

The Color of Clouds on a Perfect Day

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Personal Narrative 7th Grade

I wake up to the sound of birds. The bright yellow sun shines through the curtains, into my light brown eyes. For a second, I feel relaxed, I feel calm, until I remember what day it is. Today, is the first day of third grade. I suddenly get hit with a mix of emotions. What is it? Excitement? Nervousness? I've been waiting for this day ever since I was little. The day when I will wear hijab, a scarf around my head that is part of my religion as a Muslim. I've been waiting and waiting, but now that the day has come, I have suddenly become worried. What if my friends don't recognize me? What if they don't know who I am when I wear a scarf? And even if they do recognize me, will they think I'm wearing a blanket on my head, just like they did when they saw my mother a few years ago?

I know I want to wear hijab, the problem isn't that. Wearing hijab is a choice I have made, and one that I will not change. I'm scared because I don't know how my school is going to react. I'm going to be the only young girl with hijab in my whole town, and that's the thought that makes me nervous; the thought of what others will think.

I try to clear my mind from the worries that have overtaken it. I try to think about how excited I've always been for the first day of school. I tell myself that this is no different from past years, but I'm not very good at lying, especially to myself.

I start to wear the clothes I had laid out last night, and when I look at myself in the clean mirror, I see a normal girl with a striped pink dress staring back at me. I know that I'm missing only one thing: the white hijab I had bought for this special day. I wear my hijab with excitement, but also nervousness. And this time, when I stare into the mirror, I see a beautiful, but unique girl looking back at me. My hijab, the color of pureness, the color of the clouds on a perfect day, has a flower on the side. I walk out of my room, wondering what my mother will think.

"You look beautiful," my father and mother exclaim at the same time. And for once, I agree with this statement. I agree that this white hijab, the color of snow, has made me look more like me.

"Thank you," I softly reply.

I know that I'm ready to face my fear now, so I grab my navy backpack, which like my hijab, has a flower on it. As I wait for my parents to come, I feel so much older. After years and years of learning about hijab, and watching my mother wear it, it is finally my turn to do the same.

I start to walk up our street, my small fingers intertwined with my mother's fingers. It never takes too long to walk to my school, but today it feels especially short. Today, it feels like it only

takes a few milliseconds. As my hand is in my mother's, I start to feel safe. I start to feel relaxed again. Yet, those thoughts all wash away like water in an ocean, and new ones replaced them as I step onto the dark, wet concrete of our school. My hand starts to shake, and I can hear my heart beating faster and faster. Except for my shaking hand, I do not move; only the birds do, along with the all the loud kids on the play structure. I stand, my hand in my mother's and just wait, until I suddenly hear my friend call out my name.

"Mom, mom, it's Shira! She recognized me!" I exclaim with excitement, like a toddler who is about to go on a merry-go-round for the first time.

I let go of Mother's hand, with confidence now. Still, I can't stop from thinking one thing over and over again. My friend recognized me! I stand for a moment, observing everything before heading towards my classmates. I stand as people run past me, and reunite with their friends again after three months. I stand, and listen to the birds chirp, jumping from tree to tree. I stand, reminding myself about why I wear hijab. I wear hijab, because I don't want people to like or dislike me because of the color of my hair, or how long it is, or even how pretty my earrings are. When people look at me, I want them to see who I really am. I want them to see that yes, I am a Muslim girl, who is compassionate, helpful, kind, curious, encouraging, and is not afraid to show who she really is. Hijab is now part of my identity, and yes, I know that I will face challenges and maybe even be bullied at times because of wearing it, but I try to remember something my father once told me: "If you have a walnut in your hand, and everyone tells you that it is a diamond, you still know that it's a walnut. And if you have a diamond in your hand, while the whole world tells you that it's a walnut, it wouldn't matter, because the thing in your hand is still a diamond."

I take a deep breath, and with more confidence now, I walk towards my classroom, ready for the adventures ahead.