

Only You Ahmed

Episode 1: The Security Guard

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Bismillah hir Rahman nir Raheem

In the name of Allah, the most beneficent the most merciful

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Darkness

Ahmed: Alhamdulillah

Ahmed switches the bedside lamp on and gets up out of bed and heads towards the bathroom. Says a dua before entering the bathroom and relieves himself and performs wudhu. Says another dua after leaving the bathroom. He heads to the table in his room and picks up a bottle of water.

Ahmed: Bismillah hir Rahman nir Raheem

Ahmed drinks half the bottle of water while sitting on his bed. He gets up and lays out the prayer mat and prays fajr prayer. Ahmed walk to the living room in his house and lights the gas heater in the room. He takes out a Quran and starts reciting. 10 minutes later he closes the book of Allah and puts on a jacket and heads out to the patio of his house to smoke a cigarette. A newspaper comes flying over the gate and lands in the garage. Ahmed finishes his cigarette and picks up the newspaper and heads inside the house. Taking off his jacket he sits down to read the paper. The headlines talk of bad weather headed to the northern areas of Pakistan and a cold snap for the city of Islamabad where Ahmed resides.

Ahmed gets up and makes a cup of tea and grabs an apple. He crunches into the apple and finishes it while the water is boiling for the tea. He goes back into the living room and sits in front of the heater and sips on his cup of tea. The time is 7 O'clock it's been 45 minutes since fajr prayer. Finishing his tea, he gets up and goes take a shower before breakfast.

Putting on his clothes after the shower Ahmed asks his cook to make him a pratha and omelet. With breakfast done with he heads out of his home and heads towards his office. A ten minute commute and he arrives at the 11 storey building clearly the largest in the sector for work. At the parking entrance is a new security guard one whom Ahmed has never seen before.

Ahmed: Assalam o alaikum

Guard: Wa alaikum us salaam sir

Ahmed: well are you going to open the gates or not

Guard: Could I see your work ID card please.

Ahmed groans, knowing he forgot his work ID card at home.

Ahmed: you know what it seems like I forgot it at home.

Guard: Well I cant let you in sir without proof of ID.

Ahmed: look I can see your new here but I have been working here for the past 9 years, you can ask anyone here that I work here.

Guard: I'm sorry sir but I cant let you in without your ID or unless your line manager authorizes your entry into the office.

Ahmed groaned again knowing that his boss arrives an hour later every morning.

Ahmed: you know my line manager is not going to be here for another hour, isn't there anything you can do.

Guard: yes there is something I can do I can advise you to go home and pick up your ID and then I can let you in.

Frustrated by the new security guard Ahmed reverses his car and heads home to pick up his work ID. 20 minutes later he returns and with anger in his voice, shows the ID to the guard.

Ahmed: Here you go here's my ID

The guard looks at the ID and walks to his hut to retrieve a register.

Guard: Thank you sir I'll let you in just after you sign this register for you are 30 minutes late today.

Ahmed: hold on a minute im not signing anything I was here 30 minutes ago on time

Guard: But your entering the office 30 minutes late sir

Ahmed: I'm only late because you wouldn't let me in

Guard: How was I to know you worked here you didn't have your ID.

Ahmed: I told you I work here

Guard: yes but anyone could say that sir

The guard was taking his duties very seriously. Ahmed annoyed even further with the guards attitude took the register and signed in 30 minutes late.

Guard: You'll have to correct your time of arrival sir for its now 35 minutes late.

Ahmed getting angrier and redder by the minute adjusted his time of arrival and handed the register back to the guard.

Ahmed: There I hope your happy now open the damn gates so that I can park my car.

The guard quickly opened the gates and let Ahmed into the basement parking. Ahmed looking for a parking spot was getting more annoyed not finding any space. The parking spaces were all full. Ahmed drove back out and honked his car at the security guard to open the gates.

Guard: is there a problem sir

Ahmed: Yeah there's a problem, because of you all the damn parking spaces are full, now I'm going to have to park outside on the street.

