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Fun workouts  
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## Alia in wonderland



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## Screen-free boredom remedy, anyone?

Internet is just internet, right? Wrong! And social media is just simple, sweet social media, right? Wrong again!

'Internet has so much good in store for us, you know,' you hear this from your friends, and even from your elders. The World Wide Web surely proved to be a game changer for the current world. Media, shopping, education, news, almost everything got a facelift. But you would agree that even if something has immense benefits, we yet need to be wary of its side effects. Just like we take a medicine only when in piercing need for it so to avoid its harms - similar to antibiotics taken in dire circumstances only, but avoided as much as possible so to be saved from the side effects that they have in store such as vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, bloating or indigestion, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, etc.

But when it comes to the internet and social media usage, there we ignore the hundreds of its side effects and are seen addicted to it almost 24/7. Well, you may minus the sleeping

hours therein, but perhaps had there been a way of using the internet while sleeping too, most of us would have used that to the limits as well.

It's like this...you go to bed, you check your phone. You tuck your pillow under your head, you check your phone. You drift off to sleep, you check your phone one last time. You wake up, you check your phone. You come out of the washroom, you check your phone, so and so that even while doing nothing during the day, instead of using your time for something worthwhile like some leisure reading, extra studies, learning a new skill, playing and chatting with your siblings, reading Quran, doing zikr, you are there with your beloved phone.

And the worst part is that even children are not protected from the addiction of these so-called 'smart' gadgets. How aptly a scholar, Maulana Arif Umar Hafidhahullah, said: "Whatever thing parents let their kids indulge in during childhood will become an addiction for the child in adulthood. Be very careful! Let your kids indulge in zikr,



tilawat, namaz, reading deeni books, acquiring IIm, so that all this becomes an addiction for them as adults.”

For children, according to the AAP’s (American Academy of Pediatrics) report, caregivers should seek out toys that facilitate “cognitive development, language interactions, symbolic and pretend play, social interactions, and physical activity.” They can also pretend with toy objects, like food, vehicles, utensils, and building. Problem-solving is another aspect of child development that toys can facilitate. “Children can play with blocks and puzzles to develop their fine motor skills, language and cognitive development, spatial awareness, and early math skills.” What the AAP emphasises most is that children’s skills develop best when they play with their parents and other caregivers. So isn’t it a great tragedy that the same parents who should be sparing some time from their busy schedule and their phones, think that their kids are instead better off with phones, iPads and other fancy gadgets? They say children mess up the house, they say they are noisy, they won’t eat food without screen in front of them etc, etc. But there are some virtuous mothers too in this world who say that ‘we are perfectly fine with the racket that our kids create in the house, but can’t tolerate the noise of music in cartoons, we can tolerate a messed up home, but can’t live with messed up kids’ brains. And while making them eat food, we read to them

books, we tell them stories of Sahabah and don’t make them eat with music and other filth.’ These mothers also practice what they preach, and of course they have tasks to do on phone too, but they can verbalise why they are picking up the phone, as in ‘Lets reply to dad’s message’ or ‘Lets check out the meaning of this word.’ This helps kids understand the idea that we should have a purpose when picking up our phones.

For the children who grow up with cartoons and games, when enter their teens, are left to deal with rampant harmful behaviours like cyber-bullying, cyber-theft, internet addiction, and the negative effects of the internet on social relations and social cohesion, just to name a few. It’s hard to tell teenagers not to keep a tablet in their bedroom overnight if you didn’t start that habit when they were young.

So now that we are hopefully convinced that internet is taking an excessive roll on our lives, don’t you think you need a screen-free boredom remedy? Pull up your sleeves and say a conscious no to internet addiction. That’s the first step and then get ready to engage your imagination for worthwhile pursuits, and in so doing, also help others around develop theirs

Was’salam  
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## **Walls of fire**

*Continued from pg 07*

want to be famous. I want people to look up when ‘Zara Malik’ walks by. I want to inspire people around me, I want to make a difference in people’s lives. I can’t do that by sitting at home!”

Yes mama. I haven’t made a difference in people’s lives, but I have made a huge difference in mine. In fact, I have created a black-hole for myself.

Parents, siblings, relatives, friends, I have let

no one beside me. I have pushed them all away myself. This was MY own decision, I have to own up, I have to deal with the circumstances, all alone. Fans, people around the world, colleagues, co-stars, no one is here for me today. People who I considered my friends, they are all gone. Mama was right, everybody has their own lives, they’re too busy to care about anyone else.

Regret, guilt, shame, sorrow, self-accusation attacked me.

Alas! Too little, too late

# Walls of fire

Part-2 of 2



## Maria Sheikh's story helps us see the real face of the fake world behind fame and glamour

*A few years later, as I sat on the balcony of a reputable hotel in Malaysia, sipping my coffee and enjoying the view outside, my phone rang.*

*On receiving, I heard someone crying from the other side. I recognised the voice, it was my younger sister. What she had to say was a horrifying news. My mother had been diagnosed with cancer. I did not know how to react. I told her that I'll be back to Lahore in a day or two and booked my flight straight away.*

I tried to stay calm but couldn't. however, the next day I was able to relax when out of nowhere, 'realisations' started hitting me. If she couldn't handle criticism just because I wanted to pursue my dreams, why did I care so much? All sorts of thoughts made their way into my mind and then suddenly I was all good. All I had to do was to go and see her. In other words, the 'formality'.

