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***My Almighty God,
Do not Let Me Plant My Joys in
Other's Grief.***



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for all sections.

A Light Exists in Spring

Emily Dickinson

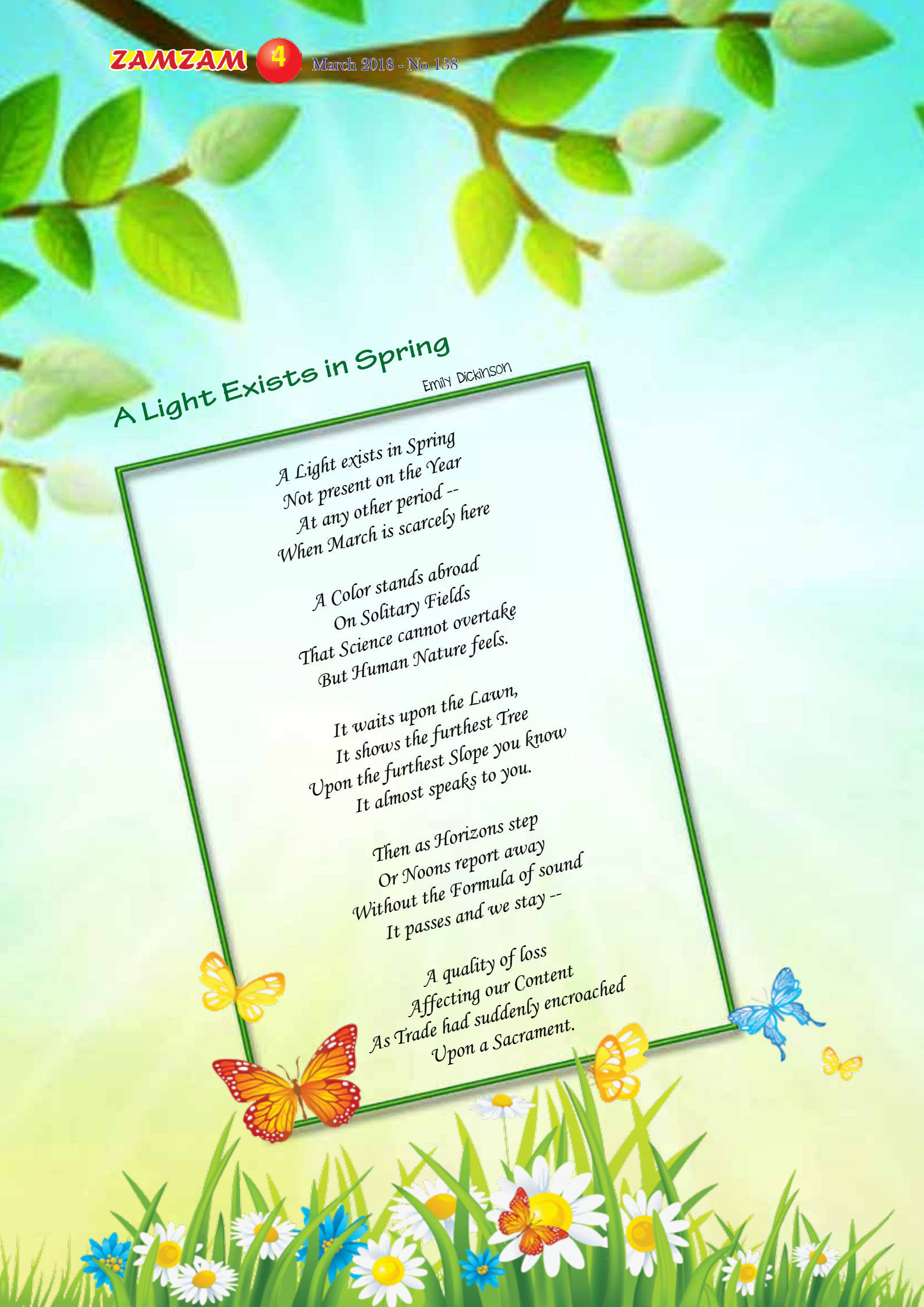
*A Light exists in Spring
Not present on the Year
At any other period --
When March is scarcely here*

*A Color stands abroad
On Solitary Fields
That Science cannot overtake
But Human Nature feels.*

*It waits upon the Lawn,
It shows the furthest Tree
Upon the furthest Slope you know
It almost speaks to you.*

*Then as Horizons step
Or Noons report away
Without the Formula of sound
It passes and we stay --*

*A quality of loss
Affecting our Content
As Trade had suddenly encroached
Upon a Sacrament.*



In the name of God

With the coming of spring, once again our eyes are pleased to see green trees and colourful flowers everywhere. This natural phenomenon refreshes our abilities, urging us to think better and work harder. Of course, this refreshment should also be directed towards making our spiritual life better and better.

We see the revival of nature which is no doubt the work of the Omnipotent Creator. Spring is an ideal time for visiting relatives and friends, but most of us, especially as children and teenagers might certainly experience moments which might then seem unpleasant and bitter to us. For example, you may be planning to go out for dinner and having a happy time with the family, but just when you are getting ready, an uninvited guest suddenly comes to visit your parents and so you all will have to stay at home and start cooking and entertaining the guest.

Naturally children and youngsters get sort of unhappy on such occasions. They may even fail to welcome the guest properly, thus causing embarrassment for their parents. But the proper way of behaviour is that one should welcome the guests warmly, and respectfully, as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has taught

us. And we should always remember that many things which might seem annoying to us may have very good results. So, try to practice talking nicely in the presence of guests, so they will feel welcome.

You can also tell yourselves that it is also possible to have a nice time at home and with guests, and that the same thing may someday happen to you; you go to a friend's or relative's house without having been invited and sure expect to receive a warm welcome there. So, be sure to behave to the others the same way you would like them to behave towards you. This teaching has been presented by all Divine Prophets (AS). So, try to keep in mind in all your actions and also in your thoughts; if you do not want the others to be unkind to you, try not to be unkind to them and if you want them to be kind to you try to be kind to them in particular to your family members, neighbours and the poor.

Shiva Mirhassani



HAPPY NOROZ!

Sahar Haghdoust



Norouz, Onset of the Persian New Year

Norouz, or the Persian New Year's Day, is a national feast, dating back to no less than 2500 years. It echoes Iranians' insight on the globe as they consider the rebirth of the nature after a cold season as the start of a new year.

In every home from time immemorial, people arrange on a table seven

small dishes of nature's symbols, like fruits, wheat sprouts, together with the Holy Qur'an, a mirror, a few coins and several painted eggs. The arrangements from what is called Haft-seen, which means seven S's, because names of the seven dishes begin with S in Persian.

The symbolic dishes are:



1-Senjed, the sweet, dry

fruit of the lotus tree portraying love and happiness.



