

# The Eemaan Reading Series

Level 6

**Stories**

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## **The Eemaan Reading Series**

Level-6

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# The Tug of War

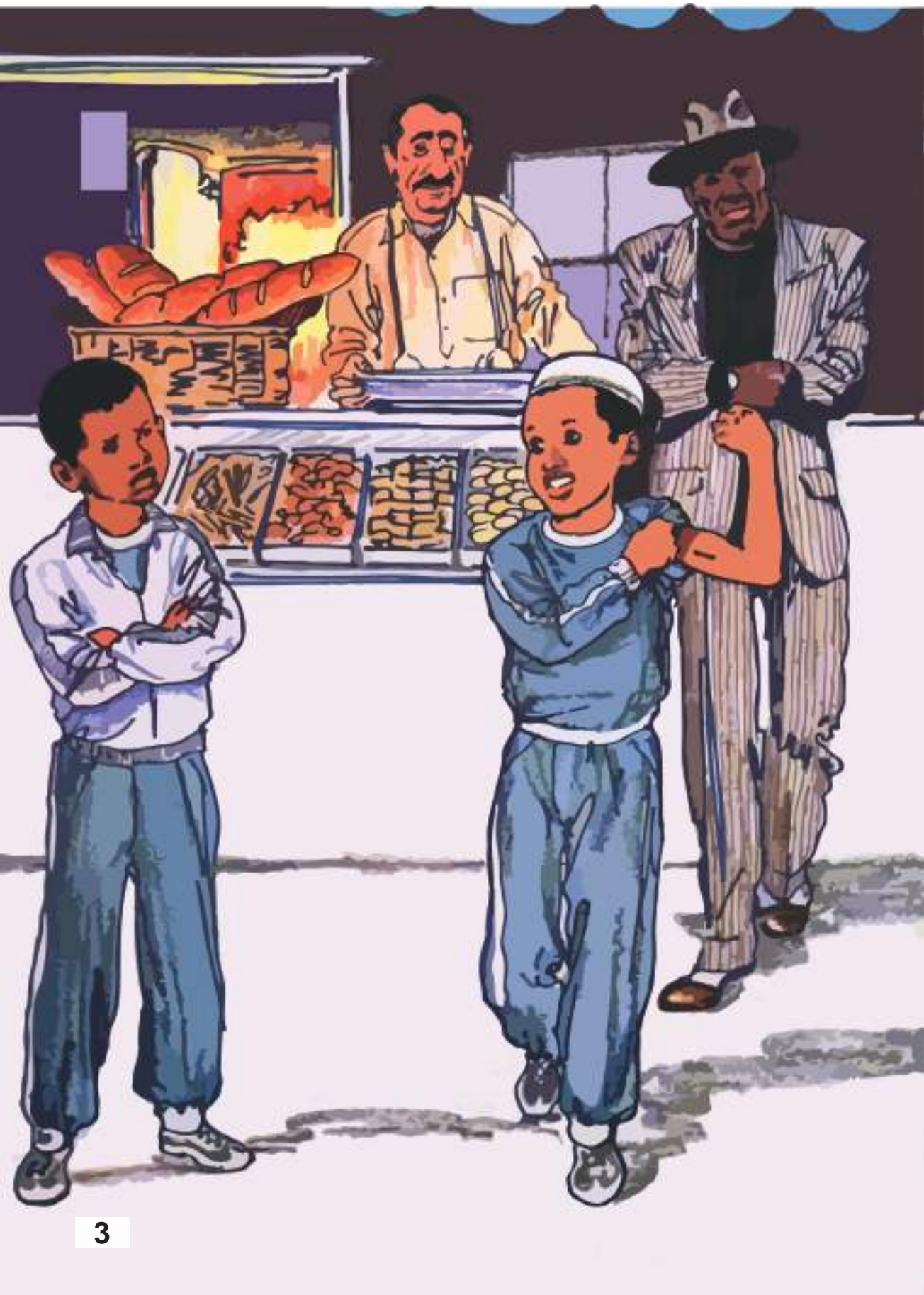


‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan are seven-year-old twin brothers. They are identical twins, which means that they both look exactly the same. Unless you know them well, it is very difficult to tell them apart!



Both the twins go to the same school. They are in the same class and are best of friends! They have two younger sisters, Nusaybah and Raheelah, and an older sister, Salwa, who is nine years old. Nusaybah and Raheelah are also identical twins, and they are five years old.