Guard: very well sir

The guard opened the gates and let Ahmed out onto the street. Ahmed parked his car in the adjacent street and walked towards the main gate of the office to sign in for duty.

Ahmed spends the morning working on his projects as the project manager for a vibration testing company he is kept busy each morning and Ahmed looks forward to lunch where he gets to meet Ali and have a conversation about the day.

LUNCH TIME

Ahmed usually meets Ali in the restaurant across his workplace at 1 O'clock. Ahmed sits down at a table and orders a Chinese bowl of kung pow chicken. Ali walks into the restaurant and sees Ahmed at the table.

Ali: Assalam o alaikum Ahmed

Ahmed: Wa alaikum us salam Ali, have a seat, I've already ordered

Ali: what are you having?

Ahmed: Im having the kung pow chicken with chowmein

Ali: Nice, I think I'll have chicken chilli dry with the egg fried rice.

Ahmed calls the waiter over and Ali orders his food.

Ahmed: you'll never believe what happened to me this morning.

Ali: ok what happened.

Ahmed: I arrived at work at 9 as usual and we had a new security guard working at the parking gate entrance. He wouldn't let me in because I forgot my work ID at home.

Ali: so what did you do?

Ahmed: Well I had to drive back home to get the ID card because there was no way I was going to park on the street. Anyway by the time I got back it was half 9 and the security guard had me sign into his register that I was 35 minutes late.

Ali: unbelievable so what did you say

Ahmed: well I told him that it was his fault that I was now arriving at half 9, he refused to let me in without signing in the register.

Ali: couldn't someone else vouch for you that you worked there.

Ahmed: now see this he said if your line manager called he would let me in but the problem is my boss always arrives an hour late. Anyway by the time I had signed in and drove into the parking lot all the spaces were filled.

Ali: so let me guess you had to park on the street anyway.

Ahmed: exactly, I was so annoyed, I just hope they don't cut my salary by me being half an hour late.

Ali: yeah that would suck.

Ahmed: so whats going on with you?

Ali: nothing much just working on some apps for clients, the usual.

The food arrives, Ahmed and Ali finish their lunch and both head back to their respective work places.

Ahmed: hey maybe I'll see you after work at my place for some coffee.

Ali: sounds good to me, till then, see ya

Ahmed returns to work, prays his zuhr prayer and then back at the office Ahmed's boss calls him into his office to discuss something.

Ahmed: you wanted to see me sir

Jamie: Yes, Ahmed come on in, I hear you were 35 minutes late today, HR called me and informed me about it.

Ahmed: Actually I was on time at 9 but the new security guard wouldn't let me in because I forgot my work ID, so I had to go home and get it and by the time I signed in it was 9:35.

Jamie: Why didn't you call me and let me speak to the guard.

Ahmed: I don't know I didn't think of it at the time, also the guard said he would let me in if my line manager vouched for me, but since you don't get in till about 9:50 I thought it better to go home and get the ID card.

Jamie: well your salary will be deducted for the 35 minutes you were late today.

Ahmed: what oh come on how is that fair?

Jamie: it's the rules.

Ahmed: but your late every day.

Jamie: yes, but I work in senior management, so I can get away with it.

Ahmed: is there anything else.

Jamie: no that will be all see that it doesn't happen again.

Ahmed annoyed with his boss walks out of his office and returns to work.

HOME TIME

Ahmed leaves his workplace and walks to his car, where he finds a massive dent in the side of his car, that was not there this morning when he parked.

Ahmed: ah this is just great, now this is why I don't like parking on the street, hey guard did you happen to see who did this?

Guard: Did what sir?

Ahmed: some moron just dented my car

Guard: no I didn't see anything

Ahmed: you've been great help all day, first you wouldn't let me in, then all the parking spaces were full, my salary gets deducted for being late and now my car gets dented.

Guard: I don't see how any of that is my fault

Ahmed: not your fault, of course its all your fault, had you let me in none of this would have happened.

Guard: just doing my job sir

Ahmed gets into his car and drives home to unwind for the rest of the day.

