

TOLERANCE

Stories



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
THE MOST GRACIOUS THE
MOST MERCIFUL

TOLERANCE

Stories

© Zayed House for Islamic Culture / 2019

Translated by
Muhammad Elhafiz Braima

Cover illustrated by
Nawara Zuhair Al Mandeel

Design by
Kesnia Nyudikova

Content

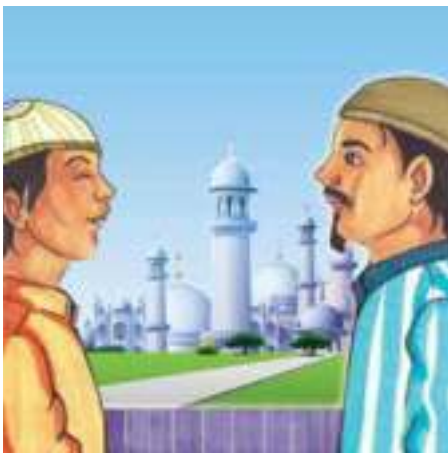
1

**STARTING FROM
DAWN PRAYER**



49

**SAY POLITE
WORDS**



25

**THE WHITE
MASK**





87

HELP!



73

**WHERE IS THE
CRESCENT
HEADING?**



121

**THE SECRET
OF THE
PARCEL**

Story By

Noura Abdul Ghani Itani

Illustrations by

Ahmad Husain & Noon Abdullah



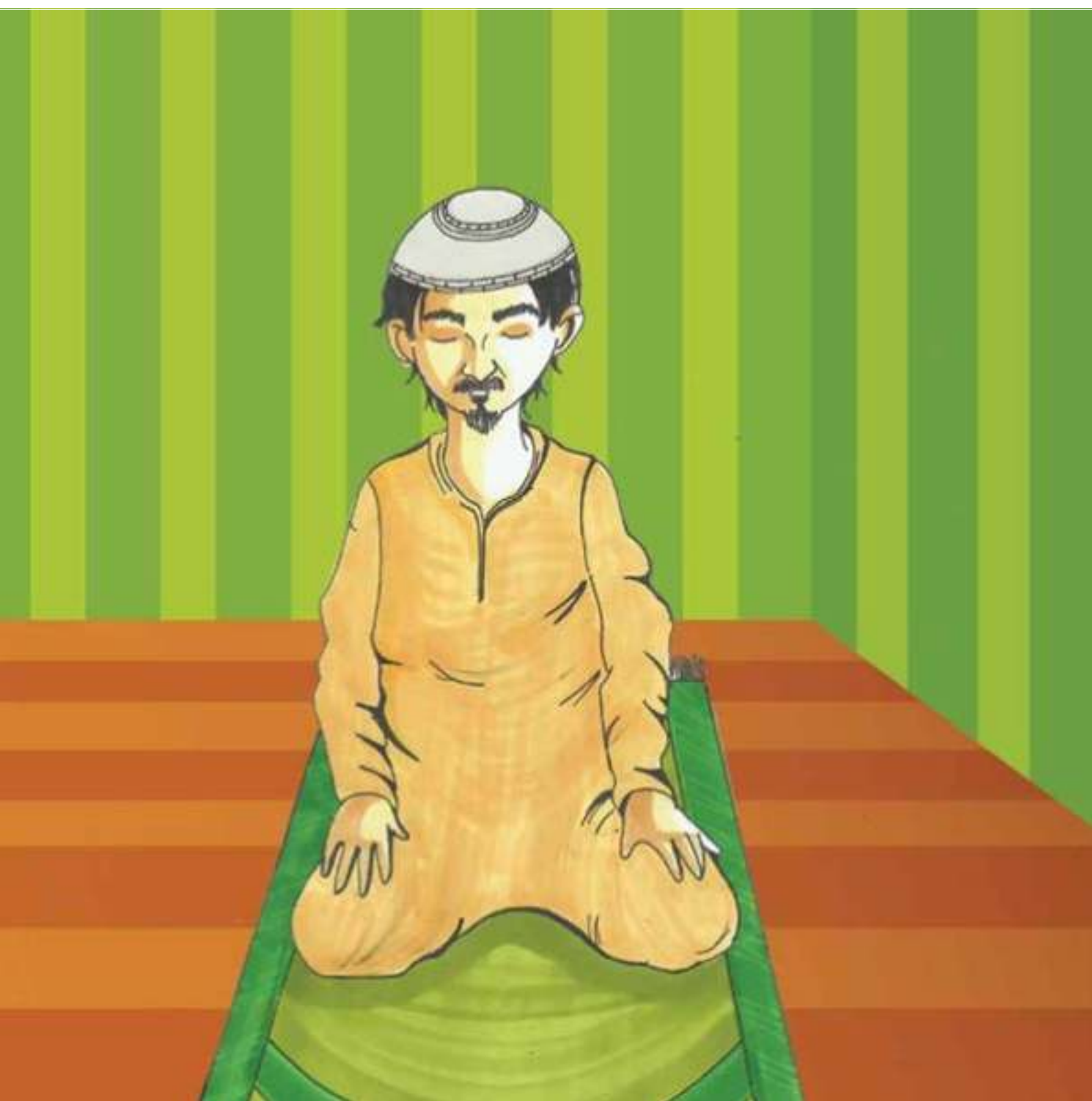
STARTING FROM DAWN PRAYER

It

was eight O'clock in the morning when Rashed was heading in hurry towards his place of work. Unusually, he missed the Dawn Prayer that morning. However, he habitually would wake up every morning upon hearing the call for the prayer without needing an alarm clock. That morning though, he awakened to the yelling of his panicked wife telling him that he was too much late for his work.

Jumping from his bed full of fear tantamount to craze, he dashed as lightning towards his prayer mat after finishing ablution. Still overwhelmed by sadness and regret for the unfamiliar laxity. After finishing prayer and invocations, he made ready to get out quickly.



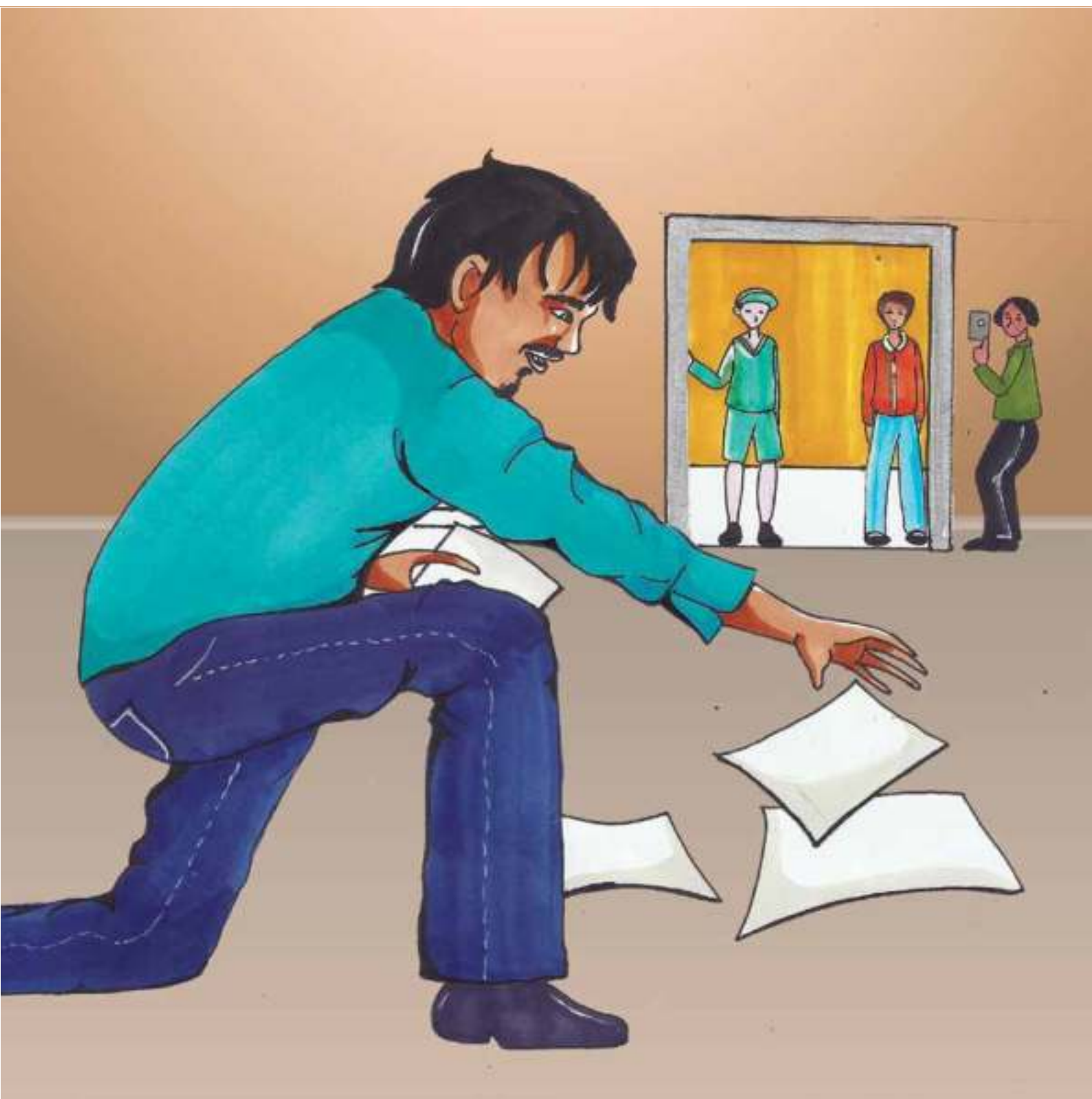


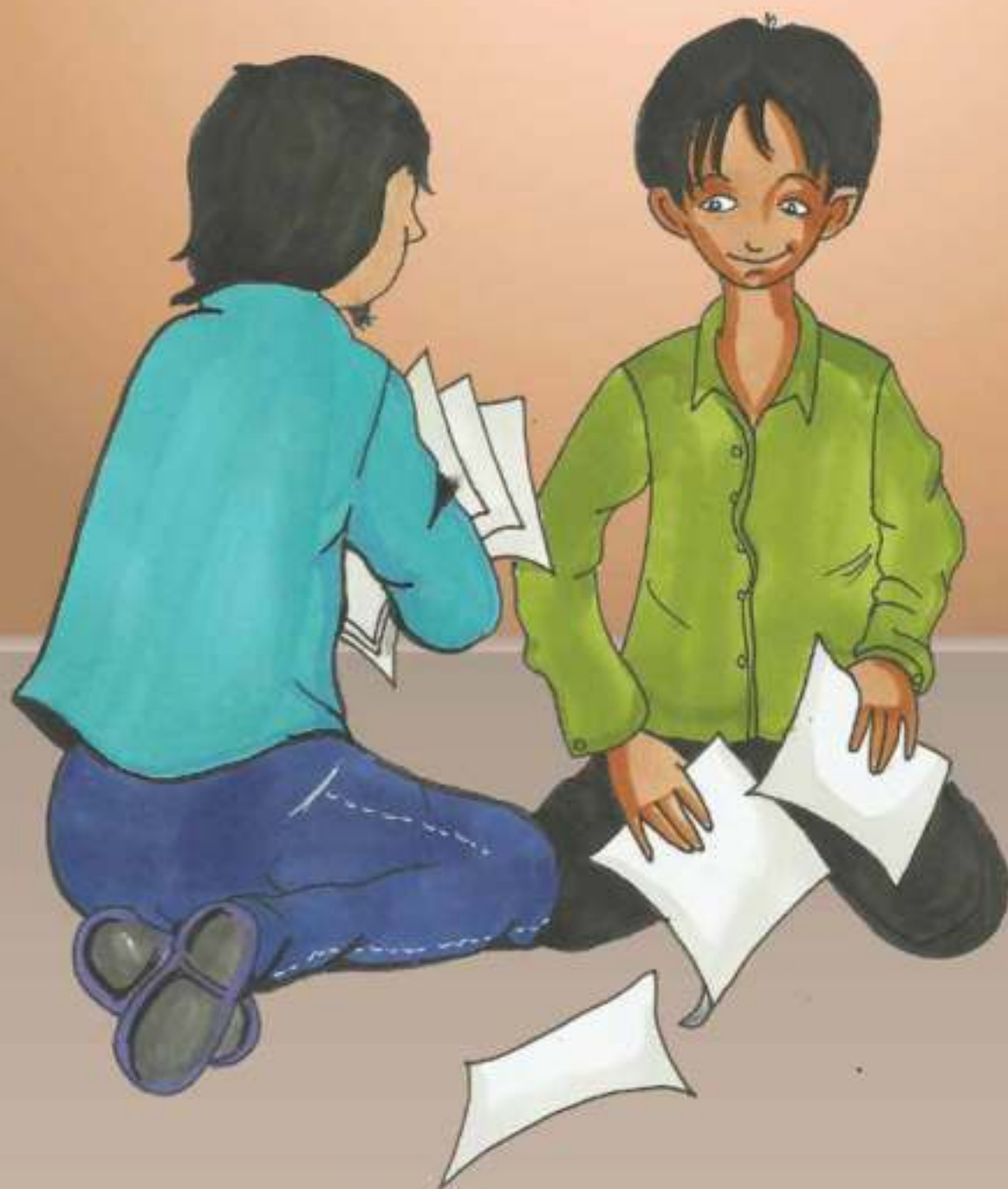
He loped to the lift carrying his books and papers as usual. Due to extreme anxiety and rush, the papers fell all around; he was struggling to collect them before the lift would pass. Alas, the lift, which would usually arrive at leisure, suddenly came apace this time.

Hence, Rashed, the caring pedagogue who always did solve the problems of blushful and confused pupils, succumbed to blush and confusion himself, while struggling to collect the papers still falling from his hands. He was trying messily to collect them lest he would lose more time. Whereas, people who wanted to go to work were yearning to take the lift down, while waiting in resentment therein for him.

Only Abdurrahman was calm and composed, demonstrating his usual childish smile as he was pressing determinedly on the button to leave the door open for Rashed to join in. Simultaneously, he greeted Rashed and asked politely if he could help. Being too uneasy, Rashed greeted back quickly while smiling in confusion unable to look at Abdurrahman. Instantaneously, Abdurrahman asked his colleague to hold on the door a bit until he would help Rashed.

When they both hurriedly gathered the papers, they entered the lift; and Rashed apologized to all for the inconvenience while thanking Abdurrahman profusely for the timely help.