Like the boys, Nusaybah and Raheelah are best of friends! Although ‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan are best friends, they are always competing with each other. Each of them wants to be better than the other; because of this they sometimes end up causing a big fuss over things.

‘Uthmaan wants to be a police officer and Sulaymaan would like to be an ‘aalim (Muslim scholar). Both of them are trying to learn the *Qur’aan* by heart. They both love Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions a lot. Their mother and father often tell them stories about how much the companions loved Islaam and what great Muslims they were.

One spring morning, while they were on their way home from Arabic classes, ‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan began to argue about which one of them would grow up to be like ‘Umar. The previous day, their parents had told them about what a great and strong companion Umar was, so each of them secretly wanted to be like him.

They became so busy in their little argument that they walked right past Mr. Alee’s bakery where they normally stopped to buy themselves some donuts.

“I’m the one who is going to be like ‘Umar - Inshaa Allaah!” protested ‘Uthmaan.

“No you are not. I am the one who is going to grow up to be like ‘Umar because I admire him,” insisted Sulaymaan.

“I love ‘Umar too, and anyway you can’t be like ‘Umar because you are not strong like him. I am strong. Look at my big muscles!” exclaimed ‘Uthmaan flexing his arm to show his tiny muscles.

“Well, I have muscles too, but I don’t like showing them off to people like you do!” replied Sulaymaan getting a bit annoyed with his twin brother.

They continued arguing with each other until they got home. As soon as they knocked on the front door, their sisters, Raheelah and Nusaybah, sighed, “The troublesome twins are here again!” “Raheelah! Nusaybah! Aren’t I stronger than Sulaymaan?” asked ‘Uthmaan. “I’m not sure,” said Raheelah. “Maybe,” said Nusaybah. “How will we know?” asked Sulaymaan. “Let’s ask Salwa!” said Raheelah. So they went to their big sister and asked her what to do. Salwa suggested that they should give themselves a week to get as strong as they could. Then, at the end of the week, they should have a game of tug of war to see who was the strongest.





The twins agreed and immediately began searching for the foods which would make them stronger.

“Milk will make you strong!” said Nusaybah.

“How do you know?” asked ‘Uthmaan.

“Well,” said Nusaybah. “Once when I was in school and I didn’t want to finish my milk, my teacher told me that if I didn’t drink milk, I wouldn’t grow up to be strong. So, from that day on, I made sure that I always finished my milk!”

The twin girls thought it would be great fun to see their brothers in a game of tug of war, and of course it would really be good to know which one of their brothers would grow up to be like the great companion ‘Umar.

At school the next day, Nusaybah and Raheelah found it very difficult to keep their brothers’ plan to themselves. They wanted to tell the whole school that one of their brothers would grow up to be like ‘Umar. How could they keep such a big thing like that to themselves? They told their best friend Saarah and by lunch time the whole of the school knew about ‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan’s plan.

“Tug of war is not going to be much fun with just the two of you watching! Why don’t you have it at school?” said a girl in Raheelah and Nusaybah’s class named Haleemah.

“Yes! And why don’t you let us come along to watch?” asked another girl called ‘Aa’ishah.

“It will be much more exciting!” added Naasir.

“Well!” sighed Nusaybah, “I suppose you all are right. But the best bit will be knowing which one of my brothers will grow up to be like ‘Umar.”

At recess, the girls told their twin brothers about their classmates’ suggestions and they both agreed to have the tug of war at school. So, all week long, everyone at Silverdale Primary School talked about ‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan’s contest.

Some were saying that Sulaymaan would win, while others were saying that Uthmaan would win. Many of the children also asked questions about 'Umar. Even the non-Muslim students at the school wanted to know who he was and what he was famous for.

Meanwhile both 'Uthmaan and Sulaymaan were drinking as much milk as possible to make them stronger. Sometimes 'Uthmaan would even buy a bottle of milk and sneak it into his bedroom to drink at night.



“What is happening to you two boys?” teased their mother one morning as she had noticed how eagerly the twins had been drinking a full glass of milk every morning “You remind me of the Prophet’s two favorite companions, ‘Umar and Abu Bakr.”

“Oh yes!” said Salwa, “Umar and Abu Bakr used to always try to beat each other in being good Muslims.”

On Friday morning a very unusual thing happened at school. Mr. Hasan, who was Silverdale’s Islaamic Studies teacher, was asked by the head teacher to talk to the whole school about ‘Umar, the great hero of Islaam!



