

# THE SIALKOT LITERARY EXPERIMENT

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*Caleb Powell*

*In Cold Blood*

*A sangre fría*

冷血

**December 24, 2015**

**Sana Nasim:** Hi

**Caleb Powell:** Hi

What do you want?

**Sana:** I want to ask a few questions for my online page

Will you reply?

**Caleb:** Yes, of course.

Merry Christmas, Sana, there are a lot of family events now, but send me the questions and I'll get back to you as soon as possible.

**December 25, 2015**

**Sana:** Here are the questions:

What to think about love care n happiness?

How can love care n happiness be promoted?

One massage for peace

**December 27, 2015**

**Sana:** I think you didn't like my questions

**December 28, 2015**

**Caleb:** Hi Sana,

Sorry, the house is full of people and I have spent little time on the Internet. Here are my answers, hope you don't mind the redundancies and platitudes:

What do you think about love, care, and happiness?

*Love, whether of nature, family, friends, romantic partners, or humanity, gives meaning and should not be confused with wanting objects and power.*

*That is lust.*

*Caring, or charitable thought, is a subcategory of love.*

*Happiness differs. We can love and be miserable. I'd say happiness is absence of suffering in the presence of love.*

How can love, care, and happiness be promoted?

*By eliminating or lessening the roots of suffering, for example, poverty, disease, war, and cruelty.*

*Increase privilege. Promote opportunities for health, financial stability, loving relationships, education.*

One message for peace:

*"Seek to lessen the suffering of others."*

**Sana:** Thank you so much

**Caleb:** You're welcome.

**Sana:** Your mini introduction please? 5 or 6 lines

**Caleb:** Intro/bio below:

*"Caleb Powell writes for Pakistan's *Express Tribune*. He lived in the Middle East and Asia for six years, and currently lives in the United States."*

Good luck.

**Sana:** Is there more?

**Caleb:** Here's a link to my page at the *Express Tribune*. Use that bio/introduction if you want. Are you in or from Pakistan? U.K.? U.S.? Elsewhere?

**Sana:** Pakistan

I want your personal introduction

**Caleb:** OK.

*"I'm Persian/Polish American and I spent eight years teaching English in Asia, the Middle East, and South America. I used this opportunity to study Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish, and travel to over forty countries, including Pakistan. I currently live in the Pacific Northwest (U.S.) with my wife and three daughters."*

**Sana:** Thank you so much

**Caleb:** You're welcome.

**December 29, 1016**

**Sana:** Hi. Can you like my Facebook page?

**Caleb:** Where is your page?

**Sana:** Here

Dreams

**Caleb:** Liked.

**Sana:** Thank you. Your favorite quote?

**Caleb:** Voltaire: "*Ceux qui vous font croire des absurdités, peuvent vous faire commettre des atrocités.*"

Or: "Those who can make you believe absurdity, can make you commit atrocity."

**Sana:** Any new year message for kids n parents?

**Caleb:** First time I thought it was a typo. A "massage" is like a back rub.

**Sana:** Hahaha I meant message

Actually my English is not very good

**Caleb:** No problem. Keep on writing and reading.

**Sana:** Thank you God bless you n your family

**Caleb:** Same to you.

Truman Capote considered his opus, *In Cold Blood*, a "nonfiction novel." His work changed the genre of true crime, sold millions, remains in print, and has been translated into over thirty languages. Of these, the Chinese, *Lěng xuè* (冷血), is literal, as is the Spanish, *A sangre fría*.

## January 2, 2016

**Sana:** I still am waiting to hear a new year message for children and Dreams. I will post your message on my page

**Caleb:** Short and sweet, if that's okay:

"Children are the future. Happy New Year!"

**Sana:** Same to you

How can I improve my English?

**Caleb:** Read. Read in the language you wish to study. I'm now reading Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*.

I also recommend using a dictionary in the given language, in your case English-to-English.

Read, write, listen, and speak in English. Find others who also want to learn. Take a class. Are there many people who speak English where you live?

**Sana:** Class is too much money

There is nobody who can speak English

**Caleb:** One way is watching TV in English with either English subtitles or the subtitles of a language you understand. Repeat phrases

aloud. But without talking every day, immersed, it's difficult. Do you have friends or family who share your interest?

**Sana:** No, I have no friend or family who can communicate in English

My biggest problem is speaking

**Caleb:** Where do you live? In Pakistan, that is.

**Sana:** Sialkot

**Caleb:** How many English-speaking foreigners live there?

**Sana:** I don't know

**Caleb:** Are you able to travel?

**Sana:** Not well, I am a polio victim

It's difficult to move alone

**Caleb:** How serious is your polio? I hope you don't mind letting me know, but if you don't feel comfortable, I understand.

**Sana:** It's a "killer" disease. It kills my dreams. Actually, I am struggling from my childhood my left leg is affected due to polio. I limp though not as bad as younger

**Tourism.gov.pk:** Sialkot has almost one million people and is situated "in the north-east of the Punjab province in Pakistan at the foothills of the snow-covered peaks of Kashmir near the Chenab River . . . about 125 km (78 mi) northwest of Lahore and only a few kilometers from Indian-controlled Jammu."