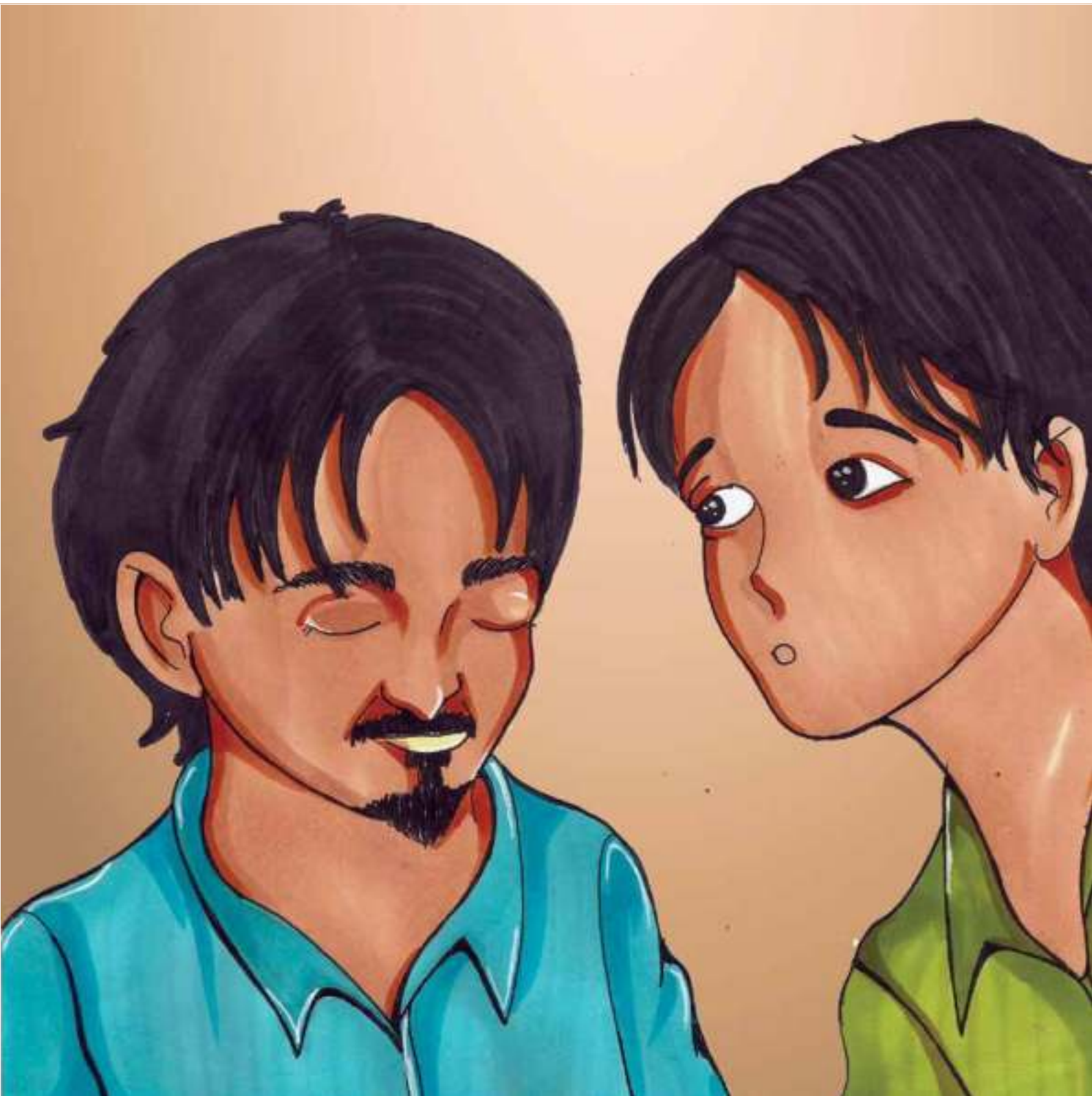


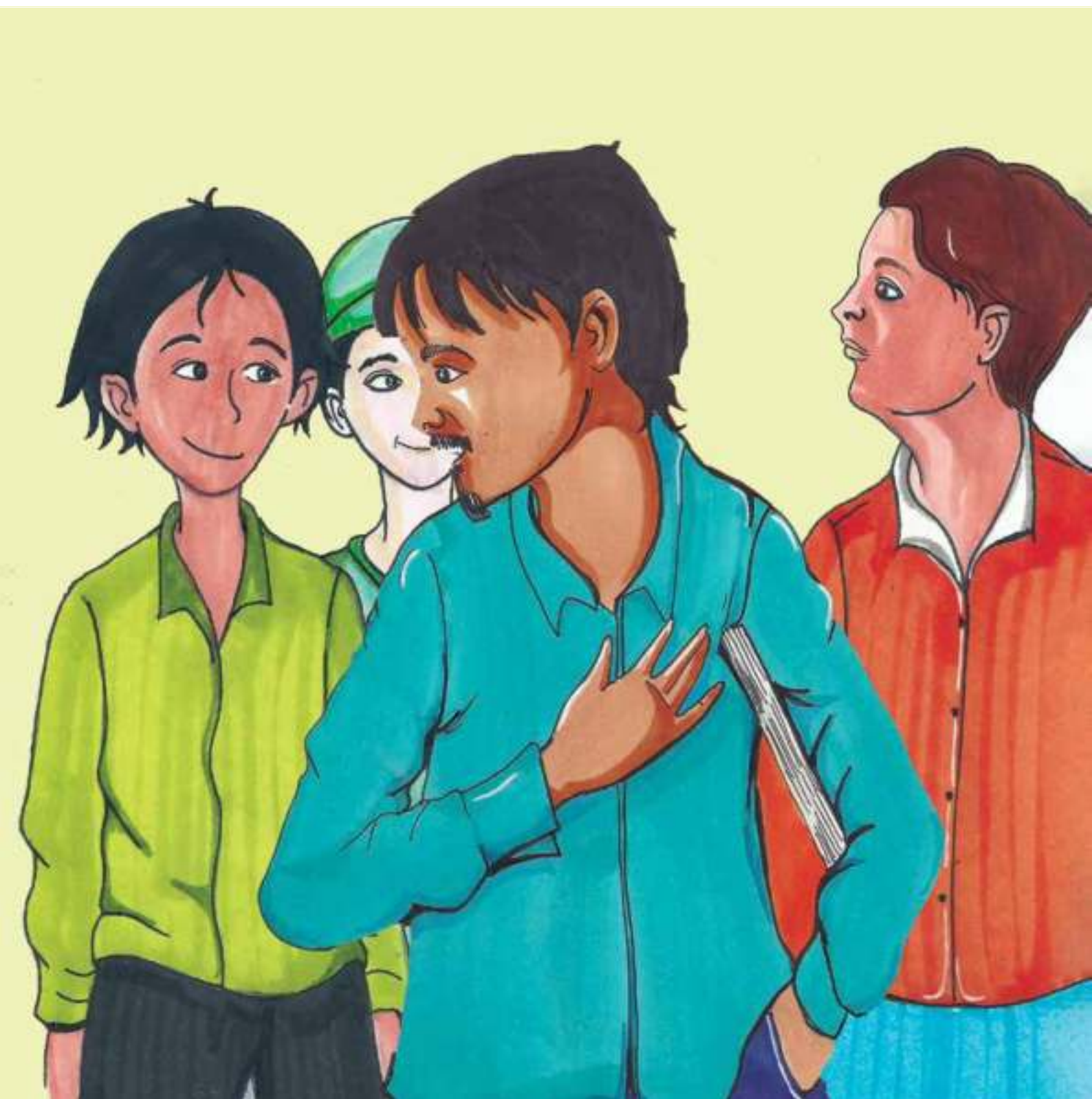
In the usual manner, Abdurrahman responded nonverbally with a truthful infantile smile tinged with shyness. As he was timidly looking down, apparently to evade meeting Rashed gazes lest the latter would feel more pathetically indebted and confused.

Abdurrahman was a simple Asian worker at a neighboring grocery. He would deliver orders and put items in plastic bags. It was such a hard work, but honest enough to save dignity nevertheless. As Rashed was a regular customer to the grocery, Abdurrahman would always insist to help carrying the items he bought. However, Rashed would adamantly refuse, for the good relation and fraternity developed

between them at a mosque, whereat they met without discrimination. They would both perform the dawn prayer together side by side; and they would greet one another daily at the time of arrival and departure.

When the elevator reached the ground floor, and all people dropped off, Abdurrahman whispered to Rashed in a tone replete with missing tone “I did not see you today at Dawn Prayer. Are you ok?” Rashed replied with manifest sadness “Yeah, it was a pity I missed the prayer! I stayed late at night correcting exam papers; now look how these very papers that caused my delay were yet falling apart”.





Abdurrahman smiled and bade Rashed Farwell as each headed for his place of work.

Having spent a hard working day, Rashed got back with some items the school would grant every year to those in need before the approach of Ramadan. A portion of the items would find their way to the teachers too.

As he was carrying the items from the car, Rashed remembered Abdurrahman whom he felt more entitled to the package than himself.

Abdurrahman would work tirelessly from dawn to dusk to maintain his family, which had totally depended on him since his father's

sudden incapacitating paralysis. Abdurrahman had to shoulder the responsibility for his mother and four siblings. In consequence, he sacrificed his ambitions and aspirations to be a teacher as well! Although the wind was against his tide, Abdurrahman never gave up. Instead, he would work hard, full of hope to realize his dream in the end. Yet he preferred that his siblings should get education. Therefore, he spent all that he earned to provide food, cloths, and education at a free school that would take only symbolic fees, but at least they would part with illiteracy!

Rashed was driving towards the grocery to ask Abdurrahman about his home address





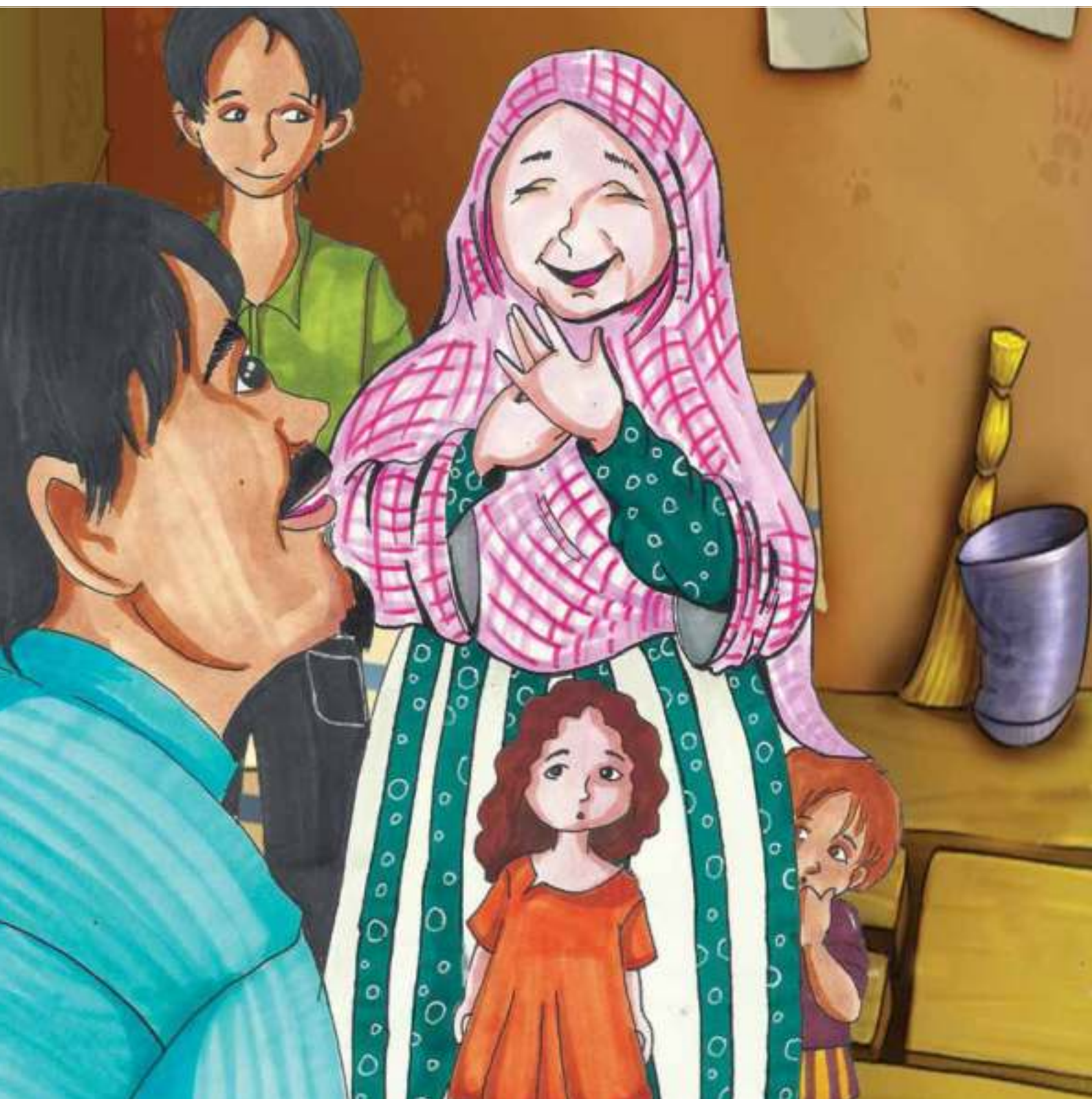
to deliver the package. He met him en route however, delivering a certain order. Having greet him, Rashed asked about the address.

Astonished about the query, Abdurrahman asked about the reason, to which Rashed replied that there was a trust in the car for his family. They both moved to the car so that Abdurrahman could see for himself. When he saw the items, Abdurrahman was touched and tears came out of his eyes, yet he was too shy to say something. He never asked others for help or put himself down as to reveal his poor situation for whosoever, including closest of friends.

Seeing how discomfited Abdurrahman was, Rashed apologized and begged his pardon for the way he had asked him about the home address. Especially as he did not know it, and did not want to ask the grocer or Abdurrahman's coworkers lest one of them would feel suspicious or inquisitive about the reason.

They both reached Abdurrahman's home where his mother gladly received them and insisted to offer hospitality to Rashed who was trying to render her welcoming zeal less excessive as he could. Lo and behold! Rashed was completely shocked and distressed when he discovered that the house lacked even the least necessities of living.





