

The voice of Children, Teenagers and Revolutionists.

The Oblivion

Fear

Fear is one of the most common feelings in the human psychology. It comes from within and some times it is so strong that it turns into a phobia.

Fear is a result of many factors. An incident in a person's life is the most probable reason. Some fears are a result of guilt and others are myths put into the mind since the child first opens his eyes.

With its disadvantages, fear brings a few benefits as well. It is not fully bad. Sometimes it may come from a force inside you that you may not recognize- your intuition.

Fear and intuition are a few things which together are important for survival. Specially for those who work at dangerous places. They develop a special ability in understanding this feeling.

Furthermore, fear is important in building up of competition in an environment which will result on a person in different ways. Fear also causes the release of sudden adrenaline rush which keeps a person active, enhances agility and helps a person to escape or fight a precarious situation. Perhaps Fear is one of the most important feeling in the game of survival- A feeling for which we should thank Allah wholeheartedly, Who gave us such a gift. If not excessive, Fear may also be a form of exercise for the brain. Fear can even be used as a shock therapy for many diseases like paralysis.

Everyone is faced by fear. What matters is how they respond to it and tackle it; this is what will affect you for the rest of your life. If you are unable to diminish it then it will turn into a phobia which is not at all good.

Fear can cause excessive stress

and in some severe cases, excessive damage to brain. It can also result in annoyance in front of others. It is one of the major reasons for psychological illnesses.

What the real question is that; sudden frights, myths, tales of horrible monster often frighten us. Some of daily incidents often frighten us but why slowly with time the fear of Almighty is leaving our minds. **Our culture is being changed** —WHY? For example we listen and adore music highly; we do not fulfill the rights of poor, neighbours and etcetera. We do not follow the injunctions of Islam properly in many of our dealings. Our hearts are daily getting corrupt which is a truth that should certainly be feared. The innocence in the hearts is attenuating day by day. Why do we fear foolish tales when Allah, the Great is with us?

It is because we have stopped fearing Allah Almighty's wrath. We forget that He is the Greatest and He helps and love all his beings. We should love Allah and fear his anger. We should love Allah and fear the fact that what will happen to us if He is angered. It is indeed something to worry about.

Our Lord Allah Almighty provided us with THE HOLY QURAN and gave a complete code of life in it to be followed. Then it is our duty to follow it to earn Allah's happiness and success in this life and hereaf-

ter. If our culture is changed, the values that once existed will be lost and this would highly threaten the Islamic culture.

My brothers and Sisters love Allah and fear the day when you may stand in front of Him with bowed heads listening to your results. Do not fear death or any material thing. Ponder over the question that weather you are going the right way. This is the time when we can bring a change; a revolt against evil and our material fears. This is the time when we can help each other by correction of mistakes and one should not feel any shame in this.

Never fear in asking for forgiveness even if you are committing sins for a long time for it's never too late and Almighty is Most Forgiving. Do not be daunted in praying; pray as much as possible for it is hope for men. Remember Allah is the only One who can help and who helps. Do not forget the blessings He has given to us and so always thank him and never forget the path of right. Thus fear in this way can be very good for us as we will have a will to go against evil and do good.

“May the true spirit Of Islam be revived in our society.”

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A PAUSE TO Wonder
by Shanzah Javed

The pen fell across my feet as I was thinking about my English composition. I bent to pick up my pen and as I was straightening up, my eyes fell upon the splashing waterfall easily visible through the glass window of my room. I decided to go outside. I went outside and looked at it in a startling manner. The beauty of the gushing water of the cascade attracted me. Its rippling and splashing had a soothing effect on me.

I was engrossed in my own beautiful thoughts when the snapping of a twig forced me out of my thoughts. I decided to take a stroll around the fabulous place. At the very moment my mind threw a question at me.

"HOW MUCH WATER IS IMPORTANT TO OUR LIFE?"

The sound of the falling water made me think, **"WHAT IF ALL THE WATER ON THE EARTH VANISHED?"**

Thousands questions and facts started rolling like a film strip in my mind.

Water IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN DIAMOND

This statement is not literally true but if we consider water as the basic need of every organism we will come to conclusion that indeed water is more important than any other thing in this universe.

About 70% of our body weight is water and without water we would probably die. No human being can live without water for more than four days. It is used in most of the body reactions such as digestion. Our cell will not carry out chemical reactions if no water is present in the cytoplasm. Water is also needed to transport waste and digested products.

Furthermore, in plants water is used in absorption of ions from soil, in photosynthesis and for turgidity.

Water is essential and vital resource for life and good health. A lack of water to meet daily needs is a reality today for 1/3 people around the world.

My thoughts were interrupted by a splash in the smooth waterfall. And as I stared into the blue depths of the falling water; I suddenly realized that water is the most abundant compound found on the earth. I can see it in lakes, oceans and seas and even in rain and tears. Although 3/4th of the earth's surface is water. Unfortunately, most of the water sources are not suitable for human use. The water in oceans which makes up almost 97% of the total

water on earth is extremely salty and is not suitable for human consumption.

Moreover, Water is used in cooling of machines, in oil refineries, for cleaning purposes and as a raw material for most industrial reactions.

Water is the universal solvent and can dissolve in almost all the substances. Water is not only essential for humans as a major constituent of the body but we humans also use water for domestic purposes like drinking, brushing, washing and cleaning.'

As I was engrossed in my thoughts of water I heard my mum calling me home. I came back inside but I decided to do something for the conservation of water. Within a week I made a lot of banners and posters emphasizing the necessity of saving water. I also wrote a number of articles for newspapers and children magazines regarding the need of water conservation.

I decided to visit the villages neighbouring our township, the intolerable pain of their thirst made me knelt on my knees.....I felt pity for them. World appeared horribly shameful to me. Our leaders state that they are doing a lot for the cause of poor village people but the way the rural people die for a single drop of water is upsetting.

I along with my friends decided to paste my posters across the town about the importance of clean water.

Today, in all parts of the world, there is such a crisis of water shortage and water pollution that it seems that a day will come in human history when it will become as rare as "Coe-lacath fish", and such a condition will be the end of time.

Our rivers which used to overflow with the abundance of water are now empty and as dry as a stick. May be it is because we do not have proper mechanisms for water preservation. Secondly we do not have a large number of dams and the little quantity of water we have is also running out.