Evidently, Sialkot leads the world in the production of hand-woven footballs.

Polio, also known as infantile paralysis, comes from the Greek, *poliomyelitis*, meaning "gray marrow." The World Health Organization states that polio "... is a highly infectious viral disease, which mainly affects young children. . . . In a small proportion of cases, the disease causes paralysis, which is often permanent. There is no cure for polio; it can only be prevented by immunization."

In 1916 in the United States polio alone led to 6,000 deaths. Numbers increased worldwide until the 1950s, when Dr. Jonas Salk, using field trials and research, helped develop a safe vaccine. In 1988 the world's governing bodies, including the WHO, CDC, and Rotary International, launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, as many developing nations still reported high numbers

of polio cases.

Shahnaz Wazir Ali at the *Express Tribune* writes, “Intensive eradication campaigns such as door-to-door vaccinations only started after 1999 in Pakistan. Before that the vaccine was available but parents had to take their children to the clinics to get it administered. In March 2001, about 27 million children were vaccinated across the country in the hope that Pakistan could be virus-free by the end of that year, but that was not to be.”

In 2015, Nigeria and India reported no polio cases for the previous year. This left Afghanistan and Pakistan as the only two countries in the world still battling the disease.

**January 8, 2016**

**Caleb:** How old are you?

**Sana:** 28. Born in 1987

**Caleb:** Do you have a job?

**Sana:** Yes, I do

But I face rejections in my life

I am physically unfit. I accept, but when people think I am useless

I can't bear it

**Caleb:** Do you have family that helps and supports you?

**Sana:** Yes, I have lovely family

I desire an independent life

But it's just a dream

I am strong

The 1959 *New York Times* headline, “Wealthy Farmer, 3 of Family Slain,” transfixed Truman Capote. He had been battling ennui as a writer of fiction and sought to incorporate facts and reality into art. This Midwestern small town tragedy would suffice. William Shawn of *The New Yorker* backed his idea. Capote asked Nelle Harper Lee, whose debut novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* would release the following summer, if she wanted to accompany him to Kansas.

Harper Lee: He said it would be a tremendously involved job and

would take two people, the crime intrigued him, and I'm intrigued with crime — and, boy, I wanted to go.

**January 15, 2016**

**Caleb:** Do you read/write much?

**Sana:** I read

**Caleb:** Do you read more in English or Urdu or another language?

**Sana:** English and Urdu and Punjabi

**Caleb:** How similar are Urdu and Punjabi?

What alphabet do they use?

**Sana:** Arabic

Alphabets are same accent is change but Urdu and Punjabi similar

**Caleb:** What authors/subjects do you like most?

**Sana:** I like to read about life happiness n hope. Ishfaq Ahmed, Wasif Ali Wasif, Umaira Ahmad

**Caleb:** Has their work been translated to English?

**Sana:** I don't know

**January 16, 2016**

**Sana:** Hi

I see you online but you did not answer

**Caleb:** My daughters were using the computer. My sister just finished teaching them from her home in Saudi Arabia.

**Sana:** How can she teach from Saudi?

**Caleb:** They use Skype and electronic piano software.

**Sana:** Do you have Skype id?

Can I call you?

If yes send me

Search Sanadreams

I can't speak English well

**January 17, 2016**

\*\*\* Missed call from Sana Nasim. \*\*\*

**Sana:** You are online but you are not picking up my call

**Caleb:** Wait.

\*\*\* Call ended, duration 30:30 \*\*\*

**January 18, 2016**

**Caleb:** Curious

What do you think of this?

Attack on Pakistan polio clinic kills at least 14 — CNN — AFP (Jan. 13, 2016)

“A suicide bomber blew himself up outside a polio vaccination center in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on Wednesday, killing at least 14 people, officials said, in a Taliban-claimed attack.”

**Sana:** I don't think so it's true

**Caleb:** What do you mean, “I don't think so it's true?” Do you think the attack happened?

**Sana:** I don't know if it's true

**Caleb:** Here's another one from the *Express Tribune* a year ago: “4 killed, 3 injured in attack on polio team near Quetta.”

**Sana:** I think media is playing a negative role in society

**January 20, 2016**

**Sana:** Can you teach me English please?

Every night, as I took my three versions of *In Cold Blood* in bed with a pen and dictionaries, and turned pages so as not to bother my wife, I thought of my struggles to learn languages, and Sana's desire to improve her English.

I missed my students and life overseas, the navigation of culture, and contact with others from places far and near to our roots. Yet the domestic routine of fatherhood and family had different rewards, and did not preclude study or, with help from the internet, global interaction.

Capote would spend six years following the community, the arrests, trial, sentence, and the legal process. The hanging of the two murderers, on April 14th, 1965, brought closure and genesis. Five months later *The New Yorker* began publishing the first chapters. In January of 1966 Random House released *In Cold Blood*.

