

The Brida Journal

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Ideas and Conversations, for and by learners of English.

When will be the end well?

Saif, in Pakistan, recounts an experience and asks some questions.

One day, in mid-December, Abdul Rehman's friend, Habeeb, was talking about assets and earning money. He showed him a video of his brother-in-law's luxurious house. It was as well-furnished and beautified as one can imagine. Abdul Rehman thought it was an ideal house, similar to a mansion of an aristocrat shown in modern movies.

Whilst they were talking, Habeeb's phone rang. It was his brother-in-law. After the call, Habeeb told Abdul, a nephew of his brother-in-law was studying in a madrassa*; and that they would go to meet the boy in one or two days.

Two days later, travelling on a motorcycle, Rehman went with Habeeb and his 10-year-old son to see the boy, in a madrassa thirty miles away from their residence. On the way, they bought some fruit for the boy.

It was a big madrassa with an adjacent mosque. Half of the madrassa's open area was covered by the lawn of the mosque. Many boys of different ages had just offered their midday prayer and were getting ready to go to their rooms.

Abdul Rehman was lost in thought as he saw the appearance of the boys. They were wearing almost dirty clothes. Their faces had become like the leaves fallen off the green branch of the tree and like a piece of flesh hanging on the hook in a butcher's shop. Some looked like pygmies.

The boys stared back at the two adults as if some strange thing had appeared before them. They were anxious to learn who it was they had come to see. Deep down, it seemed, as if they too, were waiting for someone.

The son of Habeeb's brother-in-law came. He was wearing a dirty, printed overall. He had thrust his hands into the pockets in order to defeat the cold. Two of his front teeth were broken. His face was completely expressionless. His old shirt had holes, as if the innocent body had been struggling to free itself from confinement.

Then, a tight little smile ran over his blighted face as he saw Habeeb's boy. Abdul Rehman's heart

was aching to see the plight. They wanted to take the boy out of the madrassa for a while to entertain him, but, because the head of the madrassa was not there, they were not allowed.

Then, the immediate Qari Shabi, the boy's teacher and whose own getup was not much different to that of the boys came and showed them in a small room where three cots were lying with mattress and soft blankets on them. They sat on a cot and Habeeb phoned his brother-in-law. He told him that they had come to see the boy and they were sitting with the boy in the madrassa. He also asked the boy to talk to his mother on the mobile phone. During the call they told Habeeb and the boy that they were going on a picnic in their Honda car. Soon tea was offered and served, though Habeeb tried to stop them from serving.

While taking the tea Abdul Rehman began to talk to Qari Sahib who revealed that he was twenty-four years old and that he too had passed primary five from a village school; and after learning to read the phonics of the Quran for two years, he had come to teach in the madrassa three hundred miles away from his village, for ten thousand a month. On hearing this, Abdul Rehman was much grieved at heart.

He thought, if such people teach, how would the education of such deserted children be? What will they make of such innocent souls?

The thought, why even rich parents sent their only child, at such a playful age of ten, to a far-off madrassa, hundreds of miles away, pinched his heart. Just after taking tea, he left back for home.

On the way home, Abdul Rehman thought deeply about the boy and his parents. There was something punching his heart. He could not believe the contrast he had observed.

In the late evening they reached home. The whole night Abdul Rehman had been thinking of the misery of the boys in madrassa, especially the boy they had gone to see. He grew more uncertain and could not understand what was happening. A child of ten years had been sent to a madrassa, hundreds of miles away from their home, as if he were not their own son!

Later in the next morning when Abdul Rehman and Habeeb came from a mosque after offering their Fajar prayer, he began to talk about the boy with Habeeb again. During their talk, Habeeb disclosed that it was not the real son of his brother-in-law. Actually, his brother-in-law's sister had adopted a 6-month-old baby because she could not bear her own child. He also revealed that the boy at the age of ten began to disinterest them, so they decided to send him to such madrassa where religious education is nearly free. He would learn to recite the whole Quran there. Maybe he would learn something more like his Qari Sahib. Now Abdul Rehman understood what was hurting him.