Furthermore, Water is polluted vastly. If we just take a look on the rural life we will come to know that over 65% people are using water that is polluted and contaminated to a very high degree. As a result these people suffer from a lot of contagious, bacterial and viral diseases. The majority of these people are ill literate poor people living in slums. Even in the highly developed cities, the quantity of clean and pure water is rapidly diminishing.

Due to water pollution and contamination a number of diseases have spread and caused a lot of damage to human life and even to marine life. Each year tons of fish and birds die due to oil spillages, industrial waste effluents and acid rain. In a way, we are suffering a lot, firstly because of water shortage and secondly because of water pollution.

The activity and efficiency of industrial units has rapidly declined largely because of insufficient electrical energy resulting from the shortage of water. The whole nation is suffering from load shedding due

to water shortage.

There is an echo of life, a ray of hope and a dream of life still here. Water can be treated properly in water treatment plants and made pure and fit for human consumption especially for drinking. This clean water from treatment plants can then be safely transported over large distances to fulfill the increasing need of people for water. More and more water treatment plants should be established to accomplish the increasing demand.

Moreover, the sewage should be treated before discharging it into the sea. The oil tankers should be checked for leaks before a journey. More reservoirs should be constructed so that we can get hold on this water wastage.

More than half of humanity will be living with water shortages, depleted fisheries and polluted coastlines 50 years later because of worldwide water crises. Wastes and inadequate management of water are the main culprits behind growing problems, particularly in poverty ridden regions.

Globally, the problem is getting worse as cities, population and the needs of the people grow; also due to increase in agriculture, industry and household.

Water scarcity affects 1 in 3 people on every continent on globe. The situation is getting worse with the increase in population. It forces people to rely on unsafe sources of drinking water. It could lead to plague, cholera and typhoid.

The government should make it a priority to deliver adequate supplies of quality water to people.

I would recommend everyone not to waste water and start performing the efforts, i.e. consuming less water and increasing awareness by making speeches towards conservation.

Water, Water Every where,

Not a drop to Spare,

Water is a precious thing;

In a dew drop flashing bright,

In a fountain spraying white;

All the year,

In all the seasons;

Water is the loveliest Thing

The Story Of M. Rafay

By S.O.T. ZAIDI

(Episode 2)

It was a starry night. A chilly wind blew while in the town of "FFC" a party had begun. It was a Bar B Q night, people gathered in the community lawn, some with friends, and others with families. They ordered their meals and ate it ravenously. It was a special BBQ night as many other dishes were available on the menu. The atmosphere was wonderfully invigorating a cultural feeling which was enhanced by the ambient music which played in the background.

Just near the entrance sat a group of cheerful adolescent boys, their faces lacking color and activeness due the hard pressures and enforcements inflicted upon their personal lives by their school. However they were cheerful today.

"At last a weekend, after such hard five school days," said Moosa.

"Yep and the food is just exquisite. Man you should try this 'Chicken Paratha' and 'Kebab'. I am going to eat my fingers away feasting on them," said Hasan.

"Oh yeah! Why not have a competition. The one who devours the chicken Tikka in 3 minutes wins," said Irtaza.

"Where are Rafay and Oz?" asked Haseeb.

"Thank God Oz isn't here. I have had enough of him in school: Can't bear him here as well. Don't know when I will get rid of this bastard," said Moosa.

"Shhhh... You should not say that too loud. Remember how sharp his ears are? He walks here and there many times unnoticed and hears many things," warned Akbar.

"Still where is Rafay," asked Hasan.

"He is at home; I heard he is really sick," replied Haseeb.

"Oh when did that happen?"

"He arrived two days ago at his home from a party and fell. He was in the hospital since that day."

"That's why no one's been picking up the phone at his home. I thought may be he had gone somewhere," said Moosa, "Well why we are so worried... Lets just enjoy this time and chill."

Just then far away from the noise and chatter of the people, among the silence of the trees, under the bright twinkling stars: there was A BREACH.

It was a breach in the fortress of silence by a sudden "BOOM". The sound was as if like a hammer stroked hard on a rock; a sound of doom it seemed. Like the call of death.

Faraway from it, the people heard only a strong hammer beat or a gun shot and few paid attention to it. How ever soon many others began to quiet down and others began to whisper.

"What was that?"

"Whach wob bat?" asked Irtaza, his mouth full with food.

"I don't know Irtaza!" exclaimed Akbar.

"Hey look...LOOK! LOOK. Watch that yellow rocket!" screamed a child in the crowd.

"Is that a shooting star," said Haseeb.

"Idiot, can't you see its heading upwards," replied Irtaza, "Hey look its headed this way."

"Oh sit down and watch."

But by now many girls were squealing, while people gasped and whispered to each other. The yellow shooting star got bigger and closer and many people realized it was heading towards them. Parents grabbed their children and hurried away sensing some unknown danger. Even the curious ones began to scurry but it was too late and "BOOM".

Rafay woke up with a start, his throat dry and body burning with a fever. He strained

his eyes and mind to focus. Three nights had passed since the horrible incident. He would have thought it a dream if not for the blue spot where the syringe had struck him. Three nights and he was still burning in fever. He knew he had the virus but it had not shown any other hazardous affect.

In fact he felt way better; he got up to take a drink of cool water. He wrapped himself in the sleeping cloak and saw that the lights of his home were left on, while he poured a glass for himself. He checked on his parents and was surprised to find their room empty. Suddenly he jumped up as his eyes got sight of a clock. It was 0300 hrs. "Where could they be?" thought Rafay. His head felt heavy and he closed his eyes while lying down on their bed.

I woke up as the dawn crept up in the sky and the first light of the new day entered the room. The lights were still on. "Where were my parents? What happened to them?"

Something was weird and I felt it in my heart. What was fate playing at? I ruffled up my hair while wondering and got up. A new strength had seeped in me and I felt changed. Thankfully my fever was gone as well.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE.)

THE BANE BY SOT ZAIDI

The setting Sun was covered in a red canvas through which it shined over the desert sand. The desert sand was as red as blood. On them walked two young boys (they were staggering in fact) all in rags with lips cracked and throat cracking with thirst.