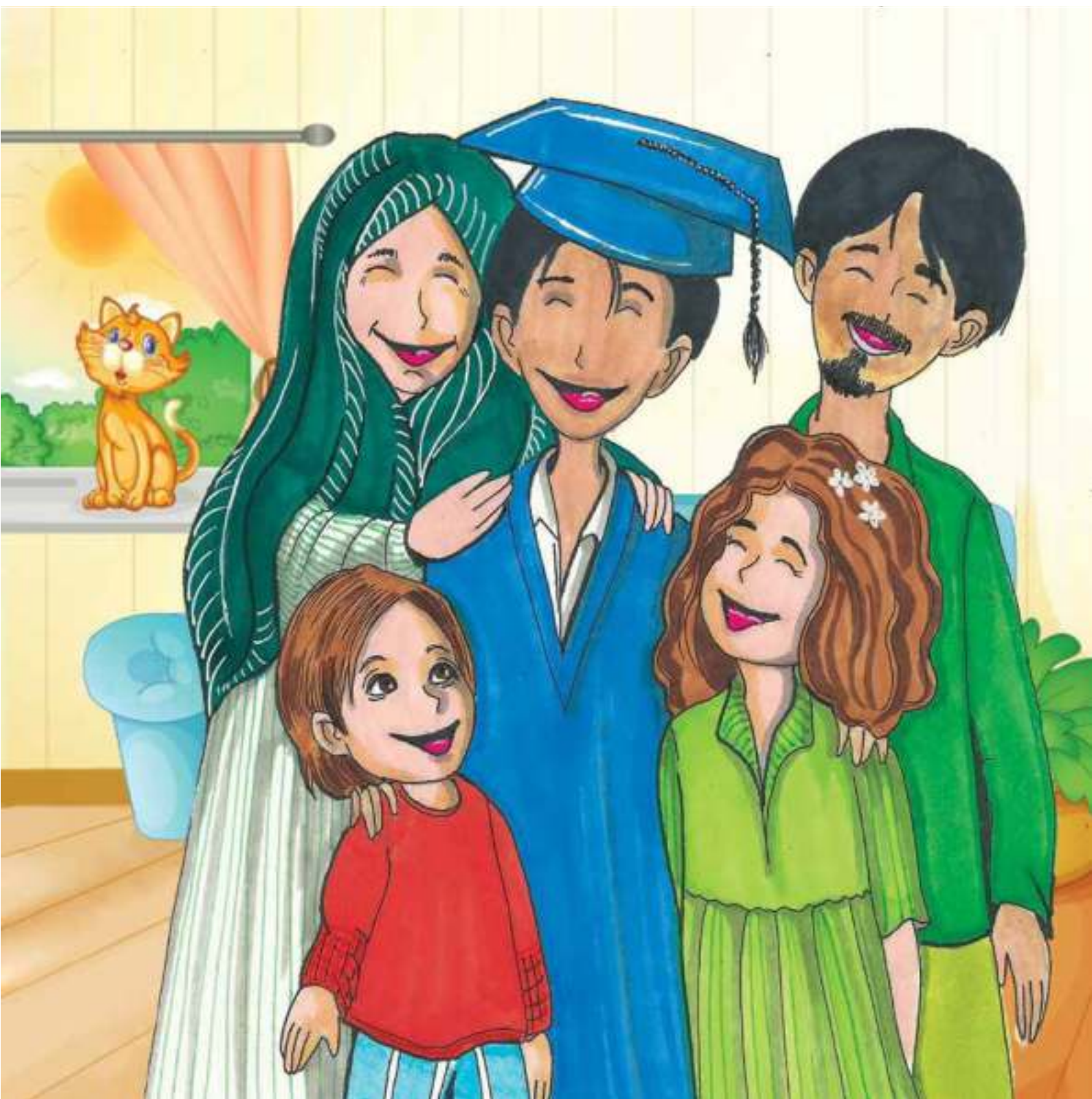
When he saw the light cloths on Abdurrahman's siblings in the midst of freezing cold, he decided to adopt the family and support them as much as possible henceforth. Beginning with emotions, smile, and love, including expenditure on the kids and their education.

In addition, Rashed took it upon himself to pay for the treatment of Abdurrahman's father, while encouraging Abdurrahman to continue his studies in the private school at which he would teach. For Rashed submitted a report to the school depicting the situation. Responsively, the school accepted to offer Abdurrahman and his siblings, free schooling. Moreover, the school provided

them with a new house to live in instead of the dilapidated one that could hardly protect from rainwater.

Six years on, Abdurrahman finished his studies and became a colleague even closer to Rashed, not only in the first row of dawn prayer, but also in the highest academic degree.

The End



Story By
Rami Matrawi

Illustrations by
Latifa Ahli



THE WHITE MASK



"Only?"

Osama's voice raises indignantly as he stands before his father's lawyer at his office.

"Is this the only inheritance by my father"?
The seasoned lawyer looks at him and requests him to sit down...

"Sit down son, I haven't finished yet"!

Osama interrupts irritably "Not interested to hear any more Sir ... I haven't traveled all the way down from Europe in which I lived most of my life as a respectable doctor only to be surprised that my well known rich father left nothing for me"!

Putting a small wooden box on his desk, the lawyer expresses "Osama, you are like my

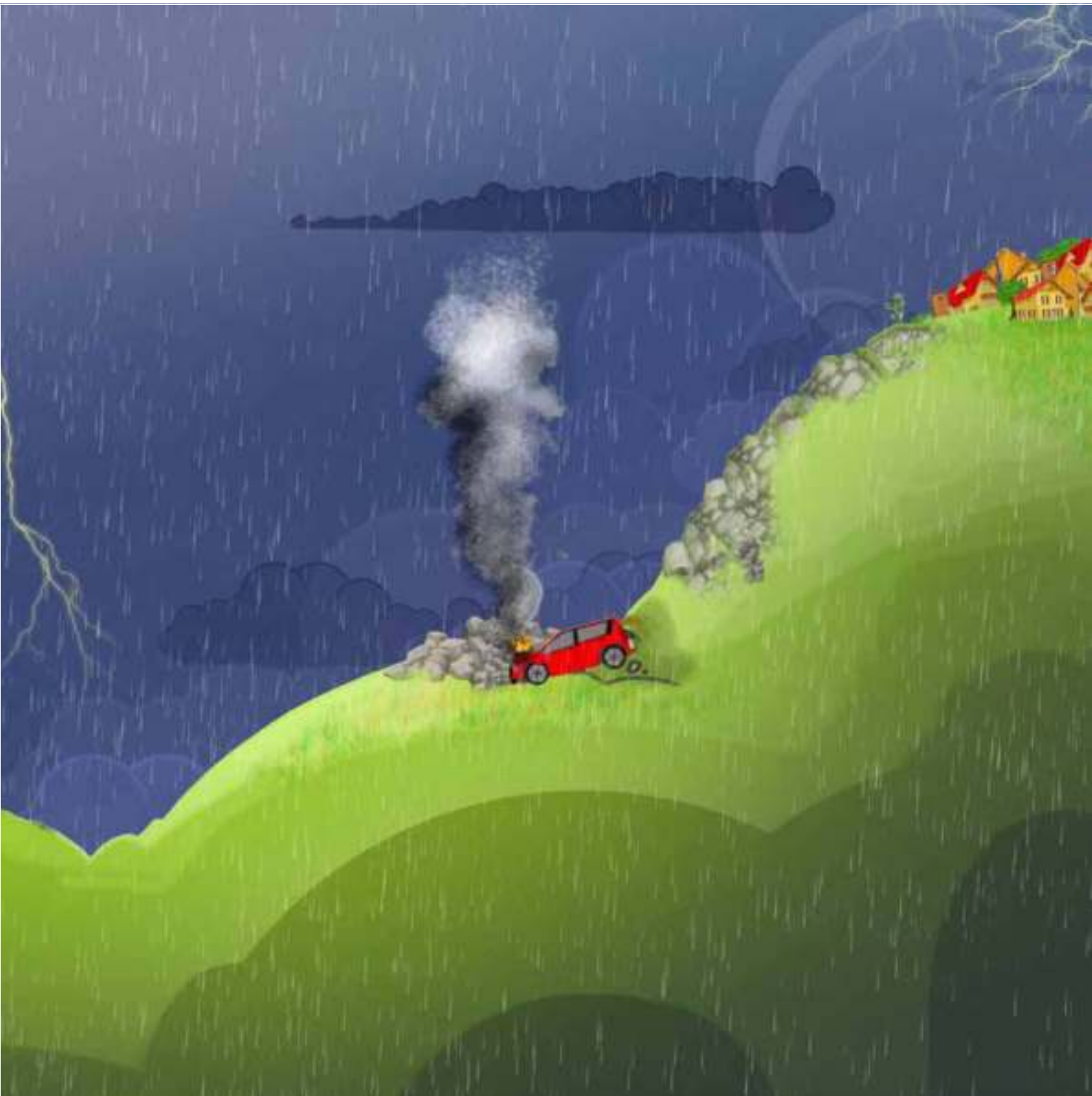


younger son ... I know how always strained your relationship with your father ... it is true that your father left you no money, but please calm down and see the message left inside this box and ...”

Osama interrupts yet again:

“It is clear ... thank you anyway, but I don’t think this will make any difference”.

Osama takes the box without opening it and leaves in anger. He starts driving his car in such a rainy weather on a stone road out the town. He barely sees the road in front as he murmurs to himself while driving, “I wish I did not come to this small wretched town... what a waste of time!”





In the meantime, Osama is too deep in thought to notice the large rock rolled by the pouring rain to block half the way.

Surprised by the rock in front, he tries to avoid it, but the car forcefully slides towards the layby, turning on its side before colliding with yet another side rock to stop completely smashed!

He is not aware how much time has passed by while he is in the car. It is all dark around except for the lights of his car. With unbearable pain in his head, which is injured and gushing blood nonstop, he tries to move. However, his position and the seat belt he luckily puts on, make it impossible for him to move.

He starts thinking that in these circumstances, at such time, and in such a small poor town, nobody will ever save him. Yet even if one does, being a physician, he knows that his continuous bleeding and rare blood group will not make saving easy.

It clearly appears that this might be the last scenes of his life. Slowly, slowly, his morale fades away as he starts succumbing to the dizziness in his head overwhelmed by gradual darkness around. It gets darker and darker to such a pitch that he does not know the time lapsed. At last, light starts gleaming bit by bit, as he suddenly opens his eyes to find himself lying in bed, in a white room.

He sees a man of fifty years of age in front, in a doctor's wear and a green





mask covering only his eyes. Astounded, Osama is mesmerized for some time before the masked man smiling at him. “Thank God for your safety”; you were about to die yesterday. The consequence would have been very serious had it not been for the grace of God ... I am your doctor!”

Osama starts recognizing what is around now, as he knows he is in one of the small town hospitals ... but there is something mystifying! The medical care he receives is far greater than what he saw in the state- of- the- art hospitals of developed countries. Being a doctor himself, he knows that very well.

As Osama is thinking, another middle-aged man enters; he wears the same green mask

but with ordinary wear. The man wonders whether there is a need for more blood transfusion; the doctor thanks him as relating that they got enough blood yesterday. The man responds thanking while smiling and saying to Osama, “wish you a speedy recovery”!

Turning to Osama, the doctor says, “we needed some blood for you yesterday. The problem was your rare blood group which did not accept any group other than its. However, with the grace of God, people of the town cooperated to provide donors at the right time”.

Osama is further amazed, as providing adequate blood for this very group may take some time even in a big developed city. How





did that take place in a few hours in such a little town?

“You can leave the hospital today if you like”, the doctor tells him.

Osama is trying to understand what is happening ... as he is taking some time before he stands up. In fact, he discovers that he is able to move ... he starts looking for his belongings. Which he notices that they are by his side; his mobile phone, clothes and a card with a number of a phone on.

He quickly wears his clothes and calls the number. A congenial man answers back asking about his health and requests to meet out of hospital after one hour.

As he is leaving the hospital promptly, Osama finds a young man waiting near his car. Which got some repair after the accident to look almost new now. Remarkably, the young man is also wearing the same green mask!

He gives him the keys to the car as he is leaving. “Wait please”! Osama begs.

The man stops, as Osama would like to pose a number of questions. Such as who he is, why he repaired the car free of charge ... and who are all those people helping without asking something in return ... and what is the secret of that green mask?

The man surprises him with a quiet smile saying, “I know what is harboring in your mind;





you are not the first one to wonder. You are not the first one to come through difficulty without availing of our help.

All what I can say is that each one of us in this town vowed to do something good every day for nothing, whatever it costs, without revealing themselves. That is why we wear this green mask when we want to carry out a charitable work. I beg your pardon therefore, as I could not tell you who I am; because if I told you, everything I did would be in vain.

As amazement mingles with fascination on Osama's face, he finds himself wondering in spite of himself "how have you got this idea ... I have never seen something like this anywhere else"!

The young man is perplexed as replying “believe me, neither I myself nor anybody else knows how this idea originated”. They say that someone started it years ago. He used to wear a white mask and he would help people without asking for anything in return. In fact, nobody knows exactly, but the idea has inspired people, it has spread and turned into a river of goodness inundating all parts of the township. As a result, you will see many amazing things around here.

Having asked for permission to go, the young man leaves Osama in wonder as he thanks God for the existence of such goodness that saved his life in this very town.

As Osama mounts his car, he notices that the little box of his father is still there.





He does not know the reason he wants to open the box this time to read his father's message.

He opens it and starts reading the message.

“Son ... I know I have not left you anything of my money ... However, I wanted to implant a good seed in this community that you might reap one day ... forgive me”!

Looking inside the box, he finds a mask similar to the one he saw today; with a minor difference: it is white!

The End

Story By
Hisham Damerji

Illustrations by
Latifa Ahli



**SAY
POLITE
WORDS**

On

the route to Ahmed school, there was an abandoned house whose dwellers moved somewhere else.

Having finished physical training lesson, Ahmed was shooting his football on his way back home. He kicked the ball forcefully towards the wall of the abandoned house. Before it bounced back, he heard a blast of another ball inside, which continued as he was kicking. He shouted, who?

The answer came back, who?

Ahmed repeated, who are you?

The sound echoed, who are you?

Ahmed said, “come play with me”! Again, he had the unknown sound back, “come play with me”.





The more words Ahmed uttered, the more reverberation he would hear of them; yet rather irritatingly and husky this time.

He approached the wall of the house and punched it, only to hear the same booming from the other side!

Fear and perplexity overwhelmed Ahmed as he neared the wooden door of the house, on which he started knocking incessantly, only to receive replication of the same rhythm from within.

Furious as he thought the child in the house was mocking his voice and knockings, Ahmed started swearing, which also resounded in the same manner.

He restrained his anger and said to himself, “I will see to it tomorrow”, as he was dashing back home. For he remembered that he was late enough to cause his mother question his punctuality concerning going and returning from school.

Realizing that he was uneasy, his mother asked him about the cause of annoyance. He informed her that there was a naughty child in the abandoned house and that he was irritated by his mockery.

His mother said, “son, you don’t have but change your route or quicken steps when passing by this abandoned house near which you should never stop”!





Ahmed responded, “yes, mam”!

However, the agitated child had another plan to punish the ‘kid’ at the abandoned house.

In the morning, before the school time, Ahmed gathered three of his friends and told them about the mocking kid. They were enthusiastic to know about the matter and to join their friend to discipline the kid.

Thereupon, they moved towards the abandoned house and stopped in front of it asking ... “who is inside”?

The sound echoed back, “who is inside”?

They knocked at the door, yet they received the same sound rattling back. They hit the

walls with their fists; but the same echoes yet bounced.

They uttered in one voice, “get out you naughty boy”!

Astounded by the multitude of high sounds reverberated, they started swearing, only to receive the same swearwords yet back again.

Ahmed and his friends thought there was too big number of kids inside to face, while it was time for school. In fact, they were rather late; they hurried while thinking about punishment by the teacher.

Teacher Moustafa was already outside of the classroom waiting for them, as he was astonished by their absence and lateness. When





they entered, he immediately questioned, “where have you been”? “Why are you late”?

Ahmed stood up asking permission to answer. “Tell me Ahmed, the teacher said, why are you late”? Ahmed said, “Sir... every time I pass by the abandoned house on my way home, I hear a kid mocking my voice and deriding me. I called him to play with me, but he refused, as he sufficed himself with imitating my voice and repeating my words. Today Sir, I called my friends to see to the matter as to urge the naughty boy to stop. Nevertheless, we discovered that they were a group of children, not only one! They also mimicked our voices louder for further mockery.

Teacher Moustafa said, “you certainly uttered bad words unbecoming of school pupils”!

Ahmed blushed as saying, “Yes Sir and the kids inside the house also uttered the same”. The teacher laughed and said, “sons, as you are going back home today, stop by the abandoned house and say good polite words befitting your manners and see how the reply will be.. If you receive bad answers, I will punish the dwellers of the house myself”!

