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The harsh
reality

The snowball
effect

Comic: Sneeze freaks!!

Life with less
of our tech
friends



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Executive Editor

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Advisory Board

Maria Sheikh
Hafsa Kamal
Eeman Adeel
Asiya Marfani
Zawjah Ibrahim



Design & Layout

Zawjah Jahangir



Printers

wasaprinters@cyber.net.pk



Reach us at

30-C, Basement 2nd Comm. Street,
Phase 4, D.H.A., Karachi, Pakistan.

P +92 21 35313278

W radiance.fahmedeen.org

E radianceteam8@gmail.com

For Advertising Queries

E marketing@fahmedeen.org

P + 92 314 298 1344

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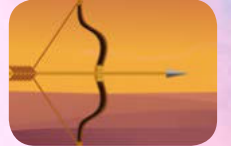
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The snowball effect

Ibn Al Hasan (A.R.) once remarked: "I am grieving for forty years over a sin committed by me." Someone enquired, "What sin is that which has caused great concern and grief in you?"

He replied, "Once I was visited by a friend and in order to entertain him, I bought fish which we subsequently ate. After the meal, I scraped some sand from my neighbour's wall without his permission, to wash my hands. I am still crying over that sin."

The questioner expressed surprise over the fact that such a small fault has created so much of anguish and concern. So Ibn Al Hasan explained that according to Rasulullah ﷺ, the biggest sin before Allah is that little slip or error which man regards as trifle and unimportant and therefore thinks it unnecessary to seek forgiveness.

We think small sins don't require tuaba and so we don't repent for them

If a man acknowledges his wrongs to be quite serious, he would certainly feel guilty and ashamed of his actions and this would induce him to repent, seek Allah's forgiveness through

which he receives pardon and in this way obliterates all trace of the sin.

Truly, how many times we have neglected a sin thinking it to be no big deal at all and thus never sought forgiveness over it?

They turn bigger and bigger

Another reason why small sins can be dangerous is that they pave the path to even more sins and these sins being committed again and again and thus piling up into a mountain. "Grains of sand are very small, yet, if accumulated, they can sink a ship. Drops of water are very small, yet how often they become a mighty river, a raging torrent, sweeping everything before them."

Remember those white lies? It never stops with just one lie, does it? Soon one lie leads to another, and soon those small lies have grown into something beyond our control. Like a snowball, each sin gathers until it becomes so big, it knocks out whatever enters its path.

Likewise the eyes looking at things not allowed for us. The eyes are the lamp of the body. When our eyes are healthy, our body is also full of light. But when they are unhealthy, our body is also full of darkness. When our eyes look at something wrong, it leads to sinful thoughts. If unchecked, it reaches the heart, which translates into action. So next time you consider looking at non-mehram a small sin, think again!

They put a stain on your white dress

Small sins put a stain on our white clothes. We all know too well that white is the worst colour to spill something on. Even the tiniest of food that drops onto a white fabric is visible no matter how hard we clean it. The sins we commit, even when we think no one is looking, make a stain on our dress that is impossible to get out.

They stunt our spiritual growth

The reason why these smaller sins can give way to bigger ones, is because they weaken our devotion, trouble the peace of our conscience, diminish the fervour of charity and exhaust the strength of our spiritual life. Allah ﷻ desires a full relationship with Him. Not just a stunted one of pick and choose - whichever sin we like, be chosen and whichever easy to go without, given up.

May Allah taala help us scratch out all sins from our lives, especially the small ones that actually become the biggest one

Ma'salaama,
Umm Abdullah Zubairi
editor.radiance@gmail.com

fresh
pens



by Manahil Gilani
10 years
Headstart School

“Sarah is your school sports day after two weeks?” Sarah’s mother asked.

“Yes Mom but I am not taking part,” Sarah replied, a dejected look on her face.

“But why dear? You always take part in your school sports day and you were so excited for it,” her mother retorted.

“Mom whenever I take part in any race, I always lose.”

“No beta you always do a great job in every event, I think you should take part in the sports day and show the spirit of sportsmanship.”

Ok Mom I’ll try.”

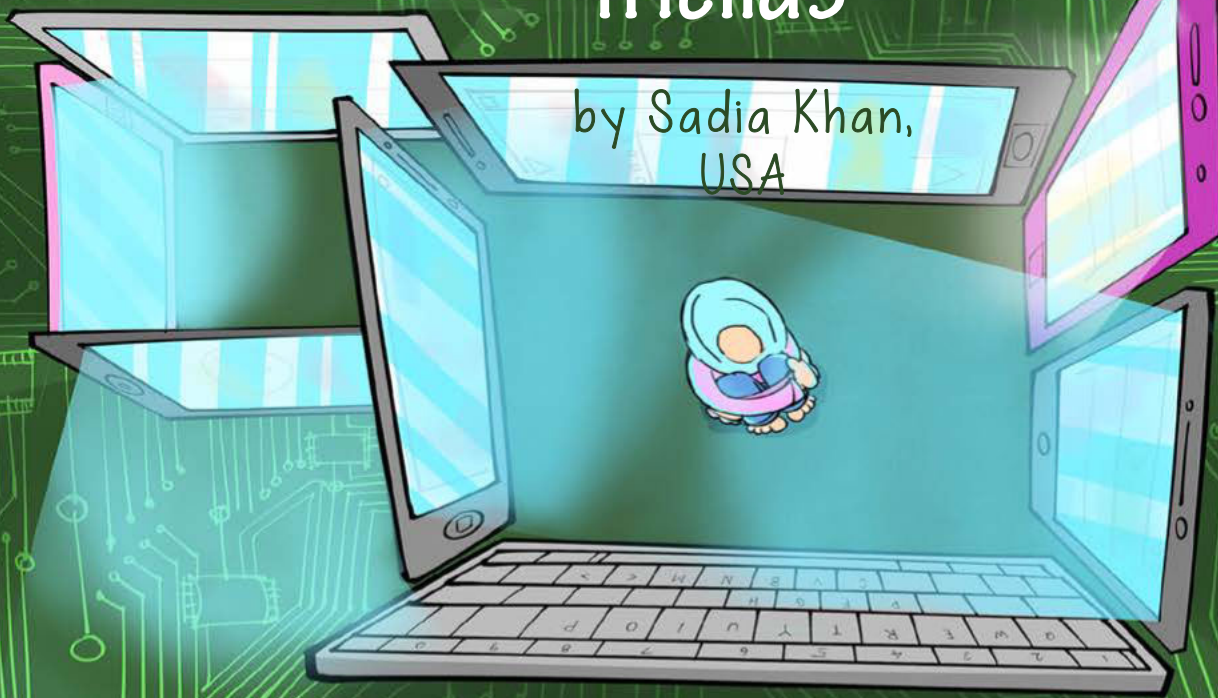
At the sports day...