They were all alone in this godforsaken place, on an errand too great for them but important for the light of their lives. A two day continuous journey had passed them and now they had started to loose hope in their strength.

It was fear that had kept them long over their feet but even that has to fade and soon one brother fell down on the warm sand. "Haris...my brother... I cannot go on much longer. I need some rest."

"FOOL! There is no time to waste or IT will be upon us. Pick up your wrecked weight and move," said Haris.

"But I cannot!" protested Akbar," I feel as if the life in me is draining away. It is the affect of this cursed place... this BLOODY place. It seems as if we have entered hell in this world. I..."

He could not go on for much long as he received severe blows from his brother, "Fool... IMBECILE... don't you remember what we set out to do. Have you forgotten what chases us?"

Just at that moment the Earth shook hard as if it was being shattered to pieces and then the sand in front of them blew apart with great force and fell side ways. In the dusty CLOUD, many thumps could be heard; suddenly out of it emerged a huge creature with a black and highly burnished body. It had death's whip at its back and its face and cold eyes were full of mockery and evil. It slashed its whip and Haris, looking at the large scorpion, sat down despairing his fate.

Haris and Akbar were two brothers; prince of the "Red Desert". They were extremely mischievous often causing problems for the hard working people of their city. Their father was the king of all the villages present in the Red Desert. These two brothers were each others best friends and it seemed as if there was no power which could separate them in times of trouble.

Soon the princes turned to stealing and secretly picked up many articles precious to different people and it was so that they met their greatest trouble. It was a fateful day and unforgettable for both of

them. In the city lived old woman like many others but with teeth full in her mouth and as active as a person in full youth. She worked hard and earned a living through sewing clothes.

One day the two boys saw the old lady put up a ring on a shelf and they decided to take it for themselves. Soon they got the chance and again they conducted the act of theft. It was a clever bit of work. One brother got her out of her house to manage the water which had started to drain (UNEXPECTEDLY to her) from the storage tank and water was scarce those days; the other brother got the ring. Happily they returned home and in their rooms rejoiced on their victory.

Haris examined the ring and saw a single gem of great beauty engraved in the ring. He wondered how a ring so precious came in the possession of poor old woman. How could the poor boy know that the one they trifled with this time was not an ordinary person and trouble was just ahead.

Soon it arrived on their door steps and the door of their room burst open and their stood the old lady full in wrath with eyes emitting fire and hair flying like as in a storm. The princes covered before her and she laughed at them. Then she said, "Fools did you thought I would leave you so easily. Now you will suffer."

With this the old women uttered words in language which sounded very harsh and the boys felt their bodies burning and they felt as if they had been taken to the doors of hell and soon were going to be cast into its fire; they fell unconscious.

They woke up in darkness on their beds and thought what happened was a dream, but then they saw a strange horrible mark on their hands; they jumped in fear and hurried off towards the quarters of an old advisor who was certainly surprised to see the brothers in such terrible condition. He was even more horrified on hearing the boys' story and while looking at their hands he shook his head slowly and said, "My young princes, there is no solution for this but for one; however, the task is impossible. There is a bane upon you which will eventually claim your life either way. It will turn you into shadows that will destroy this whole kingdom. You will be the slaves of the which."

"O wise advisor tell us how to break this curse. How to get rid of it? We do not want to die so soon," pleaded Haris.

"My dear child ..."

It was that night that they left their home in a hurry beginning together a journey that was a certain death. They had to cross the "Blood Desert" which was once a part of Red Desert but once an evil kingdom of a dark lord was formed on that part and since then even after its destruction the evil dwelt there. No one had stepped here since then for a time out of mind. Thus Haris and Akbar became the first people to step in the forbidden accursed land after a long time. It was a deed of great courage and became possible due to their strong aim and their support for each other.

On the first day Akbar felt strange while they journeyed through the desert to find the "Cave of Illusions" where they had to place the old women's ring to break the bane. Akbar's suspicion proved correct and they found themselves being pursued by a huge monster, the Scorpion.

This was in fact not any normal scorpion, it was a demon bound in this form a long time ago to guard this desert and the many secrets present there; this place was not known cursed without a reason.

From the time they set foot in the desert it had sensed their presence and thus arrived upon their heads in a matter of hours. It had tried to finish them off before but they had escaped it for they were strong then but now they were weak, famished and thirsty.

Haris was deeply shocked but as the Scorpion approached, he got up and said, "Brother GO! RUN!"

"What?" said Akbar deeply startled.

"One of us must survive. We set out on a quest to break the curse upon us and I have learned that relations and customs are very important in life. Always I have been a trouble to people but I will not give up my life in vain. I will Fight and end this monster for ever. At least I will not be any more trouble to my people, my family. We will not become tools of The Which. Now GO! Run and find the Cave."

Akbar looked at his brother's eyes. There was a great force in them; a surety which put strength in him and he got up and began to run. Deep in his heart he was thinking how noble his brother had become. He was giving up his life so that I, his brother could survive. So that mom and dad would not loose their heart completely; So that an heir of his father's kingdom may survive.

"And He will... The rightful heir will survive and I, his brother will make sure of it," Akbar

shouted in air. He was running hard towards the heart of the desert where the cave was indicated by the wise advisor. He began to wonder what would be the fate of his brother. It might be the end but Akbar had strength in him, an aim with him: to save his brother with whom he had spent all his childhood, the one who had been his constant companion in every trouble.

Suddenly again the earth began to rumble and from the sky he heard a terrible laughter and their stood; The Which! gliding in the air. She laughed and said, "Foolish boy leave this quest of yours. THIS IS THE END. The Red Desert Kingdom will be mine. You will die by your own mistake.

"Never which... I will fight you till my last strength and no matter what! I will end your power."

"So much mocking and in my own lair," said the which, "then get ready to face my wrath."

With this the Which shot two electric bolt at the prince but he resisted them by blocking them on his sword. Then he began to run realizing that the which can not be defeated in the sky. The Which laughed and soared behind him muttering many incantations and then suddenly the earth began to burst and the sky burn. The whole desert was shaken by a chaos and an army of dead began to rise from the earth. It was a certain end but now Akbar was so near his destiny. His way was cut but he had realized something. There was a reason the which was not approaching him; though she could finish him off in seconds and then he realized something and said, "Forgive us and let us break this curse."