She wasn't there for me when I wanted her the most, is that what a mother should do? If she actually cared for me, she would never have kicked me out of the house, and she never even bothered to ask about me since then.

\*\*\*\*\*

Everybody looked up as Zara Malik, dressed in a maroon suit with white heels, hair tied up in a bun, and carrying a bouquet in her arms, walked down the hospital corridor. Hearing people murmur my name to each other made me proud.

'This was the fame I had wanted for so long, and the feeling of finally achieving that, oof! So satisfying!' I muttered to myself as I proceeded towards the ward.

I entered the room. For a moment, I was shocked. Seeing mama lying on the bed, pale as ever with dried lips. There was no one in her room.

For a moment I thought I was responsible for all of this. But then suddenly, Ramsha's voice spoke in my head: "Someone who stops you from achieving your dreams can never be loyal to you!" My heart became a stone all of a sudden. I kept the bouquet on the table beside mama's bed and sat on the chair nearby. Just then, the door opened and my younger sister entered. Startled, she stopped right there. I knew she was surprised to see me.

"Ohh, you're so grown up!" I shouted.



# I wanted to cry. I wanted to shout. I wanted to wail. But I couldn't do anything. I myself had chosen this life.

She looked at me with an angry expression, "Doctors have instructed us not to shout near her, please."

"Oh, okay. Mama's sleeping right now, and I'm getting late for a shoot, I'll come back in a while."

I lied to her, and quickly left the room. I did not know what was going on, why had I done what I had done, all of it was involuntary, I was not prepared for all of this.

\*\*\*\*\*

"Zara Malik, a famous celebrity, is critically injured in a car accident"

My neck kneeled to my side, semiconscious I lied on the bed. It felt as if a very heavy rock had been placed on my body, especially my head. I couldn't open my eyes. All I could do was listen, and that too to the 'breaking news' that was playing on a television probably.

I heard people enter the room, and soon I realised that I was in a hospital.

Suddenly, all voices faded away.

\*\*\*\*\*

I opened my eyes with a considerable amount of effort. I tried moving my legs, but I couldn't. Looking around, I realised I was still in the hospital.

I was lying there on the ICU bed, staring at the roof. I could sense some people standing on my left.

"I'm sorry, but she has been paralysed for the rest of her life. We couldn't do anything ex-

cept to cut off her legs to prevent the infection from spreading to her body."

Each and every word was striking me with force. I totally froze for some seconds, I forgot to breathe.

Then I heard my driver respond to the doctor. My driver, someone I pay, someone who works for me, was there with me in the hospital, no one else.

I wanted to cry. I wanted to shout. I wanted to wail. But I couldn't do anything. I myself had chosen this life.

Mama's words were all that I could hear.

"Zara, you're very close to my heart, and I'd never give you a wrong advice. Only parents are loyal and genuine towards their kids and no one else. The whole 'glittery and glamorous' showbiz industry is an illusion, it's fake, it's misleading, plain betrayal."

"Zara, I tell you, it is quite silly of you to think of this, you're forcing yourself into hell. You do realise the fact that whatever you're going to do is neither good for us nor for you, right?" And then what darts of words had I thrown at her.

"HAHAHHA! Oh my God! I never knew you had such old-school views. Well, your times were different, your dilemmas and circumstances were completely different. Maybe that's the reason why you don't get what I'm trying to say."

"UGH! You'll never understand me! See, I

**Continued on pg 05**

# Alia in wonderland

by Hafsa Kamal  
Germany

Part 1 of 3

**Y**ou wished for wings, for a cotton candy sky..." The form whipped out a list and started skimming through it in a business-like demeanor.

"Wait, is this for real?" Alia bleakly inquired.

"I will not jest with you." The list vanished behind the light, "I have come to take you to Heaven."

"Really?" Alia's back shot straight up as she threw the cover off her legs.

"Will you trust me?"

A seven-year-old who had been repeatedly told not to talk to strangers decided to turn this 'person' into a best friend. She crept up by its side and beamed.

"If you give me what I always wished for," she said, "then yes, yes I do."

"It's a gift from Allah," the form gently corrected her, "and He hasn't 'granted' you your wishes. It was His will to give this opportunity

to you."

Alia nodded gravely although the words flew right over her head. She wanted her wings. She wanted to fly.

"... And you have to ask Allah."

"What?"

"The ability to fly!" The form whispered.

"Ya Allah, please give me the ability to fly!"

She felt a prickle on her back. A soft brush of feathers against her skin incited a flurry of goose bumps. She shuddered. Her mind filled with the notion of wings spread by her side. Lo and behold! Enormous wings canopied each side as she stared above each shoulder with confusion.