Sarah came rushing to her mother and hugged her. “Yeah! Mom you were so right. I won this race and I got a gold medal. I learned that we should never give up no matter what the circumstances.”

“Hope you will always remember this lesson and I won’t have to remind you next time,” her mother said with a mischievous smile.

Life with less of our tech friends

by Sadia Khan,
USA



Virtual learning blues are everywhere these days.... All of us are really trying our best to get the hang of it. When the lockdown first started those zoom calls with the teachers were always fun.... Kids looked forward to those lessons and would get excited to see some of the familiar and friendly faces. However, zoom classes are apparently much more prolonged. Kids have to complete their work and show their teachers everything that they are learning. Increased homework and many ways of participation.

My 7 year old Zoha started grade 2 and according to her 3 year old sister, grade 2 is a 'BIG' grade. According to her, we need to give Zoha more milk, lots of fruit snacks and freezies so she can feel energetic in class (Seriously, I am not sure who made her in-charge of our nutritional well-being.)

The teacher asks one question every morning, to which the kids have to respond with any two things that they can think of.... Today she asked "so if we have no TV, no computer, iPad

or cell phone in our homes...what can we do with our time?"....I was sitting in the room with Zoha while she was taking her class. I paused and put my phone down on the side table next to me and started to look around Zoha's room.

I love the colours she chose for her room. I love her bed and how neatly she always keeps it, and then I noticed the carpet that we replaced upstairs getting loose in some areas so I need to make that phone call to the flooring people we hired...oh need my phone again! Okay I'll just wait and let this phone rest. I started to gaze around again...her little desk and chair is so cute, love amazon shopping! It's a blessing to us moms with little kids, isn't it? And that reminds me I need to order Zoha's friend's gift.... "Okay phone, no I am not going to bug you yet."

I left Zoha's room and went to get my daily planner from the kitchen. Returned and started to write down the things I needed to do... then I heard a kid's response in Zoom. He said

The blooper coin will add another half hour to no screen time and no one wants that!

“Oh, umm we need screen so we can eat our meals!” I don’t think the teacher heard him and I don’t even know if Zoha did, lol, but I had to try and not laugh out loud. We really do rely completely on our phones for everything. Staying in touch with people, shopping, reading and ordering food. I even use my MacBook to write all my stories and groceries...almost everything is done through our phones, laptops, and iPads.

So, this week I planned a fun activity with my girls. Zoha is 7 and Zyva is 3, we made a plan to be technology free daily for 2 hours. We made a list with mutual consent of the things that we can do without our phones, TV, iPad, Alexa, Google and all our virtual friends in the house. If we get carried away- we get a blooper coin, however, if we complete the whole two hours without any whining and singing the “I am bored” song then we get to choose our own dinner. It can be M&M’s with rice, an ice cream sandwich, or some fruit. The blooper coin will add another half hour to no screen time and no one wants that!

Here is the list we tried making, current pandemic does make it a little tough, but, you have no excuse not to try it out!

Things to do as a family without technology:

1. Cook dinner together.
2. Read books
3. Build puzzles
4. Take a walk.
5. Have a backyard picnic.
6. Hula hoop practice.

7. Take a bike ride.
8. Play hide and seek.
9. Bake cookies.
10. Visit a friend in drive by style.
11. Go outside and enjoy with family.
12. Make a meal and surprise a neighbour.
13. Make a chalk picture in your driveway.
14. Make pizza from scratch.
15. Rake an older neighbour’s lawn.
16. Play miniature golf.
17. Play a game of hockey.
18. Play a board game.
19. Try some food you’ve never had before.
20. Build a snow or leaf fort.
21. Hike through the woods.
22. Shoot some hoops.
23. Do a family art project.
24. Make a family breakfast.
25. Make a care package for your local hospital.
26. Roast marshmallows.
27. Plant a garden.
28. Take a family trip to the zoo or museum.
29. Go fishing
30. Build a birdhouse or a bird feeder.
31. Clean house and donate items.
32. Heave a treasure hunt.
33. Plant a tree.
34. Fruit picking at local farms
35. Go to the beach.
36. Call grandparents
37. Gather flowers and make an arrangement for mommy.
38. Paint a picture.

So far this is what we have and we are very excited! Hope this makes a great family bonding and also gives us a refreshing break from the must haves of this era. Ameen

No ice skates in Burma

Part 3 of 3



by Adeen Ahmed
11 years
A homeschooler

We'd been up since five in the morning, packing stuff into moldy old cardboard boxes. The boat was supposed to come at ten o'clock that night, and the whole day was supposed to be for packing every nook and cranny of the house.

"Why do we have to get up so early to do the packing?" I groaned, "we have the whole day for it."

"Yes, but time flies, young lady," snapped Mama, "and we wouldn't want to miss the boat to Malaysia, would we?"

"Time doesn't have wings," said Ayla serenely.

"I wish I had wings," said Alya longingly. "Then we could just fly over the ocean to Malaysia, couldn't we?"

"Yes, dear, but we aren't going to fly to Malaysia, we are going to sail," said Mama patiently. I packed up the last of the clothes, tying them tightly by jute string. I couldn't wait to get into the boat that took us to Malaysia. Papa had explained that we'd need to be really quiet when we were going to the docks and when we were getting in that boat. He'd told us that some Buddhists were sometimes on the lookout for any Muslims that were escaping. I'd heard of many people who tried to escape but got caught by the Buddhists or drowned at sea. It filled me with shivers of terror, but I knew that the only way to get out of Rohingya was to sail there.

Shivering slightly, I glanced around the empty house which was only filled with boxes and bags. This house had been a home to me ever since I was born. I had lived in here for eleven years. Here I'd made promises and kept secrets and played and eaten and slept. But now we were leaving it - we were leaving everything for a better life in Malaysia.

I shoved my beloved Skater's Crystal carefully in one of the bags. "I'm done!" I called.

It was ten o'clock. We were slipping silently past the huts like shadows in the night. Ayla was half-asleep but Alya was wide awake, running fast, rustling everything she went by. Heaving all the bags and boxes was hard enough, let alone control a six-year-old.

