



MOMENTS WITH EMAN

A CHANCE ENCOUNTER

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Introduction: The Beauty of Fleeting Moments

We all experience moments in life that arrive quietly, without warning, but leave an indelible mark on our hearts. These moments, though fleeting, carry the power to transform our days, our thoughts, and sometimes even our very essence. This story is born from one such encounter—a meeting that began casually but evolved into something unforgettable.

In the spaces between messages, glances, and conversations, there are emotions that words often fail to capture. Yet, these emotions linger, pulling us toward something deeper. It's not the grand declarations of love that define this journey but the simple, unexpected exchanges that reveal a profound connection between two souls.

What started as a chance interaction soon became a delicate dance of understanding, discovery, and vulnerability. It's a story of longing, of the thrill of new connections, and the bittersweet reality of things left unsaid. Through these chapters, you'll witness moments of joy, laughter, uncertainty, and ultimately, growth.

This isn't a story about happily-ever-afters. It's about the beauty of the present—of living fully in moments that pass by too quickly but leave echoes in the heart for a lifetime. Each conversation, each stolen glance, and each quiet walk is a testament to the power of human connection.

To the reader, this journey may feel familiar, like revisiting the pages of your own story. Maybe you, too, have met someone who changed your life in small, quiet ways. Maybe you've found yourself caught between hope and heartbreak, between wanting more and learning to let go.

This is a story of a star admired from afar, of love unspoken but deeply felt, and of memories that will forever remain etched in time.

Welcome to **Moments with Eman**, a journey through the delicate threads of fate, friendship, and fleeting connections.

Chapter One: The First Encounter

Sunday 8/9/24

I remember it well. I had called my friend Hussaine to ask if he was heading to school, as I wanted to cut my hair. He said he was, so we decided to go together. When we arrived at the barbershop, we were greeted by a long line of people waiting for their turn. Seeing that we had some time to kill, we stepped outside.

As we sat on the steps, I pulled out my phone and instinctively opened Instagram. That's when I stumbled upon Eman's story update. One post featured a horse, and the next was a serene landscape, tagged with "Kano." Surprised, I turned to Hussaine and, half-jokingly, said, "Imagine if I could meet this girl and take her out."

To my shock, Hussaine looked at the screen and said, "I know her. She's in my faculty." I laughed, brushing it off. "Nah, it's not her. Must be someone who looks like her," I insisted. But Hussaine remained confident. "No, seriously. It's her."

We went back and forth, arguing over whether it was truly her or not. Then, out of nowhere, she appeared—with her sister Manal—heading toward Mallam Musa's shop. Hussaine grinned and said, "Gatanan toh" (There she is). I couldn't believe it. There she was, right in front of us. It felt unreal, like a moment orchestrated by fate.

In disbelief, I immediately called Abba, and he confirmed it was indeed Eman. Still unconvinced, I called Nana, who told me the same thing—that Eman had been a student here for nearly three years, along with her three sisters. I had been completely oblivious.

Gathering my nerves, I walked up to her and her sister. "Salama Alaikum," I said, but she didn't respond. So, I tried again, this time calling her by name. "Eman." She turned, and I smiled. "Hi, how are you? Khadija says hi," I added, trying to seem casual. She looked surprised. "Which Khadija?" she asked. "Khadija Faru," I replied, and she seemed even more intrigued. We exchanged a few words, and she asked for my name. "I'm Hamad. I study Computer science," I told her. That was where the conversation ended, and though it felt brief and awkward, the excitement was undeniable.

When I got home, I couldn't contain my excitement. I told everyone about how I met her. I'm sure my enthusiasm was obvious. Later, I messaged her, introducing myself again as Hamad, the stranger she had just met. We chatted a bit, though she wasn't online much. I didn't ask for her phone number—it all felt too sudden.

But that was how it all began.

Chapter Two: The Stroll

Monday 9/9/24

I had nothing to do at home that day, and some friends were heading to school to hang out and chat. Without much thought, I threw on some clothes and decided to join them.

When we arrived at school, we all went our separate ways. Some of the group went to Dowell, an eatery on campus, while Hussaine and I decided to take a leisurely stroll around the school grounds. We passed by Gambo Sabawa Hostels, taking in the evening calm before looping back. Just as we were about to meet up with the others, I caught a glimpse of her—Eman. She and Manal had just walked past us.

I nudged Hussaine, who was busy with his phone. “Ga Eman can,” I whispered in Hausa, letting him know Eman was nearby. Startled, he replied, “Ina?” (Where?) I pointed them out, and without hesitation, told him to follow me as we quietly tailed them.

