

Talal, Son of Adibeh



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Talal, Son of Adibeh

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To you, my dears,

Childhood is beautiful; we spend most of it in fun and play, but it is a precious stage which passes never to return again.

During childhood, we draw our dreams for the future and make our choices: We either devote our energy to making our dreams come true, or to being careless dwelling on daydreaming with no achievement. If we take the second choice, we will not find a place on the boat of success to ferry us with the other diligent people to the land of glory.

Dears,

This story will give you a lesson in challenging difficulties and a model of success despite the difficulties and hurdles. It is a story of a child of your age who grows up to become a legend, after facing unimaginable suffering throughout his life. However, he never gave up and rose to the challenge of facing his circumstances to build a prosperous future for himself, his family, country and nation. He became a prominent Arab figure serving as an example of genius, creativity, leadership and success, establishing a name for himself as a key character in intellectual, social and humanitarian arenas.

Let me tell you the story of Tallool... to learn how to build glory from suffering!

Areej Younis

FINDING THE TREASURE

“The flower that follows the sun does so even in cloudy days”

Robert Leighton

“Talal ... Talal ... Talal”, my father was calling me. “I am up here”, I responded while mounting an orange tree. He asked anxiously, “what are you doing on the top of the tree?” “I want to pick that orange”, I said merrily, pointing to a distant fruit facing the sun, glowing with its delicious color.

“Come down carefully,” he said. I picked it, put it in my pocket, and got down as told.

I landed in his strong hands. Father then squatted down with his hands gently resting on my shoulders. Our faces were close when he said in a loving tone, “Your mother was worried about you.” I was looking directly into his sparkling eyes before he rose, taking his usual military posture and commanding, “Let’s go inside.”

He was carefully holding a folded piece of paper. I was curious, so I asked, “Dad, what is this paper?”

He smiled, and said while opening the paper, “I will show it to you because I like that you are always eager to know,” then put it in my hand.

Folded with care, it was not the usual type of paper. I opened it and gazed into the writing inside amid silence engulfing the surroundings. My name was there: Talal Tawfiq Abu-Ghazaleh, in addition to my place and date of birth: Jaffa City, April 22, 1938. There were also drawings of extended and curved lines.



I did not understand so I asked my father, “Is this a treasure map?”

He smiled and said with confidence, “Yes, it is, one way or another.”

I asked him to explain what he meant by that; his looks met the skyline before he said with a deep voice, “This is a title deed of a plot of land; I registered it in your name when you were four, six years ago.”

Overwhelmed with the surprise, I recalled, “I remember it; you have shown it to me before but I could not read then.”

He said smiling, “You’re so clever and I’m proud of you, Talal,” then added with a gleam of happiness in his eyes, “I made you a copy to keep; you are a man from today, son.”

My father’s words filled me with confidence and I realized what he meant: Land is a treasure too, the most precious treasure ever.

“We are late; your mother will be mad at us,” he joked.

I said pointing to my pocket, “I will give her this orange as a gift, she will be happy and forget her anger.”

The orchard echoed with his laughter.

I walked beside him proudly holding his hand, and held on to my treasure in the other hand.

JAFFA, A BRIGHT STAR

“They have not killed you in my heart; I want you to reshape my spontaneity, you distant figure”

Mahmoud Darwish

Summer was my favorite season, when the sky was lit by the moon and a thousand far stars. We enjoyed our evenings most when we spent them on the rooftop.

I love the scene of the stars and meteors streaking across the sky quietly, glowing briefly before their flames go out. My dad always told me when he saw me absorbed in watching the sky, “You remind me of my childhood, Talal.” My mom adds with a gentle voice full love, “Talool will be like you when he grows up.”

My father replies to her tenderly, “Oh Adibeh, your son will grow to be a refined man in his manners, work and life.”

She smiles gently when hearing his kind words. They fall silent and I curiously ask, “Did you love the sky, dad?”

He says with an affirmative tone, “Yes, and I still do. It is my inspiration.”

My mom comments proudly, “For your dad, the sky has always been the limit. He was known as a smart trader and noble person in all his business transactions. That is why he has such a good reputation.”

Humbled by the compliment, dad falls silent, and I embrace and kiss him proudly.

I see unmatched patience, power, and seriousness in his work, and limitless kindness, warmth and love in his eyes.

When our evenings ended, I loved to sleep on the roof facing the sky, and I used to pick a dream star and hide it in my heart before I fell asleep.



My father used to wake us up by shouting a Turkish phrase “kak hemşeri”, which means, “Wake up, soldiers”, and there was no way to complain or convince him that it was too early, because he believed that God distributes rations of sustenance among his servants every morning (so you have to be there to get your share).

Our life went by this pleasantly until that evening.

We were on the roof as usual when we suddenly heard calls requesting everyone to leave their houses because military operations were imminent, “for our safety”.

We rushed out, to discover that it was a trick from the Zionist enemy to evacuate Palestinian houses and expel them from their land.

My mother held our precious belongings in a cloth bag, while my father took important papers, notebooks and some light tools. For me, I took my treasure: the land ownership deed my father had given me.

We were forced to depart; we left every meaning of happiness behind us and had nothing but sadness for leaving Jaffa, the town where the smell of orange and the scenes of the green landscape and clear sky nourished our souls.

Jaffa became as distant as the stars from us, but remained as close to us as our hearts.

