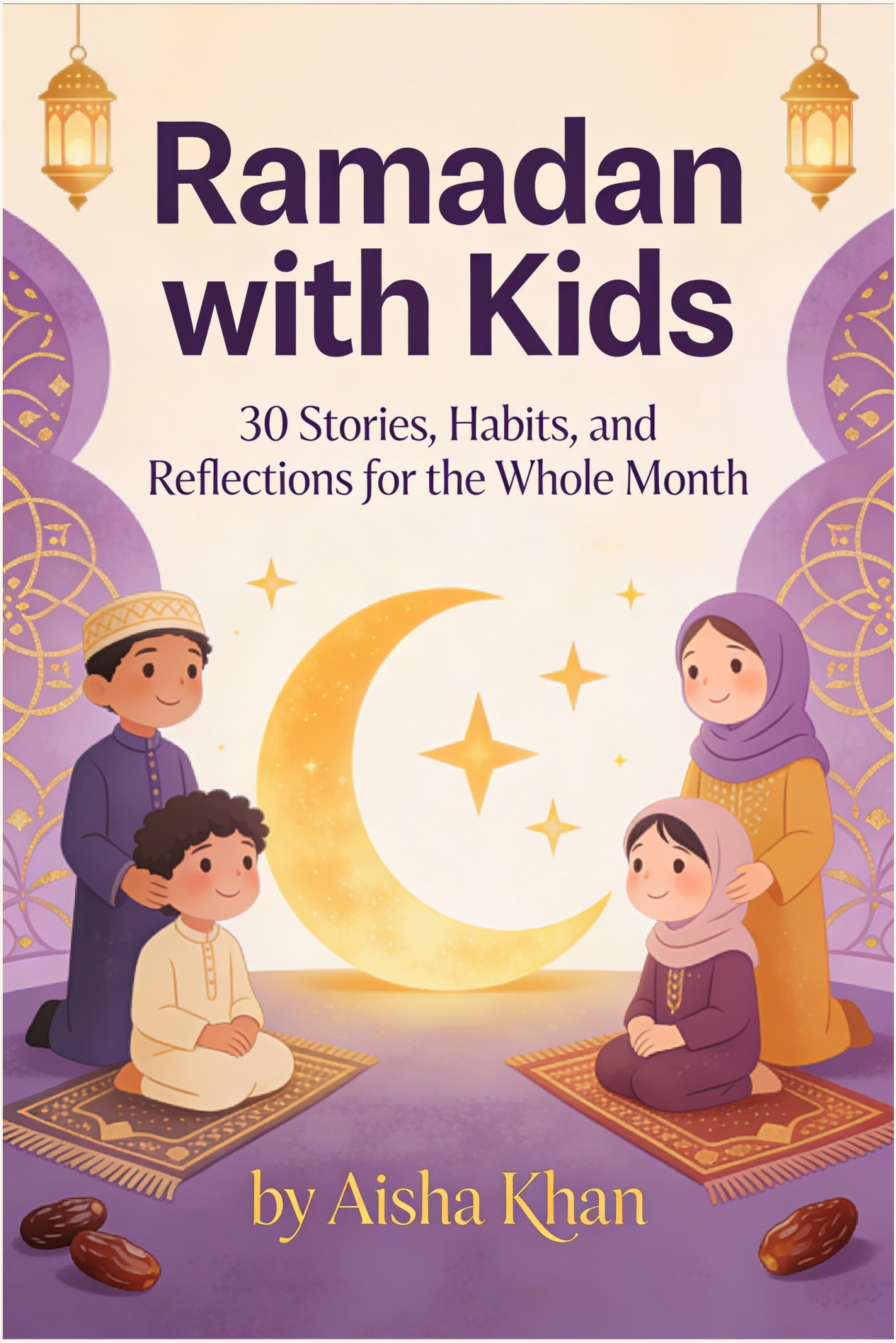
Ramadan with Kids

30 Stories, Habits, and Reflections for the Whole Month



by Aisha Khan

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CHAPTER I

The Night the Moon Smiled

The sky turned the color of a peach. Then orange. Then deep, bruised purple.

Safa stood on the rooftop with her baba, both of them tilting their chins toward the horizon. Her little brother was bouncing in the courtyard below. Mama had come up too, a dish towel still twisted in her hands.

"There," Baba whispered.

Safa squinted hard. And then she saw it — the thinnest slice of white light, curved like a fingernail clipping, barely there against the darkening sky.

The crescent moon. The beginning of Ramadan.

Her whole family erupted at once. Her brother shouted something. Her grandmother clapped from the stairway door. Safa grabbed Baba's hand and laughed, though she couldn't explain exactly why — it just felt like that kind of moment. The kind you want to hold with both hands.

Baba raised his palms slowly to the sky. "Come," he said.

Together they said the words:

"Allhummaahillahu 'alayn bil-amni wal-+m n, was-sal mati wal-Isl m."

O Allah, bring this crescent over us with security and faith, with safety and Islam. (From the hadith of Talhah ibn Ubaydullah RA, recorded in Riyad as-Salihin)

The words felt like a gift lifted upward on the warm evening air.

"Baba," Safa said quietly. "What is Ramadan, really?"

He looked at the moon for a long moment before answering. "It is the month Allah chose to send the Quran down to us," he said. The Quran says it plainly: "The month of Ramadan in which was revealed the Quran, a guidance for the people." (Quran 2:185) "So we fast from sunrise to sunset. We pray more than usual. We give to people who need. We try to come closer to Allah — closer than any other time in the whole year."

A whole month of trying. A whole month of something different and beautiful.

Safa looked at that thin white line in the sky and made a quiet decision. "I want to fast every single day," she said.

Baba smiled — the kind of smile that reaches the eyes. "Then we start tomorrow."

The crescent moon hung there, still and small. Smiling right back at her. Ready.

This Ramadan's Habit

When you see the new crescent moon, raise your palms together as a family and say:

All humma ahillahu 'alayn bil-amni wal-+m n, was-sal mati wal-Isl m. O All
with security and faith, with safety and Islam.

Say it slowly. Mean every word.

Reflect Together

What is one thing you hope to learn or do this Ramadan?

CHAPTER II

Before the Sun Wakes Up

The tap on Yusuf's shoulder came while the sky was still ink-dark.

"Yusuf. Habibi. Time for suhoor."

He groaned. His blanket felt like the warmest place in the entire world. But his feet found the floor anyway, and he shuffled down the hallway toward the kitchen light — a small, warm rectangle in all that darkness.

His mama stood at the stove in her fuzzy slippers, stirring something that smelled like cinnamon and oats. Three Medjool dates sat on a small plate beside a glass of water. She smiled at him — that half-asleep smile that still somehow looks like the nicest smile in the world.

"Sit," she said softly, like the whole house was listening.

He sat.

The oatmeal was exactly right. Not too hot. A little honey. Yusuf ate slowly, blinking, listening to the silence outside. No cars. No birds. Nothing. Just the two of them and the quiet hum of the refrigerator.

This meal has a name: suhoor. And it matters more than you might think. The in suhoor there is blessing." (Sahih al-Bukhari 1923; Sahih Muslim 1095) Not a complicated blessing. Not a huge one. Just a quiet, real one — tucked inside a bowl of oatmeal eaten before the world wakes up.

Then it came.

Allahu Akbar. Allahu Akbar.

The Fajr adhan rolled through the neighbourhood like a slow, warm wave. Outside the kitchen window, the horizon had turned the faintest shade of grey — barely a whisper of light, but it was there. The night was ending. The fast had begun.

