

Closer
than
my
jugular
vein



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my jugular vein

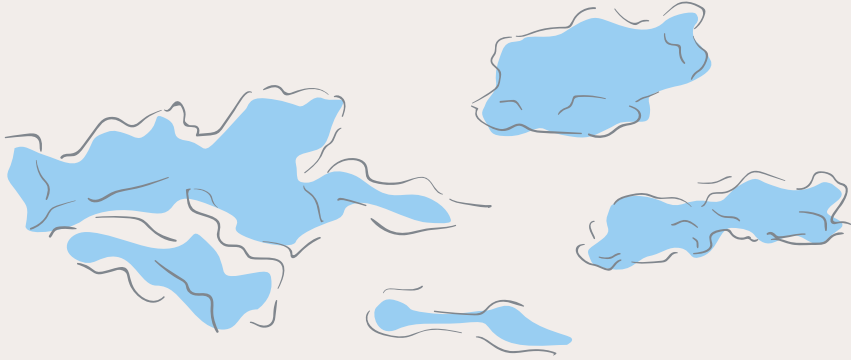


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...وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ

'...We are closer to him than
his jugular vein.'

50:16

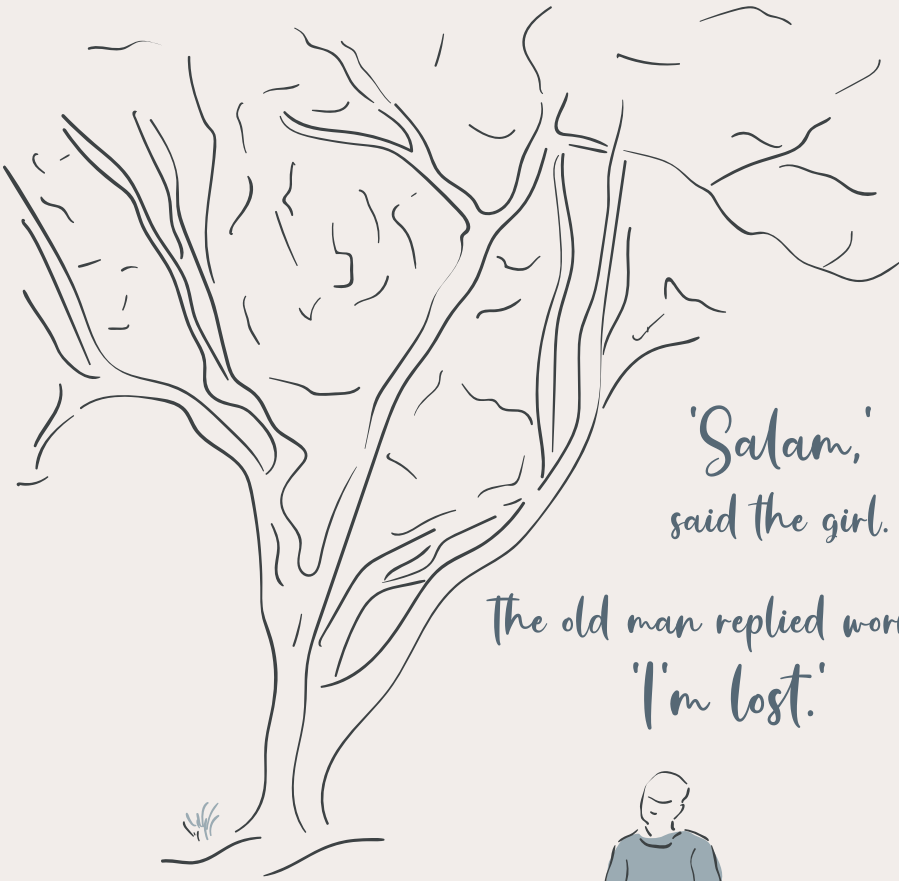
Welcome to life!

We all have ups and downs, drama and silence. Each experience is unique to us alone, so are its successes and failures, pain and relief.

We always have heard one Auntie or another, Moulana or Sheikh say, 'Read the Quran! It has all the answers.' And you know what? It does! Some of us just haven't comprehended how useful this glorious book is in all aspects of our life, beyond the mousala and corridors of the mosque; it teaches us every action and reaction.