They walked around Rahmat Hall and seemed to be heading for Coke Village when, suddenly, they stopped. Manal turned and asked, “Are you guys following us?” I froze, unsure of what to say, but Hussaine, ever direct, simply replied, “Yes.” Manal shot back, “That’s cringe, you guys,” which was when I stepped in with a smile, trying to lighten the mood. “I thought we were just strolling. Are we stopping here?” I joked. Eman turned to me with a laugh, “Hamad.” We all shared a laugh, and I quickly apologized to Manal, admitting that, yeah, it was a little weird, but I hadn’t planned anything else for the day and was just going with the flow.

“Where are you guys heading, then?” Manal asked. I suggested maybe walking towards CDA, the grocery store nearby.

We continued walking, sharing light conversation as we approached CDA. We then turned around, heading back toward the hostel. At some point, Hussaine excused himself to take a call from his girl, leaving just the three of us—me, Eman, and Manal.

I made an effort to include Manal in the conversation so she wouldn’t feel left out. But after a while, she subtly moved to the other side, bringing Eman closer to me. The three of us kept walking until we reached the hostel. That’s when Manal said she was heading back inside, but Eman and I could stay out and continue chatting.

I casually mentioned how my days were mostly filled with eating, sleeping, and watching anime. To my surprise, she lit up. ‘Me too!’ she said. We talked about *Attack on Titan*, *Jujutsu Kaisen*, and *Demon Slayer*. She told me how much she hated Annie, the titan girl who betrayed everyone at the beginning. ‘I couldn’t believe it when she turned out to be the Female Titan,’ Eman said, her voice filled with emotion. ‘And Levi! He’s just too cool. How can anyone not love him?’ I laughed. ‘Yeah, Levi’s the real MVP,’ I agreed. Then, as I started giving spoilers from the *Demon Slayer* manga, including Tanjiro turning into a demon, she

almost covered my mouth in a playful way, laughing and begging me to stop. We laughed, both of us caught in the moment.

Eman told me how she got into anime—how her sister's ex-boyfriend had a hard drive full of them, and how she picked *Attack on Titan* as her first one, along with another title I couldn't remember. We continued talking, though I barely registered some of the details, too distracted by her presence. If a genie had appeared at that moment, I would've wished for her to be mine.

The conversation flowed naturally. 'What about you? Why Attack on Titan first?' I asked, curious. 'I don't know why, I just felt drawn to it' she replied. 'Now that's magical and very lucky of you.' I smiled.

Chapter Three: The Search

Saturday 14/9/24

After those first two meetings, Eman seemed to disappear, leaving no trace of her presence. I didn't have her phone number, and with each passing day, the weight of her absence grew heavier. I called Khadija (Nana) one evening, my voice low and unsure. "I don't think I can continue with this," I confessed. "I've been feeling lost lately... like I don't deserve any of this, like maybe I'm just pushing too hard and moving too fast."

Khadija listened quietly, offering soft reassurances, ensuring me that if it's meant to be, it will happen. Days passed by with no sign of Eman—no messages, no chance meetings. The silence felt deafening, and the uncertainty gnawed at me. Each day without her only deepened my sense of confusion.

I tried waiting, convincing myself that time would bring clarity, but after a while, the waiting felt unbearable. I couldn't shake the feeling that maybe fate wasn't done with me yet—that just maybe, if I showed up in the right place at the right time, I'd see her again.

So, I decided to stop waiting. I got up, threw on some clothes, and borrowed Khalid's earpiece. I needed something to soothe the growing restlessness inside, so I set my Billie Eilish playlist on repeat, letting the soft melodies calm my nerves as I set out for school. The music filled the air around me, each note like a small comfort.

As I walked through the university gates, passing the grand Bayero University Pyramid Roundabout, I felt a strange mix of hope and uncertainty. I made my way straight to Ramat Hall, the heart of the campus, where people came and went in a constant flow. If there was any place to run into someone, it would be there.

I wandered through Coke Village, scanning the busy market for a glimpse of Eman, but she was nowhere to be found.

I walked back outside, the darkness slowly rising as I made my way past Ramat Hall again, then toward Gambo Sawaba. My footsteps echoed through the quiet campus as I looped back to the Old Senate building. An hour passed, and with each step, the hope that had fueled me began to wane. Today wasn't the day.

