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## **Jihad Against Violence: A One-Act Play**

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## Jihad Against Violence: A One-Act Play

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# Pieces

## Jihad Against Violence

*A One-Act Play*

*Fawzia Afzal-Khan and Bina Sharif*

This is the second version of the script I originally wrote with Annie Lanzillotto, *Sext of Saudade*, also published in this issue of *TDR*. After I wrote and performed *Sext* with Annie, we both realized there was something too raw and painful in that collaboration for us to continue with the process in the immediate future, never mind some disquieting orientalist echoes that remained till the very end in this version. While I hope we can revisit the troubling but productive dynamic and work again on this and other projects at some point, for the immediate future it became clear to me that I wanted to rework and own the work we'd done in a different way. Since I had accepted a gig to perform it at a spring 2009 conference on "Women, Creativity, and Dissidence" organized by Nawal el Saadawi at Spelman College (in Atlanta, Georgia, US), I decided to take my portion of the work and see how I might rework it and discover a different trajectory and resonance for it with a different collaborator. Somehow, working on the project with another woman seemed crucial to the enterprise. This version, then, cowritten and performed with a woman who is a Pakistani American like myself, is quite differently inflected in terms of its style

and content. While still in the experimental, non-realist mold, obviously this became a play that expresses the views and experiences of two Muslim Pakistani American women, not one Pakistani American and one Italian American, as is the case with the previous incarnation, *Sext of Saudade*. Not only did the change of religio-ethnic identity influence concomitant changes in the play, but the fact that we are both very highly engaged in Pakistani-US political analyses meant that some of this aspect of our lives made it into *Jihad Against Violence*—as the title itself is meant to indicate. Further, the edgy playfulness of a hetero/lesbian erotic bond gave way to something less obviously abrasive; indeed, the play took on more of a mournful, even elegiac tone toward issues of identity and (un)belonging, linking the personal to the political by way of linking gender and ethnicity to the politics of US imperialist hegemony in the world, particularly in its relationship to Pakistan, a crucial ally in the War on Terror— notwithstanding the change from the Bush to the Obama Administration. Class issues, instead of being instantiated through the different situational realities of the two female actors, became centralized through the class structure

**Fawzia Afzal-Khan** is University Distinguished Scholar and Professor of English, and Director of Women's and Gender Studies at Montclair State University, NJ. She has published articles on feminist theory, postcolonial theory, and Pakistani politics and culture; has authored two books including *A Critical Stage: The Role of Secular Alternative Theatre in Pakistan* (Seagull, 2005); and is editor of two anthologies, including *Shattering the Stereotypes: Muslim Women Speak Out* (Interlink, 2005). Her memoir, *Lahore with Love: Growing Up with Girlfriends Pakistani Style*, is forthcoming from Syracuse University Press (March 2010). She is a published poet and playwright, as well as a vocalist trained in the North Indian Classical tradition.

**Bina Sharif** is an award-winning playwright, actress, and director. She has had 24 plays produced in the US, Europe, and Pakistan. She is a Joseph Jefferson Award nominee for acting from Chicago's Goodman Theatre, a poet, and a visual artist. She is an MD from Pakistan with an MPH from Johns Hopkins University. Her new play, *A Colony of Artists*, premiered on 31 December 2009 at Theater for the New City in New York for a three-week run.

of US society itself; women's oppression as manifested differently through the characters became a mirror for the oppressiveness of human life itself, as lived in a world of ever-increasing inequality. The *jihad*—the struggle—against this inequality is a struggle against the violence that inequality breeds, but given the powerful structures that surround us—past, present, and future—this is easier said than done. Yet, the seemingly impossible must be attempted, the challenge always mounted even in the face of despair. And often, this challenge is against our own baser selves, our own inner dictators, sexists, classists, against our own cheating, lying hearts. As the same colleague who described watching *Sext of Saudade* as a “Brechtian experience” now put it: “*Jihad Against Violence* is far more Beckett-sian.”

—Fawzia Afzal-Khan

## Prop List

2 big scripts (each actress has one), gun, prayer rug, red shoes, glasses, box of donuts, 2 chairs, 1 table, harmonium, cell phone, red dress, green *burqa*, red and black *chador* (for Muslim Woman #1), thin veil (for Muslim Woman #2), screen for projecting music videos, CD player, laptop.