2-Sabzeh, or sprouts, usually wheat or lentil representing rebirth.



3-Samanu, a pudding like food in which wheat sprouts are transformed and given new life as a sweet after a lengthy and sophisticated cooking process representing prosperity.



4-Seer, or garlic, representing medicine and health.



5-Sib, or apple is standing for health and beauty.



6-Serkeh, or vinegar, representing age and patience.



7-Sumac, ground Sumac berries is the colour of the sunrise, symbolizing the victory of good over evil.

Goldfish is also an indispensable part of the Haft-Seen. They are said to represent the unexpected favours to be received in the coming year. They are also symbol of Life. Traditionally,



they are set free in rivers or ponds when the holiday period ends.

Norouz is also an occasion for all Iranians to visit each other. Every year in Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kurdistan, and some parts of Turkey, people celebrate Norouz as the beginning of the New Year.

The beginning of a spring has always been a great occasion for Iranians with Mother Nature rising up in a green robe of colourful flowers. Happy New Year!



Mirza Jabbar Asgarzadeh famously known as Jabbar Baghcheban(1886 – 1966), was born in Yerevan, Armenia. His origin was from Tabriz in Iran. The first kindergarten he established was called the *Baghch-e Atfal* which means the “Kids Garden”. That is why he was given the nickname *Baghcheban* which literally means “Gardener” in the Persian language. He founded a school for the deaf in 1924. That school was located next to his kindergarten. He was also the inventor of Persian language cued speech. In 1928 he wrote the first Iranian children’s book in Persian. The book was called *Baba Barfi* which means “Snow Daddy” in Persian.



SNOW DADDY

By: Mohammad Reza Yossefi

Illustrated by: Golnaz Mahmudi

Translated by: Hamideh Jalili Sohi

I used to call my (late) grandfather Snow Daddy, because he had a snow white hair and also liked snow very much. In my dreams I saw him under lots of snow and then under rain, the rain was like tears. And I saw Snow Daddy sleeping on the snow and playing with the sparrows - who seemed to play with the white snow very much. Then in the dream I saw Snow Daddy getting lost in the darkness of the night and under the snow.

The sparrows seemed to want to play with me, but I did not play with them in the dark and waited for the day to come. When I woke up, I saw the grown-ups eating their breakfast and talking about grandpa. And I went to the yard to see the sparrows and play with them. I threw a snow ball towards them and they flew away. They seemed to like singing for Snow Daddy who was no longer among us.



So I made a snow man for them to sit on and sing for. In another dream I saw Snow Daddy. He wanted to play with me. I made snowballs to throw at the sparrows to make them fly higher, but Snow Daddy told me that it is better to let the birds come close to us and be fed. And then he took some bread and grains from his pocket and threw them around. This made the sparrows and other birds gather around us and start eating.

They seemed very hungry. Then the other grown-ups came and seeing the birds eating and singing, brought whatever was left over from the breakfast and threw that on the ground for the birds to eat. They played and played till they were tired and covered with snow.

Then Snow Daddy told all to stop playing and leave the snow to him, because he wanted to guard the snow so that would be a blanket for the flower-beds in the yard. He liked the flowers very much and did not want them to die of cold. In fact he was a guard of flowers, that is why he gave his life to protect the children or flowers of the country.





Myths encircling Iranian New Year

Like many other ancient traditions, Norouz is associated with heroes of myths and legends that revolve around such a cherished festival in the Persian calendar.

Ferdowsi (940-1020 CE), an illustrious Persian poet, in his book *Shahnameh* (a long epic poem translated as the *Book of Kings*) dates Norouz as far back to the reign of Jamshid, who in Zoroastrian texts saved mankind from a harsh winter that was destined to freeze the

planet.

The mythical Persian King Jamshid perhaps symbolizes the transition of the Indo-Iranians from animal hunting to farming livestock, the base of modern civilization.

In both *Shahnameh* and Iranian mythology, he is credited with establishing of Norouz in Iran. In the *Shahnameh*, Jamshid constructed a throne studded with gems. He had demons raise him above the earth into the heavens; there



he sat on his throne like the sun shining in the sky. The world's creatures gathered in wonder about him and scattered jewels around him, and called this day the New Day or Norouz.

The 10th century Persian scholar Abu Rayhan Biruni, in his work '*Kitab al-Tafhim li Awa'il Sina'* at al-Tanjim' provides descriptions of the calendars of various nations. According to him, "It is the belief of the Persians that Norouz marks the first day of the beginning of the universe."

Experts say of all the ruins of Persepolis, the palace of Apadana and the Hundred Columns Hall were built for the specific purpose of celebrating Norouz. Although, there may be no mention of Norouz in recorded Achaemenid inscriptions, there is a detailed account by the Greek historian Xenophon of the celebration that took place in Persepolis and its continuity to the Achaemenid period, 550-330 BC.

Norouz was the holiday of the Arsacid (Parthian) dynastic Empires who ruled Iran from 248 BC to 224 CE.

Extensive records on the celebration of Norouz appeared following the accession of Ardashir I of Persia, the founder of the Sassanid dynasty (224-651 CE). Under the Sassanid emperors, Norouz was celebrated as the most

important day of the year. Most royal traditions of Norouz such as royal audiences, cash gifts, and the pardoning of prisoners, were established during the Sassanian era and have resisted unchanged until modern times.

Even the Turkic and Mongol invaders did not attempt to abolish Norouz in favor of another celebration. Thus, Norouz remained as one of the main celebrations in the Persian lands by both the officials and the people.

Norouz is still a long-awaited moment for Iranians and many in the Northern Hemisphere who usher in spring by adorning their homes with colorful decorations.



NAN-E SARMA, THE HERALD OF WINTER, IS COMING

By Noghme Mizarian



It is the longest night of the year, Yalda. It is snowing. The warmth of the home of grandmother nullifies the cold weather of winter. The granny has prepared a table full of different kinds of fruits, nuts, sweets and flowers. All the grandchildren are gathered at her home. The youngest grandchild asks the grandma to tell the story of Nan-e Sarma:

Once upon a time, Nan-e Sarma, the lady of cold days, arrived with the cold

weather. She was an old woman with her hair as white as snow who lived in the sky. She had two sons who brought cold weather with themselves. One of her sons, *Chelle Bozorge*, was a kind man. He reigned the world from the first day of winter for forty days. After the reign of *Chelle Bozorge*, the other son of Nan-e Sarma, *Chelle Kocheeke*, reigned the world. He was unkind and cold. He brought severe cold weather, ice and snow. But his sovereignty was short.

Only twenty days. The older brother told the younger one not to try to make the world so cold. "Don't try hard, the spring will take away cold," *Chelle Bozorge* told *Chelle Kocheeke*. However, the younger brother tried to make everything freeze.

