



NURTURING
the
Nails

Emotional Honesty
for the Female Soul

UMM ZAKIYYAH

**Nurturing the Nafs: Emotional Honesty for
the Female Soul**

by Umm Zakiyyah

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

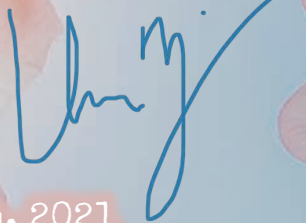
nafs: the spirit-soul or inner self

This interactive journal, *Nurturing the Nafs: Emotional Honesty for the Female Soul*, accompanies the *Our Beautiful Qur'an Journey (Tadabbur)* course by the same name (via uzhearthub.com).

In this journal of personal reflections and quotes, I am offering you a glimpse into my own journey as a female soul.

I pray it inspires you to you embrace what it means to be honest with yourself during your brief sojourn on earth, such that your hurting heart is healed, your restless nafs is calmed, and your struggling soul is nourished.

Your sister in faith,




May 29th, 2021
17th of Shawwal 1442 AH





For the feminine soul seeking healing, tranquility, and peace.



“So often people ask, ‘If you could give advice to your younger self, what would you say?’ And each time, I think of saying something like, ‘Trust no one but God,’ or ‘Hold on to your faith,’ or ‘Remember, your soul matters more than anything or anyone else.’ But now, I feel my throat closing and tears filling my eyes, and I think I wouldn’t say anything at all. I’d just give her a hug and hold her so tight until both of us could barely breathe. Then I’d stand there like that, letting her innocent, sweet soul feel my arms around her as the silence of the moment envelops us. Because she doesn’t need to hear my words. She needs to hear my heart. And in that fleeting moment, if I should ever be gifted with such, I so desperately need her to know, in case she ever doubts it later on: You are loved.”

—from the journal of Umm Zakiyyah



PART ONE

Our Beautiful Tests

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِّهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴿٧﴾



“Indeed, We have made that which is on the earth adornment [and beautification] for it that We may test them [as to] which of them is best in deed.”

—Qur’an (Al-Kahf, 18:7)