The conversation with Habeeb created turbulence in Abdul Rehman's heart again. Many painful questions began to prod his mind and soul. Why does the Government not force the parents to care for the adopted children like their own? Why are there no well-defined laws for adopting any child? Why do such people take an innocent child, a toy, for granted to play with until they have no longer heart in? Who knows how many such children fall a prey to such stone-hearted and so-called foster parents! Why do these selfish people not think whether they would do the same if it were their own real son there instead? What will be the future end of such used-for-play children? If such things continue happening, what will these children give to society? If their beginning is so bad, when will be the end well?

**Arabic word used for a school, also a school for religious education.*

Brexit English

*The United Kingdom has taken back control of its language.
Time to learn proper English.*

Blimey, I was rather chuffed when the bloke offered me some bangers for a couple of quid because I had been expecting to pay a fiver.

“These aren’t dodgy, are they?” I asked him.

“Na”, he replied. “They fell off the back of a truck and I sell them cheap. So, Bob’s your uncle.”

“Fancy a pint?” I asked.

He was gobsmacked at my offer. “Well, I’m knackered,” he replied, “but I won’t say no to a swift half.”

We entered the pub. A man, somewhat plastered was sitting in the corner.

At the counter, the barman said, “Careful, don’t sit on that stool. It’s a bit wonky.”

“What can I get you gents?” he asked.

“Couple of pints of lager” my new mate replied.

“Would you like some crisps to go with that?” the barman asked. “We’ve got some new ones in and they’re really wicked”.

English

Blimey
Chuffed
Bangers
Quid
Fiver
Dodgy
Fell off the back of a truck
Bob’s your uncle
Fancy
Gobsmacked
Knackered
A swift half
Plastered
Wonky
Mate
Pint
Wicked

What it means

Wow, (surprise or anger)
Pleased, delighted
Sausages
One pound (money)
Five pounds (five-pound note – money)
Suspicious, unreliable
Stolen goods
That’s it, there you are, Voila
Would you like?
Surprised
Tired
A quick pint of beer
Drunk
Not right, broken
Friend
A proper glass of beer (458ml for you EU lot)
Cool, fantastic



Spicy Thai Noodles

Ingredients (for 2)	Method
<p>500 g vegetables of your choice (courgettes, carrots, spring onion, aubergine or whatever else you have in the fridge).</p> <p>250 g tofu, e.g. almond nut tofu or chicken 250 g konjac noodles (tagliatelle) or other pasta</p> <p>For the sauce:</p> <p>2 garlic cloves, pressed 1 tbsp chilli sauce, Thai, hot, e.g. Sriracha 2 tbsp. chilli sauce, sweet 2 tbsp. soy sauce 2 tbsp. peanut butter 1 squeeze of lime juice or lemon juice</p> <p>For sprinkling:</p> <p>2 tbsp. peanuts, chopped or whole. coriander, fresh, chopped or spring onions.</p>	<p>Preparation time: approx. 10 minutes Cooking time: approx. 15 minutes Total time: 25 minutes</p> <p>Sauté the washed and cut vegetables in a wok or larger pan. If you want to eat with chopsticks, cut the vegetable pieces accordingly. It tastes good with any vegetable and is also a thankful recipe for leftovers in the crisper. Then add the tofu or chicken in bite-sized pieces and stir-fry.</p> <p>With the sauce, you can experiment with the quantities as you like, but nothing should be left out. Mix everything together and fold into the vegetables, adding a little water if necessary.</p> <p>Rinse the konjac noodles in hot water and drain. Just fold the noodles into the vegetable-peanut mixture while they are still slightly moist and fry gently for another 5 minutes so that they can absorb the flavour of the sauce.</p> <p>Then arrange everything on plates and serve. Serve with chopped peanuts and coriander or simply spring onion rings.</p>