"Give me the ring and I will free you."

But before he could hand it over, something clicked in his mind and he said, "Why did you not take it before?"

"Just give it to me," said the which with pleading eyes.

Akbar looked at her and smiled. He said, "Never. I know why you are after it and I will never let anything like this happen. I promise you, you will not survive no matter what happens."

"Get him! DO NOT LEAVE HIM ALIVE. Rip him apart and feast on his flesh."

Akbar raised his sword and slashed it killing the first monster in his way. Then he began to battle while blocking the Which's shock bolts. He was however tired though skilled in this art. Soon he fell hit by a shock bolt.

The which screamed in happiness and as the monster approached to finish Akbar, there was a sound of "THUNK" and the monster dropped dead with a blade stuck deep in his heart.

"Not so easily. You will not slay us WHICH nor your MINIONS," said Haris

The which stared at him and said in horror, "how did you survived Him."

"Lady! He was old and I was young. Who ought to have survived in a battle?" shouted Haris.

"Ah mockery and humor. Let's see how much fun will be left in you after I have dealt with you," said the Which with eyes blazing with fire and Hair flying like flames in the air.

She muttered an incantation and the sky started to get red and suddenly a red cloud of flames filled it. On the other side the group of dead approaching him bowed before these flames and set their weapons on ground. The flames formed the shape of a skull and then from its mouth protruded a tongue of flames which began to lick the desert and where ever it licked, walls of fire stood up.

"O my brother get up and run. Look the cave is here. Let us form an example in history of our family," said Haris.

But Akbar was lifeless. "I will not fail my brother, my friend," said Haris and taking the ring, he began to run as fast as possible. He ran past the army of bowing dead and was near the cave when the flaming tongue reached him. However before it could lick Haris away, he bravely took a strong leap and jumped into the cave, throwing the ring in its darkness and then a scream of mirth shook the whole desert from the gap, Haris saw the Which burning in fire and the flamed skull swallowing her away, The army of dead began to wither and turned to dust. The sands began to shine gold and silver. A curse was broken and could never be used again now: That was the law of magic of all kinds. The brother's had done it. From deep inside they had awaken bravery and nobility in them and left the path of bad. They had done a brave deed. They were cured now and fitting men to be rulers of their race.

As the light of new day crept on the Red De-

sert, the people woke up and found a dreaded place filled with the fruits and trees. The cursed land had turned into a forest. A heaven for the people. Everyone gathered near it but they feared nearing it feeling as if something evil was about to happen. Even the grievous king came and then suddenly emerged from the dark canopy, two young men, with faces noble and kind and brave. The king jumped with joy and people cheered as the princes told about their expedition.

Soon after sometime, Haris was given the hold of kingdom while his brother became the king of the "Wonder Forest" which had sprang out in place of the "Blood Desert" The forest now held a huge city where people lived in prosperity. It is said, that the two kings ruled peacefully and at a stage there was not a single person who could remember them as bad and mischievous boys who stole things from others. After these boys, the throne was taken up by their sons and thus ages passed and the kingdom's disappeared one by one, their culture dissolving in the ocean of time and what survived was "The Tale of Haris and Akbar and the Curse of the Blood Ring."

THE END

The following story is an adaptation of the play “Snobes and Slaves” of Miss Rahat-ulain and Miss Nazia Perveen.

Estel by S.O.T. ZAIDI

The night was full of chatter and “OOHHS” and “AAAHS” of people as beautiful models walked up the ramp representing the new fashion line. As soon as the show was over, Cathy quickly changes into her casual dress and looked at Mary and said, “Nice Show today, right.”

“Yah Cathy, so what’s the plan now? Well there is an auction being held at the ‘White Island.’ I was going there to buy a house.”

“Oh yah. I’ll come too. Let’s see who wins the house. Oh look at that girl! Is she a model?”

“Yah a new one and My God! What poor taste she has in clothing. Not a bit of glamour.”

“Yep wouldn’t last a few more months in the industry,” said Mary loudly.

Both models left laughing at the new girl.

“You cheat! I trusted you and this is its payback. Give me back my money or I’ll...I’ll SUE YOU,” said Alfred.

“And how will you afford the money for a first class lawyer who would have guts to fight against me in the court,” said Henry mockingly, “In fact if I want, I can buy the whole court. What power you have against me.”

“Indeed, what power I have. Have fear Henry. You will see it once the Wrath of GOD.”

Many people in the “City of Falsehood” had got a letter with a postcard invitation to the “White Island’s Auction”. Many of them had decided to buy the house on the White Island so that they could have a peaceful time alone in the Island. As Ahmed set on the cruise ship, the guard stopped and said, “Money for the ticket first.”

“What is the cost?”

“\$100”

“BUT you just took \$50 from the other one,” protested Ahmed.

“Which other? Buy it or leave!” said the guard showing his white teeth.

“Ok! Ok, can’t turn back now,” said Ahmed getting in the Cruise after giving the money feeling robbed.

As he got in the cruise, he saw there were many people all rich; and tacky teenagers listening to loud songs. He felt very ashamed looking at his old clothes and wished he had more money once again as he had all his life from the moment he had opened his eyes in the world. All he had dreamed was of being rich.

As all reached the island, squabbling and commenting on each other and teenagers still dancing and wreaking havoc, they got off the cruise on the white shores of the island. There not far from them was a house all white giving a very unwelcoming feeling to them. All of the new comers felt an unusual chill creeping up their spines.

The weather was dark and gloomy. The white island was covered all with dark clouds making the day look like night. There was an unusual mist there and a very chilly wind that froze the teens and models on their places for a few moments.

As the party approached near the house, the models pulled up their faces in disgust as they saw a grim looking person all in tattered clothes and face covered with dirty stubble. Their was also a sign board with a small notice. The party read the notice.

It said: O you who step in this house Beware! This is a house whose foundations were based on purity. It was made for virtues and virtues live in it. Enter it but be sure of your resolve and your inner self. Remember this that evil will be turn out of this house and those who will turn back from buying it will be cursed.

Many people from the party began muttering. It was certainly a gloriously beautiful house, an antique though it was.

“Oh my God it’s cursed. Let’s get in!” said Cathy in a panic.

“Good morning ladies and gentlemen. I am going to be your manager at this auction.” said a very shiny faced man with sleek black hair. He had a white smile over his face making him look extremely imbecilic.