One

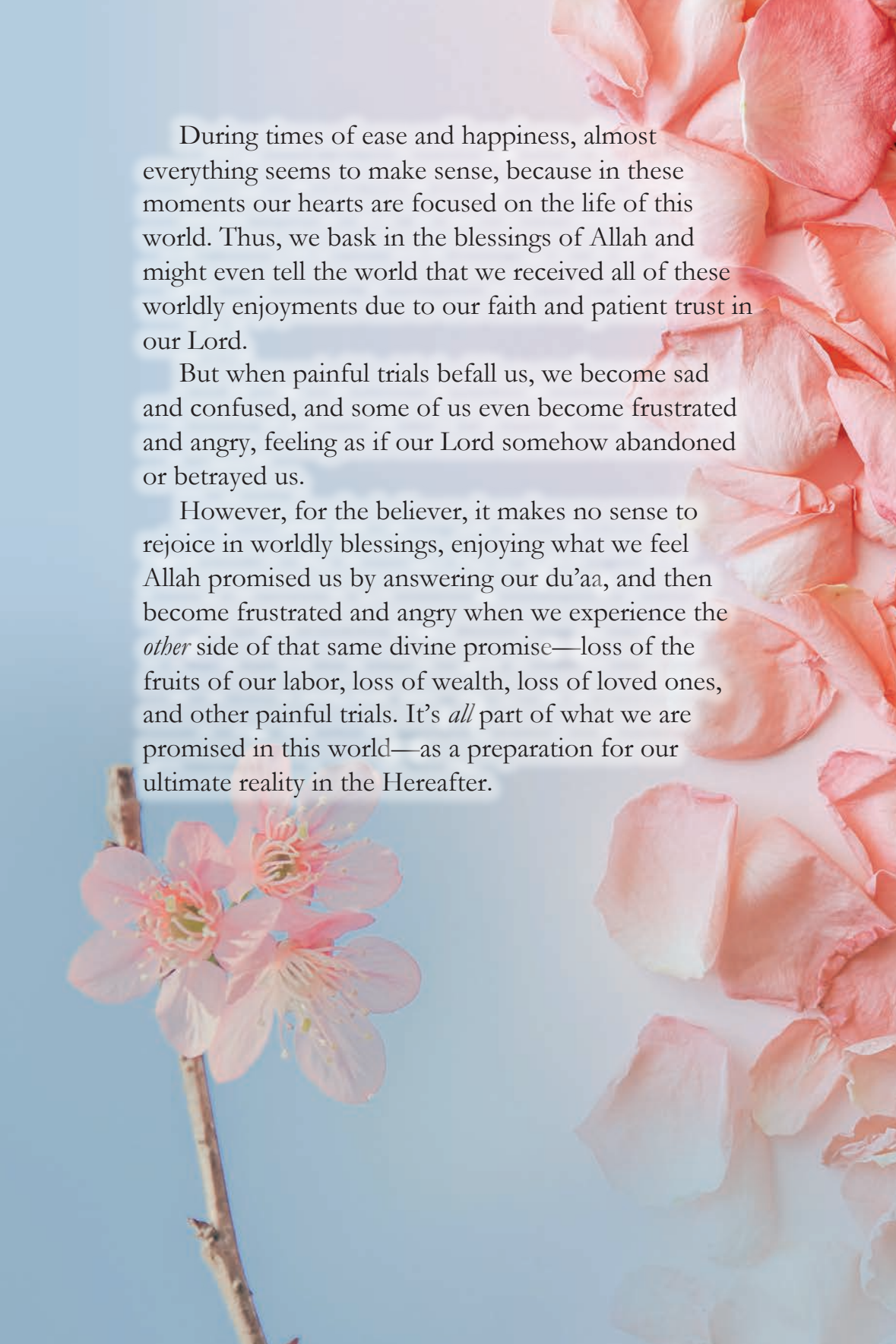
MAKING SENSE OF THE TESTS

Understand this. If your heart and mind are not focused on the Hereafter, almost nothing that our Creator says will make sense, especially in times of trial.

There is deep wisdom in Allah over and over again mentioning belief in Allah and the Last Day as a basic, foundational sign of *emaan* (true faith) in the human heart.

Without this focus on the Last Day—the time of our ultimate Judgment and recompense in the Hereafter—we will live a life of self-delusion, hungrily chasing “dreams” and wealth and fleeting happiness, and become really confused when we suffer pain and loss in this world.





During times of ease and happiness, almost everything seems to make sense, because in these moments our hearts are focused on the life of this world. Thus, we bask in the blessings of Allah and might even tell the world that we received all of these worldly enjoyments due to our faith and patient trust in our Lord.

But when painful trials befall us, we become sad and confused, and some of us even become frustrated and angry, feeling as if our Lord somehow abandoned or betrayed us.

However, for the believer, it makes no sense to rejoice in worldly blessings, enjoying what we feel Allah promised us by answering our du'aa, and then become frustrated and angry when we experience the *other* side of that same divine promise—loss of the fruits of our labor, loss of wealth, loss of loved ones, and other painful trials. It's *all* part of what we are promised in this world—as a preparation for our ultimate reality in the Hereafter.

These worldly experiences (of both ease and hardship) are to test the human heart to see whose claim of faith is true.

Allah says what has been translated to mean,

**“Do the people think that they will be left to say,
‘We believe’ and they will not be tried?”**

(Al-‘Ankaboot, 29:2).

Allah further tells us,

“Wealth and children are the adornment [and beautification] of the life of this world. But the good righteous deeds that last, are better with your Lord for rewards and better in respect of hope”

(Al-Kahf, 18:46).



أَحْسِبَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يَتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢﴾

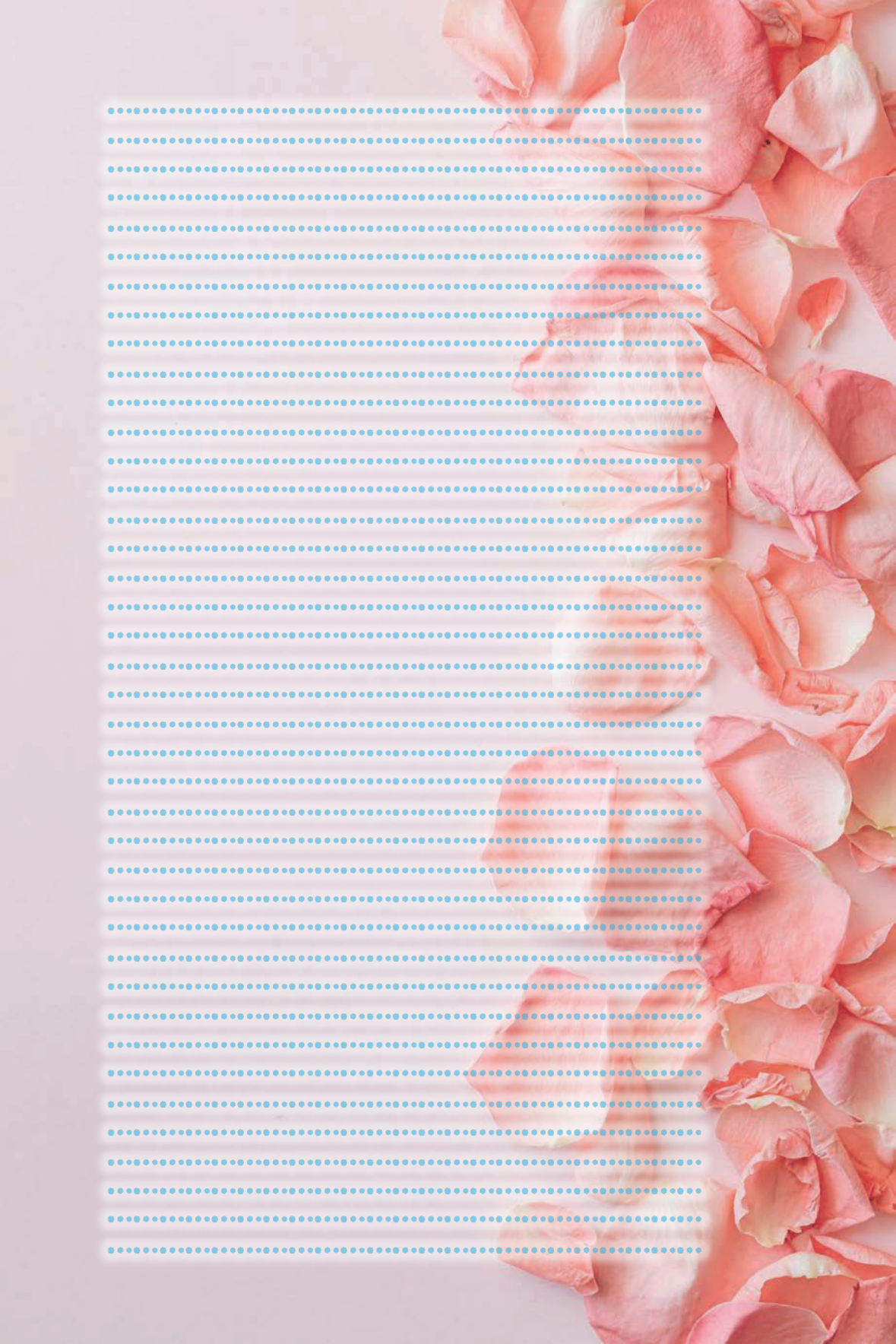
(Al-Ankaboot, 29:2)

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ

(Al-Kahf, 18:46)

أَمَلًا ﴿٤٦﴾





Two READING THE SIGNS

In the Qur'an, Allah says what has been translated to mean,

“Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.

Those who remember Allah (always and in prayers) standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying):

‘Our Lord! You have not created (all) this without purpose, glory to You! (Exalted be You above all that they associate with You as partners). Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire’”

(Ali ‘Imraan, 3:190-191).