Yusuf ate his last date and felt something he didn't have a word for yet. Quiet. Important. Like he was in on a secret the rest of the world was sleeping through.

The Habit

Eat something before Fajr every single day this Ramadan — even if it is just one date and a sip of water. The Prophet ýú said the blessing is real, so don't skip it. Set an alarm with a grov the kitchen. Show up.

Reflect

How does it feel to be awake when most of the world is asleep?

CHAPTER III

The Voice That Called Everyone to Prayer

Imagine the city of Madinah just after Fajr, over 1,400 years ago. No alarm clocks. No phones buzzing on nightstands. Just rooftops, stars fading out one by one, and the question hanging in the quiet air: how will everyone know it's time to pray?

The Prophet ﷺ thought about bells. Drums. A horn. None of it felt right.

Then came Bilal.

His full name was Bilal ibn Rabah, and his story will stop your breath. He had come from Abyssinia — what we now call Ethiopia — and had been enslaved by a cruel man in Makkah. When Bilal became Muslim, his enslaver dragged him into the scorching desert, laid a heavy rock on his chest, and demanded he give up his faith. Bilal only pressed his lips together and said one word, again and again: Ahad. Ahad. One. One. Meaning: Allah is One, and I will not deny it.

He never gave in. Not once.

Abu Bakr RA eventually bought Bilal his freedom. And when the time came to choose the very first muezzin — the voice that would call every Muslim in the city to prayer — the Prophet had said Ahad in the desert heat. That voice that would not be silenced.

So Bilal climbed up and called out across the rooftops of Madinah: Allahu Akbar. Allahu Akbar. Allah is the Greatest.

Can you picture it? Doors opening. Heads lifting. Children tugging their parents awake. One voice, carrying an invitation to every single person within earshot: come, leave whatever you're doing, come.

That same invitation reaches you today. Every single adhan you hear is a continuation of Bilal's call.

The Prophet ﷺ told us: "When you hear the adhan, repeat what the muezzin sa
Sahih Muslim, no. 384)

Not just listen. Respond. Whisper it back, word by word, like a conversation.

Your Ramadan Habit

The next time you hear the adhan — from a speaker, a phone, a masjid nearby — pause. Just pause. Whisper each phrase back quietly, the way you would answer someone who called your name. You are answering an invitation that started with a man who refused to stop saying One.

Reflection

If you could call people to something good, what would you call them to?

CHAPTER IV

A Date, a Sip, and a Smile

Maryam had been staring at the clock for what felt like a hundred years.

The big hand was almost at the twelve. The soup smelled like the whole world. The dates on the plate looked like tiny brown jewels, plump and waiting. And her tummy made a sound like a very small, very grumpy bear.

"Teta," she whispered to her grandmother, "is it time yet?"

Teta smiled her slow, wrinkled smile and pulled Maryam close on the sofa. "Almost, my love. Almost."

Five minutes can feel like forever when you are five years old and very, very hungry.

But Teta used those five minutes like a gift. She told Maryam about the Prop home after a long day of fasting, and do you know what he would reach for first? Not the soup. Not the warm bread piled in the basket. Just a few fresh dates, or a sip of cool water. That is all. Simple, quiet, and on purpose — a Sunnah that Muslims across fourteen centuries have followed, because he loved it (Riyad as-Salihin).

"Just a date?" Maryam blinked.

"Just a date."

She stared at the little cluster on the plate. Dates had always been there at iftar. She had never really looked at them before. Now they seemed like something else entirely.

Then — the adhan.

It came through the open window like a wave, rolling soft and deep over the rooftops: Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar…

Teta lifted her hands. Maryam lifted hers too, small palms facing up.

Together they whispered:

Dhahaba al-zama'u, wa abtallatil-'uruqu, wa thabatal-ajru insha'Allah.

The thirst is gone. The veins are moist. And the reward is confirmed, if Allah wills (Riyad as-Salihin, hasan).

Then Maryam picked up a single date.

She bit into it slowly.

Oh.

Sweet. Soft. Warm in a way that had nothing to do with temperature. Like the whole long patient day had been leading to exactly this one small moment.

She looked up at Teta with enormous eyes.

"Can I have another one?"

Teta laughed — the real kind, from deep in her chest — and handed her the plate.

The Habit

Before anyone at your iftar table takes a single bite, pause together and say the dua:

Dhahaba al-zama'u, wa abtallatil-'uruqu, wa thabatal-ajru insha'Allah.

Then start with a date — or a sip of water — just like the Prophet ýú did, eve

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Reflection

Why do you think something as small as a date can feel so special?

CHAPTER V

The Neighbor's Soup

The kitchen smelled like cumin and something golden.

Hamza stood on his tiptoes, watching the pot. His mama stirred the lentil soup slowly, and the steam rose and fogged his glasses. He wiped them on his shirt and leaned back in.

"Is it ready?"

"Almost." She handed him the blue container — the one with the lid that always clicked satisfyingly shut. "We're making extra tonight."

Hamza already knew why. Mrs. Fatima next door. Seventy-three years old. Soft-voiced. She lived alone, and her children were far away. Some nights her apartment was so quiet you could hear her television through the wall.

His mama ladled carefully. A big scoop. Then another. She wrapped two pieces of bread in a cloth, glanced at Hamza, and nodded. "Ready?"

He carried the container with both hands. Very carefully.

The walk to Mrs. Fatima's door was fourteen steps. Hamza counted.

When she opened it, something happened to her face. It crumpled — then opened wide and bright, and her eyes went wet.

"Ya Allah," she whispered. "You remembered me."

She kept saying thank you. She held Hamza's mama's hands and said she had been about to open a can of chickpeas. That she had been watching the sky turn orange from her window. That she had been feeling very alone.

Hamza didn't know what to say. So he smiled.

On the walk home — fourteen steps again — something felt different inside his chest. Full. But he hadn't eaten a single thing. Iftar was still twelve minutes away.

"Mama," he said. "Why do I feel full?"

She pulled him close. "Because you gave something real."

The Prophet ýú said it plainly: when you cook a stew, add extra water and giv Muslim 2625 — sahih.) Such a small thing. Such an enormous thing. And in Surah An-Nisa, Allah names the near neighbor among those we must do good to, right alongside our own parents (4:36).

Mrs. Fatima's tearful face stayed with Hamza all through iftar. Even the dates tasted sweeter that night.

Your Habit This Week

Pick something simple — a plate of dates, a fruit cup, a handwritten card — and bring it to a neighbor or friend who could use a little brightness. It does not have to be fancy. It just has to be given.

A Question to Think About

How did it feel to make someone else's day brighter?

CHAPTER VI

Letters Made of Light

Grandfather's chalkboard smelled of chalk dust and something faintly like orange peel. Every Ramadan evening, Noor found him sitting cross-legged on the floor of his room, a piece of white chalk in his hand, drawing letters slowly. Like each one mattered enormously.

Because each one did.

"What are you writing, Jiddo?" she asked, dropping down beside him.

"Al-Fatiha." He smiled and handed her the chalk. "The opening surah. The one we recite seventeen times every single day in our prayers."

She traced the first curling letter after him. It didn't look like anything in her school books. It looked like a tiny boat.

"The Prophet ﷺ told us," Grandfather said, "that whoever reads even one lett from Allah." He paused. Held up three fingers. "And then he said something extraordinary. He said Alif is a letter. Lam is a letter. Mim is a letter. Three separate rewards. Not one." (Riyad as-Salihin, narration of Ibn Mas'ud, graded sahih)

Three letters. Three gifts. Just like that.