"I have wings?"

"You have wings."

"W-what now?" her voice trembled with a new sense of excitement and nervousness.



# Her checklist was simple. She wanted to fly, help a person in need, eat cotton candy clouds and...

“You stand at the window and then jump, imagine flying with your wings and it’ll happen.”

“Will you hold my hand?” the seven-year old inquired.

“I am leaving,” it said, “you do as you please.”

With that, the form trickled into a molten liquid gold on the floor and dissipated out of her vision in specks. It was a very strange sight.

‘Time to fly,’ Alia heaved a sigh, ‘I am not going to get this chance.’

She was afraid mummy might find out about her nightly episodes and cut her wings off. The thought of clipping it off before mother sees it never crossed her mind.

She closed her eyes and wished herself to fly. Her wings jolted open once again in sync with her mind and began to flap. She started to ascend the sky. And then she was flying.

*Alia was actually flying!*

She felt an exhilarating rush of adrenaline pump through her whole body as her body hit the night breeze. Her eyes roved the ground as she attempted to find someone she could help in anyway possible. Her checklist was simple. She wanted to fly, help a person in need, eat cotton candy clouds and...

The fourth thought made her shiver. She never wanted her mind to steer close to that thought. But it was always a wistful wish she never thought would ever come true. Would it

come true that night?

A man in dirt-stained shalwar-kameez slept on the pavement, cross-legged and arms crossed, to dispel the cold. He seemed like a lean menial worker in his mid-twenties. His mouth was half open as drool trickled from the edge of his mouth. He must have been extremely worn out to have slept in such a condition.

She decided to rush back home and retrieve the extra bedding mommy keeps in the store room. God knows that this man deserved it. She turned herself around, flying homebound. Two folded duvets and a pillow was weighty but the elation lightened the burden quite a bit. She softly descended by the man’s side. She had already propelled towards dangerous grounds by talking to a stranger. What’s one more?

“Here,” she fervently hoped her wings would caution the man of ill-intent. He jerked his lids open and shot up.

“Aah!” he screamed.

“Don’t!” Alia hushed him reassuringly, “just take this! You’re cold!”

“I’m seeing an Angel!” His eyes gaped at her and his lips quivered.

“Where’s your family?” Alia asked innocently. The question must have jabbed a nerve because the man turned to the side and bellowed in agony.

"I don't have a family," he sobbed, "my mother was the only one. She passed away yesterday and the landlord kicked me out of the house. I tried to prove that I could pay him but he wouldn't hear it. My mother was the bread-earner, she was a seamstress and I was studying..."

He exhaled.

"Does it feel better to talk about it?" Alia asked wisely. The wings penetrated a strange holistic wisdom to her heart and she felt several decades older.

"It does but it doesn't help with my situation, does it?"

"What is your name?"

"Rehan Rasheed, I am seventeen years old."

Alia looked at him with surprise, "you look much older."

"Circumstances have aged me," the boy sighed, his miserable demeanor and hunched shoulders yanked her soft-corner, "I miss my mom."

Alia could empathize.

I miss my...

She shook her head. Tears threatened to spill from her lashes.

The concrete pavement dimly lit by the street lamp reflected a strange light from each face. Alia decided to break the silence.

"My dad is a CEO of this company," she racked her brain for the name, "R-E-M is the name, it's on Tariq Road. I can get you a job but the wage will not be enough for your education and housing. Lucky for you, my mother is a

principal of a school. A lot of questions will be asked but I can help you! We also need a boy as a helper in the house. There are a lot of possibilities but I can promise you, I will help you." "Your parents will have a lot of questions."

"I know," she shrugged. Suddenly her eyes lit up. She filled him in with her plan.

"That's brilliant!"

"You sleep now!" she gestured to the duvet and pillow, "sleep the way you did before."

'The moon has awoken with the sleep of the sun. The light has been broken, the spell has begun.' - Midgard Morningstar

Mentally checking off the second point from her To-Do list for the night, Alia braced herself for her flight towards the plum tinged sky. Dark clouds flitted by in flutters. She aimed straight at one. Her chubby fingers threaded against the wisps. It disappeared into fluff. Except for one.

A ball shaped cloud brushed cozily against her palms. She brought it to her lips and allowed the sugar to dissolve in the roof of her mouth.

"This is what Heaven feels like." A smile played on her lips as she closed her eyes, feeling the wind blowing about her as her wings allowed her figure to float in air.

"Yes, pretty much." The voice jolted her to consciousness. Her eyes flew open and she drew a breath. She dared not breathe and turn around.

"Is this Alia?" it inquired



**Continued In'sha'Allah...**



# fun workouts for a sharp mind

## 1. Hiking

I left my campsite and hiked south for 3 miles. Then I turned east and hiked for 3 miles. I then turned north and hiked for 3 miles. I then turned north and hiked for 3 miles, at which time I came upon a bear inside my tent eating my food! What color was the bear?



## 2. A sundial

A sundial has the fewest moving parts of any timepiece. Which has the most?