One day, another ruler came and imprisoned *Chelle Kocheeke* in an icy mountain. *Nan-e Sarma* became really sad. She took a hot bar with herself and went to the mountain to fight with the ices and snows and save her son. She won the fight and all snows were melted. *Nan-e Sarma*, happy and cheerful, made her home all clean and neat. She prepared everything and waited for *Amoo Norouz*, the "Uncle New Year", the kind messenger of the New Year

and spring. On the first day of spring, *Nan-e Sarma*, dressed up and set up her haft-sin, waiting for *Amoo Norouz*.

But she fell asleep while *Amoo Norouz* showed up. He drank some tea and left her a flower and disappeared without waking her up. So she should wait one more year until next spring to see him again. Some people believe that if these two meet each other, an amazing incident will happen.



Birth Anniversary, Fatimah (SA)

Our sincere congratulations to you on the blessed occasion of the birth anniversary of the best lady of the worlds -Her Holiness Fatimah al-Zahra (SA), which blessed day is the 20th of the month of Ja'madiuthani of Lunar Hijri Calendar (March 9, 2018).

May Allah help all of us to be benefitted by the excellent model she presented; she always obeyed Allah's commands, helped the poor, prayed a lot, worked hard and was very kind and tolerant, and like her dear father - Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and her dear husband, Imam Ali (AS) she taught good manners to the others. She advised all to respect, help and do good to their parents if they desire Allah's Mercy. So, let's do our best to behave as we are taught by our Holy teachers.

Thanks God

O God! My Kind God! Thank You very much for giving me good food. Please also help me not to forget the hungry people.

O God! My Loving God! Thank You very much for giving me nice water to drink. Please also help me not to forget the thirsty people.

O God! My Gracious God! Thank You very much for giving me a house to live in. Please also help me not to forget the homeless.

O God! My Merciful God! Thank You very much for giving me good health. Please also help me not to forget the sick people.

O God! My Beneficent God! Thank You very much for giving me parents. Please also help me not to forget the orphans.

O God! My All-knowing God! Thank You very much for giving me the ability to talk to You and thank You. Please also help me teach the same to those who do not know You are The One Who gives every good thing. Amen.

Ten Things We Waste

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah

1.Knowledge: Wasted when not taking action with it.

2.Actions: Wasted when we do anything without sincerity.

3.Wealth: Wasted when used on things that will not bring us *âjr* (reward). We waste our money, our status, our authority, on things that have no benefit in this life or in *âkhirah* (The Hereafter).

4.Hearts: Wasted when empty from the love of Allah, and the longing for Him, and devoid of peace and contentment.

5.Bodies: Wasted when we don't use them in *ibâdah* (worship) and service of Allah in serving humankind.

6.Love: Wasted when our emotional love is misdirected, not towards Allah, but towards something/someone else.

7.Time: Wasted when not used properly, by not doing what is right.

8.Intellect: Wasted on things that are detrimental to society and the individual, not in contemplation or reflection.

9.Service: Wasted when in service of someone who will not bring us closer to Allah.

10.Dhikr: Wasted when it does not affect our hearts.



Have a Nice Journey

Azadeh Tafvizi



In holidays many people take trips, at least for a few days. For children and teenagers these trips can be especially very nice and unforgettable. But there are several points which one must keep in mind and observe in order to enjoy the holidays and trips most:

As you know, often trips include spending long hours in a car, a bus or a train. These hours can be boring for young people, if they have nothing to do, because unlike the aged, the youth are very energetic and so should use their energy on useful, interesting things, such as reading. Therefore, do take some books and magazines with yourselves when taking a trip with your family. You may have lots of time during the vacations for reading the material for which you may not be able to give time after holidays. So, make the

most of your free-time by using it in the most useful way. Reading gives you more and more knowledge and also removes any boredom you may feel.

You can also gather some information about the place you are going to travel to, for example about its climate and it's important and beautiful sites for visiting.

Sure you will have many happy memories of your holidays, so do write them down (on a daily basis) for the benefit of the others and also for your own pleasure. Taking notebooks and pens with yourselves are obviously necessary for this purpose, for you may not be willing to write the memories of your holidays later. Self-education about travelling is a must for all, especially for young boys and girls. As we know, travellers may sometimes get very tired or bored or an-

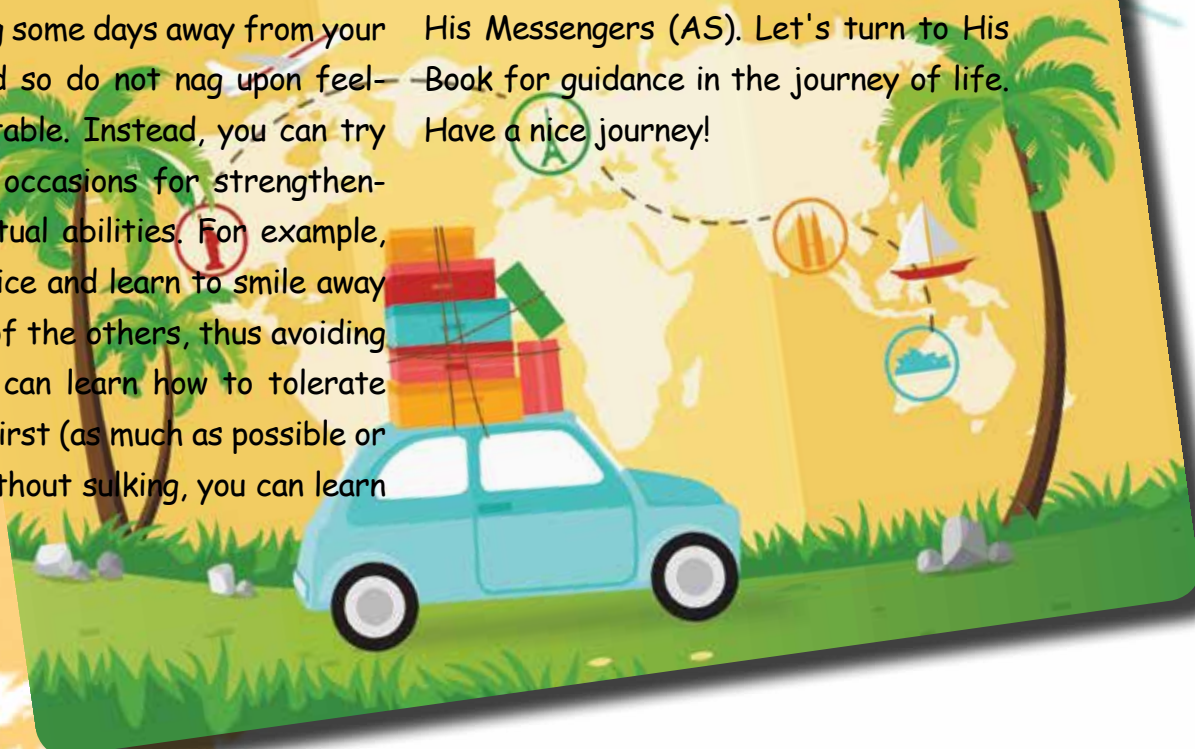
gry with each other. So, before going on a trip with your family members, try to learn self-control. This way, neither you nor your family will experience bitter moments of quarrelling which can make your trip a bitter one.

