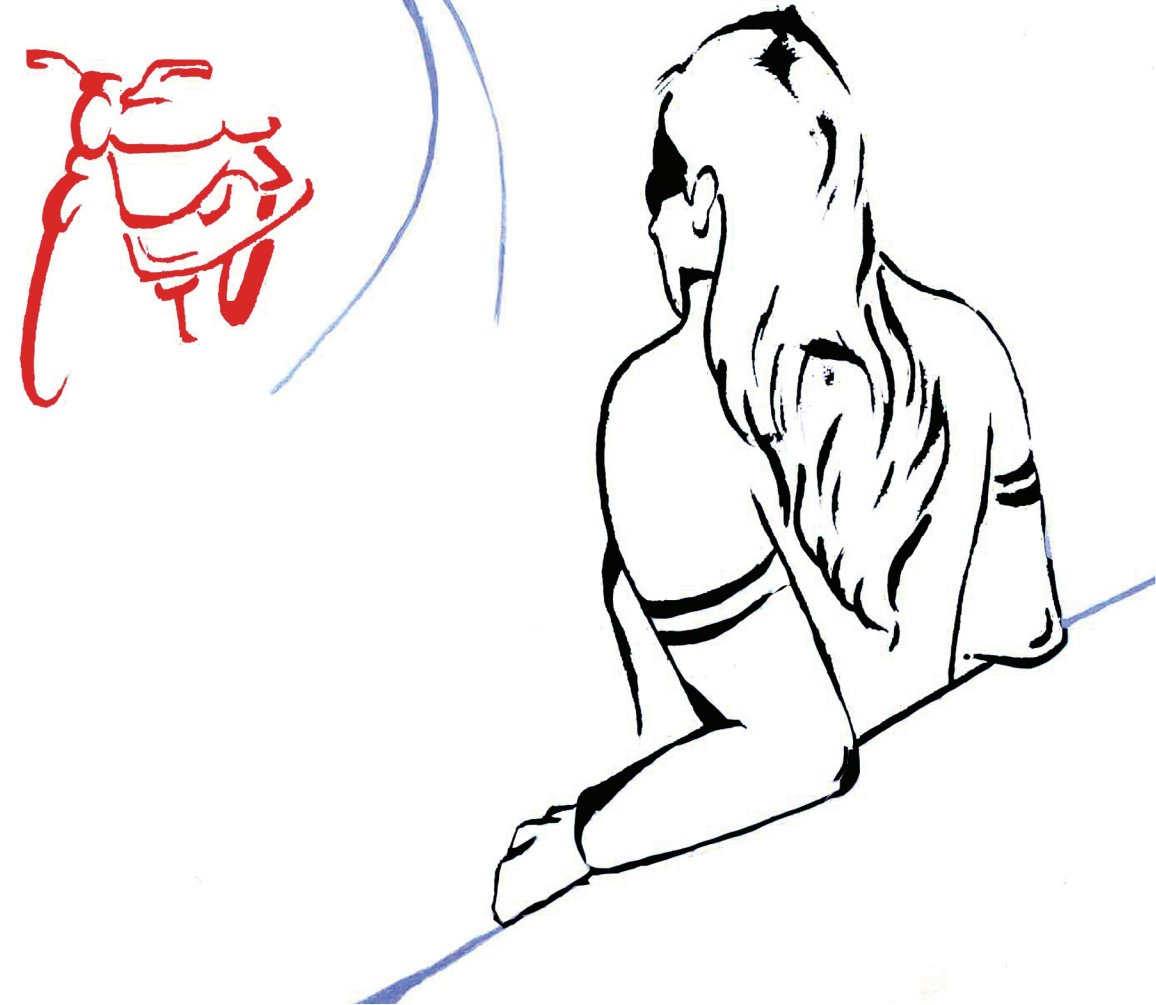