By the end of the lesson, the four boys rushed down the strange house and stopped thereat. Ahmed raised his voice in greeting: “peace be upon you”!





The sound replied, “peace be upon you”! The boys hailed, “hello friends”! The sound came back, “hello friends”!

The boys were amazed, as they remained for some time looking at each other.

“You are such polite boys! We are glad to make friends with you”!

The voice echoed as usual, “You are such polite boys! We are glad to make friends with you”!

The boys were astonished even more and discerned that only teacher Moustafa would know the secret of the abandoned house. They went along waiting for the

following day. Thereon, before Ahmed or any of his friends spoke, the teacher asked them, “How was the result kids”? Were you annoyed with the answers from the abandoned house”?

Ahmed stood up enthusiastically, “No teacher Moustafa ... the boys in the house were such nice and polite. They only returned what we expressed. I am no longer troubled or afraid of that house Sir”.

Teacher Moustafa laughed and said, “O Ahmed, the way others treat you is only a reciprocation of how you treat them. If you are nice, they will be nice, if you are compassionate and forbearing, so they will be. However, if you are rude, they will be rude





as well. So treat people the way you want them to treat you and never say a word that you do not want to hear from others”.

In this connection, teacher Moustafa has told his pupils about the great character of our Prophet (peace be upon him), who would only do what make people happy. The Prophet was polite in speech and tactful in question and answer. No wonder, he won the love, respect and trust of people even before prophethood and revelation.

The teacher went on explaining the wonder about the echo, which was behind numerous inventions and discoveries in medicine and acoustics...etc.

From that day on, whenever the children passed by the abandoned house, they would spend a good time in play. They would read a poem to have it resonated and would demonstrate what they kept by heart at school to have it exactly repeated back. They would greet whenever they stopped or moved by. The abandoned house would still greet back, as they were laughing!

The End



Story By
Ahed Hamad Al Zaerat

Illustrations by
Latifa Ahli



WHERE IS
THE CRESCENT
HEADING?

Having

chosen two paintings of all the ones drawn by his pupils in class, the art teacher called two painters to declare their winning of the competition. Through which he asked the pupils to draw a natural scenery.

He announced the two paintings as winning, once he lift both up before his eyes, contemplating them with utter care and scrutiny trying to check which one was better.

However, the more he tried, the more his trials were doomed to failure. As no sooner one picture appeared outstanding than the other seemed even more so. Thus, the teacher decided that both paintings should share the winning.



Nael and Sami raised their paintings before the classmates, full of pride with the creative work of theirs. Yet their clamoring fellows started picking on them.

It happened that each painting depicted a night scenery with one crescent heading to the right, and the other to the left. Hence, the kids shouted loudly stating which way the crescent should face:

“To the right!”

“To the left!”

Then, the teacher asked each winner to justify the direction adopted. Nael firmly said that the right direction was correct, as he saw the crescent as such more than once,









he said. Contradictorily, his peer was no less confident though! Nevertheless, the pupils divided galore. Some sided with Nael, others with Sami, and a number of them were lost in thought trying to envisage the night, while others were searching in their books and notes about pictures or flags showing the correct direction the crescent should be. For them, prior to arguing with any group, they should support their claim with proves.

The teacher, having left each team speak out arguments, and conclusive proves, he surprised the all that there was nothing wrong with either painting. What Nael and others saw was right! What seemed to be the case in a certain time might have been





quite the other another time. Therefore, what Sami and his supporters saw, was right as well! For instance, the moon has phases of which is the crescent that moves to the left in its first stage and to the right at the end of the month.

Thus, what we see as right may simply not be as such. May be it is one form of the truth that sometimes appears in a way controversial to what we perceive!

The End



Story By
Aisha Saeed Al Zaabi

Illustrations by
Ahmad Husain & Noon Abdullah

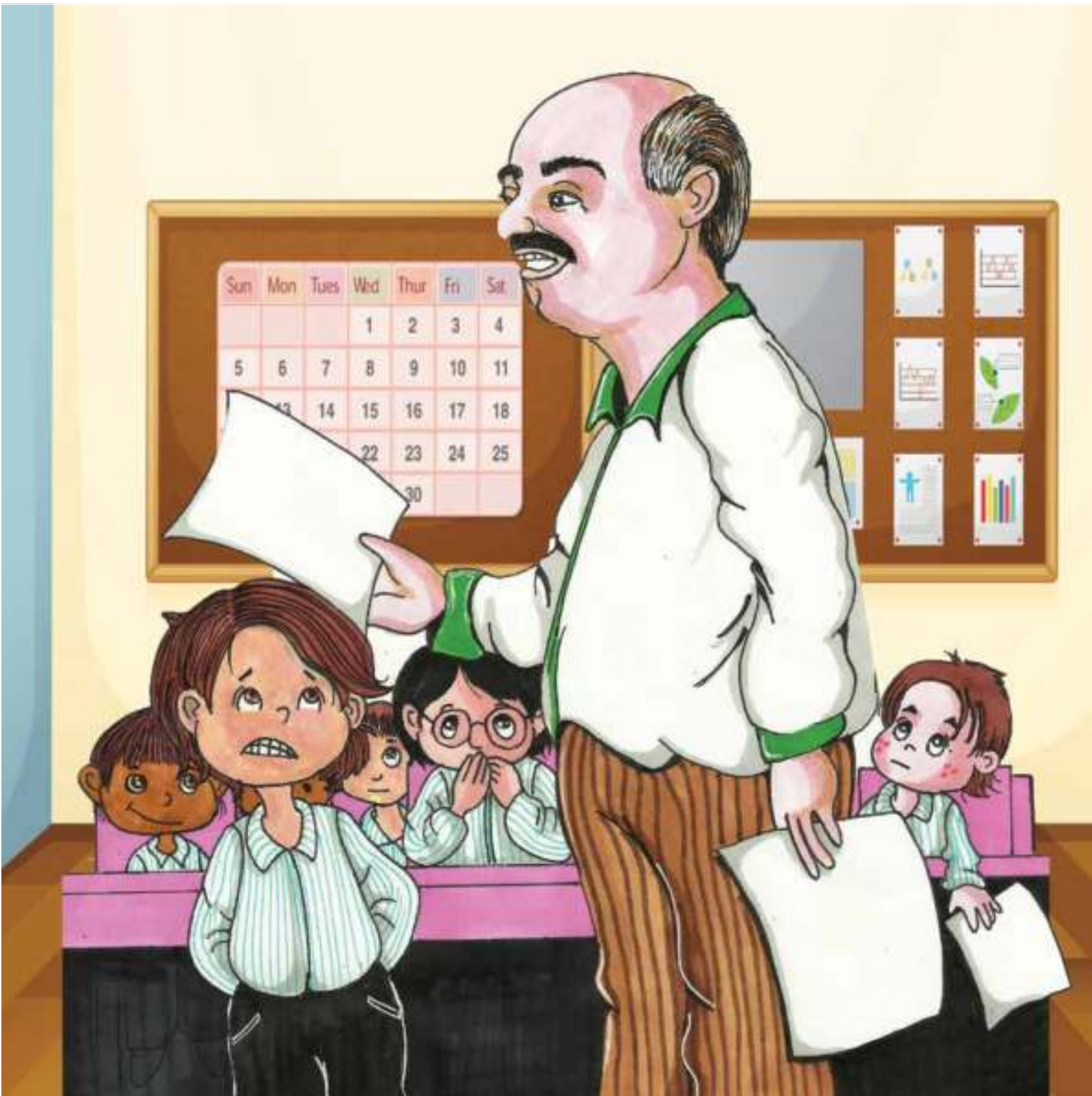


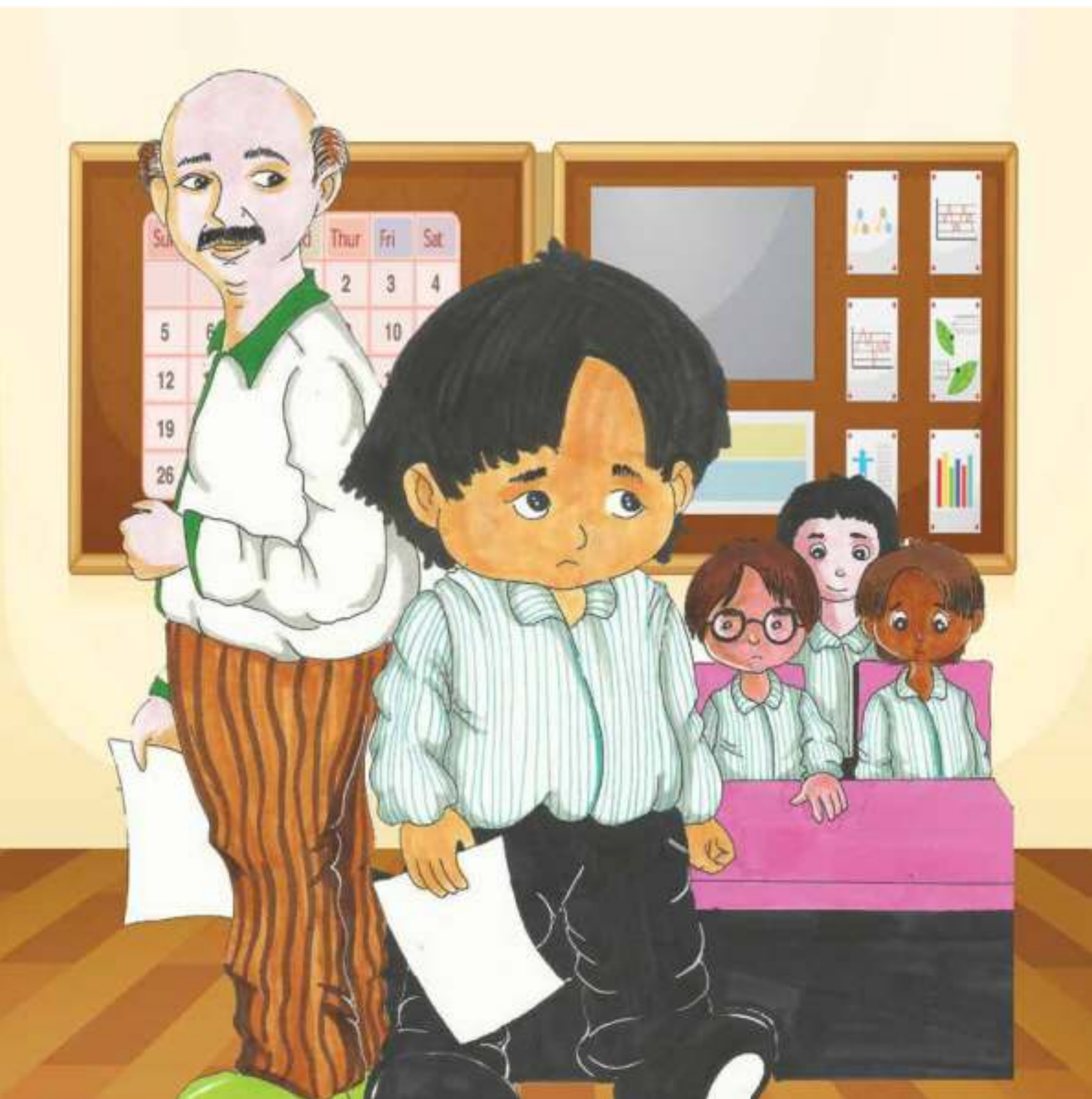
HELP!

Hamza,

the teacher, stood before his pupils to declare the results of the first term exam. “My heart was beating too hard while I was waiting to hear my name”. It was the turn of our classmate Khaled. Whose name the teacher called without looking away from his certificate. Then followed the name of Raed Mohammed! Who neither responded to the teacher’s call, nor assumed he heard it. He paced heavily and slowly, dragging his feet; as he was overwhelmed with anguish and desolation. Which withered his features as though he were an old man, not a boy of fifteen years of age.

Raed received his certificate without looking at the result, as if he knew what it was.





The teacher raised his head looking at Raed with a fatherly compassion as quietly saying, “please double effort the next term Raed”!

All understood that Raed failed! However, he took his certificate from the teacher and replicated the same steps back.

Then came my turn, as the teacher called my name out: pupil Rashed, well done! “You are the top of the class”. He expressed it with a broad smile.

Am I the top of the class?

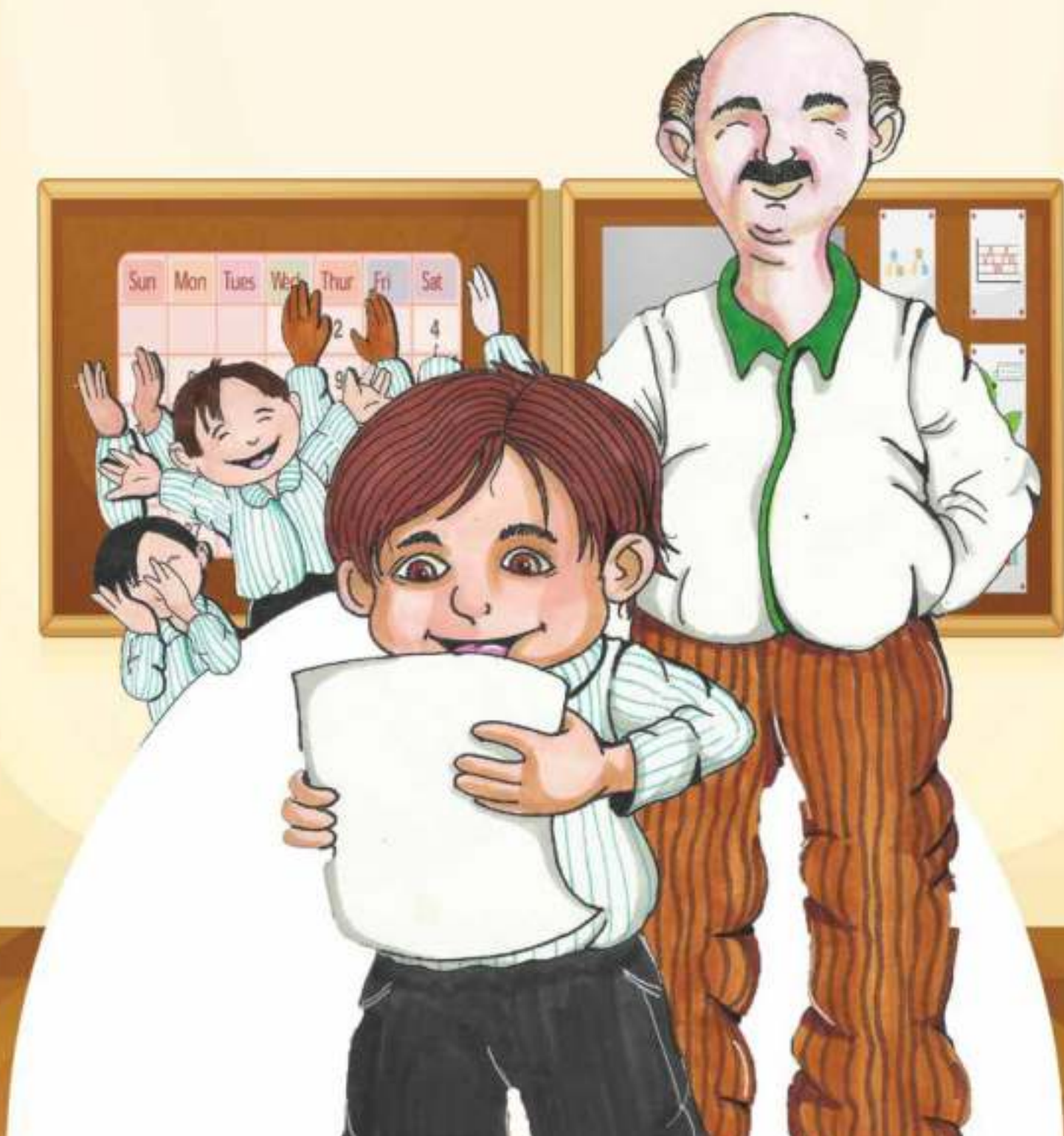
I took my certificate amidst high applause from my classmates. Whereas Raed lowered his head in shame and distress.