"So every letter I read—"

"Is a gift coming back to you."

Outside, someone in the house was reciting Quran in a low, steady voice. The whole room breathed with it.

"Who wrote it, Jiddo?"

"Allah spoke it. Jibril carried it. And then millions of people — for over 1,400 years — memorized every single word and passed it on. Word for word. Breath for breath." He tapped his chest gently. "Right now, children your age carry the whole Quran inside their hearts."

Noor looked at the chalkboard. All those letters. All those years. All those hearts keeping the same light alive, passing it forward across centuries like a lantern no wind can blow out.

The Quran wasn't homework. It wasn't a chore. It was a letter — from Allah, to her — that had been traveling through time, waiting for her to open it.

She picked up the chalk and started again, from the very beginning.

Your habit this Ramadan: Read or listen to at least five ayat of the Quran each day — and look up what they mean. Even one new meaning changes how the words feel inside you.

Reflect and talk together: If the Quran is a letter from Allah to you, what do you think He wants you to know?

CHAPTER VII

Faster Than the Wind

Close your eyes for a moment. Imagine you are a child standing at the edge of a dusty road in Madinah, watching a tired traveler knock on a simple door. The sun is setting. The man has walked a very long way. He is hungry, thirsty, and his sandals are worn thin.

The door opens.

And he never leaves empty-handed.

That is how it was at the home of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Ibn Abbas, may it plainly — the Prophet was the most generous of all people. But in Ramadan? In Ramadan, he became more generous than the fast wind that carries rain to thirsty ground. (Sahih al-Bukhari, no. 6; Sahih Muslim, no. 2308)

Think about that wind for a second. It does not stop to ask if you deserve the rain. It does not wait until tomorrow. It just gives. Fast and full and without thinking twice.

That was him.

Every night of Ramadan, the Angel Jibreel would come and review the Quran somehow, each visit left his heart even more open, even more ready to give. As if the Quran itself was filling him up and spilling over into the world.

Here is the surprising part. You can be that kind of generous too. Right now. Today.

Not just with money. With your time. With your attention. With a kind word when someone is sad. With your seat on the couch. With a joke that makes your little sister laugh. Those things count. Every single one.

The Prophet ﷺ said that even a smile is sadaqah — an act of charity. (Sahih

A smile costs nothing. And it lands like rain on dry ground.

Your Ramadan Habit Do one generous act today. Small is fine. Hold a door. Share your snack. Say something kind to someone who looks like they need it. Then do it again tomorrow.

Reflection What is something you have — a thing, a skill, some time, a smile — that you could share with someone else today?

CHAPTER VIII

Hands Raised to the Sky

The clock above the stove read 7:41. Iftar was eighteen minutes away.

Ibrahim sat on the prayer rug beside his baba, watching the whole family lift their hands — palms open to the sky, like small cups waiting to be filled. His mama's eyes were closed. His baba's lips moved quietly. Even his older sister Dina, who usually had a great many opinions about everything, held her hands up without a word.

Ibrahim raised his own small hands. Then he lowered them again.

"Baba," he whispered. "Does Allah really hear me?"

His baba opened one eye. Then he smiled — the full kind, not the polite kind. "Why do you ask?"

"Because I'm just little."

His baba reached over and gently lifted Ibrahim's hands back up. "Allah says in the Quran: 'Call upon Me; I will respond to you' — and He does not say 'unless you are six years old'" (Quran 40:60, Sahih International).

Ibrahim giggled. Just a little.

"In another ayah," his baba continued softly, "Allah tells us He is near. That He answers the one who calls upon Him" (Quran 2:186). "And the Prophet ﷺ taught us that dua is worship itself — the worship. The very heart of it" (Riyad as-Salihin, from the hadith of al-Nu'man ibn Bashir, graded sahih).

Ibrahim thought about that. The whole heart.

He raised his hands again and closed his eyes. He thought of Auntie Zahra, lying in her hospital bed two cities away. He thought of children at school who came in every morning without a lunch. He thought of his own heart — how it could be slower to shout, quicker to share, gentler in a hundred small ways.

"Allah," he whispered, "please help Auntie Zahra feel better. And please feed the kids who are hungry. And please make my heart a good heart."

Simple words. His own words. No script, no performance.

And then something quiet settled over him. Not a sound. A feeling — like being held from very far away and very close at the same time.

The adhan rang out across the neighborhood.

Ibrahim lowered his hands and smiled.

This Month's Habit: Keep a small dua notebook. Each day this Ramadan, write or draw one wish or prayer — for yourself, for someone you love, or for the whole world. On the last night, read it back and see what Allah answered.

Reflection: If you could ask Allah for anything — not just for yourself — what would you ask for?

CHAPTER IX

My Tummy Is Talking

It happened at exactly the wrong moment.

Zainab was sitting cross-legged on the living room rug, the Quran open across her knees, afternoon sun painting gold stripes on the carpet. Her little cousins were napping in the next room. Her mama was reading quietly nearby. Everything was perfectly, beautifully still.

Grrrrowwwl.

So loud.

Zainab slapped both hands flat over her stomach. Her mama looked up — one eyebrow raised — and then they both collapsed into that helpless, silent, shoulders-shaking laughter you try very hard not to do near sleeping babies.

"Your tummy," her mama whispered, "is talking."

It was 2 p.m. Six more hours until maghrib.

Zainab settled back against the cushions, still grinning. But the feeling stayed — a hollow, gnawing ache just below her ribs. Not dangerous. Not even very bad. Just there, impossible to ignore, nudging her with every breath.

And that is when she thought about a boy in her class. He always ate his school lunch very fast. Sometimes he asked if she was going to finish her chips.

What if he felt like this every single day — not because he chose to fast, but because there simply wasn't enough?

The thought sat heavy.

Allah tells us in the Quran that the truly righteous give food "in spite of their love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive" (Surah Al-Insan, 76:8). Not leftover food. Not food they didn't want. Food they loved. And the Prophet ﷺ taught that the believers are like one body — when responds with sleeplessness and fever (Sahih Muslim, 2586).

Zainab's stomach was grumbling by choice. Iftar was waiting, glowing like a promised gift at the end of the day.

Not everyone had that promise.

That hollow feeling wasn't only hunger. It was a window. A small, honest window into someone else's world — open just wide enough to let the light of empathy in.

Your Habit for Today

Find one organisation that feeds hungry children — a local food bank, or a global one like Islamic Relief. Ask a parent about donating, volunteering, or even just sharing information about it with others.

Reflect

What is one thing you are grateful for that you might have taken for granted before Ramadan?

CHAPTER X

The Coin in the Cup

The coin was just sitting there. Right in the middle of the bedroom floor, catching the morning light like a tiny mirror.

Tariq picked it up and turned it over. One coin. Not much, honestly. He could buy a piece of candy with it. He could tuck it under his pillow. Or — his eyes drifted toward the kitchen — he could drop it into the sadaqah jar sitting on the shelf by the toaster.

The jar was an old glass pickle jar, cleaned out and painted blue, with a paper label in wobbly marker letters: Sadaqah.

Was one little coin even worth it?

Then he remembered what Baba had told him. The Prophet ﷺ once said: "Prot by giving half a date in charity." (Sahih al-Bukhari, 1413.) Half a date. That is smaller than Tariq's coin. Much, much smaller.

So the size of the gift doesn't matter. Not even slightly.

Tariq walked to the kitchen and dropped the coin in. Clink. That small sound. Something warm spread in his chest — the same feeling he got after a really good dua.

Then his little sister shuffled in from her room, hair everywhere, and he smiled at her. Big and genuine.