In fact, the art of self-control is needed by all of us all the time and as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has remarked, a person's temper can be tested when travelling. So, try to correct your temper if it is quick from now, and do your best to learn the necessary skills for making the trips enjoyable for the others, too, for example through jovial manners, helpfulness and generosity.

Do not forget that no one enjoys an easy life away from home and on a trip, and that travels have their own hardships besides the pleasures they can offer. And remember that the others experience the same unpleasant moments such as extreme fatigue, hunger and thirst as you may feel when travelling or when spending some days away from your hometown and so do not nag upon feeling uncomfortable. Instead, you can try to use these occasions for strengthening your spiritual abilities. For example, you can practice and learn to smile away harsh words of the others, thus avoiding quarrels, you can learn how to tolerate hunger and thirst (as much as possible or necessary) without sulking, you can learn

how to share your spare times with the others in ways useful for them and for yourself and many other good skills which you will certainly need in your future life. After all, this world's life is itself sort of a journey or more correctly a migration, migration from the material world towards God and the eternal world. Therefore, we all need to make preparations for it, especially through giving ourselves the art of being good - good co-travellers, good sons, good daughters, good brothers, good sisters, good playmates and later, good spouses, good parents, good colleagues and most important of all, good servants of Allah - our Beloved God to Whom we will all return.

Never forget that our Creator - Allah - The One and Only God loves us most greatly and desires the best for us. That is why He has sent Messengers (AS) to guide us to the way of eternal happiness and salvation. So, we on our part should show our love for Him through following His Messengers (AS). Let's turn to His Book for guidance in the journey of life. Have a nice journey!



An exhibition of photos on Peace, Children and World Cup was held at the Goya House of Culture and Art, in the interest of children suffering from rare diseases. The exhibition "Teaching Peace to Children" was a reminder of the 2014 Brazil World Cup.

The project was directed by Elham Gharakhani and Mehrtash Mahdavi. Each tableau was sold for the benefit

of one sick child.

Jamshid Mashayekhi, the well-known Iranian actor and Ali Daei, the famous footballer and football coach were the spiritual patrons of the exhibition.

At the exhibition 32 pictures representing 32 countries having participated at the Brazil World Cup, were exhibited. The flags of the countries were painted on the children's faces.

A photograph of three children standing against a colorful, abstract background. The child on the left has curly hair and a German flag on their cheek. The child in the middle has curly hair and a Brazilian flag on their cheek. The child on the right has straight hair and a white flag on their cheek. The child in the middle is standing on a soccer ball. The text "Peace, Children and the World Cup" is overlaid on the image in a large, white, bold font with a black outline.

Peace, Children and the World Cup

The money earned at the exhibition would be gifted to the Rare Diseases Foundation of Iran.

"Peace has a significant concept in culture and sociology and we aim at teaching peace to children. Such tasks require the support of cultural and sport foundations as well as the artists in the society." Elham Gharakhani, Director

"At this exhibition we tried to teach peace and we believe that through children we can best convey the concept of peace and calm in the society. And because sick children are the neediest in every community we decided to sell the exhibited works for the benefit of the sick children suffering from special diseases." Mohammad Reza Amir Sadeghi, Photographer

"At this exhibition, 32 children were present, each representing a country attending 2014 World Cup. Since each participant is also a spiritual representative of his/her respective country, it has been aimed to portray the need for the solidarity of the world countries in creating peace and unity among world

nations." Farhad Malvandi, Public Relations Manager

The project has been performed with the collaboration of:

Mohammad Reza Amir Sadeghi, Photographer

Mona Mirbagheri, Producer

Farhad Malvandi, Public Relations Manager

Mohammad Ghorbanali, Project Executive

Also: Goya House of Culture and Art, Kherad Foundation, Football Federation, Rare Diseases Foundation of Iran, Tehran Sun Art Group and Tiwall.



Showing Sympathy

Elham Salimi

Feeling lonely and friendless is certainly of the most bitter and undesirable feelings a human being might experience. No doubt, all of us like having good friends to keep company with and to rely on in times of facing problems. Also, all of us want to have the love and care for our family members first and foremost. As we know, this world's life is not without problems for anybody.

Children of course are less likely to feel the same stress as adults some-

times do. But as one grows into youth and adulthood, one becomes more likely to need the helping hand and of course the caring heart of the others. In other words, one needs sympathy





and sympathetic people to trust.

Sympathy is understanding another person's experience or situation, good or bad, with a focus on their individual well-being. To receive and appreciate sympathy, certainly one should be

sympathetic himself or herself for, true sympathy is indeed a virtue and should be acquired through knowledge and practice.

No doubt, there might be some who pretend to be kind and sympathetic to the others, but when it comes to real situations they turn their back to the one who needs their help. These kinds of people will of course lose true friendship, namely the friendships which are based upon affection, sincerity and sympathy. It is better to avoid such people, as 'a friend in need is a friend indeed'. There might still be another group who not only do not sympathize with the others but also take pleasure in seeing the others in trouble. These are, according to Imam Ali (AS) among the jealous people: "Jealous people gossip, flatter and become happy upon seeing the other people troubled." So, do avoid such people too, because there is no good in

their companionship.

Yet, there are certainly individuals who have kind hearts and so feel for the others. The friendship and companionship of such people is indeed

useful if one knows their value and behaves with the same kindness towards them. This is really a skill we need in our life; a very important life skill, and a very valuable way of behavior. Showing sympathy is a skill that will be helpful for the rest of your life.

Have you ever been in such a difficult situation in which a friend or acquaintance has experienced a loss of some kind? In such conditions, usually we don't know what to say. We just want to console our friend. So, how should we go about doing so? Here are some key do's and don'ts:

Do say you are thinking of them

This is about as simple a way as possible to let someone know that we are aware of what has happened, yet we don't want to impose by asking them to open up just yet. "I'm thinking of you" effectively says "I'm here if you ever want to talk about it," and it does so without asking them to do any real explaining about the situation, if they don't want to.

Do not overcomplicate it

Over-complicating things will only lead to a potentially awkward situation, which is why it's best to keep things as simple as possible.



Do ask if there is anything you can do to help

When a person suffers a significant loss or is trapped in a bad situation in



his or her life, the emotional turmoil he or she experiences can be enough to bring normal life to a complete standstill. One may not outwardly ask for help, so it is always a good idea when offering some assistance in getting things back to normal. It could be helping in doing homework, mending some things or any of a million other small acts of kindness. Even if your friend declines the offer, the fact that you made it in the first place is what really matters.

