

An illustration of a street scene in Karachi. The foreground is a wide, dusty dirt road. On the left, there's a building with a red door and a small window. In the center, a brick wall with a blue water container on top. To the right, a blue building with a red door and a yellow building with a red door. Power lines and poles are visible in the background. The sky is light blue with a few birds.

Paths to where we are - Karachi

2024



Asif:

They say one's own home is a heaven.
And I've worked hard for mine.
This house is testimony to my success.

2024



It took sweat and smarts for me to
get here. Now I have a good
government job.

2024



And all the modern conveniences
I could wish for.

2024

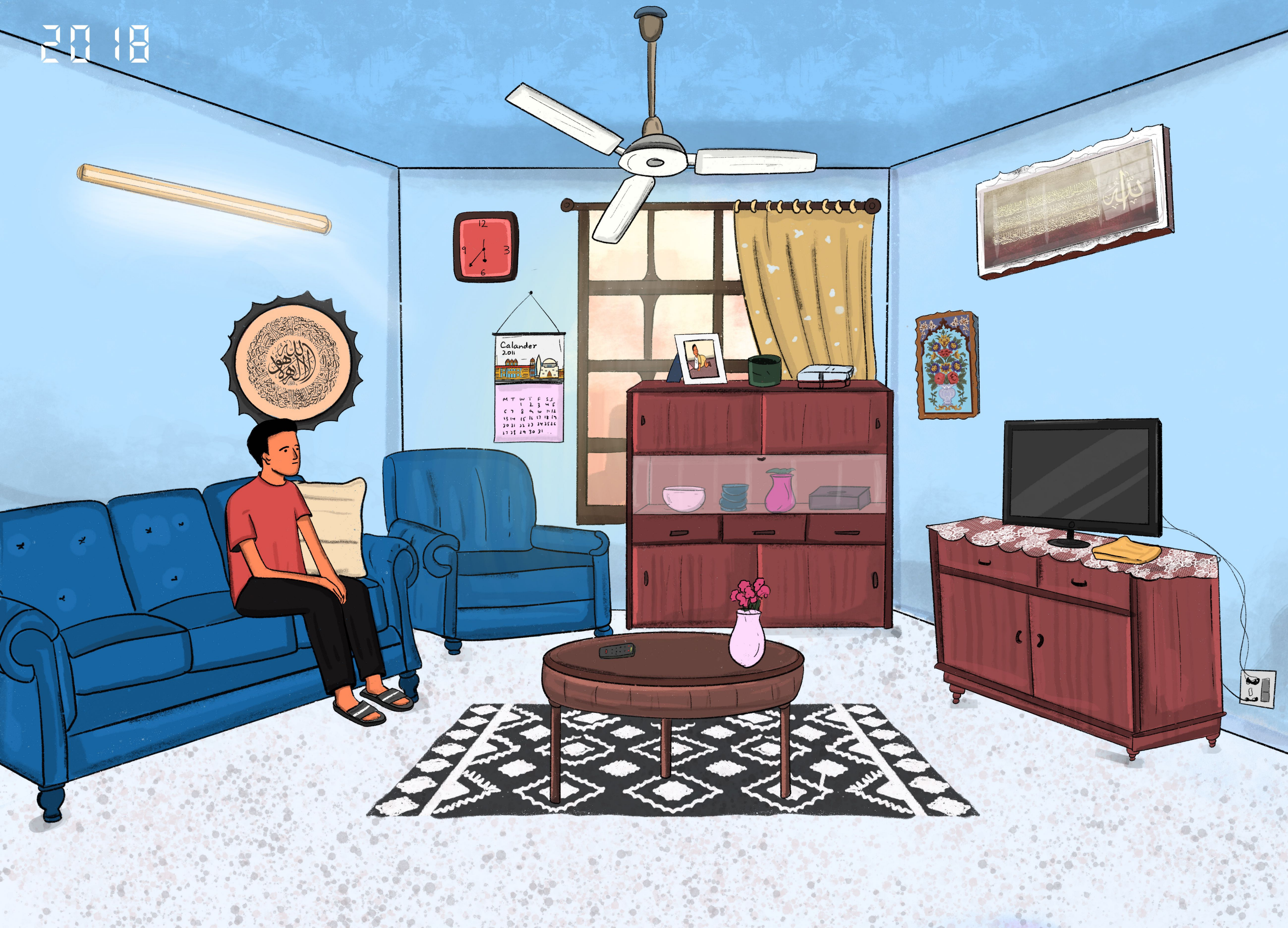
This air conditioning,
that large TV.