## 3. The evidence

A chemist was murdered in his own lab. The only evidence was a piece of paper that had the names of chemical substances written on it. The substances were nickel, carbon, oxygen, lanthanum, and sulfur. The chemist only had three people come by his lab on the day of the murder: fellow scientist Claire, his nephew Nicolas, his wife, and his friend Marc. The police arrested the murderer right away. How did they know who it was?



3: Here was a very obvious clue on the piece of paper. If you combine the abbreviations of the chemical substances on the paper, you'll get a name: Ni-C-O-La-S.

2: An hourglass—it has thousands of grains of sand.

1: White. The only place you can hike 3 miles south, then east for 3 miles, then north for 3 miles and end up back at your starting point is the North Pole. Polar bears are the only bears that live at the North Pole, and they are white.

Answers

# Hadhrat Utbah bin Ghazwan رضي الله عنه

Zawjah Junaid Mukaty writes about a true warrior and a wise commander, Hadhrat Utbah bin Ghazwan رضي الله عنه

Hadhrat Utbah bin Ghazwan رضي الله عنه was an early convert in Makkah. He was a thirty year old tall, brave and intelligent man when he converted to Islam. Hadhrat Utbah, also known as Abu Abdullah migrated twice, once towards Abyssinia when the Makkans made the lives of Muslims difficult and the second time towards Madinah.

## **Migration to Madinah**

The companions of Rasulallah ﷺ loved him more than their lives and families; same was the feeling of Hadhrat Utbah bin Ghazwan رضي الله عنه for his beloved Prophet ﷺ. When Muhammad ﷺ migrated to Madinah, Hadhrat Utbah felt lonely and desperately wanted to join him but it was not easy as the polytheists of Makkah did not know about his new faith. Finally he got the chance in Shawwal.

Quraish sent a combatant of soldiers under the command of Ikramah bin Abu Jahl or Abu Sufiyan to spy on the activities of the Muslims. Hadhrat Utbah bin Ghazwan and Hadhrat Miqdad bin Aswad also joined them, hiding their real motto. Muhammad ﷺ had sent a troop of eighty riders for patrol. Both the par-

ties faced each other at Raabigh. Muslims were victorious while Makkans ran away. Hadhrat Utbah and Hadhrat Miqdad were already waiting for such an opportunity and thus joined the Muslims and reached Madinah. There he was made the brother of Hadhrat Abu Dujana.

## **As a Soldier**

Hadhrat Utbah رضي الله عنه was a man of valour and strength. He participated in all the battles with his beloved Prophet ﷺ and fought bravely. Apart from the main battles like Badr, Uhud, Khyber and Hunain, he also fought skirmishes and was there at the time of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah and the Conquest of Makkah.

One of the narrations tells that when Hadhrat Umar رضي الله عنه became the Caliph, he sent Hadhrat Utbah رضي الله عنه in the fourteenth Hijra, to southern part of Iraq where the people had rebelled in Hadhrat Abu Bakr's رضي الله عنه era. There he conquered the mighty fortress of Ubullah and Dast Maisan. Another narration says that Hadhrat Suwaeed bin Qutbatul Ajli was fighting with his army against the Sassanid army. He had requested Hadhrat Umar to send some reinforcement for his help, thus Hadhrat Umar



sent Hadhrat Utbah to them.

There is yet another narration which says that he was sent with an army of twelve thousand towards Astakhar where Hadhrat Alla bin Abdullah Hizrami was surrounded by his enemies. There the swords of Muslims proved to be fatal for the Persians and the Muslim army which was now huge in number, attacked the areas of Ubullah and Ahvaz and conquered them.

This force did not stop there. They defeated the rebels of Mazaar and murdered its ruler. Meanwhile, Persians gathered in Dast Maisan and were ready to face the Muslims. The fight between the two armies was profound and ultimately Muslims were successful in hoisting the flag of Islam on the city of Abarqabad.

**T**he companions of Rasulullah ﷺ loved him more than their lives and families; same was the feeling of Hadhrat Utbah bin Ghazwan ﷺ for his beloved Prophet ﷺ.

### **Foundation of Basra**

Hadhrat Utbah bin Ghazwan ﷺ was a true warrior and a wise commander. His strategies were well planned and effective. He once wrote to Hadhrat Umar ﷺ that he wanted a place where his army could protect themselves

from cold and stay after returning from battle. Hadhrat Umar told him to choose a place near water and greenery. This way the city of Basra was founded and bit by bit it flourished into a developed city. Hadhrat Utbah appointed Hadhrat Mahjan bin Al Adraa' to build a masjid while Hadhrat Naafay bin Haris built the first mansion with the permission of the Caliph.

The founder of Basra was made the first Governor of that city. He held this post for six months and then resigned. There is another narration reported too which says that Hadhrat Umar asked him to report about the booty collected from the banks of River Tigris and Euphrates. Hadhrat Utbah appointed Hadhrat Mujashi bin Masood as his substitute and left for Makkah.