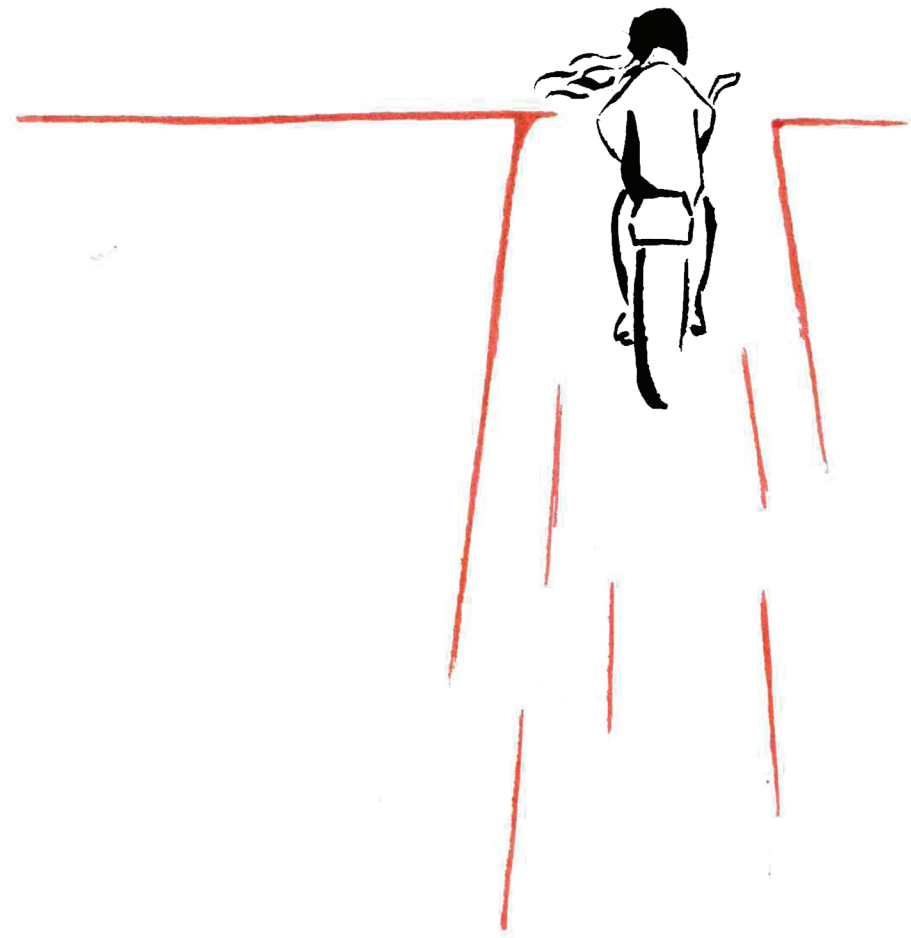