We went with the crowds to board a cargo ship. I asked my father anxiously: “Where are we going? Isn’t it a cargo ship? How will it carry people?” He replied with a sad tone while holding my hand more tightly than ever before, “Do not worry my son, it will take us somewhere.”

I looked at my mother, who also tried to comfort me: “Don’t be afraid, Tallool; we are with you.”

I boarded the ship with the crowds, and looked at Jaffa for the last time. My mom wiped my tears and said, “Do not be sad, we will return.”

My mother’s words had always had a calming effect on me, but on that day, she could not reassure me. A voice deep inside was telling me that meeting Jaffa again would not be anytime soon.



ARRIVING IN AL-GHAZIEH

“The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future in life”

Plato

The ship arrived in Lebanon. I clutched my mother’s arm with a tired hand, and a feeling grew inside me that we were entering a new phase that required a lot of patience.

We were moved to Al-Ghazieh village in south Lebanon, and were welcomed by Haj Rida Khalifah, who was the chief of the village, or mukhtar, and a friend of my father with whom he had done business before. The mukhtar refused to let us live in the tents erected for Palestinian refugees and hosted us in his house instead.

Haj Rida was an icon of generosity and virtue. Every time I went to the village’s grocery, the shopkeeper treated me kindly and said, “Haj Rida asked us to treat you and your family well.”

By that time I had not actually felt the sense of the word “refugee”, as my parents kept saying that we would return to Jaffa, but as the days passed by, the return became a far-fetched dream, and asylum became a reality we had to accept first so that we could change it.

Life changed drastically, and the looks of happiness and satisfaction on the faces of my parents gradually faded away, so I was determined to return to them the glimmer of hope and joy of success.



On one day...

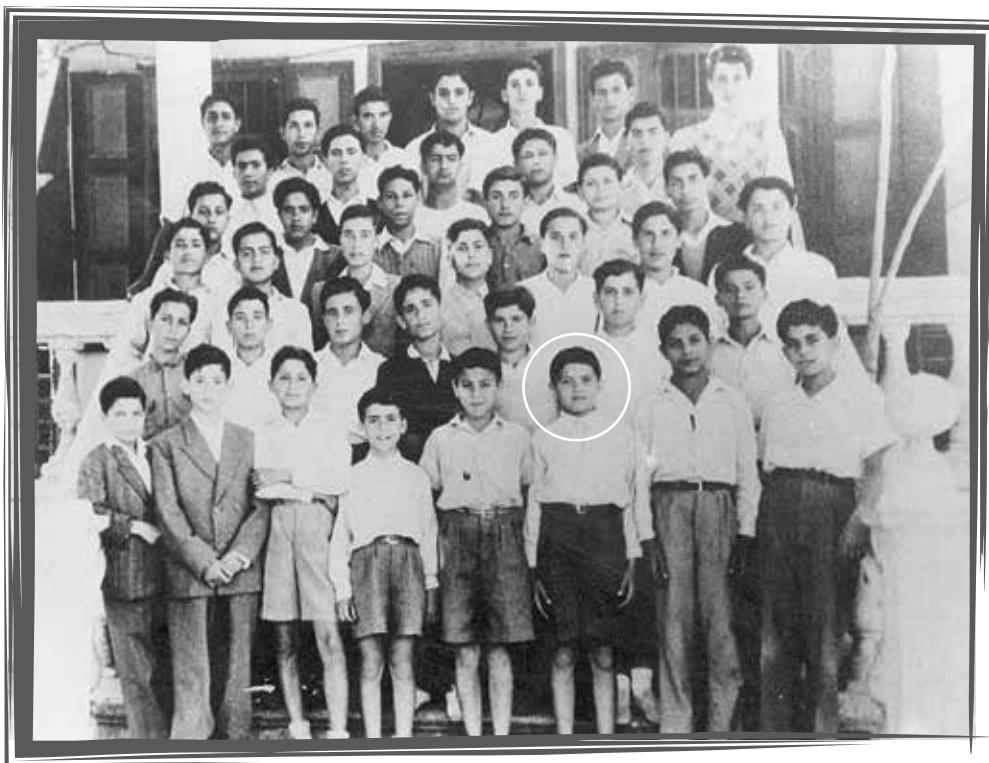
I sat beside my mother while she was picking impurities from lentils seeds and said, “Mom, I know you are sad”. She replied with deep grief, “We are all sad, Tallool, losing your homeland is losing the most precious thing you have.”

I asked, trying to console her, “What can I do for you and dad? How can I restore my country and rights? How can I counter my enemy? How can I return the smile to your face and joy of achievement?”.

She put the dish aside, held me firmly, looked into my eyes and said, “Education is the best path to pursue in order to build your future and serve your nation.”

Her words had a great impact on me, so I promised her, “Of course, I will dedicate my life to seeking knowledge”.

I was actually promising myself more than her.



MY FIRST SCHOOL

“You cannot give without love, and cannot love without forgiveness”

Ibrahim Elfiky

Since that moment on, I dedicated my time to studying and enrolled in the “Protestant American School” in Sidon.

The school was quite far from Al-Ghazieh, so I had to walk to and from there under the different circumstances and weather conditions.

Every time I achieved high scores at school, I would carefully hide the paper to show it to my parents. I just liked to see the gleam of joy shooting from their eyes. And I enjoyed it when my father used to visit the school and teachers started praising my disciplined behavior, sharp mind and my love of knowledge. I was all that because I believed that everything I did represented my family and sent me closer to Jaffa and Palestine, which was always in my heart and on my mind.