As soon as Mr. Green, the principal, announced that Mr. Hasan would be talking about ‘Umar, the whole school became really excited. Even the teachers were eager to learn about this great man about whom the school children had been talking about non-stop for the past week. At last everyone at Silverdale Primary school would get a chance to know about the great hero ‘Umar, whom ‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan longed to be like. Of course ‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan were even more excited about what Mr. Hasan was going to say to the whole school about ‘Umar.

Everyone gathered in the assembly hall and Mr. Hasan began to talk about ‘Umar, the great hero of Islaam.

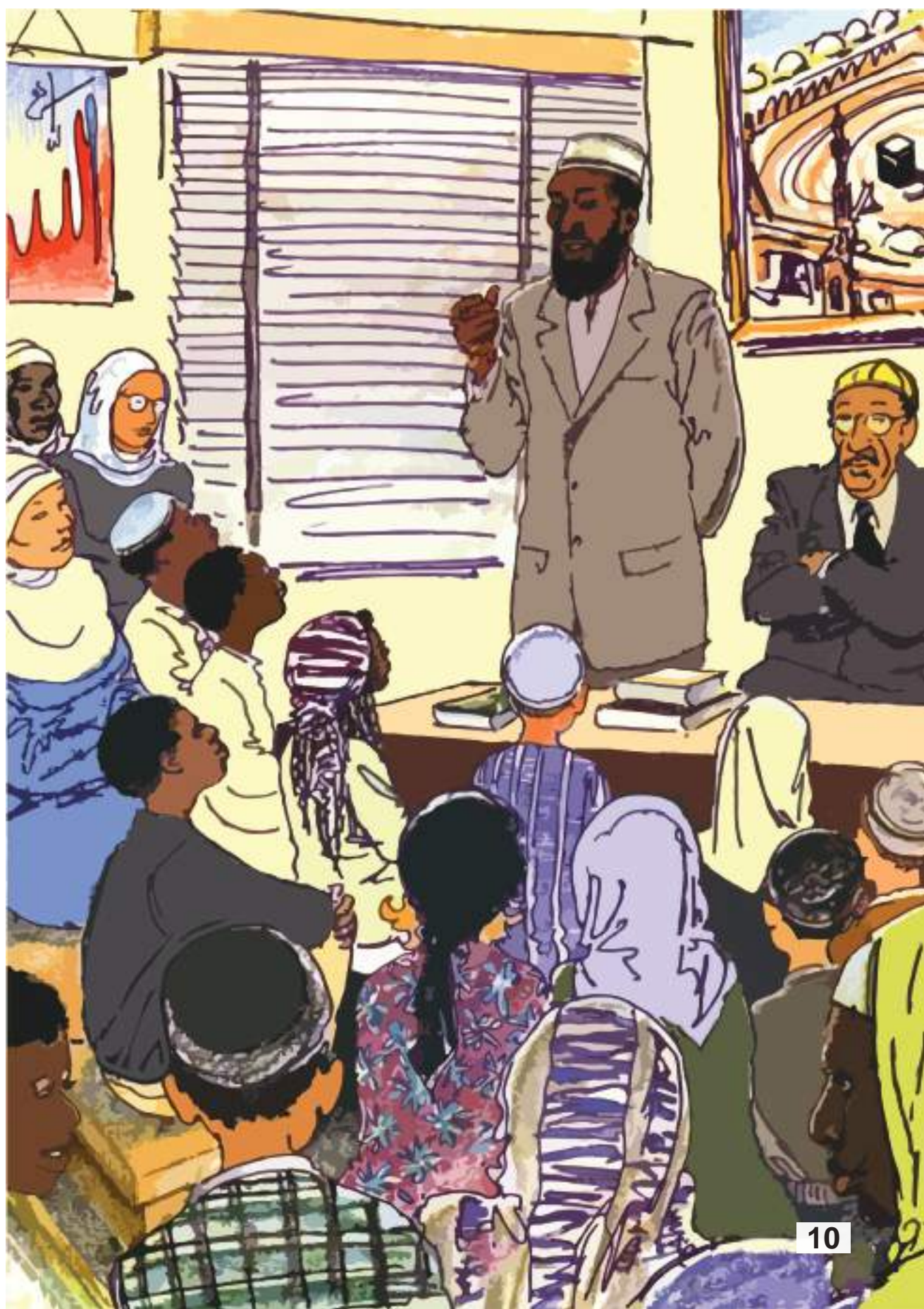
‘Umar ibn al-Khattaab was a very close companion of the last Prophet of Islaam, Muhammad (peace be upon him). He became the second *Caliph* (leader of Muslims) after the death of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Abu Bakr was the first Caliph.

