First Eid in America

By: Kinza Yasar

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It had been six long months since Farzeen's arrival into the little town just outside of Virginia and spring was just around the corner. What a spring it was! Just by looking outside the big window of her small apartment, all the struggles of her family's move felt worthwhile.

It was also the blessed month of Ramadan and tomorrow was Eid. In Pakistan, Eid was Farzeen's favorite holiday. After breaking the fast, Farzeen's family would all gather on the rooftop, hoping to catch a glimpse of the tiny sliver of the moon. Eid day was all about family visits, collecting Eidi money and eating so much scrumptious food.

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The next morning, Farzeen ate food that her mother had prepared the night before. The food was a reminder that Eid would never be the same now that her family had moved from Pakistan to America. She came up with a plan to make their first Eid in America a little festive.

"Ammi, can we please throw a mother-daughter Eid party for all our neighbors tonight?" Farzeen asked shyly.

Ammi reflected for a moment and then agreed. "That's a great idea! Most of our neighbors don't celebrate Eid, but they can learn, and you might make new friends along the way!"

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Farzeen hugged Ammi and ran to her desk. After shuffling through a pile of supplies, she finally settled on a roll of green paper, silver glitter paint, silver stickers, scissors, and a glue stick. Farzeen made ten green cards displaying a silver moon on the top and tiny sticker stars sparkling around it. Inside the cards, she wrote her invitation notes.

> You are invited to a Mother and Daughter Eid Party. If you are in the mood for some mouthwatering food and excited to learn about Eid, please come join us at Apartment #401 at 5 PM sharp!
>
> Thank You,
> Ayesha (Mother) & Farzeen (daughter)
>
> PS.: Farzeen is twelve years old.

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Farzeen and Ammi went door to door, sliding the invitation cards inside each mail slot in the door.

After returning, Ammi and Farzeen busied themselves with preparing fancy Eid treats. Finally, the food was prepared and the dining table was ready. The sight and smell of the food reminded Farzeen of all her earlier Eid memories.

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When it was close to five, the doorbell rang. Farzeen opened the door and greeted so many new female faces. Everyone came inside the tiny apartment.

The pretty lady with the blonde hair was the first to introduce herself: "Hi, I am Mary, and this is my daughter Lisa. We celebrate Christmas but would love to learn about Eid!"

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Next was the shy-looking Hispanic woman: "Hi, my name is Joanna, and this is my daughter Marianna. We are from Peru."

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Then, the Black lady in a lovely dress introduced herself: "Hi, I am Whitney, and this is my daughter Christie. We celebrate Hanukkah but want to learn about Eid!"

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Lastly, the lady wearing the beautiful head scarf pitched in: "Assalam-o-Alaikum and Eid Mubarak. I am Fariba, and these are my daughters Hania and Hira. We are from Morocco and just like you, we celebrate Eid."

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Farzeen was overjoyed to know that someone else in her building celebrated Eid! Soon after, Ammi and Farzeen invited everyone to the table. Everyone admired the food and ate until they could eat no more. While Ammi and Fariba reminisced how they celebrated Eid back home, Mary, Joanna, and Whitney shared their Christmas and Hanukkah stories.

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Just then, Farzeen remembered an old Islamic proverb that her grandma used to say— A lot of different flowers make a bouquet. She realized that everyone with our diverse backgrounds were the flowers that completed a beautiful bouquet called America.
It was the best Eid ever; her very first Eid in America!

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