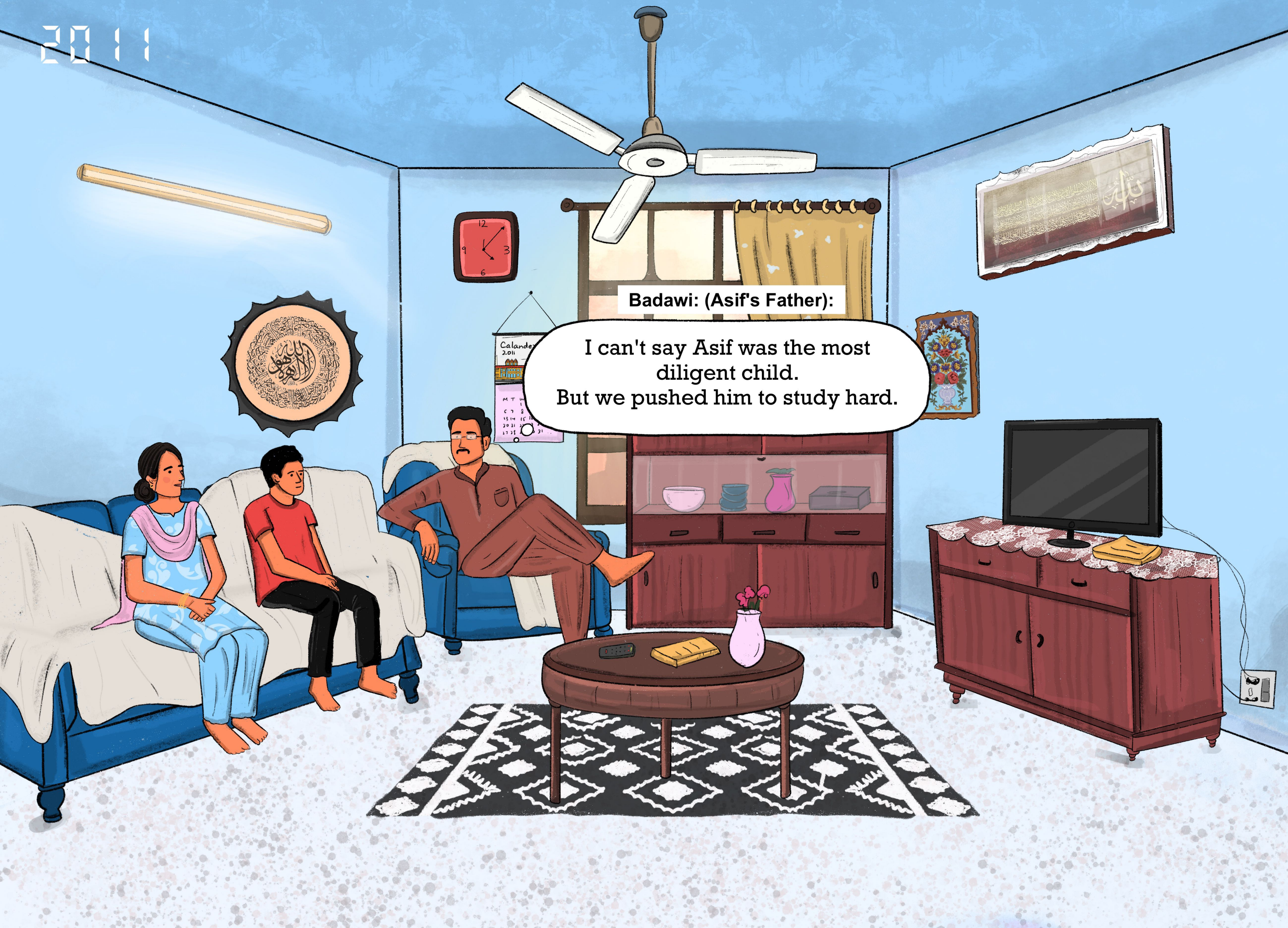




Not bad for a self-made man, eh?
Hard work pays off, that's for sure.
I wouldn't have dreamed of this when
I was younger.

2018





Badawi: (Asif's Father):

I can't say Asif was the most
diligent child.
But we pushed him to study hard.



His mother always said education
would be his ticket to a better life.
To freedom.

1997



She came from an educated family- her father was a teacher.

1995

Things hadn't been easy for my family with my sister. Life can be a struggle at times. But this marriage brought a change in my fortune.



1995

My intelligent and kind wife helped
me build my home.
We received generous
wedding gifts.



1995