*In Cold Blood* opens with “The Last to See Them Alive.” One of these

“last” was New York Life Insurance representative Bob Johnson who, on Friday, November 13, 1959, sold a \$40,000 double indemnity policy to Herbert Clutter of Holcomb, Kansas. Clutter lived with his wife Bonnie on a farm with their youngest two of four children. That Saturday night they were murdered, and on Sunday evening Mr. Johnson still held Mr. Clutter’s uncashed check.

Bob Johnson: Well, it was a *delicate* situation. It appeared that *legally* we weren’t obliged to pay. But *morally* — that was another matter. Naturally, we decided to do the moral thing.

— Bueno, la situación era *delicada*. Al parecer, *legalmente* no estábamos obligados a pagar. Pero *moralmente* era distinto. Y claro, nos decidimos por lo moral.

嗯, 这件事很微妙, 很棘手。从法律上看, 我们不必赔偿, 但道义上是另一码事。当然, 我们决定按照道义办。

The Spanish translation of this passage contains nine tangible cognates with English: *situación, delicada, legalmente, obligados, moralmente, distinto, claro, decidimos, and moral*. Eleven if you consider the less obvious *pagar* (to pay) and *estábamos* (to have been in a state of, deriving from *estar*).

The relation of English and Spanish to Chinese parallels that of Urdu and Punjabi to English, and my study of language to Sana’s.

**January 25, 2016**

**Sana:** How can we find our purpose of life?

**Caleb:** That’s abstract, personal, and my meaning would be different than yours. Some people look to religion. Why don’t you answer?

**Sana:** Actually, I have no purpose in my life

**Caleb:** Why?

**Sana:** I don’t know.

**Caleb:** What do you do every day?

**Sana:** I am a teacher.

**Caleb:** What subject?

**Sana:** Everything. I am pre-school teacher.

**Caleb:** Do you like your job?

**Sana:** Yes.

I love kids.

**Caleb:** That's a purpose.

**Sana:** I don't think so.

**Caleb:** What do you want in life, then?

**Sana:** I want to travel. An independent life. I want to paint.

**Caleb:** That's a purpose.

**Sana:** It is a dream.

**Caleb:** Hold on.

This is Kaya.

**Sana:** Hi Kaya.

**Caleb:** Kaya, say something.

**Kaya:** Hi.

**Sana:** How old are you?

**Kaya:** Six.

**Sana:** So cute.

\*\*\* Call ended, duration 28:09 \*\*\*

### **February 8, 2016**

**Sana:** I am trying to write something about my childhood but it's difficult to express my feelings in words

**Caleb:** Give it a shot.

### **February 9, 2016**

**Sana:** Caleb I am so confused about could, would, should

**Caleb:** "Should" often is imperative, namely, it implies an obligation. It's not as strong as "must," and often precedes a condition with consequence. I.e. "You should study if you want to pass the class." ...

When Richard Hickock and Perry Smith complete an 800-mile round trip to and from Holcomb, returning to Olathe, Kansas, on Sunday, November 15, we know who they are, and what they are running from. Seven weeks later the authorities arrest them outside Las Vegas.

Special Agent Harold Nye (to Richard Hickock): I guess you realize we wouldn't have come all the way to Nevada just to chat with a couple of two-bit check chiselers.... **Would we, Dick?**

— ...¿No te parece, Dick?

The Chinese version avoids and omits the modal auxiliary *would*.

**February 10, 2016**

**Caleb:** Hi Sana,

I will help your English.

Teaching, at its best, is a mutually beneficial experience. I want to learn from you, to understand your life, polio, Sialkot, Pakistan, through your everyday experiences. Tell me about you, help me understand your culture, and in the process you will, hopefully, improve your English.

What do you think?

**February 12, 2016**

**Sana:** Caleb, a short story about childhood.

I was a quiet person and always avoided gatherings if I attended any (marriages, birthdays, etc.). Mostly people asked, "Hey, Sana, what's wrong with your leg?" My eyes looked at my dad, asking him to hold my hand, and he did.

Kids with special needs want attention, love, and care, but our society gives them pain. In my childhood nobody encouraged me to face reality, to accept.

One day I asked myself, "If you die, who cares?"

I was confused. I asked my sister for the first time, "Can I play with you?"

She said, "Why not?"

Nobody should force a person to stay positive it's your own way of thinking that can face negativity.

Life is so short. Ups and downs are part of life. For peace of mind we should forgive people for their rudeness and forget their harsh words.

### **February 16, 2016**

**Caleb:** Nice start. Keep writing, please, and I will offer help/suggestions. Also, I think you should read in English.

**Sana:** Suggest to me some books I should read

It's a great idea

**Caleb:** *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, *The Razor's Edge* by W. Somerset Maugham, and *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison.

### **February 17, 2016**

**Sana:** How to find books, sorry to disturb, I am trying to download

**Caleb:** I'll mail them. Physical books have value as art, as objects. You can hold them. In the margins you can take notes and translate words and sentences. You can put them in your shelf and stare at the title like you stare at a Gauguin, call me old fashioned.