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

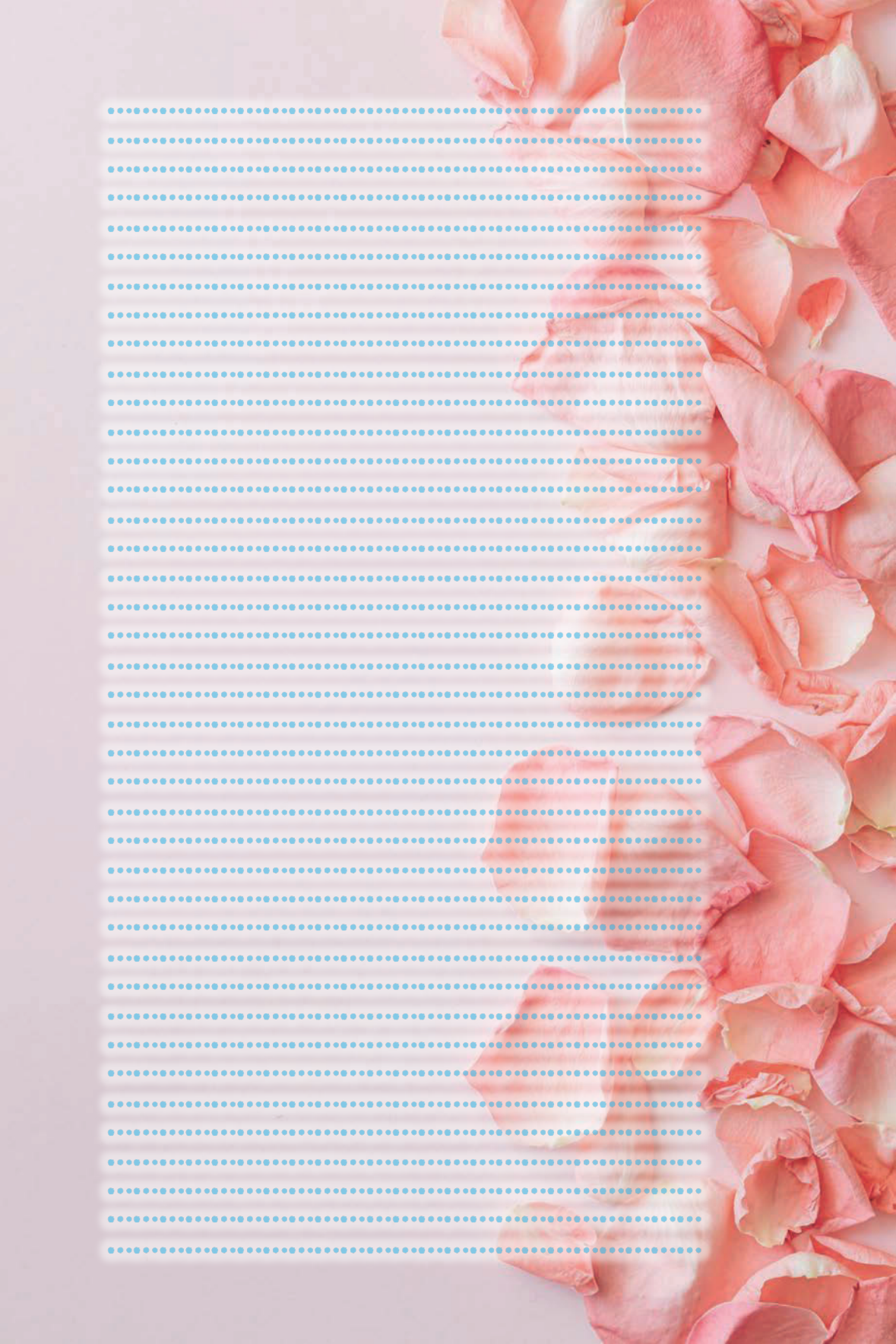
When we are honest with ourselves, we see the signs of Allah all around us, and every single sign in this world—whether on the earth or within our own bodies and souls—points to our purpose of creation: worshipping and submitting to Allah, our Merciful Rabb, until we are lowered beneath the ground.

But the human soul is restless and weak. It is easily distracted by the *zeenah* (adornment and beautification) of this world. This *zeenah* sometimes distracts us so much that it begins to fill our hearts until we begin to genuinely believe that our entire purpose in this world is to seek as much of it as possible.

Allah and His Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) have taught us that the *zeenah* of this world includes every pleasure, adornment, and beautiful distraction in our lives. These pleasures and adornments include wealth, beauty, status, privilege, children, and even falling in love and getting married.

Most human souls—whether Muslim or non-Muslim—count it as the highest success in this world to possess all (or most) of these.

But for the believing souls who begin to feel satisfied with this definition of worldly success, it behooves them to honestly ask their hearts, “Am I reading these divine signs correctly?”





