

ELIYAS EXPLAINS

BITE-SIZE

WHAT'S GOING ON
in the

UK?



Ages
8+

by Zanib Mian



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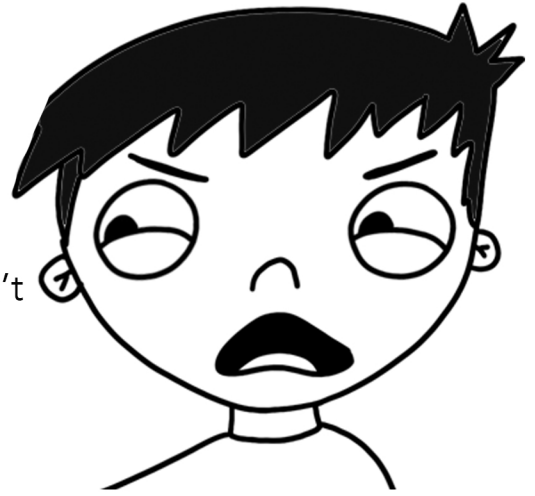
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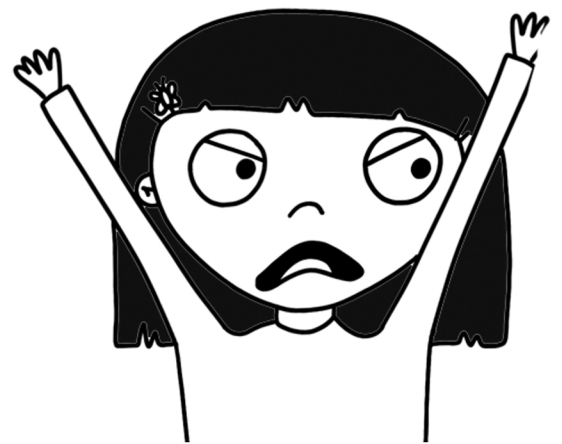
It was Wednesday the 7th of Aug 2024. And I was NOT happy.

“But **MUMMMM**, you said we could go to the trampoline park today? Why aren't you keeping your **promise?**” I demanded, crossing my arms over my body really tightly to show how unfair it was.



Only hours later, I understood that Mum wasn't breaking her promise, she was keeping another one. A silent promise I think every mum makes to herself when she has a baby. A promise to always protect him or her.

I'm not going to lie. My parents always keep their promises to us. That's why my sister Aasiya and I could NOT believe they were cancelling our plans to be **HUMAN BOUNCY BALLS FOR 60 MINUTES STRAIGHT** with our best friends.



“You even paid for it already. So, you're wasting money! You're always telling us not to waste money!” Aasiya whined. She was in her protest position – laying down dramatically in the middle of the room on the carpet.

Mum just looked **sad**. She sighed the longest sigh I've ever heard and pulled her lips in until they disappeared. 😞

Just then, Dad came down the stairs and joined us in the living room. He was all serious as he read the room. There are only a few times in my life that I've seen that look on Dad. It made me **GULP**. “Are we in trouble?” I asked. 😱

Dad's expression softened straight away, and he came over and sat next to me with his hand on my knee. “No, of course not. Nobody's in trouble,” he said.

Aasiya sat up and we both stared at my parents waiting for an explanation.

"We've decided to stay indoors and not go outside at all today. Not to the trampoline park, not anywhere," Dad continued.

"WHY?!" we asked.

"YEAH, WHY?!" my little brother Yusuf mimicked even though he doesn't like the trampoline park because he's not allowed on with the big kids.



Dad switched back to serious and said, "Well, the truth is, it's not safe out there for us today. There are people coming into town to riot. **People who are anti-Muslim, who don't like Asian or black people and don't want immigrants or refugees coming to this country.**" 🙄

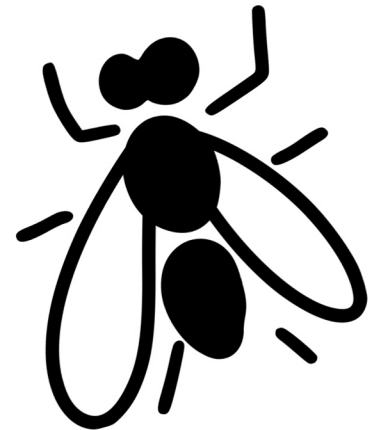
"You mean **RACISTS?**" I asked.

"Yes," Dad answered, simply.

"They're coming to do what?" Aasiya asked.