"That counted too," Mama said quietly from behind the stove, without turning around.

Tariq stared. "What did?"

"That smile." She glanced over her shoulder. "The Prophet ﷺ said that your s — or your sister — is charity." (Riyad as-Salihin, from Abu Dharr RA, Sahih Muslim 2626.)

Tariq stood very still.

If smiling counted — actually counted — then he had been giving sadaqah his whole life without realizing it. Every grin across the breakfast table. Every wave at the neighbor. Every time he made his little sister laugh.

The jar on the shelf held coins. But the whole day, it turned out, was overflowing with chances.

This Week's Habit

Start a family sadaqah jar. Any jar or box works. Each day this Ramadan, add something to it — a coin, a folded note about a kind thing you did, or a short prayer for someone else written on a scrap of paper. Watch

it fill. At the end of the month, decide together where it goes.

Reflection

If a smile is sadaqah, how many times did you give sadaqah today?

CHAPTER XI

The Seven Verses That Open Hearts

Hana's grandmother had one rule about memorizing: never sit still for it.

She led Hana to the garden — past the mint, past the little clay pots — to where a single tall sunflower stood against the fence. Six years old, Hana squinted up at its wide yellow face.

"We'll learn two lines today," Teta said. "Tell them to the flower. It keeps secrets."

Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Raheem.

"What does Rahman mean?" Hana asked.

Teta pressed her cheek against Hana's curls. "The Most Loving Hugger," she said. "The One whose love wraps around everything — you, the sunflower, the whole spinning world — all at once."

Hana whispered it again. The flower didn't move. But something felt different.

They did two lines each morning. Seven mornings, all seven verses. Alhamdulillahi Rabb il-'alameen — all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of every ant, every ocean, every sleeping baby. Maliki yawm id-deen — the Only One in charge on the final Day. Ihdina s-sirat al-mustaqeem — guide us to the straight path, the path of the people You love.

On the last morning, Teta told her something astonishing.

The Prophet ﷺ said that Allah Himself answers back — every single verse. W
Allah says: My servant has praised Me. When you say Iyyaka na'budu wa iyyaka nasta'een — You alone we worship, You alone we ask — Allah says: This is between Me and My servant. (Sahih Muslim, 395)

Seven verses. Seven replies.

A real conversation.

Hana stood very still. "So every time I pray," she said quietly, "Allah talks back to me?"

"Every single time," Teta said.

The sunflower swayed a little in the breeze. Like it knew.

Your Habit: Learn two verses of Al-Fatiha each day — stand up while you practice, just like Hana — until all seven live in your heart. Then look up what each word means. By the end of the month, you'll know them by memory and by meaning.

Your Reflection: Which word from Al-Fatiha feels most important to you right now — and why?

CHAPTER XII

Watching the Sky Turn Orange

The sky above the backyard does not just change. It performs.

Layla knows this. So does her twin brother Adam. That is why, every evening in Ramadan, they drag the two old cushions off the porch chairs and drop them flat on the top step — their front-row seats, claimed before anyone else can get there.

It always starts the same. Blue. A wide, ordinary blue, and Adam says, "Nothing's happening yet," because he is the impatient one. Then the horizon softens. Gold sneaks in at the edges — the kind of gold that makes the neighbor's apple tree look as if it was dipped in honey. Layla always catches it first.

"There," she says.

Baba comes out with dates on a small plate and lowers himself into his chair behind them. He does not hurry anyone inside. He never does during these minutes.

"What are you grateful for today?" he asks. Same question, every evening, without fail.

Adam thinks for four whole seconds. Long, for Adam. "Mama's samosas."

Layla rolls her eyes. "I'm grateful the sky is free. Anyone can look at it. Even people who have nothing."

Baba smiles into his tea.

He once told them that Allah made the alternation of night and day as a sign for those who think — Quran 3:190 — and Layla has decided that watching the sky shift, night after night, is its own kind of thinking. Orange deepens now, violet pressing in from the top. The world holds very still.

The Prophet ýú said that people remain in goodness as long as they hasten to arrives (Sahih al-Bukhari 1957; Sahih Muslim 1098) — but first, these last quiet minutes. The waiting is part of it. The held breath is part of it.

Then the adhan comes.

Not with warning. Just there — sudden and beautiful, cutting through the orange air like something long promised finally arriving.

Hands go up.

The day, which was long and absolutely worth it, is done.

The Habit Go outside for five quiet minutes before iftar today — no phone, no talking. Find one thing in the sky or in nature that you have never paid attention to before. Just look.

Reflection What does waiting patiently feel like in your body — and what helps you wait?

CHAPTER XIII

The Man Who Never Turned Anyone Away

He never said no.

Not once.

One evening in Madinah, a man arrived at the Prophet's ﷺ door — dusty, tire
hold himself upright. The Prophet ﷺ turned to his wives and asked: is there a
answer came back down the hallway. Nothing. His own household had nothing that night.

So he turned to his companions. "Who will host this man as a guest of Allah?"

An Ansari man — one of the generous helpers of Madinah, the kind of people who had already given everything to welcome the new Muslim community — stepped forward without a moment's pause. "I will."

He brought the guest home. His wife met them at the door. The husband leaned close and whispered: we have a guest tonight. Give him everything. Don't hold back.

She looked at him. "I have nothing except the children's food."

He did not waver. Put the children to sleep early, he said. We'll sit at the table. Blow out the lamp so our guest won't see. We'll manage.

And so they did — the whole family slipping off to bed with empty stomachs, quiet and unhesitating, while the guest ate his fill in the warm dark, unaware of a single thing.

When the Prophet ﷺ heard what this family had done, he told them that Allah
And a verse came down from Allah about that very night: "They prefer others over themselves, even though they too are in need." (Al-Hashr 59:9, Sahih International; Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Tafsir; Sahih Muslim)

Even though they are in need.

Sit with that for a second.

The family was hungry. They gave anyway. Not because it was easy. Because someone else needed it more.

Have you ever given something away that you really wanted to keep? The last biscuit on the plate. Your favourite marker. The good seat. It was probably hard right before you did it. But what happened inside your chest right after?

That warm, quiet feeling — that small glow — is called ithar. Choosing some
lived it every single day of his life. He never turned anyone away from his door. And on a night when he himself had nothing, he made sure someone else did.

That kind of giving doesn't need to be huge. It just needs to be real.

This week's habit: Give food to someone outside your family. Tuck a treat into a classmate's bag at school. Pack a tin or two into a donation box at the masjid. Leave a plate of dates on a neighbour's doorstep before iftar. Even one small thing counts.

Reflection: Is there anything too precious to share? Why or why not?

CHAPTER XIV

When Brothers Argue (and Then Forgive)

It started over a mango.

One mango. The last one in the bowl, golden and soft, sitting right in the middle of the suhoor table at 4:47 in the morning.

Khalid grabbed it first. Omar screamed that he saw it first. Khalid said seeing doesn't count. Omar said it does. Their mama closed her eyes slowly, the way mamas do when they are choosing patience on purpose.

By the time fajr adhan rang out, the mango was cut and on Khalid's plate — but the argument was still very much alive. Omar sat at the far end of the bench with his arms crossed. Khalid stared at his food and chewed loudly just to be annoying. The whole kitchen felt grey.

That's when their mother sat down and said, quietly: "Did you know that the not allowed to stay angry at his brother for more than three days?"

Khalid looked up.

She continued. "He said — and this is in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim both — that when two Muslims turn away from each other in anger, the better one is the first to say salaam." She paused. "The better one goes first. That's the test."