In Makkah he met the Caliph during Hajj. There he presented his resignation which was disapproved by Hadhrat Umar and he was asked to go back and take charge of his post again. He could not decline the orders of the Caliph though he did not want to go and started his journey towards Basra. On his way he fell from the camel and was injured badly and could not succumb his wounds. He died at the age of fifty seven.

*May every compassionate heart weeping with  
me be  
Perhaps it may awaken those who may uncon-  
scious be*

May Allah help us to understand the lives of these respectable companions of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Aameen



If you're hungry, grab your apron and get cooking! Making food yourself - with a little help from an adult - is a great way to learn about food and meal preparation. Misbah Hussain Sayani brings us some quick and easy, kids friendly sweets to give a shot



## 5 ingredient chocolate dipped peanut butter cookies

### Ingredients

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter or almond butter
- 8 ounces pitted dates ( 1 cup packed dates)
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 egg
- 8 ounces melted dark chocolate
- roasted peanuts, for topping (optional)

### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a food processor, combine the peanut butter, dates, and vanilla. Pulse until well combined and no large chunks of dates remain. Add the egg and pulse to combine. Roll the dough 14-15 balls and place on the prepared baking sheet. Using a fork, gently press down on each dough ball to flatten and create a cross hatch pattern. Transfer to the oven and bake for 9-10 minutes. It's important not to over bake these cookies, so set a timer!
3. Remove the cookies from the oven and let cool. To make dipping easier, freeze the cookies for 10-15 minutes. Then drizzle or dip the cookies in chocolate and sprinkle with peanuts. Eat...or let the chocolate harden and store in an airtight container for up to 4 days. Enjoy!

## Bread Dessert

### Ingredients

- Bread slices 12
- Milk 1 litre
- Sugar 8 to 10 tbsp
- 2 small cardamom

### For topping

- Heavy cream 2 to 3 ounce
- Instant Coffee 2 to 3 tsp
- Sugar 2-3 tsp
- Cocoa powder 2 tbsp
- Milk chocolate bar (chopped)

### Method

1. Boil the milk in a pan with sugar and cardamom, then let it cool for a while.
2. Take the bread slices and cut off the edges.
3. Cut the slices into a half shape and set them on a serving dish.
4. Pour the milk on these bread slices and let them cool.

### For topping

1. Add heavy cream in a blender with cocoa powder, sugar and coffee on it.
2. Beat it until all mix well.
3. Pour cream on your prepared bread slices.
4. Make it more beautiful by sprinkling chopped chocolate on it.
5. Refrigerate for approximately 2 to 3 hours and then serve chilled. Yummmm...







☆ Home Taalim  
is like a star ☆

Like how  
stars are  
used for  
navigation.  
Home Taalim  
guides you to  
the straight  
path.



Home Taalim  
decorates  
your home  
like the stars  
decorate the  
sky.



Shooting Stars  
pelt the  
Shayaateen  
and Evil Jinn.  
Home Taalim  
too chases  
them away  
and replaces  
them with  
Angels.

Taleem  
a great  
storytime

radiance





# Into my heart

Part 4 of 7

A story of two young worlds  
at war by Zawjah Junaid Mukaty

Javeria was all set to leave for college. She once again checked her makeup and hairbrush which she had secretly hidden in her bag. Her new friends were teaching her new makeup techniques and hairdos. "Life is great!" she whistled joyfully and put on her abaya. This abaya would go directly in her bag as soon as she reached the college.



"But this is prohibited in Islam!" Javeria objected weakly.

"Hey, stop being so childish. You wanna stay with us or..."

Javeria quickly interrupted, "I just said it like that. Carry on, I'm listening."

One of her friends was Sophia, a Lebanese girl who loved to boss around. She was outlining details of this Saturday's plan. They would gather at Sophia's house and then leave for Mall of Emirates. There they would have lunch and do some fun stuff like shoplifting and meeting boys. It was all a bit difficult for Javeria to digest but she was ready to enjoy her life fully. And why not! This was her life. So she decided against objecting the next time. At home she would inform that she was going to Sophia's house to catch on with what she had missed at college. It was quite simple. No need to tell them what they had planned.

That whole day she kept fighting with her good side. She did not want to listen to its pity and sins philosophy. She just wanted to chill. She wanted to explore the world.

In the end her bad side won the battle.

Locked in her room, Khadija was sobbing helplessly. Many times she had tried to picture the reactions of her family but it never occurred to her mind that her father would choose such a path for her. They were taking her to America on Saturday and soon she would have to join a church to become a nun.

She wanted to contact the Embassy or go to Maulana Jamshed but she was not allowed to step out of her room. Her cozy and nicely decorated room as well as everything else looked meaningless around her. Suddenly something occurred to her. She quickly sprang to her feet and spread her prayer mat. She had been tired praying secretly but now she can do it openly. On her prayer mat she offered two Rakaat Nafil and raised her hands for dua. A never-ending stream of tears left her eyes. "O Allah! O Lord of all! You're the One who guided me to the right path. You showed me the light. I worship only You, my Creator. Now I am standing at Your doorstep, please don't let me go waste. Please, please, please don't let me go waste."

