

IQRA 2022 - 2023

IQRA

2022 - 2023



F.G. DEGREE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
ABID MAJEED ROAD, RAWALPINDI CANTT.

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**In the name of Allah the most Beneficent and the most
Merciful**

I Q R A

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It is a moment of pride and privilege for me as a Principal of this alma mater that creative efforts and intellectual pursuits of my staff and students have culminated in the form of a college magazine "IQRA". After a hiatus of several years, this was a long outstanding event on the college calendar.

It cannot be further underscored that good communication skills are crucial for developing leadership skills among students. It is essential that students and teachers both develop their penchant for reading and writing; activities which shall provide the necessary impetus to their analytical and team-building skills. Our mission at college remains to provide every student the opportunity to read and write and IQRA has come out to be the perfect forum for this intellectual parley. Active involvement in the literary arts enhances student engagement and improves academic performance. Thus, public celebration of students' writing through publications like IQRA builds self-esteem and confidence.

We are aware of the hurdles and difficulties encountered by the Editorial staff. Their efforts are commendable. We are also indebted to our worthy contributors for without their contributions this issue would not have been possible. Finally, we also record our profound gratitude for our discernable readers who spare their time and savour every bit of the magazine. We hope and pray that IQRA continues to flourish and shine for the coming years.

Prof. Azra Karim

Principal FG Degree College (W), AMR, Rawalpindi



ENGLISH
SECTION



EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

We are thrilled to bring to you the latest edition of our college magazine “IQRA”. The aim of the English section of the college magazine is to allow a literary and creative space for those who write in English to express their thoughts and ideas. We have tried to incorporate as many different genres as we could. This volume includes pieces on a diverse range of topics, depending on the writers’ interests. The prose pieces in the magazine include essays, short stories, a biography, a letter, a humorous article and an opinion piece. The poetry section includes free verse poetry that gives freedom of expression to the poets to write without any fixed metrical structures. Even though the curtain call is done at the end, we would like to throw the spotlight on the writers, right here right now!

In the essay section, Abrish Gul, Ayesha Arshad, Hajra Manzoor and Tayyaba Naveed impart various ethical virtues through their honest and simple, yet powerful words. There is also a timely piece by the lecturer, Ms Ulfat Tahireen, on the dangers of climate change. Next, we have the budding poets, Noor ul Husan, Shezal Fatima, Ayesha Jamil, Nadiha and Ayesha Arshad (again!) who give voice to personal emotions and social issues in their poetic works. We also have a few exciting short stories by Areeba Fayyaz, Aliza Jamil and Ayesha Jamil (back again!). The biography section contains a short piece by Hajra Manzoor (yes, the essayist!) that reflects the real life struggles of an individual and contains a great message of resilience and hope. Letter-writing or the epistolary form of writing is another genre in English literature, so we have also included a letter by the lecturer Ms Kalsoom Khawaja. It is truly a visionary piece and great advice for girls on how to behave with grace and confidence in a challenging world. Next, Saleha Bukhari’s opinion on her perception of beauty is shared here. It is meant to make us think about abstract notions of beauty and joy and compel all of us to extract happiness from the special as well as ordinary moments of life. Lastly, a humorous piece written by the lecturer, Ms Sara Noor, highlights the challenges and rewards of teaching in a satirical way.

We hope the readers will enjoy reading these pieces and will gather something worthwhile from these pages. Without further ado, we hand you the magazine of session 2022-2023!

Ms Humaira Ishtiaq & Ms Sara Noor

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COURAGE

Abrish Gul

XI C-2

When the word courage comes to mind, I wonder what it actually means. Is it something touchable? Something countable? Something different? Knowing what courage really means is important. Courage is the most prominent and significant of all the virtues a person may have because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently. You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently. Courage is to overcome your fear to achieve the things that you wished for. It is aptly said: A brave man is not he who doesn't feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.

The mark of courage makes itself known through risk taking. Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen. He who is not courageous enough to take risks will accomplish nothing in life. You can never do anything in this world without being courageous. It's the greatest quality of the mind next to honour. Legend has it that when Robert's spirits were broken, he took refuge in a cave. Sitting in the cave, he noticed a small spider attempting to weave a web. The spider tried and failed over and over. Each time the spider fell, it climbed back up to try again King Bruce was surprised by this. Watching this tiny creature trying, again and again, gave the king new hope and new strength. He cried and said, "If a little spider can bravely do it without losing hope, then I can also do it." With this, the king decided to raise his army once more. His final victory exemplifies that courage is what makes a person honourable.

The virtue or ability of courage may be God gifted to some, whereas others need to develop it by their own efforts. Courage can be displayed when you don't let the noise of others' opinions down out your own inner voice. You get courageous though every experience where you really stop and confront fear in the face It is said that: Courage is not the absence of fear but the triumph over it. The case of Jack Ma Yun, a Chinese business magnate, is an example of tremendous courage conquering extreme adversities. Jack Ma failed in school three times, tried in vain to get admission in Harvard ten times and got rejected 40 times for different jobs. Once, 24 people applied for job in KFC and 23 were selected and the one who was rejected was Jack Ma. Another

time, five men applied for the police job and four were chosen. The one who was repudiated was again Jack Ma. Yet when Jack Ma borrowed money from his friends to start a company and faced his relatives' continuous taunts during that period, he finally emerged successful. Today, the world knows Jack Ma as the co-founder and former chairman of the Alibaba Group. He is known as one of richest persons in the world with a net worth of 28.6 million dollars. Hence, he proves that one can learn to build and develop courage with time and experience.

The effects and signs of courage are visible in one's thinking and behaviour. In our life, many of us stay in our comfort zone. But to achieve something we need efforts and courage. We should never stop and have the courage to distinguish ourselves from the crowd. Courage is when you don't care what others say. Courage is a strange feeling which strengthens you, which makes you superior, which helps you reach the sky. Courage makes you special in whatever you do. The more you can manage to step forward, take actions and face your fears, the more courageous you become.

There are various steps to become courageous. One should have the courage to say "No", have the courage to face the truth and do the right thing because it is right. These are the magic keys to live one's life with integrity. One should have courage to bear the great sorrows of life and have patience to bear the small ones. As a student, teacher, employee or whatever you are, you may fail many times in achieving good grades, best performance, awards and promotion, but it doesn't mean that you cannot do anything. You must remain steadfast and never get disheartened and discouraged. You must keep on working on yourself and be hopeful because hope is essential in life. A day will come when you will be successful and realize all your dreams.

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

Ayesha Arshad

XI D

I've decided on one idea which seems to have formed a constant difference in my life. I'm thankful that I have faith in myself. This technical quality is part of what makes me unique and part of how my friends and loved ones have endorsed me across all of my life. Regardless of where it comes from, it reflects the one trait that allows me to not only engage with, but also love living. The most significant difference I've observed between successful and unsuccessful people isn't brain power, potential, or manpower. It is their conviction that they can achieve their goals.

Believing in yourself is vital for maintaining a happy and productive life. When a person has complete faith in oneself, one is able to accomplish anything without being afraid of failing. As a consequence, many self-assured individuals are frequently effective in whatever they do. They also encourage us in their overall life management.

I believe that we have more potential than we realize, that we are more talented than we realize, and that we only need to discover ourselves and have self-belief among us. When significant assignments were assigned in school, I waited until the very last minute to undertake them. I didn't think I'd be able to complete it by the deadline. I would begin the homework a few days before it was due. I would revise and put together the evening before it was due. This forced me to stay up late and do miserably in lecture the next morning due to exhaustion. Despite the fact that my projects were excellent, I was doubtful about my ability to continue performing well in class. I knew I was competent of doing everything I dedicate my life to, but staying up all night to complete tasks was a barrier to my success. My mother advised me to commence my projects early and with proper time management, which allowed me to get more rest and accomplish my classwork more quickly.

My friends and loved ones are constantly available to assist me get back up after a fall and elevate me higher than before. With the right perspective, anyone can do anything. Life is like a roller coaster, with many ups and downs. Encouragement enhances your self-esteem. What matters is how much work you put into it and how you use it in your life. Never, ever lose faith in yourself.