"**RIOT,**" Mum repeated. "Cause chaos, break things, be violent and attack buildings."

"Oh!" 😱 I gasped, "So it's true what Yahya told me on Discord. I thought he was just scaring us for fun, like the time he said the **flying ants** have mutated because of the acid rain and they're going to be the size of tennis balls. He said **they attacked a mosque building.**"



"The ants?!" Aasiya asked, shocked.

"No, the racists, silly," I explained.

Dad nodded. "They did attack a **mosque in Southport.** The lovely people in the **community,** including non-Muslims helped to rebuild it. But sadly, they have threatened to attack other mosques."

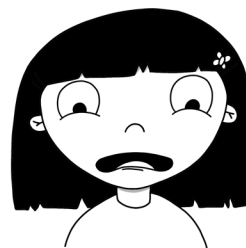
"Why doesn't the police stop them?" **Aasiya trembled,** making her way to

Mum on the sofa to be held by her.

"They do try, but these mobs have even attacked police officers and police vans, going so far as setting fire to them. The riot police are doing what they can," Dad replied.

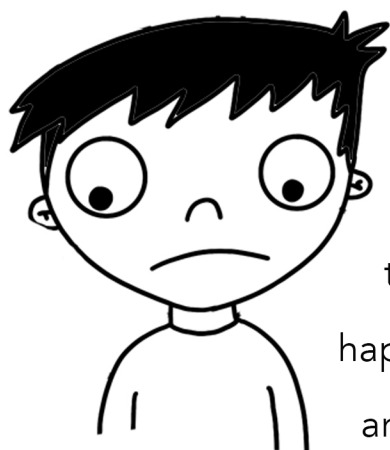
"But it's **SAFEST** for us to stay indoors today while the far-right mobs are out," Mum added.

My little sister's bottom lip **trembled** and her eyes filled with tears as she held on to Mum and asked, "Are they going to attack our masjid as well?"



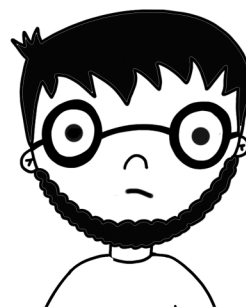
"No, sweetie, no, no," Mum soothed, stroking her hair. "**And there is lots more security at our masjids now, including police.**"

But that didn't make me feel any better. "**WHY ARE THEY DOING THIS?**" I pleaded. Nothing was making sense to me. I mean, I know racism exists. But how



could people **hate** ☹️ other people so much that they'd hurt them? For no reason? There are all kinds of people living in London and the other places I've been to, and I thought that was normal and everyone was happy. I was finding it really hard to get my brain wrapped around it.

"Well, darling, sadly, **PEOPLE haven't started thinking like this overnight.** For years and years our **newspapers, and TV, and our politicians** have painted a picture of Muslims, and immigrants, people who came to the UK from another country, as the bad guys. It's the headlines, and the way politicians talk about us," Dad explained, pausing for a second to show us something on his phone. "Look at these headlines in the papers."



Aasiya and I sandwiched dad on the sofa and craned our necks to

look at his phone at some of the headlines.



I COULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT I WAS SEEING! 😱

For a few **WHIPLASHED, BRAIN MALFUNCTIONING** seconds, I was scared of Muslims. Then I remembered **I WAS ONE** and so were my family and how much my parents keep teaching us about being good people and always following the rules. I mean, my mum always makes us buy **one bottomless drink** at Nandos each, even though Aasiya and I could easily share one glass and fill it up as many times as we want, and **NOBODY WOULD KNOW.** I started **laughing hysterically**, at what my brain just did. The kind of laugh that is actually a cry, like the Joker from Batman. 😈

Mum and Dad looked at me, with concerned faces. 😬

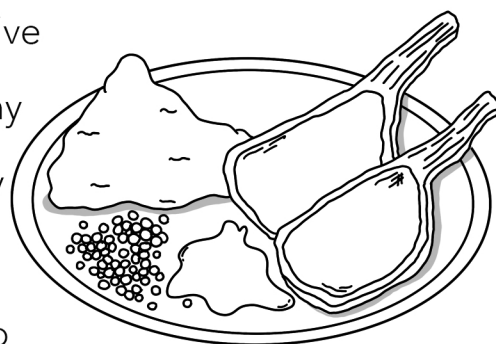
"Eliyas?" Aasiya prodded, as if she was checking it was really me.

I shook my head to snap myself out of it. "Sorry. I just can't believe how easy it is to **MAKE PEOPLE SCARED OF OTHERS.**" I shivered.