“Who can buy a cursed house? Mr. ...”

“Mason. It’s Mr. Mason. And do you really believe in stories written by people of old. For a long time people have lived in this house. It’s just a tale to drive people away. And I think it’s a good time to start the

auction or it may rain.”

Thus with a little more speculation, the auction began. A tough competition started. “\$10,000” said Cathy.

“\$90,000” said Mary wiping most of the players of the competition. The teenagers were simply watching and hooting at the auction. As a fact they had never got a brochure but read one lying at their neighbours house and made the plan of visiting this place to have some fun.”

However Cathy never gave up so easily. Immediately she shouted, “100,000”

Thus the completion went on for a long time. At last Cathy won the completion by putting up “\$200,000.”

Many of her friends, though morose, congratulated her while some turned up their faces. Ahmed felt resentful and cursed his life even more. The teenagers hooted and put up the music. They called for a party.

Cathy was in a smug mood and said, “All right every one step inside. We are going to have a party. I have got everything on the cruise.”

She opened the door and stepped inside the darkness. She felt her eyes blackening out and she fell.

As Cathy opened her eyes, she saw it was a certain night now and people were bent over her. She said, “What happened?”

Others asked her the same question telling her that they heard her screams and some ran after her and most of them were thrown out.

Cathy got up in rage, “I want my money back. I DON’T want to LIVE IN A HAUNTED HOUSE.”

“But that is not possible miss! You have paid and bought it. You could have looked first at it,” said the manager still showing his white teeth.

“You give me my money or I am going to put a hole through those white teeth. GET IT BASTARD!”

“Oh this is going to be tough fight,” said a teenager and started shouting, “Fight! Fight! Fight!”

“Now miss! ...”

He was cut off by an old weak voice. It belonged to the old beggar like man who had been watching over the auction and the events which followed. "Give her the money. It is no use for her to buy it. She cannot step in it. I see none of you have the power to step in it."

"But sir!" protested the manager.

"Give her the money! And this order should be followed."

"Who are you Mr?" said Henry.

"I was the master of this house... This house of Purity. I was living a happy life until I fell down from the position the Most-Great had given me. I fell to lies, desire and cowardice. I became faithless. I had some friends to whom this house actually belongs. On the name of them was this house made long ago by my ancestors and they lived with them a good and pure life. Now I have disgraced myself and have been turned out by the real masters of this house."

"We would like to see your friends, Sir?" said a teenager in a light mood.

"They come when they have to. No one can summon them?"

Suddenly the door creaked open and the sky thundered hard. A storm was coming and the unusual mist thickened and darkness in the sky deepened. The models huddled together.

From the door appeared some light and they saw seven people old and draped all in white robes stepping out. They held a staff each and two of them had long beards reaching their waist. They walked with an unimaginable grace. One of them bent with age. Spooky they felt, completely mysterious. A strange light came out of them. The whole party felt itself covering before them.

Suddenly the manager screamed and as they turned towards him out of the trance they saw a serpent of flame leaping towards them from out of the drawer where the money was present. "The money it's all gone, cried the manger."

"Suddenly out of the drawer stepped numerous insects and started biting and stinging the manager who screamed in pure agony.

The others shivered at the sight and even the teenagers lost control of themselves and cried like wailing children.

Soon they found themselves being circumambulated by the strange seven people

who then at a distance stopped in a line forming a wall between them and the house.

"Defeated you are and cursed for your whole life until you change your heart. Liars, cheats and slaves to worldly desires you are. O people do you know me? DO YOU?" said one of the seven people. His staff was of pure white colour with a hint of gold at the top globe.

The people stood agape at his question and he retreated. The other old man came forward. He was the most fragile of the seven, the weakest and leaned on his staff while standing, but now he walked with a sudden strength and power as he came to encounter these people. "I am the weakest of bonds, most fragile and most precious. More valuable than all the wealth of world. The connection between a relation. Can you tell who I am?"

No one answered. They were all in a trance. It is sad certainly, "For I AM TRUST and the one before me was Truth. Fires of mistrust burn in you. You all are lost. What is lost cannot be repaired." He looked at Henry, who looked away trying to avoid his gaze, and then to others.

Now he retreated and a strong looking young man came forward. He had a black beard which gave his face a noble look. He was kingly in features. "O people. Look at your hearts. Filled with cowardice they are. The days of bravery are gone. Look at you. Can you raise your voice in front of injustice? CAN YOU. INDEED LOST YOU ALL ARE. Where is the strength of heart which was once the main feature of men? The power and will... ALL gone. Lost in the rubble of broken virtues. You have betrayed us all."

"Indeed, for money you live, for money you die and what is given to you does not make you happy. You have forgotten the virtue called contempt. You are filled with desires which will never leave you in peace. Cursed you will remain. Trapped you will be in a trouble set upon you yourselves," said a beautiful lady out of the seven virtues. She looked at them and her eyes stopped specially on Ahmed who lowered his gaze feeling hot in the chill. Both the words of cowardice and contempt had shaken him from inside.

"A flower in the hair flying in the wind and face full of natural charm is enough for a person. An apparel covering a person completely is enough for a man to walk boldly on Earth without shame. What is the use of fashion when you can get much more by simplicity? You have wasted yourself and lost the innocence that was gifted to you all. Ashamed be you all!" said another lady, graceful simple and beautiful; She was simplicity.

Another person approached. He had long white hair and an astute face. Generations of

knowledge seemed to be reflected in the creases on his face. "Are you just enough? Look in your heart. Are you just with yourself?" and he looked at the models this time, "Are you just with your life. Have you filled all the injunctions laid upon you? Can you claim to be sincere with those close to you? With those who are around you." This time as he retreated, the man left came out of a halo of light and could be seen clearly. Upon looking at him, all the humans fell to their knees. They felt broken under this light. The man with the pure snow white beard and silvery white robes looked at them and said, "Can you claim to be pure. To be God-Fearing. If you had been you would have lost nothing. Peace would have lived with you in your mind and life. You would have been pure. What is left now with you? You lie and you are a mound of broken trust. You are coward against evils. Slaves of your evil desire. How can you be saved?"