# THE ADVENTURES OF ZENITH IRFAN



**FORMAN  
CHRISTIAN  
COLLEGE**  
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

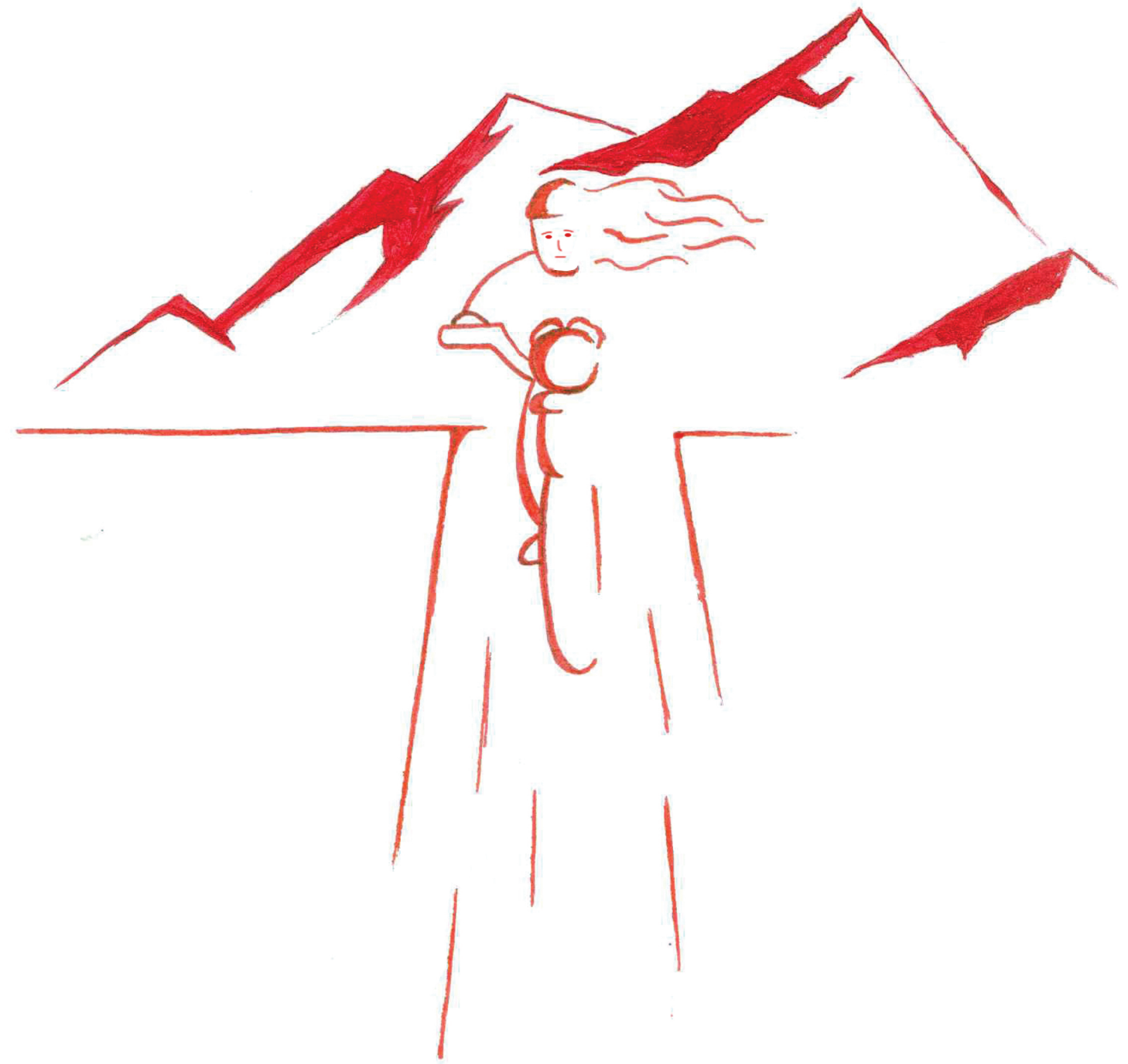
*This book is published as part of a project entitled 'Advancing Female Literacy and Empowerment in Pakistan and India through Life Writing'. It was led by Professor Siobhan Lambert-Hurley (University of Sheffield, U.K.) in collaboration with Dr Rukhsana Zia and Dr Nukhbah Taj Langah (Forman Christian College University, Lahore, Pakistan), Professor Claire Chambers (University of York, U.K.), Dr Nafhesa Ali (University of Manchester, U.K.) and Shaheen Attique-ur-Rahman (the Bunyad Foundation, Lahore, Pakistan). It was crafted by students at Forman Christian College University under the guidance of Sobia Zaidi, Haidar Shahbaz and Mussarat Shahid with the support of Saima Fayyaz from the Bunyad Foundation. The project was funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund in the United Kingdom.*

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*"What if I'm not able to balance  
my motorcycle? What if I fall?  
What if I... don't make it?" The  
thoughts raced in her head as she  
got her bike off the road.*



*But over the years, Zenith had mastered the art of riding a motorbike. Now she rode with a victorious smile. She tore through the wind and covered large distances in a matter of minutes.*



Little did she know the difference between riding a heavy motorbike on roads and scaling heights. The latter required completely different skills. Racing downhill, Zenith lost control and skidded on the gravel below.



Bruised and cut, she felt alone and afraid.  
She found herself crying in the middle of  
the mountains. Zenith wondered if she  
would ever make it to the top.



*She looked around for help. Then she looked up at the sky, its darkness reflecting her gloom.*

*She could almost hear her father saying to her, "Zenith beta, now is not the time to think of quitting."*



Once again, she was reminded of her first time on a bike . . .

She had ridden a motorcycle for the first time in her locality. Her brother was there beside her, watching with pride as she skillfully manoeuvred the bike and came to a halt. In her head, she shouted, "I'm on top of the world!"

Later, she turned to her brother. "You know what we have to do next, right?" Zenith didn't wait for him to answer. "We must ride our way across Pakistan. All of it. We must do what Abba couldn't."

She was ready to take on this enormous challenge.