Do make yourself available

When you end up offering your helping hand to your friend, it can be tempting to say "I'm here for you" without actually thinking about what that means. Saying something such as this essentially binds you to actually helping the person should they choose to reach out at some point. If your friend ends up calling on you, it is important to stick to your word, which could mean going out of your way to help with something. Otherwise, you could risk losing a friendship.

Do not overthink it

The awkwardness of the situation may cause you to overthink what you're going to say, but your best bet is to simply say it. Let the person know you're there, inject your personality into the situation and avoid taking any approach that comes off as mechanical. If you stick to being yourself, you'll have a hard time going wrong.

True sympathy attracts true affection and these are what one needs in this world's life in order not to feel lonely and helpless. For example, if you have a friend of several years and he or she shows no feeling for your grief or trouble and remains indifferent, offering no help, you will certainly change your opinion of him or her and stop considering him or her friend. So he or she will lose your friendship forever and on the contrary, if you receive true sympathy from him or her when you are sad, distressed or in need of help, you will for sure think much better of him or her and will try to be a better friend. So the sympathetic friend will find you a more loving and helpful friend and will enjoy your friendship more and more in the

future.

In conclusion, no wonder sympathetic people tend to have sympathetic friends. This is a mutual relationship and very significant for our happiness. And towards your siblings too, you should show true sympathy; otherwise you will lose at least part of their affection. For example, if your brother has failed in his exams and is worried about the reaction of your parents, you should try to assure him of your help and calm him down, otherwise you will not be considered a sympathetic brother or sister and as an unsympathetic sibling, will be left uncared for by your siblings. So, try to learn this life skill and rest assured that you will get lots of success through it!



Ingredients:

1 cup sugar

Seeds of two cardamom pods

1/8 teaspoon ground saffron threads dissolved in 1 tablespoon hot water

Recipe:

1- Melt the sugar in a small, heavy-bottomed saucepan over high heat, stirring constantly for 3 to 5 minutes until caramelized. Add the cardamom seeds and saffron water.

2- Spread some parchment paper on the counter.

3- Once the syrup has caramelized, use a spoon to drip 1-teaspoon sized dollops of syrup on the paper.

4- Allow to cool, peel off from the parchment paper, and serve with tea. These candies should be sorted in an air light jar.

Traditionally these candies are colored with saffron and served with tea, but you can also replace the saffron with various food colorings to make the candies more festive looking.

PERSIAN SEQUIN Candy

HISTORY ON COMPUTER

Nashre-Shahr
Ali Derakhshi

In old times when computer had still not been invented, men had no place for keeping their files and always had to put their files under their arms taking them everywhere.

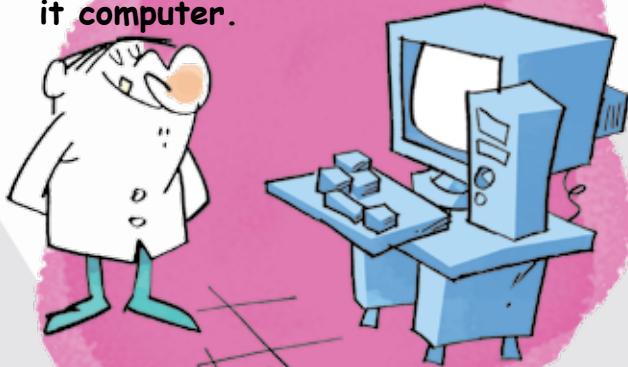


That is why, the files were always stinking.

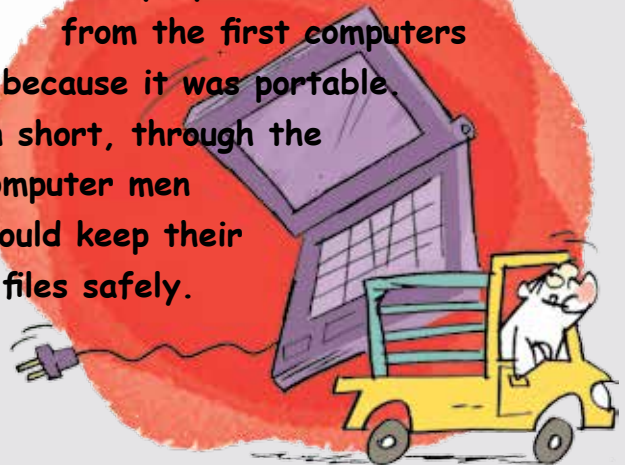
Then men invented the first CD for saving their files.



Anyway, it was a good invention. They named it computer.



Then came laptop. It was different from the first computers because it was portable. In short, through the computer men could keep their files safely.



Then computers began to process men. Men would do all their works through the computer. Even marriage proposals.



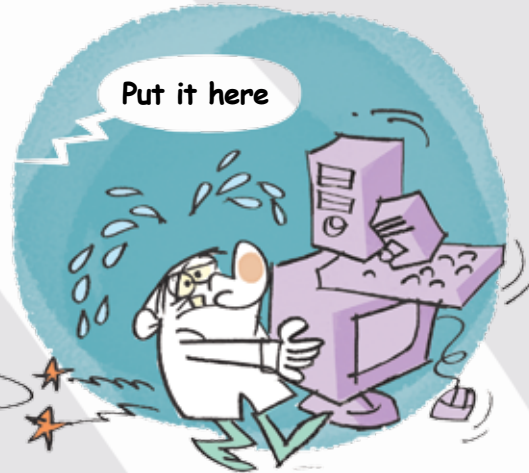
Even some men got addicted to computer games.



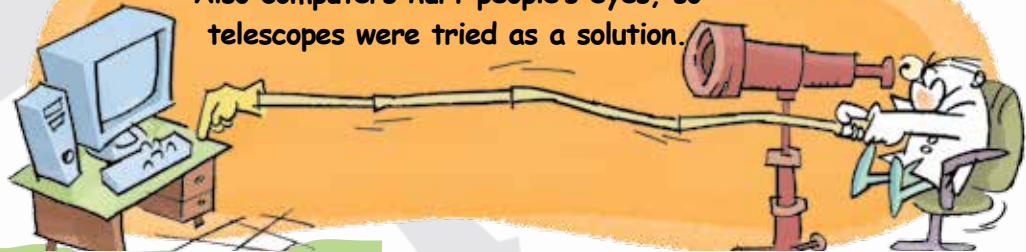
Do not leave
it there



Put it here



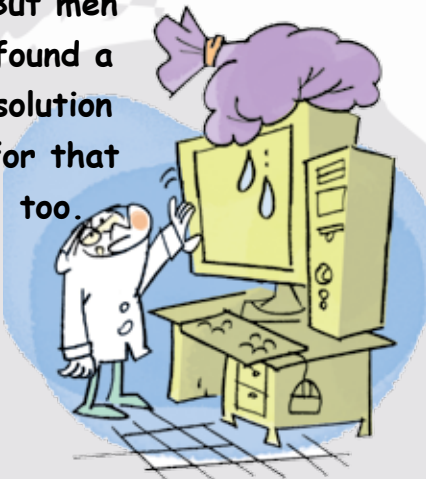
Also computers hurt people's eyes, so
telescopes were tried as a solution.