The road was not easy, as my family’s financial situation was modest, so I accepted the little they could afford without any complaint that would make them feel sad for not doing enough, or hurt my father’s pride, especially since he had been a businessman and well off before the exodus and he had never failed to meet my needs.

I realized early the importance of gaining my parents’ love and respect, and the trust of everyone around me. I had self-confidence despite the little I had compared with

my classmates. In winter, for example, my mom sewed a wool coat for me from the blankets that were used as bedcovers. I used to wear it with pride rather than shame and, before I left the house while putting it on one winter day, my dad held my shoulder and said, “Talal, I see the future in your eyes; you will grow into a wise leader, and an important man. Do you know why?”



I kept silent and looked at him, so he answered, “That is because you are a son of Palestine, which has always given birth to great people.”

I kept repeating his words to myself while walking all the way to school. In one hand, I was holding a cheese sandwich prepared by my mother to nourish me throughout a day of hard work and, in the other hand, I was holding my books, which helped me keep alive my dream to achieve success.

On one rainy day, I remember arriving in class soaked with water dripping off me. My classmates laughed at the scene, but I smiled instead of getting sad, then a friend of mine called Mohammad stood up and told them, “Do not laugh at him, he walks more than two hours to get here.” “If you can endure what he endures, you can mock him then, or you’d better show respect and keep silent.”

The students fell silent and then all rose to their feet and gave me a standing ovation.

During the break, I thanked Mohammad for his stand, which showed true brotherhood and friendship. He said while we were eating on the floor, “What I said was nothing, but what you are doing is extraordinary.”

I learned with Mohammad and from him that life is only sweet when you share food, play and friendship. As a Muslim at a Christian school, I learnt the importance of loving each other regardless of religion, because religion, in essence, is love.



HIGH SCHOOL

“Good will shortens distance”

Brazilian proverb

After I finished elementary school, I had a dream to join Al-Makassed Islamic Secondary School, but its tuition fees were high and I was penniless.

During one of our quiet evenings, I told my mother about my dream. I was aware that my family did not have money, but I needed someone to charge me with determination and keep the flame of the dream awake inside me... I watched my mother’s darting eyes as she was thinking, trying to figure out how they could secure that money, which was a dilemma at that time.

I cannot forget the sadness and helplessness that clouded her face. I approached her and said optimistically, “Just pray for me,” and wiped the tears that ran from her eyes. She raised her hands and prayed for me, “May God bestow good luck upon you, Talal, guide you to the right path and lead your steps on the road of success and excellence”.

That evening, I did not close my eyes, nor did my parents. I heard their prayers for me. My father told my mother, “Pray for him, Adibeh.” “You do that, too, Tawfiq.”

In the morning, as I said goodbye to my parents to go to school, my father held my hand and said with a firm tone, “Talal, he who believes in what he pursues, nothing can stop him.”



On the road to school, I was imagining every possible dialogue with the principal of Makassed, Mohammad Salam, and thinking of how to convince him to enroll me in the school despite my difficult financial situation. I reached his office, well dressed up. I took a deep breath before I knocked on his door; he asked me in and I entered and sat calmly. “Go ahead son and speak,” he said, “You wanted to meet me for something important, what is it?”

I said confidently, “I want to enroll in the school, but I do not have money.”

He leant on his desk, and asked, “You are aware of the rules, aren’t you?” I approached him and said with a serious tone, “I’ve come to get a free scholarship and in return, I will work hard to rank top in academic achievement. If I make it, I stay at school, and if I fail, I will pay you the fees in installments.”

The headmaster sat back straight and looked at me with interest. “Are you up to this challenge?”

I replied with confidence of a believer. “Yes, God willing.”

We shook hands and he said to me as I was leaving, “Welcome to your school.”

I was in a transport of delight, imagining my family’s joy upon hearing the news. It was a big leap on the ladder of success, and I would spare no effort to climb it.

EXPERIENCE SUPPORTS KNOWLEDGE

“If you wish success in life, make perseverance your bosom friend, experience your wise counselor, caution your elder brother and hope your guardian genius”

Joseph Addison

I was studying perseveringly to rise up to the challenge. It was not enough for me to get straight A's, but I also worked hard to memorize the Holy Quran and recite it and for that I received a very special prize.

When the news broke that I won the Quran competition, my friends encircled me to say congratulations, and they were looking at me as if they were looking at a bright star in the sky. My heart was filled with happiness and my soul with contentment.

I received a prize, which included a certificate of merit and, for the first time in my life, a wrist watch. I cannot describe my feelings then. I imagined myself climbing the first step of a high ladder.

Besides my studying, I was working to help my family to secure life essentials. My first job was selling ice cream. I used to carry a box of ice cream on my back and roam the streets calling out loud, “Stick ice cream”, until I sold the last piece.

On one hot day, I stopped to sell to some children when I glimpsed a boy sitting aside watching the others. After the young customers paid and left, I asked him to approach. When he came, I gave him an ice cream, but he refused to take it. I asked him, “You do not like ice cream?” He replied, “I like it, but I don’t have money.” I smiled and said, handing him the ice cream, “This is on the house; consider it a token of friendship if you want.” He extended his hand and said, “I am Khaled”, and I introduced myself, too. I saw happiness on his little face. He took the ice cream and thanked me, and every time he saw me after that, he came and helped me, calling out to children to come and buy.



I have always believed that helping others is my duty, within available means, as little things mean a lot to others. Life has taught me that giving has no limits, and the more you give, God will protect you more and more.