I started to wonder if this connection, as beautiful as it felt, was just a fleeting moment. The silence around me only amplified my uncertainty. But then, the memory of her laughter—the way her eyes lit up when we joked—reminded me that perhaps there was more to this story than I realized.

The walk back felt heavy, each step pulling me deeper into my thoughts. I've always been comfortable being alone. Solitude has always been my safe space, the place where I could gather my thoughts, where I didn't have to explain myself to anyone. But this was different. For the first time in my life, I wanted someone else's company more than my own. That's how I knew Eman was different. She had unknowingly pulled me out of my comfort zone, and now I found myself searching for something I didn't quite understand.

As I left the campus, the night sky stretched out above me, stars twinkling faintly, just out of reach—much like Eman. The cool air wrapped around me, making me feel both grounded and distant at the same time, as if the world itself was a reminder of the distance between us.

Chapter Four: The Message

Saturday 14/9/24

I got back home, exhausted, feeling even worse than when I'd left. "Maybe love isn't for you, Hamad," I muttered to myself, the words heavy on my heart. The walk back had felt long, and the hope I carried into the night had evaporated like mist in the morning sun.

On my way home, I stopped by 88 Takeout to grab some food. It was something to fill the emptiness, but it didn't touch the hollowness inside. Once home, I plugged my phone in to charge and wandered into Musty's room. We all sat down, eating and half-watching *Dynasty* on Netflix. The network was bad, though, and the show kept buffering, leaving us stuck in limbo. Frustrated, I got up and went to check my phone.

Back in the room, I started eating and casually scrolling through my notifications when, out of nowhere, I saw it—Eman's message on Instagram. It popped up just as I turned on my mobile data. She had replied to our chats, reacting to a few reels I sent her earlier that day. My heart skipped a beat.

"Where you been?? I miss my anime bonding buddy," I wrote, trying to act tough, even though deep down, I was feeling blue. "Forget it, I'm drowning in schoolwork here," she continued.

"Come on, you need to soften up on yourself," I replied, my fingers typing quickly. "There's more to life than just school. It's about finding the right balance, you know?" I could tell from her messages that she had been trying to refocus, pulling herself back into her studies. She called it "redemption," trying to regain her grip after what sounded like a lot of fun she'd had since joining school. I could relate. I'd never been too serious about school either—at least not to that extreme.

As we talked, she asked how I was doing. "Just chilling with my poor network," I said, sending her a picture of the frozen screen on the TV. I didn't know how it happened, but we just kept talking. Her presence, even through a phone screen, made me forget the disappointment of the day. Yet, there was something gnawing at me—a thought that wouldn't leave. What if I was just fooling myself? What if this was all one-sided? What if I lost her because I was playing it safe? A million thoughts rushed through my mind, each one louder than the last, like a storm I couldn't control.

I messaged her again, trying to keep things light. "There are two things we need to settle before you disappear again," I joked, my fingers flying over the keyboard. "We need to find a better way to communicate—maybe a walkie-talkie?" I added with a laughing emoji, trying to ease the tension.

Her reply came quickly, “That sounds like a great idea, gaskiya,” she said, matching my playful tone. But I wasn’t done. “But seriously, we need to work something out. And, well... I don’t want to come off as pushy, but I enjoy your company. Your energy is different. I like making new friends, but if this isn’t something you want, I can step back, no problem.”

I paused, my heart racing as I hit send. A small part of me regretted not just saying what I really felt. Why was I beating around the bush? Why didn’t I just tell her that I liked her? I stood there, waiting for her response, feeling the weight of every second.

Finally, her reply came in: “Thanks! Understandable, redemption just ain’t easy.” I read it again and again, trying to make sense of it. It felt vague, like she was dodging the point. Was that her way of letting me down gently? Feeling a bit blue, I typed back, “I guess that’s an out,” the disappointment seeping into my words.

But then she replied, “When there’s a will, there’s a way.” Her words hung in the air, and I couldn’t help but feel a mix of hope and confusion. It felt like jumping off a cliff, knowing you’ll never reach the ground. Your heart races, but you’re stuck in mid-air, unable to move forward or go back. It’s a thrilling, painful fall that leaves you breathless and wanting more. You’re trapped between what you desire and what you can’t have.

Without thinking, I typed out, “I hate hanging around where I am not needed or wanted... you get that feeling and you don’t need to be all goody-goody and nice.”

Her response came quickly, “So you feel that way? Being polite is just who I am.”

“Very much,” I replied, trying to hold on to the conversation.

