

MY LAUGH-OUT-LOUD LIFE

MAYHEM MISSION

BURHANA ISLAM



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*For my family,
May He always keep us close.*

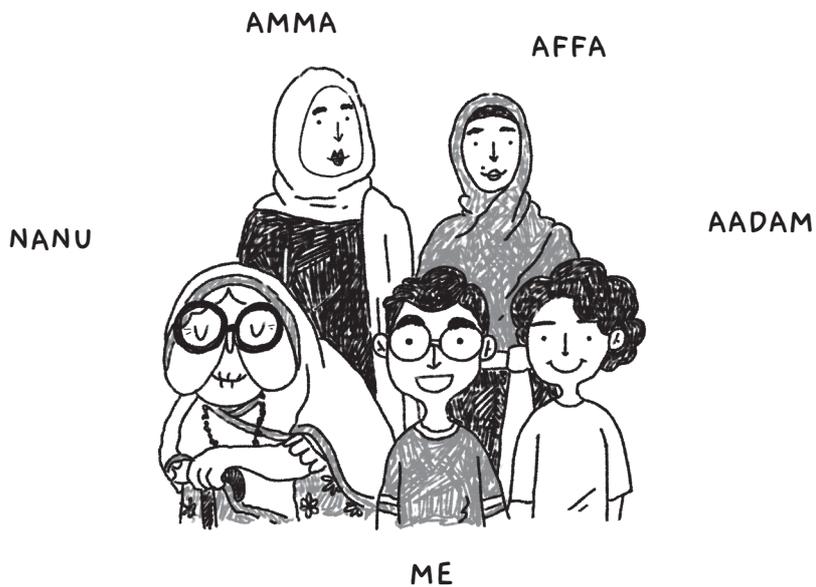
~~MY SUMMER HOLIDAY STORY~~
~~THE ADVENTURES OF YUSUF ALI KHAN~~
~~MY LAUGH-OUT-LOUD LIFE~~
By Yusuf Ali Khan (Age 9 and 3/4)

Miss Minchell, my brand-new Year 5 teacher (yes, that's right, you heard it here first: Year 5! I'm one of the big boys now) has told our class to write about our summer holidays and she gave us this booklet to do it. Yes, I know, teachers make us do this nearly every year and, normally, I'm the third-last person to fall for this kind of stuff. The second-last person would be my cousin, Aadam, and the last person would be my arch-nemesis, Bashir, but we NEVER talk about Bashir.

BUT (and this is a big, big **BUT**), Miss Minchell said, and these were her exact words (no word of a lie): "There MAY be a little prize for the best storyteller in our class."

Then she winked at me. **DIRECTLY AT ME.**
Nobody else - just me. It couldn't be a coincidence that she sat me in the first row, right in front of her desk, so I knew this was her way of secretly communicating to me that she had a pair of special edition Black Panther gloves with battle sounds with my name on it. ~~†Chatta~~ Miss Minchell, I will NOT let you down.

So here it is, my summer holiday story AKA The Adventures of Yusuf Ali Khan AKA My Laugh-Out-Loud Life. Now, let me introduce you to the main characters in my story...



Yusuf (THAT'S ME):

- I'm 9 years old (and 3/4), which basically means I'm almost an adult.
- Even though I'm almost an adult, Amma says I'm still growing into my teeth.
- I wear glasses - Affa says I have square eyes from being on my tablet too much.
- You might recognise my name from the Penalty Points board, but Amma has made me change my ways. She can be very persuasive.

AMMA (my mum):

- When she's wearing her hijab, she can look like an angel - especially with that smile.
- At home, she looks wild. Sometimes I think her hair is secretly hiding horns.
- Usually seen carrying a slipper to throw at me (see: persuasive).

NANU (my grandma i.e. Amma's mum):

- LOVES ME TO BITS (just like she should).
- She has no teeth and is always sucking on gwa and fan (betel nuts and leaves) like it's oxygen. She's not wearing lipstick and she

isn't a vampire (I hope). It's the fan juice that makes her mouth red!

- She always has a tasbeeh (prayer beads) around her neck.

AFFA (my sister):

- Her eyebrows are always wrinkled because Nanu always picks on her.

- She has TWO names (Tammy and Farhana), which is SUPER confusing. But because she's soooooo much OLDER than me, I have to call her Affa, anyway (it's a Bengali thing).

- Her head is quite big, probably because she's got a very big brain. I think that's why she has a fringe. (Nanu hates the fringe).

- She's engaged to be married this summer to Umar Bhai (gross).

The other important person in my story is Aadam, my favourite cousin (and I have hundreds of cousins to choose from so that makes him extra special).

AADAM (my favourite cousin):

- My best friend in the whole galaxy.
- Has the most amazing gadgets.
- Still growing into his ears.

Normally, Aadam goes to Bangladesh for WAY more than a month during the summer, so my holidays are usually BORRRRING. All I do is sleep, eat, play on my tablet and then press repeat to do it all over again. I know it sounds fun, but it's not, especially after six whole weeks! I'll never tell anyone else this, but it actually makes me feel even more excited to go back to school again. But SSSSHHHHHHHH, that's TOP secret. I'm already the 29th least-coolest person in my class (and there are only 30 people to choose from!). That would make me a whole lot uncooler if that's even possible.

But not anymore!

This year, my homework booklet won't be filled with things I've made up - even though I do work extra hard to make them not sound like white lies (astaghfirullah).



Amma makes me say this every time I do something bad like tell fibs. It means 'God forgive me'. I secretly hope He does, otherwise I'm in big trouble especially after this summer.

I definitely didn't go to Disneyland or America or get some kind of deadly flesh-eating disease. BUT (another HUGE BUT) this time I did get myself into some extra tricky business involving THE WORLD'S HOTTEST CHILLI PEPPER, the BROWNIEST, SLOPPIEST and RUNNIEST paste in the whole wide world and a really, really, REALLY expensive red dress.

And it all started with a big sister, a bigger wedding and the BIGGEST problem I've ever had.

CHAPTER ONE

“Yusuf, are you even listening to me?”

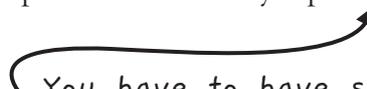
My sister, Affa, always sounds like she has a blocked nose, but she actually hasn't. That's just her voice. She quack-quack-quacks like Daffy Duck. It's hard to ignore her even if you DESPERATELY want to. And trust me, I've tried wayyyy too many times.

“I always listen.” I said. (I do, but sometimes I just pretend not to because it can get me out of very sticky situations.)

We were in her bedroom, hiding from Amma and Nanu. Affa was on the bed and I was on the floor, playing with her keyring torch.

“Prove it. What did I say then?” She looked at me with her beady eyes.

I knew that would happen. Luckily, I was always prepared because of my supersonic memory powers.

 You have to have supersonic memory powers to be a hafidh and memorise Qur'an.

I'm nowhere near finishing so don't ask me where I'm up to. Don't ask my mosque teacher either! (Seriously, don't!)

It helped that I had just written it down in my notes for my summer booklet (the one you're reading right now) too, even if I did look weird doing it.