"Alya!" Come back this instant!" I hissed.

"What?" she yelled. She was a good way off and couldn't listen my whisper.

"I SAID, come back right NOW!" I half-whispered.

She strained her ears, then nodded her head and came running to me. In her speed, she knocked over a large wooden crate of iron nails. The nails spread out on the rocky road, clinking everywhere, while the crate rolled around and disappeared out of sight.

Papa had explained that we'd need to be really quiet when we were going to the docks and when we were getting in that boat. He'd told us that some Buddhists were sometimes on the lookout for any Muslims that were escaping.

Then suddenly there was a terrific bang, and, just for a fraction of a second I saw the wooden crate being shot by a bullet.

Five hooded men came, their guns raised. They reminded me of Death Eaters.

They cocked their guns, and shot.

And then there we were, running for our lives, dodging this way and that. We managed to throw them off our scent, though we could hear faint gunshots in the distance. And suddenly we were in full view of the docks. We threw our bags and boxes in, and piled up in the boat. There was Aassia's family with us, too. And suddenly the Buddhist shooters came into the distance. The boat's master started the rickety, rusty engine. We propelled forward, and one of the shooters fired two bullets at us, but they just hit the water and sank.

We'd gotten away. We were sailing towards a clearer tomorrow.

Epilogue

Three Years Later

Tormentina Ramsey leaned back into the seat of the limousine, looking out on the quirky Malaysians moving up and down the street. Her secretary, Rosemary Clark, was sitting next to her, clipboard and pen in hand.

"What brings you to Malaysia, Miss Ramsey?" she asked, with a curious expression on her face "especially in winter?"

"I wanted to visit the place where I first learned to ice skate," Tormentina replied, her green gray eyes shining. "I used to live in Malaysia for two years and I learned to ice skate here."

"How interesting!" said Rosemary.

"Yes," agreed Tormentina, pushing out her long red hair out of her face. "I'm going to donate \$500 to this place. This place was the spark of my career."

They stopped outside a place called Ice Skating: Training for Beginners. Tormentina got out of the limousine, with Rosemary clutching her clipboard behind her. A young woman stood at the entrance.

"Good afternoon, Miss Ramsey," she said, taking her inside the building. They took a long tour of the whole place, where Tormentina saw beginners learning, training, and practicing. Suddenly, her eyes fell on a fourteen-year-old girl with night-dark hair and soft brown eyes skating. She was wonderful at it, doing all the moves the right way, even inventing up as she went along.

Tormentina felt an immense interest in her.

"This girl skates wonderfully," she said, indicating towards her.

"Oh, yes," said Dora Cheok, who was the woman showing her around. "She's from Burma, as a refugee. She came here in Malaysia three years ago, and she told me all about it." She paused.

"Do go on," said Tormentina, wanting to know more.

"They lived three months in a refugee camp, and then her father got a job as an officer for the subway. They moved in a neighborhood a few blocks away from here, and two months later, when her father was promoted as a lawyer for luxury liners, she started coming here. She showed a passionate desire to learn how to ice skate. She also has two little adopted

sisters, who often come here to learn skating.”

“What is her name?” Torpentina inquired.

Dora looked towards the girl fondly. “Rania,” she said softly.

“How fascinating,” proposed Torpentina. “This girl – she reminds of what I was, fifteen years ago.”

“She has got immense talent,” Dora told the internationally-known skating star, “if only someone would give her more...you do know, Miss Ramsey, that we are not very wealthy in our resources: but I’ve seen plenty of young stars here with loads of talent in them. Sadly, we can only facilitate them with teaching, a rink, some shoes and courage alongside patience.”

“In this girl,” Torpentina predicted philosophically, “I see something.”

“What, Miss Ramsey?” asked Rosemary breathlessly.

“I’ve seen young people,” parodied Torpentina whimsically, “who were born, purely destined, with stardom, those who have successfully achieved stardom, and others who have stardom, handed down from generations, thrust upon them. I am only one of the many who have achieved it, but this girl, she is born with talent from the merciful heavens above.”

Here the girl looked up, her eyes like sparkling stars as she whipped her head around to look at Torpentina. A thrill went through her.

Torpentina, too, felt that thrill. She smiled as she went across the rink to her.

“Hello, Rania,” she said, quite frankly.

“Good afternoon, Miss Ramsey,” Rania felt happiness surging through her. She knew that just meeting this woman once, would give her all the confidence and courage and patience she needed.

They talked for some time. Dora felt a thrill of pride as she saw Torpentina coming back with pleasure and approval towards her.

“Miss,” she said sagaciously, “I would not only like to give funds to your hardworking institute, but also to this young girl, Rania. I would like to, without further ado, give a cheque of three hundred dollars per year to cultivate this girl’s talent. She is surely worthy of it.”

Little did Rania know that one day, she would be one of the leading stars in Asia. But she never forgot where she came from. She spent her money not only on the betterment of her family and the skating institute, but established refugee camps in Malaysia, Turkey, and Pakistan, and shared the sorrows and joys of the Burmese refugees she herself rescued from the brutal Buddhists. It was not only the Burmese she took care of – refugee Muslims from all around the world, from Syria, from Kashmir, from Iraq, from Yemen, and from Afghanistan: she helped them, and helped the children, and the families, and the young ones striving for happiness.

Rania has a message for you. She says:

“To change the world, don’t try by changing the WORLD first. Try to find that thing that makes you come alive, and makes you feel close to your Lord. And then try to change the world. Because what the world needs is people who’ve come alive and had realised their connection to their Creator.”

Autumn

Written by Arwa Akhtar

I think of Space

Written by Aminah Amanullah
A Homeschooler

I look out of our window and think of space
There is so much to learn and so much that
takes place

There are galaxies and stars and much more
I look at the planets through a telescope

I have seen Saturn a lot of times
But yet never got bored

Space looks endless but it's in Allah's hands
It's smaller than a grain of sand!

Autumn is finally here

Leaves changing their colours
Red and yellow, orange and brown
Falling softly to the ground.

It is the season of hats and coats,
It's the season of pumpkins and scarecrows

I like to drink hot coffee
Fall is here, enjoy the autumn trees.

Days are getting shorter and nights longer
Crisp - crasp - crunch

Are the sounds of leaves
Swirling, twirling, the autumn leaves.