“Says my anime buddy,” she shot back, her tone light again. “Truth is, I would like to know you more while chatting, then come out to talk, especially these days with the situation I’m in. Hope you understand.”

That wasn’t the answer I was expecting. She caught me completely off guard. My mind raced, and before I knew it, I was grinning from ear to ear. “I’d love that too—meeting up, talking, laughing... things that keep me sane,” I typed back, feeling a surge of excitement.

But just as quickly as the conversation had started, it ended. “The problem is how to meet,” I had written, but before I could get more out of her, she was offline again.

This time, though, it didn’t feel like before. It had been a long chat, and it was nice. It left me with hope, but also with more questions. What do I do now? Should I keep going or step back? I was stuck in my thoughts, unsure of what would come next.

But if it’s meant to be, it’ll happen. That’s what Khadija always said, and with that thought, I closed the day.

Chapter Five: The Next Day

Sunday 15/09/24

The next day came, and from the start, I was bored. By the evening, I got a call from Nana. “Momo ka samu Eman ka mantani ko?” she said, teasing me about forgetting her because of Eman. I felt bad because I had actually been planning on calling her. “Sorry,” I replied. “I’ve just been busy lately, and I really wanted to call you so we could have our long convo.” She agreed, and we started talking.

I told her about my chat with Eman and how it ended with her saying she really wanted to get to know me better. Nana could hear the excitement in my voice, and she was happy for me too. That’s when I had an idea. “Nana, call Eman and tell her I want us to meet at school later after Isha, since she doesn’t want to share her number with me yet.” She laughed hard and said, “Give me a couple of minutes, I’ll call you back.”

Minutes passed, and I went to pray Salatul Maghrib at a mosque nearby, still waiting for the call. After I finished and made my Duas, I called Nana again. She answered, “Momo, sorry, we got carried away talking about something else entirely.” I replied, “Ah lallai, kuna jin dadinku. Ni kuma an barni nan ina jiran ku bh.” (Oh wow, you’re really enjoying yourselves, while I’m here waiting.) She apologized again but added something unexpected: “Eman said I should send you her number so you can call her and plan where to meet up.”

I froze, not knowing what to say, how to reply, or how to react. “Thank you, Nana!” I finally said, “This is the best thing that has happened to me today.”

Excited, I got up and went back home. I freshened up, put on some clothes, and headed straight for school.

On my way, I called Eman. “Finally,” I said when she picked up, my heart fluttering with excitement. She laughed, “Yes, finally.” We greeted each other, and I told her I’d be in school in the next few minutes and asked if we could meet. She paused for a moment and then said, “Yeah, surely.” I told her I’d call when I got inside, and then we ended the call.

I got to school even faster than the last time. I called her, “Salama Alaikum, I’m near Ramat Hall.” She replied, “Okay, are we meeting there? I’ll be out soon. Take your time; you’ve got 15 minutes,” I joked. “If you take longer, I’ll leave.” She laughed, “Okay, okay, boss!”

I went to Coke Village and headed for Mallam Musa’s shop. “Mallam Musa, ina wuni? A bani chocolates da Caprison,” I said, pulling out my debit card. He showed me a variety, and I chose “Parago,” a candy with both milk and chocolate flavors, stuffing them in my pockets. “What about the Caprison?” I asked. “Wlh, we don’t have any cold ones,” he replied. I paid and left, but on my way out, I stopped by Blue Shop to ask if they had any. “A bani Caprison guda biyu danAllah,” I said to the shop owner, and he brought out two chilled ones. I paid and left the market hub.

I called Eman again, "I'm on my way. My phone's going off, so I'll call you with Manal's phone." she said and I told her not to worry, that I'd be waiting outside.

Deep down, I was feeling anxious. Am I really doing this? Meeting Eman? What am I going to say to her? While I was still lost in my thoughts, I saw her. Mesmerized by her beauty, I got up and went closer as she called, "Hamad, where are you?" "I'm coming, I see you," I replied.

As I reached her, I said, "You look great, Salama Alaikum." She smiled, "Wa alaikum assalam, how are you, Hamad?" "Alhamdullah," I replied, handing her one of the Caprisons. "Thank you," she said, "Where are we sitting?" "Take me anywhere you want," I replied, trying to charm her. She laughed, "Okay, I know just the right spot."

As we walked, we talked about how she was coping with school and how I'd been having back-to-back classes, with some lecturers even conducting tests. We reached a bench near the old Senate building. She sat on the right, and I on the left. She turned slightly, looking me in the eyes as we continued talking. Her hand rested on the armrest, just inches from mine. Our eyes met, and time seemed to pause. In that suspended moment, the world faded away, leaving only the two of us.