This AC from my cousin.
To set us up for the future.
Although we try to not
use it so much.



1995



1995

We know education comes first.
It provides insurance for whatever
the future may hold.
Like this house did for me.



1990

Though when I was a teenager I sometimes felt trapped living here. Don't get me wrong- I know I was so lucky to have inherited a house.



1986

Life is a struggle for people
who have to rent. We have our own
home, Alhamdulillah, all is set.



1983



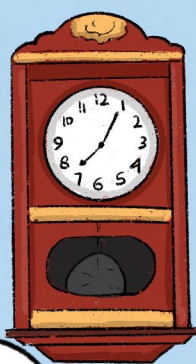
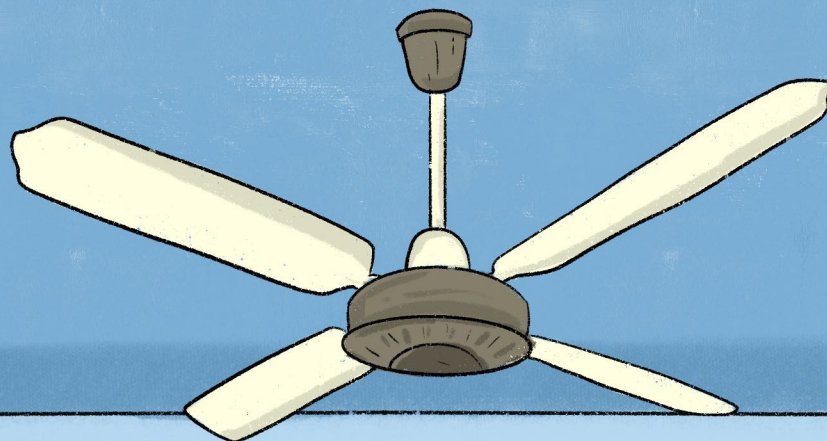
Fatima (Asif's Grandmother):

A home is important for
future generations,
not just as a nest but
also as a safety net.