AT HOME

The doorbell rings and Ahmed goes out to see who it is. It's the next door neighbor Bilal.

Bilal: Assalam o alaikum Ahmed

Ahmed: wa alaikum us salaam Bilal, come on in, I was just making some coffee, if you're interested.

Bilal: don't mind if I do

Ahmed: I just have to pray Asr prayer, if the doorbell rings will you get that it could be Ali.

Bilal: ok you take your time.

Ahmed goes to pray asr and Bilal sits down in the living room. The doorbell rings and as expected its Ali. Bilal goes to let Ali in.

Ali: Salam o alaikum Bilal, is Ahmed not in.

Bilal: wa alaikum us salam Ali, Ahmed just praying Asr he told me to let you in, so come on in.

Ali: Thanks

Bilal: so whats going on with your life Ali?

Ali: The usual work and friends, have you found any work yet?

Bilal: no not yet, it's a tough climate out there not many jobs going.

Ali: that it is, unemployment is still very high

Bilal: I am working on some job applications, but I never really get past the interview stage.

Ali: keep trying you'll have your breakthrough

Ahmed walks in with 3 cups of coffee.

Ahmed: salam o alaikum Ali, glad to see you made it, here take a cup.

Ali: wa alaikum us salaam Ahmed, thanks for the coffee

Ahmed: You know I told you about the new security guard today.

Ali: yes and your parking dilemma

Ahmed: well when I finished work and I walked to my car, some idiot had dented my car right on the back door on the passenger side.

Ali: did you know who did it.

Ahmed: No and the guard didn't see anyone do it either, that's why I don't like parking on the street, the school rush gets really bad after lunch time, I bet that's when the guy must have hit my car.

Ali: I know a good mechanic; he could get that dent out.

Ahmed: maybe I'll take you up on that offer.

Bilal: whats the mechanics name?

Ali: Daniyal, he works in Sector G-8 where all the workshops are.

Bilal: oh I know him he works on all those vintage VW beetles in the city

Ali: that's the one.

Ahmed: tell you what after we finish our coffee lets head down to his workshop to get my car fixed.

Ali: sure let me just call him to see if he's working this evening.

Ali makes a call on his mobile and talks to someone on the other end.

Ali: yeah he's available, he said call over to him when you can.

Ahmed: great we can head out in the next 10 minutes.

Bilal: Tell me something Ahmed, how come you're always in some sort of problem or the other.

Ahmed: what can I say Bilal, problems, troubles have a way of finding me.

The three of them finished their coffee and all of them headed over to Daniyal the mechanic.

IN THE CAR

Bilal: speaking of troubles I must say you're a magnet for disorder.

Ahmed: The world that we live in is a temporary abode. Its life is short and difficult full of tests and trials.

Ali: I have noticed that the closer one is to Allah the more difficult their life becomes, why do you think that is?

Ahmed: I think its because when one is closer to God he has something of value and the devil tries his best to make things difficult for him or her.

Bilal: you could be right, it's like a thief only steals from a place where there are valuables, no thief steals from a place that has nothing of value in it.

Ahmed: precisely

Bilal: I think you may notice that when a person sets out to follow and practice the path of Islam that people and particularly disbelieving folk will start to mock and make things difficult for the believer.

Ali: The devil will try his best to sway and deter a person from the path of Allah. Because the devil knows that the path of Allah leads to success whereas the path of the devil leads to ruin and the devil has made his promise that he will lead as many people astray as possible, for he himself is doomed and will take as many people with him to the hellfire.

Ahmed: True

Ali: Daniyals workshop is just in the middle over there

Ali points out to Ahmed where the mechanics workshop is and Ahmed parks the car outside it.

Ali: look there's Daniyal

Daniyal: salam Ali

Ali: salam Daniyal, this is my friend Ahmed, as you can see he has a big dent in his car that needs fixing.

Ahmed: salam Daniyal nice to meet you, so do you think that you can fix it.

Daniyal: it will take two hours and the cost is Rs5,000 for the job

Ahmed: perhaps we can negotiate a better price

Daniyal: better for me or better for you.