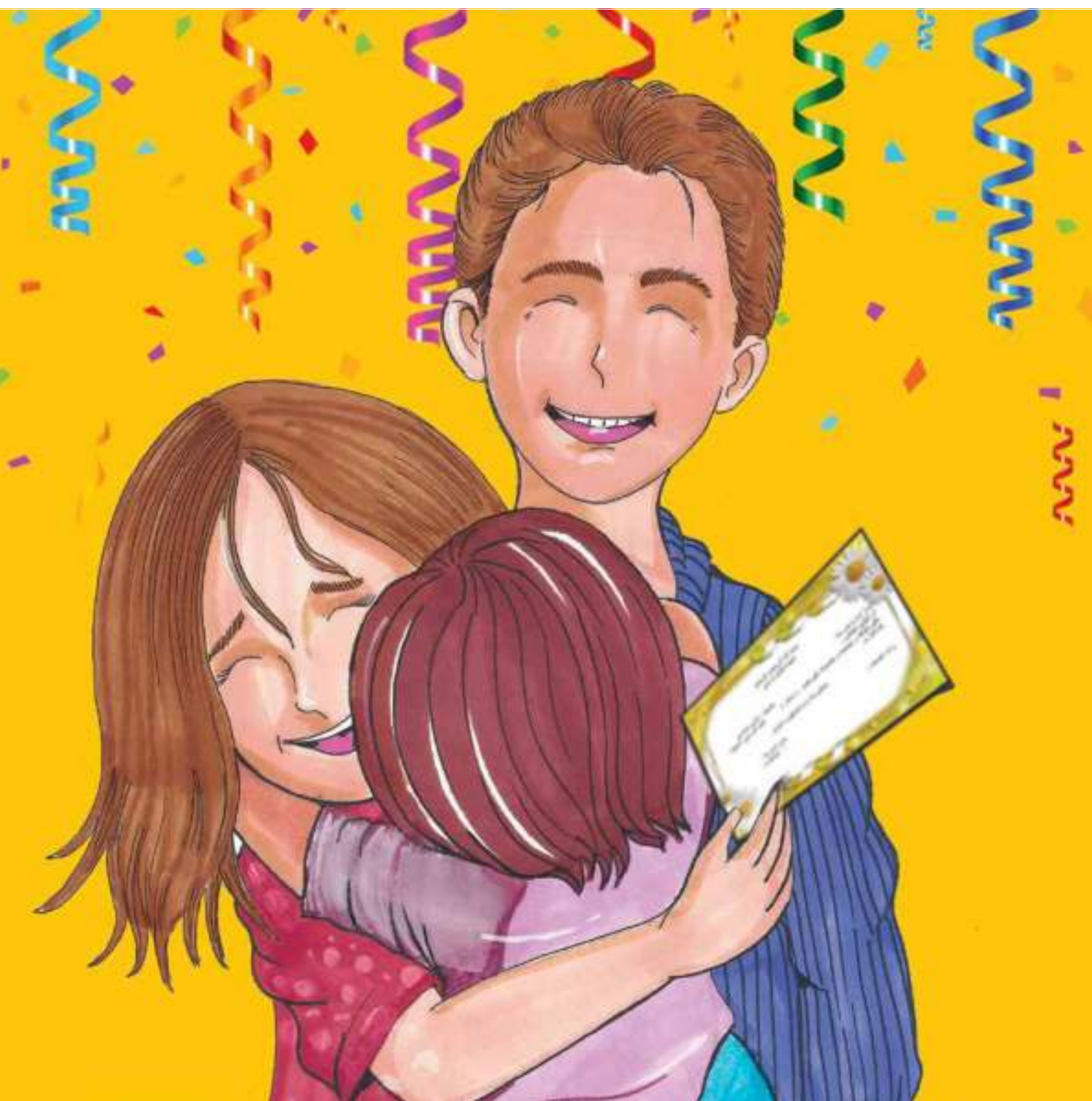
Joy filled our warm home to transform it to a lush garden beaming with love and compassion my parents would bestow on me to yield yet more delight from my part.

Nevertheless, there was an enigmatic feeling slowly settling in my heart and occupying my mind only to steal the joy short-lived as an air bubble.

I proudly put my certificate on the shelf of my little desk, while contemplating the figures reflecting my hard work and determination.

While I was experiencing the joy of success, closing my eyes to navigate further with my dreams, suddenly the sad face of Raed ghosted! O poor Raed!





I murmured to myself contemplating his languid walk, low morale, and helpless look as a one-winged bird faltering in pace.

I was still remembering the scene though with different details.

No sooner the teacher finished handing out the certificates, than Raed started evading pathetic and teasing looks. He sat away from his colleagues' circles, swallowing his grief and regret; he was too worried to pay attention to the fuss caused by their continuous talk and laugh.

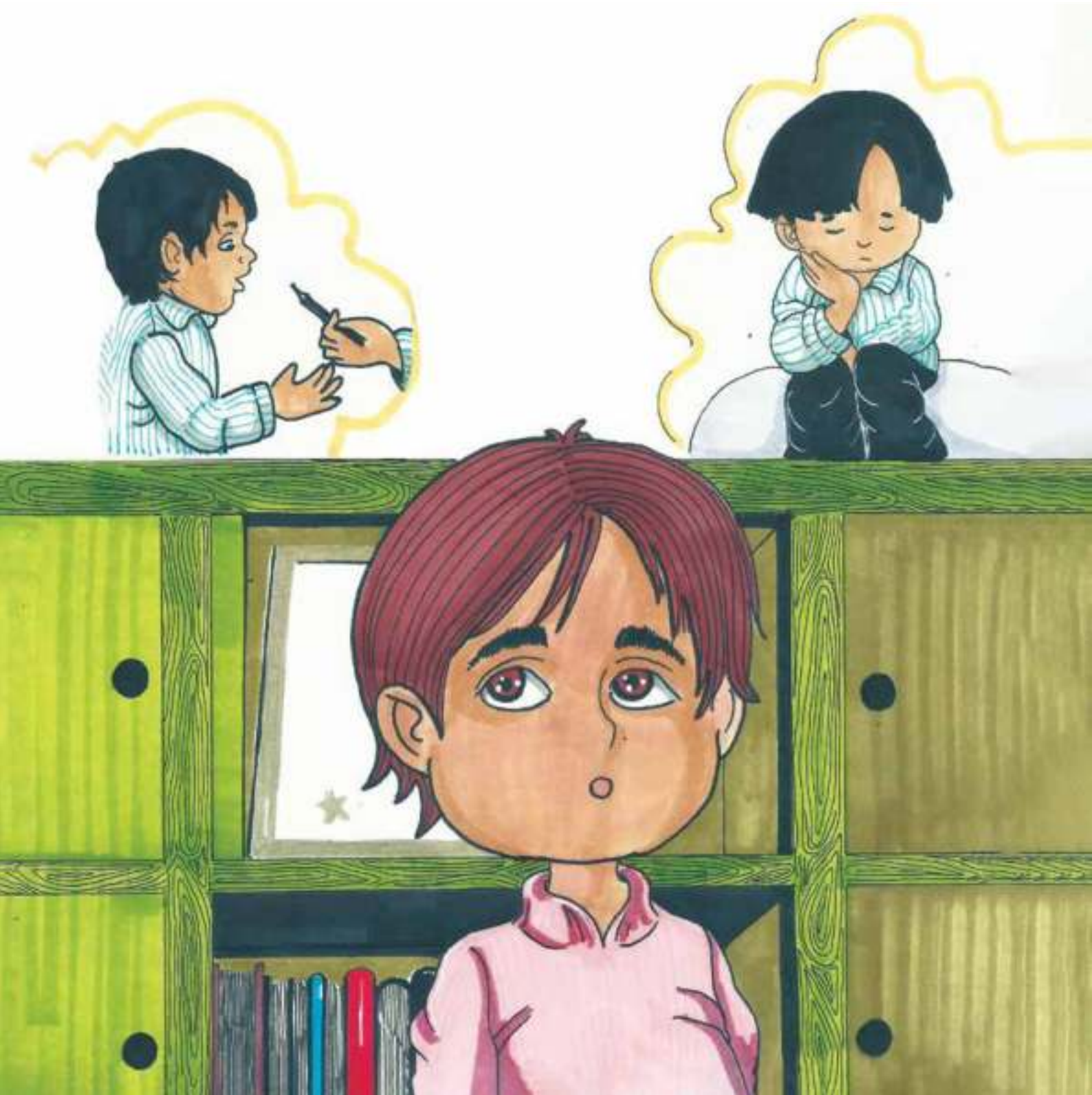
Raed was a frail boy with light dark skin and small eyes demonstrating unfathomable melancholy. Imagining his figure, It

was very painful that I barely knew my classmate. Though I could hardly remember that I approached him or asked about him. We did not converse either, as would every neighboring classmates except once when he asked to borrow my pen; painfully shy though! He asked with strained voice:

“Excuse me! Can I borrow your pen? I forgot mine”.

I replied dispassionately “Yes”, as I was handing him the pen without looking at him or seeing his face, which must have tinged with embarrassment. Particularly if by that gesture, he meant only to strike a conversation with me. It was reproachful and inconsiderate





of me not to know my classmate more or approach him for better understanding and friendship.

I felt ashamed as I was recalling his sad countenance, feeble character, and cloths evidential to his poverty.

In the morning following a long and difficult night, I went to teacher Hamza (our head teacher). I stood before him gathering my scattered thoughts.

“Teacher, I would like to ask about my classmate Raed”.

“Well done! That is very good of you Rashed”, he said.

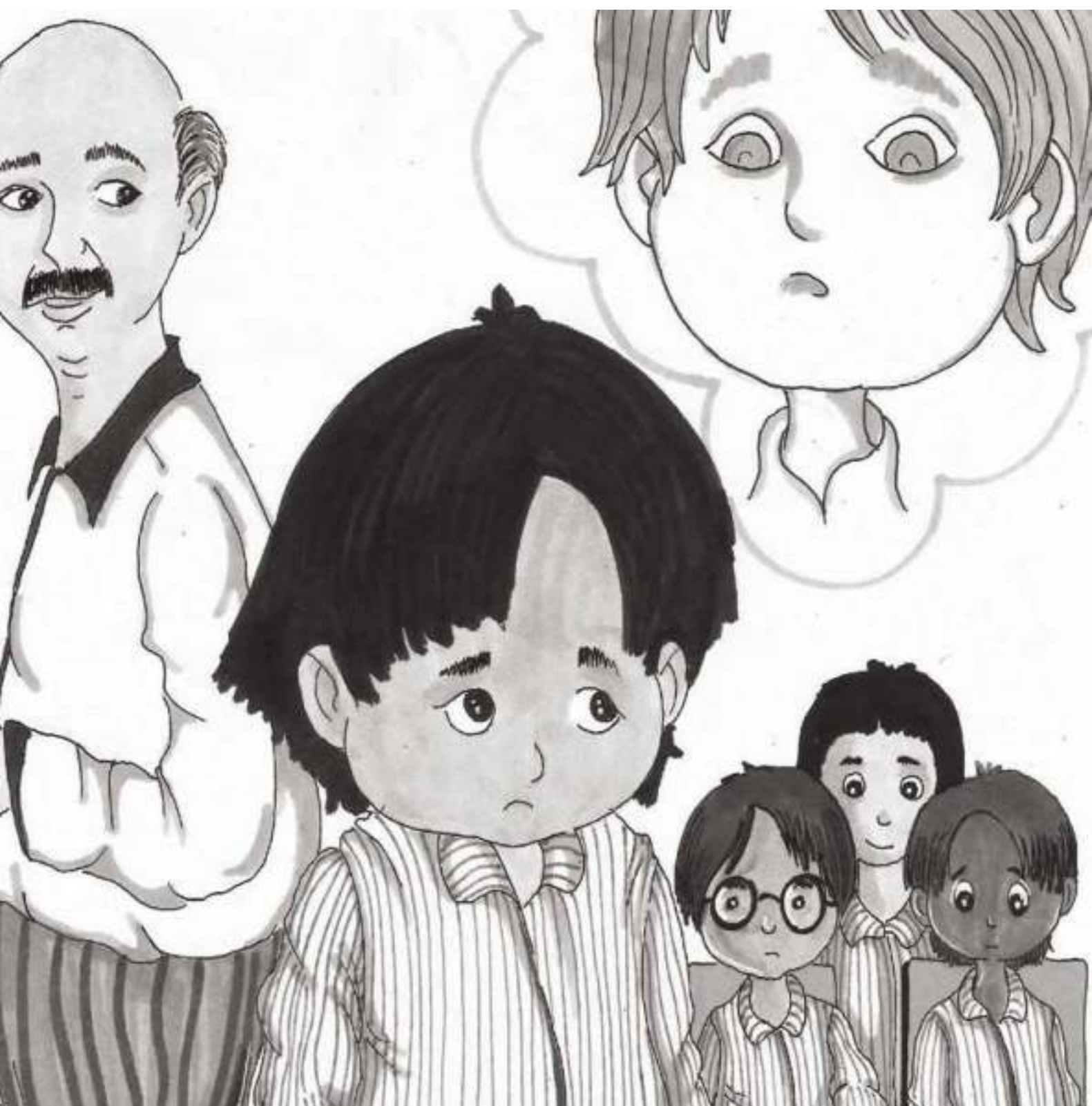
I felt shy because of the spontaneous hint.

“Do you want to know about the circumstance of your classmate Raed?” I nodded for agreement. He took out of the drawer a green file flipping its pages as stating: “Raed is an orphan boy, whose father died two years ago. He is the oldest of his siblings. His grades in the past years did manifest his academic prowess. For he was the top of his class through all stages”.

As I was struck dumb, I asked with difficulty and astonishment... top?!

Yes! However, because of the responsibility of the household he shouldered following his father’s death, he neglected his studies.





In consequence, he lagged behind to the extent of failure.

How can we help him teacher?

“As the social worker has examined his condition, it is clear to all of us that he is in need of financial and moral assistance”, the teacher said.

Moral?

Yes, he is in need of compassion and respect.