It gives us insight and upliftment. It is something to be read, treasured and most importantly, it is a guidebook to live by. Let's delve into the world of four strangers who become companions, each representing different stages of our life. The young girl is curious, the bird is in its prime and carefree, the rabbit is full of responsibility mixed with anxiety while the old man is frail and weak.





'Salam,'
said the girl.

The old man replied worried,
'I'm lost.'



وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ

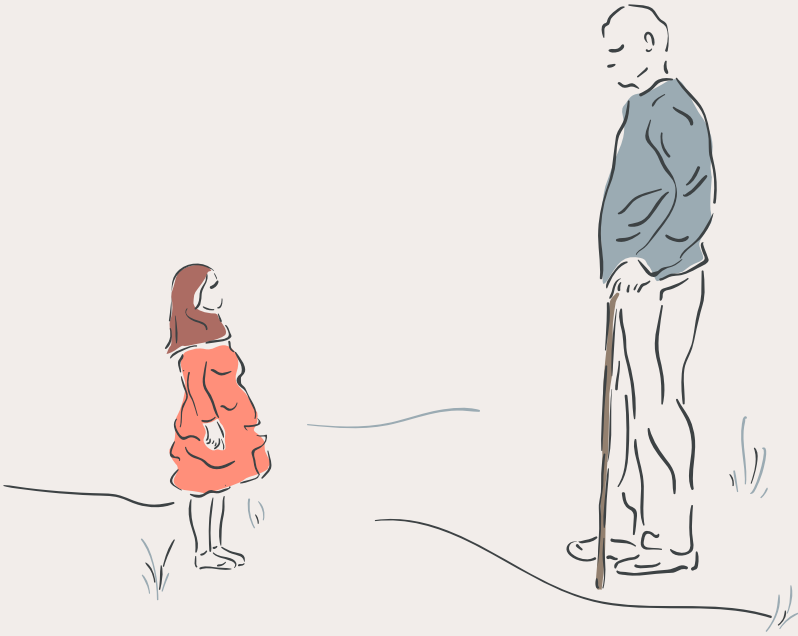
'And He found you lost and guided you.' 93:7

The girl looked up. The old man looked
down and said,

'I feel so old and frail.'

The girl timidly replied,

'I feel so young and weak.'



وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ...

'And He has made me blessed wherever I am...' 19:31

'What's the key to happiness?'

the girl asked the old man.



مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْتَرَىٰ وَهُوَ
مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً...

'Whoever does righteousness, male or female, while believing, we will grant them a happy life...' 16:97

'You are so lucky to have
wings and be free,'
said the old man to the bird
which was flying high in the sky.



وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

'...The life of this world is nothing but the
enjoyment of the delusion of deception.' 3:185

'What are you doing?'
the girl asked the bird as he was
somersaulting in the air.

'I'm showing you all my
tricks! Aren't I brilliant?
When I'm rich and famous
you will all say that you
once knew me.'



يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ...



'Oh you who believe, let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah...' 63:9

The bird whispered to his companions,
'You know when I fly so high
I see so many things.'

The girl was puzzled and asked,
'What do you mean?'



...وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُّحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ
أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ...

