

I MAY END SOON

My

**BIG
GIRL**

Dream

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BY

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CHAPTER ONE

“Pass me the remote, please.” said Bella.

“For what? I hope you don’t want to change the channel because you know the Choice Music Top Tens for this week just started and I haven’t seen my favorite music video yet.”, replied Joe.

“But this is just unfair. You’ve been seeing TV channels of your choice for quite a long while and I’ve just been looking on and viewing shows against my interest and you still don’t want to release the remote. The Big Brother Reality show has been running since and I would like to see what is happening in the house. I have really missed the show. You have no choice but to pass me the remote if you don’t want trouble.” said Bella.

“But I seriously think your penchant for this show is getting excessive. I remember seeing you watching the show after I came home around 4:00 pm yesterday and you were still at it until Mom changed the channel to view the news at 10. I just hope your ardency for that show would not lead you to applying to participate in the show when you have the opportunity. Mom may nearly kill you if you try it. You can have the remote, I’m going out.” said Joe.

“Look at this one talking. So what about you and your penchant for music? You remember that day when you were rushed to hospital after a motorcycle hit you from behind when loud music filled your ears from both sides of the headphone. The motorcyclist proclaimed that he had tried to prevent such occurrence by pressing the horn multiple times but you were just too engrossed in your music and you couldn’t hear the alarm because you got both ears blocked with the headphone with loud music playing in it. See, if you let the lifestyle of those gangsters and rappers who smoke weed influence you and you start smoking weed, Mom may nearly kill you.” replied Bella feeling satisfied that she gave him a suitable reply.

That was part of their lives – Mr. Uthman and his family. Muslim names, but lived secular lifestyles. However, the places where they were recognized with Islam in their lives included passports and documents and that they were given Muslim names. And as for where the names “Bella” and “Joe” came from, they were actually not given those names during their infant ages, rather they were names they adopted for themselves. Because of their uncontrolled hankering for the secular lifestyle, they had the tendency to be ashamed of their Muslim names. They both also had their career choices they wished to chase and they felt a Muslim name or identity would not befit those choices. So Zaynab was Bella and Hassan was Joe.

The family of Mr. Uthman was quite rich, and this made them exposed to various opportunities in the worldly interests. The Children attended a sophisticated international secondary school, and were also privileged to travel to western countries for summer vacations and holidays. They were also sociable individuals, and they consequentially met different people and attended different occasions. All of these lines point that they were immensely exposed to secular lifestyle and it profoundly affected them. Secondary school eventually ended for Bella. She became a grown lady, her mind occupied with various aspirations in her worldly interests.

Bella, being an extrovert, was also outspoken. She therefore hoped to explore opportunities into the media and entertainment world. Joe being an ardent lover of music, hoped to become a musician.

Secondary school ended for Bella, the journey to secure admission into the university began. There was not really much difficulty in the process, as private and sophisticated universities in the country were not attended by a large number of people. That was because it took a huge amount of money to maintain and upgrade the assets of the institution, in addition to the fat salaries their staffs were given all of which consequentially contributed to the expensive rates of the tuition and other fees. There was a high percentage of poor people in the country and these people often found it difficult to afford such requirements. So, the percentage of people who could afford was lower than that of people who could not which caused the competition to get admitted into such universities to be relatively low.

Bella eventually gained admission into the university and was even given the course of her choice – Media and Performing Arts. Her joy heightened as a result and she felt she was making progress in her aspirations. Bella arrived school and was shown to her hostel which she was to share with three other people. There, she met people – these secular set of people whose religious beliefs she knew not and did not really care about, Adele, Ellen and Genevieve. However, there were some things about the personalities of these three ladies that caught Bella's interest. All of them – including Bella were striving to become celebrated figures and rank high in their relevance in the society. Adele was a student in the Theatre Arts department, and she was aspiring to become an actress and model, and have a conspicuous mark in the entertainment and modeling industries. Ellen who was a political science student had the itch to engage in political affairs and to take up public posts and offices. As for Genevieve, she wanted to be a boss of her own enterprises and acquire various establishments in her name. What was she studying? – Business Management. They all saw that they shared some things in common and were all motivated to unite and combine ideas, and to strive towards attaining some accomplishments. One of the ideas that came up in the process which they all agreed to was to join a movement that propagates and supports the idea of women empowerment and feminism. Various programs did they engage in and different experiences did they have. These experiences however affected their mentalities and their actions.

“Hey girls! What do you girls think about what the president said in the last program we attended? I was so motivated by her words and have been having this strong itch to carry on with this movement. I feel this movement provides solutions to the problems we encounter in satisfying our desire of a remarkable women societal relevance.” said Bella.