"We waited for the one who would rekindle the lights of this house with his heart but you have condemned yourself and can never enter this House of Purity. Evil will not touch it. It is defeated and will always be defeated," said Truth.

"Oh indeed, have you lost your wits. It may seem to you that we are defeated but do you really think we will give you an easy victory. Oh slaves of this house: You will fall," said Cathy in a voice that was harsh and deep. It was barely discernable.

"Lie, Mistrust, Greed, Desire, cowardice and all other evils will win. They still have one last stroke to perform," said Henry (in same tone as Cathy's).

In a sudden instant Cathy and Henry fell on the floor as rotten skeletons from which a black steam like ball escaped them. Five others swept pass the humans and attacked the house. However, an invisible force stopped them and burned them with pure light which threw them back. In human form they came with horror on their horrible faces and wailed loudly.

“O Master Devil help us!”

Thunder clasped and a black cloud came to halt upon the islands floor and a cold voice said, “Leave this house or you will not survive anywhere in the world.”

“Hold back Satan. You will not cross the limit. Already you have extinguished our powers in the hearts of the people,” said Piety.

“Indeed. Rise now my evils and attack. A whole army lies at your command. Summon it with your will and raze this house down to give us a clear victory,” said the Devil.

The Evils rose renewed in strength. On the other hand the virtues also gave a sign and an army of light appeared on the island. The land between them widened.

“Let’s give them a bit of pure magic,” said Trust. He raised his staff slowly muttering something and struck it hard on the ground. Immediately, a wall came up swallowing up the assaulting darkness. Suddenly the black cloud turned green and the light changed to darkness. The rest of the army crossed this path while it came upon the virtues as a new predicament.

“Volley,” cried Truth and a swarm of arrows covered in light shot out from the house and struck the Dark Army and killed many of the soldiers. Still the army kept on moving forward.

“March forward and stop the assault,” said Simplicity. The doors of the house of Purity opened and out came an army clad in white armour. It ran forward and thus a battle began with monsters of dark. Many lights were extinguished and still the darkness approached.

Trust received a terrible blow and fell thus his magic ended and fell the protective wall on the house. Similarly lie took Truth and the lantern burning in hands of Truth extinguished. It seemed the end of every thing. It was the end of virtues; a complete destruction of the world.

The models standing on the island went catatonic and attacked

simplicity.

Contempt cut out the heart of greed and burned it away excluding it out of fight, however soon a soldier cut of her head and she fell too, her staff bursting with flame which burned the darkness away.

The cloud of devil began to move. Darkness covered the white house.

“Give up! It’s your end,” said Devil.

“Never. Satan. We will not die in cowardice,” said courage and piety felt courage steaming in him. He raised his voice and said, “The pillars of virtues have not fallen. You cannot take this house until then.” The earth shook and cracks began to appear on walls of the house. Piety took up his staff and threw it in the sky. A gap in the sky opened covering it with light. It reduced the strength of evil but now he was one on eight. The cloud of darkness was about to burst in a storm which would wipe out every thing good in the world. This was the last attempt of evil to take over this house of purity and there was nothing but destruction and blackness. Despair was to rule the heart of world in some seconds. Piety was about to fall with all his glory, power and grace, even he could not fight such hatred. Piety was about to fall.

Suddenly as Piety dropped on his knees, a voice calm as the cool wind said, “I will buy this house for I am free from the evils and pure without doubt.”

The house flashed in a powerful white light the darkness vanished instantly.

A cold cry of agony came from the black cloud and it exploded in fire and light with a sound mimicking a huge drum beat, sending green waves in water far away from the island.

The last stroke of evil had failed. Devil was defeated. Again fallen from height just by a mere human. Human the greatest creation of Allah Almighty. Human granted with life: a test which he has to cross, a path waylaid with many barriers and meadows, had caused the devil to fall once more.

Piety looked up. Hope had rekindled in him. He looked up smiling at the new face among the others. “Indeed you are and this house confirms the truth.”

“Suddenly out of the light stepped Trust, Simplicity, Courage, Truth, Contempt and Justice all renewed in life and strength.

“Hail Estel! The end of Despair,” they cried.

“Look O people, where you live, there exist people (not very different from you!) Who are free from evil and yet you fell from the status of man. You became slaves of Evil Deeds. What do you have to say for yourself,” said Courage in loud and deep voice.

“I see it in her innocent eyes, how she lived in squalor after loosing her mother and father but never fell for evil. This is what a real human is like,” said Con-

tempt.

“Child You came as hope and lit this house. Your name is Estel which means “Hope”. Come Estel, here you will dwell in freedom. Pure and free you are and together we will revive the candle among the people of this world. With this piety held Estel by the finger. Mary coming to her senses recognized her and cried, “Hey aren’t you the new model we saw yesterday?”

Estel turned to her and said, “I am not a model. Though I did volunteer for a show yesterday.”

With this Estel walked in the House. The doors closed behind them and the island began to rumble and sink. People causing great commotion hurried back upon the cruise. Here they saw the house disappear under water and as its tip vanished under the surface, a blue flash swallowed it up.

After this not much is left to tell. Ahmed soon became a scholar and a great leader. The models left the Fashion world and adopted a life of peace and piety. They became extremely charitable and left the world of desires far behind in their life.

Mary also departed for new life. She became a pious lady with a strong will. All her life then she fought against the injustice and lie.

The works of this small band became a big forest fire which set out in the world to end evil where it existed still in the hearts though now hope had been rekindled.

As for Estel, it is said that she lived happily in the house under the sea and each year she came above with the island to take those who were the most hopeful with her as a reward to bear the pressures. She is remembered in songs and tales with different names;

Long may you live O Estel!

Among the hearts of men

May your light never fade?

O Estel! May you be the light of mind and heart.

The Grief of Trees

By S.O.T. Zaidi

Tall and Straight we Stood;
Our heads touched the sky
Where is that Majesty that once we had?
What is left in us?
Our glory lost!

Beautiful were our flowers;
Hanging like chandeliers from the sky,
Where is that beauty now?
What is left in us?
Except for Wood and Soil

Long was our Gaze
Lived on us birds of great beauty
Where are the mighty creatures now?
Broken Are their Nests;
Lost their homes are indeed.

Gold were leaves in autumn
Trees of an Elfish Garden were we;
When will we have those leaves again?
For bald are we now!
This is the Curse from Man!