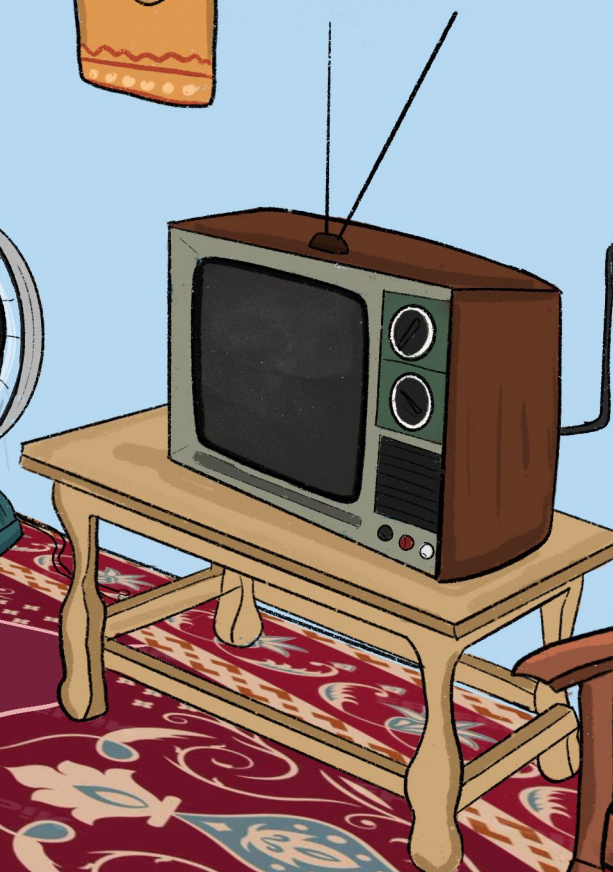
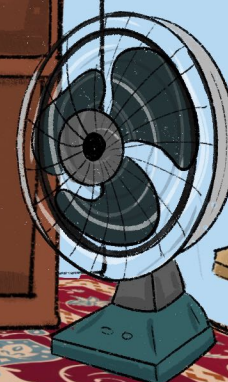
1980



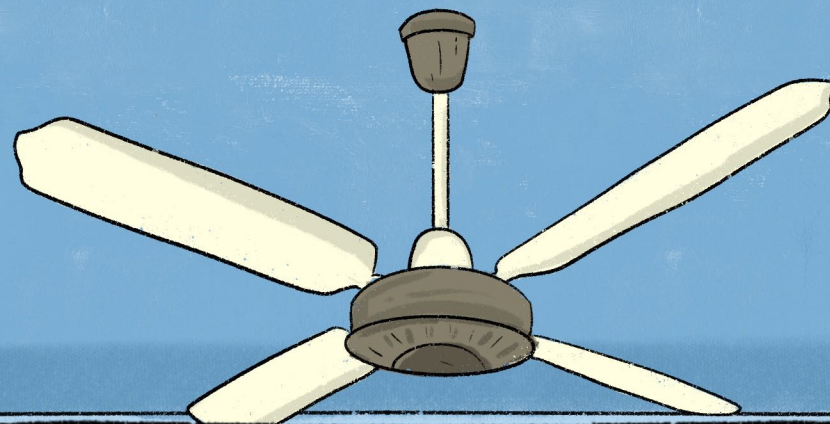
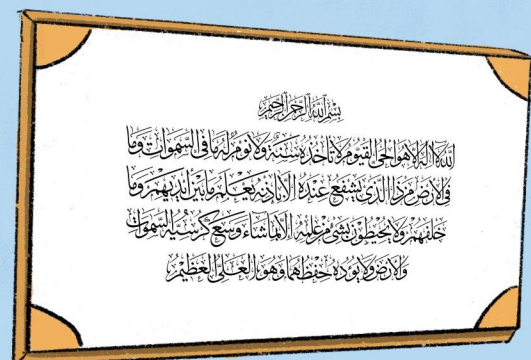
We learnt that the hard way when
our daughter got sick.
At first we thought it was
just a headache.