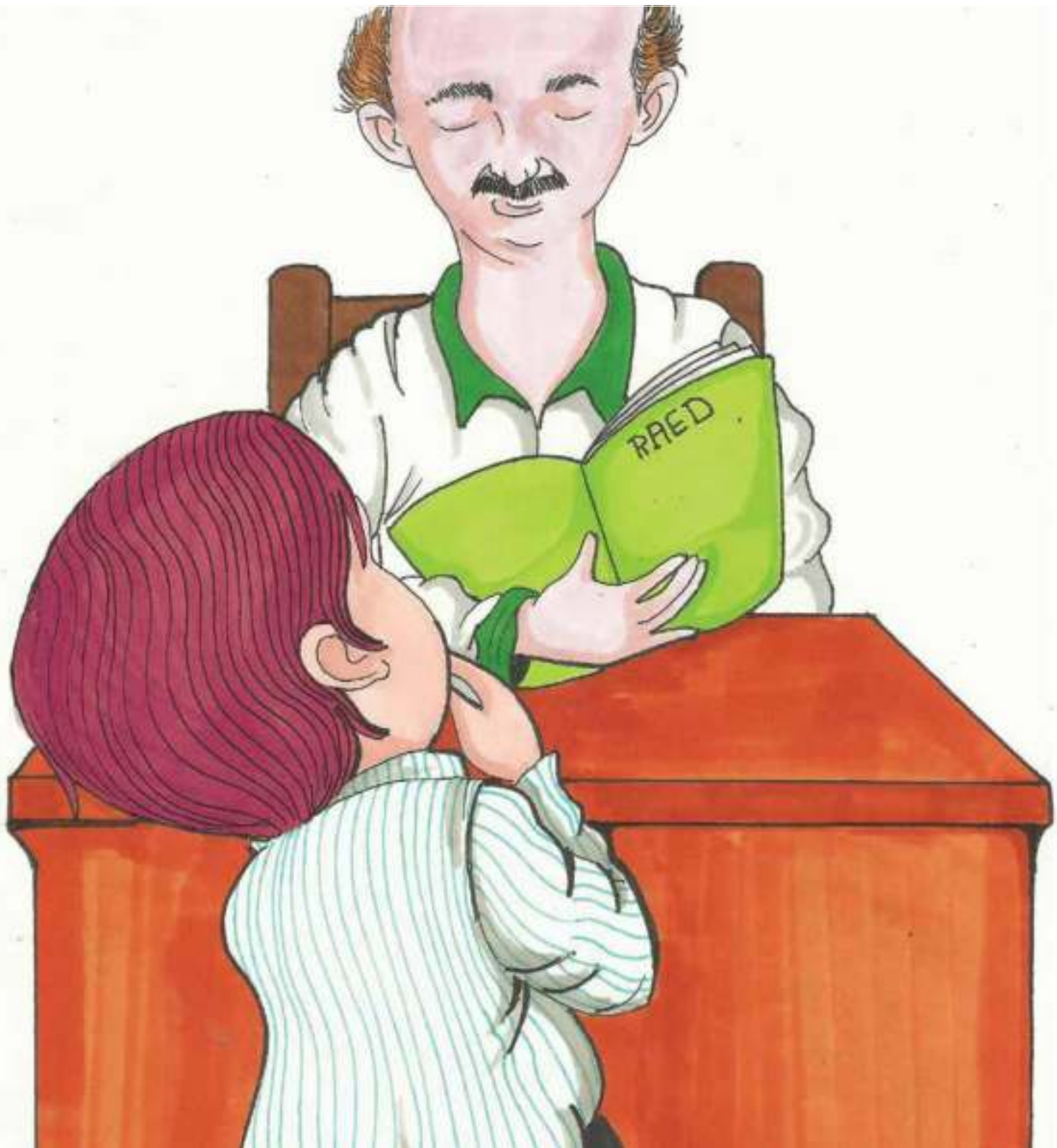
Respect?

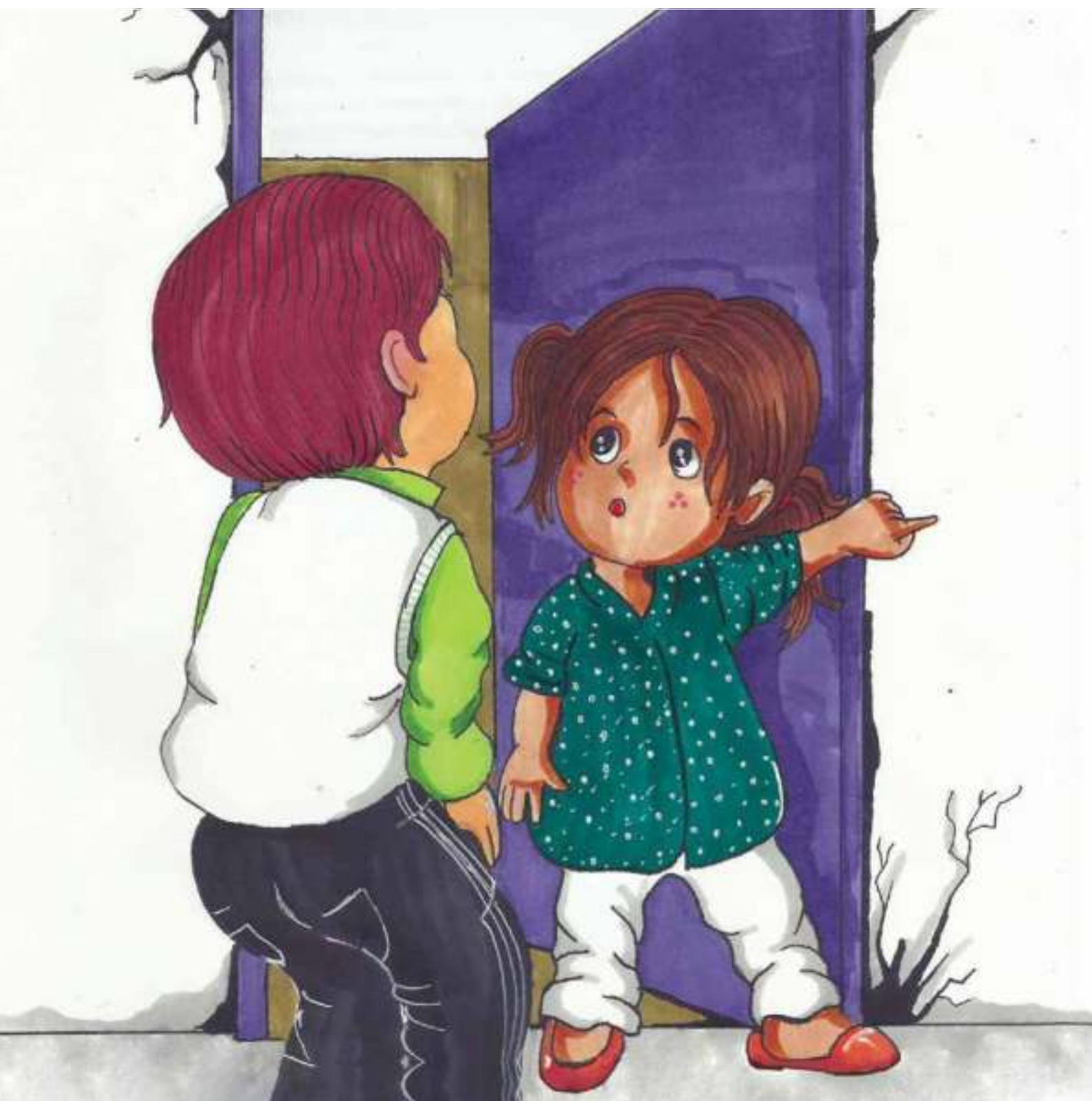
“Yes, one needs respect and love as he needs water and food”, he explained.

As teacher Hamza finished his speech, he put his hand on my shoulder and said, Rashed, I trust you are able to help Raed; remember that love and compassion can make miracles. I hope Raed can make his way back sooner, before plunging into a whirlpool of despair because of neglect.

My teacher went, but his words were still ringing in my ears, reminding me with the difficult task ahead. Raed did not show up that day.

I had decided to do something different this time. I got Raed's address from the school admin and found my way to his home. It was a small old derelict house, saying all about its dwellers. Climber plants with intertwined





branches did out- tall its low walls because of lack of pruning and trimming.

A little girl resembling (Raed) came to me in response as I rang the bell. I said to her politely, “Where is your older brother (Raed)?” She spontaneously answered, “He is at uncle Hassan’s grocery...working there” as she pointed towards the grocery on the street corner.

“Raed ... a grocery worker?” I lamented the shocking idea, while I was standing far behind contemplating the agonizing scene.

Raed would work at the grocery during the evening to help his mother with the household expenses.

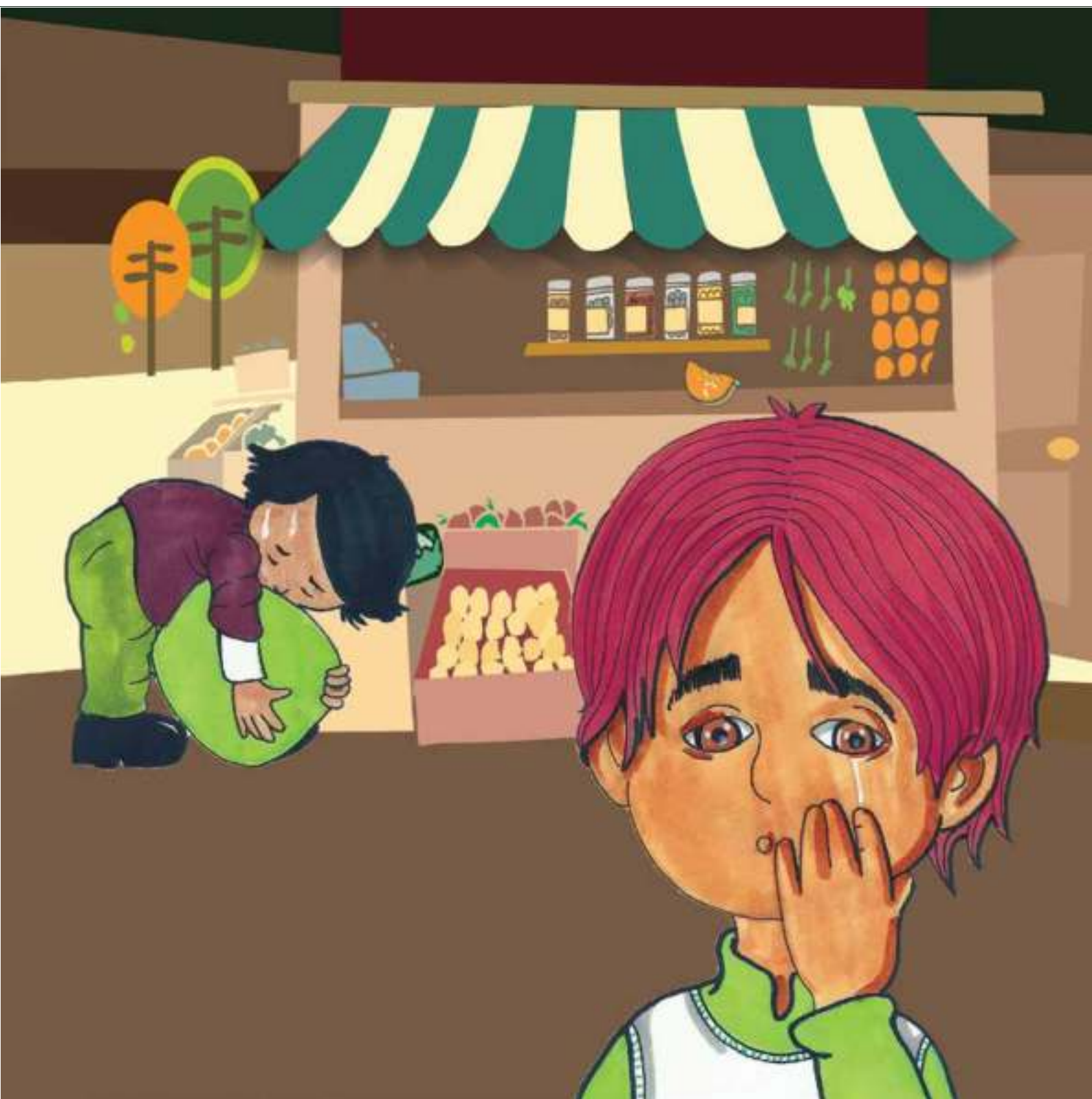
Sweat was dripping from his head; he seemed exhausted. I headed towards him with firm steps, as he was actively delivering orders to customers.

As I stood immediately behind him, I put my hand on his shoulder saying warmly, Raed!

He turned towards me swiftly with staring eyes and face overwhelmed with surprise and embarrassment. He started sweating as he was trying to hide his perplexity.

Rashed? What are you doing here?

I have come to visit you.





Then he turned around hiding his shyness when called by one of the customers for orders. I extended my hand to him shaking and encouraging, I am proud of you Raed! You are such a responsible chap!

His eyes filled with tears I saw coming down his shriveling cheeks. I held his hand encouraging him to continue his job, while engaging to help meet the orders of the customers.

Time quickly passed by as we were laughing and reacquainting. When I decided to return back, I offered him a gift he repeatedly posed questions about, “What is this? ...what is this?”

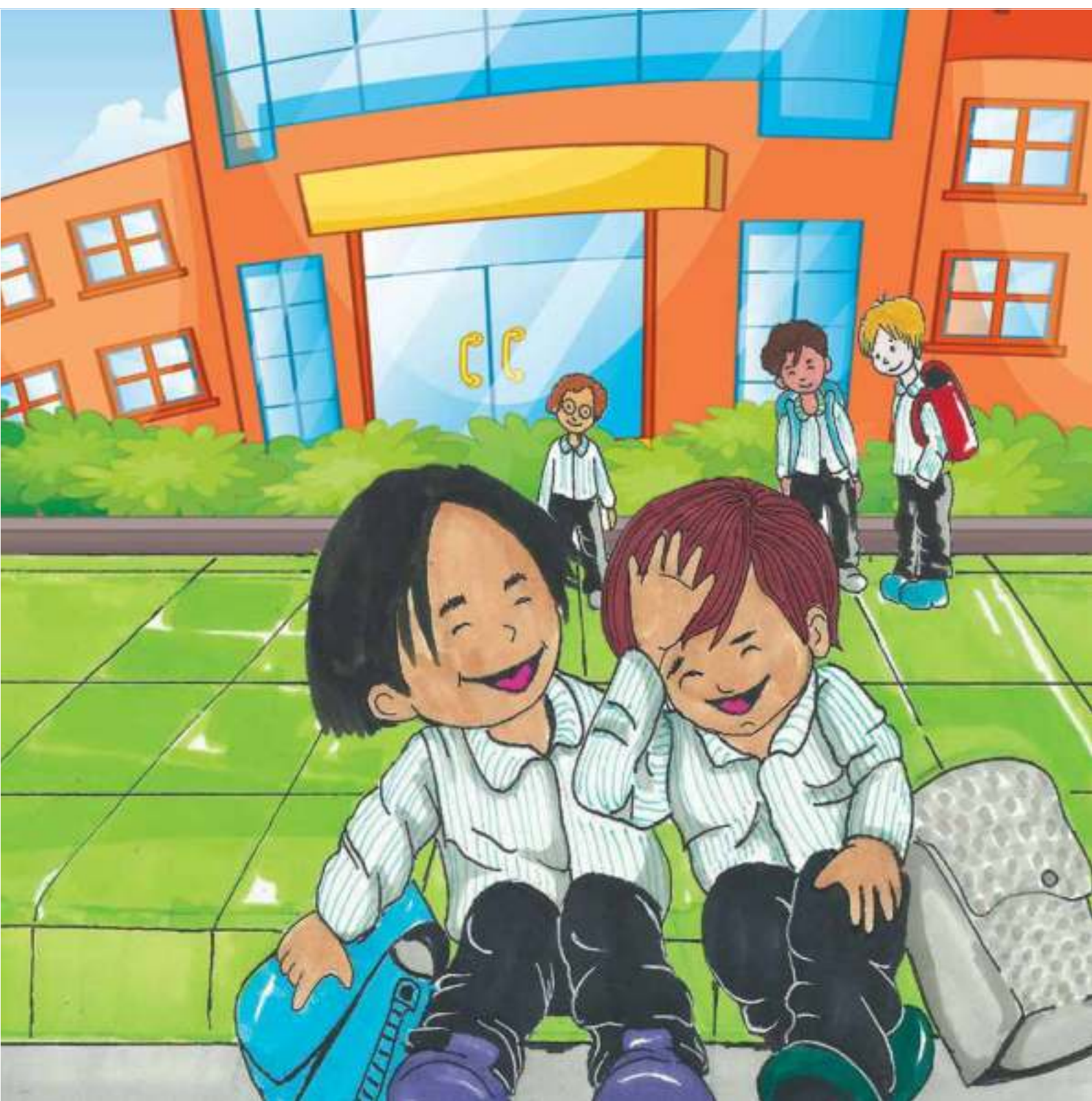
An advance for our friendship; I answered.