Ahmed: lets say the middle ground I'll give you Rs4,000 for the work

Daniyal: that's too low I'll go as low as Rs4,500

Ahmed: deal

Daniyal: excellent

Ahmed: here are the keys, its half 6 right now, I'll be back by half 8 to pick up the car.

Daniyal: I'll have it ready for you then.

Ahmed: come on lets head over to a restaurant for some food.

Ahmed, Bilal and Ali make their way to a nearby restaurant in the sector and on the way get accosted by a beggar child.

Beggar: Can you spare some money for bread

Bilal: don't look at me I don't work

Beggar: perhaps you could spare some money sir

The beggar had turned his attention to Ahmed and Ali

Ahmed: I'm not giving you any money you're probably working for your professional handlers.

Beggar: im hungry I haven't eaten all day

Ali: how come your clothes and face are so dirty, and you have no shoes. Water is free you could at least try to keep clean

Beggar: please sir give me some money

Ahmed: no

Ali: they keep themselves in such a ragged state to instill sympathy for them.

Bilal: go away young child try somewhere else.

The beggar becomes even more persistent in his approach and starts following the trio.

Beggar: I'm not leaving till you give me some money

Ahmed: the nerve of these beggars, they just don't take no for an answer.

Ali: ignore him he'll go away

The three of them walk into a restaurant and sit down at a table, the beggar is waiting outside hoping for something.

Waiter: Here is the menu I'll give you some time to make your mind up.

Ali: lets have some barbeque

Ahmed: I was thinking the same thing

Bilal: I'll eat anything since I don't have any money

Ahmed: how do you get by Bilal, with no money, no work and no woman in your life.

Bilal: I don't have a choice, until I find some work I'm stuck like this.

Ali: Don't worry that's what friends are for.

Bilal: well I'm sure glad you guys are my friends

Waiter: are you ready to order

Ahmed: yes, we'll have three chicken tikkas chest pieces and four seekh kebabs, with raita, salad and naan bread. Also do me a favour you see that beggar child outside get him a naan bread and some yogurt.

Waiter: very well sir, your order will be ready in 5 to 10 minutes.

The waiter heads to the kitchen and comes back 5 minutes later with a naan bread and some yogurt for the beggar. He calls to the beggar and hands him the food. The beggar takes the food and still sits out there waiting.

Ahmed: That beggars not eating the food, if he was so hungry why isn't he eating the food.

Ali: he's probably just eaten and is still hoping for some money, they just say there hungry to get money.

The beggar gets up after five minutes and leaves on his way he throws the food in the bin outside the restaurant.

Ahmed: did you see that, unbelievable

Bilal: what?

Ahmed: he threw the food in the bin, what a waste, I was feeling sorry for him and now I regret it.

Ali: that's what they want you to feel, it's the oldest trick in the book.

Ahmed: I thought he was really hungry, what a scam artist.

Ali: don't ever give these beggars money, food is ok, you should feed the poor but that was a professional beggar. They don't work because they make a lot of money from begging.

Ahmed: yeah he probably makes more money than I do.

Ali: he probably does and most of it gets taken from them by their handlers.

The waiter returns with the food and serves it to the trio. The three of them get stuck into the food.

Ahmed: This chicken is delicious, I'm loving the spices on it and it goes well with the raita.

Bilal: I agree this is scrumptious.

Ali: well we have an hour and a half to kill before your cars ready

Ahmed: I'm taking my time with this

Bilal: no rush

Half hour later and the food is finished, Ahmed and Ali share the bill and the three of them head back out into the street.

Ahmed: well we still got an hour to go

Ali: lets have some chai

Bilal: are we going back in

Ahmed: no lets head over to a café

Ali: There is a Quetta tea café just down the road

Ahmed: lead the way

The three of them sit at a table and order three cups of chai.

Ahmed takes out a cigarette and lights it.

Ahmed: I sure do enjoy a cigarette after eating meat

Ali: you don't smoke that much do you

Ahmed: only about 3 or 4 a day

Bilal: That's nothing when I was smoking I was having a packet a day, but I'm glad I managed to quit.