Have you ever heard the phrase "If you believe it, your mind can achieve it?" Accepting how beautiful you actually are, having a belief in yourself, and afterwards adopting this idea into your character and behavior is one of the hardest things to do in life. But no one compares to you. We have distinct contributions to make to the world that no one else can. After all, we all have unique talents and qualities that set us apart.

So, what precisely is belief in oneself? It is the faith in one's own ability. It encourages kids to take opportunities, be creative in their classroom tasks, and invest in their schoolwork. A self-assured kid or grownup is more inclined to be confident and focused, and to approach academic education and instruction with a "can do" rather than a "can't do" attitude.

Luckily, parents and teachers may help by building a good self-image, supporting independence, and assisting children who are struggling to discover the support needed. What I've realized is that students are naturally highly imaginative. During homework, teenagers may have a unique notion or thought that differs from everyone else's. Teachers must inspire confidence in their children so that they may express their originality and creativity without concern of being condemned.

There will be difficulties and changes in your life, and it is up to you to accept them and maintain a constant sense of direction for yourself. It will not always be easy, but it will provide you with a better understanding of who you are.

Starting to read a great novel, transports you to another planet and assists you to eliminate tension. Many individuals may recall a big event, a work of art, an important coach, or a religious experience that influenced their worldview. When I started reading J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series, my perspective of the world shifted dramatically. I was reading this excellent novel when I learned about this amazing writer and her battle, which taught me about self-belief and not giving up. The Harry Potter manuscript was rejected by 12 major publications. However, she did not give up and continued to believe in herself, and now this book is one of the best-selling novels ever written.

Some folks feel that if we keep going forward with confidence, we will figure out what to do next rather than sitting about doing nothing and being overly optimistic. To be successful, we must believe in ourselves. When I have a fantastic chance but am unable to reap the benefits of it.

I think I will figure it out and pursue that chance; I believe in myself; this type of confidence has made a difference for me time and again; I don't desire opportunity, intelligence, or resources. I only believe in myself because this will help me turn every opportunity into success. Lately I was really impressed by the following stanza that I would love to share here:

“When they judge you, yawn.
When they misunderstand you, smile.
When they underestimate you, laugh.
When they condemn you, ignore.
When they envy you, rejoice.
When they oppose you, prevail.”

— **Matshona Dhliwayo**

To conclude, it is necessary that you suppress negative thoughts and work hard to accomplish your goal. You may not be the most attractive, brilliant, or wealthy person, but it should not prevent you from being the greatest. Accept yourself as you are! You can be tall, short, chubby, skinny, charming, or unattractive, but none of these factors should prevent you from achieving your ambition.

WHEN LIFE HURTS

Hajra Manzoor

XI B

What do you do when your battle chooses you? What do you do when something shows up on your doorstep, that you did not directly cause, choose, or anticipate? Life is not always easy! In fact some of you today, you are here and you're going through the toughest seasons of your life. There will be seasons when you'll suffer; there will be seasons of real pain. And the question is: How will you respond in those moments?

Life is hard sometimes. It's not an option. But it's worth fighting. It's worth believing. It's worth giving yourself a chance. It's worth mustering yourself up, standing up inside yourself. It's worth fighting relentlessly. In short, you must remember never to give up.

Whatever difficulties you may face, you can convince yourself to do it! There are problems that we go through that cause stress, worry, anxiety and fear, but you might be in the battle of your life. I want to encourage you and tell you that it's not about what's happening around you, it's always about what's happening inside you. Just because you feel afraid, doesn't mean you have to be afraid. Just because you feel discouraged doesn't mean you have to be discouraged. Just because you fear, doesn't mean fear has to have you.

The sentence out of your mouth is a story that you are putting out: "I'm gonna make it" or "I quit." "I've no one" or "I can make it on my own." "Business is never coming back" or "This can be an opening." "I've lost too many people" or "There is yet hope!" "I've made too many mistakes" or "I have learnt so much by my mistakes." "I'm a failure" or "I am the product of my experiences." "Nobody can help me" or "I can rely on my skills and ability." "I've done too many bad things" or "I can do this right."

I don't know what's coming out of our mouths, but you're spelling your fortune, you are either pronouncing your death sentence or breathing new life into yourself. And as you continue to confess it and as you continue to declare it, don't be surprised when it becomes true in your life.

All of us have to make sure that whenever we feel, when we think of a death sentence, we must replace it with a life sentence. I'm giving myself the sentence of death. I'm having the

thoughts of anxiety. I'm feeling the thoughts that I'm done. I feel like I've been used and it hurts and is really difficult!

But when that happens I must start speaking out a life sentence. No! I'm just gonna keep showing up, No! I'm going to get back up. The righteous man who falls countless times but he gets back up, never gives up! So, never give up because skills and agility can't get you past certain things. In the process of getting back up, you will develop mental resilience.

You must remember that pain isn't permanent. You can get through this. You're bigger than your pain. You need to remember this is not the first time you cried, this is not the first time you were short of breath, this is not the first time you didn't see a clear way, this is not the first time you were hurt, this is not the first time your heart was broken, this is not the first time you didn't have enough money, this is not the first diagnoses that came up from behind. Say I'm gonna live to tell the story. This too shall pass!

Say to yourself the sentences breathing signs of life: I will remain. I'm not gonna quit. All my burdens have blessings in disguise. If you don't quit, you will win, dear! You gonna work through this, you gonna get up, you gonna get dressed, you gonna get out, and you gonna do what you've been called to do, you gonna be what you're called to be. And you're gonna prove to everybody that tried to break you, everybody that tried to stop you, everybody that tried to kill your dreams, and you're gonna prove all of them wrong. Just keep coming back.

If you have nothing left to give, just show back up. Half of life is just showing up. And I'm telling you right now, don't give up. I'm telling you right now: Get in, get through it, get over it. And if you can get through it, if you can work through your pain, I'm guaranteeing you on the other side is a reward. Pain is not permanent. Pain is temporary.

CLIMATE CHANGE: THE IMPACT ON HUMANITY

Ms Ulfat Tahireen

Lecturer

One of the most important global issues of our day is climate change. It results from a buildup of greenhouse gases, mostly carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide in the atmosphere, which traps heat and raises world temperatures. Humanity will continue to be significantly impacted by this occurrence.

The rise in severe weather events, such as heatwaves, droughts, floods, storms, and wildfires, is one of climate change's most important effects. These occurrences have the potential to seriously harm crops, houses, and infrastructure, resulting in population displacement and financial losses. Additionally, high heat can have negative health effects, especially for those who are more susceptible, like the elderly, children, and people with chronic medical disorders.

Loss of biodiversity due to many species' difficulties in adapting to rapidly changing surroundings is another effect of climate change. Ecosystems and the services they offer, such as pollination, water filtering, and temperature management, may be severely impacted by this loss. Furthermore, as many communities rely on natural resources for their livelihoods and cultural practices, the loss of biodiversity may affect human well-being.

Another effect of climate change is the increase in sea levels brought on by the melting of ice-caps and glaciers. This phenomenon raises the possibility of submerging low-lying coastal areas, which would result in the displacement of millions of people and severe economic losses. In addition, sea level rise can worsen storm surges and coastal erosion, causing more harm to buildings and infrastructure.

Food security is also impacted by climate change since crop yields and agricultural production can be impacted by changes in temperature and precipitation patterns. For underdeveloped nations where agriculture is a key source of revenue and food supply, this impact is particularly severe. Furthermore, disputes over natural resources, such as water and land, might become more likely as a result of climate change and can worsen already existing disparities.

Finally, because it may cause emotions of worry, anxiety, and hopelessness, particularly for those who are most sensitive to its impacts, climate change can influence mental health. The effects of climate change may also cause social and economic upheavals that may have long-term psychological repercussions.

In conclusion, climate change is a major issue that affects people globally. Governments, civil society and people must all work together to find a solution to this problem. We can build a more resilient and fair future for everyone by lowering greenhouse gas emissions, adjusting to the effects of climate change, and encouraging sustainable development.