3 beautiful things

Translation by Bint Aftab Ahmed

Who said this world was going to be a merry place? Who said that nothing would go wrong here? But yes, the thing to be happy about and what sets everything right is the obedience of Allah as depicted by this extract from a spiritual discourse of Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Sattar Hafidhahullah

When all seems too gloomy, and we see no hope for our sinner-selves in this world or the hereafter, the hadith of the Prophet ﷺ and Allah's Holy Quran are two treasures of infinite hope and guidance for all. In one hadith, the Holy Prophet ﷺ stated that three things can be your safe road, number one: fearing Allah ﷻ and fearing Him only, whether we are in a crowd or alone, just this constant thought and realisation that Allah ﷻ is watching me, HE is with me, can prevent us from sinning even when there seems to be no other way out.

Number two: speaking the truth and nothing but that, even when your honesty will not be appreciated or even when your honesty is what you will be ridiculed for. Give no care for the world and be honest; honest to others, honest to yourself and honest towards your faith. Last but not the least, number three, spending moderately, whether you are a billionaire or a beggar, spend wisely whatever you have and don't waste it away on never-ending worldly

pleasures and desires for that's a trap you need to dodge.

So let's ponder, dear readers; are we honest, God-fearing people? Do we actually fear Allah ﷻ? Perhaps not, because if we did, then why would we be sinning left, right and center? Skipping Salah, mistreating the poor, backbiting and misbehaving with our elders, parents in particular; these are all sins right? Do we spend wisely, or are we always unsatisfied with the brand we can afford? I think it's more of the latter than the former. No wonder there is so much unease and be-barkati in our lives today, since all the lovely teachings of our beloved Prophet ﷺ have been forgotten. We have forgotten that the Quran, Hadith and Sunnahs are not just prime guidelines and examples of how to be secure in our Akhirah, but also how to live peacefully in this fitnah-filled world.

May Allah ﷻ guide us all and make us amongst the Swaliheen. Ameen

Take advantage of five blessings before deprived



“Sometime in life, a sudden situation, a moment in time, alters your whole life and forever changes the road ahead,” writes Vania Faheem

Ayesha’s life was going on with all its charm like a student’s life goes on. It was Friday morning and her last monthly examination as a gigantic grin spread across Ayesha’s face and her eyes lit up like the sky on a moonless night. The well-awaited time arrived and the teacher announced the summer break holidays.

The kids were smiling with their eyes wide open, claspng their hands together, jumping up and down excitedly. The teacher asked everyone to keep calm. The most important announcement was still left. The kids thought that this would be the message of some party or meet up. The teacher asked children to keep calm and announced that they had to keep coming to school as their physics review was still left.

A foreboding discomfort of dread penetrated their stomachs, making the youngsters stiffen up. The hearts sank, tears of defiance welled up in the eyes. Two more days! “Noooo, that’s not fair!” the whole class mourned, but no one

could do anything as it was the principal’s order.

The next morning, Ayesha’s brothers were playing in the garden and her mother asked her to go and play with them. But Ayesha didn’t feel like doing that at all as she was experiencing extreme pain; bouts of spasms travelled up her body. Using her will, she suppressed the pain. She asked her mother to give her medicine, but her mother advised her to get some rest only.

In the afternoon, her father asked her to come along him to the super market nearby to purchase some grocery items. With extreme effort, she put on her hijab and got organised. At the mart, she could take it no more as she felt a piercing pain penetrating her skull, making her wince in pain. In a quivering hoarse voice, she asked her father to help her move out of the place and to be seated in the car.

They came home as everyone was drained and it was a roasting day. Eyelids drooping, head

Trembling body, shallow breaths, Ayesha's heart was beating hysterically as it was the first time she found herself in such a situation.

spinning, Ayesha stretched out her hand, placing it on her dad's shoulder for support. A boiling hot hand placed on her father's shoulder made her dad frown in distress, as he turned around to face her.

Time passed as Ayesha experienced intolerable pain crashing her body and she repeatedly felt more and more aching. One day it was too much and thus her mother got anxious and called her father to take Ayesha to the hospital. He took her to the emergency; the doctor suggested her a glucose drip. Trembling body, shallow breaths, Ayesha's heart was beating hysterically as it was the first time she found herself in such a situation.

Next day she was feeling all drowsy. Her father went to take her blood test report. After seeing the report her father couldn't help himself - his mind went blank unable to comprehend the meaning of the bold printed letters splashed across the paper; tears gleamed in his translucent chocolate brown eyes. The report showed the presence of dengue and it was almost a war of life and death.

Ayesha was admitted in the hospital. Although everything was spinning out of control, her parents held great faith in Allah ﷻ as if they knew everything was going to be okay. All of her highly anticipated plans, which she was looking forward to, seemed to vanish like dust. She felt dismayed. Her platelets were touching the lowest and were at the last stage. Everyone was worried about her and

making supplications for her. Her friends were worried and they tried calling her to know

about her, but all she wanted was to be alone. The doctor asked her father to arrange for platelets as her condition was getting worst.

The super speaker of her class who would make everyone laugh all the time, the lifeline of her parents was not smiling or speaking a single word because of severe pain. Round the clock she was having blood tests thrice a day which was very painful in order to obtain W.B.Cs. She recalled the hadith which she had heard several times but only now she understood its meaning. Ibn Abbas reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your riches before your poverty, your free time before your work, and your life before your death."

She kept prayed earnestly to Allah, crying in front of Him like a baby to grant her health again and end her misery.

At last, Ayesha fought that battle with the Help of Allah ﷻ and after about one week, by the grace of Allah ﷻ she returned home. This event/accident changed her life and drew Ayesha closer to Allah ﷻ. Alhamdulillah. She realised that life is not only the name of fun, enjoyment and pleasure, it's a great gift of Allah ﷻ and as a Muslim it's our duty to fulfil all his commands and to walk on the righteous path. Time is precious, health is precious, life is precious, and one doesn't realise their worth unless they are lost

7 S's OF OVERCOMING FEAR WITH FAITH



1. STRONG FAITH

Allah knows what is best for you and when it is best for you to have it.



2. SUPPLICATION

Use dua and zikr as your shield and fortress



3. SUNNAH

Adopt Prophetic medicine and regime (dates, honey, olives) and follow the Sunnahs of eating and drinking



4. SADAQAH

It increases your blessings and drives away difficulties, diseases and calamities.



5. SAFETY

Take precautions and trust Allah



6. SABR

Exercise patience in times of distress as Allah is with those who are patient.