‘Umar was a very strong and brave man and people used to be afraid of him. He was so strong that nobody would dare say anything to make him angry. ‘Umar was also very smart. At that time not many people could read or write, but ‘Umar was one of the few people who could read and write.

In the early days, ‘Umar worshipped idols. Once he had an idol made of dates which he used to worship. But he later got very hungry and ate his idol. ‘Umar did not like Muslims or Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He did not like that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was telling the people of Makkah to stop worshipping idols that could neither move nor speak. ***Muhammad (peace be upon him) told the people to worship Allaah alone, who was the only God, and who was The Maker of everything in the Heavens and on earth.***

The two strongest men in Makkah in those days were ‘Umar and Amr ibn Hishaam. ***One day Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) prayed to Allaah to strengthen Islaam by making either ‘Umar or ‘Amr accept Islaam. Allaah accepted the prayer and a few days later ‘Umar became a Muslim.***”







“Could you tell us a little bit about how ‘Umar became a Muslim?” asked the headteacher, Mr. Green.

“Well,” began Mr. Hasan, “ one day ‘Umar was really fed up with the trouble that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was causing, so he took his sword and set off to find him and kill him. On the way, he met a man whom he knew. The man, who was a secret Muslim, asked him where he was going in such an angry mood. ‘Umar told him that he was going to kill Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The man then told him that his own sister, Faatimah, and her husband had become Muslims too. When ‘Umar heard this he became even angrier, and went immediately to his sister’s house.

As ‘Umar approached his sister, Faatimah’s house, he heard someone teaching her how to read something. When ‘Umar knocked on the door, his sister stopped reading and her teacher, Khabbaab, hid himself in a closet. ‘Umar asked his sister what she was reading, but Faatimah would not tell him. He then asked her why she and her husband had become Muslims, but she still refused to answer him. ‘Umar became very angry, so Faatimah’s husband said: “Why shouldn’t we believe in the true religion of God?” On hearing this, ‘Umar became even angrier and jumped on Faatimah’s husband to give him a beating. While Faatimah was trying to stop her brother, ‘Umar smacked her in her face. Blood began streaming down Faatimah’s face. ‘Umar quickly let go of her husband and stared at his sister surprised at what he had done. Then Faatimah courageously said to him : ***“We have accepted Islaam because we believe in Allaah, His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) and in the Qur’aan which is the true word of Allaah. What you heard me reading was the Qur’aan, so you can do whatever you like but we will never give up Islaam.”***

‘Umar was shocked to hear his sister’s words and he was very ashamed of hitting her. He remained silent for a moment, then he asked her to show him what they had been reading. Faatimah told him that he would have to wash himself before he could touch the *Qur’aan*. So ‘Umar went away, washed himself and came back. When ‘Umar read the *Qur’aan*, he was moved by its words. Umar felt in his heart that there was nothing in the world like it. From that moment ‘Umar knew that Islaam was the truth - a big change had taken place in Umar.

He left his sister’s house and went looking for the Prophet (peace be upon him), and when he found him in Makkah he said: ***“I believe that there is no God but Allaah and I believe that you are a messenger of Allaah.”*** So ‘Umar became a Muslim. The Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions were very happy that ‘Umar accepted Islaam. Before ‘Umar became a Muslim, Muslims would not dare to pray openly in front of the Ka’bah because the Kaaba was controlled by the idol worshippers. However, after ‘Umar became a Muslim, he went to the Ka’bah and prayed there openly. The idol-worshippers were upset, but no one dared to challenge ‘Umar. After that other Muslims joined him. ***This pleased the Prophet (peace be upon him) so much that from that day onwards he named ‘Umar “al-Faarooq” which means ‘the one who makes the difference’.*** He was called that because he stood up for the truth and fought against falsehood.

From this we can see how brave ‘Umar was. We, as Muslims, should also be strong and fight for the truth. For example, even if we are in school, we should not miss our prayers. We must be brave and pray wherever we are, even if others may laugh at us. ‘Umar lived at a time when people carried swords around with them. Nowadays many

Muslims will not pray in front of their non-Muslim friends fearing that they will be laughed at. But we must try to be strong like ‘Umar and do what Allaah tells us to do in the *Qur’aan*.

Umar was so strong that even Satan was frightened of him. ***The Prophet (peace be upon him) told ‘Umar that when Satan sees him coming on one road, he changes to another road.*** This took many of the children by surprise. “No wonder the twins want to be like ‘Umar!” a little boy in the twins’ class named Muhammad said quietly to himself.