Omar peeked from under his eyebrows. Khalid looked down at his mango.

It was still very good mango. Sweet and cold. He had eaten exactly half.

He picked up the plate. Slid it across the table without a word.

Omar stared at it for a second. Then he looked at Khalid. Then he took a piece.

"Jazakallah khair," Omar mumbled. Small voice. Embarrassed.

"It's fine," Khalid said. Also small.

And just like that — the grey was gone.

That is the strange magic of forgiveness. It costs something. But it gives back more.

The Habit

This week, fix one broken thing before the day ends. A quick sorry. A hug. A note slipped under a door. You don't need the perfect words. You just need to go first.

Reflection

Why do you think forgiveness feels hard right before you do it — but light right after?

CHAPTER XV

Halfway There!

Night fifteen. The midpoint. Exactly halfway.

Baba places a small candle on the kitchen table, and the whole family crowds around in their pajamas — even little Rania, who mostly just wants to chew on the matchbox. The flame trembles once, then holds. Baba grins. "We made it to the middle," he says.

And it kind of is a big deal.

Dina, who is twelve, says the hardest part was 3 p.m. every single afternoon, when her stomach forgot it was supposed to be patient. Her brother Taim, seven, says the best part was suhoor — eating oatmeal in the dark kitchen while the whole street slept, feeling like their family shared a secret with the night. Their little sister Safa just says, "I prayed so much." Everyone laughs. But she is not wrong.

The Prophet ﷺ said: "Fasting is a shield." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Fasting does not sit in a cupboard. You carry it. And carrying something through fifteen days — through school lunches you could not eat, through hot afternoons and extra rakaahs before bed — means you are already stronger than you were on Day One.

Allah says in the Quran: "And it is better for you that you fast, if you only knew." (Quran 2:184.) You are beginning to know. That is what the middle of Ramadan feels like.

The candle flickers. Baba blows it out softly. "Fifteen more," he says.

You have fifteen days of proof now. Proof that you can. Proof that your family shows up. Proof that Allah is worth every hungry, grateful, beautiful hour of it.

Your habit: Make a Ramadan report card. Write or draw three things you did well in the first half — maybe you woke up for suhoor every day, or you made dua before bed, or you shared your snack without being asked. Then pick one thing to improve over the next fifteen days. Be honest. That honesty is its own kind of worship.

Reflect: What has Ramadan taught you about yourself so far?

CHAPTER XVI

Three Little Surahs, One Big Shield

The dark had a way of feeling bigger once the lamp went out.

Tariq knew it wasn't really bigger. He was eight years old and he understood that. But the shadows still piled up in the corners of the room, and some nights his heart would thump loud enough to hear.

His older sister Hana was twelve and therefore, in his opinion, afraid of absolutely nothing. One night she caught him pulling his blanket over his head and sat down on the edge of his bed.

"Do you know what the Prophet ﷺ did before he slept?" she asked.

Tariq shook his head.

She told him. Every single night, the Prophet ﷺ would cup his hands together palms — Qul huwa Allahu ahad, Qul a'udhu bi rabb il-falaq, Qul a'udhu bi rabb in-naas — each one three times, then blow gently into his hands and wipe them over his face and body, starting from his head. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported this herself. It is in both Sahih al-Bukhari (5017) and Sahih Muslim (2192).

Three little surahs. Like a shield you wrap around yourself at night.

Hana explained each one simply.

Al-Ikhlas says: Allah is One. He needs nobody. Nobody made Him, and He is like nothing else. Just saying that reminds you — the One who made the whole universe is right here.

Al-Falaq says: I ask the Lord of the morning to protect me from everything dark and harmful. The Lord of daybreak. The One who splits night open every single morning.

An-Naas says: I ask the Lord of all people to keep the bad whispers away from my heart. Because sometimes the scariest thing isn't outside the room. It's the worried thought inside your own chest.

Tariq uncovered his head. He held out his palms like Hana showed him, and together they recited — slowly, quietly — all three surahs, three times each.

Then he blew into his hands and wiped them over his face.

The room was still dark. But it felt different now. Smaller, somehow. Manageable.

This Month's Habit: Memorize Surah Al-Ikhlas, Al-Falaq, and An-Naas. Recite all three — three times each — every night before you sleep, blowing into your cupped palms first. Even if you're still learning the words, start tonight with what you know.

Reflection: What is one thing that makes you feel safe — and how does remembering Allah change that feeling?

CHAPTER XVII

Long Nights, Bright Hearts

Sara's feet didn't quite reach the floor.

She was sitting on the edge of the prayer mat, wearing her favorite green socks — the ones with the tiny white stars — and she kept wiggling her toes just to check they were still there. The masjid smelled like rose water and warm carpet. She had never been here this late before.

The hall was full. Fuller than she had ever seen it. Row after row after row of people, shoulder to shoulder, heel to heel. Tall uncles and little boys. Grandmothers with white scarves and teenagers who looked almost like grown-ups. All of them facing the same direction. All of them waiting.

"Baba," Sara whispered, tugging his sleeve. "How many people are here?"

He looked around slowly. "A lot, habibti. A lot."

Then the imam said Allahu Akbar — and everything went still.

Everyone stood. So Sara stood too. She didn't know all the words yet. But when they bowed, she bowed. When they pressed their foreheads to the floor, she pressed hers to the cool carpet and thought, just for a second, that she could feel the whole earth listening.

On the walk home, the air smelled like jasmine and streetlights made puddles on the road. Baba reached down and held her hand.

He told her something the Prophet ﷺ said — that whoever stands in prayer du true faith, hoping for Allah's reward, will have all their past sins forgiven. Every single one. (Sahih al-Bukhari 2009; Sahih Muslim 759)

Sara was quiet for a moment. That was a very serious promise.

"So we should come every night?" she asked.

"Every night we can," Baba said.

She nodded. Once. Firmly. The way you nod when you have made up your mind about something important.

And she had.

Tonight's Habit Join your family for at least part of Tarawih prayer — even just two rakaahs before bed counts. You showed up. You stood. And Allah sees every single star-sock step.

Reflection What does it feel like to pray alongside so many people at the same time?

CHAPTER XVIII

Thank You for This Date

Hana picked up one date from the iftar plate and just… looked at it.

It sat in her palm — wrinkled, dark brown, exactly the size of her thumb. Around her, the rest of the family was busy watching the clock tick toward maghrib. Baba had one eye on the window. Little Sami was already pointing at the samosas. But Hana held her date and stared at it like she had never really seen one before.

"Mama," she said. "Where did this come from?"

Her mother smiled. Not the quick kind. The sit down, this is going to be good kind.

That date began as a tiny bud on a palm tree — somewhere warm and dust-gold, the way farmers have grown dates for thousands of years in the lands where the Prophet ﷺ once walked. A Watered it patiently. Waited, because date palms take years before they bear a single fruit. Then rain came — sent by Allah from clouds that only He commands. Sunlight pressed its sweetness into every wrinkle. Hands picked the dates, sorted them, packed them into boxes, loaded them onto a truck, then a ship, then another truck — and finally onto your table.

All of that. For one date.

Allah says: "And if you should count the favors of Allah, you could not enumerate them." (Quran, 14:34)

Not poetry. Just the truth.

The Prophet ﷺ felt this so deeply that he said Alhamdulillah after every sing that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Allah is pleased with His slave who praises Him wh Him when he drinks a sip." (Sahih Muslim)

One small bite. One word of thanks. Allah is pleased.