Dad agreed and he told us that just like that, over time, they've whipped up hatred and **MADE MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE MUSLIMS AND IMMIGRANTS ARE THE REASON THERE IS CRIME AND THE REASON WHY PEOPLE ARE POOR.**

"That's a lie!" Aasiya blurted.

"**YES,**" said Dad, placing his hand on her back, "*You* know that, *I* know that, but many people don't. They **begin to believe** what they've been told time after time because they don't know any better. **THEY START TO FEAR US.** 🙄 And especially when those people have problems like not being able to pay bills or put food on the table, they want to believe it because it gives them **someone to blame** and they think they can solve their problems by getting rid of the people they think are the problem. It's true that many people in the UK are living in **VERY TOUGH CONDITIONS**, and I feel for them. But obviously it's all a lie that migrants are to blame – many migrants are suffering too. **In fact, this whole thing erupted because of a huge lie after a horrible crime where three little girls were murdered in Southport.** People, including **POLITICIANS** and **JOURNALISTS** started spreading a lie about who did it. They said it was a Muslim illegal immigrant and so **the far-right mobs got worked up, started a riot, and attacked a mosque** and these riots have been happening all over the country since."



My heart ached. Like it had just been used as a punching bag by someone with very fast fists. Aasiya was holding onto Dad's arm, looking more **scared** than hurt. Everyone was dead quiet, lost in thought, staring down at our

feet.

Just then, we heard an **unusual sound** and all looked up. Yusuf was standing in the middle of the room (Aasiya's protest spot) and pouring out a pot of bubbles slowly onto the carpet. Looking into our faces with **PURE DELICIOUS DELIGHT.**

"YUSUF! NOOOO!"

Mum jumped up with a bit of a delayed reaction. She was too late.

My little brother does things like that when he feels all the attention is on something or someone else.



Mum and Dad scrambled about looking for a way to absorb the water. Aasiya stayed glued to her spot with her arms wrapped around her body and **MY BRAIN WORKED IN OVERDRIVE**, still chewing on everything Mum and Dad just told us.


I paced the dry part of the room. "So, everyone who's white is racist because of the newspapers?" I asked, thinking about my friend Alfie at school and our neighbour, Hazel. "And now they've been stirred up, **LIKE ZOMBIES RISING FROM GRAVES** and we can't even go out because we'll be attacked?!"



“What? NO,” Dad responded distractedly while pushing down on the **bubble puddle** with a towel.

Mum took me by the hand and sat me back down on the sofa and Dad joined us again too. She told us that what’s happening is horrible and unthinkable, but the **people who are behaving that way are a small percentage.** There have been thousands more white people and people from all backgrounds who came out onto the streets to **PROTECT MOSQUES** and **PROTEST** against racism. She pulled out her phone and showed me a video of a white man with tattoos on his neck saying he would protect anyone being harassed by a racist. She showed us videos of **thousands of people on the streets holding anti racist plaques.**

That made me feel a little better. 

“But there’s still people that hate us aren’t there?” Aasiya insisted. 

Every time I looked at the fear in my little sister’s eyes, as annoying as she was sometimes, I felt really angry. Dad looked like he was thinking about how he should answer the question. Finally, he said, “Those people won’t be able to hurt you because **YOU’RE GOING TO ASK THE ONE WITH ALL POWER AND MIGHT TO BE YOUR PROTECTOR.** And then I’m here with you. So is your Mum.”

“AND ME!” I said, puffing out my chest.

Aasiya smiled happily.

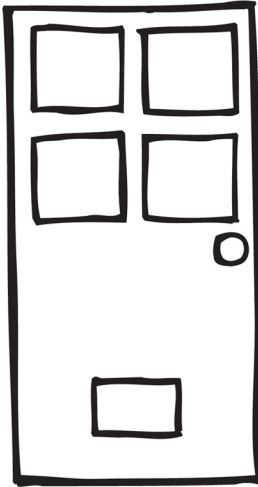
“Eliyas go and get your angels book,” Mum said.

When I grabbed it for her, she turned to the pages at the end to remind us of a **POWERFUL DUA TO SAY FOR PROTECTION.** Here, you have to read it too, it’s awesome:



1

When you step out of your door to go out, and say this dua:



BISMILLAH
TAWWAKALTU
ALALLAH LA HAWLA
WALA QUWWATA
ILLA BILLAH

The two angels that protect you respond to you.