7. SHUKR

Be grateful for all the blessings that Allah has given you for gratitude increases blessings.



The Harsh Reality

Aavaiz Noor's story tells the harsh realities of life's many uncertainties

Standing at the cashier's counter, the tinkling sound of a door being opened brings me out of the chain of my thoughts.

"Welcome to DanBam!" I say in a monotonic voice.

It has become a routine for me, working here at DanBam Convenience Store, which is in the middle of a very busy city, Seoul. I work here every day from 3 pm till 6 in the evening, because I asked my parents to let me experience practical life.

Being here is like doing 2-in-1 chores. While the customers are busy picking up the things they want to buy, I make myself busy by studying, revising all of my notes again and again thoroughly.

My parents died on an overseas trip two years ago and I was the only child. They loved and cherished me with all their heart. But I was the one who always misbehaved with them and it feels like Allah punished me for that by taking them away from me. I used to shout at them and my mother used to tell me that if something happens to them I'll be all alone that's why I should be thankful. I didn't listen to her.

After their death, I was so lonely. Then I finally understood the meaning of the specific sentence which we often get to hear: 'Be thankful for what you have.'

'Being alone is hard . Mum, Dad I miss you both and I regret not treating you properly', Now I declare to myself.

I concentrated on my studies to get the schol-

Part 1 of 2

arship I wanted, and I got it after trying hard. My dream came true at last; being in my dream country, the Republic of Korea. South Korea to be exact.

Everything didn't go as I thought it would. My expectations went up in smoke as I got to know this place more.

So many crimes happen here every night. Everyday hundreds of people become witnesses, victims of those filthy, horrendous, scary crimes. Uncountable innocent people are killed without any reason. Children and women are kidnapped, held hostages for Allah knows how long.

But what I did not know was that I'd become a victim and a witness someday too, and that this 'someday' wasn't far. This was all my punishment, I guess.

As I mentioned before, my expectations were long forgotten when the curtains of lies were uncovered and the harsh reality of this place called Seoul was stripped.

A pleasant day on April the 4th, I had been working in the store. It was my first night shift that day. I was reviewing the notes I had taken in the lecture earlier. When the door opened and the bell chimed. The warm spring breeze rushed as if criminals were drained out of jail.

It was warm but it had a chilly feel, it crept up my back and I shivered. I wrapped my scarf tightly around my neck and stretched my

“Everything didn't go as I thought it would. My expectations went up in smoke as I got to know this place more.”

beanie till it covered my ears.

A girl, around my age, wearing a light blue blouse and tight black jeans with a pair of wedges came rushing inside. Her hair covering her whole face only her lips could be seen quivering. She was shaking slightly.

‘Is it that cold outside?’ I thought to myself.

“어서 오십시오 (eoseo sibsiyo)!”, I proclaimed, which meant ‘Welcome in Korean or Hangul.

She bowed formally and started walking towards the far end of the store.

Three young males entered after her, they had this freaky, peculiar feel in them. The man who entered first looked a little older than the two following after. He was wearing ripped jeans and a black hood which covered half of his face. He was looking spine chilly. His hands were tucked inside his hood pockets.

The man standing behind him on his right had a ghastly appearance as well. Fitted in black leather pants with a T-shirt, a weird logo kneaded on it, and some leather jackets. He had a mask covering his face.

The third man was the one who looked the most normal in them. He was wearing white T-shirt and jeans and a baseball cap as well. One corner of his lips slightly raised as if trying to mock someone.

I welcomed them and they glanced at me. The smirk widened slowly. My face contorted in disgust and I felt nauseous after seeing that smirk dancing on his face.

It was clear that they pretended to be custom-

ers when they were not in reality. They just passed through all of the stalls. Faint murmurs could be heard from the far end stall, which most probably belonged to the timid looking girl.

Since it was getting dark, there weren't any customers at all. It was just those guys, the girl and I. I had this gut feeling that something was wrong and those guys were up to something bad, really bad.

So without thinking about a thing I lifted the flap on the counter and made my way towards the basket lying underneath the stall, mainly used for disposing off the expired supplies.

I grabbed it and my legs carried me to the far end stall. The men were already there so I raced, sprinted across the store.

The girl was standing with her back glued to the wall, those men were eyeing her. I entered the stall and the guy who looked like their boss or something glared at me.

“Hey lady! You want something?” He inquired in a flirtatious manner making me scoff at his high end ego. ‘tsk! Egoist!’ , I speculated.

“Do you want to buy something from here? Because I have to dispose the products that are due expiry, I can't sell expired things you know.” , Faking the politeness, I snapped at him.

I began checking the products. Taking them in my hand one by one. After a few minutes I turned around and saw those men were staring at me.

I glared at them, my hands shaking as I hid them behind me. “Aren't you leaving? I have to close the store soon.”

Continued Insha'Allah

Hadhrat Abu Talha Zaid bin Sahal رضي الله عنه

Zawjah Junaid Mukaty inspires us with the details of a beloved Sahabi, Hadhrat Abu Talha رضي الله عنه, as well as his wife, Umm Sulaym رضي الله عنها

Hadhrat Zaid bin Sahal رضي الله عنه or more popularly known as Hadhrat Abu Talha رضي الله عنه was a skilful archer who belonged to the Banu Najjar tribe, a famous clan in Madinah. He was a strong and robust chieftain of his tribe, blessed with excessive wealth. Clearly a man who could not be rejected, especially for a marriage proposal.

However, there was a woman who rejected his proposal, the famous Hadhrat Anas bin Malik's mother, Hadhrat Rumaisa bint Milhan or widely known as Umm Sulaym. Her former husband, Malik bin Nadr, one day, furiously left the house because his wife had converted to Islam on the invitation of Hadhrat Mus'ab bin Umair رضي الله عنه. He was set upon by his enemy and was killed. Hadhrat Abu Talha رضي الله عنه then resolved to marry her before anyone else did.

He was rather confident that Umm Sulaym would not pass him over for another. After all, he was immensely wealthy, was an accomplished horseman in addition to being a brave soldier, moreover, he belonged to the same clan as Umm Sulaym; the Banu Najjar. Abu Talha proceeded to Umm Sulaym's house. On the way, he recalled that she had converted to Islam but did not pay much attention to it.