“Could you not perceive sense in what she was saying? And I could not just help but reason with her as I have witnessed some true life cases affected by some things discussed in the last program. I have witnessed cases of some widows who were full housewives, being deprived of the right to their deceased husband's wealth after his death for some reasons, making them poor and strive lamentably to survive. I just don't think I can cope being in such a deplorable situation. If those women had acquired some establishments to their names and were earning money before such calamity of their husband's death struck them, they would likely not have

been in such condition. As for me, whoever it is that I am going to marry, we must agree to equal rights between us in the house. If this agreement cannot be reached, then no marriage. That is my own plan.” said Genevieve.

“I even consider myself not to be an exception. Yes, I have witnessed some cases too concerned with this topic. And even in my case, some of the women affected are close to me. They are my relatives. That was how one of my aunts foolishly accepted the idea of being a full house wife when she got married. After having three children for her husbands, the idiot felt he should marry another wife. He married another wife, who is much younger and more presentable in physical appearance than my aunt, and guess what happened. He absconded the house with the new wife, leaving my aunt to take care of herself and three children. As in, one, two, three children. Till date, we haven’t seen the idiot. And as for my other aunt, look I don’t even want to talk about it. I consider her situation to be even more deplorable than the former. As for me, if I haven’t acquired my own multi million mansion that houses a fleet of cars of sophisticated fashion, and also a substantial amount of money in my bank account, I will not get married. I don’t even think I want to marry. If marriage will cause problems for me in the course of chasing my dreams, I will just do away with any plans for marriage. Come on, I have to make this money. I have to run things. I have to be a BIG girl.” said Adele.

”Yeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeaaaaaaaahhhhhhhh” (They all said raising their voices)

“That is my girl. You’re on point babe. Ride on.” said Genevieve.

”As for me, I’m taking mine to another level. For me, it is not just about women equality with men. It is also about women dominance over men. As in, I’m dreaming for a world where the major leadership roles across all nations of the world will be handled by women. I’m dreaming for a world where a woman will be generally considered as the head of the house who goes out to search for income to sustain the family, while the husbands will be the ones feeding the babies and changing their diapers. If not that it does not naturally happen, I would wish for the husbands to conceive, carry the fetuses and even deliver the babies.” said Ellen.

(They all laughed)

“Seriously, I’m having this feeling that we would not regret in these choices we have made. I anticipate an auspicious life ahead for us.” said Bella.

CHAPTER TWO

During school vacations, Bella didn't go home to see her family. It was quite a long distance to their family home from where the university hostels were located. The university was located on a distant region of the country quite far from their home. So, she did not bother going home. And her roommates as well, were no different in this regard. They also did not bother going to their families.

One day, Bella got a call.

"Hello mom"

"Hello, it's not mom. It's Joe."

"Joe, what's up?"

"Are you alone or you are with some people?"

"I'm alone. Hope no problem, bro?"

"I fear that you may not be able to take this or control yourself. I..."

(Cuts in) "Hey Joe! Please, tell me whatever it is."

"Dad is dead"

"What?"

"Are you coming home? Hello! Hello, are you there? Bella, are you okay? Hello"

And it happened that Bella's Dad died. After battling with a previous illness for some time, he eventually gave up the ghost. Bella, however, still chose not to go home to her family after the incident, but she was later reached to ensure that she was fine and she was being updated about the burial processes and some other family situations.

The death of Bella's dad was a phenomenon that the other three members of the family reacted to in some ways that were distinguishably unique to them.

When Bella's dad died, it served as a wake-up call for her Mom, and she was able to reflect on the reality of life. The family generally was immensely slack in their religious commitment. She contemplated on her purpose of life, and the deplorable extent to which she has not been paying attention and exerting efforts in fulfilling the purpose. She reflected on atrocious activities she had engaged in, reprehensible gatherings she had attended and some other things she did. Her heart became softened by the will of Allaah, and she felt the urge to repent.

Bella's mother repented and started offering her obligatory prayers and involving in other acts of worship.

Joe was the "cool" guy who didn't really care. It did not take much before the grief of his father's death disappeared from his heart, and he was not even really affected by it anyway. After Bella's mother repented and started practicing Islam, she wanted to influence the family, so she would tell Joe to go offer prayers. However, the feeling of regret for the past which the mother experienced was not so for Joe. Joe loved the party lifestyle, with the music, drinks and the ladies. He was concerned about music, entertainment and having fun, going for shows, visiting the cinema, going clubbing. These were part of his lifestyle, and things he was concerned with, so his heart was so hardened that the fear of Allaah had virtually no place in it. And then, his mum wanted him to offer prayers and he was like "what is this, man?" But anyways, his mother would not leave him alone on the matter, so he decided to pretend like he was praying just because of his mom. So the guy would go out in the day, engaging in things playing, having fun, cycling, visiting the girls, soccer, and some other things, and he would come in the night and pray all of the five prayers in quite a short time, hardly would it exceed ten minutes. No ablution, no actual recitation. The guy would just be moving his lips and body, going down and rising up in pretense, trying to deceive his mum into believing he was actually praying. His mom did not know that it was wrong to combine prayers in such manner due to ignorance, so she would not object to it.