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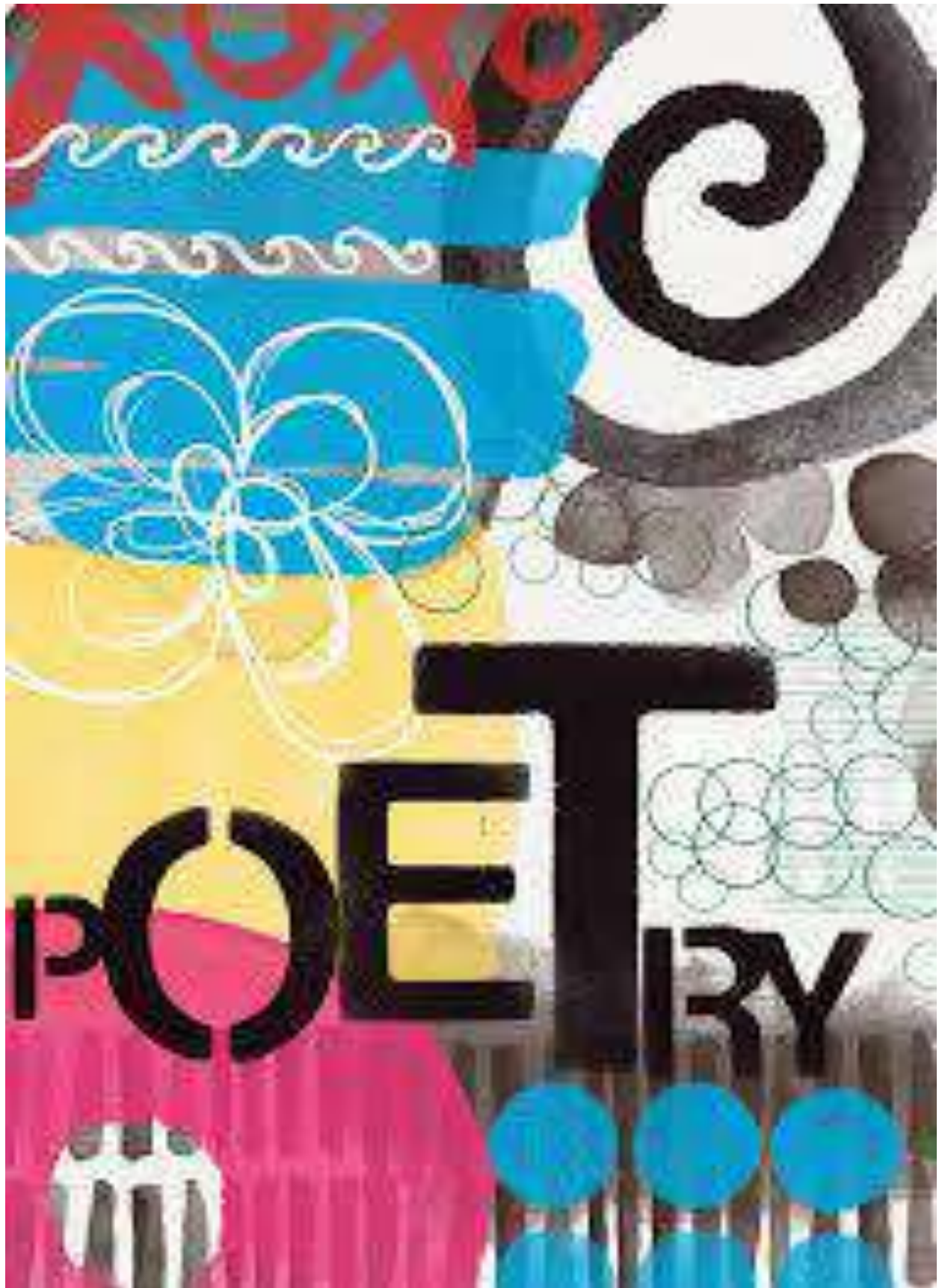
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WATER**Ayesha Jamil****XI B**

I live in Tharparkar
Barren and dry,
With shortage of water,
And people die,

The day is hot,
With a blazing sun,
If one finds water,
His task is done,

We struggle, we struggle,
For every single drop,
We look for water,
From bottom to top,

I have a wish,
I have a dream,
To discover a new,
African stream,

We have heard stories,
Of people who live,
Surrounded with water,
They have water to give,

They waste the blessing,
They prove they are greedy,
They don't even care,
That we are needy,

They are not aware,
Of the situation over here,
That we are living,
In great despair,

We are humans,
We must always care,
For the people who suffer,
In a region near,

We don't want,
More people to die,
We have to save them,
We must try.

A MEMORY

Noor-ul- Husan

XII

When we both sat on another planet
And said goodbye to this blind world,
When we warmed our hands by the fire of the sun
Together in the cold night,
When we admired the fading of the day into the golden evening,
When we built a house of love in the depths of the sea,
When we were together in the infinite universe,
When we talked about the moon together,
When your heartbeat was flowing like the waves of the sea,
When your breath was blowing like the wind in the desert evening,
When you used to say magic words as deep as the ocean...

It's a day I always remember.

A day I'll never forget!

When I look into the eyes waiting for long lost love,
When I look at the art of an artist,
When I look through the flying smoke of memories,
When I look into the meaningful words of the poet,
When I look inside the depth of the ocean,
When I look at the peace noon of the graveyard...

I think of that unforgettable day
That stretches into an eternity,
Whose memory lingers on...
But this 'forever' is without you.
Now we both are alone in our universe.

A NEW BEGINNING**Nadiha****XI C-1**

Let's start a new beginning

Rise like a sun shining,

Be prepared for the worst

And keep going.

Think what you want,

And what you are doing

When no one's there:

Raise your hand and keep praying.

They are the part of our life

And life is incomplete without them

For whom you have some special feeling.

One day life will end,

But till that one day

You have to keep living.

No matter how hard it is,

Face the reality and keep going...

Let's start a new beginning

Rise like a sun shining.

I HAVE MY OWN WAY

I don't care what naysayers say

I always have my own way.

No matter how hard it is

I choose to make my own way

“Destiny will never be changed,” they say.

But I dare to change my attitude and my way.

A principle of life is

For what you did, you have to pay.

To live a happy life

You have to clear your own way.

Be strong to face the reality.

Be brave to win the battle.

Because you can't care for what others say,

You got to make your own way.

THE SHATTERED CRYSTAL**Shezal Fatima****XII D**

Here in the grave lie thee,
The One who was shattered against the wall,
Gathered there in a pile
Shining from the outside
But deep and dark and broken
Known as Crystal to others
Admired by outsiders —

Admirers gazing at the beauty,
Tryin' to reach its bottom
But those who try to touch deep down,
Got hurt by the surface there.
Disowned by some, unloved by others
The love she gained was all by strangers
Strangers — who knew nothin'.

What was wanted was just love!
By those she loved the most
By peeking in their hearts

Love was not the host
So, those who touched the shattered crystal
Are frowning and are hurt
They run away from her and beware others too

Here in the grave lie thee
The One with the thirst of Love,
With stress and a broken heart
The One who lighted the way for others
Is now resting beneath the starry sky.

A DAY I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER**Areeba Fayyaz****XII E**

Everyone has a good or bad day which is completely unforgettable. Likewise, today I'm going to share one of my strangest and most unusual experiences of a day that I will never forget. We were on our Summer Holidays and as usual we were ready to go to our maternal grand parents' house situated in the delightful city of Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. Our excitement was touching its peak as always. A day before our travel, we spent our whole day shopping and buying gifts for our family. In our family, relatives and family members are the most important part of our lives no matter what our circumstances are or whatever stage of life it is.

We had to travel from Rawalpindi to the city of Kabul by road. So we had to start our journey before sunrise. My father was also with us but he had to return back home due to his job after dropping us on the Pak-Afghan border. My mom, my two elder brothers and I were to go. I was only eight at that time.

We started our journey from Rawalpindi heading towards Peshawar and then to the Torkham Border. My brothers and I spent most of our journey sleeping while my mother seemed more curious and excited than us. As soon as we reached the border, we saw the emblem of two different countries, evoking a special kind of peace, attraction and satisfaction for me.