I'll need your address.

**Sana:** Address:

Sana Nasim / ... District / Sialkot, Pakistan

### **February 18, 2016**

**Sana:** I want to work for special kids but I have not resources to help them. Sometimes I arrange a few events for children. On my first event we visited a special institute and did some art work on the walls of that institute. We decorated their class rooms to see smiles on their faces. I tried to talk to a deaf child and he answered me in signs.

I think these children need extra care and special education which can help them to live an independent life.

On my 2nd event I offered them a special deal, "take candy and give me a smile." I arranged a drawing party in which I gave them color pages n colors.

They made very beautiful drawings. I love to spend my time with these children.

### **February 19, 2016**

**Caleb:** Hi Sana,

Thanks for writing about working with special kids.

I'm mailing the books today.

What do you for fun in Pakistan?  
Meaning, you, Sana Nasim.  
What does Sana do for fun?

### **February 20, 2016**

**Sana:** I have no fun.

**Caleb:** Why not?

**Sana:** APS

**Caleb:** The Army Public School massacre?

**Sana:** They killed 132 children

I think evil is everywhere

### **February 21, 2016**

**Sana:** I just want your 15 mins daily

It's my humble request Caleb

When I talk to you I make sentences in my mind to speak

It's my weakness to not speak English

I need your help

I know you have a busy life

### **February 22, 2016**

**Caleb:** Do you remember when I posted the article about the attack on a polio clinic in Quetta?

You responded, "I think media is playing a negative role in society."

I've thought about this for a while. You have polio. So I'm not sure what you meant. Shouldn't media cover this?

**Sana:** I don't know who attacked the polio team. I live in Punjab n here people are so conscious about their children. They welcome polio team to vaccinate their kids. In some areas people are not educated so they don't have awareness about vaccination.

They need awareness.

\*\*\* Call ended, duration 17:51 \*\*\*

### **February 25, 2016**

**Sana:** During my events I realized that these children live a very tough life. They have schools in which they feel themselves equal

but these schools lack facilities. Their teachers teach them how to read and write but fail to give them a purpose of life. It's nasty when parents introduce their special children with grief. I think family support can give them confidence and purpose.

I met a deaf boy. His name was Asadullah and he was trying to play with other children. Everyone was calling to him, "Hey deaf boy! Hey deaf boy!"

But he was deaf.

Nobody called him by his name. We should teach our society to give them respect. In Pakistan there are many institutes which are working for children with special needs but all are useless I think.

Caleb thank you so much for you help

Perry Smith: "I didn't want to harm the man. I thought he was a very nice gentleman. Soft-spoken. I thought so right up to the moment I cut his throat."

**March 7, 2016**

**Sana:** Just want to say something

I write a story as a child write a story, but I want to share something

**Caleb:** What?

**Sana:** I am not satisfied with my job. So much confused about it

**Caleb:** Why not? You said you loved children.

**Sana:** Yes, I love children

**Caleb:** Why are you not satisfied?

**Sana:** I don't have good salary n I travel 30km to reach my job place, it takes more than an hour

I am working in a private school

I try many times to change jobs but failed

I have lost confidence

It's my dream to work for special kids but I am hopeless

I can't help myself

How can I help others?

**Caleb:** I'm sorry to hear about your situation.

**Sana:** Today I have a day off from my work place and I am thinking of what will be next

Means I will apply in other institution

**Caleb:** Good luck.

**Sana:** Caleb, thank you  
I need guideline and motivation  
I want to hear “Sana you can do anything”  
“We are with you!”  
Also, I wrote a story its name is “I killed my son”

*In Cold Blood:* Many observers of the trial scene were baffled by the visitor from Boston, Donald Cullivan. They could not understand why this staid young Catholic, a successful engineer who had taken his degree at Harvard, a husband and father of three children, should choose to befriend an **uneducated, homicidal half-breed** whom he knew but slightly and had not seen for nine years.

... **un asesino mestizo, sin educación** ...

... 无知的杀人犯 ...

无知的 — wúzhīde — ignorant  
杀人犯 — shārénfàn — murderer

While the Spanish translation closely captures the original meaning, the Chinese, an “ignorant murderer,” though synonymous, does not convey America’s consciousness of racism embedded in the term “half-breed.”

**March 10, 2016**

**Caleb:** Sana, I’ve taught children and adults, the alphabet to beginners, and NPR radio to advanced students. Teaching helps my study, and study helps my teaching. Yet I can’t speak, read, or write fluently in any of the languages I study. Nevertheless, the challenge addicts me, the moments of understanding give a certain pleasure, a satisfaction similar to solving a crossword or chess puzzle. The books I’ve sent are ones that I hope you not only read, but re-read.

Perry Smith (to Cullivan): “Soldiers don’t lose much sleep. They murder, and get medals for doing it. The good people of Kansas

want to murder me — and some hangman will be glad to get the work. It's easy to kill — a lot easier than passing a bad check."

