

AMINAH ASSILMI, EX-CHRISTIAN, USA (PART 1 OF 4)

Rating: 4.7

Description: Ending up in a theatre class filled with heathen Arabs, Aminah is bent upon saving them from Hell.

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I was completing a degree in Recreation when I met my first Muslims. It was the first year that we had been able to pre-register by computer. I pre-registered and went to Oklahoma to take care of some family business. The business took longer than expected, so I returned to school two weeks into the semester (too late to drop a course).

I wasn't worried about catching up my missed work. I was sitting at the top of my class in my field. Even as a student, I was winning awards in competition with professionals.

Now you need to understand that while I was attending college and excelling, ran my own business, and had many close friends, I was extremely shy. My transcripts actually had me listed as severely reticent. I was very slow to get to know people and rarely spoke to anyone unless was forced to or already knew them. The classes I were taking had to do with administration and city planning, plus programming for children. Children were the only people I ever felt comfortable with.

Well, back to the story. The computer printout held one enormous surprise for me. I was registered for a Theatre class...a class where I would be required to perform in front of real live people. I was horrified! I could not even ask a question in class, how was I going to get on a stage in front of people? My husband was his usual very calm and sensible self. He suggested that I talk to the teacher, explain the problem, and arrange to paint scenery or sew costumes. The teacher agreed to try and find a way to help me out. So I went to class the following Tuesday.

When I entered the classroom, I received my second shock. The class was full of 'Arabs' and 'camel jockeys.' Well, I had never seen one but I had heard of them.

There was no way I was going to sit in a room full of dirty heathens! After all, you could catch some dreadful disease from those people. Everyone knew they were dirty, not to be trusted either. I shut the door and went home. (Now, there is one little thing you should know. I had on a pair of leather hot pants, a halter top, and a glass of wine in my hands...but *they* were the bad ones in my mind.)

When I told my husband about the Arabs in the class, and that there was no way I was going back, he responded in his usual calm way. He reminded that I was always claiming that God had a reason for everything, and maybe I should spend some time thinking about it before I made my final decision. He also reminded me that I had a scholar's award that was paying my tuition, and if I wanted to keep it, I would have to maintain my G.P.A.. Three credit hours of 'F' would have destroyed my chances.

For the next two days, I prayed for guidance. On Thursday I went back to the class convinced that God had put me there to save those poor ignorant heathens from the fires of hell.

I proceeded to explain to them how they would burn in the fires of hell for all eternity if they did not accept Jesus as their personal savior. They were very polite, but did not convert. Then, I explained how Jesus loved them and had died on the cross to save them from their sins. All they had to do was accept him into their hearts. They were very polite, but still did not convert. So, I decided to read their own book to show them that Islam was a false religion and Mohammed was a false God.

One of the students gave me a copy of the Quran and another book about Islam, and I proceeded with my research. I was sure I would find the evidence I needed very quickly. Well, I read the Quran and the other book. Then I read another 15 books, Sahih Muslim and returned to the Quran. I was determined I would convert them! My studies continued for the next one and half years.

During that time, I started having a few problems with my husband. I was changing, just in little ways but enough to bother him. We used to go to the bar every Friday and Saturday, or to a party, and I no longer wanted to go. I was quieter and more distant. He was sure I was having an affair, so he kicked me out. I moved into an apartment with my children and continued my determined efforts to convert the Muslims to Christianity.

Then, one day, there was a knock on my door. I opened the door and saw a man in a long white night gown with a red and white checkered table cloth on his head. He was accompanied by three men in pajamas. (It was the first time I had ever seen their cultural dress.) Well, I was more than a little offended by men showing up at my door in night clothes. What kind of a woman did they think I was? Had they no pride or dignity? Imagine my shock when the one wearing the table cloth said he understood I wanted to be a Muslim! I quickly informed him I did not want to be a Muslim. I was Christian. However, I did have a few questions. If he had the time....

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