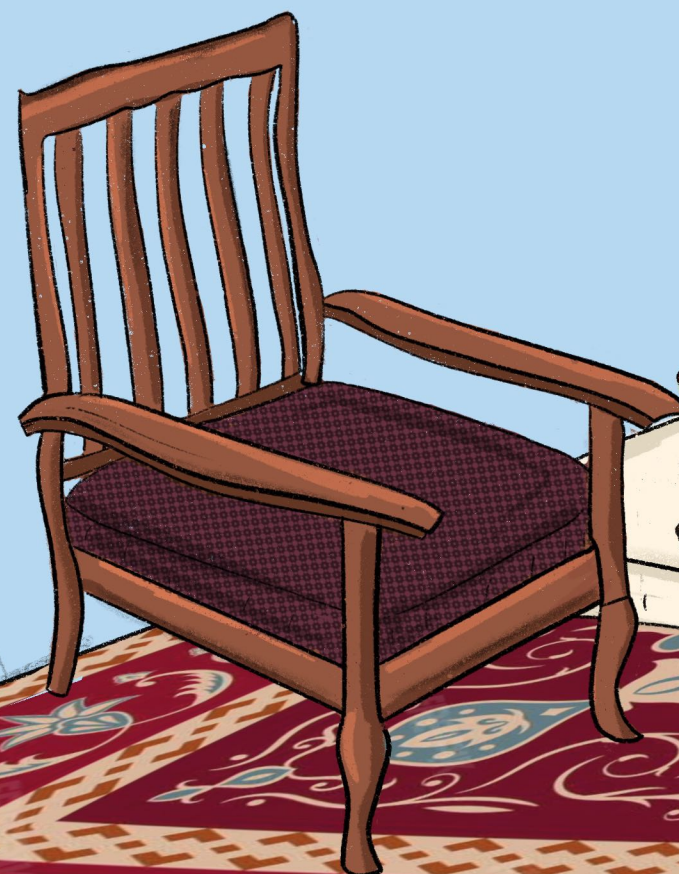
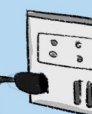
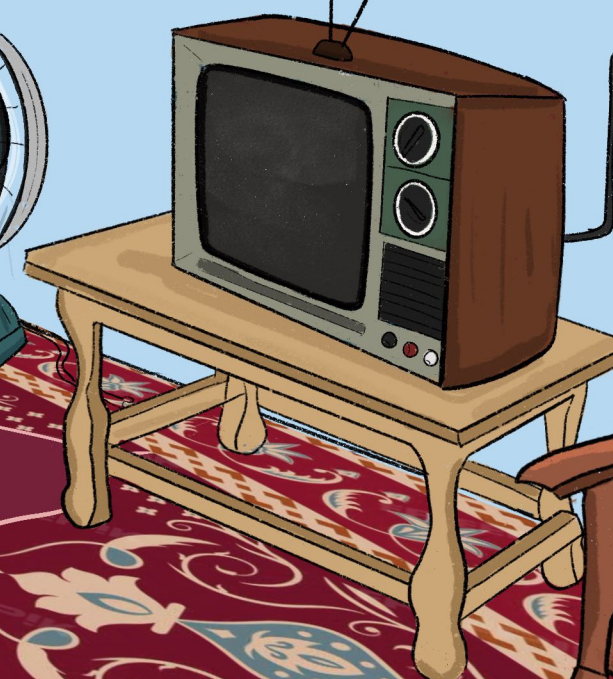
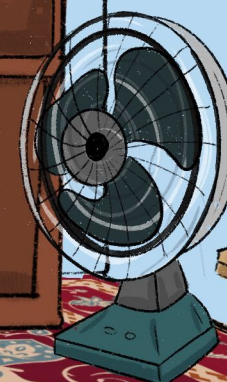
But the headaches didn't get better.



1978



She was treated by a specialist in Lahore.
My husband would travel out to the
hospital every time she needed a blood
transfusion. Standing on the train the whole
journey if there were no seats available.



1977



The bills crippled us.
We tried everything we could,
But we could not save our baby.

1975



You never know what is around
the corner. I learnt that
lesson in childhood.

1972



Luck is important too.

1973



Hard work only gets you so far.

1966

Hassan (Asif's Great-Grandfather):

We didn't know what life had in store for us. Following Partition we had to rebuild our lives from scratch.



1966



Having lost not only our home,
but our livelihoods and loved
ones as well.

1960

We first laid these bricks.
Dividing up these flats back in
the 60s.



1960

Alongside my brothers.
Brick by brick. We are not self-made.
We each build our lives on the shoulders
of those that came before us.



1960

And in building this house we lay the foundations of our family for generations to come.



2024



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The vast majority of the global increase in the size of middle classes occurs in Asia.

Migration Rhythms is a research project from The Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) that explores trajectories of upward social mobility in Asia.

To find out more visit:
prio.org/migrationrhythms



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