Not only men, but also computers
got sick. Computers sometimes vom-
ited their windows.



But men
found a
solution
for that
too.



Sometimes computers
would get very angry with
men and get overheated.



But if comput-
ers lose their memory
the only solution would be a
shock.



Of course, not
this way.

FUN AND FROLICS

Do you know that.....

Why do birds have beaks of different shapes?

A bird's beak tells us what kind of environment it lives in and what is inside its stomach. Birds from swamps or shallow streams have long, delicate beaks for probing in mud and shingle. Other aquatic birds have a spoon shaped beaks groveling in muddy water. Carnivorous birds have long necks for exploring deep water. Seabirds like the albatross have tweezer-like beaks for catching slippery fish.

Pelicans plunge their beaks into water and scoop up their catch in a pouted lower part. Carnivorous birds, like eagles and vultures, have hooked upper beaks, ideal for hooking onto and tearing pieces off their prey. Toucan's beaks have serrated edges for cracking open nuts and crossbill's lower jaw moves sideways to enable it to extract seeds from pinecones. All living things need food, and evolution has ensured that birds are well equipped to get their share.



What is the difference between frogs and toads?

Frogs and toads are amphibians, which mean that they live partly in water and partly on land. Frogs are good swimmers and fond of water. Toads spend most of their lives out of the water. Frogs are such good jumpers that frog-jumping contests are held sometimes. Toads make only short hops, and they usually crawl. The frog's skin is brighter and shinier, while the toad's is dull and rough and drier. The toad's skin also gives off a bad smelling secretion which is distasteful to predators. Frogs eggs, or spawn, look like a mass of jelly in the water. The eggs of the toads are laid in strings and wound round the stems of waterplants. What frogs and toads have in common are bodies of roughly the same shape, webbed feet and the same taste in food - slugs, worms, and insects.



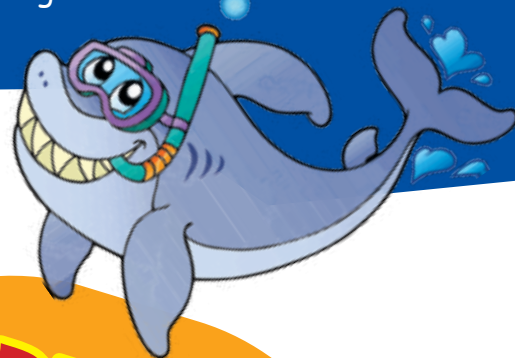
What is hibernation?

The practice of certain animals of spending part of the cold season in a more or less a sleeping state is called hibernation. It gives protection from the cold when they cannot maintain their normal body temperature and food is scarce. Animals which hibernate are able to store up enough food in their bodies before they go to sleep to last them until food is more easily obtainable when warmer weather returns. They do not grow during hibernation and bodily activities are reduced to a minimum. In some animals, the heart only beats once or twice a minute. Hibernating animals look for somewhere to shelter. Bears and bats hide in caves. Fish and frogs bury themselves in mud or at the bottom of ponds. Squirrels go to sleep in their nests, or burrows, but may wake up on especially warm days.



How do fish breathe?

When we breathe, we draw air into our lungs and take from it the oxygen we need in order to remain alive. Like other animals, fish need oxygen in order to live. But a fish gets its supply of oxygen not from the air, but from the water in which it is swimming. It takes water into mouth. Then it closes its mouth and squeezes the water over its gills. These are feathery pieces of tissue on each side of its throat, and they are full of tiny blood vessels. Just as our lungs take oxygen out of the air, so the gills take oxygen out of the water. And just as with us, so the waste carbon dioxide is passed back through the gills and the 'used' water then flows out through the fish's gill slits.



JOKES

Father (to his daughter): "Dear, why are you standing in front of the mirror with closed eyes?"

Daughter: "Dad, I want to see how I look when I am asleep."

RIDDLES

How do bees get to school?

By a school buzz!!!!

Ramsar; Host World Wetlands Day Ceremony

Arman Alimohammadi

World Wetlands Day is celebrated every year on February 2. This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands in Ramsar in 1971.

The Standing Committee of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands approved "Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future" as the theme for World Wetlands Day in 2018. Iran marks the World Wetlands Day in a ceremony which was scheduled to be held in the northern city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

The Ramsar Convention is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

The Convention came into force in 1975. Since then, almost 90% of UN member states, from all the world's geographic regions, have acceded to become "Contracting Parties".

The Convention's mission is "the

conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world".

A wetland is a land area that is saturated with water, either permanently or seasonally, such that it takes on the characteristics of a distinct ecosystem. Wetlands are among the most diverse and productive ecosystems. They provide essential services and supply all our fresh water. However, they continue to be degraded and converted to other uses. Wetlands are important features in the landscape that provide numerous beneficial services for people and for fish and wildlife. Some of these services, or functions, include protecting and improving water quality, providing fish and wildlife habitats, storing floodwaters and maintaining surface water flow during dry periods. These

valuable functions are the result of the unique natural characteristics of wetlands. Wetlands can be thought of as "biological supermarkets." They provide great volumes of food that attract many animal species. These animals use wetlands for part of or all of their life-cycle. Dead plant leaves and stems break down in the water to form small particles of organic material called "detritus." This enriched material feeds many small aquatic insects, shellfish and small fish that are food for larger predatory fish, reptiles, amphibians, birds and mammals.

The functions of a wetland and the values of these functions to humans depend on a complex set of relationships between the wetland and the other ecosystems in the watershed. A watershed is a geographic area in which water, sediments and dissolved materials drain from higher elevations to a common low-lying outlet or basin a point on a larger stream, lake, underlying aquifer or estuary.

The Convention uses a broad definition of wetlands. It includes all lakes and rivers, underground aquifers, swamps and marshes, wet grasslands, peatlands, oases, estuaries, deltas and tidal flats, mangroves and other coastal areas, coral reefs, and all human-made sites such as fish ponds,

rice paddies, reservoirs and salt pans.

Iran currently has 24 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites), with a surface area of 1,486,438 hectares.

Unfortunately wetlands in Iran are suffering drainage to various extents. The mismanagement in agriculture and water sector as well as climate change is among the most important reasons for the lakes disappearance in Iran.

There are more than 250 wetlands in Iran of which 28 are suffering dryness and have turned into hotspots for sand and dust storms.