Angel Jibreel came and told the Prophet (peace be upon him) that the angels in Paradise cheered when they heard that ‘Umar had become a Muslim. **Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also said that if there was a prophet to come after him, it would have been ‘Umar!**



“That’s really wonderful!” said ‘Uthmaan looking towards his twin brother Sulaymaan. “Yes! And I am the one who is going to be like Umar!” said Sulaymaan. “No you are not!” whispered Uthmaan.



“SHHHHHhhhhhh! Listen carefully to what Mr. Hasan is saying, twins!” said Miss Perry giving both twins a nudge in the back.

It rained very heavily on Thursday night. The next morning when the twins came to school they saw huge puddles in the middle of the playground.

“It will be great fun to see Sulaymaan get soaked in a puddle!” said ‘Uthmaan to his friend Haarith.

“And what makes you so sure that you are going to win?” asked Haarith.

“I am very strong! I have been drinking lots of milk, much more than Sulaymaan!” replied ‘Uthmaan.

At last, recess arrived. All the children left their classrooms and went to the playground. The gym teacher, Mr. Khaalid, came out with a rope and told ‘Uthmaan and Sulaymaan to stand on opposite sides of the biggest puddle in the play-ground. The twins wrapped opposite ends of the rope around their waists and held on to it tightly as it stretched across the puddle. They anxiously waited for Mr. Khaalid to tell them to begin. Everyone in the playground was shouting and cheering. Some of the children were supporting Sulaymaan while others were supporting ‘Uthmaan. Raheelah and Nusaybah couldn’t decide whose side to take!

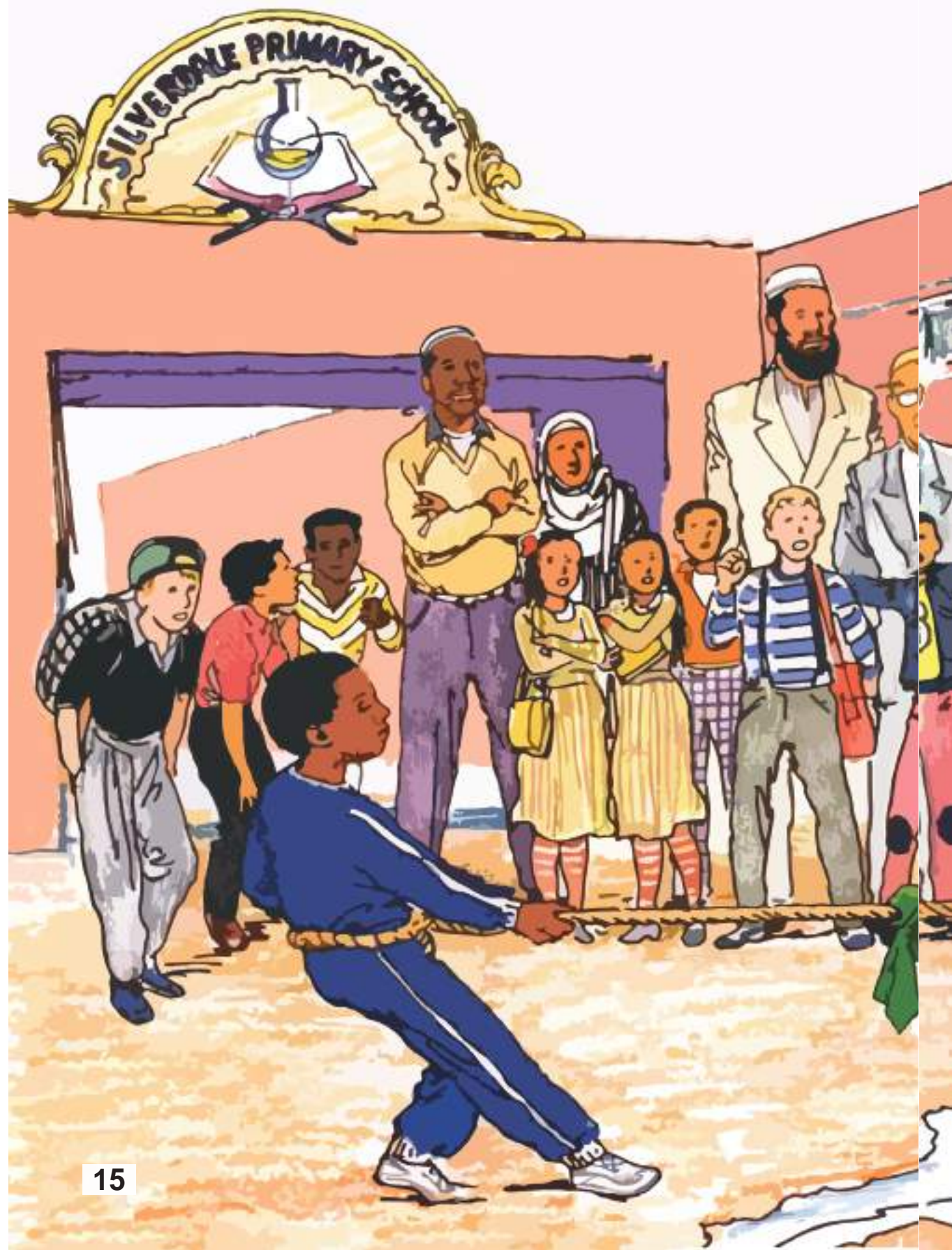
“I think I’ll be on Sulaymaan’s side because he helps me with my math homework,” said Raheelah.