Strong was the Wood of our bodies
Lost is its strength now;
Destroyed to Timbers are We;
Wondrous once we had been.

O Man what harm had we done to you!
Why is it that we are small now?
Without beauty, without majesty,
Our shade lost for those who
Needed rest and home.

Drops of Dew fell on earth,
As cool as cucumber,
From the numerous leaves
In the land of Winter Queen
When the light of Dusk fell on trees.

O man Kind tell us why you destroyed us
In a kingly Garden we Once Stood
Despair now all is destroyed
O man Kind What have you done
How will you now pay?

A lament on the cutting of trees in FFC. Beautiful they were and will be once again, however who knows how many ages will pass for them to grow again in the same beauty. Long Live the Trees!

History PointMahmud Of GhazniBackground

Ghaznavids were the *Turkish-speaking Muslims* from a tribe in *Central Asia*. They were the slaves and soldiers of the *Caliph of Baghdad*. *Baghdad* was the most important educational centre at that time. When *Baghdad* started to decline, the *Ghaznavids* seized power and dreamt of making their own empire. First they tried to capture *Persia* but they did not succeed and thus they captured *Afghanistan*. "*Ghazni*" near *Kandahar* was set up as their capital. Soon the leader, *Sabuktigin*, defeated *Raja Japal*, who ruled on *Punjab* and part of *Afghanistan*. He captured his land and *River Indus* was made the *Eastern- Frontier* of the empire.

Mahmud of Ghazni

AFTER the death of *Sabuktigin* in *A.D.997*, *Ismail* became the ruler. *Mahmud* was the elder brother but at the time of choosing of king he was at war. He asked *Ismail* to give him the throne but *Ismail* refused to do so and *Mahmud* had to fight against him to take over the power. He came to the throne in *A.D.997*.

Mahmud was a brave soldier. He was not interested in collecting money. He wanted to protect his empire because it was very profitable. The empire was profitable because the main trade routes (from *China* to *West*) were running through the empire. He needed a lot of money to protect his empire as it was required for *training and payment* of the army. He made his army strong.

He collected "tax" from rich merchants passing through main trade routes running from his empire.

This money was used to make the empire as beautiful as *Baghdad*. *Mahmud* made many social reforms. He invited scholars, craftsmen, scientists, poets, writers and artists to settle in his empire. *Education* was improved. *Craftsmen* from all over *Asia* were paid to build huge mosques, palaces, universities and libraries.

Mahmud raided many lands but he was very kind to people and loved knowledge and beauty. He struggled for "*Islamic faith*" and tried to spread it as far as he could. He famously came to be known as the "*Idol Smasher*" the numerous idols he destroyed. Though people of the captured lands were allowed to worship their religion if they paid *Jizya* (a Muslim tax).

Mahmud at war

He fought for two reasons:

- To expand his territory
- To spread Islam

Mahmud defeated his enemies with special war planning. These were to attack in *dry season* and use "*Swift cavalry*".

The *Swift cavalry* was the main weapon of *Mahmud*. This *Swift cavalry* was made up of light-armed horsemen, which were fast at their pace. These men were from *Central-Asia*. *Mahmud* made lightning raids, with them, to capture *Kanauj*, *Mathura* and other cities of the subcontinent.

Mahmud always made attacks on *Hindus* in *dry season*, because in *monsoon* the flowing rivers blocked his way back to *Ghazni* and the other armies would have had a good chance to attack his army which was in no position to fight because it was heavily laden with *war spoils*, the loots taken from war, Thus *Mahmud* safely arrived in *Ghazni* after war with the *war spoils* and captured slaves.

Mahmud made 17 attacks on *Northern-India* and his most famous attack was "*Somnath Attack*". *Mahmud* went across the desert to *Somnath* (which was the centre of *Hinduism* with most of the temples) where a lot of *Indian* soldiers were gathering. *Mahmud* made a severe attack and destroyed many temples up to *Siva*. *Mahmud* himself smashed the most important idol with his hands and since then he was known as the "*idol smasher*". His army returned

to *Ghazni* with 6.5 tones of *gold* and massive temple gates.

Against the *Central-Asian enemies*, he used captured elephants which defeated them (just because they had not seen such huge creatures). *Mahmud* appointed *Indian* troops, *IN-CASE*, his *Turkish* commanders became too powerful that they over take him. *Mahmud* made 17 attacks on *northern India*. After the last (17th) attack *Mahmud* fell ill when he returned to *Ghazni* and after 4 years he died due to the illness in *A.D.1030*.

Mahmud's Behavior towards Non-Muslim after a capture

Non-Muslim was not forced to accept *Islam*.

He allowed them to worship their own religion if they paid the Islamic tax "*Jizya*" (other than doing military services).

He allowed many *Hindu officials* to stay in their offices and continue their work and this made administration easier.

He employed many *Hindu officials* in his army.

Mahmud's contribution to India;

Mahmud filled *India* with beautiful buildings, palaces, schools, mosques and universities.

Introduced porcelain paper and tea (also gun powder) from *China*.

Spread Islam where ever he was able to.

He invited musicians, artists, scholars, poets and scientists to encourage them.

He introduced good administrative system followed by emperors for many years.

BOOK'S STORE: THIS MONTH MARKS THE END OF ANOTHER GREAT TALE

The Inheritance Cycle:

Eragon

Eldest

Brisngr

Inheritance

AND THUS THE TALE IS SEALED TO AN END.

The story begins with the first book, Eragon, in which the main protagonist discovers legends of old coming true when a strange stone, which he found in the accursed mountain range "The Spine", hatches into a dragon and bonds with him making him a Dragon Rider. As a threat to King Galbatorix, he has to escape with a story teller Brom who is skilled in the magical language. His uncle is killed by the Razaac, a creature which preys on human. Grievous he pursues them and in that journey he finds himself fighting ferocious Urgals and performing magic with the help of his dragon. Brom get's killed and he with a new companion Murtagh rescues an Elf from the dungeons of a Shade. They travel a vast stretch of desert and arrive in the Beor Mountain Ranges where the King Galbatorix's enemies were hiding in the dwarf kingdom. Here he is tested and praised. In the end he achieves victory by killing The Shade, Durza and earning the title "Shade Slayer" thus saving the Varden from being razed.