Reaching there, he stated the reason of his arrival. Umm Sulaym replied, "A man like you, Abu Talha is not easily turned away. But I shall never marry you while you are a disbeliever." Abu Talha thought she was trying to put him off and that perhaps she had already preferred someone wealthier and more influential. He expressed his concern to her on which she said, "I swear to you, Abu Talha and I swear by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ that if you accept Islam, I shall be pleased to accept you as a husband, without any gold or silver. I shall consider your acceptance of Islam as my mahr (dowry)."

The words and the reasoning of this intellectual woman made Abu Talha reflect deeply. He left her house but with a lot on his mind on which he had to ponder. He peered into his heart and his rational nature allowed him to identify right from wrong.

Soon he pronounced Kalima Shahadah on the hands of our beloved Rasulullah ﷺ. Their Nikah was carried out by her son, Hadhrat Anas bin Malik and mahr was what she had promised Hadhrat Abu Talha. Hadhrat Thabit says, "We have never yet heard of a mahr that was more valuable and precious than that of Umm Su-

Hadhrat Abu Talha was nearly seventy at that time. He was reciting Quran when he reached a verse related to jihad, his heart suddenly felt like picking up the sword again. People tried to refrain him because of his age but yet he went out with the army.

laym, for she made Islam her mahr.”

Love of Allah and His Messenger ran through Hadhrat Abu Talha’s body like his blood. He had an orchard rich in dates and flowing fresh water in front of Masjid e Nabawi. Rasulallah ﷺ sometimes went there and drank from the good pleasant water. A verse of Quran which became the opening ayah of the fourth Juz was revealed which says, “By no means you shall attain righteousness unless you give (freely) of that which you love; and whatever you give, Allah knows it well.” Hadhrat Abu Talha immediately gave away this profitable property as a charity only to attain Allah’s pleasure and love.

His love for Rasulallah ﷺ was visible on the day of Uhud when he was one of those companions who protected Hadhrat Muhammad ﷺ selflessly. Being an expert archer he gave a tough time to the enemies. He broke two or three bows that day. Whenever a man carrying a quiver full of arrows passed by, Rasulallah ﷺ would say to him, “Scatter its contents for Abu Talha.” If Rasulallah ﷺ would raise his head to look at the enemy, Hadhrat Abu Talha would say, “May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! Do not raise your head, lest an arrow of the enemy should hit you. (Let) my neck (be struck) rather than your neck.” Rasulallah ﷺ admired him and kept him near. He used to say: “The voice of Abu Talha in the army is better than a hundred.”

Hadhrat Abu Talha and Umm Sulaym had a son who died while still an infant, and his father was

travelling at that time. When he returned, Umm Sulaym served him dinner and let him rest. When he freshened up she told him about their son that he is at a better place than he was. The next morning Hadhrat Abu Talha went to complain about Umm Sulaym to Hadhrat Muhammad ﷺ. Rasulallah ﷺ smiled and made a dua, “May Allah give you barakah in this.” After this, Umm Sulaym gave birth to a boy who was named Abdullah by Rasulallah ﷺ himself. Hadhrat Abdullah bin Abu Talha ﷺ who became a famous companion was well-known for his intelligence. He was among the top ten most knowledgeable and noteworthy Sahaba of that time. Hadhrat Abu Talha’s lineage is known to be continued from this son only.

During the Caliphate of Hadhrat Uthmaan bin Affaan, the first fleet of the Muslims was formed. It was planned that the Romans would be attacked from the sea. Hadhrat Abu Talha was nearly seventy at that time. He was reciting Quran when he reached a verse related to jihad, his heart suddenly felt like picking up the sword again. People tried to refrain him because of his age but yet he went out with the army. They were still in the ship when he passed away. They could not find an island to bury him. Seven days passed but his body remained as it was, it did not change until they found a place to bury him in it. Verily we do not know the place where Hadhrat Abu Talha is buried, except that he was an astounding companion whose life gives us many lessons to learn



KIDS CORNER

Riddles

1. How many months of the year have 28 days?

Answer: All of them! Every month has *at least* 28 days.

2. What has hands and a face, but can't hold anything or smile?

Answer: A clock.

3. It belongs to you, but your friends use it more. What is it?

Answer: Your name.

4. Which word becomes shorter when you add 2 letters to it?

Answer: The word "short."

5. What can you catch but never throw?

Answer: Cold

6. There's only one word in the dictionary that's spelled wrong. What is it?

Answer: The word "wrong." It's the only word that's spelled W-R-O-N-G.

EASY CROSSWORD

CLUES: DOWN

1. Tawheed: Allah is _____
2. This prophet healed the blind
4. This is the month of fasting
5. The famous well in Makkah.
7. This prophet and his son built the Ka'bah
9. The name of the first prophet
10. The last prayer of the day.
11. The people of ignorance worshipped this.

CLUES: ACROSS

2. The religion of all the prophets
3. The final book of Allah
6. A person who knows the Qur'an by heart
8. The last and final messenger
11. The word for *knowledge* in Arabic.
12. Another word for mosque
13. The creator of everything
14. Allah gave us this _____ as a test

