

The rugmaker – in times of conflict ordinary people



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

During times of conflict, we see how ordinary people can do extraordinary things. It is when we are placed in such situations, similar to Najaf in 'The Rugmaker of Mazar-Sharif' that we see these things reveal themselves. Najaf experiences, life threatening situations during the war and experiences the effects of the tragedies. Extraordinary acts of humanity are also seen when people of opposing views of the conflict come together to help each other. In recent real world examples it is seen that such acts can also be displayed through battling racial abuse.

During periods of chaos and war, extraordinary occurrences happen where least expected. In a land where many religions are accustomed, Afghanistan's citizens are divided by these religions. However in the case of safety, two religious groups come together, believing in the same idea. The Hazara and Pashtuns are religious groups with conflicting opinions and different leaders. But Qadem, a known Pashtun to Najaf's Hazara family knows Najaf would 'surely be killed' if he was to remain in his homeland.

It is there that the two groups, although nervous, put aside their differences and conflicting beliefs and 'entrust' their lives with one another for the safety of their own futures. Qadem helps Najaf seek asylum from Afghanistan and in turn this leads to him becoming a refugee. In the conflict at Mazar-Sharif, Afghanistan, a war that seems never ending shows hope. People can survive conflict and in doing so achieve extraordinary feats in the process.

Najaf witness many horrors in his homeland and decides it is best to leave behind his family and flee as an asylum seeker in order to find a new home

to bring his wife and child to afterwards. He settles in Australia after he gains a visa from his long detention time, and not only does he rebuild his life, he flourishes and remains a man of peace. Najaf claims that peace is 'part of me, something that was inside of my brain and my heart'. As a man who, like many other Afghans, has experienced so many traumas from the ongoing war, Najaf holds onto his good will and positive attitude throughout his journey.

The text shows that people are not always depleted of their will power by their encounters with conflict, but can be made to feel more true to their values. Recently in the headlines, on the 24th of May 2013, indigenous footballer Adam Goodes found himself involved in a conflict of racial abuse. After kicking a goal, in the match against Collingwood, a minor from the Collingwood cheer squad made a snide and racially intended remark at Goodes. A proud Aboriginal and playing during indigenous round, Goodes heard the comment from the girl, calling him an 'ape'.

The usually calm Sydney player retaliated at the comment and later told the media that he 'feels sorry for the girl' who must be unaware of 'how deep' those words cut the AFL star. Goodes extraordinary act is seen in the way he did not attack her actions, but simply questioned them. This shows the side of Goodes that can be seen as a role model, as he told the public that more needs to be done to educate our young society about equality of race. These examples show that conflict can make the everyday person do extraordinary things. These acts could have been possible within us always.