But I

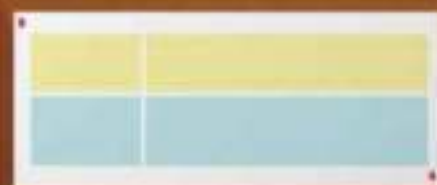
I interrupted his confusion winking, “Do you reject my friendship Raed?”

To the contrary, the honor is mine to befriend the top of the class!

We laughed heartily as I embraced him, bidding him farewell. I felt a new friendship deeply overtaking my life and bringing change to the way I thought and cared. Raed and I now became close friends. His family affairs were getting better after my father offered to help them. The school cooperated in full secrecy lest they would affect the introvert Raed’s privacy.



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27					



Hence, Raed started to show a smiling and confident complexion laurelled with optimism. All noticed our upright and successful friendship, as our classmates began to know the new Raed.

He became extrovertly sociable and competitive to me not only in fluency, but also in diligence and study; as the competition was drawing nearer and nearer. Moreover, he resumed his academic competence, with more competitiveness and self-assurance of relentless determination.

Now, we were in the process of receiving the final exam certificates. All were anxious and silent following the end of competition. In the middle of such atmosphere of apprehension,

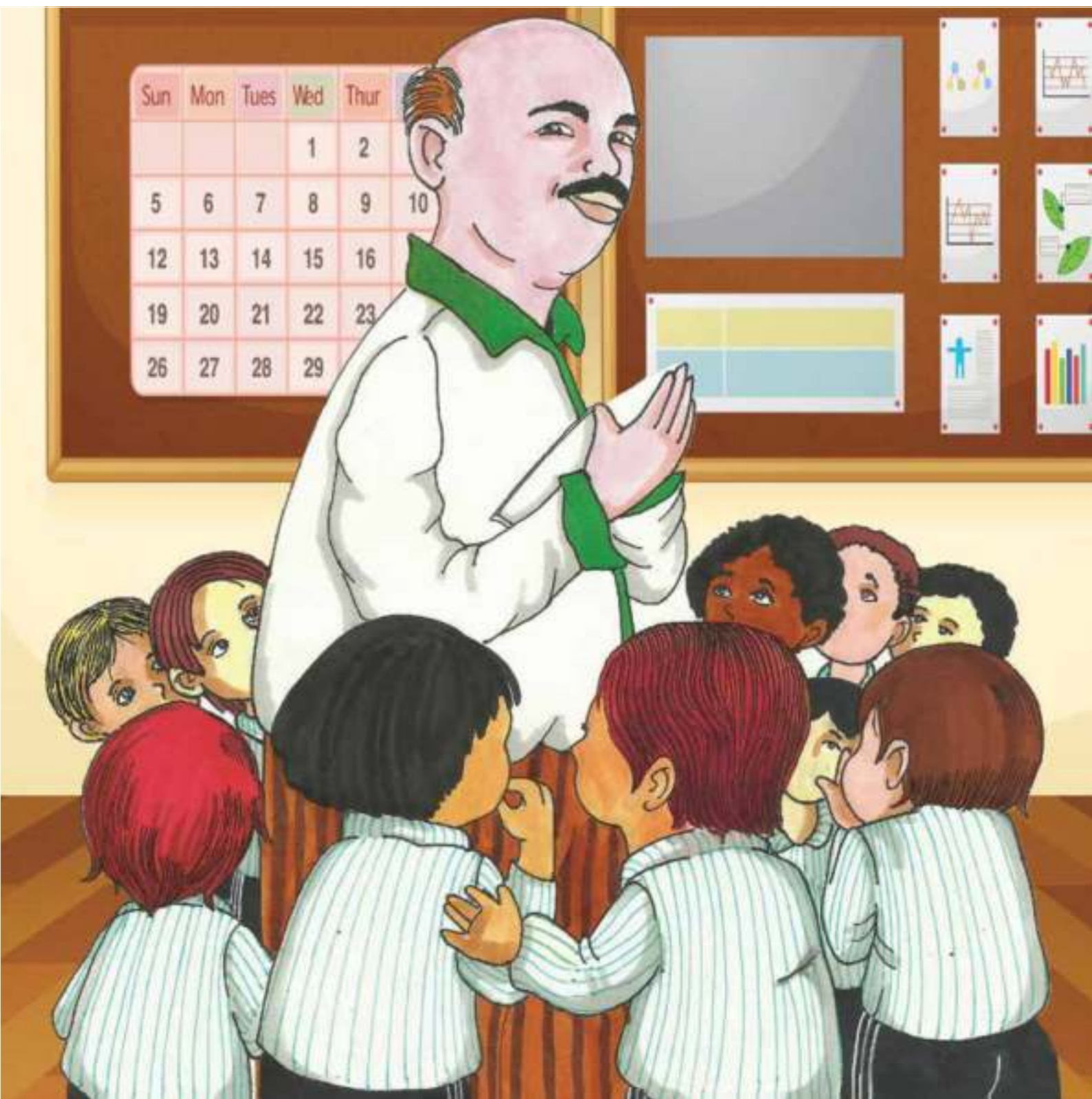
my eyes met with Raed's who shew some smile of contentment and confidence.

The teacher broke our anticipation as he brandished two certificates saying; I do not know by whom should I begin?

It was so tingling what he said. What he meant to say? I posed the question to Raed who was more composed than I was.

The teacher raised the tow certificates calling enthusiastically: Raed Ahmed, Rashed Ali; "you are both the top of the class. You equally scored the same marks! Congratulations".

Being surprised, I opened my eyes wide as I dashed toward my friend to hug in true joy.





Tears came from his eyes as he was embracing me in delight and gratitude. We shook hands before our classmates and teacher who gave a hug as well, with pride and pleasure.

Thank you Rashed! You showed such a good friend and brother. I am proud of you.

I felt the joy of winning, prowess and true friendship as I was listening to his appreciative expressions.

The End

Story By

Fatima Ibrahim Muhammad Al Amri

Illustrations by

Ahmad Husain & Noon Abdullah



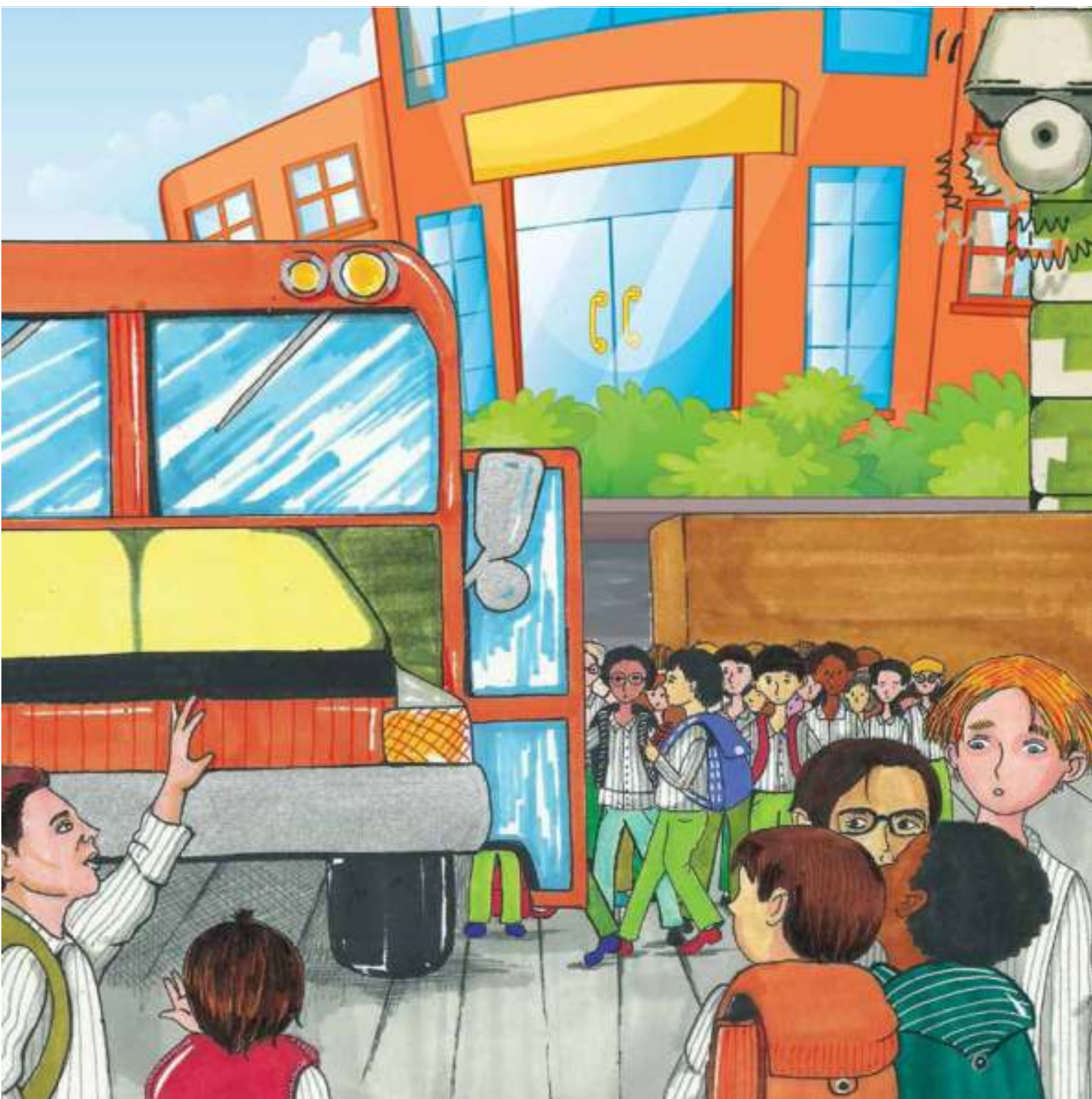
THE SECRET OF THE PARCEL

The

bell rang announcing the end of a long learning day. The pupils discharged as a frightened flock of birds to catch up transport back home. Except for Salim, the slim dark boy in his twelve, with consistent features and sharp brilliant dark eyes. He started returning on foot!

Now, he seemed absent-minded, slow walking, and with wondering looks. To the extent that he did greet neither the grocer nor their neighbor Mr. Said, as he usually did. He continued following the road on which each side palm trees would extend dense and sparse until his feet dragged him back home.

The one-story house was beautiful despite being simple, with a wide yard covered with





colored tiles under the rectangular walls. The windows would have been better looking had it not been for the thick bolt wedged by their side to hang the clothesline. Besides, there was a pole from which dangled a small lantern about to fall at any moment just as any lanterns previously hung thereat.

Upon entering home, he forgot even to say hello to his parents. Rather, he went straight to his room wherein no sooner he started changing his clothes than he heard his mother calling him for lunch. He responded unexcitingly in repetition, “I am coming!”

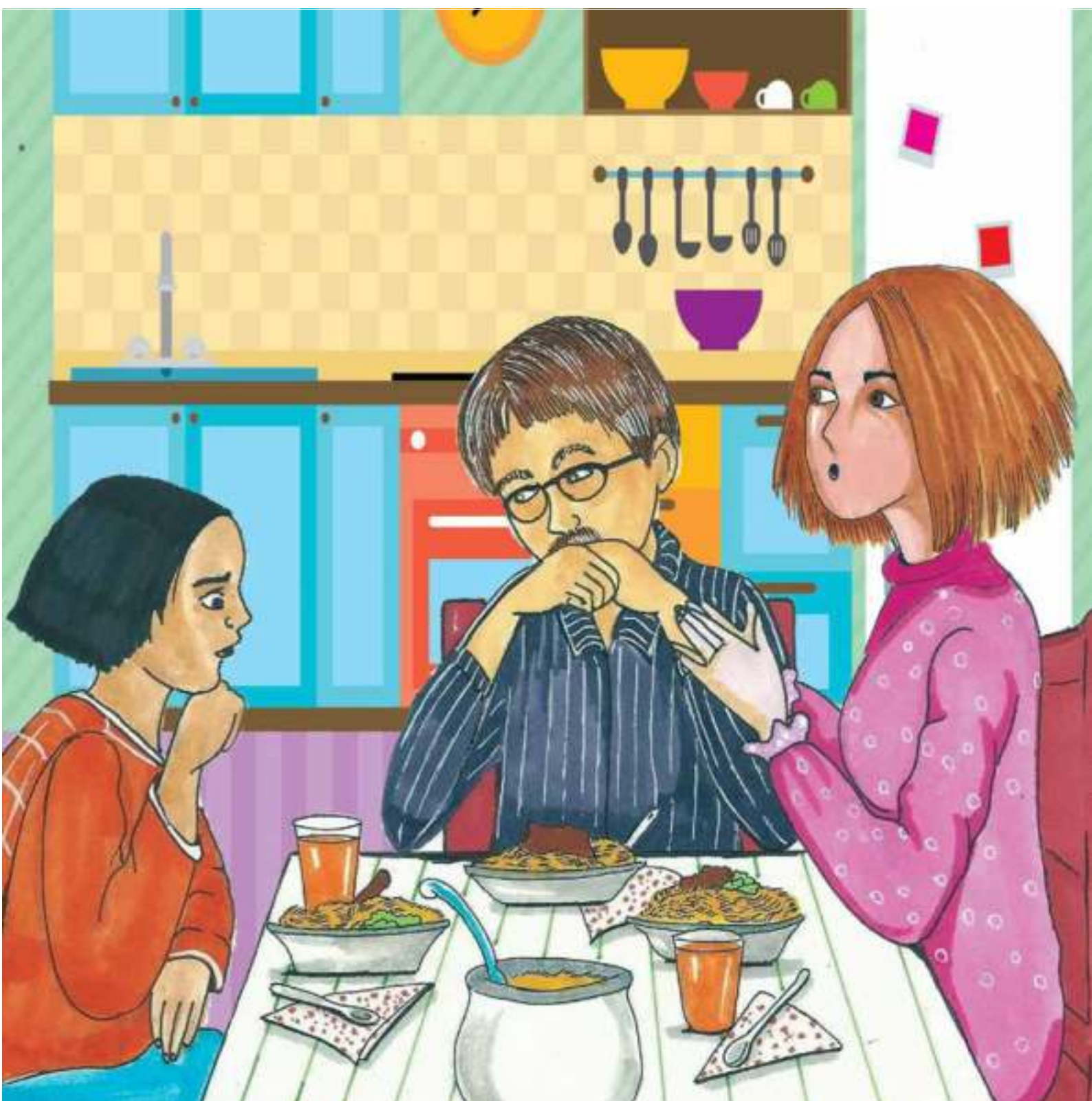
Salim sat around the table with his parents as he started eating in utter silence except for the sound of the spoons on plates. His

mother broke that silence by asking: “are you okay son?” Why are you thus absent-minded?