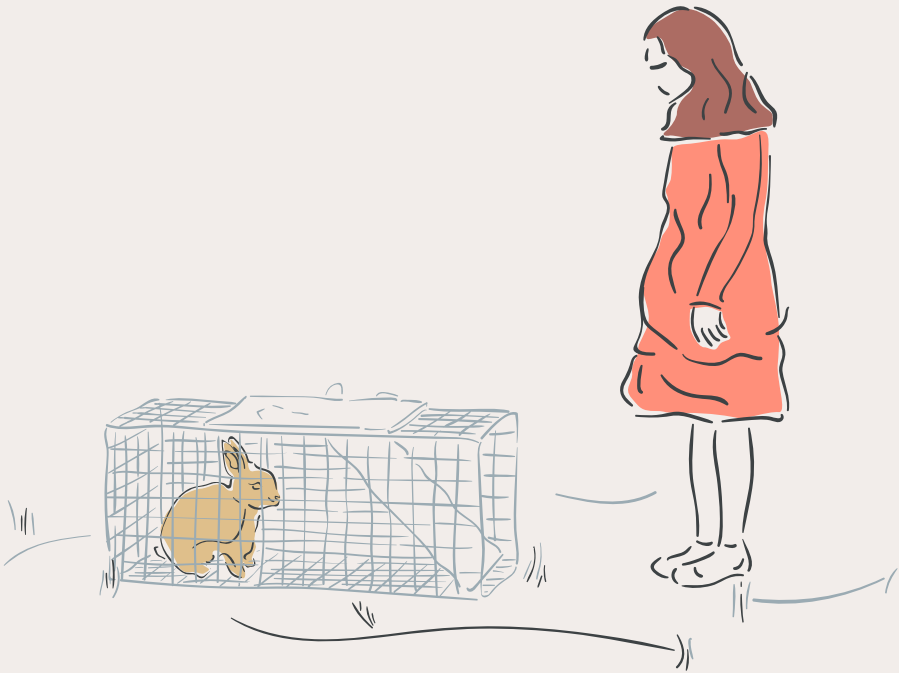


The bird smiled and replied,
'Lots of people's secrets,
some good some bad.'
'Tell me everything...'
said the old man.

'...And do not spy and backbite on each other.
Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead
brother? You would hate it...' 49:12

'Oh look there,'
squealed the bird.

'Are you okay?'
said the girl whilst reaching out to the rabbit.



وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ...

'And seek help in patience & prayer...' 2:45

The rabbit whimpered and replied,
'I was trapped for so long, I
became lonely.'



...وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ...

'...He is with you wherever you are...' 57:4

'What is everyone's motto in life?'
asked the girl.

The bird chimed in first saying,
'Forget what hurt you.'

'But never forget what it taught you,'
added the old man.

The rabbit was too busy
worrying to answer.



...وَمَنْ يُؤَوِّ شَخَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ



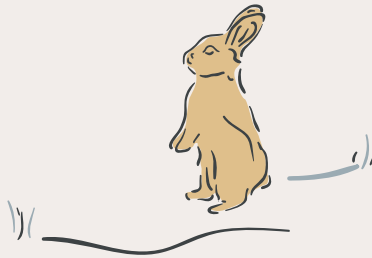
'...And whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, those are the successful ones.' 64:16

'I really wish I could walk fast like
you,
said the old man to the rabbit.



...عَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا
شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

The rabbit looked up at the tall figure in front of
her and replied,
'I wish I was as tall and big as you.'



'...But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you;
and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you.
And Allah knows, while you know not.' 2:216

'Why are you
always so anxious?'
the girl asked the rabbit.

The coy rabbit
uttered under her
breath,
'Sometimes, I
find it hard
to trust.'



...وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ...

'...And whoever puts his trust in Allah,
He will be sufficient for him...' 65:3

The girl was skipping
happily and announced,
'Let's go to the
river, it's so
beautiful there.'



وَاللَّهُ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
مَوْتِهَا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

'And Allah has sent down rain from the sky and
given life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness.
Indeed, that is a sign for people who listen.' 16:65

The bird looked down at the waves in the river
and exclaimed,

'I want to try to swim!'

The rabbit squealed,
'You are from the sky, you can't
mix with the creatures of the sea.'