That whole day she kept fighting with her good side. She did not want to listen to its piety and sins philosophy. She just wanted to chill. She wanted to explore the world.

She did not know for how long she sat there, begging for help from Allah. When the alarm for Fajr blared, she found herself sleeping on the mat.

After namaz she felt clear-headed and started to think of an idea. If ever she could escape from this room she couldn't still go to Maulana Jamshed because if her father came to know about him, he could be in danger. It was Friday morning and nobody had to go to work. 'Everyone must be sleeping', she assumed. She tried to jump out from her bathroom window but that also had iron rods through which she could not pass.

She only had today. The next day she would be flown to America with her father. The thought of becoming a nun gave her shivers. Among these scary thoughts she saw a paper lying under her door. She quickly grabbed it. It had Jim's writing.

"Sis, I love you and respect your wishes. I'm sure what you want must be worth and I'm also sure you would have given it a thorough thought. The only help that I can give you in this difficult time is that I can drop you till Barsha. I have a camping trip and I'll be leaving the house before sunrise. I'll open the door with a duplicate key and you rush outside in the back of the land cruiser. Make sure the driver does not see you. Hide under my camping gear. There will be an abaya for you to disguise yourself and some money. Keep all this as a gift. I have to pick Andrew at Barsha so you'll have to leave the car.

I will miss you and your baking. Love you a lot. (If you accept my offer write yes on it and tuck this note under the latch of your bathroom window by ten at night. And if no then tear it

into pieces and flush it.)"

Khadija never knew that Jim loved her so much that he was taking such a big risk for her sake. But Allah was answering her prayers. How could she decline?

Where would she go, she didn't know. Whom would she contact, she had no answer. Should she say no to Jim? She felt giddy and tired. She could see some difficult times ahead. She remembered Maulana had told her to do Istikhara while taking a decision.

Timothy was sleepless that night. He did not want to send her daughter away but it was really necessary for her. Children make mistakes but elders are there to correct them. He had talked to his friend, Edward, to take care of Katherine and try to keep her close to his son, Thomas. Thomas and Katherine were best childhood friends and now Timothy wanted them to be close enough to marry.

He had a long flight tomorrow and he needed tight sleep. Jim had repeatedly advised him to take sleeping pills before going to bed. He decided to take one now.

Istikhara worked. She felt relieved. She wrote a YES on the note and tucked it under the latch at ten. Five minutes later she saw a silhouette plucking the note. That whole night she wondered what her future had in store for her. Jim was taking a daring step for her. What if their father found out?

**Continued Insha'Allah...**

# Cloud of love

Umm-e-Hani Mansoor

9 years

Generations school

I think and then I remember  
That it is my mom  
Who takes care of me  
Caring for the house  
Assembling everything in the right order  
Making the environment neat and clean  
Thinking sure that the house is full of love,

I think and then remember  
That it is my dad  
Who drove me to school  
Who bought me many toys  
Working hard all day for the family  
Telling me wonderful stories at night  
Reciting the Quran regularly,

I think and then remember  
That it is my sister  
That when I get bored  
She plays with me all day  
Brings me a glass of water  
Appreciates me so much  
Cares for me when I am sick  
Helps me in cleaning the room,

I think and then remember  
That I have got blessed with a baby brother  
He cheers our my family with utmost love  
He's the apple of our eyes  
I know he disturbs me a lot  
But that too is fun,  
When he smiles I thank Allah  
and I pray to Allah  
That these clouds of love stay  
Ever on my head.



# Nature

by Ayesha Khalid Lakhani

8 years

Generations school

It was indeed a lovely sight  
With the sky so blue and the clouds so  
white,  
The roses burning fiery red  
The white storks carrying pieces of bread,  
Little rabbits here and there  
No foxes here, for them to fear,  
Monkeys chattering in the trees  
They too enjoying the nice, cold breeze,  
And in the midst of all that  
In the mountainside two children sat,  
Looking around their surroundings in awe  
In this scene they could see no flaw,  
For indeed Allah had made it perfect  
And as a stork pecked on the little boy's  
head,  
He could see it was truly flawless.

# Need for a Real Hero

by Ibn-e-Gul

In the world of ego  
You will never find  
A real gallant hero  
Who is always kind  
To the creature tender  
Having love in heart  
And a pleasing manner  
And a splendid art  
Of bravery and smile  
To help the people in need  
Who works hard and toils.



# KIDS CORNER



A nutritionist was giving a presentation at a conference. "The stuff we eat is enough to have killed most of us sitting here, years ago," he said.

-----

Employer: How long did you work during your last job?

Candidate: 30 years

Employer: What's your age?

Candidate: 20 years

Employer: How?

Candidate: I did overtime.

-----

I am a huge fan of jokes but riddles are harder and being up for a challenge is always exciting! How do you make the word 1 disappear? Add a 'g' then its gone!