*"I really can do it!" she smiled as she finally got to Lake Saif ul Malook with her riding friends.*

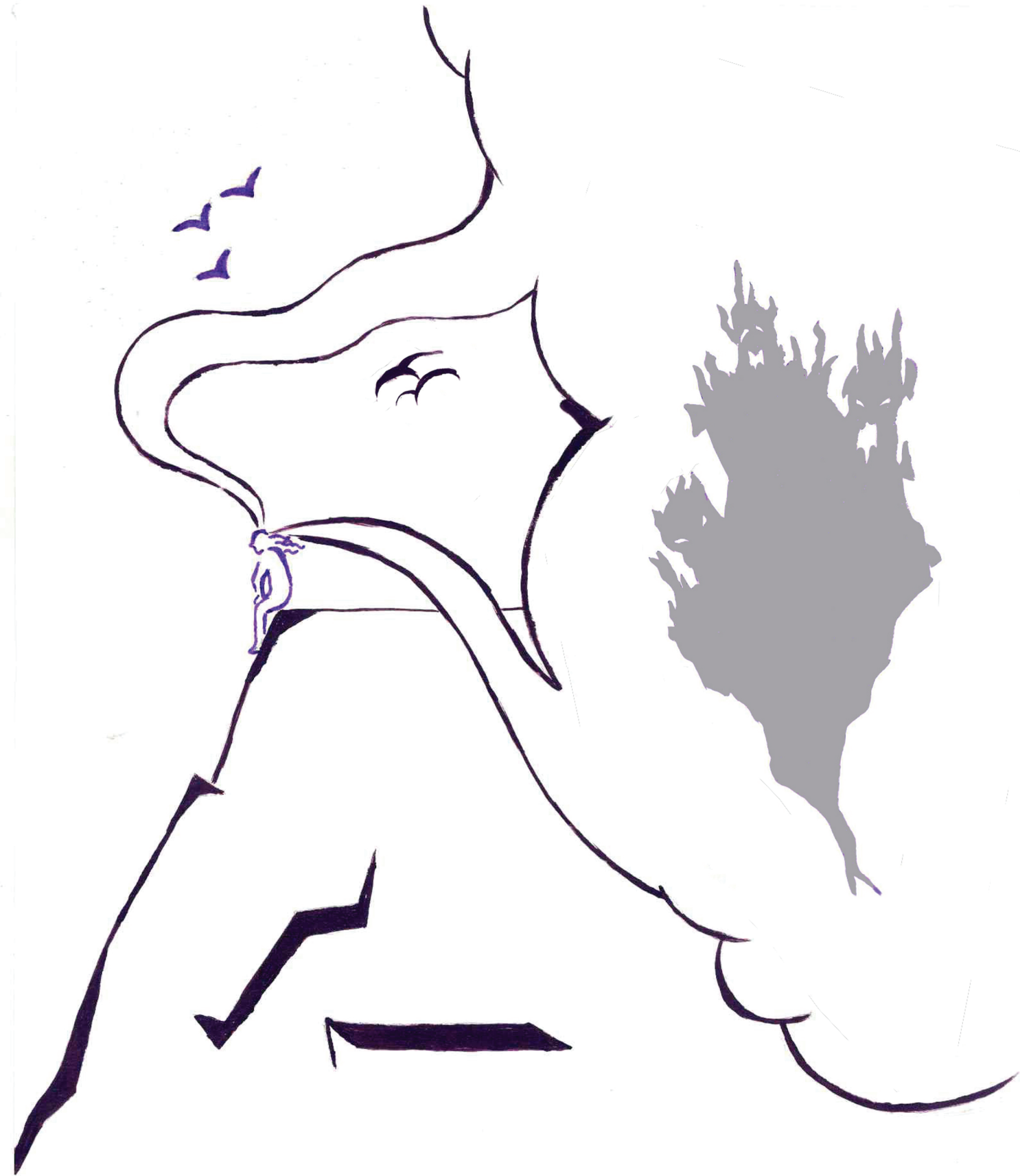
*They had braved rough ground, tough weather, and many falls.*



Perhaps the hardest thing of all was the mean comments of the men. Zenith was the only girl in the group, and on top of that, riding a motorcycle!