I stopped selling ice cream after a while and so I rarely saw Khaled, but our friendship continued. Memories of this friendship remained with me when it was not possible to see him.

One of my friends advised me to use my mental energy and my talent in math to work as an accountant in a wholesale vegetable market. I used to wake up at daybreak and go to work to do the accounting of vegetable box sales from the wholesale trader to the retail vendor, finishing at 7am, with just enough time to go home to change my clothes and head to school.

I was always accompanied by my mother's prayers in the mornings, "May God guide you to success, Tallool." I kiss her head and hand and leave.

Once I was at school, I would stop thinking about work and devote my energy to knowledge and pay attention to everything I heard or saw or anything the teacher said or pointed at. My classmate Mohammad joked with me once, "You are like a radar; nothing escapes you," I responded, teasing him, "You are also a radar, but do you know the difference between us?" "What is it?", he asked. I said, "You are an out-of-order radar."

He chased me around the school yard and we both laughed at this funny chase.

My day did not end like my school mates' days, as upon returning from school, I used to tutor students in English and Shakespeare's literature, which enabled me to improve my translation skills and the interpretation of English texts in Arabic.



But the milestone job I had was at a record store. During that time, I became acquainted with the world of music, mysterious as well as astonishing. I fell in love with classical music, travelling with Beethoven's works to dreamlike beautiful realms, while Mozart's music gently penetrated my mind and soul... In the beginning, I used to listen to music in order to convince the customers to buy, but with time, I developed a passion for music, which became an integral part of my life.

But this job did not last for long, as the owner decided to terminate my service and bring his son in my place as he claimed. I believe he just wanted to save the little money he was paying me. I felt heartbroken as these few coins meant a lot to me and my family. Besides, I loved music and wished to continue in this field, not to mention that I did not have enough money to buy, or even rent a record.

I packed my stuff and left. With each step away from the store, I moved further away from despair and was more determined to find another job to help me continue my journey.

The jobs I did in that stage of my life, as various and exhausting as they were, did not give me distress, but rather supplied me with experience to continue my path and turn my suffering into a blessing.

LOVE BAG

“God chooses for us what is in our best interest”

I finished high school with excellence, and was determined that the challenge that I had just overcome must lead me to a bigger one, so I started to send applications to several universities. While I was waiting with patience for the journey to resume, I received a letter from the American University of Beirut confirming that I was granted a full scholarship covering the costs of my study, accommodation, books and even meals.



I received it as a reward for my academic achievement because I ranked first in the secondary school general exam in Lebanon... I thanked God from my heart... I have learned that gratefulness perpetuates blessings and brings generous rewards from God. I prepared myself to pass the admission exam, and did it. That helped me to shorten the duration of my studies. I was confused at the beginning and did not know what to study, having to choose one of two options; English language at the Faculty of Arts or commerce and business administration. I made up my mind at first to enroll in the Faculty of Art to study English, but we may want something and God chooses something else for us.

When I went to register in the major I picked, it was fully booked, and the only option left was business administration. I was confused and felt unable to take a decision, so I called my friend Gandhi because I always trusted his judgment.

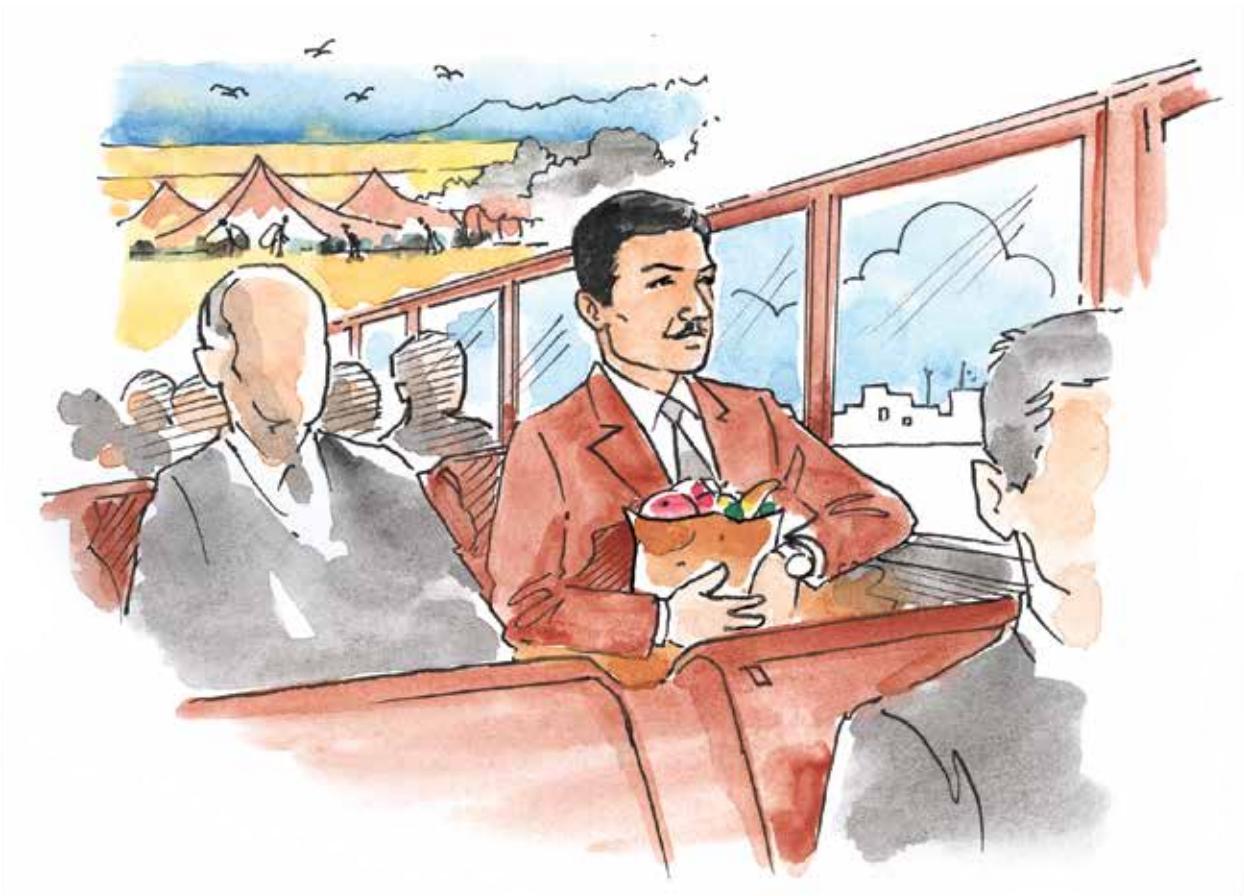
Gandhi said, with his words that always gave me comfort, “You have a huge potential. Go for the Commerce Faculty and I am sure that you will excel there.”