The adhan rang out across the neighbourhood. Hana looked at her date, then at the whole table — the soup, the warm bread, the water jug glistening with cold, the faces she loved most.

She said Alhamdulillah. Slowly. Like she meant every single letter.

Then she took her first bite.

It was the sweetest date she had ever tasted.

The Habit

Before every meal this month, say Alhamdulillah slowly — not a quick blur of syllables, but a real, full thank-you. Then pick one specific thing on the table and feel grateful for it. Just one. The warm bread. The cold water. The person who cooked it.

Reflect

If you had to thank everyone who helped bring your dinner to the table, who would you thank?

CHAPTER XIX

The Longest Table

Baba called it the longest table they had ever built.

Really it was three folding tables pushed end to end, stretching from the front door all the way to the edge of the driveway. Mama spread a bright yellow cloth over the whole thing. It kept slipping. She laughed every time she fixed it.

Four families had said yes. The Khans from next door. The Yilmazs from the cul-de-sac. The Hassans, who always arrived smelling of cardamom. And the Nguyens, who had taken their shahada six months ago and were celebrating their very first Ramadan. Twenty-two people altogether. Seven of them were children, and those seven discovered in approximately four minutes that the space under the table made an excellent tunnel.

Dishes appeared from every direction. Samosas. A pot of something red and magnificent. Dates in three different sizes. A pan of rice so large it needed two people to carry it. Nobody had planned who would bring what. Somehow there was too much of everything.

The last ten minutes before maghrib were the best part. Everyone crowded close. Stomachs growling. Eyes on phones showing the prayer time. Somebody's toddler lunged for a date and got a gentle "not yet, habibi." The countdown felt electric — silly and sacred at exactly the same moment.

The Prophet ýú said that whoever provides food for a fasting person to break reward as that fasting person, without taking a single thing away from the fasting person's reward. (Riyad as-Salihin, 1233, hasan sahih)

Think about that. One meal. Twenty-two people. Rewards multiplying like ripples across still water.

When the adhan rang out, every voice went quiet at exactly the same second. Then the dates disappeared. Then the noise came rushing back — louder, warmer, and far happier than before.

This week's habit: Invite one family to share iftar with yours — or accept an invitation to join theirs. It does not have to be elaborate. Dates, water, and good company are enough.

Reflection: How is eating together different from eating alone?

CHAPTER XX

The Prophet ýú Who Loved Child

He was the leader of nations. The Messenger of Allah. Men stood in rows behind him; armies moved at his word.

And he let small children climb on his back.

That is the Prophet Muhammad ýú. Not a distant figure sealed inside old book crouching-down-to-your-level man who made every child feel like the most important person in the room.

Take little Abu Umayr. Just a small boy with a pet bird — a tiny sparrow he called his nughayr — who loved that bird with his whole heart. One day, the sparrow died. Abu Umayr's heart broke the way a child's heart breaks: completely. The Prophet ýú noticed. Every time he passed the boy, he softly: "O Abu Umayr — what happened to your little nughayr?" He didn't forget. Didn't rush on. A child's sadness mattered to him. (Riyad as-Salihin)

Then there was his granddaughter Umamah — barely big enough to fit in one the community in prayer, rows of people standing behind him in silence, he carried her on his shoulder. Time to bow? He set her gently down. Time to stand? He picked her straight back up. Every single rakah. In front of everyone. (Sahih al-Bukhari; Sahih Muslim)

Nobody told him this was undignified. Because it wasn't.

One afternoon, a man watched the Prophet ýú kiss his grandson al-Hasan on th ten children. I have never kissed a single one of them." The Prophet looked at him and said simply: "He who does not show mercy will not be shown mercy." (Sahih al-Bukhari)

Mercy isn't weakness. Tenderness toward children is not a small thing — it is a light. The same light the Prophet ýú carried into every room he entered.

Today, your job is simple. Carry a little of that light yourself.

This Week's Habit Tell one person in your family — a parent, a sibling, a grandparent — one specific thing you love about them. Not just I love you. Something real: I love the way you make me laugh at breakfast. Say it out loud. Today.

Reflection If you could spend one hour with the Prophet ýú, what would you w

CHAPTER XXI

The Special Ten Begin

Something was different.

Idris noticed it before anyone said a word. On the night the calendar flipped to the 21st of Ramadan, his baba did not go to bed after Tarawih like usual. He just stayed up. His prayer mat was still spread in the corner of the living room at midnight, a glass of water beside it, his tasbeeh beads clicking softly in the quiet.

In the kitchen, mama was whispering. Not to anyone in the house — to Allah. Her lips moved gently, her hands open in her lap, and the sound was low and steady, like a river you can hear but not quite see.

And the Quran. It was everywhere. Open on the coffee table. Open on the kitchen counter. A small, worn copy sitting beside the bathroom sink.

Idris stood in the hallway in his socks, just watching.

"Baba," he whispered. "What's happening?"

His baba smiled. "Sit with me."

He explained it the way good fathers explain big things — simply, and with his whole face. The last ten nights of Ramadan are the most precious nights of the entire year. Somewhere inside them, wrapped in stars and waiting, is one night so powerful that Allah described it Himself: "The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months." (Surah Al-Qadr, 97:3.) That is more than eighty-three years of worship, folded inside a single night.

The Prophet ﷺ knew exactly what that was worth. Aisha RA told us that when the last ten nights arrived, he would tighten his waist-wrapper, stay awake in worship, and wake his entire family to pray alongside him. (Sahih Muslim, 1174.) He held nothing back.

Idris looked at his baba's face. Calm. Focused. Full of something that looked a lot like hope.

He sat down on the edge of the prayer mat.

"Then I'm staying up too," he said.

Your Habit This Week

Choose one act of worship to add — a longer dua before bed, five extra Quran verses, one more coin in the sadaqah jar. Start tonight. These ten nights are not waiting.

Reflection

If these are the most special nights of the year, how do you want to spend them?

CHAPTER XXII

The Still and Quiet Heart

Tariq pressed his nose against the masjid window and stared.

Grandfather was just sitting there. Not eating. Not talking. Not even moving very much. Just sitting on his prayer mat with his eyes closed, his lips barely moving, his old hands resting on his knees like two sleeping birds.

"What is he doing?" Tariq asked his mama.

"I'tikaf," she said softly. "He stays inside the masjid for the last ten nights and gives that time completely to Allah. The Prophet ﷺ did this every single Ramadan without fail." She pause for thirty years."

Thirty years. Tariq could not even imagine being quiet for thirty minutes.

That evening, grandfather came to the masjid door to say salam, and Tariq asked the question that had been poking at him all day.

"Baba Ji — what do you do in there for so long?"

Grandfather smiled. The slow, warm kind that meant a real answer was coming.

"I talk to Allah," he said. "I say sorry for the things I did wrong. I say thank you for everything He gave me. And sometimes—" he patted Tariq's shoulder, "—I just sit still and let my heart breathe."

He looked quietly at Tariq. "Allah says in His book: Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest. (Quran 13:28) Even your heart, habibi. Even when you are seven."

Tariq went home and turned off his tablet. He sat on his prayer mat. No games. No cartoons. Just quiet.

It felt strange at first. A little scratchy, like a new sweater.

But then — slowly — something inside him settled. Like water going still.

He didn't have any big words. He just whispered, "Allah, I'm here."

That was enough.

This Week's Habit

Find five minutes of quiet each day — no screens, no sounds. Sit with your hands on your knees and your heart open. You don't need a long speech. The Prophet ﷺ gave his last ten ni closeness with Allah, every year, until he passed away (Sahih al-Bukhari; Sahih Muslim). You can start with

just five minutes.