Her smile, the soft rhythm of our hearts, the unspoken connection between us—it all felt so surreal. We talked about everything and nothing, but I couldn't remember the exact details. We laughed as I pulled out some candy and gave her some. "Hamad, you like sweets?" she asked, smiling. "I do," I replied, "And I know it's not good... I just like sweet things," I said, trying to rizz her again. We kept talking, feeling like we could go on forever.

At some point, she asked for help with her Caprison, struggling with the straw. Man, I was in love. There was no denying it. As if that gesture wasn't enough, she noticed the mosquitoes biting me because I was wearing black. Little did she know, I would have gladly let them drain me if it meant spending even a second more with her. "Hamad, let's go for a walk. I know you're not comfortable here," she said. "Okay," I replied.

We walked past the grand Bayero University Pyramid Roundabout, to the bank roads, and back to Ramat Hall. I checked my phone to see the time and realized we'd been together for almost two hours. I could have gone all day like this. It was just that beautiful.

For someone who had felt lost that day, losing hope, I had forgotten everything that had been bothering me. We stopped by Blue Shop again to get some water as I was thirsty. We got two bottles of water and a biscuit called "Fab" for her.

We found another bench, this time closer to her hostel, and continued talking. I'm sorry I can't remember exactly what we talked about; I was too lost in her eyes. Her voice was like music to me, and I was more captivated by the melody than the lyrics.

A few minutes later, my friends called, "Hamad, where are you? It's time to go home." "I'm near Ramat Hall with Eman," I replied. I didn't leave until I saw them getting tired of waiting

for me and planning to leave without me. I turned to Eman, pointing out that they were leaving. We said our goodbyes, and that was how that beautiful day came to an end.

Chapter Six: The End of a Journey

The next day came again. Eman, Manal, and I met, but this time, we just strolled around the Senate building before they headed back. We exchanged greetings, and I vividly remember talking about how I watched a horror movie the night before and actually got scared. We all laughed, discussing the scariest movies, though I couldn't relate much since horror wasn't my genre of choice.

I then asked them a hypothetical question: Which scenario would they prefer—a zombie apocalypse where all the students are locked in the Senate building with zombies outside trying to eat us, or a scenario like *A Quiet Place*, where you can't make a sound because monsters are drawn to noise and kill anything they hear? Or would they prefer *Bird Box*, where you're blindfolded because the moment you see the light, you'd be driven to suicide? We laughed about how crazy the scenarios were, but soon after, they went inside, and I headed back home.

That was the last time we met in person. We continued talking online, sharing moments, and I told her many things about my past and private life, feeling safe while doing so. It was beautiful. I wanted us to meet again, but I was tired of always meeting late at night. So, I decided to change things up and thought maybe we could grab a slush drink from Coke Village—a go-to refreshment during the hot summer days.

I tried calling Eman to arrange a meetup, but every time, I was given an excuse. It left me feeling blue because, for all those times I called her, I had dressed in my finest Hausa attire, which she'd never seen me wearing. Unluckily, the meetup never happened. You know that feeling when everyone tells you that you look good, but the one person you want to hear it from doesn't say a word? I wanted Eman to say it.

I started feeling a shift in energy between us. Maybe it was because I had expected things to be like they were last week, where we met, talked, and had fun. Or maybe she was going through something else. I just couldn't tell. And so, it continued for days.

We were having our light Instagram chats when I suddenly messaged her, "Can I ask you something?" She replied, "Sureee." I asked, "Is this the real you? The true Eman? Or is this a shield, a face you let strangers see while hiding the real you?" She responded, "Depends on how you see me, but yes, I think so."

I wasn't satisfied. "Not gonna lie, our chat—your replies—feels robotic, too perfect. It's like they lack emotion or are forced, you get it?" I asked. She admitted, "Chatting is not for me, truly. But I'm just going through something right now, ne kawai."

I pressed on gently. "Is it something you can share?" I asked, trying to bring her comfort. She replied, "Unfortunately not, that's why I've been like this."

I had to say something more. "Even if it's a no, I have something for you that I once wrote a long time ago. It was meant to be mine alone, but it was actually yours to begin with. And I'd love for you to have it."

I predicted her answer would be no, so I sent her what I'd written anyway. It was something I had penned even before we started talking.