When Gandhi was trying to convince me to study business administration, I recalled my father’s prayers, asking God to choose for me the best. I told myself after completing the procedures, “God chooses for us what is in our best interest.”

University was a new stage. There, I led an active life and invested my time and energy to excel in every task assigned to me.

My beloved Palestine was on my mind. Therefore, when the Higher Council for Art and Literature announced a short story competition, I signed up and wrote a story called “the Dreaded Echo,” in which I depicted the tragedy of Palestine. It was about a

dialogue between a father and a son; the father was convinced that Palestine was lost and its people were exiled forever, while the son believed that “Israel” was a temporary situation that would be washed away by sea waves. The story won first place and I received a prize of EGP500, which was a big amount of money for me, in addition to a Certificate of Award commending the story.



I took the money and the certificate and went home, in a transport of joy for the success I made, with my heart full of yearning for my family. I wished the train would go faster so that I could see the happiness in the eyes of my father, mother and siblings, a little happiness to wipe the pain and suffering of the years.

As a habit, I used to collect in a bag the fruit offered to me at meals every day, and at the end of the week, the bag was full of different kinds of fruit. My family knew that I was saving food to share with them after a week full of effort, hard work and study. My mother said while wiping my face with her warm palm, «My dear Tallool, you work so hard every day and you need the fruit more than us.»

My father commented, “Your son is a real man, Adibeh. Chivalry is growing bigger inside him every day.”

It made me happy to share the fruit with my family. That simple gift created a cloud of happiness around me, for nothing except that they tasted in it the deepness of my love for my family.

MY OTHER TREASURE

“Joining hands builds nations; joining hearts mitigates plights”

Scottish proverb

My graduation from university was harvest day in every sense of the word. I harvested the yield of my hard work, relentless efforts, long nights of study and staying away from family. I could not sleep the night before, excited that my dream was finally coming true.

My friends gathered around me during a party to celebrate the end of college life, which we shared with love and harmony. Someone joked with me, “Where do you want to keep your certificate, Talal?”

Another laughed and said, “After all these efforts, I think Talal will put it in a safe and lock it up there.”

I smiled and said merrily, “Of course not.”

He asked, “What will you do with it?”

I went far in my imagination before I said, with a tone of determination, “I will start looking for a job.”

Everyone said cheerfully, “This is Talal, perseverance is his motto.”

When I held my certificate, I felt that I earned my second treasure; my first treasure was the title deed of the plot of the land my father gave me when I was a child.

I kept looking at the certificate again and again. I had deep faith that my Arab Nation would rise again to lead the world and realized that this dream won't be achieved without knowledge, as my mother always told me.



After graduation, I applied for different jobs in several companies, but I was not accepted as I was a fresh graduate. However, I did not give up or complain and continued searching for a good opportunity.

I was not disappointed, but rather felt that rejection is actually acceptance and the companies' responses did not upset me because they were actually giving me motivation and hope to keep applying for jobs.

I was returning from the market when my family welcomed and greeted me joyfully. My father said, "Congratulations my son." My mom kissed me and said, "Tallool, didn't I tell to you that after black clouds, clear weather?" I did not understand, I looked at them and at my brothers' faces looking for an answer, before my father finally said, "A Kuwaiti Company has hired you."

It was happy news indeed and I started packing. I put my trust in God and prayed that he chose for me what is in my best interest.

I was sad when I said goodbye to my family. I shook hands with my father, who said in pain, "We Palestinians are destined to experience the pain of being away from the loved ones." His words hurt. I kissed his hands and my mother's head before I flew to Kuwait, accompanied by her prayers, which helped me endure a new exile. "God protect you dear, and grant you a life of ease."

During my work at the company, I was eager to be the best representative of my country. I also had to endure work hardships and the high temperatures which I was not used to. Besides, I did not have enough money to buy an air conditioner, so I decided to invest my time after work to stay at the office for extra hours in order to finish assignments for the company and spare the costs of air conditioning.