**March 14, 2016**

**Sana:** Here's my story.

### I Killed My Son

Saadia, poor, lived in a small town with her husband and seven year old blind son, Ali. Her husband, Kashif, drove a rickshaw and earned little. Kashif always shouted at Saadia and blamed her for Ali's disability, but Saadia bore his rudeness with patience. Ali was obedient and quiet. When he was hungry he did not disturb his mother, but simply raised his hands. When Ali started to speak it was one of the happiest days in Saadia's life. Ali asked questions about everything. Saadia made a happy, imaginary world of beauty. She took him to a nearby park, and with his hands in hers touched plants, flowers, grasses, and they caught the air. Ali enjoyed these moments with his Mom.

Kashif avoided Ali, when Kashif saw Ali he walked away. Ali asked his Mom, "Why won't Dad talk with me?" Saadia told him lies, that his father was tired after a tough job.

One day a neighbor told Saadia about a school that would accept students with special needs. That night, when Kashif returned, Saadia told him about the school, but Kashif didn't listen. The next day, when Kashif left for work, Saadia went to the school and got Ali admitted. Saadia told Ali, who also was happy. In the evening she told Kashif, who became angry because he could not afford tuition. Depressed, Saadia locked herself in her room. Saadia had planned to work and make money to pay for her son's tuition.

The next morning, when Ali awoke, he called, "Mom!" But Saadia didn't reply. Ali looked for her and went out of the house, into the street, and a motorbike hit him. Ali died immediately. People gathered around and knocked on the door. Saadia opened the door and saw Ali's corpse. She screamed, "I killed my son! I am a killer!"

We translate pain into language using the art of triage.

**March 16, 2016**

**Caleb:** Questions:

Do you know Saadia?

Why does Saadia blame herself for Ali's accident?

Tell me more about Ali, Kashif, and Saadia.

*In Cold Blood:* In the disposition of capital cases in the United States, the median elapsed time between sentence and execution is approximately seventeen months.

The murderers executed, the victims buried, and the survivors heartbroken. The characters of Capote, like the fiction of Lee, Maugham, and Morrison, live forever.

To Kill a Mockingbird

Matar a un ruiseñor

O sol é para todos

梅岗城故事 — Méigǎngchéng gùshì

**March 15, 2016**

**Sana:** I have received the books

Thank you so much

I am reading now *The Razor's Edge*

difficult to understand

I need the help of dictionary

**March 16, 2016**

**Sana:** There are many words I can't pronounce

I read 4 pages but really I still can't understand

you are free to reply otherwise ignore my questions please

**Caleb:** *To Kill a Mockingbird* might be easier. Why don't you try that?

*To Kill a Mockingbird:* Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember, **it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.**

... **matar un ruiseñor es pecado.**

... **é um pecado matar um passarinho imitador.**

... 杀死嘲鸫是一种罪恶。

The Spanish translation of the title is literal, but not the Portuguese: “O sol é para todos.”

Or: The Sun Is for All.

This refers to *Mateus* 5.45: “Ele faz nascer seu sol sobre os maus e os bons, faz chover sobre justos e injustos.”

Or Matthew 5:45: “He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”

The Chinese translation is not so poetic. *Méigǎng* is a cognate for Maycomb. Thus the title, *Méigǎngchéng gùshì*, reads *Maycomb City Story*.

### March 18, 2016

**Sana:** Boo Radley means?

**Caleb:** It’s Arthur Radley’s nickname. Ghosts say “boo” to frighten people.

**Sana:** I am reading n writing word meanings in margin. I take it as a challenge

“Ain’t” means?

**Caleb:** A contraction that takes the place of “isn’t,” “hasn’t,” “won’t,” “doesn’t,” “aren’t,” commonly used in the South, but grammatically incorrect.

### March 21, 2016

**Sana:** This is confusing

“You don’t ‘n’ I’ll tell Calpurnia”

**Caleb:** “You don’t and I’ll tell Calpurnia,”

It’s like how you use “n” instead of “and.”

I didn’t take into account the colloquial expressions, idioms, contractions, and jargon.

**Sana:** Caleb one day when I will learn English I will write a book on your life

Really I have not much vocabulary, how to improve it?

**Caleb:** Use English more.

*The Elements of Style:* The writer must simply learn the idioms.

**March 23, 2016**

**Caleb:** Hi Sana,

I'm still waiting to hear more about Saadia, Ali, and Kashif.

**March 25, 2016**

**Sana:** The characters Saadia, Ali, and Kashif do not exist in reality. In our neighborhood a child ran onto street, he was blind, he died sorry if story doesn't make sense

**Caleb:** Mark Twain said, "It's no wonder that truth is stranger than fiction. Fiction has to make sense."

**March 26, 2016**

**Sana:** Will you correct my next story?

"A love story"

It's a true story

I want to share it on Dreams

A Love Story

Soni, six years old, looks at a photo frame.