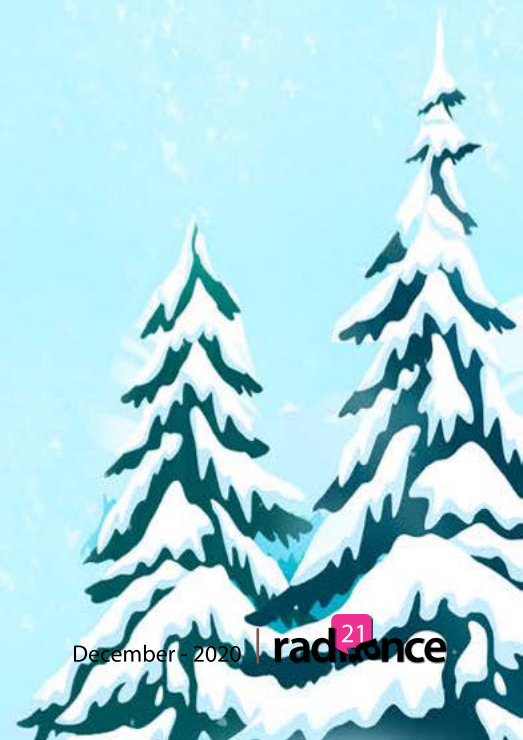
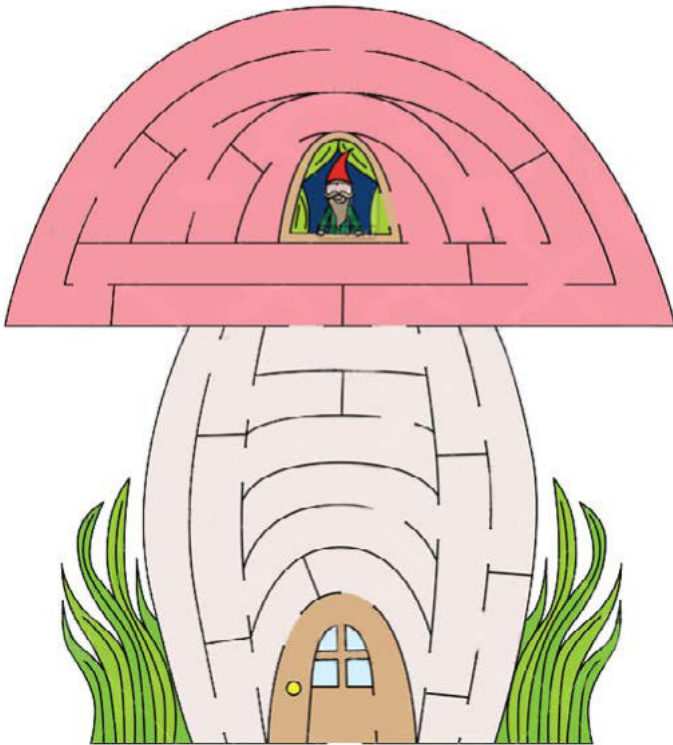
BONUS QUESTION: Get your thinking caps on and find out the names of the four rightly guided khalifahs.



Find the hidden foods



Mushroom Maze



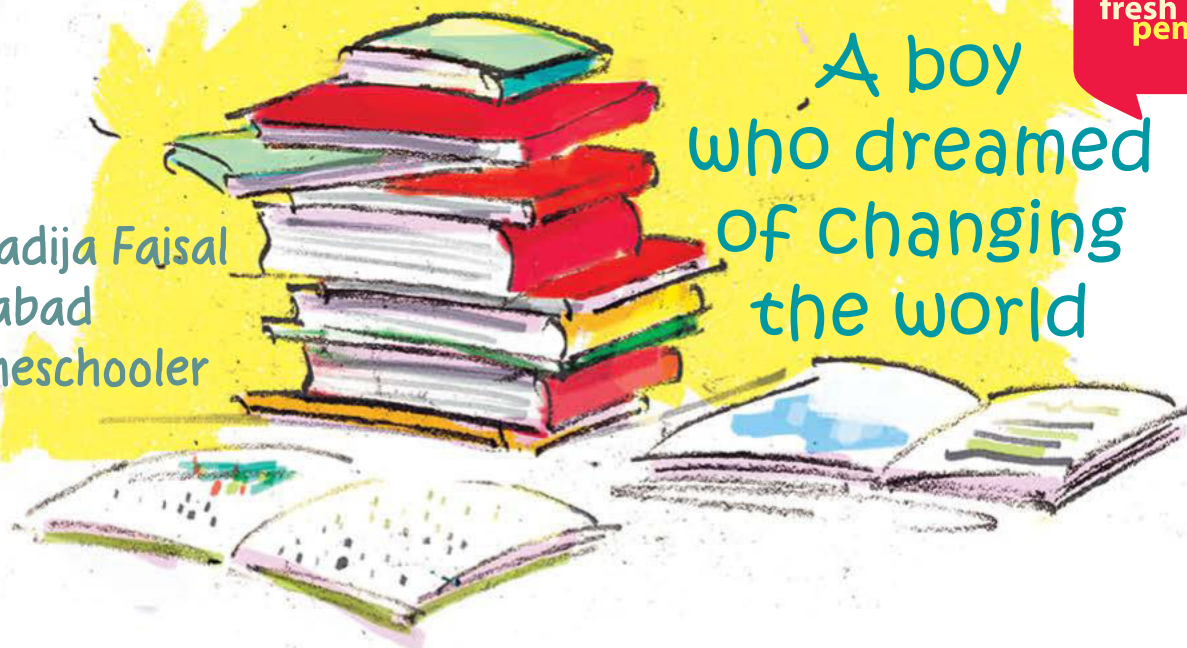
Taste Like Never Before

Sun Rise



A boy who dreamed of changing the world

by Khadija Faisal
Islamabad
A homeschooler



“Ahmed look what’s going on, how people are spending their time. Poor people are begging on roads, even children are begging. In Pakistan the environment is very substandard,” Ali said gloomily.

“Hmmm you’re right Ali we should think of something...” Ahmed remarked sadly.

“Yes so now I am going to my house and Insha’Allah tomorrow we will meet again. We’ve time till tomorrow for finding a solution, ok,” Ali said.

The next day...

“I got a solution!” Ali said happily, his voice ringing with excitement. “I will teach people how to struggle and work hard for living a good life,” he concluded.

That’s brilliant but how?” inquired Ahmed.

“We will set up a small school in our house where poor children will come and we will teach them how to read and write in our free time,” Ali announced.

“Oh, how incredible! Ahmed felt a new wave of energy within him, “Lets start from today only. I have friends who too might be interested in joining us.”

Ali and Ahmed went to beggars and tried to convince them to spend a respectful life and encouraged them to work hard and struggle for their children’s prosperous and happy future and send their kids to study. At first some beggars hesitated but after continuous convincing they were ready to be a part of Ali’s plan.

Soon there was no more space in Ali’s house to accommodate more poor children as already so many of them had become regular students. When their neighbour got to know about this, he donated a big place to be made into a school. With time the students kept on increasing and increasing and some of them even reached university level and lived respectable lives.