I spent years at the company before I quit my job there. However, leaving it was not an ordinary development, as I was surprised when I was packing my belongings that some employees had also packed their stuff and decided to leave with me. I tried to talk them out of quitting their jobs, as I did not have a place to work in and I did not have money to pay them salaries, but they insisted. «We believe in your capabilities and ideas, and know you will succeed.»

I said proudly and gratefully in response to their support, “You mean that WE will succeed.”

I extended my hand to them and we joined hands. Yes... joined hands are inseparable.



THE BEGINNING OF SUCCESS

“Those who are diligent will achieve their goals and those who sow will reap”

Arabic Proverb

We started the work as a team. I turned my small car into a mobile office, and I sought help from some friends and relatives like Mr. Abdul-Aziz Al-Shakhshir, who gave me one of the rooms of his office to work from, while Ms. Mary Hayek gave me her jewelry to invest in my project. I received support from a lot of friends who worked with me for no pay.

My friends vested a responsibility in me and I was determined not to disappoint them. Our company achieved success after success that raised its name high in the trade, intellectual and social fields.

Life has taught me that what we do today is a prelude to what we will do tomorrow, and to always aspire to more achievements.

I have learned to believe in my cause and adhere to my love for my country and that defending my national identity, advancing the nation, restoring our rights and surpassing our enemy cannot be achieved through guns only, but also through education, intellectual supremacy and culture.

I have seen bitter times. I lost my country, stability, and comfort. I stayed up all night when others were asleep and worked when others were resting. And it was God’s will that I lost my parents, who passed away while praying for me, asking God to grant me

success and eminence. All these crises have neither frustrated me nor shaken my will and resolute; instead; they emboldened me and boosted my alertness and eagerness to succeed and uphold my right to return to my childhood home in Jaffa.

Our home still stands in the centre of Jaffa as a witness to the catastrophe (Al-Nakba), and my father's name "Tawfeeq Abu Ghazaleh" is engraved on the door. Its key is still with my family as my mother kept it hanging on her chest near her heart and gave it to my elder sister when she was on her deathbed and it is now in the possession of my younger sister.



JORDAN, MY GATEWAY INTO THE WORLD

***“A true Jordanian does not accept failure, but rather defies and overcomes the impossible”
“Good citizenship and true belonging are measured by what we give to our country, rather than what we take from it”***

His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussien

“Jordan is my destination”, this is what I decided while I was preparing myself in 1990 to return to the country which honored me with its citizenship of which I am proud, to work from my office here.

I was forced to leave Kuwait, leaving behind my family, friends and a country which embraced me in my youth.

Having made up my mind, I told myself, “I am moving toward a new experience and I do not fear failure. Life, after all, is summed up in three situations: things that can be done, things that may be done and things that must be done.” I believe in the words of wisdom that say, “A man’s feet should be planted in his country, but his eyes should survey the world.”

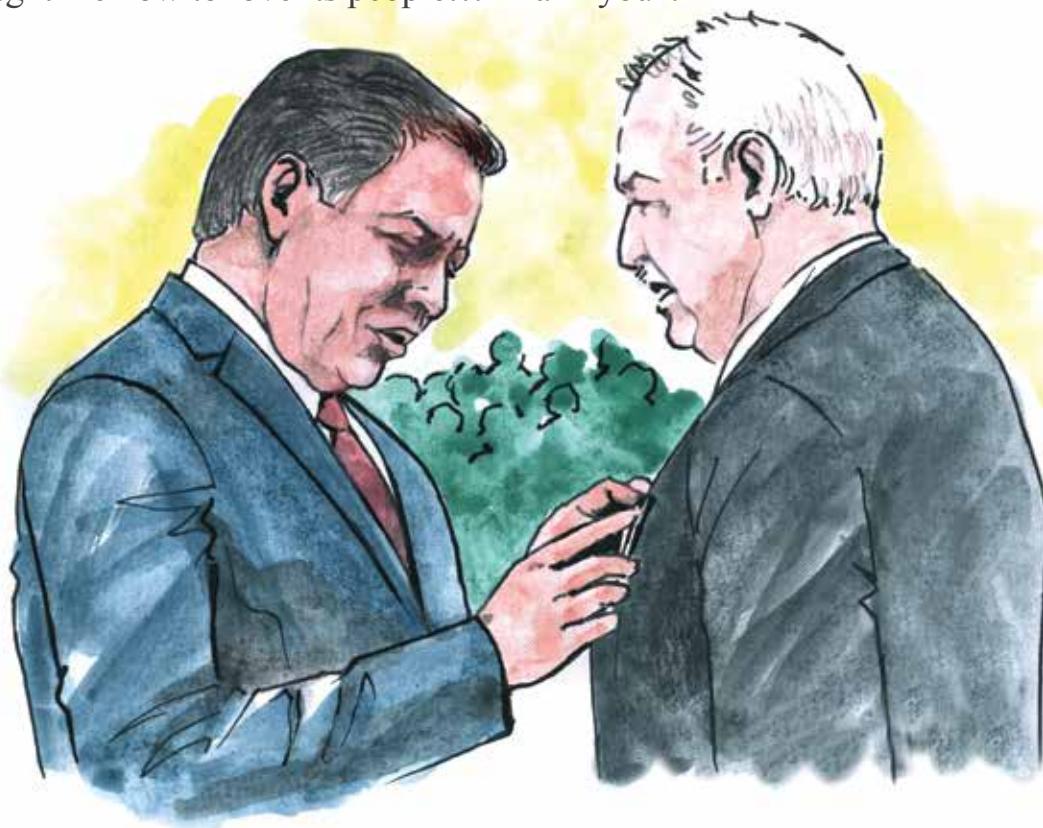
I arrived in my beloved Jordan, which received me with open arms and from its warm embrace, I set out to the four corners of the globe.