Three

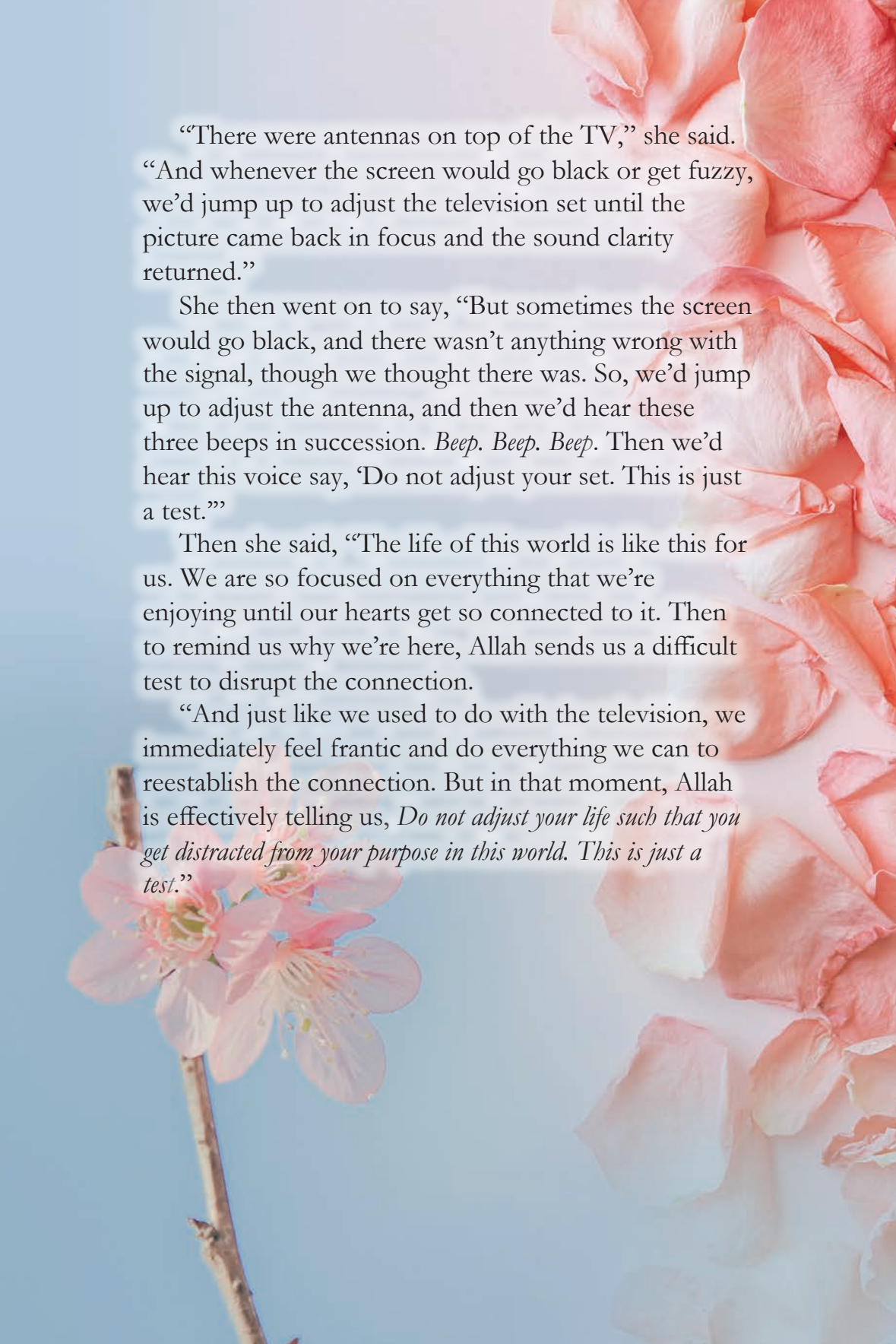
THIS IS JUST A TEST

One day my mother and I were discussing our reflections on some ayaat of the Qur'an wherein Allah reminds us over and over of the inherent nature of this world: that it is full of both ease and hardship as a way to test our souls on our journey to the Hereafter.