She says, "Baba do you know today was our Parent Teachers Meeting (PTM) and teacher told mom that I got good marks. Baba, mom brought chocolates for me, like you told her, but I didn't want chocolate. I gave all chocolate to my friends. You don't need to send money for gifts, just earn money to come home. Your daughter wants to sit in your lap. Baba when you come we will play together. My friend Saba's baba takes her to park and Sanum's baba taught her how to ride a bicycle.

"Baba, mom tells lies, she promised me that if I get good marks then you will attend our PTM. Please Baba, ask Mama why she tells lie.

"Baba, mom gave me 20 Rupees for pocket money but I kept my pocket money in box. Mom said if you earn enough money you will come home. Baba, don't worry. I am saving money for your ticket.

"Last time you called you just said three sentences: How are you, Soni? How are your studies? I love you.

"Baba, when will you say, 'I am coming home, Soni'?"

“Baba, your Soni misses you every time she sees Saba’s father come to pick her up from school. I miss you when her father hugs her and kisses her on her forehead.

“Baba, I tell you one secret. Today you win an award for most beautiful father. Yesterday Sanum brought her birthday’s pics. I told her my Baba is handsome. I took your photo to school (I did not tell mom) and all my classmates said, Soni, your Baba is handsome. I told Sanum, ‘All fathers are hero to their daughters.’

“Baba, grandma misses you. She says you are the best son. You spent years abroad to earn and you only came home three times for vacation with your family. Baba, do you miss me? Please, Baba, every day mom tells lies. She says that you will come home on Sunday, but which Sunday?

“Then, Baba, mom told a big lie. Yesterday an uncle came, but mom said he is Baba. That uncle was so weak, like a skeleton, his complexion was dark, but my Baba is fair and healthy. This uncle could not say a word.

“Baba, that uncle was admitted to the hospital. Mom and grandma were with them, Mom sent me to Saba’s house. Then I went to see my uncle in the hospital, but mom said he was you. But I did not know the uncle and that person was not you, but he hugged and kissed me and I prayed for his health. Yesterday that uncle died.

“Baba, I am angry with Sanum, she told my classmates that ‘Soni’s Baba died.’ Baba, she is jealous of you because you are handsome not like her father.

“Baba, why are you not calling? I wait for your call. I am missing your three sentences. Please, Baba, call me. Please. Please.

“Baba, close your eyes, I have a surprise for you. No cheating.”  
Soni puts her little hand on the photo.

“Surprise, Baba, see; my money box is full. I have saved money for your ticket. Baba I will meet you soon, your Soni will not let you go abroad again.

“Baba, Soni loves you so much.”

**March 27, 2016**

**Caleb:** I read “A Love Story.” You said it is a true story. How so?

**Sana:** It is my neighbor’s story

A father spent his whole life abroad to earn money  
when he came back he was in critical condition

he spent just one week with his daughters

**Caleb:** And when the father died his daughter thought it was her uncle?

**Sana:** I don't know

**Caleb:** You said it was a true story.

**Sana:** It is true life

I change the life

When I taught at Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan Business School, in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, the janitor was from Pakistan. The janitor told me he spent two months a year in Lahore with his wife and two sons. Compared to other South Asian expatriate workers in the service and construction fields in the UAE, he was lucky.

### **March 28, 2016**

**Sana:** Can I share something personal?

I am depressed about people's behavior

My friends are married n they are all busy in their lives, I am happy for them but they have no time to communicate. I am a human n I want to talk n share my views

Whenever I call them they say "Sana we are busy"

**Caleb:** How many single people are there in your city?

**Sana:** I don't know

**Caleb:** But can you make or meet new friends?

**Sana:** I was hurt by new friend when I ask, can I call you?

He said yes but cut our conversation short

Sorry

I have a fear that people will leave me if I share something negative about me

### **March 29, 2016**

**Caleb:** I've been thinking about what you wrote earlier about your life. And purpose.

**Sana:** What are your thoughts?

**Caleb:** I'm 47, and what I do now will make my future better and benefit those I love.

Sana, you are young. You have said that your life has no “meaning” or “purpose” for you. Learning language, writing a book, dedicating oneself to career, marriage, children, art, science, sport, or any passion demanding commitment can give purpose.

What do you want for yourself twenty years from now?

**Sana:** I will be a writer of a book n I will have a name in painting I will have a center for special kids I will visit at least 7 countries and I will learn fluent English.

I want to do some short courses like graphic designing, floral art, oil painting, glass painting (Dream)

I want to become a skydiver (Dream)

Caleb I don't know next moment of my life but these are my Dreams

### **March 30, 2016**

**Sana:** Can you make a promise?

**Caleb:** Sure

**Sana:** You will not irritate of me

**Caleb:** “Will you be irritated?”

**Sana:** Will you be irritated?

**Caleb:** Try me.

**Sana:** You are like my teacher

**Caleb:** Thx, and what's the promise?

**Sana:** I am not feeling good talk to you later

### **April 3, 2016**

**Sana:** On my way to school sometimes I pass an old dead tree on the roadside. The tree always grabs my attention. I think, one day it will be green. Months pass and whenever I pass the tree, I notice that it is brown and withered. Then it happened.