In the second book, Eldest, Eragon travel's with Arya, the elf he rescued to her land in the forests of DuVeldenvarden. There he discovers one old crippled rider still alive and preserved with his Golden Dragon. Eragon and Saphira are given training of riders and they soon return to Varden to find war being waged. After a hard fight, The Varden suffers terrible loss and Eragon looses the Rider sword he possessed to Murtagh who also bonds with a dragon and is controlled now by magic of Galbatorix.

The third book begins, with Eragon infiltrating Razaac's lair. He finishes them off thus fulfilling his revenge and frees his cousin's Fiancée. He and Saphira attend to many important matters and they just cannot figure out how to finish of Galbatorix. Eragon and Saphira thus travel back to their teacher Oromis who reveals them the secret of Eldunaris which are Dragon's of old preserved in stone form. This was why Galbatorix had so much power; he possessed nearly all the Eldunaris of old and so could use their power. Meanwhile Eragon and Saphira discover the last part of the star ore which was the material used in making of a Rider's sword and thus had his own sword forged. Eragon now battles another war, a great one. A war set to finish the Varden completely and thus Eragon and Varden win this war.

Now will Eragon be able to defeat Galbatorix? Will he find Eldunaris for his own collection and will the rider's be revived? Where will Eragon and Saphira's fate take them? All these questions are answered in the last and most epic part of the Series, THE INHERITANCE.

The series is a must read for fiction lovers. It features many themes like love, anger, friendship, war and its affects, grudge, desire, craziness, fear, tension and much more. The book borrows many elements and some plot features from Star Wars and The Lord of The Rings. They have been one of the best selling series of the decade. It certainly fulfills what a reader asks for. The final book released on 8th November 2011.

It was ranked as #1 on U.S. Book List on its release.

INHERITANCE
Christopher Paolini



ERAGON
Christopher Paolini

Saphira



ELDEST
Christopher Paolini

Thorn



BRISINGR
Christopher Paolini

Glaedr



INHERITANCE
Christopher Paolini

Firnen

STUDENT'S COUNCIL

(Available only in Clandestine Version)

Before reading this section pay heed to this advise.

What appears on the pages are merrily views and some pieces of news. They are not the production of editor but a combined discussion from different students.

The Editor will not be responsible if anything concerning this section is grieving to some one though it has been tried best to keep it unbiased, true to facts and not harsh.

The name of Students giving views or news will not be named as the policy nor revealed in any matter. Any one is liable to send his views.

The Section is open for any kind of student all over FFC.

It is a forum for student's who have long been crushed to share their views.

Thus Reader's have been warned!

S.O.T. ZAIDI

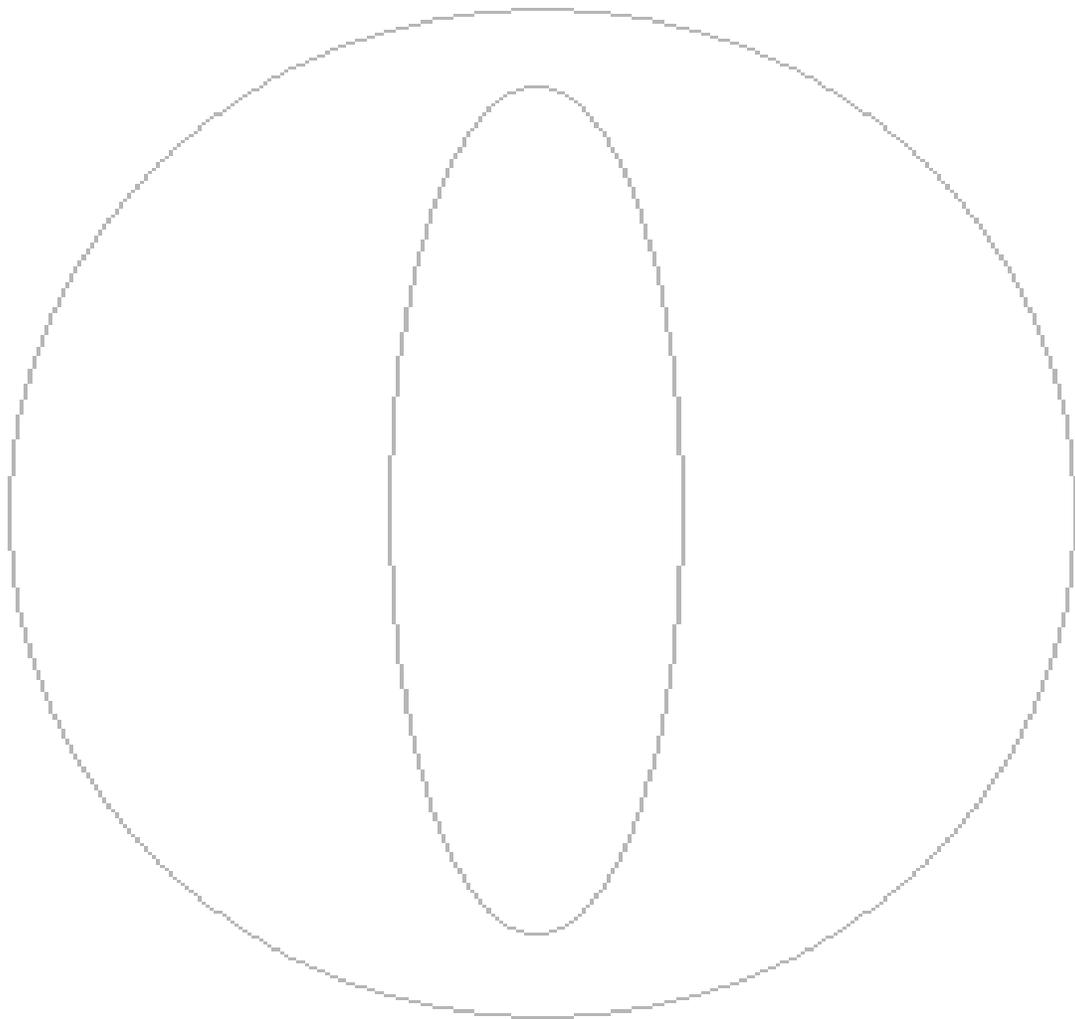
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