Any talk about Jordan is associated with His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein, who still amazes me with his great humbleness and refined manners in dealing with others. These traits earned him the respect of all.

I am proud to belong to Jordan, where I have made every success. I have learned how to love it and its people from His Majesty the late King Al-Hussein bin Talal and from His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein, who honored me with the Order of Independence of First Class on the 70th Independence Day anniversary. I would like to say to His Majesty what I told him when he decorated me:

Your Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein,

“I came to Jordan as a refugee who decided to turn the Palestinian suffering into a blessing and determined to render the blessing of Jordanian citizenship into a mission to serve the community. You have given me a second homeland which I am proud of and have taught me how to love its people... Thank you”.



Every time I look at Occupied Palestine from my balcony in Amman, I say, “I love you Amman, and I yearn to see you Palestine.”



A PASSION FOR ARABS

“Identity cannot be compartmentalized; it cannot be split into halves, thirds, or separated zones”

Amin Maalouf

It was late when one of my friends called. He wondered, “Are you still working until now?” I replied, “Success does not come on a plate of gold; it needs effort and hard work.”

He said, encouraging me, “You will succeed my friend, you are entitled to that and you have a strong will to do it.”

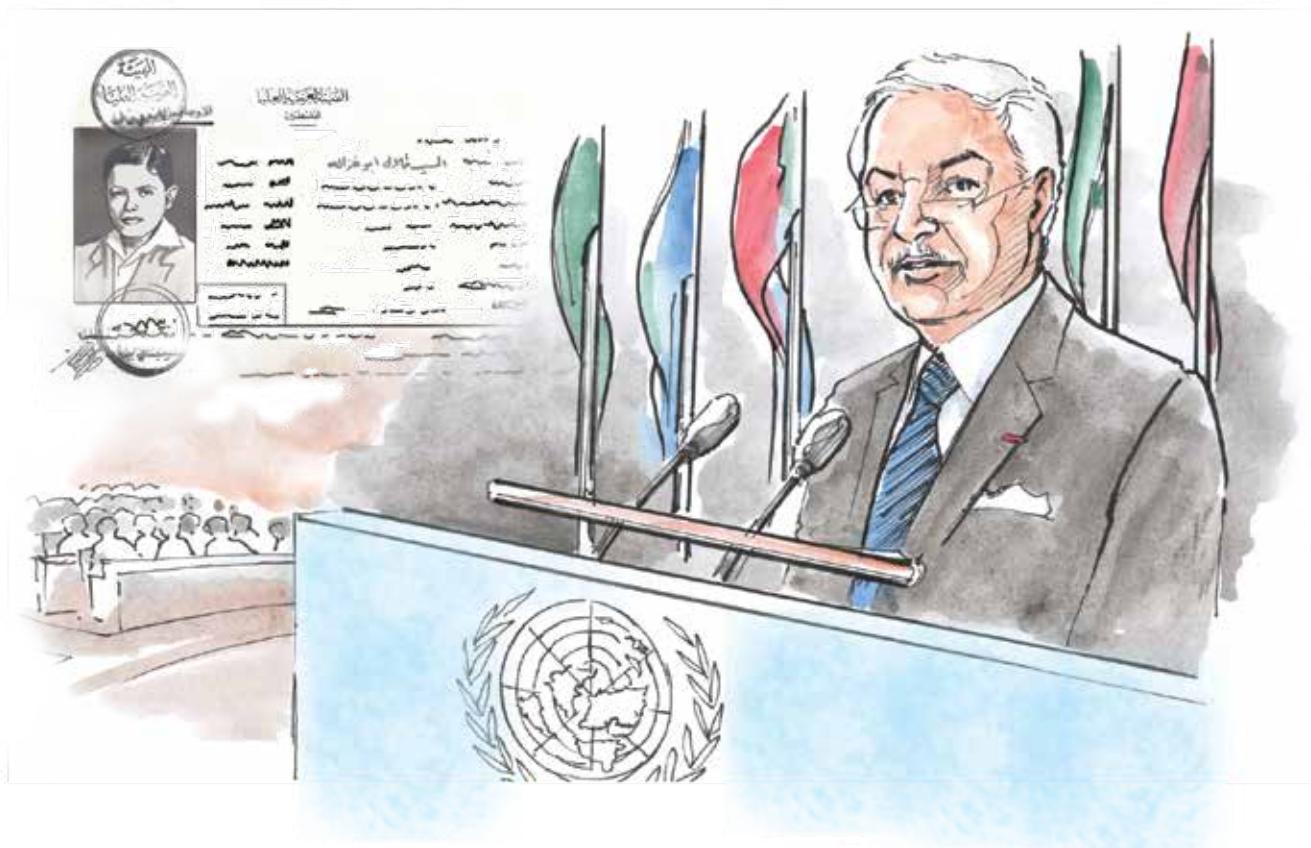
I continued the work with my team day and night ... year after year. Time passed and I achieved what I was dreaming of when I was a child: Advancement of Arabs. Towards that end, we opened a series of companies around the world in the name of Talal Abu Ghazaleh Global, and its logo is “We work harder to stay the first.”