Reflection

What happens inside you when everything goes quiet?

CHAPTER XXIII

The Night Worth a Thousand Months

Grandma pulled the quilt up to her chin and patted the space beside her.

"Come," she said. "I have a story with no once-upon-a-time — because it is happening right now."

She turned off the lamp. Only a thin silver light from the window remained.

"Somewhere in these last ten nights," Grandma began, her voice low and warm, "there is a night so full of angels that if you could see them, the sky would have no room left for stars. Allah told us Himself in the Quran: The Night of Decree is better than a thousand months (Al-Qadr, 97:3). Better than a thousand months." She let that sit in the air between them.

A thousand months. That is eighty-three years — a whole long human life, tucked inside a single night.

"Does it only happen once?" you might ask, the way any sensible child would.

Every year. The same miracle, every Ramadan, hidden in the last ten nights — most likely an odd one. The twenty-first. The twenty-third. The twenty-fifth. The twenty-seventh. The twenty-ninth. Five chances. The Prophet ýú told us to seek it there, in those odd nights (Sahih al-Bukhari, 201

And on that night, the angels pour down — for every matter, the Quran says (Al-Qadr, 97:4). Every prayer. Every whispered dua. Every sorry and every please and every thank you rises up, and the angels carry it all. And then, right at the very end, Allah described the whole feeling of the night like this: Peace it is, until the emergence of dawn (Al-Qadr, 97:5).

Peace. Just that word. Peace.

Grandma closed her eyes. "You don't need to know which night it is," she said softly. "You just need to show up for all of them."

Outside, the sky was very, very still.

Your habit this week: On every odd night — the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th, and 29th — make one heartfelt dua before you sleep. Ask for the best things: for yourself, your family, and the whole world.

Reflection: What would you do tonight if you knew it was the Night of Power?

CHAPTER XXIV

What Would You Ask For?

Layla had been carrying it for three days.

Not constantly. Just in the quiet moments — when the house went still after suhoor, when she lay staring at the ceiling waiting for sleep. Her best friend Hana walked past her at school now without smiling quite the same way.

It wasn't a huge thing. A week before Ramadan, Layla had laughed at something Hana said in front of the other girls. She hadn't meant to hurt her. But she had.

That night was one of the odd nights of the final ten. Her mama sat on the prayer mat, palms open, lips moving. Layla crept in and sat beside her.

"Mama. What are you asking Allah for?"

Her mama smiled. "The same thing Aisha RA once asked the Prophet ﷺ. She s what should I say? And he taught her this." Her mama cupped both hands and whispered:

Allahumma innaka 'afuwwun tuhibbul 'afwa fa'fu 'anni.

O Allah, You are the Pardoner. You love to pardon. So pardon me. (Riyad as-Salihin)

Not a wish for something exciting. Not for something sparkly or sweet. Just a clean heart. A fresh start.

"'Afuww," her mama said softly, "means to wipe away completely. Not just to forgive and quietly remember later. Gone."

Layla turned that over. Then: "Mama. I think I need to say sorry to Hana."

Her mama just nodded. The way mamas do when they already knew.

The next morning, Layla sent a voice note. Eleven seconds long. I'm sorry I laughed. That wasn't kind. I miss you.

Hana replied in four words: I missed you too.

Something lifted. Right there in her chest.

Allah asks in the Quran: "Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?" (Surah An-Nur, 24:22). When we pardon each other, we are practicing the word in its smallest, most human form. We learn what forgiveness feels like from the inside — and then we understand, just a little, what we are really asking for when we raise our hands on these precious nights.

The most important night of the year deserves the most important request. Not things. A heart made clean.

Habit

Memorize Allahumma innaka 'afuwwun tuhibbul 'afwa fa'fu 'anni and recite it every odd night this week. Say it slowly. Mean every single word.

Reflection

Is there anyone you need to forgive — including yourself?

CHAPTER XXV

Bags of Rice and Bags of Love

The bag of rice sat on the kitchen table like a small, important thing.

Hana had helped her baba carry it from the pantry that morning — five pounds of basmati, solid and cool in her arms. Her little brother Kareem was already in his Eid shirt, too excited about tomorrow to notice the rice at all. But Hana wanted to know what it was for.

"Zakat ul-Fitr," Baba said simply. "Before the Eid prayer, we give food to families who need it. So that every Muslim family — every single one — can celebrate Eid with a full table."

Every single one. Hana turned that over in her mind.

At the masjid, the collection room hummed with people. Families came carrying bags of rice, bags of dates, bags of flour, and small white envelopes stuffed with money. Ibn Umar reported that the Messenger of Allah ýú made Zakat ul-Fitr compulsory on every Muslim, free or enslaved, male or it should be given before the Eid prayer (Sahih al-Bukhari, 1503). Every person in the family counted. Even Kareem, who had not fasted a single day.

Hana placed the bag on the table herself. Carefully.

The uncle behind the table smiled wide. "Jazakum Allahu khayran." May Allah reward you all with good. Hana stood a little straighter.

On the walk home, she asked, "Will the rice reach someone by tomorrow?"

"That is exactly the point," Baba said. "Someone wakes up on Eid morning and the food is already waiting. The fast is done. The joy can begin. For everyone."

Hana looked down at her hands — the small hands that had carried that heavy bag all the way.

Even small hands can do something big.

Your Habit

Help choose and carry your family's Zakat ul-Fitr to the masjid or collection point before Eid prayer. You do not have to do it alone — just be part of it. Hold the bag. Hand it over. Let it count.

Your Reflection

Why do you think Allah wants everyone to celebrate Eid, not just the people who have enough money?

CHAPTER XXVI

Sorry Is a Brave Word

Rania knew the feeling. It sat right in the middle of her chest, like a pebble in a shoe.

Three weeks into Ramadan, in the quiet after Tarawih prayer, she remembered. Before the month started, she had laughed when her classmate Dina dropped her lunch tray in the school cafeteria. Not a kind laugh. The kind that makes your face go hot and red. Rania hadn't meant to be terrible — but the words came out sharp and loud, and Dina had not looked at her once since.

She had never apologized.

She told her mama. Mama sat beside her on the prayer rug, still in her hijab, said: "Whoever has wronged his brother in his honor or anything else, let him ask for his forgiveness today — before a day comes when there will be no dinar and no dirham." (Sahih al-Bukhari 2449)

Twenty-six days of fasting. Twenty-six days of dua, Quran, and trying hard to be good. And this one small pebble was still there.

Rania took out a piece of paper. She chewed her pencil for a long time.

Dear Dina. I laughed when I shouldn't have. I'm sorry. I really mean it. — Rania

She folded it very small. The next morning she ran to Dina's front door while her baba waited on the pavement and slid the note underneath.

On the walk home, the pebble was gone. Just like that.

Sorry is five letters. It can feel like climbing a mountain — right up until the moment you do it. Then it feels like putting down something heavy you forgot you were even carrying.

Allah says in the Quran: "Would you not like that Allah should forgive you?" (Quran 24:22). Asking forgiveness from people and asking forgiveness from Allah — they travel together, always.

The Habit: Before Ramadan ends, write, call, or visit one person you may have hurt — and say sorry. You don't need a long speech. A few honest, quiet words are enough.

Reflection: What is harder — saying sorry first, or waiting for the other person to say it?

CHAPTER XXVII

When the Angels Come Down

The room is very quiet.

Layla can hear her own heartbeat.

Downstairs, Baba's voice rises and falls — low, steady Quran. The clock says 2:14 a.m. She should be asleep. She is not even close.