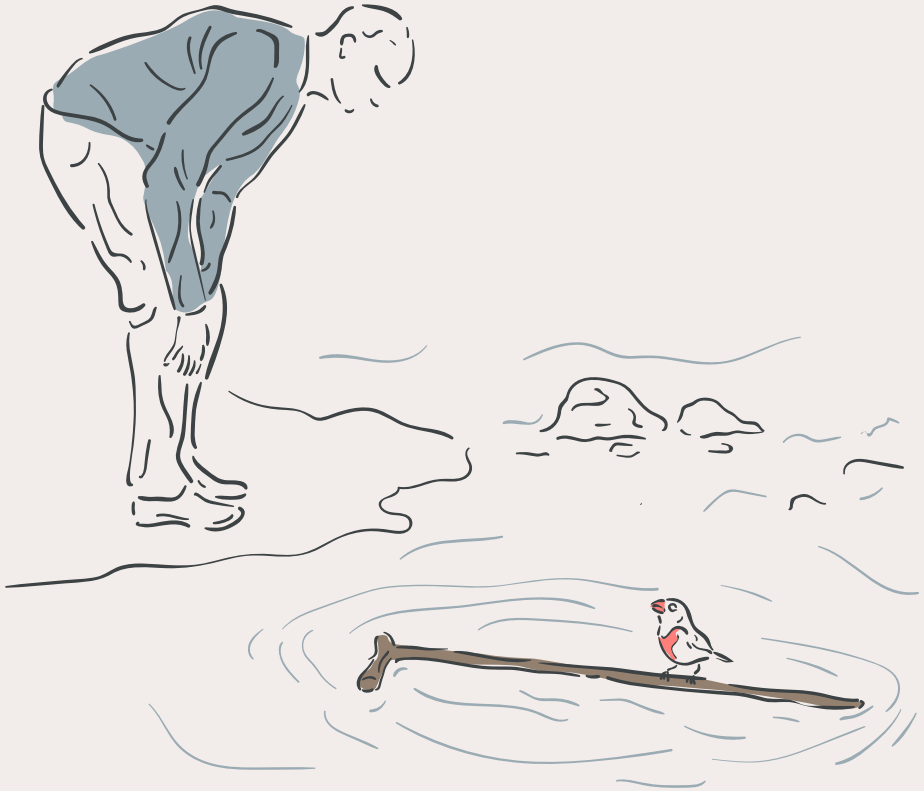


إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ...

'The believers are but brothers, so make
peace within your brethren...' 49:10

The old man stretched out his hand and proclaimed,
'Here, use this.'

The bird smiled in thankfulness.



...وَأَشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ...

'...And be grateful for the favour of Allah...' 16:114

'Argh!'





فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

'Verily, WITH every difficulty there is ease.' 94:5

'Who tripped
me over?'
asked the old man
angrily.



وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ
النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

'...those that control their anger, and pardon others.
And Allah loves the good-doers.' 3:134

The girl looked down and said,
'I'm sorry I think it was me.'



وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَن تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ

'Yet I am most forgiving towards those who repent, believe,
do righteous deeds, and stay on the right path.' 20:82

'It's raining,
quickly take shade
under the tree,'
squealed the bird as his
companions trailed behind him.



وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً مُبَارَكًا فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ جِبَاتٍ وَحَبَّ الْحَصِيدِ



*'And We sent down blessed rain from the sky and
grew gardens and grain to harvest.' 50:9*

The girl looked up and exclaimed,
'Don't plans change so quickly?'



...وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

'...Allah is the best of planners.' 8.30

The bird pensively stated,
'When something doesn't go the
way I want, it makes me think
that someone is watching over me.'



بَلِ اللّٰهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّاصِرِينَ

'But Allah is your protector and he is the best of helpers.' 3:150

The topic of conversation worried the
rabbit, she went on to reply,
'When my plans change I
feel so anxious sometimes.'

'Why?'
replied the girl.

The rabbit whimpered and said,
'I have so much to do, so
many people to look after,
and so little time.'

...فَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ هَذَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ



*'...whoever follows My guidance, they will have
nothing to fear, nor will they grieve.' 2:38*



The bird circled round his friends, waiting
to say something. Finally he plucked up
the courage and said,

'Sometimes I feel sad when
the other birds pick on me...'

'...and sometimes I want what
the other birds have.'

