

I shovel the cold food down my waiting mouth, just like any normal morning. All I was having was stale rice and yoghurt. Again. Sometimes my family and I have lamb meat, but it's a rare thing that we treasure, and save for our dinners. That's all we eat; meat, rice and yoghurt. Every day.

"Baa! Baa!" My goat was bleating for my attention. It is sad, trapped in a body where only those who speak your language can understand you, like me. I get up from my mat to feed the goats breakfast. It's never much, just whatever we can scrounge up for them.

"Bilal! Bilal! How many times have I told you not to feed the goats leftovers? We need all that we can get!" My mother screeched at me.

"Many times," I said slowly and dropped my head like a weak branch. Her eyes grew softer than before.

"Feed them this," she said quieter and with more sympathy, knowing that I was hurt. She handed me a bowl with goat feed inside of it. I nodded at her and slipped away, I was frustrated as I fed the goats because I couldn't speak my mind to anybody. After I finished feeding them, I began my laborious, unpaid job of milking the goats. Ari, one of my favorite goats, kept me company as I stroked his white fur.

After a few hours, I headed inside to eat my poor substitute for a lunch. All I can find to eat is some cold meat and rice leftovers from dinner the night before the last. I down my 10 ounces of water and save the rest for later.

As I watch the goats, I day-dream about America, considering they call it “The Land of the Free”. Becoming bored, I head back inside to play with Ari, Malia, and some of the other goats until dinner.

During dinner, my father asks in his rough, sandy voice, “Did the goats act out today, Bilal?”

“No, Pa-pa,” I reply quietly. We sit in silence as my mother brings out our small water amount for each of us.

“We should go to bed early,” Ma-ma says. “We have a long day ahead of us.” I get up and head to bed after finishing my water.

“Goodnight, Ma-ma. Goodnight, Pa-pa,” I confess to my parents. I fall down on my woven mat, without a blanket, and can barely hear my parents discussing something in Hebrew, my native language. With scarcely any roof, I can see the entire night sky. A shooting star passes by and I fall asleep, traveling into my brain’s paradise.