.

"Go-saeng," Yangjin said out loud. "A woman's lot is to suffer."

"Yes, go-saeng" Kyunghee nodded, repeating the word for suffering.

All her life, Sunja had heard this sentiment from other women, that they must suffer—suffer as a girl, suffer as a wife, suffer as a mother—die suffering. Go-saeng—the word made her sick. What else was there besides this? She had suffered to create a better life for Noa, and yet it was not enough. Should she have taught her son to suffer the humiliation that she'd drunk like water? In the end, he had refused to suffer the conditions of his birth. Did mothers fail by not telling their sons that suffering would come?

"You're upset about Noa," Yangjin said, "I know. He's all that you ever think about. First it was Koh Hansu, and now it's Noa. You're suffering because you wanted that terrible man. A woman can't make a mistake like that."

"What else should I have done?" Sunja blurted out, then immediately regretted doing so.

Yangjin shrugged, almost in comic imitation of the woman farmer.

"You brought shame on your child by having that man as his father. You caused your own suffering. Noa, that poor boy, came from a bad seed. You're fortunate that Isak married you. What a blessing that man was. Mozasu came from better blood. That's why he's so blessed in his work."

\* expectation of suffering

blame placed on Sunja

suggests that men can't

snaring culture