وَلَا يَحْزُنُكَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ



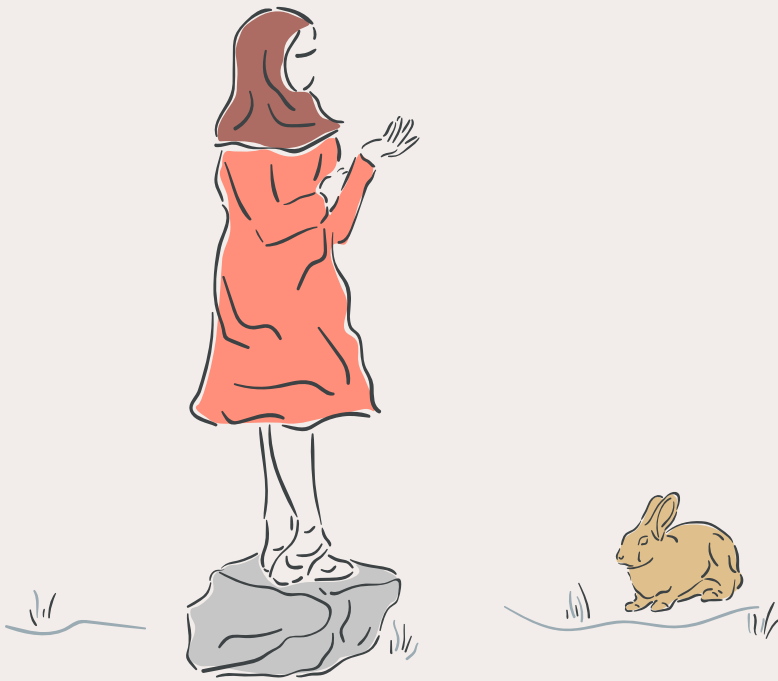
'And let not their speech grieve you. Indeed, honour due to power belongs to Allah entirely. He is the Hearing, the Knowing.' 10:65

The old man looked up and stated,
'I have felt fear, sadness and
anxiety over the years too...'

The curious girl asked,
'So what did you do when you
felt that way?'



وَأَضِيزُ عَلَى مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ



'...Be patient over what befalls you, because truly with determination you can overcome things.' 31:17

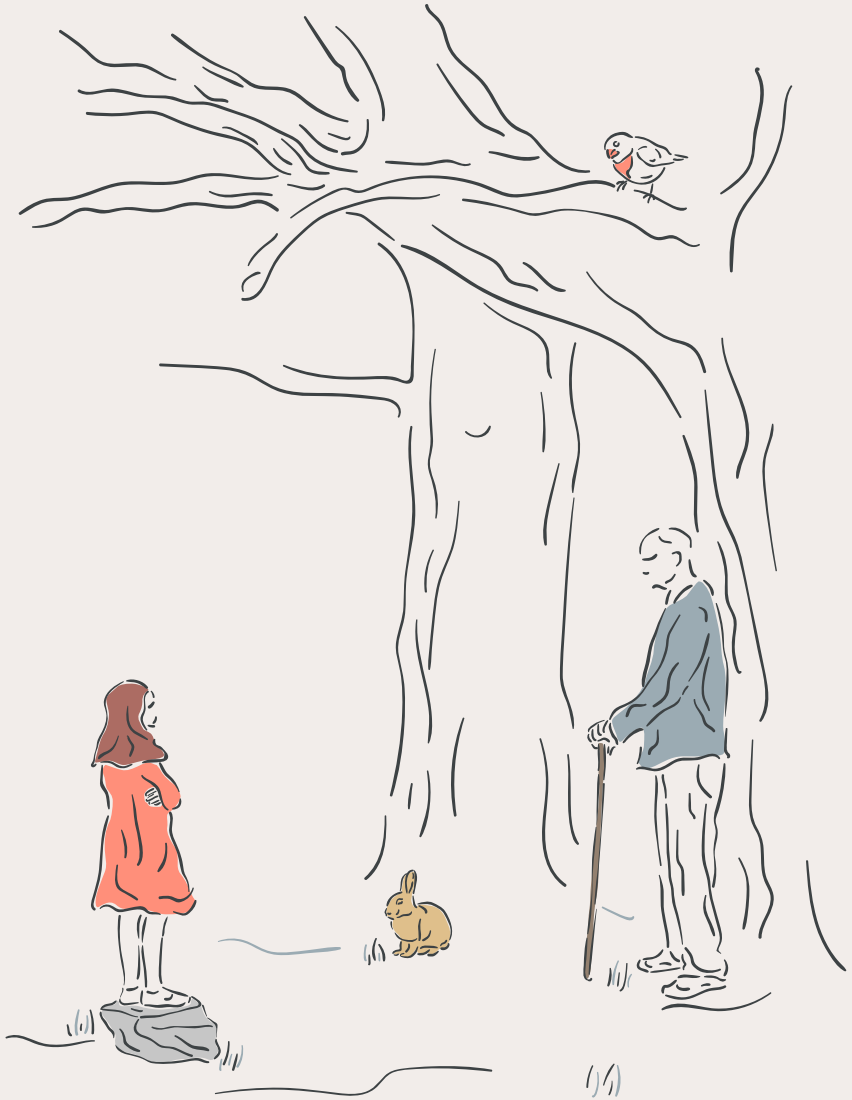
The bird flew up high and shouted,
'I like travelling on this journey with
you all.'