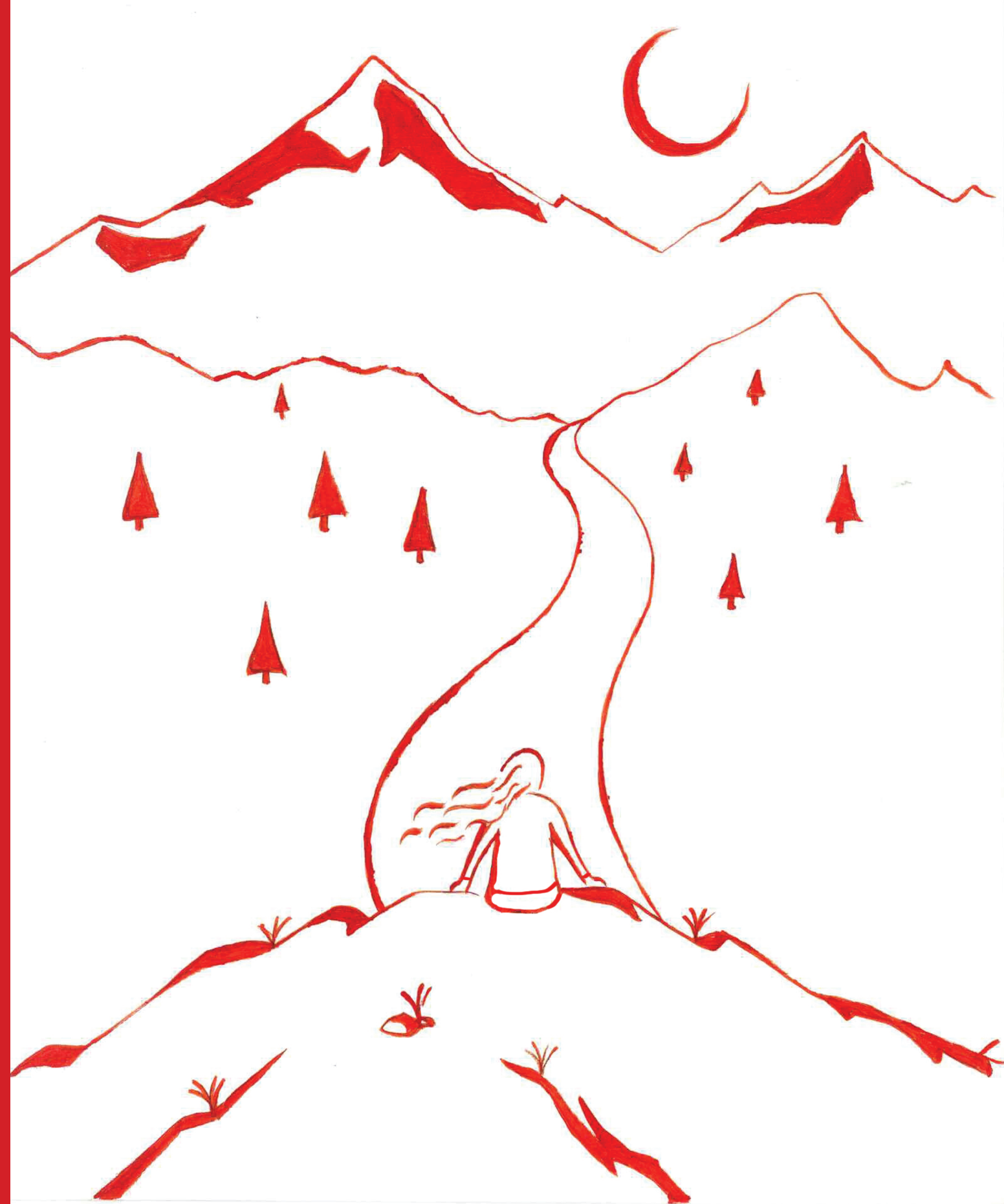
"This is unIslamic, is this how girls are supposed to behave in this society?" The voices rang in her head. The voices shrieked, "This is not what girls should do!"

But Zenith was determined; nothing could deter her from fulfilling her father's dream.