To the One Who Lights Up My Feed,

I find myself in the quiet of the night, words and thoughts swirling in my mind, all centered on a vision of beauty that I stumbled upon on Instagram. In a sea of faces, it was yours that caught my eye and captivated my heart. I hope these words find you well and bring a smile to your face.

There is a certain magic in your eyes, something that words struggle to capture but compels the soul to try. They hold a depth, a universe of untold stories, hopes, and dreams. It's as if Allah Himself took extra care in crafting them, making sure they would captivate anyone fortunate enough to gaze into them. Chico, your eyes are the kind that poets dream of and artists strive to paint.

Your face is a masterpiece, a beautiful creation that reflects Allah's boundless creativity. It's not just about the symmetry or the features; it's the way your smile reaches your eyes, the gentle curve of your lips, and the warmth that emanates from your expressions. You possess a radiance that stands out even through the confines of a screen. MashaAllah, truly, you are a testament to the beauty of His creation.

I haven't had the privilege to know you deeply, but I can sense a kindness and goodness in you that shines through in your posts and comments. You seem like a person with a good heart, someone who spreads positivity and joy. In a world often filled with noise and chaos, finding someone like you feels like discovering a serene oasis.

I know this might sound a bit forward, but I just wanted to tell you how much your presence has brightened my days. I'm not here to propose a date or anything of the sort. My only wish is to bring a little joy to your morning, to let you know that someone out there appreciates you and sees the beauty in you. I pray that Allah protects you from the harm of this world and grants you all the desires of your heart. May He bless you with happiness, health, and endless opportunities to grow and shine.

If nothing else, I hope this message makes you smile. And maybe, just maybe, we can be friends. But even if this remains a one-time exchange, know that you've inspired a stranger to pen down his thoughts in the dead of night, all in admiration of you.

MashaAllah, you are a wonderful person. Stay blessed, stay beautiful, and may your days be filled with endless joy and love.

From,
The Diary of a Stranger, Hamad.

Minutes later, she replied, "Wow, this is quite beautiful, wallahi. Thank you, and I appreciate you, Mohh. You're a great friend, truly."

I had to tell her the truth. "The problem is, it took me long to realize it, but I like you. Not just like, I adore you, for reasons I know not of. I guess that's what love is. I don't just want to be friends... I want you, Eman. But sadly, I don't see that happening."

She responded softly, "I'm sorry, Moh! I really do care about you though. You're someone I really relate with, and I hope we can confide in each other as friends."

I sighed, feeling the weight of my expectations. "Don't worry! At this point, I'm used to it. I pray that Allah heals whatever is bothering you, and I pray that you find solace in it. Always remember, 'Surely, after hardship comes ease.' InshaAllah, all will be well. Sadly enough, I've never seen you as just a friend, and I feel like continuing this might break me even more. I hope you understand."

I added, "And I guess that's the end of our little journey. It might not be as beautiful as I wanted it to be, but I will forever cherish the little we had—the chats, the walks, and everything in between. The comfort of talking to someone who truly gets you is rare."

"You were a star I was meant to admire from afar," I concluded.

Her message followed: "I really did enjoy those moments too, and having someone to relate to was special. I appreciate it a lot. I wish you the best in life, and hopefully, one day, we'll meet and chat again. Until then, take care of yourself. I'll be just a text away if you ever need a friend to talk to."

As I read her message, a wave of numbness washed over me, leaving me suspended between acceptance and regret. We were galaxies apart now, and I had just confessed to a star I could never reach.

I stared at my phone, the warmth of her words seeping through, but all I could feel was the growing distance. My thumb hovered over the screen, unsure if a response could do justice to the storm inside me. "Good luck in your redemption," she had said. Redemption. It tasted bitter now.

I let out a deep breath, eyes burning with unshed tears. How did we get here so fast? Was this the end... or just the beginning of something else, something I couldn't yet grasp?

I locked my phone, the screen going dark, reflecting nothing but my own uncertain expression.

For the first time, I wasn't sure what tomorrow would bring—or if I wanted to know.

About the Author

Daniya Muhammad hails from Sokoto, Nigeria, and is currently a student at Bayero University, Sokoto, where he is pursuing a degree in Quantity Surveying. His debut work, *Moments with Eman*, started as a personal project, intended to be a private gift. However, after sharing it with friends who resonated with its authenticity, he was inspired to continue and eventually publish the story.

Written as a journal of real encounters, *Moments with Eman* captures the unguarded vulnerability of unexpected connections. For Muhammad, writing is a passion, not a profession. When he's not exploring his creative side through writing, he enjoys drawing, listening to music, and spending time with his close friends.