When you say the Bismillah - in the name of Allah - part of the dua, they

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Pages from Elias Explains
Angels.

say, "In the name of Allah, you've been **GUIDED**." 😊

When you say, "Tawwakaltu alallah - I put my full trust in Allah," they say, "You've been **DEFENDED** (against anyone that's going to try to harm you today)." 😡

When you say, "La hawla wala quwwata illa billah - there is no power or might except that belongs to Allah," they say, "And you've been **PROTECTED** (from all harm of the day)." 😊

And the shayateen* that come to mess with you while you're out and about start getting all hopeless as

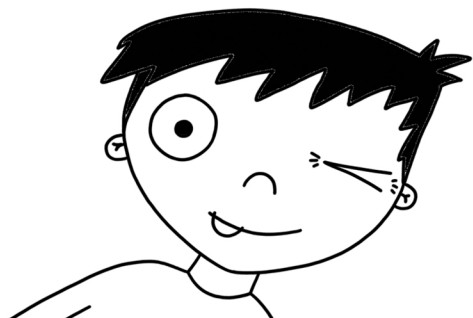
*This is the plural of Shaytan

their plans completely **FLOP!** They ask each other, "What can we do with someone who has been **GUIDED, DEFENDED AND PROTECTED?!**"

OH YEAAAAAH!

TAKE THAT!

YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING!



So obviously those shayateen run away.

HOW COOL IS THAT?

I think once you know this, it's **absolutely nuts** to ever step out of your house without saying this dua. I made sure I memorised it STRAIGHT AWAY, and now when I go out, I feel **INCREDIBLE**, like Allah's shield is all around me.

(You can read the hadith from Tirmidhi about this in Zanib Mian's 30 Hadith for Kids book)

And then they showed us two more duas which if we say them with **REAL BELIEF IN ALLAH'S POWER, AND TRUST IN OUR HEARTS, ALLAH'S PROTECTION WILL BE WITH US.**

Bismillahil-ladhi la yadurru ma'as-mihi shai'un fil-ardi wa la fis-sa-ma'i, wa Huwas-Sami'ul-'Alim (In the Name of Allah with Whose Name there is protection against every kind of harm in the earth or in the heaven, and He is the All-Hearing and All-Knowing).

Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi.

Say this three times in the morning and three times in the evening and nothing will harm you.

Allaahummak-fineehim bimaa shi'ta (O Allah, suffice protect me against them however You wish).

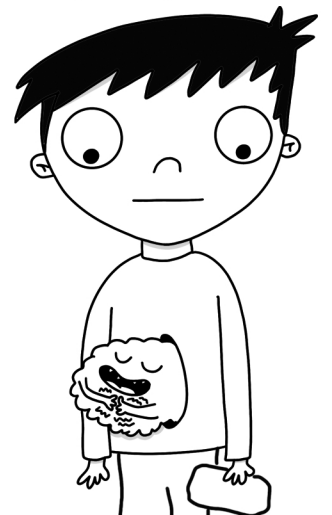
Muslim

so where do we go from here? 😊

After I said the duas, I felt a lot lighter. And a lot safer.

Mum and Dad also reminded me of a few things which I already told you about in *Eliyas Explains Why Does Allah Let Bad Things Happen*. Which I'm definitely going to read now to remember why evil can happen if Allah is in control of everything and how we can handle things like a **GOAT** if bad things do happen.

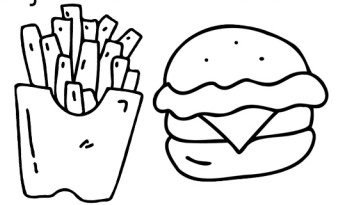
My tummy growled then, so we moved to the kitchen to have some snacks. I couldn't help but think about the racists that would be terrorising the streets that evening, and I wondered what we should do about it. I asked my parents if we should go to



the streets to **PICK FIGHTS WITH THE BAD GUYS AND SCARE THEM AWAY.** Show them who's boss? Like in the movies?

My Mum and Dad that would be a **VERY BAD IDEA.** They said that would only make things worse and would make us just as bad as the rioters. They said Islam teaches us to **respond with what is better.** Don't respond to hatred and violence with more violence. Dad said it takes a lot more strength to respond with **wisdom and kindness** to someone who is wronging you, than it does to just punch them in the face, which made me giggle. 😄

Mum told us about how Imam Adam Kelwick at the Abdullah Quilliam masjid in Liverpool handled the far-right mob that came to attack his masjid. He and the people at the mosque made **burgers and chips** for everyone standing outside seething hatred. The police were there and they waited until the mob was as calm as can be



before Imam Adam went outside to speak with them and share food. **Mmmmmmm**
I'm always in a good mood when I get a burger! 😄

"He sounds like a lovely Imam, just like Imam Abdullah from the *Meet the Maliks: Twin Detectives* books!" Aasiya beamed.