A waiter arrives with the three cups of chai

Ali: Who was it that said let the world go to hell, but I should always have my tea.

Ahmed: I believe that was Dostoevsky

Bilal: a wise man

Ahmed notices someone sitting at the far end of the café

Ahmed: oh my God it's that new security guard

Ali: the one that made you late today

Ahmed: the very same one, I wonder what he's doing here

The guard gets up ready to leave when he notices Ahmed and walks over to him.

Guard: hello sir, what brings you here

Ahmed with a sour note in his voice

Ahmed: just having some chai while were waiting for my car to be fixed at the mechanic

Guard: the dent?

Ahmed: the very same, you do know your partly responsible for it

Guard: I don't see it that way

Ahmed: no you wouldn't would you

Guard: perhaps in future it would be wise of you to remember to bring your credentials with you sir

Ahmed: Yeah in the future

Guard: anyway sir I must leave enjoy your chai

Ahmed responds with a hint of annoyance in his voice

Ahmed: thanks

Ali: That was strange

Ahmed: The guard just reminded me of how my whole day has been, things were starting to look good after the meal.

Bilal: Well nothing beats a good cup of chai

The three of them sit around in the café for the next 45 minutes talking and enjoying the evening before heading over back to the mechanic

Ahmed: Salam Daniyal, is the car ready

Daniyal: yes it is have a look yourself

Ahmed inspects the car and cant notice any problem with it whatsoever

Ahmed: that's a good job much appreciated Daniyal

Ahmed pays Daniyal and the three of them get in the car and drive back towards Ahmed's house.

IN THE CAR

Ahmed: you know its been quite an expensive day for me today

Ali: some days are like that

Bilal: at least you can afford to get things done

Ahmed: Still I'd rather not be wasting my money on unnecessary expenditures

Bilal: your insurance could have covered it

Ahmed: I don't have car insurance

Ali: WATCH OUT

Ali shouts across to Ahmed as Ahmed was distracted by Bilal. Ahmed slams on the brakes as the car screeches along the road however, The car hits someone.

Ahmed: Oh my days did I just hit someone

Ali: Yeah you hit a woman

The three of them get out the car and see a woman lying on the road.

Ahmed: is she breathing

Ali checks her pulse

Ali: yeah she's breathing, luckily you weren't going that fast.

Ahmed: let's put her in the car and take her to the hospital, it's on the way anyway

The woman regains consciousness

Woman: what happened?

Ahmed: You got hit by a car don't worry were going to get you to a hospital.

The three of them help the woman into the car and head over to Shifa Hospitals emergency.

Ahmed: are you in any pain?

Woman: Just a slight dull ache in my hip

Ahmed: don't worry well get the doctors to check you out

Woman: I don't have my purse with me

Ahmed: oh I'll pay for the doctors' fees, it's the least I can do.

Woman: thanks for not killing me

Ahmed: your welcome, what's your name?

Woman: my names Maryam, Maryam Raza

Ahmed: nice to meet you Maryam I'm Ahmed, this is Ali and Bilal

Maryam: I think I'm ok

Ahmed: better to get checked out just in case

Maryam: ok

They reach shifa hospital emergency and find the same security guard at the gates

Ahmed: what you again, you work here aswell

Guard: yes this is my second job

Ahmed: will you open the gate

Guard: you need a ticket sir

Ahmed: what? It's an emergency

Guard: you still need a ticket sir

Ahmed: whoever heard of having to get a ticket at the emergency

Guard: you just need to reach out and press the button on the ticket machine

Ahmed: oh

The guard opens the gate and Ahmed drives into the emergency area.

Maryam: I can manage from here

Ahmed: here is some cash for the expenses

Maryam: thanks

Ahmed: will you need a lift home I can drop you off after your check up

Maryam: no thanks I can manage from here.

Ahmed: ok well look after yourself.

Maryam walks off into the hospital and Ahmed drives back to his home

Ali: it's just not your day today Ahmed

Ahmed: one of those days