



**WHEN THE WORLD  
SMELLS OF COFFEE**



**AHMAD LUTFI ANIS**

National Book Award-winning author of  
*If You Want To Lose Weight, Go To The Moon!*

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# Preface

PEOPLE like me are often being asked about the secret to becoming a successful graduate student. Normally, the person asking would expect a quick recipe to success or perhaps a list of Dos and Don'ts. Unfortunately, there is none. The pursuit of knowledge in its truest sense can never be summarised like Jamie Oliver's guide for Yorkshire pudding, contrary to what some of us choose to believe. The process of learning and seeking knowledge is intended to build character, expand our comprehension of the world around us, and enrich one's life. In the process, we are constantly influenced and spurred by the experiences of those before us, especially by the stories they tell. This book chronicles one such story, about the postgraduate journey of a young man (who happens to be a coffee addict), driven by the wisdom from stories shared by his grandfather. While the narratives may be relatable, and perhaps inspiring for some, others may enjoy the wit and humor. No matter how this book appeals to you, I hope you will find the 'pieces of recipe' hidden among the pages.

**Ahmad Lutfi Anis**

# The Sufi

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***I like my coffee with cream and  
my literature with optimism.*** 

Abigail Reynolds

THE heavy downpour had finally subsided. It remained drizzling and misty, outside the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA). It is a common December weather in this part of the world. The Malaysian West Coast has always been fortunate compared to the East Coast at this time of the year, where flood have been a year–end formality in some states. But things have been different in recent times due to climate change, and even worse, one cannot use an old Malaysian geography school textbook to understand the weather anymore. Monsoon or not, both are equally unpredictable.

Damai was making his way from the Departure Hall at Level 5 to the Arrival Hall at Level 3. He needed a dose of black coffee. The Arrival Hall is normally relatively quiet compared to the Departure Hall. However, the crowd that day was bigger than he had anticipated. “*Bad timing,*” Damai sighed, as he walked past an entourage of Malay families sending off their relatives to Mecca for the *umrah* (Muslim ‘visit to the Holy Land’ or ‘minor pilgrimage’). This is the period where busloads of families from villages and towns across the country make their merry tour of KLIA. Damai reached almost the end of the hall, where the Gloria Jeans Coffee outlet stood.