"I was thinking the same!" Mum said.

We rummaged around the kitchen looking for snacks while we talked, and I found out that **PEOPLE HAVE A FEAR OF THINGS THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND.** They feel unsafe because they just don't get it. They don't get why we do some things the way we do, why we pray, why we eat halal meat, that kind of thing. **The PEOPLE that do have a problem with MUSLIMS aren't upset because they know what ISLAM is. They're upset because they have no CLUE what ISLAM is.** So, reaching out and helping people understand and showing them that we will always behave the way Allah wants us to behave as Muslims is the best thing to do. In every situation, we have to pause and think what the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) would do and that's what we should

do, instead of behaving the way our **EGOS** want us to. By the way, I'm writing a book all about the Prophet (saw) and what he was like, so in December inshaAllah, I can tell you how he behaved.

My brain completely agreed with whole thing about not getting into fights, because the other day, I saw two truck drivers get into a fight, and it was **ugly**. There were more swear words flying around than I've ever heard before and none of them were looking like they would back down. 😡



I was watching in horror, and from where I was, and I could see what none of them could see in all their **HOT ANGER** – that if one of them got violent, it would only get worse. Dad was with me, and he said, **one of them needs to be the stronger person and back down. Even if he's right**, or this won't end well. Dad actually got out the car and gently approached one of the drivers and helped him walk away. And that was the end of it. Much better ending than if they had both gone home with a **BROKEN NOSE** and **WOBBLY TEETH**. Oh, and the guy that walked away from the one that was still swearing, definitely looked **cooler**. 😊

"It will all settle down and even though we will be more careful when we're out, we won't have to stay indoors every day," Mum assured.

"So, trampoline park on Friday after Jummah?" Aasiya asked.

"Sure," Dad nodded. "With ice-cream afterwards." 😊

"What's going to happen now?" I wondered out loud as I bit into a carrot stick dipped in creamy hummus. "I mean we have to do something to make sure more people don't get turned into **ZOMBIES** by the hate spreaders."

Mum and Dad quickly smiled at each other before they both stared at me as if I just won a **Nobel peace prize**. For a second, I thought they were proud I was eating carrots without being bribed with samosas, but then I realised it was because of what I had said.


"Eliyas, I am so **proud of you,**" Dad said.

"You are exactly *WHAT THIS WORLD NEEDS,*" Mum cooed. "Determination to do good and put things right."

"I'll do it too!" Aasiya quickly said.


"It will take work, and it will take time, but we have to do it," Dad agreed.


HE EXPLAINED THAT FROM NOW ON, WE WOULD ALL HAVE TO DO THESE THINGS TO STOP MORE PEOPLE GETTING BRAINWASHED INTO HATING MUSLIMS AND OTHER MINORITIES:

 **Hold the newspapers and journalists accountable for their words. The ones who have said and done things to get us to where we are today and any in future who put out harmful ideas against Muslims and immigrants.**

 **Hold TV and film producers accountable for portraying people of colour in a negative way.**

 **Teach children in schools about racism, Islamophobia and the way the media controls how we think.**

 **Help to fight ignorance in any way you can. Talk to people. Share books with schools and friends. Invite neighbours for food.**

 **Stand up to prejudice whenever you see it. If one of your friends says something racist, it could even be a friend that's a person of colour, tell them you don't like what they've said and why.**

"By coming together and with trust in Allah, we will get through this and **GROW STRONGER** and closer as an ummah," Dad said.

Mum smiled, "I already see one good thing that's come out of this is that all the minorities; black people, Asian people, Muslims and more, as well as good, ant-racism people; are coming together in unity to stand up against this. We all have each other."

We all smiled. It was a nice thought. 😊

Mum and Dad told me that 1400 years ago **Prophet Muhammad** (peace and blessings be upon him) taught people not to judge people or treat them differently because of their skin colour or where they are from. Once, when the Prophet heard a friend call his other friend, Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him), 'the son of a black woman,' he showed that he was **SERIOUSLY UNIMPRESSED** by this and said to his friend, 'you are a man who still has traits of ignorance in him.'


