

KADISHA (CONT'D)

I was the only Muslim woman in the audience wearing a hijab. To my surprise the comedian was a Muslim woman also wearing a hijab.

They look at each other somewhat surprised.

~~PARAM/IZZA/JASMINE~~
 Really?
~~IZZA~~
 This is going to get interesting.

KADISHA

(where there are quotes she's pretending to be the comedian)

She opened acknowledging the elephant in the room. She points to me and says, "Hello to my fellow hijabi. For the non-Muslims out there, I'm referring to the head scarfs wrapped so elegantly around our beautiful faces." (with Vanna White hands she models her head scarf) "I want to help clear the Islamophobic air out there." She looks at me and asks, "Are you oppressed?" The audience waits for me to answer.

Beat.

~~JASMIN~~
~~That had to be the worse.~~

KADISHA

It was awkward. I said, No. She said, "What about your husband?" I responded, "Not married." She came back with, "Look at that, I'm not married either, imagine that. Two hijabis out because they choose to be here. Good for us! But if I'm being honest, there are definitely moments in my life when I use the Islamophobic troupes to my advantage. The other day, my neighbor who I can't stand because she's that person who lets her dog shit in your yard and never picks it up. By the way, she doesn't know I can't stand her.

(MORE)

KADISHA (CONT'D)

I'm a good Muslim that has learned the American art of being neighborly nice. (She winks.) So when she invites me to her 50th birthday. Yes, a 50 year-old woman lets her dog shit in my yard on the reg and then invites me to her birthday party. I tell her I'll have to ask my husband and get back to you. (She winks again) Crisis averted."

The women laugh.

~~LEZZA~~

~~Good stuff. How was the rest of her set?~~

KADISHA

(smiles)

She was funny. She did a few more Muslim jokes and then moved on to other topics. She broke a wall with the audience and they saw her as an individual, one who happens to be Muslim and wear hijab, not a person to fear. And while I wasn't thrilled about being a part of her bit, it was nice not to be the only other Muslim in a room challenging stereotypes about me, my hijab, and my faith.

~~FARAH~~

~~I hear you. If I had a dollar for every eye-roll, dirty look, or person that crosses the street when I get too close to them, I'd be a millionaire.~~

~~JASMIN~~

~~Ditto. Multi-millionaires.~~

~~LEZZA~~

~~I'll co-sign it too. But it's not just non-Muslims. I feel judgement from men and women in our community. There have been times when others have tried to make me feel like I'm not Muslim enough.~~

JASMIN

Giving you the side-eye. I get it. Our religion is beautiful.

(MORE)