Indulged in these pleasures, I didn't even notice that my mother wasn't feeling well. Soon after we had eaten our breakfast in our hotel room, I observed that after every few seconds, she felt a spasm and her whole body moved involuntarily by that spasm. Suddenly, she screamed very loudly and her whole body became completely unconscious. She began to behave abnormally and I was unable to understand what was going on which made me extremely nervous. Certain questions were coming in my mind. *"What happened to her?" "Why is she behaving like an abnormal person?" "Will she remain like this for the rest of her life?"*

While these questions were revolving in my mind, my eyes were filled with tears and I started crying while watching my mother. My father told me to calm down. He did not seem as worried as I was. May be he was aware of what happened to her.

I went outside the room along with my brother who was also very curious. After a few minutes, my mother's condition became normal but the spasms were still continuing. One of my cousins picked us up from the border and we continued our journey across the border. I was still

afraid that my mother might be jolted by spasms again as they were sudden. There was a complete chaos in my mind. However, we successfully reached our grandparents' room, away from my mother as I could not see her in pain any longer.

After meeting her family, her brothers and her parents, she was normal and perfectly fine in a few minutes. She then called my siblings and me to her as she had understood that we three were worried about her.

Her illness, her problem was none other than an 'Epilepsy Attack' (a nervous disorder in which there is abnormal and excessive discharge of nerve impulses in brain, which causes unprovoked seizures in a patient). Though I didn't know about it at that time, the only thing I learnt was that the love of family is very essential for all of us in every situation as it can help us face and go through any problem fearlessly. The cause of the epileptic attack was sudden excitement and lack of sleep. I have learnt the actual reason and problem after a long time but, now I have learnt a lesson from it. Parents and children should have an active communication so that children learn to be responsible and are able to deal with emergency situations in a calm and measured way.

A WORLD WITHOUT RULES!

Aliza Jamil

XII A-1

I was about to scoop a large lump of chocolate from a giant cocoa mountain when I heard the alarm clock ringing. Rubbing my eyes, I opened them and found myself in the same old grey room. It was a dream! I wish I had tasted the velvety goodness. There was a knock on the door and my mum stepped inside. *Oh! And another busy school day begins*, I thought and to my surprise, my mom kissed me and said, “Sorry honey! I forgot to turn off the alarm.”

Confused, I turned towards my calendar hanging lazily on the wall. “Isn’t it Tuesday, mom? Aren’t you supposed to shout and wake me up so I could get ready for school?” She replied with a smile, “No dear, not from now onwards. Yesterday, the president announced that all the rules of the country have been suspended. People are free to do what they please.”

I had no words to speak. A huge wave of happiness and bubbling excitement surged through me. I was so proud of what I had caused. “Maybe your application was very impressive and the president accepted your request of no rules in the country”, she added. “So that means no school?” I asked. “You are free dear, it’s all up to you but remember, there will be ‘No Rules’ in the school so you might have a great time with your friends.”

I was in awe; I still couldn’t believe all of this had actually happened. Just to be sure, I pinched myself a couple of times and then decided to enjoy this surreal world. I jumped from my bed, and rushed downstairs without brushing my teeth in my PJs. I swung on my sofa and turned on the TV. My mom was beaming, reading a magazine. I wondered where my dad was. *Maybe he had gone to work or maybe he was asleep*. SLAM! The door closed behind me and dad stood yawning in the gallery. If he didn’t go to work, then that means there would be a fantastic football game in our backyard today. From now onwards, mom would never cook vegetables according to the weekly meal plan. *Pizza, burger, ice-cream... Life would become a dream...* The shrill doorbell invaded my salivating journey of food and as I opened the door, there stood my best pals, Sara and Ali in their PJs with unbrushed hair and teeth and then together they chanted, “Let’s Play!!”

We ran to the main playground of our neighborhood and found all the children celebrating their freedom like escaped prisoners. We decided to raid the senior citizen park but no luck. Every park was full. As there were no rules, everyone had gone bananas. We ended up playing in our backyard but it was also fun. *Football on Tuesday with your buddies, in pajamas, while bunking school... Awesome!* Then I saw a man stepping out of the garage in a Hawaiian shirt and bermudas. It was dad, and he looked so different than he usually does. I have always seen him in a suit and tie but now he was free of mom's wardrobe rules and was sticking to his favorites.

Dad beamed at us and shouted, "Who wants to have some fun?" We all hopped behind him in the car, he started it and as it moved, *SCREECH!* Somebody had stolen the tires, and since there were no rules, we couldn't do anything about it. A taxi passed by and dad signaled it to stop. He asked for the fare to the amusement park and the driver said, "5000 rupees". He was also taking an unfair advantage of the 'No Rules' policy and was charging as much as he pleased. We had to walk to the park but it was also fun. *Walking to the amusement park, with dad in a Hawaiian shirt, with friends in PJs, on Tuesday while bunking school... Awesome!*

After a tiring trek we reached our destination which was completely chaotic. It was flooding with people and all the rides were very crowded. People were riding on swings with eatables in their hands, which is strictly forbidden. We waited in the crowd to ride the giant roller coaster. Our turn finally came when beads of sweat had started making my face sting. I got a seat with Ali who was licking a jawbreaker lollipop. As the ride began, he started to feel nauseous and right when we were about to take the 360 degree loop, his jawbreaker fell down and the roller coaster halted to a stop with our legs dangling upside down in midair! The lollipop was stuck inside the ride machine and we were trapped! People called the cops and a rescue team, but it took an hour for them to arrive because it was difficult to assemble them due to the absence of crew members.

After an hour of insufferable agony where people blamed one another and no one took responsibility for the fault in the swing that endangered so many lives, I realized that having no rules is less of a panacea and more of a hellish chaos.

At last, we were rescued by a helicopter and my heart was relieved. The video of this incident reached the press and it was requested by government officials to revert to the old policies.

That night, it was declared in a special news segment that everything would be back to normal again. The government and the public both agreed to create balance between freedom and rules.

The events of the day had changed my heart. I'd realized that taking a moderate approach is the best way to go in life. So, I felt happy and relieved that rules existed for the safety of everyone. The next day, I woke up for school at six a.m. sharp!

THALASSOPHOBIA AND I

Ayesha Jamil

XI B

The sea is a place of wonder and mystery where the hands of man have barely breeched the depths. Despite the captivating beauty of its shimmering waves, the sea is the most vulnerable place to be in, where the waves thrash you to the shore or take you with them into their deep dark water.

Thalassophobia is an intense persistent fear of the ocean or deep water. It includes the fear of being in large bodies of water. It is the fear of the deep. I have thalassophobia and as much as the beauty of the sea overwhelms and fascinates me, I find the sea as most petrifying place in the world. I freak out near lakes, swimming pools and am even unable to stand under the shower for a long time. Thalassophobia makes me weak in limb, my heartbeat races and I have difficulty in breathing while near water bodies. Once, I had a major thalassophobic attack when I fell in the middle of a thirty feet Mediterranean Sea.

That day sticks vividly in my mind as it was the day we went to Mersin, Turkey with Dr. Uncle and his family. We went to the beach at noon. I could see the sun – blazing yellow, blistering in the cloudless sky. The clear blue sea’s waves rattled tiny pebbles embedded in the golden sand. The foamy mist from the rampant ocean sprayed our faces lightly as though it was the touch of a feather. The vivid blue waters shining marvelously in the afternoon sun and the warm sand welcomed us at the beautiful beach. A beautiful castle –*Kiz Kalesi*, built on a small island in the middle of the sea attracted tourists because of its ancient heritage and architecture. We were happier than ever. It was at this beautiful day that my existence was almost terminated.