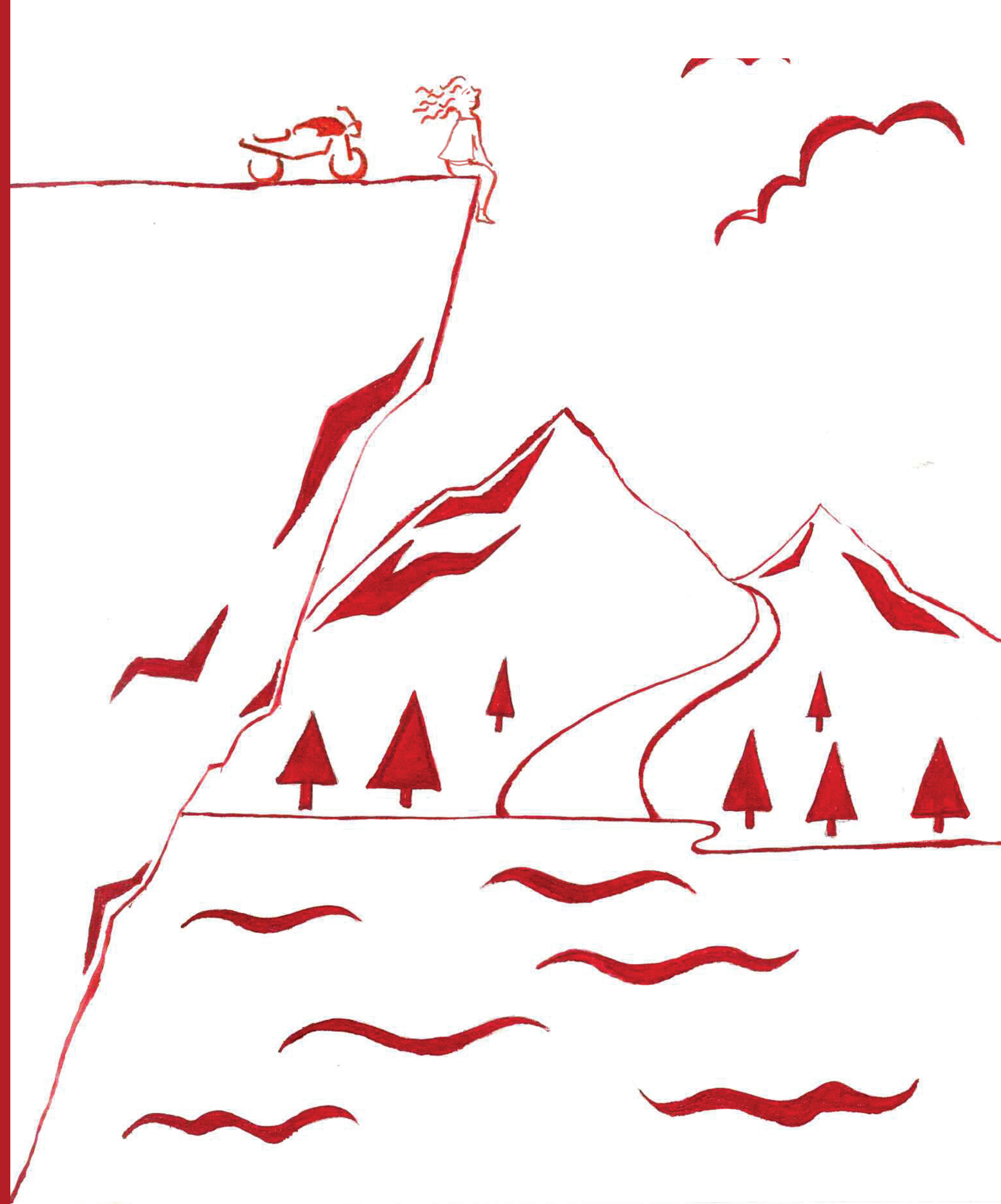
*"This is it. This is when I shall finally put my fears to rest, once and for all," Zenith thought as she set off alone. She refused to listen to the chatter that echoed in her head. No longer did she care what girls should do or not do.*

*She increased the speed this time with the intention to ride all the way to Kashmir in the north. Like her name she was to go to the country's zenith or highest point. "I will not fail!"*



Her father's voice rang in her ears. "Do you see now why you must continue, meri beti? Rise again, one more time. You are a fighter, not one who gives up. Become your destiny, touch the skies."

And so, Zenith did. She faced her fears, again and again, until she overcame them. From the lowest point in her journey of fear, she had risen to the top. In the literal and the spiritual sense, she was at the zenith of success.