"OOOOOH," I said when I heard that bit. And I listened carefully to what my parents told us next, so I can tell you all about it too, even though Yusuf was being really distracting by blowing bubbles right next to my face. I'm talking about **SALIVA BUBBLES** this time, which is **GROSS**. I don't know how he does it.

Basically, in his last public speech, which was kind of like a goodbye, so it included all the really important stuff, the **Prophet** (salallahu alayhi wasalam) wanted to leave people with, he said:

"All mankind is from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; a white has no superiority over a black, nor does a black have any superiority over a white except by piety and good action."

Mum and Dad have told us that before and I like hearing it. I like thinking of all of us humans as one species, treating each other with respect and kindness and not thinking any of us are better than anyone else just because of


our skin colour. I know it sounds cheesy, but it's actually **COOL**.

As we put our snack plates in the dishwasher, Mum gave me a hug, "You'll see that **ALLAH HAS PLANNED SOME GOOD TO COME OUT OF ALL THIS** insha'Allah. You're determined to make a change, and your dad is eager to continue writing more books with Muslim characters. That's already something." 

"I'm going to write a poem about it too!" said Aasiya happily, "To share with my class when I go back to school."


(If you've read any of my **Eliyas Explains** books, you'll know my Dad is an **author**)

"That's wonderful sweetie!" Mum hugged her tight.

And Dad marched over like a robot and hugged us all in his strong **PROTECTIVE** arms, just as the **adhaan** started sounding through our house. It was the call to prayer, so we could reconnect with the **MASTER OF THE UNIVERSE, ALLAH, THE GUARDIAN AND PROTECTOR AND FEEL HIS PEACE.** 

OK, wait, I'm **back with an update**. I drew that line above because I thought that was the end, but I had to come back and tell you more. That evening, and the next day, we watched the news and Mum and Dad checked their socials and guess what? The rioters didn't even show up in all the places they threatened they were going to be! But who did show up? Thousands of good people who are with us, who stood outside to **SAY NO TO RACISM**. How cool is that?!

And that's not all! Remember Mum said some good will come out of all this? I already saw it! Dad showed me a video of **IMAM ADAM KELWICK**, where he had opened the doors of his mosque to some of the people that had been rioting outside the masjid before, so they could meet real Muslims, ask questions, and enjoy food.

Those people were completely changed! One guy came on the video to say he's learnt a lot, and he just looked so happy to be there. Alhamdulillah! That's how things work out when you love Allah and follow His Deen! 

Also, while I'm HERE, I had an idea! I think all of us kids should **RESPOND WITH BETTER.** We're kids, we're creative, we're motivated, and I think we can help to **FIGHT RACISM** and **ANTI-MUSLIM NONSENSE.** So, think of YOUR way of doing it, and DO IT!

Get your adults to post in on their socials with #RespondWithBetter and tag @muslimchildrensbooks

I can't wait to see what you do!

Let's show people how awesome Islam is!



ZANIB MIAN IS THE AUTHOR OF THE **PLANET OMAR** AND **MEET THE MALIKS** SERIES OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS.

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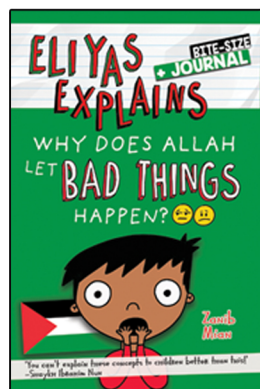
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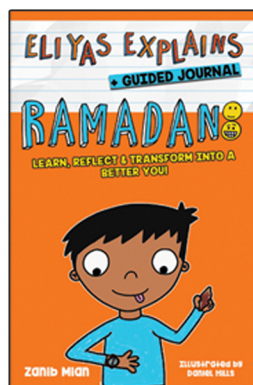
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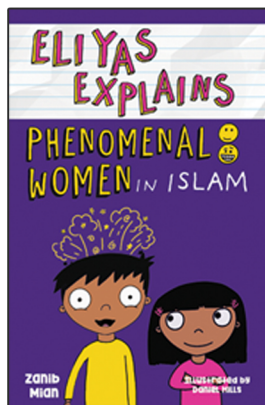
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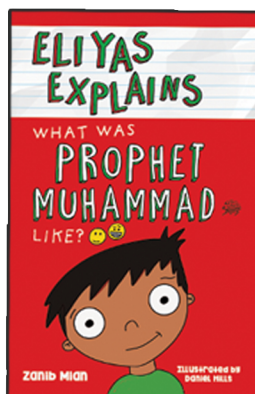
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