

IZZA

Indeed it was. She tried to shame me, but she got checked. I'm a grown woman. I was there with my father. If he doesn't have an issue with what I'm wearing, why do you? I went through a whole lot to get to the mosque that day.

KADISHA

Sister Izza, I see this issue too. We all have to have patience with anyone who seeks to judge us, Muslims and non-Muslims. The arc is long, but I agree with Dr. Martin Luther King, when he said, "that it bends toward justice."

JASMINE

It's a very slow bend. My faith helps to keep me resolute. The way I live my life is by striving to be the change I want to see in this world. The best of you are those who, when they are seen, inspire others to remember Allah Almighty. (Source: Sunan Ibn Majah 4119, Grade: Sahih li ghayri)

The women look directly at the camera.

KADISHA/IZZA/FARAH/JASMINE

(in unison)

O you who believe! Shun much suspicion; for lo! Some suspicion is a sin." [Source: Sûrah al-Mujurât: 12]

INT. THEATER STAGE - DAY

Rafi is dressed in a white Kufta (Islamic shirt) and loose fitting white slacks. He paces back and forth and eventually stops. He will recite the poem, "American Ideals and Inconvenient Truths."

RAFI

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
Ideal, yes. My reality, no.
I see complexions like cream
representing the American dream.
(MORE)

RAFI (CONT'D)

And yes, there are exceptions to
this rule, but in my world, brown
and blacks lookin' like me are the
salmon in the river battling to
make it upstream.

Cry me a river, yes, I can

But I rather debate your flawed
ideals and inconvenient truths.

The US is a melting pot.
Ideal yes, my reality, no.

Something told, sold, and then sewn
into the fabric of our lives
Stitched tightly into our memory
banks
I can't help but feel like this
melting pot is more like a salad
dressing of oil and water, ready to
separate

It taxes and is taxin'
I work hard, but gots little time
for relaxin'

My America dream is fractured,
feels backwards, and ongoing
struggle.
Yet, I still look to this American
ideal to lift me up.

And like a balloon that goes pop
Hypocritical, condescending winds
got me feeling like I'm about to
erupt.

I am Muslim. I am American.
Cry me a river, yes, I can

But I rather debate your flawed
ideals and inconvenient truths.

Muslims are terrorists.
Ideal, no. My reality, yes.

Good ol' boys and gals go all in
for the click-baite
They seek and find messages that
promote hate

(MORE)

RAFI (CONT'D)

Constantly feeling biased and
othered, I wear the transgressions
of flawed followers of Islam on my
back,
Worried that at any moment I could
be attacked. Like my four brothers
murdered in Albuquerque

By Islamophobists who labeled our
brothers so-called enemies

Since 9-11, and even before, any
bad thing a Muslim has done or will
do becomes a universal blame game
all of us go through,

Now, do you get why I look so sad
and feel so blue.

This is not my American dream.

Throwing in the towel is not an
option, because there will be no
givin' in.
Too many have come before me
fighting for a win.

A dream deferred but not forgotten,
I still seek progress, life,
liberty, and the pursuit of
happiness.

Ideal, yes, reality, not yet.

I am Muslim. I am American.

Cry me a river, yes, I can.

But instead I choose to debate your
flawed ideals and inconvenient
truths.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - 10 YEARS AGO

The walls are plastered with posters of US presidents, quotes
from world leaders, and pictures and drawing from various
periods of US history. In the front of the class there is a
podium and mic. On the front of the podium is a "Rosie the
Riveter, "We can do it" poster.