Dr. Uncle booked a boat before swimming. According to the owner, it was a kid’s boat called the “Banana Boat”. The boat was bright yellow, cylindrical and could hold up to eight people in it. We sat on the boat with Dr. Uncle’s wife and his daughter, Sadia. As we got seated on the boat with our life jackets on, the driver tried to explain us something in Turkish. To which we said ‘Anlamadım’ because we didn’t understand what he said. All I could comprehend was him saying, “When I wave, ‘Bye-Bye’, leave the ropes.” This made no sense to me at all. He did not bother to

call a translator and explain us the safety rules and just started the motor boat. It dragged our Banana Boat by a rope slowly into the water. We thought that we would just float slowly in the water near the shore within the safety boundaries and return after a while. I recited *Ayat ul Kursi* three times followed by the prayer for travelling before we moved. I felt a wave of excitement as our boat swayed in the sea, with the cool air touching my skin and splashes of water brushing my ankles.

I saw a flicker of movement at a distance and spotted my mom and brother waving at us while they swam in the sea. My mom's eyes shined as she cheered me because I was learning to overcome my thalassophobia. As we were waving back at them, suddenly the boat jerked almost dropping us all and accelerated at a high speed. We were heading rapidly towards Kiz Kalesi where the waves were bigger and the water was deeper. The motor boat sped through the water even crossing the safe swimming borders. The ride became more thrilling. Everybody was screaming but I couldn't feel anything. I just stared at the water and wondered how deep it was. We were moving farther away from the shore.

Our boat jumped up and down in the fierce waves. The screams of excitement turned into shrieks of terror and the ride became alarming rather than exhilarating. I started freaking out. The motor boat moved so fast that our fragile boat could lose its balance any minute. I looked back at the beach and the people there appeared as small dots. The water beneath me got colder and darker. The waves looked petrifying and were brutally moving our boat as if they would cut through it. I was worried about my sisters a lot and kept on instructing them to hold the ropes tightly as one wrong move could prove fatal. My heart raced and all I was doing was praying to Allah (SWT). When Kiz Kalesi was just a few yards away, the motorboat took a turn and proceeded towards the back of the castle. I was a little relieved that now we will move away from the depths towards the beach. I was just calming down when the driver took a sharp turn. As soon as I saw that careless move, I knew we were not going to make it. Everything became slow. I couldn't hear anything but my exploding heart. The driver turned to us with a concerned face and waved a goodbye before my face hit the water.

Our boat lost its balance and all of us fell into the deep blue sea. The water entered my nose and my mouth as I was screaming when I fell in the water. I looked up at the glossy layer of water and saw my sister Aliza falling in after me right on my shoulder pushing me deeper into the sea. I

saw everyone struggling in the water when I stole a glance at the darkness beneath me and before I could black out, the life jacket pulled me to the surface. I blinked a few times to get the blurriness out of my eyes as I gasped for air. I saw turquoise water all around me and could hear muffled noises. The water was cold, seeping into my skin, seeping into my bones. Suddenly, I was pushed back into the water a couple of times as Sadia tried to gain her balance and avoid the high waves. The water burned my throat and I choked. Sadia and Aliza had fallen closer to me and we were a few meters away from the boats. I took Aliza and Sadia's hands and we formed a chain. I scanned the water frantically for my elder sister Shehrbano and saw her struggling closer to the boat - my heart sank. She was crying and begging for help. We were wearing our life jackets but the brutal waves were overpowering us, going above our heads, and hitting our faces with the bitter water splashes. My hands started trembling as I saw her face turn red.

Instinct, not presence of mind pushed me into a dive. Every muscle in my body strained towards her. But the strong waves kept pushing me farther away. I recalled my swimming lesson and tried my best to swim but it didn't work. Everyone was screaming for help but the motor boat driver sailed away from us. He did not care to pull us back. Everyone panicked but I was numb.

My heart pounded and my limbs didn't seem to work. A thousand thoughts rapidly crossed my mind. *"I fell in the sea....How could this happen?"* The fear of the unknown overwhelmed me. *"What lies underneath these glistening waves? Is there a predator near?"* I thought of the wound in my toe *"Sharks can detect blood...they see flashing colors...Ampullae of Lorenzini...The average shark attacks per year are 70 to...STOP IT!!"* I regretted possessing all that knowledge. Momentarily, I lost consciousness.

Seconds later, I tried to return to my senses. *"Breathe in, breathe out."* A small sound gurgled in my throat; it would have been a scream if my teeth hadn't been clamped shut. The flash of memory faded but I still couldn't move. Aliza screamed at the top of her lungs. Her voice cracked up, her face red and blotchy. She cried pleadingly for help, *"Save us you maniacs! Save us please! I don't want to die. My mama...my baba... somebody please help me! I don't want to die."* Her words startled and injured me. I felt like I was plunging into the Earth. It was at that moment when I knew, what I was meant to do. Aliza and Shehrbano, they did not have anyone but me. I was their only family there and my aim was to protect them no matter what. Burning and boiling inside me was the desire to keep them safe.

“*Air in. Air out.*” Blood was pushed all the way to my extremities – the heart is a powerful muscle, the strongest muscle in the body in terms of longevity, but I wasn’t thinking about my heart anymore, but of Aliza’s. Her voice trembled and she panicked in the water, wailing and I feared that something might happen to her heart. I brought her closer to me and concealed my shaking hands by holding hers tighter. I constantly kept telling her not to panic and tried to calm her and Sadia down. We held hands together and tried to swim towards the boat. Shehrbano, at a distance was held tightly by Aunty and I was relieved. Sadia was begging me to save her and I tried my best to pull them closer to the boat and avoided looking in the deep water where all my fears hide. All my efforts did nothing except for calming them down. The waves had taken us a few more yards away from the boat and the others. I wanted to feel something, fear, anger, grief. But I couldn’t. All I felt was the need to keep moving. On the other hand the boat driver had returned and was pulling the others onto the boat. We couldn’t get closer to the boat no matter how much we tried. Coughing out the water from my throat I called out to Allah (SWT) for help.

Right at that moment, two men from my left appeared from nowhere into the water and swam towards us. They didn’t have any boat near, nor did they wear any jacket. One of them came closer to me and pulled my hand towards the boat, I did not let go of my sister’s hand and the other man pushed Aliza and Sadia through the water. As we got closer to everyone, the grip of the man’s hand loosened and I clinged on to the boat’s slippery side. I pulled my sisters closer and tried to give Aliza a boost so she could climb up. I looked behind me where the men were present and I saw nobody there. They miraculously disappeared in the sea. The three of us were left in the water and somehow our legs went up and got stuck under the boat. We could barely move. Aunty pulled Aliza onto the boat and I tried pushing her with all my might. Her legs got free and she climbed the banana boat. Pushing her had made me stray a little farther in water. Then they pulled Sadia out of the sea and I pushed her so she could climb safely.

