

Noticing the Past Perfect Tense

Instructions: Read the following passages from the article "Sweet, Sour, and Resentful".

- Underline verbs in the Past Perfect tense.
- **Highlight** "had" with causative meaning in yellow.
- **Highlight** "had to" (the past tense of modal "have to") in blue.
- **Highlight** the Past Simple form of the verb "have" in green.

Paragraph 3: By the time of the Iranian revolution, we had adjusted to life in California. We said "Hello" and "Have a nice day" to perfect strangers, wore flip-flops, and grilled cheeseburgers next to our kebabs. We never understood why Americans put ice in tea or bought shampoo that smelled like strawberries, but other than that, America felt like home.

Paragraph 4: Our guests squeezed onto the sofa, sat on the floor, or overflowed onto the patio. We eventually **had to explain** to our American neighbors why there were so many cars parked in front of our place every weekend. My mother, her diplomatic skills in full swing, **had me deliver** plates of Persian food, decorated with radish roses and mint sprigs, to them.

Paragraph 6: Because my mother did not drive, my father took her to buy ingredients every Tuesday after work. In Abadan, my mother and I had started most days in the market, going from vendor to vendor looking for herbs, vegetables, and fruits.

Paragraph 7: The first step was preparing the herbs. My mother insisted that the parsley, cilantro, and chives for qormeh sabzi, herb stew, **had to be** finely chopped by hand. The food processor, she explained, squished them. As she and my father sat across the table wielding huge knives, they argued incessantly.

Paragraph 8: While all four burners were in use, my mother mixed the ground beef, rice, split peas, scallions, and herbs for stuffed grape leaves. I chopped the stems of the grape leaves. I had tried stuffing them once, but my rolls, deemed not tight enough, were promptly unrolled and then rerolled by my mother.

Paragraph 9: She soaked walnuts and almonds in water to plump them up; fried eggplants for kashk-e bademjan, a popular appetizer with garlic, turmeric, mint, and whey; made torshi-e limo, a sour lemon condiment; and slivered orange peels. I had been fired from this task also, having left on far too much pith.

Paragraph 10: Almost 40 years later, I still remember my mother's disappointment and her explaining to my father that her sister **had** time to talk because my aunt's maid did all the cooking.

Paragraph 11: As people entered the dining room, they gasped at the sight of my mother's table. Her zereshk polow, barberry rice, made many emotional. There are no fresh barberries in America (my mother had brought dried berries from Iran in her suitcase), and the sight of that dish, with its distinct deep red hue, was a reminder of the life our guests had left behind.

Paragraph 12: On Sundays, my mother lay on the sofa, her swollen feet elevated, fielding thank-you phone calls from our guests. She **had** the same conversation a dozen times; each one ended with, "Of course you can give our name to your cousins."