“I don’t know,” said Nusaybah, “I think I want them both to win. Wouldn’t it be wonderful to have two brothers like ‘Umar the great leader of the Muslims!”

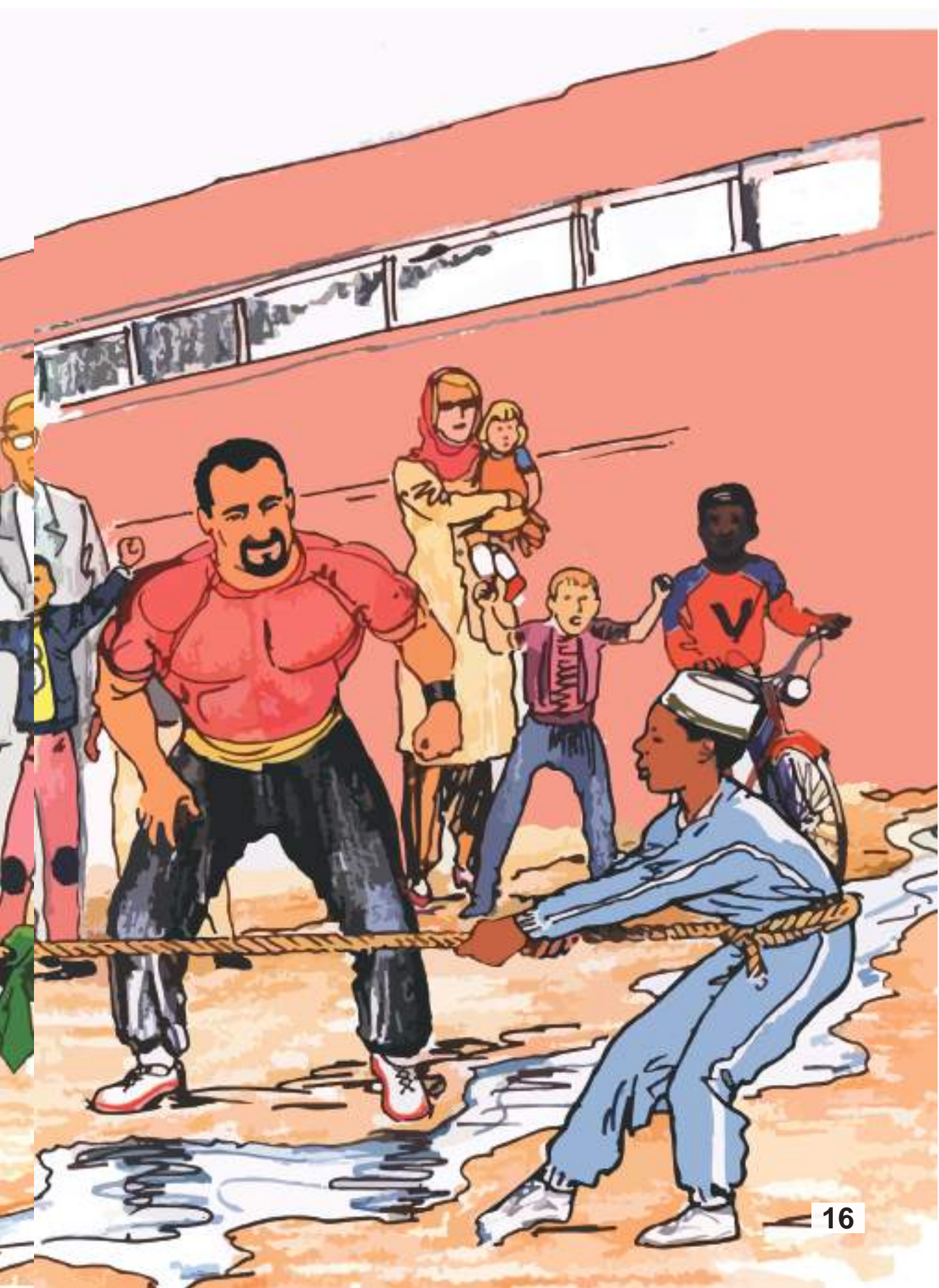
Mr. Khaalid began to count: “One .... two .... three .... and go!” Both boys pulled at the rope with all their might. “It looks as though both of them are going to win.” said Haleemah. Then ‘Uthmaan began to feel his footing slip and felt Sulaymaan pull him closer to the puddle. “No!” thought ‘Uthmaan to himself, “I can’t let Sulaymaan win, because I am the one who is going to be like ‘Umar.” He then said, “*Bismillaah* (In the name of Allaah) and pulled on the rope as hard as he possibly could. He took one step away from the puddle and then another, and pulled Sulaymaan up to the edge of the puddle.