-----

Two campers are walking through the woods when a huge brown bear suddenly appears in the clearing about 50 feet in front of them. The bear sees the campers and begins to head toward them. The first guy drops his backpack, digs out a pair of sneakers, and frantically begins to put them on. The second guy says, 'what are you doing? Sneakers won't help you outrun that bear'. 'I don't need to outrun the bear,' the first guy says. 'I just need to outrun you.'

-----

Nate: Why was school easier for cave people?

Kate: Why?

Nate: Because there was no history to study!

-----

Joe: What's the king of all school supplies?

Moe: I don't know. What?

Joe: The ruler.

-----

Unscramble these words which are all related to reading

EARXL

KBRMAOKO

ASESGSL

AIRAHRCM

OKOB

YORTS

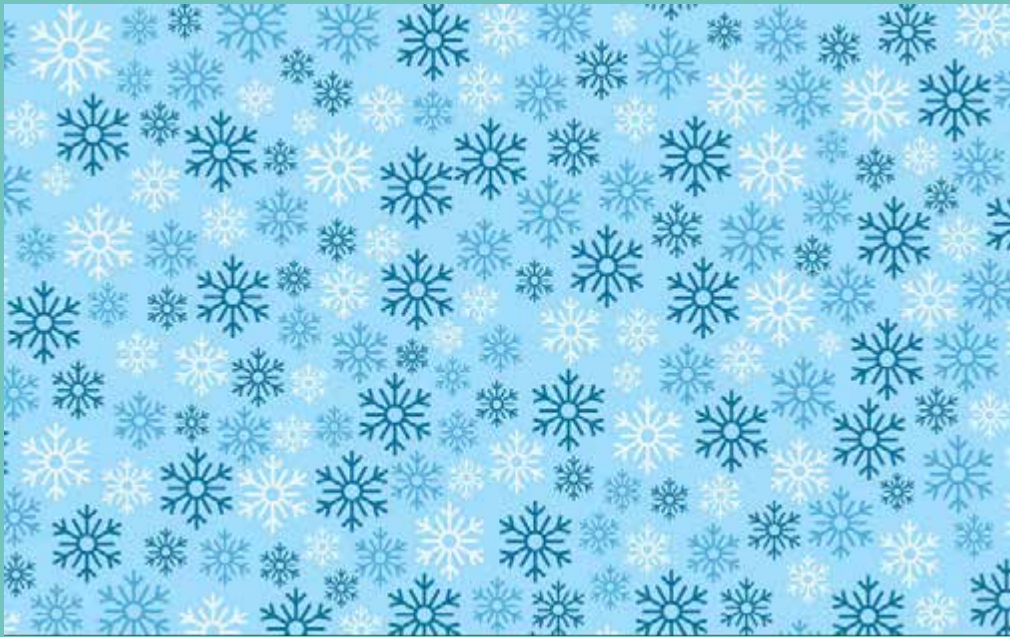
HARTOU

ENIMGAZA



# One Snowflake Is Not Like the Others—Can You Spot It?

Attention, puzzle pros: You've met your match!  
Hopefully you won't be sick of the sight of the white stuff before spotting our one and only special snowflake. Struggling to spot it? Don't flake out!  
Hint: Take a closer look at the snowflakes' "arms." There's one crucial difference about them, as the solution below points out.



Answers





# Black magic art

## What you need:

- \* light colored cardstock
- \* crayons
- \* sponge brush
- \* black acrylic paint
- \* something to etch with (fork, toothpick...)

**First step:** using crayons, get a lot of colour on your cardstock. The more the better. Dust off all wax when you are done.

**Second step:** squeeze some paint right onto your picture. Spread out with foam brush. once dry, apply a second coat.

**Third step:** once paint is dry, etch a picture onto the paper so your crayon art underneath shows through.





# Art Work

fresh strokes

By Afrah Muddasir

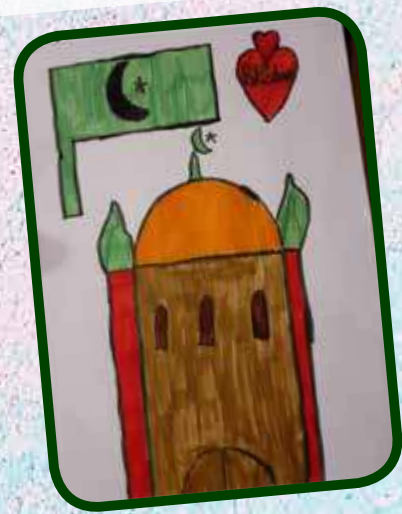


By Khadija Abdullahi  
USA



By Mariam Mehmood  
London

By Amarah



By Umaimah Shoaib



By Tooba Abdul Haseeb





# What is life?

by Amna Umer  
A.E.S. school for girls

Some days I'm just chilling on my bed, reading something or building up the motivation and energy to complete my homework and this annoyingly similar question pops up, 'What is life' \*sigh. Now I'm quite sure that this question is somewhat familiar and you have at least thought about it once.