Lake Urmia, northwestern Iran, Hamoun, eastern Iran, and Hour-al-Azim in southwestern Iran are some of the main wetlands in Iran suffering unprecedented dryness and are causing great deal of inconvenience for the citizens residing the regions.

Wetlands' microbes, plants and wildlife are part of global cycles for water, nitrogen and sulfur. Scientists now know that atmospheric maintenance may be an additional wetlands function. Wetlands store carbon within their plant communities and soil instead of releasing it to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide. Thus wetlands help to moderate global climate conditions.



*O, the new spring, you are like our souls, do revive our souls!
And make the gardens flourished, and refresh the farms
Now that flowers are exhibiting their beauty and birds sing,
You the spring! Offer morning breezes, for it gives new life.
Spring has come; the scenting spring has come,
The friend has come; the tranquil, tolerant friend has come.
The beautiful spring has come, happy and nice,
Turning the world into a green rose-covered garden,
Listen to the words of lilies, O my dear,
Lilies have a lot to say for those who listen to them.
And look at the revived earth, for it now reflects much elegance.*

Mowlana, Persian Poet

My Happy Friend

By: Mohammad Goli

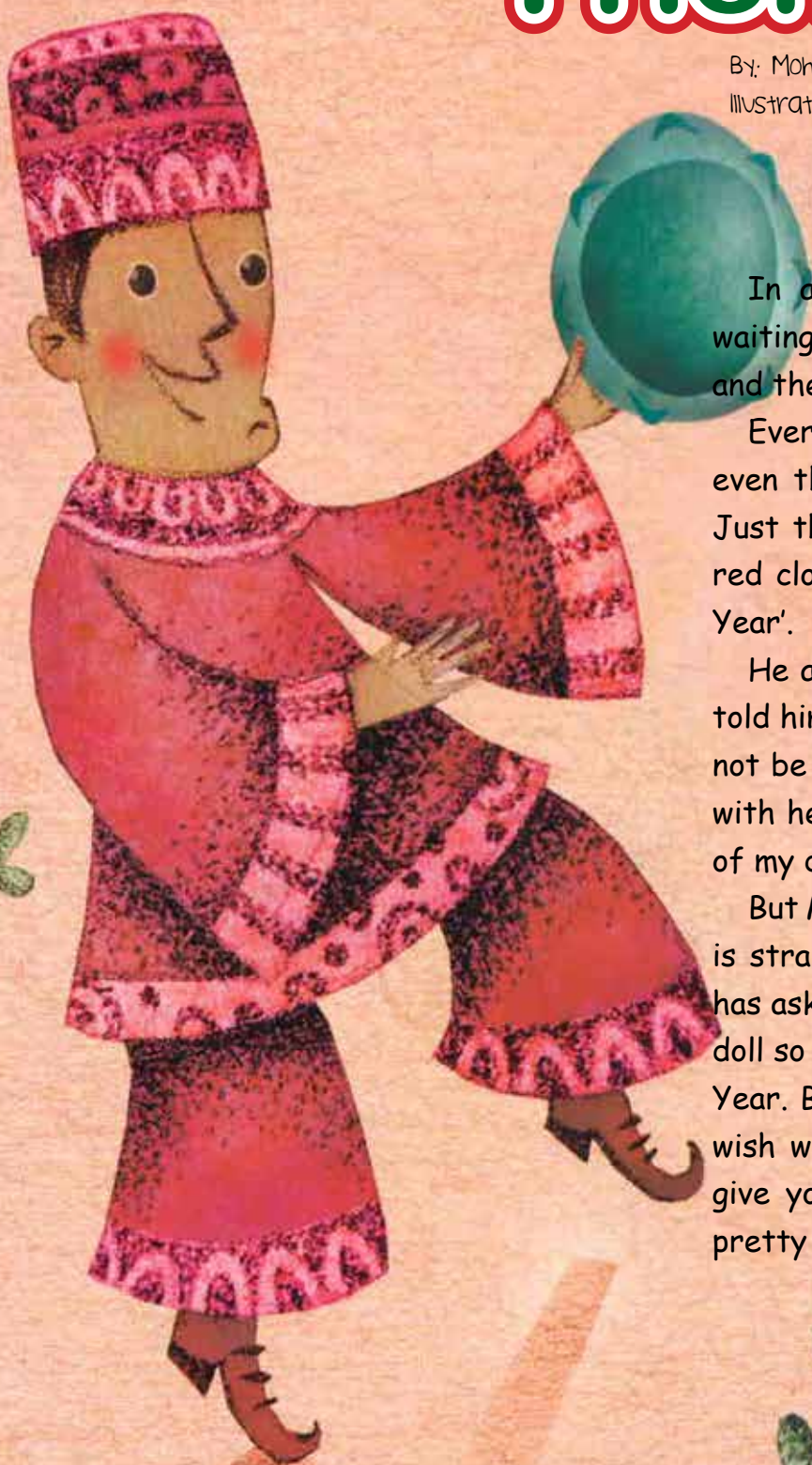
Illustrated by: Farnaz Zahedi Labbaf

In a dream I saw that we were waiting for the start of the new year and the Norouz celebrations.

Everybody was happy and hopeful, even the little red fish in the bowl. Just then, Mr. Firooz entered in his red clothes to wish us a 'Happy New Year'.

He asked me to make a wish and I told him: "I wish my sister wish would not be given her. Because I am angry with her for having taken out an arm of my doll yesterday."

But Mr. Firooz laughed and said: "It is strange, very strange! Your sister has asked me to bring you this pretty doll so you would be happy in the New Year. But since your wish is that her wish would not be given her, I can't give you the doll." Then he put the pretty doll in his bag and went away.





Good Things Come In Large Packages

By Brenda Barnhart

Jacob was a stoutly boy, with round features through and through, including his eyes which glowed almost neon blue from round granite spheres. He accepted his roundness, for after all, good things come in large packages, or so his mother always told him, with a funny grin on her lips. He never understood the grin, but took it to mean it was their little secret, that the world had yet to learn this, and Jacob was the one to teach them.

On this warm Sunday morning, he sits in the coffee shop awaiting his food. His platter, really, for Jacob was a boy with a ferocious appetite and he fed this appetite lovingly.

"SEVEN egg omelet with half a pound of cheese..." said the waitress as she dropped the plate to the table, rolling her eyes in amazement at this boy's order. 'This poor boy,' she thought to herself, 'what have his

parents done to cause such low self-esteem.' Jacob dug into his food immediately and rather seriously, as if feeding a hunger that never rested.

Jacob watched silently out the window after he finished his feast, lost in thoughts of his future, of becoming something special and showing the world what love really is. He didn't know how he was going to do this, but he knew, from the depths of his soul, that this was his mission in life, and he looked forward to it with an excitement that made any Christmas morning celebration look like a Sunday at church.