## Scene One:

### Waiting for the Messiah

(MUSLIM WOMAN #1 in rehearsal studio, awaiting her director; taking inventory of her props and commenting.)

WOMAN #1: *Burqa*—’cause all Pakistani Muslim women wear burqa, hence the burqa  
Pretty red shoes...fuck-me shoes...all girls need a pair...gun...hmmm...

prayer rug...of course...I am a Muslim you know...

red dress—yeah I’m wearing it, what do you think I’m the *puta*?

Glasses—’cause I’m a professor, alright, you can’t put me in a box

Donuts—he likes American donuts. Where is he, my director, my messiah?? Maybe he’s afraid of me, afraid I’ll be mad at him...???

What the hell...as usual, promises promises and then...nada. Gets my vote, and then...doesn’t

bloody well show up! Well, I can’t waste my time waiting for him anymore. I’m paying for this damn rehearsal space.

Listen, you tech person back there...what’s your name??? Oh, okay...Mary...like the virgin, of course. Well, could you please play the first video, “Smokescreen” for me??? Thanks...

(Tech cue #1 for film #1. Dim house lights. “Smokescreen” DVD of Westernized woman artist/writer being pursued in a sinister fashion by a man all over the town of Lahore; also a metaphoric rendition of the Pakistani state under the grip of Dictator Musharraf’s Emergency Rule, 2007. As film finishes, lights go up.)

WOMAN #1: Jesus! I came to the West to get away from this Man-Following-the-Woman bullshit. To Trap Her! Well—Fuck him! With his film noir ending. Wanting the woman of his past to be dead in the end...maybe wanting all of that past, my beloved country Pakistan’s past to be dead too... Well, guess who won *that* argument! Bepawl me in my agnestis! That’s what I told him. That’s English for, Cover me in saliva on that part of my back where I cannot scratch!! (Spits)



Figure 1. “Pretty red shoes...fuck-me shoes... all girls need a pair...gun...hmmm...” Fawzia Afzal-Khan, *Jihad Against Violence*, 21 March 2009, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo courtesy of Fawzia Afzal-Khan)

Ok—I wanna do the Western thing now. Play me track two. And give me a spotlight please. Screw the director!

*(Tech cue #2. Audio up from laptop: “Why Can’t We Live Together?” by Timmy Thomas. WOMAN #1 dances playfully. WOMAN #2 enters from offstage. Audio off.)*

Is that you? Mi amor...What? Who are you? What are you doing there? I’m scared...

*(WOMAN #2, in the shadows, thin veil on her... silent...glides onto stage like a ghost, stands still.)*

Dance with me. I remember you, I’m not scared. You’re my friend. Haji, come back to me from the dead...dance with me, oh please...prettyplease...it’s been soooo long...Haji why...okay nevermind... *(WOMAN #2 makes as if to move away.)* NOooo...please wait, please...listen, ok, no dancing but maybe we can sing. *(She starts singing “Baajay, payal meri.” WOMAN #2 moves away slowly.)* WAIT!! Okay, forget that

you wanted the sky I would write across the sky in letters / That would soar a thousand feet high “To the Messiah with Love.”

*(WOMAN #2 glides away some more. WOMAN #1 throws herself at WOMAN #2’s feet.)*

Please Please Please. Don’t go! Direct me Haji. I don’t want any more scummy men who never show up or who punish me when they do. I beg you, please, direct my play...better still, be in my script, please... *(Sings “Baajay, payal meri” sitting at Haji’s feet.)*

*(Tech cue #3: Black out for 3 minutes. WOMAN #1 puts on burqa. Lights turn back on.)*

## Scene Two: At the Table of the Jihadi Feast

*(WOMAN #1 and WOMAN #2 sitting in two chairs, a table in between, with a box of donuts and a jug of milk on it. And the gun and chador draped on the chair behind WOMAN #1.)*



Figure 2. “Ok, no dancing but maybe we can sing.” Fawzia Afzal-Khan and Bina Sharif, Jihad Against Violence, 21 March 2009, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo courtesy of Fawzia Afzal-Khan)

WOMAN #1: *(Peering through the burqa)* I can’t live like this anymore, Haji. That ruddy man is reading my text messages again. Here, see for yourself. He says he’ll put me in detention, in my very own Guantanamo... he wants to punish me he says...for what? For what? *(WOMAN #2 sits in her chair silently, veiled with thin fabric. WOMAN #1 continues, sobbing.)*

Ok, so I’m a piece of crap. A married woman carrying on again, but the cell is my witness, I swear it’s not what it seems—and what about him, he’s busting me

again, surveilling my every move, tapping the phone, cracking my passwords...