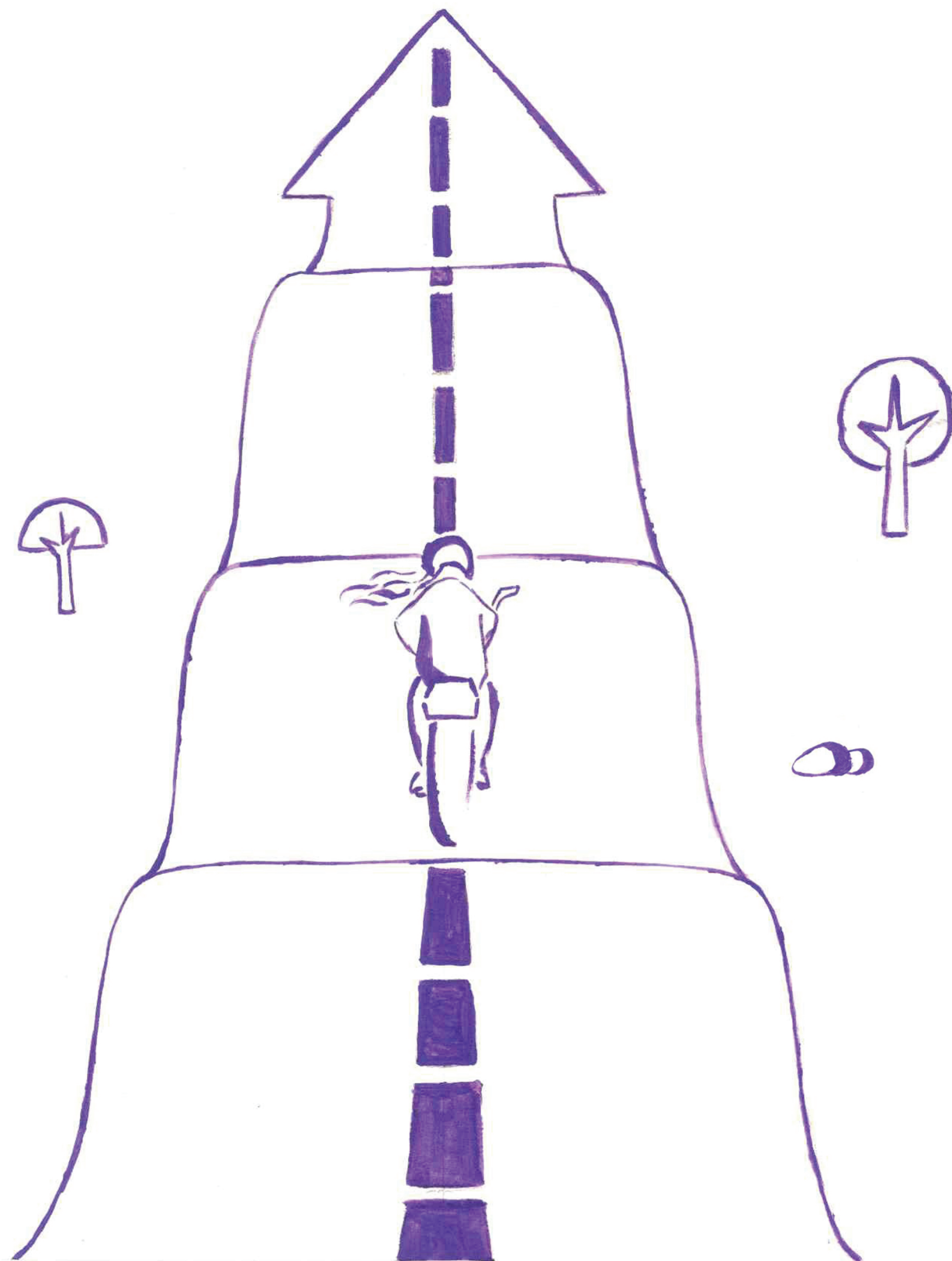


*The dangers were endless, but the rewards even greater. She had experienced the worst extremes, both emotional and physical. And she was ready to do it again, going even further, where no woman had gone before. Alone, riding a bike, Zenith soared like an eagle.*



Zenith Irfan - the Motorcycle Girl - continues to ride, breaking stereotypes. She has ridden more than 20,000 kilometers and has no intention of stopping.

Have you ever wanted to do something you are afraid of? Are you willing to set out to do what hasn't been done before?





### Guidelines for Teachers and Parents

Based on the life of a daring motorcyclist, Zenith Irfan, this story reflects her struggle against breaking the social taboos. Despite all the obstacles her strength and perseverance led her to fulfill her own and her father's dream. The illustrations are very minimalistic and playful complementing the solid colored background for the text.

The teachers and parents can engage the students in a discussion about the stereotypical expectations from girls who grow up in Pakistan and introduce Zenith's struggles in the context of her inspiring victory.