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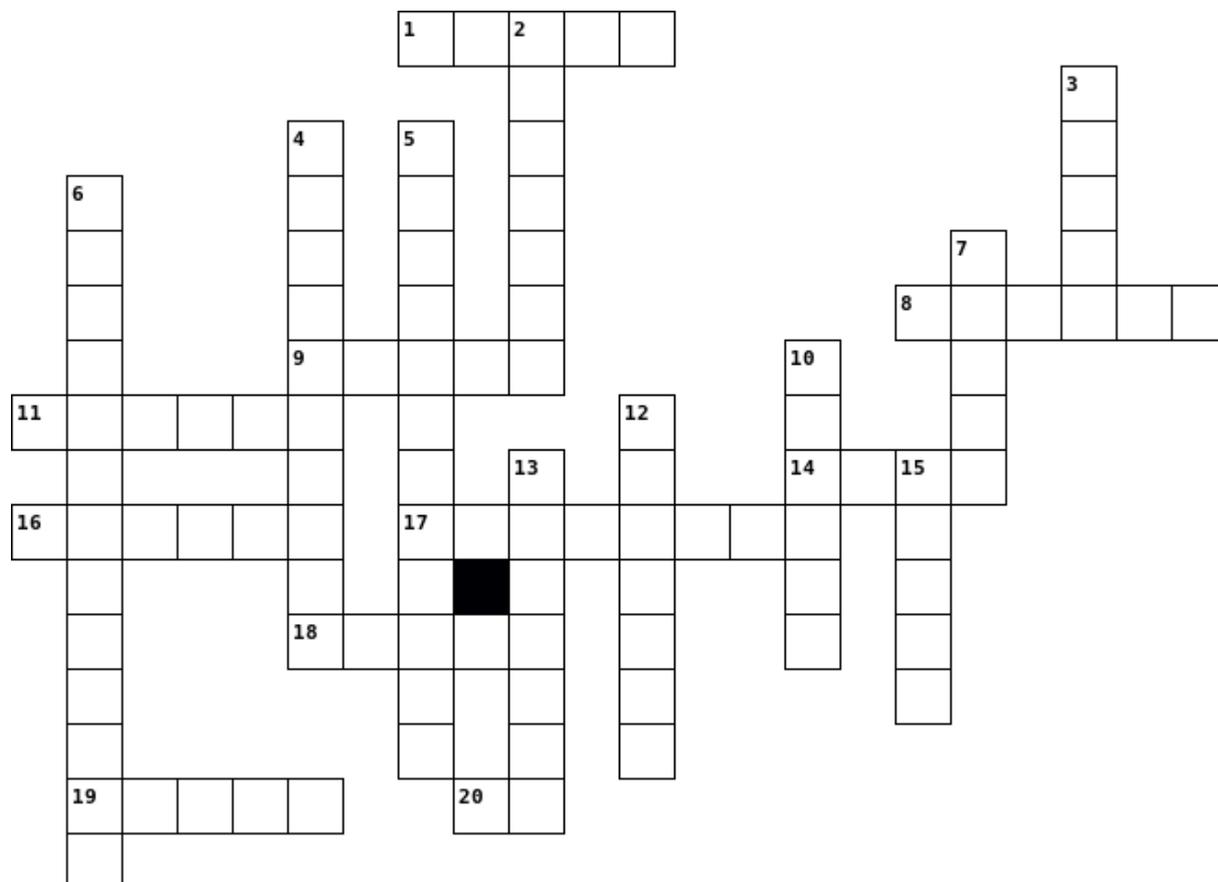
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The Crossword



Across

1. He left on Monday and arrived two days
8. I the green shirt, but it was already sold.
9. The chocolate mousse is very
11. Yesterday, I... some new clothes.
14. The restaurant is 15km
16. A meal eaten outside, often in a park.
17. The subject of planes and flying.
18. An item of clothing worn by men.
19. The area in your neighbourhood.
20. I saw Mary my way home today.

Down

2. I the shoes were very expensive.
3. We were talking the football game.
4. Chinese use these to eat their food.
5. I had an interesting with our boss today.
6. The train will be 10 minutes late.
7. a trip to the shopping mall?
10. Butter which is partly made with nuts.
12. A shop where you can buy meat.
13. An imaginary story.
15. He what time it was.

Solution 02.21**Across**

2. Seasonal
3. Through
5. Needed
8. Had
11. Explore
13. Unload
16. in
17. written
18. in
19. write
20. with

Down

1. interested
4. interesting
6. thirsty
7. fold
9. during
10. How
12. preheat
14. I saw
15. List.

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