As the phenomenon of her dad's death occurred when she was being influenced by the social theory and movement of feminism and some other ideas, the type of contemplation Bella had differed from that of her mom greatly.

"Hi girl! Sorry about your dad's death. I offer my sincere condolences to you. I wonder how you will be feeling about it."

"Thanks Ellen. Thanks for your concern"

"How are you feeling now?" asked Ellen

"I feel relieved, but I've been having some thoughts in my mind that stemmed from the memory or experience of what happened and I've made a decision for my life which I wish to achieve with resolution." Bella said.

"What decision? Do you mind telling me about it?" Ellen asked.

"One of the decisions or issues which some people consider important to be implemented in their lives is marriage. At some stage in some people's life, they feel this desire to opt for the marriage life. Some feel they need a partner in their life in that regard. In some cases, their bodies experiences sexual arousal or feelings and nature calls for their bodies to long for sexual pleasure, which prompts them to search for partners. But as for me, I now feel it is not worth it. Marriage is not just worth the stress and efforts exerted into maintaining it. I mean, what is the point when your partner which you've shared love or feelings with may just die and leave u one day, which may cause you heartbreak and depression. It may also happen that, you and your

partner would have jointly planned and effected some decisions in your lives which affects both of you, and then your partner may just die and leave you to deal with it. Look at my dad, he just died like that, and his death had an impact on my emotions, me being his daughter. I wonder how my mom who was his wife would feel with the nature of the bond and connection they used to share when he was alive.

So I don't feel marriage is worth going into for me, since I cannot have the guarantee that my husband would not just leave me one day, which may consequentially make me go through some psychological or emotional attack, or make me go through a hard time." Bella stated.

"So what do you plan to do, or what decision has these ideas motivated you to make?" asked Ellen.

"I don't want to get married. I just want to be a single woman all my life, a single woman with great accomplishments. And I wouldn't have to share such feelings or love with any man, to avoid suffering such heartbreak as a result. And I don't want to plan my life or share the managements of my plans or accomplishments with any man, to avoid dealing with it if he dies or leaves me. I just want to be on my own." Bella stated.

That was the situation with Bella. She didn't want to get married.

As time went on, Bella and her cohorts in feminism continued to promote their theory and movement. Bella's mom continued to practice her religion, while Joe continued with his craziness.

Eventually, Bella and her roommates, along with some other students graduated from the university. Bella and her roommates, being striving feminists, they had this tendency to study and do research in the aspiration of gaining different ideas and knowledge, and building on their potentials. So, they were quite studious students, and they did well in their academic activities and got good grades. They all obtained degrees in their respective fields.

"Now, the time has come. Our academic endeavors have ceased, and we have acquired our degrees and have built a platform on which we can start chasing our dreams and possibly accomplishing our ambitions.

The plan that I wish to implement now is to go join one of the best political parties that we have in this country. And as for me, I plan to start involving in politics at the federal level. As in, those state and local levels, are not for me. They are just below my standard." said Ellen.

"And how do you plan to do that? That seems like a herculean plan to accomplish." said Bella.

"You don't worry, girl. I have my way of doing things now. Trust me, I'll get there. Anyway, what

are your plans, girls?" said Ellen.

"As for me, as a lady born with a silver spoon in my mouth, as a lady exposed to various opportunities from various angles, I plan to use some of the money I have accumulated over the years to set myself up in one big business. I think, I will start from there, and as the money grows and the opportunities get wider, I will invest in some other things. But whichever way I go, I must be the boss and must be the one to give orders. That's for me." said Genevieve.

"As for me, the ravishing and alluring Adele, possessing the potentials of being a celebrated face of the entertainment and modeling industries, I plan to exert the phenomenal and glamorous qualities that I've got to attract suitable personalities and opportunities to myself. It is not for my type to go and start queuing for auditions which you may not eventually succeed in getting your desired opportunities. And even, if they consider you, they may start giving you some low level deals that will bring you poor and cheap pays. And as for me, I'm always on a high level, so I don't deserve all that. As in, I'm a superstar." said Adele.

"Well, I haven't really resolved for any particular plan yet. Although, I know there are various chances out there, but I've not just settled for a particular plan. I think, if I can widen my research and reach, it is possible that I would come across something big. That is for me", said Bella.

