

## **My Imaginary Thursday**

### **By Bashar Zghayyar**

My brother Tareq woke me up this morning at 6. Since I'm lazy and never get up after hearing the alarm clock, it's normal for someone to have to come into my room and push me out of bed in order to get me off to school. Once washed and dressed, I sat down and ate breakfast and then waited in the car for my father to take me to school.

By the time I arrived my teacher was already handing out the results of the last math test. I was surprised when he handed me mine and I saw that I had an excellent mark - 23 out of 25. Great! The rest of the school day was equally as good, and by the end of the day, when three of my friends and I made our way to my father's car, which was waiting for us outside, I was in excellent spirits.

On the way home, I told my father about my test results and how I had improved in math. Dad was happy to hear the good news and suggested that we all go for a ride around the city to celebrate. Of course we agreed so off we went, and, after dropping in at McDonalds for lunch, we ended up at the zoo. The zoo was so cool, and my friends and I got a kick out of seeing the latest new animals: three crocodiles and a huge gorilla...wow!

At the end of the day, my father took my three friends to their homes and then we went to ours where we found my mother baking a cake - carrot, my favorite! We told mom about our day - my math results, the zoo, McDonalds, driving around town and having a lot of fun. Mom said she was happy for us, and as she continued to make the cake, I looked forward to the time when it would be ready to eat.

23 April. Everything I've just written is a lie. It never happened. No, I wrote about my imaginary Thursday, the simple fact being that to write about my real Thursday - my real any day of the week - would be way too depressing.

It's true though that Tareq used to wake me up, but that was until three years ago. He's dead now. I still remember, so vividly, the day he was shot. He was supposed to collect me from school and take me home, but when they closed the checkpoint, he tried to climb over the fence. It cost him his life.

It's also true that I'm often late for school, not because I'm lazy, but because crossing the checkpoints takes so much time. We don't, however, have a car - we don't have the money to buy one. I've never been good at math, and the only zoo I have ever seen is the one that I saw on TV.

As to my father, he divorced my mother a few months back. My aunt, his sister, insists that he's really a good man and that we should give him a second chance. She says that he only divorced my mom because of his financial situation and the fact that the separation wall around Jerusalem stopped thousands of people from reaching his shop.

Do I believe my aunt? I don't know. The truth is it's easier to not think about my life right now and instead, to carry on imagining...

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