He answered anxiously, no, no mother ... I am okay. Nevertheless, he submerged again into yet deeper pondering.

Sunset began to disappear behind dusk, hitherto, Salim still too scatter-minded to respond to his parents who were trying to find out why he was not as usual. However, he felt it upon himself to visit his grandfather.

So it was; Salim visited his grandfather Mr. Mohammed. He was sitting on a white wooden chair, wearing his thick eyeglasses while studying a book. He noticed Salim’s footsteps upon entering and warmly welcomed him as usual. Salim reciprocated the greeting and said, “Am I bothering you grandpa?”





His grandfather replied with broad smile; “not at all son; pleased to see you ... but why you are thus worried? You seem so perplexed and annoyed!”

Salim answered hesitantly shaking his head, “the teacher chose me to sit next to the new pupil”.

“What is wrong with that?” His grandfather enquired.

I am not happy with the boy. Besides, no classmate approaches him, as he is a non-Muslim. I am not pleased sitting next to him.

Has he done you any wrong Salim?

“Never, he is very cooperative with me and with the other pupils”.

Has he uttered any bad or annoying word?

Certainly not! All he did was that he greeted me and introduced himself.

Why do you hate him Salim? His grandpa asked.

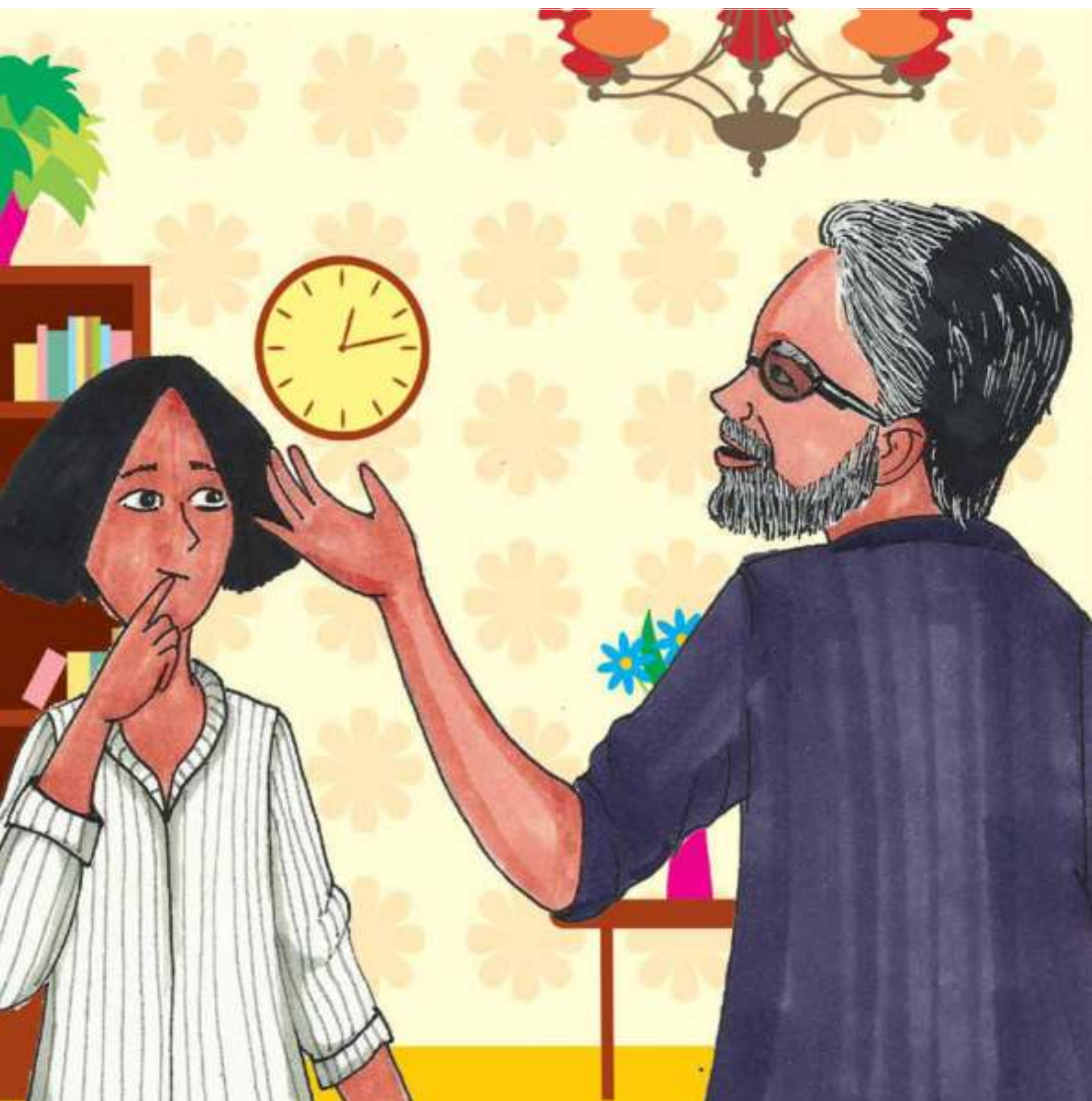
“He is of a different faith ... his not a Muslim ... he worships a deity other than God (Allah)”.

What the other pupils thought of him?

“They all do not approach him. He sits alone during the break, with neither friend nor companion”.

What other reasons do you hate him for, apart from being a non-Muslim?





Salim went into deep thought voicing mmm...
“Nothing else”, he replied.

His grandfather sighed while shaking his head and stating wisely, “What if I told you about a solution to your problem Salim?”

Salim answered enthusiastically, “really ... really grandpa ... what is that?”

The old man leaned unto Salim whispering carefully, “However, there are three conditions Salim” while folding his thumb on his index finger to demonstrate the number three, and continued:

“If you fulfill them, no one week passes before your problem is solved.

Salim nodded his head optimistically, “I agree... I agree with your entire conditions grandpa”.

The granddad rested his chin on his hand fist as saying, “come tomorrow at the same time”.

Going back home, Salim mulled over his grandfather’s light countenance, white beard, and all the reverence and veneration. The beaming of his eyes never dimmed in spite of the thick eyewear through which compassion and warmth would shine.

Being overwhelmed with zeal, curiosity, and different thoughts, Salim preferred to go to his grandfather’s house directly the following day.





Upon realizing how probing his grandson was, the old man articulated laughingly, “no hustle son”.

After remaining calm for some time, his grandfather asked; “do you insist that you do not want to sit next to your new classmate Salim?”

The answer came quickly, “yes ...yes I insist. I do not want to spend a single day beside him”.

The grandfather went and brought a seemingly heavy velvet parcel and said as he approached Salim, “Son! There is a secret in this parcel ... if you want to tackle your problem; you have to take it with you”.

As Salim did not know what his grandfather meant, he exclaimed, “parcel! Why should I take it? How will it help to get rid of the boy?”

“In this parcel, there is a secret that will help you solve your problem”, the grandfather said.

The old man’s speech was too enigmatic for Salim. However, he yieldingly said, “as he extended his hand for the parcel ... ok grandpa, if it will actually solve my problem”. Yet the grandfather tightened his grip on it as saying, “wait! The three conditions have to be fulfilled”.

Oh! The conditions, what are they? Salim asked.

“First of all, you must carry this parcel for two weeks to get what you wanted”.

“Two weeks! Too much. How can I bear that boy for additional two weeks?”

“There is no other option Salim!” The grandfather said.

Salim queried despondently, “Well, what are the other two conditions?”

“Secondly and most importantly, you must not open this parcel whatever happens! Promise me!” The old man said.

“I promise you grandpa,” Salim said apprehensively.

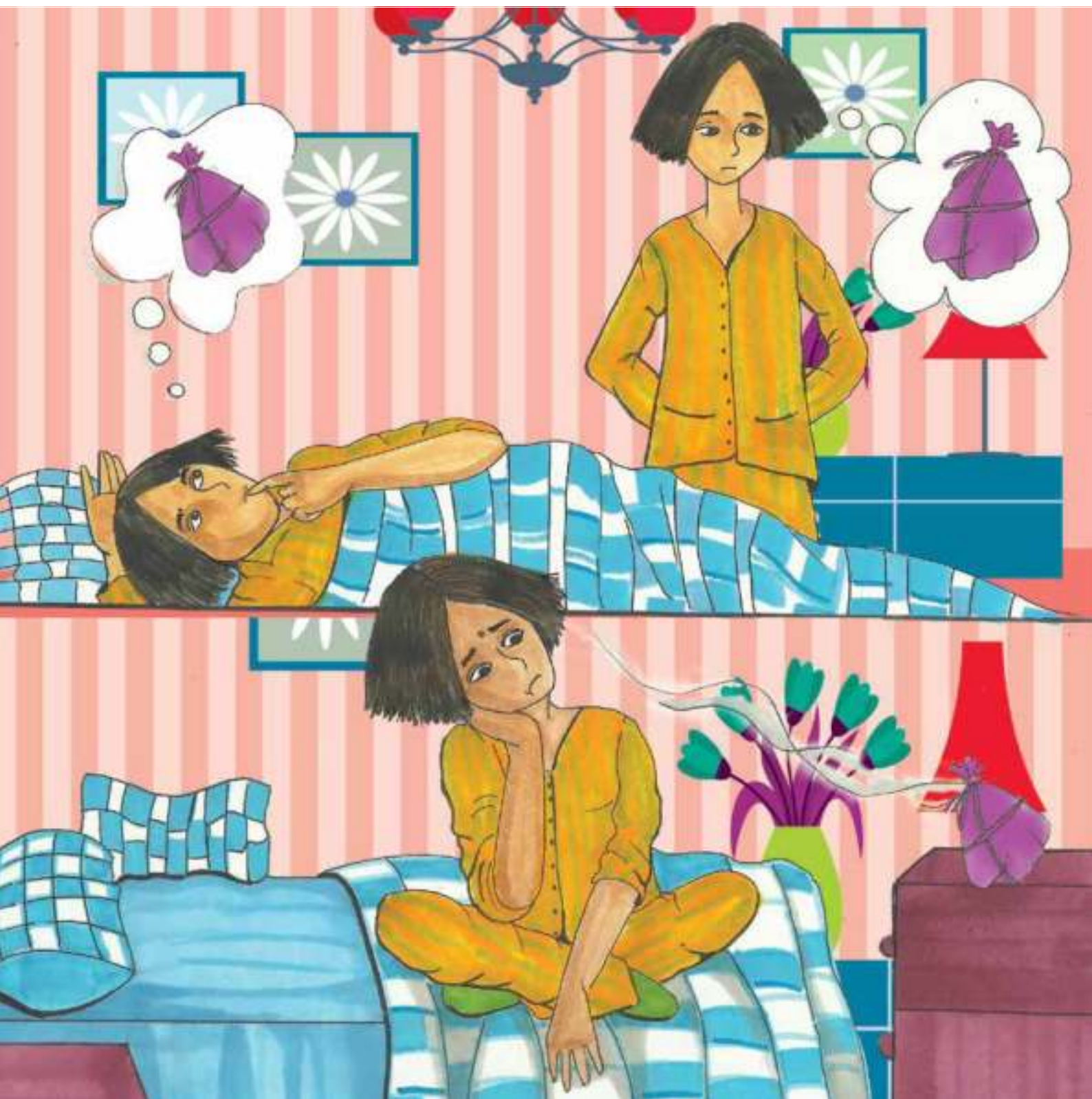
Stroking his beard, the old man said, “last of all, you must carry this parcel all times... at home, on street, at school, and even during play, put it in your pocket; never leave it behind for a moment!”

“Well, okay grandpa, but is it a magical parcel? I mean is there a sort of a genie in side? Such as that narrated in the Sindbad fables”.

The old man laughed until his face turned red and age lines folded around his eyes. He replied, “no son! It is nothing of that sort”.

Salim returned home carrying the parcel that seemed bigger in his hand as he was soliloquizing for long on the secret of the parcel, which would help him to get rid of the boy he hated.





On day one, Salim was enthusiastic about the parcel, which he would carry everywhere to meet the conditions by his grandfather.

Despite being heavy, he would put it into his pocket. Which would become critically inflated, nevertheless he would take heart that it would rid him of troubles. Day two and three passed normally. However, on the fourth, he noticed a bad smell which he could not locate its source. Upon getting back home, he bathed repeatedly with no avail! The stink was still there. He detected that it was the parcel!

He wanted to open it, but retreated upon recalling his promise to his grandfather. The first week passed slowly and unbearably as the stink agitated Salim to such a pitch that

he could not focus in class. Moreover, he could not sleep at night, or think or play. He was thinking too much about the strangely malodorous parcel. Which caused him such shame every day the foul smelling increased.

Before the end of the two weeks in question, Salim went back to his grandfather, as he could not bear the parcel any longer. Especially as it caused him sleepless nights, mind scattering, unhappiness and broken relationship with others. He complained to his grandfather about his suffering with the parcel; which he affirmed he could not bear any more.

Conversely, his grandfather responded, “even if you could not bear it in hand, you still bear it in your heart!”





“How?” Salim shockingly enquired.

His grandfather’s answer came full of wisdom, “It was the hate in your heart towards that boy of different faith ... which has deprived you sleep, play, agility, and even proper thinking. In consequence, has barred you from entertaining with your friends. It is the malodor of hate! If you were not able to carry this parcel in your hand for less than two weeks, how could you carry it forever in your heart? Tolerance is the remedy for your heart and the solution for all your problems”.

The End



ZAYED HOUSE FOR ISLAMIC CULTURE
Al-Ain, UAE

PUBLISHED BY
ZAYED HOUSE FOR ISLAMIC CULTURE
P.O. BOX 16090, AL-AIN, UAE
WWW.ZHIC.AE | INFO@ZHIC.AE

ISBN 978-9948-23-673-3

All rights reserved. Aside from fair use, meaning a few pages or less for nonprofit educational purposes, review, or scholarly citation, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Copyright owner.

ZHIC has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Printed in UAE





دار زايد للثقافة الإسلامية
Zayed House For Islamic Culture



zhic.uae



@zhic_uae



zhic_uae



zhic

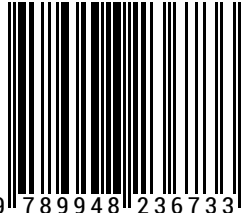
800 555



اتصل على
JUST CALL

P.O Box: 16090, Al Ain, U.A.E
www.zhic.ae | contact@abudhabi.ae

ISBN 978-9948-23-673-3



9 789948 236733