*(WOMAN #1, standing up as Husband:)*

You bloody whore! You’re at it again! After you swore you stopped! Why don’t you just go to the market and sell yourself to the highest bidder?? You’re nothing but a piece of meat... you disgust me! Run...run away before I KILL you—whore of La-bore!!!

Eastern-woman-waiting-for-her-beloved shit too, how about...do you remember, we used to sing that song from that movie with Sidney Poitier and Lulu... *(Starts singing “To Sir with Love.”)* Those schoolgirl days of telling tales and biting nails are gone / But in my mind I know they will still live on and on / But how do you thank someone who has taken you from Pakistan to USA? /It isn’t easy, but I’ll try / If

*(Tech cue #4: Lights dim to out. "Payal" video plays from laptop: Images of feet running through Karachi's Empress market, a visual reminder of the glory days of the British Empire, now a faded, dirty marketplace where meats and vegetables are sold. As film finishes: Lights up. WOMAN #1 throws back the front of the burqa and starts devouring donuts and drinking milk with a frenzy.)*

Screw him! Screw the director! NO more messiahs! NO more pretty little Eastern feet running through the men's marketplace!!! You understand??? I want to feast on ALL the market goods, do YOU HEAR???? Yes, I want all of the feasts. Who are they to forbid me what they enjoy themselves? I want to eat at the table of marriage, and of solitude; the table of plenty and the table of none. I want to eat and drink and drown in the feasts of fornication and suck the milk from the full teats of adultery i want to sit at the table of the straightest of laces and thence to the table spread with fruits of all



Figure 3. Fawzia Afzal-Khan, Jihad Against Violence, 21 March 2009, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo courtesy of Fawzia Afzal-Khan)

types i want to feel their juices running down my chinny chin chin so with a huff and a puff i can blow all their narrow houses down. They're made of straw and paper and the occasional brick or mud, so easy to disassemble (*pulls burqa cover down*) and disassemble, especially with the help of a few unmanned drones...

*(WOMAN #1 turns to WOMAN #2)*

LISTEN! We both know what happens to the whores who wear bangles and who don't carve out a space for themselves!

*(WOMAN #1 throws off burqa, grabs and aims gun at WOMAN #2's head and then at her own head. Tech cue #5: play DVD of Islamic violins from laptop. In this video, made by Ibrahim Quraishi, an image of a violin repeatedly explodes, bursting into flames to the sound of gunshots. WOMAN #1 starts doing a dance to the taped sounds of gunshots and when it ends, goes and sits on chair at far side of stage, away from WOMAN #2.)*

### Scene Three: Success Is Thin...and Violent

*(WOMAN #2 throws off the thin veil and reads lines, seated in her chair; WOMAN #1 reads, also from her chair. First line spoken by WOMAN #2.)*

WOMAN #2: Scene one—Very thin women dancing

WOMAN #1: Scene two—Very thin women singing

WOMAN #2: Scene three—Very thin women doing cocaine

WOMAN #1: Scene four—Very thin women having sex

WOMAN #2: Scene five—Very thin women going shopping

WOMAN #1: Scene six—Very thin women having sex with very thin men

WOMAN #2: Scene seven—Very thin men and very thin women fighting

WOMAN #1: Scene eight—Very thin women stabbing very thin men

WOMAN #2: Scene nine—Very thin men stabbing very thin women



WOMAN #1: Scene ten—Very thin women stabbing each other

WOMAN #2: Scene eleven—Very thin men and women drinking

WOMAN #1: Scene twelve—Very thin men and women screaming

WOMAN #2: Scene thirteen—Very thin men and women shooting drugs

WOMAN #1: Scene fourteen—Very thin women and men shooting each other

WOMAN #2: Scene fifteen—Very thin men and women getting arrested...maybe.