A small effort that Ali had put was now shaped into a big change in the world that helped thousands of lives towards betterment

Musfirah Zeeshan



Yahya Ahmed
6 years



Meesha Ali, 11 years
South Austalia



Hafsa Iqbal
Lahore



Nawal Ishaq
Muscat



Rumaysa Wasil, 8 years,
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia





Aatika Fatimah



Aminah Fatima



Hamza Ahmed



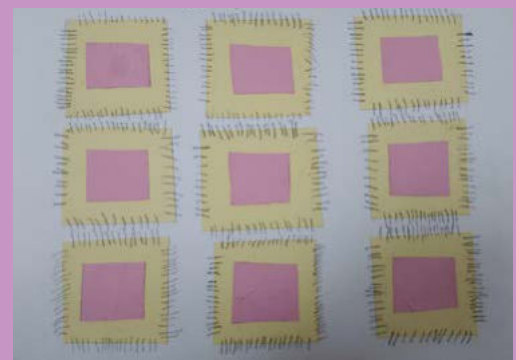
Rumesa Masood



Hamza Jaffri, UK



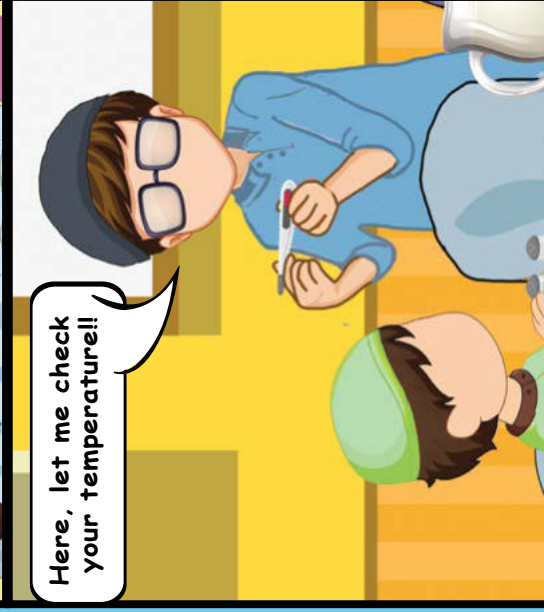
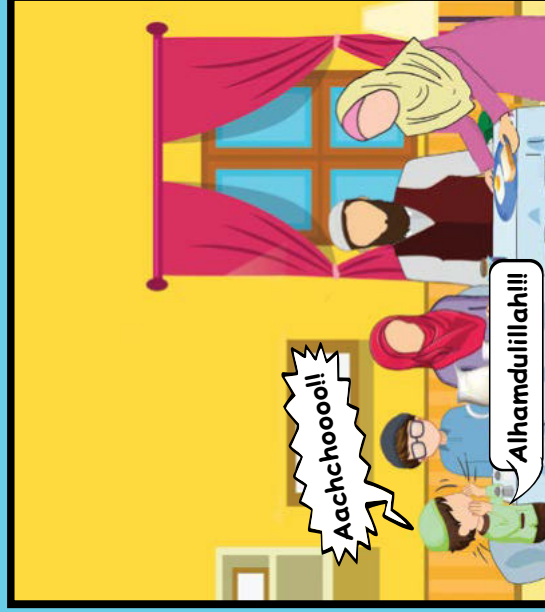
Zoraiz Adeel Khan



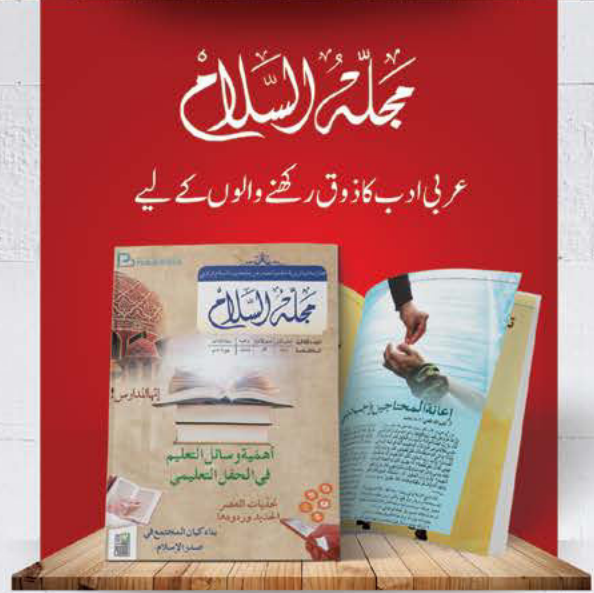
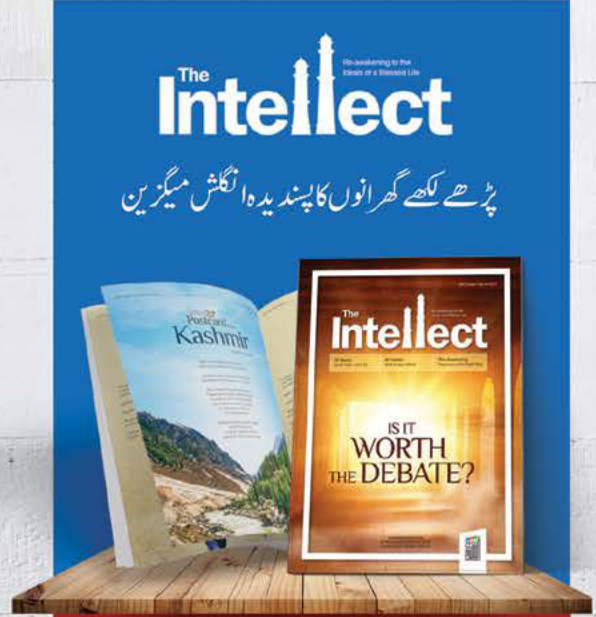
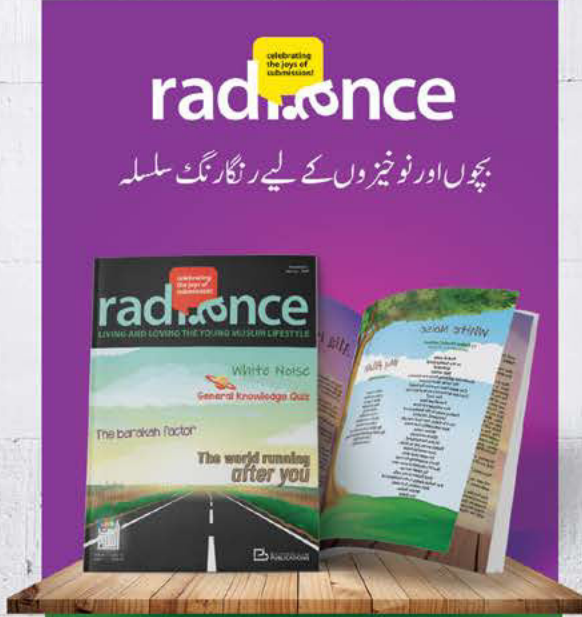
Sneeze freaks!!

Concept by Zawja Zia

Artwork by Zawjah Jahangir



جید علماء کرام کے زہرنگرانی شائع ہونے والے میگزین



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