Last week I saw leaves and a bird's nest on the top middle of the tree and today I saw red flowers. It was an amazing feeling. Maybe my life is like that tree and this helps give me a hope to learn more and more. One day I can help someone to give him or her purpose.

### **April 6, 2016**

**Sana:** Your work? What is your job?

**Caleb:** I'm a cook, carpenter, gardener, tutor, day care provider, electrician, plumber, chauffeur, and cleaning service.

**Sana:** ???

**Caleb:** In other words, I'm a stay-at-home father.

My wife supports our family. I maintain the house, look after the kids, and I freelance, which brings in very little money. With three daughters I've probably changed over 5,000 diapers.

How many in Pakistan have working women supporting their families?

**Sana:** In Pakistan mostly males support their families but now women also do work to help support their families

**Caleb:** Do women make as much money as men?

**Sana:** I think yes

Women are in every field in Pakistan, they are highly educated and can become doctors, lawyers, journalists, politicians, but there is difference between city and country

**Caleb:** How possible would it be for you to start a business, maybe a school?

**Sana:** If you have money, you can start your school

I think if males are earning enough to support their families then females don't need to do job. They should stay at home for their children

### **April 7, 2016**

**Sana:** Caleb today I was teaching alphabets to those mothers who don't know alphabet

A granny was sitting there n looking very busy to write something on the page. I had curiosity to see and when I came to her she held my hand and showed me that page. She wrote "Aa" in exact formation. She was learning to write for first time ever for her grandson Even she thinks she has time for the future

### **April 12, 2016**

**Sana:** I am bothered because people wonder why I am single I accepted the reality of my disability but people around me hurt me by asking, "Why are you single?"

I am trying to make myself busy but during this routine I have become a rude person (I don't like to be rude to anybody). But when friends call me n they ask me about my marriage and when and if in very funny way I am hurt

Even they all know in our present society nobody want to marry with a disable person

Sometime I think about committing suicide but I can't do it

I don't want to go to hell

**Caleb:** Suicide? You are a pretty girl. I don't know enough about your culture to understand why a disability would make a difference in a marriage.

**Sana:** My students recognized me as a disabled teacher, they see way I walk

They know

It really hurt me

Sometime I wish there was a land where I could take all special people n there they are equally treated

How can I travel to explore this world?

**Caleb:** Money.

**April 13, 2016**

**Sana:** Can I share something?

**Caleb:** Yes.

**Sana:** Yesterday I was alone at home because my family went to attend a marriage ceremony. I did not go with them. I avoid marriage ceremony because people ask me about my marriage. I have no marriage

When my family came back they did not ask about my day at home.

I am afraid of ignorance

**Caleb:** Why is marriage so important? And what do you mean "I am afraid of ignorance?"

**Sana:** I am afraid that people do not know about me

I don't think marriage is important

In our culture marriage is very important

Everyone asks me about it

**Caleb:** Yes. It must be tiring. What do you say? Do you tell them that it's not important to you?

**Sana:** They take it as a joke, Caleb, I am really fed up

**Caleb:** Why don't you tell your family and friends this? Or do you tell them? Just say, "I don't want to talk about marriage all the time."

**Sana:** I have told them 1000 times but they do not understand. It makes me a strict person

**Caleb:** Strict?

**Sana:** Strict

Means that I feel mean

I do not like feeling this

**Caleb:** What would you like to happen? Do you have male friends (not including family)? Do you desire to live by yourself if you could afford it?

**Sana:** No

I have no male friends

I can't afford to live by myself but I want an independent life

Sometimes my family find husband

Uncle I never met

A grandfather older than my father

**Caleb:** What do you tell them?

**Sana:** No

They stop asking

**Caleb:** In America you're young. These days many women don't think about marriage until they near 30. When we married my wife and I were both over thirty.

**Sana:** But in Pakistan thirty is over age to marry

I am almost thirty

**Caleb:** I think it's possible to be happy without getting married.

**Sana:** How?

When everyone asked about it how can I stay happy?

Friends make jokes about me. They tease me

At workplace colleagues gossip about me and my marriage. My being single and unmarried

So I don't like that topic

Posted on my Facebook timeline:

**Alishba Zarmeen:** Not all but MANY 30-something single and babyless Pakistani women living in Pakistan tend to be REALLY weird. Why can't they be as confident and relaxed as non-Pakistani women who fall in the same category?

**Sana Qu:** Because all of Pakistani society views them as aberrations.

**Uzma Yunus:** Being single in Pakistan at that age is considered a disability and deficiency, dealing with that every day must be taxing and hard. Not everyone has the resilience that is needed to ward off daily assault on self esteem in a horribly oppressive en-

vironment. We can see from outside but cannot assess the trauma they go through. Adding to their stress I suppose.