“Come on, ‘Uthmaan! You can do it!” shouted one boy.









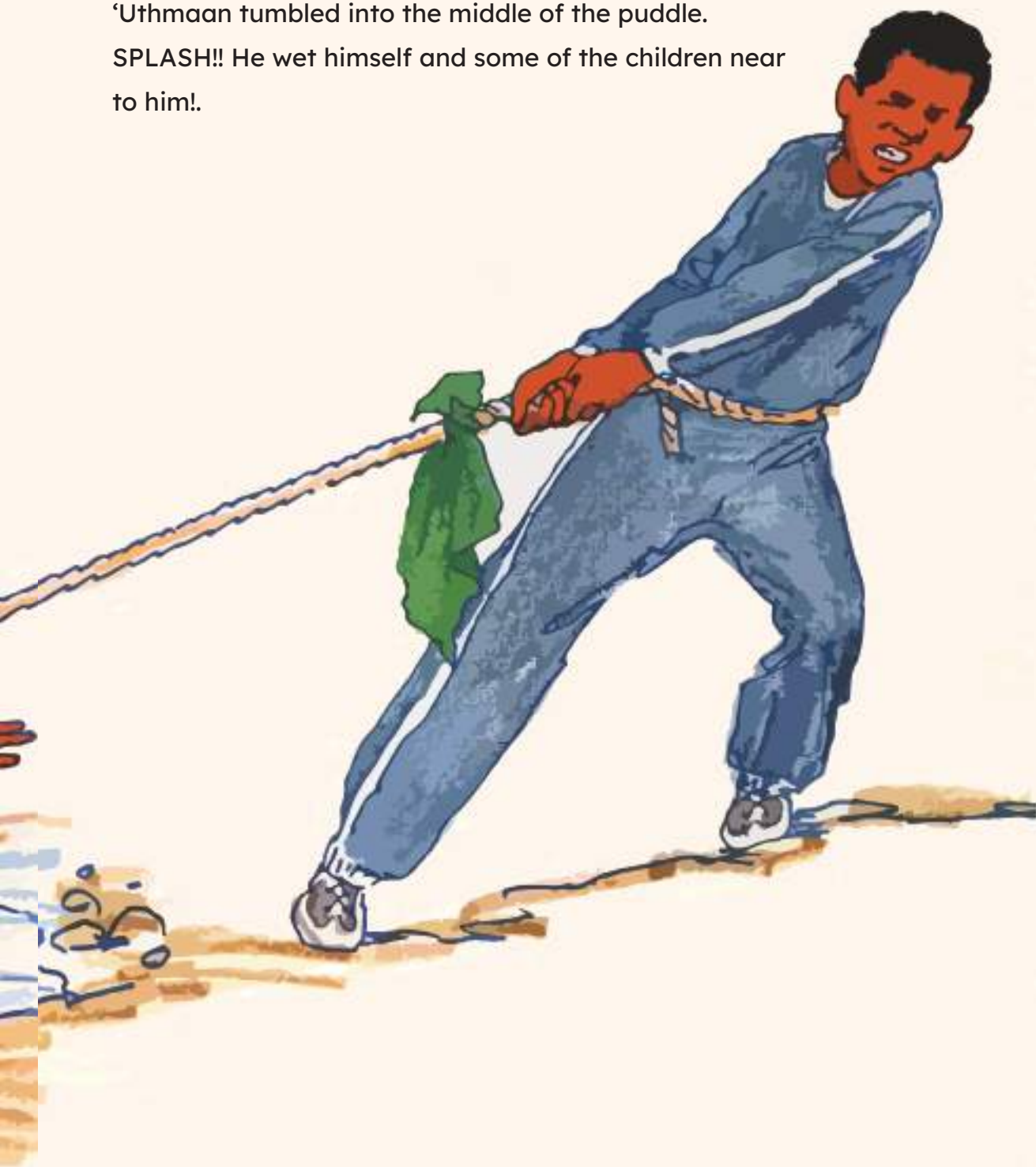
“Go, Sulaymaan, go!” shouted another.