She stares at the ceiling and thinks about what he told her before Isha: Tonight could be the night.

Laylatul Qadr. The Night of Power.

She has heard about it all month. But tonight, the stillness in her room feels different — thick, like the air itself is holding its breath.

Allah says in the Quran that on this night, the angels and Jibril come down from the sky by their Lord's permission, for every matter. "Peace it is, until the emergence of dawn." (Al-Qadr, 97:5)

Layla pulls her blanket up and tries to picture it. Not cartoon angels. Real ones. Thousands of them — more than stars — filling the sky above her roof, above her city, above the entire sleeping world at once. Jibril himself, the one who brought the Quran, somewhere up in that dark.

Her chest goes small and full at the same time.

She slips out of bed. Pads down the hall. Baba looks up, surprised. Then he smiles and opens his arm.

She sits beside him on the prayer rug. Folds her hands. Closes her eyes.

Ya Allah, she thinks. I don't have big words. I just want you to hear me.

The Prophet ﷺ promised that whoever stands in prayer on Laylatul Qadr with from Allah, will have all their past sins forgiven. (Sahih al-Bukhari, no. 1901; Sahih Muslim, no. 760)

She is seven years old. She does not know all the right words. But she knows she wants to be good. And she knows — the way she knows her own name — that Allah is listening.

That is enough to pray.

Your Habit This Week

Wake up for — or stay up until — Tahajjud prayer at least once. Even two rakaahs. Even half-asleep on the rug beside someone you love. The night is open. Step into it.

Reflection

Do you believe Allah hears you? How does that belief change how you pray?

CHAPTER XXVIII

A Thank-You Letter to Allah

Hana found the crayons under her bed — a little squashed, one missing its wrapper — and spread them across the carpet next to a blank piece of paper.

She was going to write Allah a letter.

Not a dua exactly. Not the kind you recite from memory with your eyes closed. Something more like… spilling your heart out.

She started with the easy things. Thank You for mangoes. The kind that drip down your chin and make Mama say "not on the good rug!" She drew one in orange. Then: Thank You for my eyes, so I can see the crescent moon every Ramadan. She paused, chewing the end of her crayon. Thank You for Mama's laugh — the big one, the one she does when Baba tells a terrible joke.

She kept going. Thank You for the feeling after Tarawih, when I'm so tired but somehow full at the same time. She didn't have a proper word for that feeling. But Allah knew exactly what she meant.

Then she wrote about her little brother Sufyan. He breaks her colored pencils. He sings the wrong words to every nasheed. He is, without question, the most annoying person she has ever met. She wrote slowly: Thank You for Sufyan. Even the annoying parts.

She looked at the page.

Allah says in the Quran: "If you are grateful, I will surely increase you in favor" (Surah Ibrahim, 14:7). Hana had heard that ayah dozens of times. But sitting here, with a crumpled crayon and a page full of mangoes and her brother's name — she finally understood it from the inside. Gratitude is not a polished speech. It is noticing. It is saying: I see this gift. I didn't make it. Thank You.

The Prophet ýú once prayed through the night until his feet swelled. When Ai himself so hard, he said: "Should I not be a grateful servant?" (Sahih al-Bukhari; Sahih Muslim). He noticed everything Allah gave him, and he could not help but respond.

You can too. Every mango. Every laugh. Every annoying little brother.

The Habit: Sit down with paper — crayons, markers, whatever you love — and write or draw your own thank-you letter to Allah. List the big things and the small things and the surprising things. Keep it somewhere you will see it long after Ramadan ends.

Reflect: What is the most surprising thing you are grateful for this Ramadan?

CHAPTER XXIX

The Last Night

The dishes are still on the table. Nobody moved them.

That's how you know.

Mama washed them an hour ago, then set three more glasses down just to have something to do with her hands. Baba is still in his Tarawih clothes, sitting quietly in the corner, prayer beads moving soft and slow. The little ones fell asleep on the sofa before anyone thought to carry them to bed. Nobody minds. Tonight, the house feels too full to put away.

The 29th night of Ramadan sits in the room like a dear guest who has just announced they're leaving in the morning.

All month the family woke before the sun. They shared dates and whispered duas and stood shoulder to shoulder in rows at the masjid while the Quran floated out above their heads. Thirty days — or twenty-nine. The moon decides. And somehow, impossibly, here it is. The last Tarawih has been prayed. The last long ameen has rung through the hall and gone quiet.

The Prophet ﷺ said that the fasting person has two moments of joy: one when they meet their Lord. (Sahih al-Bukhari, 1904; Sahih Muslim, 1151.) The Companions who loved this month the most were the ones who felt its leaving the sharpest. They knew what a gift looked like, and they held it gently.

That ache isn't sadness. It's proof.

If something leaves a hollow when it goes, that means it was real. It means you weren't just watching the clock count down to Eid. You were actually here. You actually loved it.

"The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was revealed, as guidance for the people." (Quran 2:185.) That guidance doesn't disappear when the crescent sets. It lives in whoever carried it well.

You carried it. Now carry it forward.

The Habit

Before you sleep tonight, write down three habits from this Ramadan that you want to keep — maybe the dua notebook, maybe the dates at iftar, maybe the quiet minutes before maghrib. Pick three that felt true and good. Keep the list somewhere you'll stumble across it in February, when the cold mornings make it easy to forget.

Reflection

What part of Ramadan do you most hope stays with you after tonight?

CHAPTER XXX

Eid! Carrying the Light Forward

The alarm doesn't need to go off. You are already awake.

Something is different this morning. The air feels bright before the sun has even climbed, and the house smells like rose water and ironed cotton. Today is Eid.

The ghusl comes first — warm water, fresh start. Then the special clothes, the ones set aside just for this. The Prophet ýú always dressed in his finest for Eid (Sahih al-Bukhari, sahih), bec and showing up beautifully is its own kind of thank-you.

Outside, the takbeer fills the air. Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, la ilaha illallah. In doorways. In cars. On the walk to the prayer ground. The whole neighbourhood chanting together.

At the prayer field, the rows stretch wide — hundreds of people, maybe thousands. Babies on shoulders. Grandmothers in bright scarves. Little kids holding their fathers' hands tight. Everyone who fasted, everyone who tried, standing side by side to say: we made it. Alhamdulillah.

But here is what nobody tells you about Eid. It is not just a party. It is a graduation.

Allah says in the Quran: "…and that you complete the prescribed period and glorify Allah for that to which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful" (2:185). The takbeer ringing across the morning sky — that is the glorification. You finished. You were guided. Now you are grateful.

Before you leave the house, stop. Just for a moment. Look in the mirror.

That person looking back fasted. Made real dua. Shared food with a neighbour. Gave sadaqah. Forgave someone. Stayed up on odd nights hoping for Laylatul Qadr. The Prophet ýú s with sincere faith and hoping for reward will have their past sins forgiven (Sahih al-Bukhari; Sahih Muslim — both sahih). That forgiven, lighter heart is yours now.

Walk out the door carrying it.

Eid is joyful. Run to your cousins. Eat the sweets. Hug everyone in sight.

And then — when the day grows quiet — choose one habit to keep. Just one. The morning Quran verses. The dua before bed. The Alhamdulillah you mean with your whole chest. Carry it into the long, ordinary, beautiful year ahead.

Ramadan gave you a light.

Don't put it down.

The Habit: Pick one habit from this month and keep it for the next 30 days after Eid. Write it on a piece of paper and stick it somewhere you will see it every single day.

Reflection: Who are you now that Ramadan has ended — and what light will you carry into the world?