I said, "It's so strange. No matter how much we are reminded of this in the Qur'an and in our own lives, we get so frustrated, confused, and frantic whenever we experience any loss in this world."

Then my mother shared how when she reflects on the nature of this world, she is reminded of how television used to be in her younger years. At the time, television was relatively new as a household norm, and there were no opportunities to record shows. Thus, if you missed a show, you just missed it.

So, people were glued to that TV when their favorite show came on, and they didn't want to miss a single minute.



“There were antennas on top of the TV,” she said. “And whenever the screen would go black or get fuzzy, we’d jump up to adjust the television set until the picture came back in focus and the sound clarity returned.”

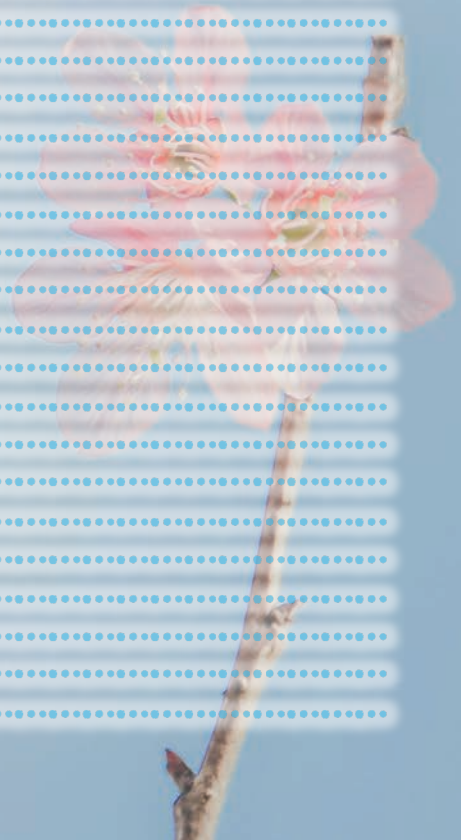
She then went on to say, “But sometimes the screen would go black, and there wasn’t anything wrong with the signal, though we thought there was. So, we’d jump up to adjust the antenna, and then we’d hear these three beeps in succession. *Beep. Beep. Beep.* Then we’d hear this voice say, ‘Do not adjust your set. This is just a test.’”

Then she said, “The life of this world is like this for us. We are so focused on everything that we’re enjoying until our hearts get so connected to it. Then to remind us why we’re here, Allah sends us a difficult test to disrupt the connection.

“And just like we used to do with the television, we immediately feel frantic and do everything we can to reestablish the connection. But in that moment, Allah is effectively telling us, *Do not adjust your life such that you get distracted from your purpose in this world. This is just a test.*”



A central writing area consisting of a white background with horizontal blue dotted lines, resembling a notebook page. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.





PART TWO

Souls Seeking Love

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ
مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُفَكِّرُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

“And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought.”

—Qur’an (Ar-Room, 30:21)

ALSO BY UMM ZAKIYYAH

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Hearts We Lost

The Friendship Promise

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even if. bits and pieces from the heart of
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Back To Allah