So here's the thing, many people in this world think about this very question, but no one answers it. Well except Google of course, so here's what Google thinks what life is, "Life is the condition that distinguishes animals and plants from inorganic matter, including the capacity for growth, reproduction, functional activity, and continual change preceding death." Well, we can all agree that this, in no way, is the definition we're looking for. So what is really life?

Actually what I perceive is that life is the most magnificent gift from The Almighty. He lends us life to enjoy His blessings, thank Him and foremost of all, to test us. He lends us this life so that we can choose our own eternal destiny, whether we want to go in the blazing flames of Hell, or the fresh, cold breeze of Heaven.

So if you'd want to go in Hell, then you will spend your life doing wrong and going against the teachings of Allah and His last Messenger ﷺ, and if you wish to spend your life with full satisfaction and happiness, then you

will follow the commands of Allah.

Dear friends, life is one of the most astounding gifts Allah has blessed upon us and we should be grateful for it. It is also an Amaanat from Allah. For example, you like your friend's book, you borrow it, take good care of it, and when you're done reading you return it, but if you don't take care of it, she will be really angry at you. Similarly, Allah has given us this life as an Amaanat, you have to take good care of it or else Allah will be angry with us. Amaanat is necessary to be taken care of, besides, this life isn't ours, we didn't buy it on sale or create it, so what gives us the right over it? Many lives in the world might be suffering, but if they're true Muslims, they go through it all with full faith. That's the purpose of life, having full faith in Allah. If you don't have full faith in Allah and His last Messenger ﷺ, then our lives aren't complete.

So, dear Muslims, in order to get a rainbow, you need to go through the rain but don't wail over how scary, dark and stormy the rain is, instead enjoy it. Enjoy your life while you still have it by living it in the ways of the Holy Prophet ﷺ - surely living in such beautiful ways is the only manner of having a life of fulfillment and contentment.

Hopefully this was the answer we've been looking for



# Lesson well learnt

by Aiman Aamir

10 years

DHASCC School

**W**hats for lunch Ami?" Aamir asked longingly, hoping it would be something delicious to eat as he was starving.

It was a sunny afternoon. In the Khan House you could hear the chairs being pulled, Aamir's Ami offering everybody food and his small sister crying. Aamir was a young boy who was nine years old. He had brown untidy hair, blue eyes and very light pink lips. He had a small sister named Amina who was two years old. He sprinted down the stairs and saw a bowl full of thick yellow gravy which looked delicious and smelled amazing. As he approached the table he saw his dad sitting in his office clothes which were shining and crisp and he smelled lovely as usual.

Mr Khan was thin and tall, he had blue eyes and hair just like his son. Aamir was very fond of his father as both father and son had many things in common and they looked alike a lot. "Abu how come you are home so early?" Aamir questioned.

His father replied, "Just had less work today, thought that I might spend some more time with my star."

"Oh!" Aamir murmured.

"So what's for lunch today?" Aamir questioned once more.

"Dal chawal," his mother answered while her attention remained on her work. Mrs Khan was a very hard-

working lady and loved Aamir dearly but there was only one thing she didn't like about Aamir that he was a picky eater.

"But Ami I don't like dal chawal!" Aamir sighed disapprovingly.

Suddenly the room fell silent and everybody stared at Aamir. His Mother turned from Amina and looked at Aamir, she told him to sit and explained lovingly, "Beta I know you don't like it but you should try and eat everything which is cooked as it is a blessing from Allah. Try thinking about those who don't even have anything to eat and they stay hungry for days. You should be grateful that every day you have different choices of food and plenty to eat everyday."

Aamir silently grabbed a plate and started to pour the Dal and added some chawal. He began to eat. His father then exclaimed proudly, "That's like my boy!"

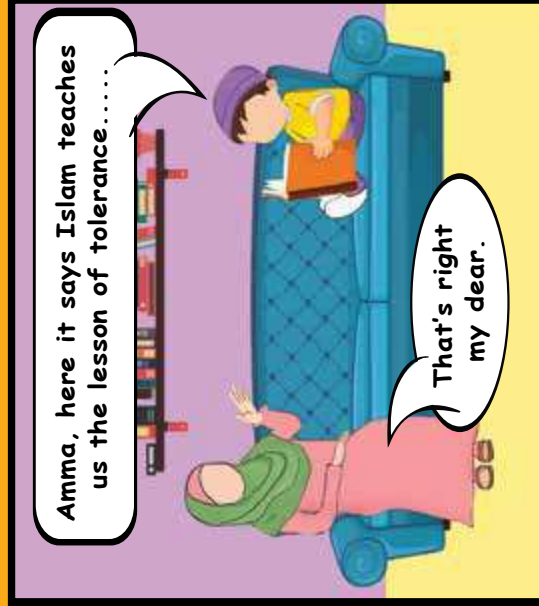
Aamir then thanked his mother for letting him realise his mistake and also prayed to Allah ﷻ that may He forgive him for being ignorant and ungrateful



# Tolerance as I see it

Concept by Zawjah Zia

Artwork by Zawjah Jahangir







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