

Just the First Piece



== مدارج



Five-year-old Rayyan opened the puzzle box. Pieces spilled across the rug: blue sky, a red sail, and a sea full of waves. He looked at the picture on the lid, then at the pieces. “It's too big. I can't do it.”

“Would you like to put it back in the box?” asked his eight-year-old sister, Salma.



Rayyan reached out, then pulled back. He wanted the whole boat but did not know where to begin.

Salma sat beside him. “We don't need the whole boat yet. We only need the first piece.”

Rayyan searched until he found a red corner shaped like the tip of the sail. He placed it at the edge of the board.



“That's the first piece.”

He found another red piece, but it would not fit. He pushed once, then twice.

“If it doesn't fit, we don't hurt the piece,” Salma said. “What could we ask?”

Rayyan compared the two red lines. “Does this belong at the top of the sail or the bottom?”



Salma pointed to the lid without placing the piece for him. Rayyan noticed a thin white stripe and found its place. Now the sail had two corners. Next he chose a straight edge. Then he found a piece with a wave. Whenever the puzzle felt enormous, he told himself, “Just one piece.”



When he grew tired, he put the loose pieces on a tray and went for a drink. “I’m stopping for a rest, and I’ll come back,” he said.

The red sail waited for him. He added one piece, then asked for help when two colours looked alike. Salma asked a question, and he chose for himself.



Before sunset, the whole boat appeared. Salma had not solved it for him. It began with one red corner and grew whenever Rayyan found a step he could manage.

He lifted the final piece. “This is the last one!”

“And how did we reach it?” Salma asked.

Rayyan pointed to the first corner of the sail. “With that one. It wasn't the whole boat, but it opened the way.”

Begin with one small step

What is the first piece or step you can see clearly?

Choose an age-appropriate, safe puzzle. Ask about a corner piece or a clear colour instead of requiring the whole picture. If the child gets stuck, offer a question or a clue without taking over. Resting and returning are valid choices. Finishing the puzzle is not a test of worth or intelligence.

Original fiction inspired by From Procrastination to Completion. Source: physical PDF pages 5, 15, 16 and 17, corresponding to printed pages 4, 14, 15 and 16. The story contains no direct quotation from the Qur'an or hadith.