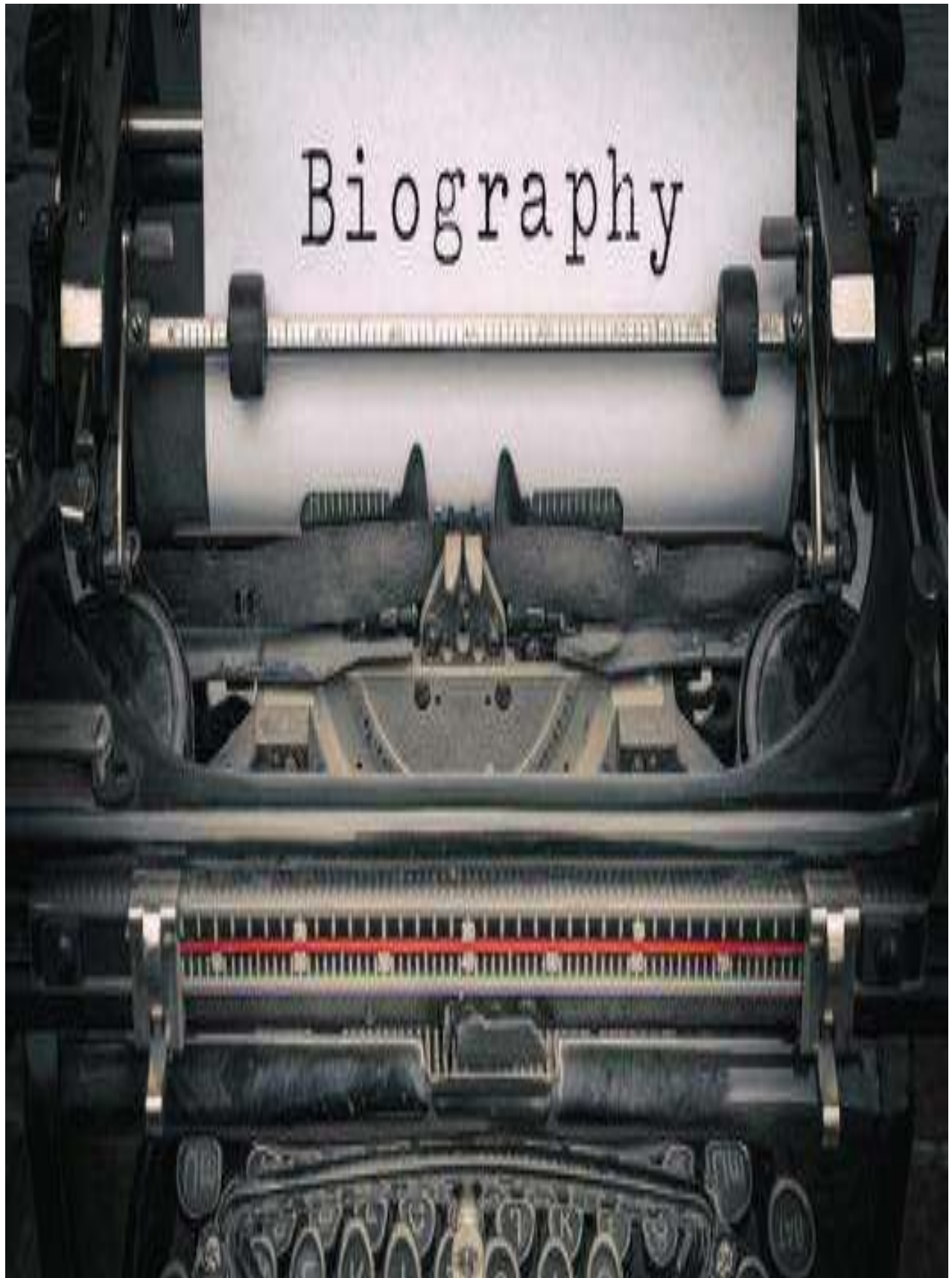
My heart was now relieved as I had completed my mission. Pushing Sadia onto the boat had made me shift into a lying position under the boat unable to move. I was the only one left in the water now. I was out of breath and my lungs burned. I didn’t care if there was a predator under the water. I was just satisfied that my family was safe. A burden was now off my chest. My head was hurting, my throat was sore and I could see my sisters crying and leaning to catch my hands. My legs were tired from fighting with waves for the last twenty minutes. No one else was trying

to pull me up and my sisters were only crying. I tried to push myself up onto the boat but my legs were stuck to the boat I couldn't fight it anymore.

I looked everywhere and tried to fight the scream building in my stomach, chest, and throat, the scream that filled every part of me. It was then, when my eyes started to well up with tears. I knew I was going to separate from my family this year, but I didn't know that it would happen this way. I felt anger and grief clawing inside me, warring each other for dominance but terror was stronger than both. I screamed with gritted teeth as I tried to break my legs free but it was of no use. All I could say was "*Allah! Allah!*" I recalled my prayers, "*Oh Allah! Please keep my loved ones safe; please grant them a long, healthy life. Don't let anything happen to them, even if it happens to me, please protect them.*" The driver's assistant jumped into the water and pushed my legs away from the boat where the water pressure was making them stick to the bottom of it. As soon as my legs were free, I pushed myself up and climbed the boat, my sisters held me tightly in their arms. "*Alhamdulillah!*" Allah (SWT) had saved me from a fate that threatened to take my young life. He has a different plan for my life. How many lives would have been different if I had drowned or had been attacked?

The driver tried to make us ride the Banana Boat back to the beach but we all refused and rode back in the motor boat. Shehrbano's shirt had torn, her hair disheveled and she was whimpering as she curled in my arms. Aliza was also trembling and cried and I was glad that we were all safe. The lack of instructions and awareness had caused this incident to occur and we informed the police about this driver as soon as we got to the beach. As we reached the beach, the three of us embraced our mother and that is verily the only place on Earth, where I feel the safest.

I believed Thalassophobia was my greatest fear, but now I have come to realize that the fear of losing someone is my greatest weakness.



BIOGRAPHY: THE HARDSHIPS OF MY GRANDMA**Hajra Manzoor****XI B**

(Here is a biography that I wrote about my grandma. Whenever I go to her, she usually tells me her entire journey about how she struggled and raised her children at a very young age after the death of her husband. I really got inspired by her, so I thought to share her struggle with the world).

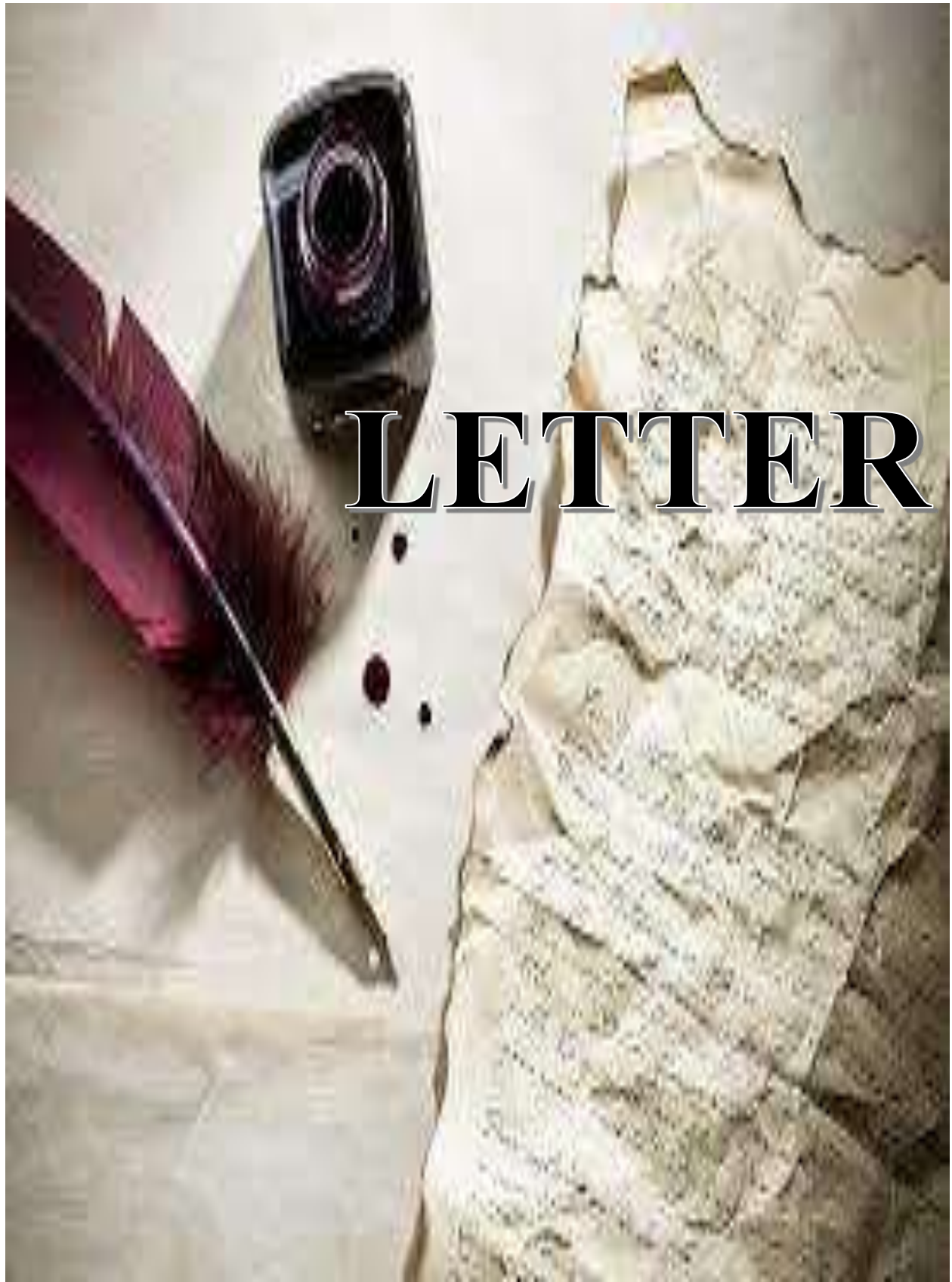
It was the month of November when her husband died. He took his last breath right in front of her. More than thirty years on, the memories remain fresh in her mind. When her husband died, the next morning she wasn't his wife anymore. Instead, she was his widow and a mother of five children: four daughters and one son. She always remembered the restless nights and traumatic mornings that she spent next to her husband as the cancer took control over her husband's body. Her husband passed away on 5th of November, 1987. It was a slow and painful death, obviously not ideal for anyone.