But this morning, however, something was different. Jacob thought about his future with a new sense of melancholy that he could not explain. He felt as if something was going to happen very soon that would catapult him into his purpose, and he wasn't sure he was ready. He was processing his thoughts, analyzing his feelings

when a sudden bang brought him back to his seat at the booth, once again aware of his surroundings.

He looked around for the source of the interruption to his thoughts, and saw people gathered around something on the floor. At closer examination he saw it was a body, very pale and thin and had sores on his face. You could see his skeletal structure he was so thin. People were frantic, but no one wanted to assist the man lying on the floor. "He has AIDS!" someone yelled, "don't touch him! You'll surely catch it!"

Jacob got up and walked over to the man, knelt down and felt for a pulse. An older woman tried to stop him but he paid no attention. "He's got a pulse!" he said, "He's still alive. Call 9-1-1, NOW! Hurry!" he screamed as he began to perform CPR. People gasped in horror as they watched this large boy press his mouth against this sick man. He continued the CPR until the ambulance arrived, and he kept him alive.

As Jacob started his walk home, he heard whispers fading behind him as folks continued to talk about him with disbelief at what he'd done. "That wasn't brave!" said one man,

"it was purely idiotic!" Jacob just shook his head as he walked away,

lost in his own thoughts of what had just occurred. He was a hero, regardless of what that man was ill from, but that didn't matter. Jacob didn't care about that. His melancholy had grown still without recognition as to its source, and this is what Jacob was deeply contemplating when the truck hit him. He never heard it coming. Total blackness ensued... and very soon after, death.

By this time news had gone around about what Jacob had done at the diner. The news reporters were at the diner the moment Jacob was hit a few miles down the road. The story of the year for this small town. The headlines the next morning read, "TWISTED FATE: Cancer patient collapses at Mel's Diner, and a young boy saves his life, only to die moments later". The story ended noting that the cancer patient was in remission, and collapsed due to food lodged in his throat and no one noticed his

struggles for breath. This man was a father of three young babies.

Three young babies, who will grow up with their father; their father, who will live to see his babies grow up. All because of the selfless love of a young boy. A young boy in a large package, with a heart bigger than life could contain.

What if, I were the Moon

If I were the moon, I would ask children to draw me in their paintings, too, because they often draw the sun and neglect me.

I would also invite the stars to a party or to a playground. I would ask them to send messages as guides for mountaineer, so they could find their way to safety at nights better.

I would never try to change my position as a moon and also I would never ask the sun to add to the

daytime hours, because I know very long days make the children tired and they need to go to bed early at nights.

Anyway, I'm not the moon and I know I will never be. But I can study more and more, so that I grow up to be a person of knowledge who gives light and beauty like a moon.



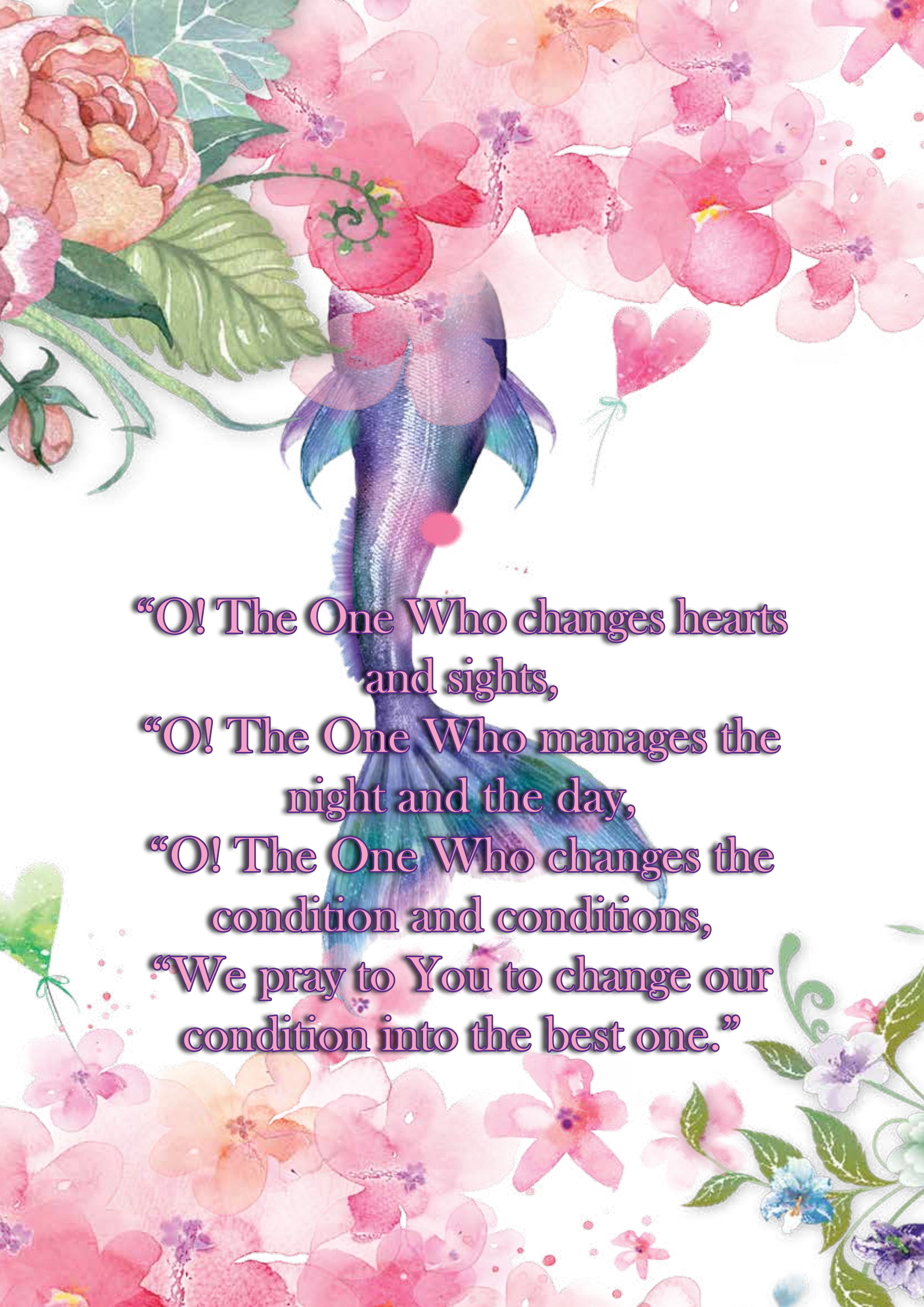


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“O! The One Who changes hearts
and sights,
“O! The One Who manages the
night and the day,
“O! The One Who changes the
condition and conditions,
“We pray to You to change our
condition into the best one.”