"I hope that we all accomplish our dreams and plans." said Ellen.

After a while, they all parted and went different destinations.

CHAPTER THREE

Bella eventually arrived home after her university days of a period of four years, welcomed and greeted by families, friends, and some other well-wishers.

Things have changed at home. And guess what? Joe had started to pray for real and perform other acts of worship for real. What happened to him?

As the faith in their mother's heart continued to grow, she repented from some prohibitions she had been falling into. Some of which in the form of prohibited things she viewed on satellite and TV stations. So she disconnected the satellite, and she got a video player which she used to view Dawah and useful videos. What that meant for Joe was that there were no more music videos, no more reprehensible shows and skits to be viewed on the television in the house. This was against his wish anyways, but he couldn't prevent his mum from doing what she did. So whenever Joe came home and wished to view television, he only had the option to view what had been made available by his mum of Dawah and useful videos.

It so happened, that there were times when Joe would see some lectures of Dawah on the television, and after some time, he started developing interest in viewing such lectures. As time went on, his heart started experiencing some changes, and he would be moved by what he has viewed. And it got to a time, when his heart softened and he repented to Allaah, and started praying for Allaah. As time went on, he started repenting from some prohibited things he fell into. No more girlfriends, no more music, no more music videos and the list goes on.

So when Bella came home, she realized things have changed at home. But, she was feeling uncomfortable. Her own ways were different from some of the things going on at home. The girl is a striving feminist, dreaming for a world of equality between men and women and even not wanting to get married, and a video is there playing, and on it is someone saying that Islam made the husband the protector and maintainer of the wife and gave him the responsibility of heading the household and it is obligatory for the wife to obey her husband with exception to some cases. Those experiences they used to have where their mom would take them out to the cinema, and comedy shows had ceased. The opportunity to view her favourite reprehensible TV shows on the television in the house had ceased, satellite access gone. Her brother had changed, and some of the things they use to share or do together stopped. No talk about music, artists, Hollywood and so on and so forth.

And I did talk about how their mom wanted to influence the family after she repented and started practicing Islam, she didn't leave Bella out. She started telling Bella about prayers and feeding her with words of Dawah. But, the girl's brain had been immensely manipulated by feminism and some ideas different from what her mom would tell her during the course of giving Dawah to her.

It eventually got to a stage where Bella decided she was not going to live with them anymore and go somewhere else. She then connected with some of her fellow cohorts in the feminist

movement, and after some interactions and efforts, she was able to get accommodation to live with some of them. Without the knowledge of her mother and brother, Bella was able to abscond from the house and move in with her cohorts who welcomed and received her. Bella feared that her mom and brother may be thrown into perturbation and distress if they do not hear from her, so she put a call through to her mom and declared that she had moved out of the house and was fine where she was. She also added that since she had graduated and become qualified for work, she thought that she would be able to chase her career choices in the new domicile she has found better and more conveniently than she would do if she lived with them. To further keep their hearts at rest, she professed that she would keep getting in touch with them and keep them updated about how it goes with her.

Bella got out of her family home, and once again she fell into the midst of people she shared some things in common with, the feminists. These set of feminists she now lived with had a particular lifestyle they lived. They appeared like they were into some deals and businesses, they would go out of the house like someone seeking to achieve something in the worldly interest or seeking to earn some sustenance. Because Bella had not found any formal or official job to do, she often stayed at home. On some occasions, she would witness her roommates receiving different phone calls and engage conversations on phone which seemed to her like they were securing appointments or doing business. The way they dressed for their outings, the flashy possessions they had and utilized and the lifestyle they lead all caught Bella's attention. To her, these people were leading auspicious lives, they were making it. What she had witnessed about these ladies got into her head and she felt it was time for her to start making a living too. She started seeking opportunities and she met a man named John, who was working in one of the big telecommunication companies in the country. There was vacancy in the company where John worked, so John was disseminating vacancy notices on social media which eventually caught the eyes of Bella. Bella saw that as an opportunity, and connected with John. The telecommunication company where John was working was quite a big one in the country, so people of expertise were required to manage, run and involve in the affairs and operations of the company. Bella did not have any working experience that could show the level at which she is skilled in the job, so she fell short of the vacancy's requirements. However, John was assigned to manage operations at the quarters which had the vacant office, so he had some power to influence the decisions of the company. After some confabulations between John and Bella, John declared he would offer her some help, and she was invited to the office.

"Good Morning, Sir"

"Oh! Good Morning, are you Miss Zaynab? (Remember, Bella was a name she chose for herself)"

"Yes Sir, I am."

"Oh! Please have your seat. I've been expecting you. And I also commend your punctuality. You came right on time."

"Thank you very much sir"

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