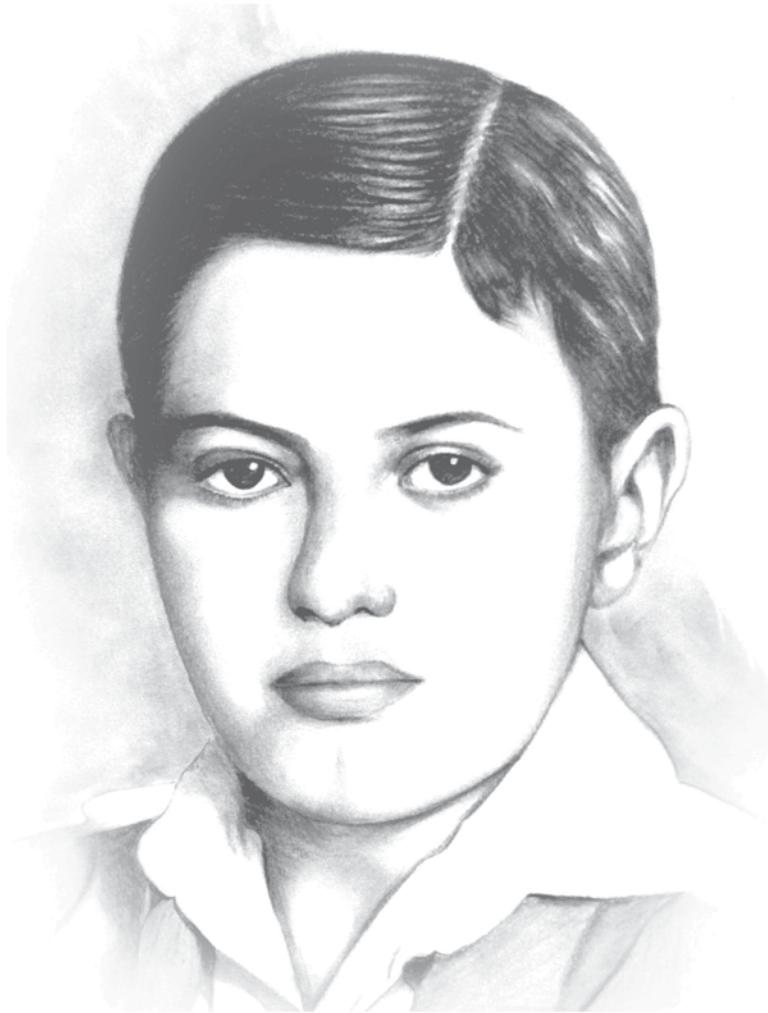
Today...

Old memories flush inside me like a river when I see the old pictures of my family. The image of my mother “Adibeh” praying to me all the time, I feel comfortable and at ease when I hear her voice in my heart, “God bless you my dear Tallool.” “I have grown up and you still calling me Tallool?”, I protest. She replies lovingly, “You are still Talal, my beloved son, no matter how old you are.”

The image of my father “Tawfeeq” holding me in his hands brought me back to the habit of picking oranges from the treetop. He saw in that the behavior of a person who cannot be defeated by hardships and one who always gets what he wants. His words ring in my ears like a prophecy, “You will be a great person someday Talal.”

And the picture of Jaffa provokes yearning to see it again.





Talal Abu-Ghazaleh 1951

A Message ...

To you, future leaders,

I was a child just like all of you, dreaming of a quiet and care-free life in my home country, but it was my destiny to live a childhood different from yours. Yet that did not defeat me. On the contrary, it enhanced my determination to succeed.

Dream and set your goals as you pursue them. Today, you are children, but you will grow into the future leaders. Banners will fly higher with you holding them and we will give you our support so that you give us back glory.

Hold on tight to your dreams as I did. Despite my tough situation and the pains I have had to endure, I was determined to achieve these dreams and I did, with the grace of Allah and the prayers of my parents and I have, in the process, served my country and nation well.

I am addressing this letter to you hoping that all of you, not one, but thousands and hopefully millions, will achieve the success I have achieved ... and remember that you can achieve the impossible with a strong will and trust in Allah.

We have given you your present... and will wait for you to give us our future.

And let your motto to achieve success be:

(We work harder to remain the first, and will be always the first).

Your friend,

Talal Abu-Ghazaleh

About the writer

Areej Omar Younis

- Born in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Amman on April 17, 1987.
- Graduated from the Jordan University of Science and Technology University with a Bachelor degree in agricultural engineering.
- Obtained her Master's degree in clinical nutrition and dietetics.
- Worked in the field of print media for several Jordanian newspapers and magazines.
- Participated in several story writing contests and won top prizes.
- Writes short stories for children and others that focus on social issues and public awareness. She has a short stories collection titled "At the Sunset"

Talal Abu-Ghazaleh: 10 Prescriptions for Success

1. Hope brings luck: **Be hopeful, always.**
2. Happiness is an enabler: **Be happy, always.**
3. The objective of education is innovation: **Invent.**
4. Be a natural and perpetual student: **Never stop studying.**
5. Look for the first mover advantage: **Resist the herd instinct.**
6. Just like your non-stop heart, rest is bad for you: **Work and work.**
7. In Arabic, retired (متقاعد) means “die-seated” “مت – قاعد”: **Never retire.**
8. Your adversaries help protect you from yourself: **Love and love everybody.**
9. Welcome adversities and failures: **Turn them into blessings and successes.**
10. At school, you learn and sit for exams: **After School, you face exams and learn.**



Talal Abu-Ghazaleh



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A Dedication to All Children