Sulaymaan pulled with all his might and took a step away from the puddle again. Who was going to win? The playground was filled with children’s voices cheering and shouting. Sulaymaan pulled with all his might, and ‘Uthmaan pulled back.





They both pulled and pulled and pulled until... at last  
'Uthmaan tumbled into the middle of the puddle.  
SPLASH!! He wet himself and some of the children near  
to him!.





“Sulaymaan won! !” the children all cheered and shouted.

“Sulaymaan is the winner! Sulaymaan is the winner!”

Raheelah and Nusaybah looked at ‘Uthmaan, whose eyes were filled with tears.

“Now you can’t be like ‘Umar !” said Nusaybah sadly.

“Does this mean that he can’t be a police officer when he grows up, because police officers have to be strong?” asked Raheelah.

“I don’t know! Maybe Allaah will make him strong when he grows up,” said Nusaybah.

Meanwhile Sulaymaan was surrounded by his cheering classmates. “O Sulaymaan, you are going to be like ‘Umar, *in shaa Allaah*” said Muhammad happily.

“Can I be your best friend when you grow up to be like ‘Umar?” asked another of the twins’ classmates. “Sure,” replied Sulaymaan.

Once all the children were back in school, they were told to return to the assembly hall. Mr. Hasan told them all to be quiet, then he began to speak: “Right, children! You have all seen that Sulaymaan

won the contest. However, being a strong Muslim does not only mean that one has to have a strong body. It is true that Umar's body was strong, but he also had a very strong belief in Islaam. He would always try his very best to do things to please Allaah and would not



let Satan make him disobey Allaah. **Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “The strong Muslim is not the champion wrestler, but the one who can control his anger.”** It is good for us to try to have a strong body like Umar, but it is more important to be strong in doing deeds which please Allaah, and not doing deeds which displease Him.”





'Uthmaan wiped the tears from his eyes and smiled. He could still be like 'Umar if he really tried! His little sisters came and hugged him. They were happy too. His brother, Sulaymaan, also came over and took his hand and said, "*Al-Hamdulillaah* (Thanks to Allaah) - We can both be like Caliph 'Umar when we grow up if we try hard to please Allaah. But now you know that I am the strongest." "Maybe you are now," said 'Uthmaan, "but just you wait and see. I'm going to drink more milk from now on and maybe I'll become stronger later!" "No you won't," said Sulaymaan in a loud voice. "Yes, I will!" shouted 'Uthmaan.



Mr. Hasan came over to them and said, “Now boys, remember that **the Prophet (peace be upon him) said that real strength is in good behaviour, like not getting angry and raising our voices.**”  
“Yes, Mr. Hasan. We are sorry.” said both of them and, at the same time, their sisters laughed heartily.

## Questions to Answer

1. Who was 'Umar?
2. Why did Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) call 'Umar 'al Faarooq'?
3. What did Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) say about 'Umar being a prophet?
4. What did 'Umar do with his idol when he got hungry?
5. What does Satan do when he sees 'Umar?
6. What did 'Umar do that the Prophet (peace be upon him) really liked?
7. Why did 'Umar hit his sister in the head?
8. What does it mean to be a strong Muslim?
9. Who was Abu Bakr?
10. Who fell in the puddle?

<i><b>Page</b></i>	<i><b>Reference</b></i>
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9	Qur'an 6:102
9	Sunan al-Tirmidhi – Hadith no. 3681
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13	Jami' at-Tirmidhi, Hadith 3686; also in Musnad Ahmad (17456) and Mustadrak al-Hakim (4494)
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