**April 20, 2016**

**Sana:** I have read part of the novel n want to discuss death penalty Atticus is defending Tom Robinson

**Caleb:** What do you think?

**Sana:** I think Atticus does not like death penalty

**Caleb:** What do you think about the death penalty?

**Sana:** I think okay if person guilty

But not if person innocent

**May 6, 2015**

**Sana:** In *To Kill a Mockingbird* why people not like black people?

**Caleb:** It'd take a long time to answer.

**Sana:** Obama now is leader. I think an African president play an important role for black people

**Caleb:** Yes. Definitely. Hopefully.

**Sana:** I have question

Scout's maid Calpurnia don't like people to say nigger

But at church Calpurnia say nigger.

I am confused about that word

**Caleb:** It's controversial. The closest translation, for you, might be *kaffir*.

*To Kill a Mockingbird*: "Do you defend niggers, Atticus?" I asked him that evening.

"Of course I do. Don't say nigger, Scout. That's common."

Nasimuddin Sardar: "It is simply not good enough to be a Muslim. You have to be labeled Sunni or Shia, and from there on progressively put in smaller boxes. . . . those who deviate one iota are, by definition, *kaffirs* — infidels who deserve to die."

Emily Bernard (Ph.D. Yale, Professor, English and Critical Race and

Ethnic Studies, University of Vermont): “Look, I don’t want to give you the impression that I am somehow longing for you guys to say ‘nigger,’ but I do think that something is lost when you don’t articulate it, especially if the context almost demands it’s articulation.”

*To Kill a Mockingbird*: “Calpurnia says that’s **nigger-talk**.”

— ... **cuentos de negros**.

— ... **invenção de negro**.

“... 黑人瞎编的。”

Translation of a racial epithet:

Spanish: stories of Negroes.

Portuguese: invention of Negro.

Chinese: black person’s fabrication.

**May 14, 2016**

**Sana**: Today I am thinking about broken families like Dill’s family. It mostly happens in West, broken families, where everyone chases his or her own satisfaction n nobody sacrifice for one another  
It’s not good for kids

**Caleb**: It’s interesting how you think it happens mostly in the West.

**Sana**: I am an art lover

I have some artist online friends

sometime they told me about themselves

All are divorced

Every one

That’s why I said it happens in West

**May 15, 2016**

**Sana**: Can I ask a personal question?

**Caleb**: Yes.

**Sana**: Does love vary from person to person?

**Caleb**: Yes. Why?

**Sana**: One of my art friends got married for love

After a few years she divorced

Then she loved somebody else

He cheated on her

Then she again loves somebody  
Now they are living together without marriage  
It's really strange for me, how can it be possible?  
You love someone, and then you don't, and then you love someone  
again, and then you don't  
Maybe it is common in West

**May 16, 2016**

**Sana:** I feel sorry for Tom Robinson  
He is an innocent person

*To Kill a Mockingbird:* "You're left-handed, Mr. Ewell," said Judge Taylor....

... Atticus was trying to show, it seemed to me, that Mr. Ewell could have beaten up Mayella. That much I could follow. If her right eye was blacked and she was beaten mostly on the right side of the face, it would tend to show that a left-handed person did it....

... Tom Robinson's... looked oddly off balance, but it was not from the way he was standing. His left arm was fully twelve inches shorter than his right, and hung dead at his side. It ended in a small shriveled hand, and from as far away as the balcony I could see that it was no use to him.

**May 17, 2016**

**Sana:** I am starting to read fast  
do you think they will really kill Tom Robinson?  
in Pakistan there was no death penalty.  
but after APS they made death penalty law.  
so they could execute terrorist

**May 21, 2016**

**Sana:** Tom lost. Atticus lost  
Sad

Atticus Finch: "Don't fool yourselves — it's all adding up and one of these days we're going to pay the bill for it. I hope it's not in you children's time."

**May 22, 2016**

**Sana:** I had to know about Tom Robinson

Boo Radley was a hero

I feel sorry for Mayella because her life consists of seven unhelpful siblings, a drunken father, and no friends

I feel sorry for Boo Radley wasting life in the cage of his house

I feel most sorry for Tom Robinson and widow and children

I have tears

*Rilke: Und der Künstler ist immer noch dieser: ein Tänzer, dessen Bewegung sich bricht an dem Zwang seiner Zelle. Was in seinen Schritten und dem beschränkten Schwung seiner Arme nicht Raum hat, kommt in der Ermattung von seinen Lippen, oder er muß die noch ungelebten Linien seines Leibes mit wunden Fingern in die Wände ritzen.*

Or: And the artist is still this: a dancer whose movement is broken by the constraint of his cell. What in his steps and the limited impetus of his arms does not have space, comes from his lips in the exhaustion, or he has to scratch the still unlived lines of his body with sore fingers into the walls.

Mortality; that of the Clutters, Perry Smith, Richard Hickock, the 132 children of Peshawar, blind Ali, Sana's Baba, and Tom Robinson; affected Sana's and my "unlived lines." Similarly and differently, but how?

**May 24, 2016**

**Sana:** I will start next novel tomorrow

Caleb will you write a story about me when I die?

**Caleb:** I imagine you will outlive me. I'm almost 20 years older, and women outlive men.

Anyway.

Let's tell your story while you are alive.