For her, a good husband and caring companion had been taken away. She was left to raise her children who were too young on their own. She had to worry about finances; she had to work; she had to take care of all the things she resented when he first passed on. It was a very difficult first three to five years of her life after he passed away. She needed his presence and support, but he wasn't there anymore and she was alone with five kids and numberless responsibilities. So, parenting was a huge responsibility for her! She just wanted to get it over and done with. She had to make sure that they were fed on time, didn't lack anything that they needed, were getting good grades and were secure from harmful influences. She had to check all of this on a daily basis!

It was more than one exam for her because she was a single parent and had to worry about each and everything. She was not just a mother for them, but also played the role of their father. All their relatives always let her down, but she remained steadfast without bothering about their discouraging words and attitude. She raised her children on her own. She was always worried about raising them and was making sure that she would raise them properly, the way she and her husband had dreamt to see their children raised.

It is aptly said that, “God helps those who help themselves.” So, with the Mercy of the Almighty and her enormous struggles, my grandma managed to raise successful children as a widow and single mom. Today, all her children have respectable prospects and are well- settled.

Words are insufficient to explain the indestructible and fortified spirit of my grandma. One of the main lessons I have learnt from her life is that whatever a problem comes in your life, you must not give up. Instead, you should remain firm and stand up again. An analogy can be drawn with an ant that climbs the wall and falls repeatedly. Even then, it gets up again and again. Similarly, we, human beings, must always give our best and remain steadfast to achieve our goals in life.



IF I WERE TO HAVE A DAUGHTER

Ms Kalsoom Khawaja

Lecturer

Most people plunge head first into the whole ‘let’s get married and start family business!’ Although I do believe that nothing can prepare one for such an event, except for the very experience of it. I, however, have been contemplating questions like marriage and children for well over a decade now. I am smart enough to understand that I cannot form a working opinion about either, but I can plan and I can try to set an SOP, so that I am not caught unawares.

The thing about children is that you cannot, ever really plan them – children, Happen! But my decade long contemplation has brought me to the point where I can safely say what wisdom and knowledge I would impart to my daughter(s), if I were to have any. And here now, is a public declaration of what I’d say. Some of this is very basic stuff – things that we as individuals, as human beings and as women must never forget. And some of it is unique to my own experiences and life events. This is not a complete list, it is however meant as a lucid guideline for, oh I don’t know for what... it is just some musings and observations and I hope I can learn and absorb them as I write! So, here goes...

Dear Daughter,

I sit here, in a remote past, writing about things that have not been, based on things that have already happened. My training in history reading and analysis have given me the gift of foresight, but my great intuitiveness comes by virtue of the fact that I a woman. The fairer gender (if this term is not obsolete in your present), have been endowed by this honour – they can anticipate, guess and, sometimes, predict. I do not believe in the fact that any human being can learn caution and prudence merely on the basis of the wisdom passed down to them, experience is an imperative and necessary component of growing up and learning how to live this life. But knowledge of the ages helps. So read away, and I do hope I don’t bore you!

□ This one is a cliché – **be you!** You are you, an individual, even if you had a twin at birth! You were born an individual, never let that go. Of course, as you grow up you would learn from your surroundings and the people in your life. Your personality will be composed of all your experiences and interactions. You would follow fads and fashion. All that is alright, just do not let go of your core. Be who you were and who you are! Don't be a supply line product, be custom designed, one of a kind! Remember honey, individuality leaves the greatest impression.

□ **Never ever let go of reading!** Read, as much as you can, wherever you can, anything you can. But also, read good books, essays and articles. Read the news and editorials. Read billboards and product labels. Read. It is important for your growth as an individual.

□ Have **opinions**. I am sure I have passed on my opinionated genes to you; it totally runs on the family! I know there is a negative connotation attached with this, but opinions show that you have a personality (read: individuality). What is even more important than an opinion, is to have an **informed and educated** opinion (remember, reading?) Unless you know what is going on and how things are you cannot have an opinion. But it is important to have a stance. It gets you through life.

□ And while we are at it, **always stick to your stance!** I know this is some hardheaded stuff. But I still believe that those who don't stand for something will fall for anything. I may be interpreting this wrong, but it has been one of the guiding principles in my life, and I think I did all right! One must have opinions, ideas, beliefs, morals and values and one must be ready to take a bullet for them.

□ Never ever forget to **smile**. Smiling makes all the difference in the world. I know you are a woman and I know smiling may not always be the best course of action, but I must assert the importance of a soft expression on your face. A smile transforms not only your overall look, but also your aura. A smile even changes your mood in an instant! A smile is the start of many friendships. Your smile may make someone's day. And honey, you have a beautiful smile; don't deprive the world of such wonder!

□ Never ever keep a **grudge**. Women are famous for this. Our enemies go a long way. And I feel like this is the worst that a person can do to themselves. I have never kept a grudge, and

while you would have then tendency by default, it doesn't hurt to be reminded. Grudges only make you negative and allow another person to live inside your head rent free! Grudges also make you negative and distract you from achieving your goal.

□ Always stress on maintaining a **deep friendship with your father**. He loves you, and you light up his world. But you also need to be able to talk to him, discuss ideas and give your views. You can learn so much more about this world from his experiences as opposed to mine. And the kind of confidence that comes from being friends with your dad is what every woman needs in her life! Remember that he is a parent, and he will exercise authority over you always, but when you are friends with him you can voice your views in a much better method.

□ Always be **gentle**. This is perhaps the most defining feature of a woman. Be gentle in your ways, in the way you talk, in the way you think, in the way you interact. Gentleness is your tool, it is your façade, it is the mask from which you can rule the world. How you ask? Look below!

□ Be **strong and assertive**. I have already told you the importance of having opinions and of sticking to your views. However, the world will never change; no one likes a woman who has views, **unless** she can voice them in a soft manner, with a kind smile. The words you choose, the expressions you make, your body language and your gentle manners are perfect for deceiving just about any one into thinking you are the fairer gender. Use that deception to your greatest advantage! But, this doesn't end here.

□ I am sure, I still am not a feminist, but that does not mean I am not emancipated. Avail all opportunities and **take care and watch over other women in your life**. Men make caring friends, women make lasting friends. I believe the greatest manifestation of being emancipated is, not only wanting the best for your own self, but also for your sisters! Always be ready to extend a helping hand, a sincere compliment, an extra tissue, a shoulder to cry on, a phone call of reassurance. Always be there to help and celebrate your womanhood with others of your kind.

□ Always remember to maintain your **femininity**. Elegance is the virtue of a lady, remember when and where to exude it and be the epitome of femininity. Use whatever nature has given you to your advantage.