'Me too!
exclaimed the girl,
'it makes me wonder how it all started.'

'What do you mean?'
replied the bird.

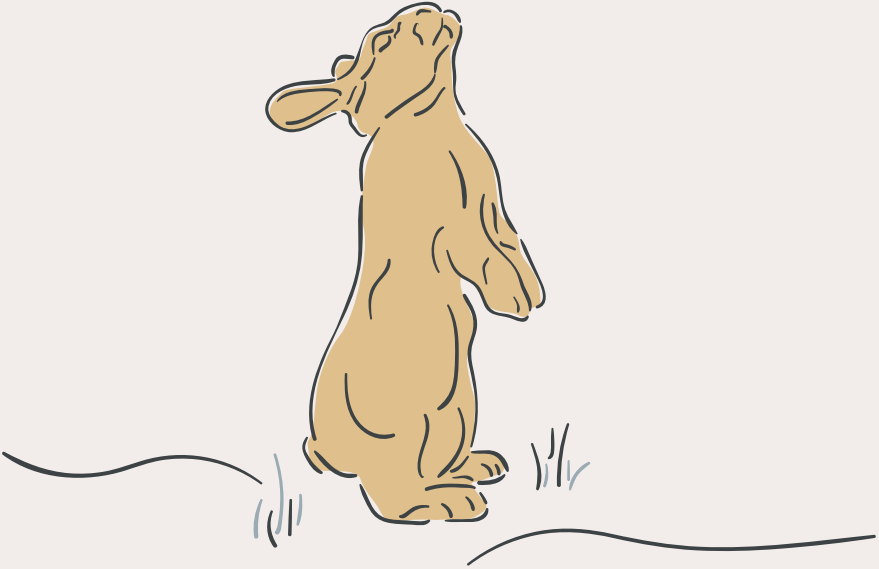
She gave a perplexed look and questioned,
'like where did we all come from?'

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ جَعَلَ
فِيهَا زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلُ النَّهَارَ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ



'And it is He who spread the Earth and made in it firm mountains and rivers, and created two of every kind of fruit; He makes the night cover the day; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.' 13:3

'I always wonder WHY
are we here?'



وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

'I did not create the Jinn and humankind except for worship.' 51:56

The old man looked down at his hands and cried,
'I believe I'm not good enough any
more, I'm far from perfect and a
waste of space.'



لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

'We have created the human being in the best form.' 95:4

'Which way shall we go, left or right?'
screached the girl.

'Left!' exclaimed the bird.

the old man retorted, 'Right.'

'I hate making decisions, I feel so
confused,'
the rabbit whispered.



وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا...



'And hold firmly to the rope of Allah and do not be divided...' 3:103

'I love you all,'
the girl declared.

The bird flew high and called out,
'I like you too.'

'Yes I enjoy being with all of you,'
the rabbit acknowledged.

The old man muttered,
'It's nice here.'

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَى
وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا...



'O humankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into races and tribes, so that you may know one another...' 49:13

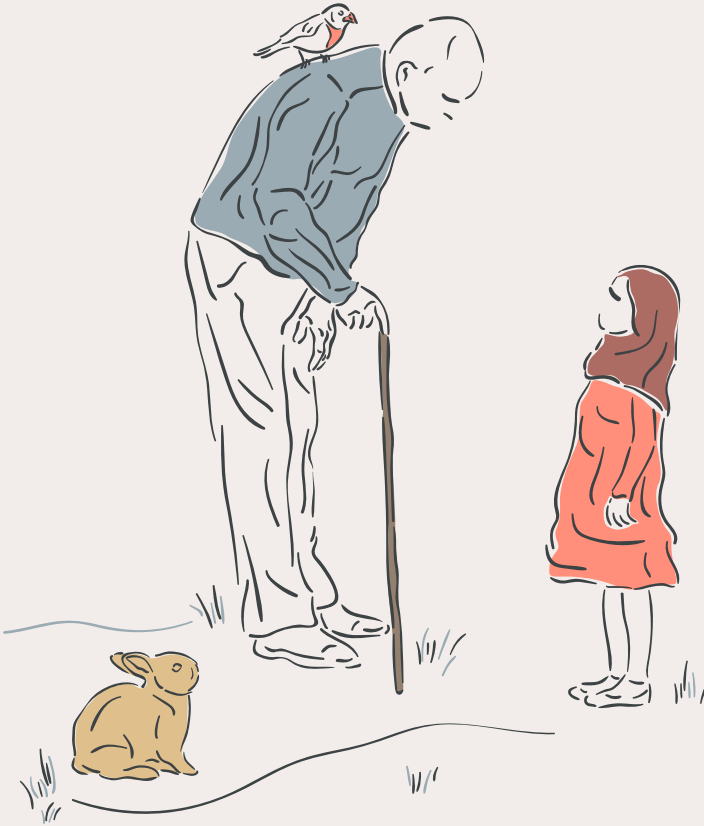
The girl was saddened and expressed,
'Our time together will soon end.'



..إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

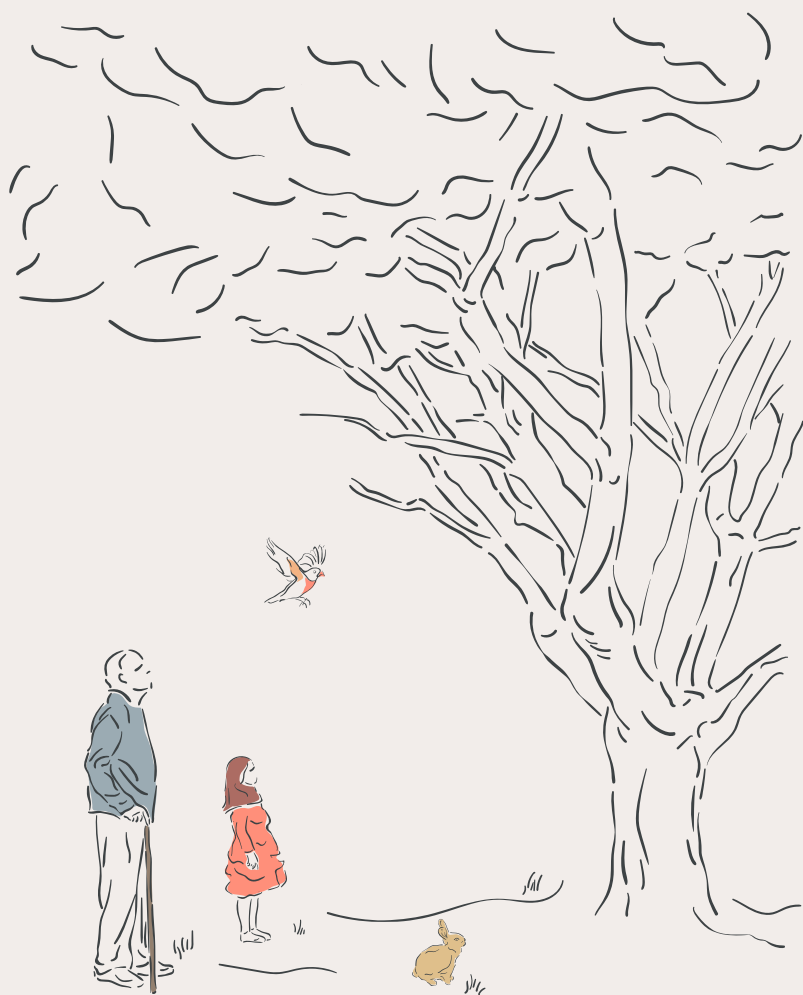
'...Indeed we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return.' 2:156

The old man bowed his head and replied,
'Yes, but that just means a
new beginning.'

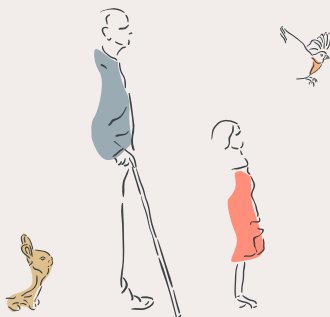


وَلَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ

'And the hereafter is better for you, than the first (life).' 93:4



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