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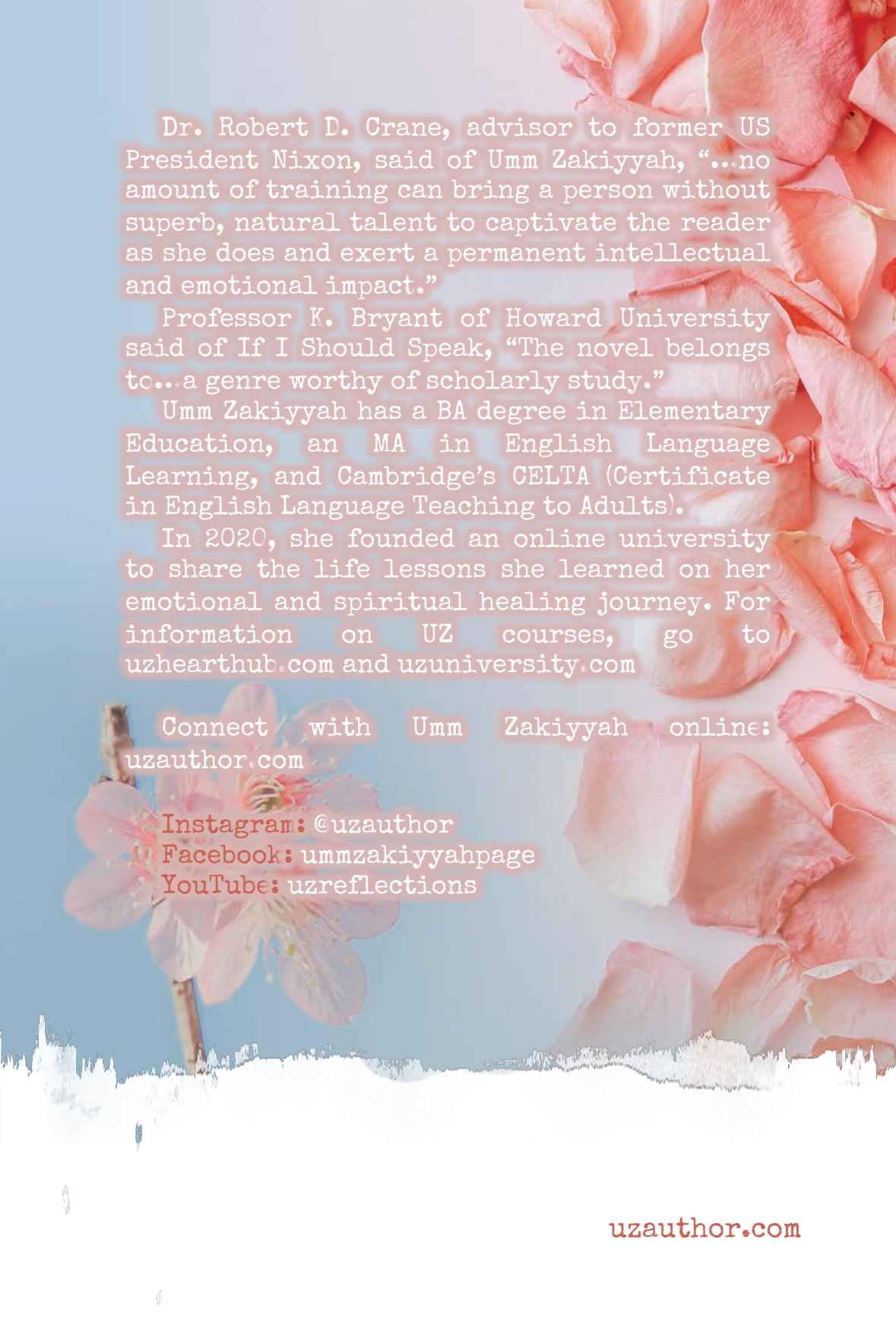
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Known for her soul-touching books and spiritual reflections on the Qur'an and emotional healing, Umm Zakiyyah is a world-renowned author and soul-care mentor.

Umm Zakiyyah studied Arabic, Qur'an, Islamic sciences, 'aqedah, and tafseer in America, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia for more than fifteen years. She currently teaches tajweed (rules of reciting Qur'an), tafseer (explanation of the meaning of the Qur'an), and tadabbur (deep reflections on the Qur'an) via uzhearthub.com.

Daughter of American converts to Islam, Umm Zakiyyah (also known by her birth name Ruby Moore and her "Muslim" name Baiyinah Siddeeq) is the internationally acclaimed, award-winning author of more than twenty-five books, including novels, short stories, and self-help.

Her books are used in high schools and universities in the United States and worldwide, and her work has been translated into multiple languages. Her work has earned praise from writers, professors, and filmmakers. Her novel *His Other Wife* is now a short film.



Dr. Robert D. Crane, advisor to former US President Nixon, said of Umm Zakiyyah, “...no amount of training can bring a person without superb, natural talent to captivate the reader as she does and exert a permanent intellectual and emotional impact.”

Professor K. Bryant of Howard University said of *If I Should Speak*, “The novel belongs to...a genre worthy of scholarly study.”

Umm Zakiyyah has a BA degree in Elementary Education, an MA in English Language Learning, and Cambridge’s CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults).

In 2020, she founded an online university to share the life lessons she learned on her emotional and spiritual healing journey. For information on UZ courses, go to uzhearthub.com and uzuniversity.com

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