- Be genuinely **nurturing**. This helps you have a kind outlook towards life. It is the most natural instinct of the female of any specie, and more so of the human female. Develop it. This is more for your own personal growth than your public life.
- Be **proud of your gender!** Never, ever apologize for being a woman or all the baggage that comes from being a woman.
- Remember to surround yourself with people who **accept you for who you are**. Never apologize for your views, opinions and personality. Conforming may not always be the right choice, never conform to make another individual happy.
- You must learn how to walk like a queen in **heels!** Heels transform your entire personality. Heels are love!
- Fall in **love!** It is one of the most amazing feelings in the world. It makes you believe like anything is possible. You need that kind of energy in your life.
- It's okay if **your heart gets broken**. It is one of the necessary outcomes of human interaction. It makes you feel like nothing is right in this world, use that knowledge to know your limitations and incapacities, and try to live above and beyond those.
- Always make time to watch **animated movies**. Animation is one of the most amazing human interventions ever!
- Read **philosophy**. You would be able to understand SO much in life.
- Learn to play at least **one musical instrument** or **paint** or **sketch** or **write**. It is one of the healthiest ways to let off some steam.
- Own a **pet**. They are loving creatures. You could also have kids, but they are a bigger handful than pets!
- Never let go of your roots and culture**. It has given you your most basic sense of identity; never ever under any circumstances let that go.
- However, be **worldly**. Know of your surroundings and learn from them all. The world has so Much to offer, and you have so Much to learn!

- Know that it is a **cruel society** out there. There are people who will judge you and analyze you and gossip about you. But also remember that **you are better than all that**. Those who genuinely wish to know you would never lend an ear to these, and those who don't want to know you never really mattered!
- Learn how to **bake**. Mostly because the smells are lovely.
- Remember that it is a **man's world**. The sooner you accept it the better. Know that sometimes the roles are defined. It is the man's job to think it is his world, and the woman's job to **actually own it**.
- Remember that **diplomacy** goes a long way. Develop that quality. It is a woman's best weapon!
- Know that **manipulation is a fine art**, and covertly is how the woman runs the man's world.
- Many people would tell you that there are many things you can't do just **because you are a woman**. Remember that you can not only beat them to what they do, but you can do that wearing a pair of heels and looking every bit like a lady!
- Bear your **scars with pride**. As a woman you will get many. They define you.
- Know that **the kingmaker has a way better job satisfaction than the king**. The king is only the face, the mind is someone else (read: behind every successful man, there is a woman).
- And most importantly, all of these are only words. Remember always that there is no handbook to life! **We are all just winging it**.

You might wonder why I told you all this and not your brother(s)? Mostly because two generations down the line, I would be just a faded memory and a name, but whatever I may tell you would live on... and you would pass it on, one lady to another.

Be you, be pretty, be amazing and remember, I am proud of you!

Much love,

Your Mother



OPINION

A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOREVER

Saleha Bukhari

BS Psychology (IV)

“A thing of Beauty is A Joy Forever”, is an idea beautifully committed to paper by John Keats. Reflecting upon the idea, lost in the chaos of this over-embellished world, we tend to drop our attention without question. But some unquestionable elements are found alluring by our senses. They drive us crazy within a trice. Beauty! Their beauty enchants our souls, reverberating the feeling of ‘A Thing of Beauty is a Joy Forever’.

But why is it considered to be a joy forever? Ever thought that? The beauty of that particular thing is so mesmerizing that it elevates our senses and bestows us with the ecstasy and satisfaction for which our hearts may sometimes feel nostalgic. Something that brings us happiness shouldn't be worth a thousand dollars. What it should possess is to be conspicuous to one's mind and ideas. Since we tend to have devotion towards what we find beautiful, it becomes a measure of deep-rooted joy for us, thus ‘A Joy Forever’ as said by Keats. You may think of a bouquet presented to you on a special occasion or a gift that you gave to someone special. These items and memories are forever preserved in the mind and heart as everlasting beauty.

Everything subsisting in nature possesses the resplendent as the gentle breeze, the bright sunlight, the soothing moonlight, the running streams, the rustling of leaves, the sweet-scented air across the daffodil fields, the quietness of the dark, the sound of rain... Everything and anything one could fall for in nature is a reflection of immeasurable beauty. This beauty is everlasting for an observant person, for the eyes that see into the depth of things. It is always the origin of the birth of an electrifying notion carried by us in our hearts.

Whenever we face our obsessions, the beautiful ceases our surroundings. Think of the grieving heart of a widow that finds solace in the sight of her young children. This sight of innocence, helplessness and purity is a beauty tinged by pain, yet it has the capacity to stop the obsession over the tragic. So, a thing of real beauty gives joy to the heart and physical vigour to the body to overcome obstacles and difficulties.

The 'beautiful' makes us dwell in the sorcery of its beauty. They say, 'beauty is in the eyes of the beholder'. This is why every one of us owns different obsessions and has a different concept of beauty. Each one of us has a different sense of aesthetics and beauty.

Another facet says that even if the beauty fades away, we still find joy in the things we find adorable since they trigger our memories. Every encounter with our fascinations grants us a trip down the memory lane. This is something that never lets our joy and pleasure fade away. We are trapped in a strong emotional attachment to the things and the people we love. This somewhat grants us the capacity to flow freely or maybe just 'be the flow'.

They say behind everything that is exquisite, there is a tragedy. The allure and beauty resulting from the pain and misery ultimately become the source of true joy and rejoicing, celebration and cherishing! So, one can strive to see the silver lining in the clouds during the dark times of life.

HUMOUR



TEACHING IS A WORK OF HEART

(A Tribute to the Efforts of All Amazing Teachers)

Ms Sara Noor

Lecturer

The average human heart beats approximately 72 times a minute, but a teacher's heart beats seventy- two into seventy- two times per minute on a daily basis. That is how enormous and vital the heart and function of a teacher is.

A teacher usually starts his/ her day by snoozing the alarm clock for seven times after which they can't snooze it any longer. Then, the exhausted creature must drive away memories of terrible nightmares of bosses and students collectively hounding him or her for some useless data submission or for threatening to bring down the GPA through their varieties of nonsensicality. (The teacher remains forever divided between which of the former two they would like to see behaving more intelligibly). Having poorly regained sanity after a restless night's sleep, the teacher recites all prayers that he or she knows for mental resilience and sets out for the battlefield.

Depending on the socioeconomic strata to which they belong and the distance at which the workplace is located, teachers may either fly to their workplace, take a steamboat, brave through the nerve- wracking traffic or simply mutter a spell to be magically transported to the school or college. As soon as the teacher steps inside the gate, he or she feels the watchful gaze of an anonymous spy measuring his quickening number of steps against the hands of a clock. The first thing to greet his ears is the sound of students delivering fiery speeches on different virtues during the morning assembly. Their duty fulfilled, the students now move to the classes free of any and all burden of behaving virtuously.

The teacher arrives in the class-room and starts calling the attendance, marking and signing leave applications, distributing challan forms, collecting the fee and fines, selling tickets, getting charts made, checking assignments, scolding this one and that (and also teaching) before the bell goes off and off goes the teacher to repeat the litany in the next circus. When recess comes, the teacher's heart has already supplied one- half of the blood required for the day, but sadly, it is not yet half- past noon. The teacher is able to find camaraderie and brotherhood amongst his colleagues whose hearts are working in a similarly over- efficient manner. There is no lunch hour or prayer

break, rather the teacher must rush from one class to the next, sometimes even ignoring hunger pangs and nature's call.

The teacher is also a human and can have base desires like the need to have leisure and rest. When the teacher sees the students freely and gaily running to the gates at off- time, the teacher feels envy because he would also like to run away as speedily and freely as that. Even at home, the teacher remains connected with the students through online platforms and answers their queries as punctually as the five daily prayers. The teacher issues instructions and commands to the battalion of devout online students like a military general, except that his commands often go ignored. Had the students been regular and listened attentively during class, they might have spared themselves and their teachers extra working hours.

The teacher stands at attention in the evening also because his inbox regularly fills up with the shining face and pleasing smile of his boss who 'requests' more labour on pain of death! The teacher hurriedly puts aside the book he had just taken up for his mental rejuvenation and strives to save the physical support mechanism necessary to sustain life. Intellectual growth can wait!

Seated uncomfortably, his/ her eyes drooping shut and the test papers slowly slipping away from his/ her hands, a message by a student shines on screen: *Thank you, teacher. You are my motivation for coming to college every day.* The teacher's eyes glisten with unshed tears and a sudden satisfaction springs up inside the teacher's harrowing heart which finds the energy to again beat seventy- two into seventy- two times per minute on a daily basis.



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