WOMAN #1: End of first act

WOMAN #2: Act two, Scene one

WOMAN #1: But Act Two has not been written yet...

#### **Scene Four: Unending Present**

WOMAN #2: Oh yes it has

WOMAN #1: No it hasn't

WOMAN #2: Oh it's been written...darling it's being written even as we are speaking.

WOMAN #1: Well, and so who is writing it, darling?

WOMAN #2: Here's Obama...

WOMAN #1: OH...OBAMA...oh so he's the Messiah. My director...oooh I love him, my beloved...I've been waiting for him since this wretched play started. (*Starts singing "Baajay, payal meri."*)

WOMAN #2: Yes, yes, I love him too—he is the Messiah Director you have been waiting for, and me too, my darling...we have all been waiting for him...and my darling, he is coming to Pakistan—get your masala chicken and shami kebabs ready!

WOMAN #1: Ooh, I hear he cooks a mean daal himself.

WOMAN #2: Yaar, he loves our spices!

WOMAN #1: Oh God! For the love of our spice...you know what I mean yaar...our brown, sexy spice—perhaps—perhaps...he won't bomb us...

WOMAN #2: Yes, maybe he won't...after all, he isn't British.

WOMAN #1: Well yes...he isn't British...but he may still bring the Browns and the Blairs with him for dinner. How many chickens will we have to slaughter do you think?

WOMAN #2: Oh dear, we may be forgetting... what about the Blacks...???

WOMAN #1: Honey-darling-sweetheart...let's not worry...after all, everyone is welcome in our country—we do have a tradition of hospitality you know, so we no longer have to guess who's coming to dinner anymore!!

WOMAN #2: It's true, it doesn't matter who comes, we are great cooks you know.

WOMAN #1: You are so correct! Who can be better cooks than us?? You know, my grandmother was a fabulous cook, and my mother is a grand chef, and my youngest aunt cooks a mean shahi korma...shahi korma...oh...that reminded me of my best friend from childhood...Haji... you know, I've been waiting for her, actually... all this time...her real name meant a *shabi* bird. Did you know, if that magical bird flies over your head, it makes you a king...

(*Lights dim; WOMAN #1 goes and sits on prayer mat, plays harmonium in a spotlight.*)

WOMAN #1: (*Playing harmonium softly*) I met her when she was nine. We were both nine. I used to pride myself on being the youngest and the smartest in the class, and she came along and beat me by a month. She was tall to my small; she was curvaceous to my flat iron chest at the time. She had Sofia Loren eyes. We became inseparable. She was like a sister I never had. Haji, Haji, Haji. She got her period at eight or nine.

I learned about Leonard Cohen from her, "Like a bird on a wire... I tried in my way..." Haji was a live wire. In college, I got her into acting. Of course she upstaged me. She was a painter. She got enrolled in the only prestigious painting school in Pakistan. Her class of fine arts was only one other student, a man. He had this really older man affect. He called himself "Sufi" with a beard. She fell for him. She'd say, "He's wonderful. He's deep. He really cares about the poor." He was so not right for her. He made her doubt herself. He was Mr. Lower-Class Pakistani Let's Be Communists. He didn't say very much. He'd stroke his beard and be very deep. And the Lenin glasses, let's not forget. He



Figure 4. "I had my harmonium. All I could do was sing. I prayed to a God I hadn't prayed to in years." Fawzia Afzal-Khan, Jihad Against Violence, 21 March 2009, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo courtesy of Fawzia Afzal-Khan)

pulled her away from her friends. And she just changed. She forgot all about me. She grew her hair. She used to have such a bouncy gait, and bouncy hair, and chatting for hours. My Daddy would say, "You were with her all day at school—what do you girls have to chat about?" She became completely quiet after she met him. Silent. She put her hair in a *piranda*. She gave up her jeans. She wore the poor-man's cotton. Weird slippers. She was just not herself anymore. The chattier he became, the quieter she grew. Then, no more smiles. No more chatting. Silence. (*Harmonium silent.*)

He was like the snake. She was this innocent. He entrapped her. He wanted her money. Once they got married, he lorded over her family's servants, drove her family's car. What happened to his communist manifesto? He was all puffed up. He had scored a possession. They lived in her parents' fabulous house. She had a baby just four months after the marriage. You can imagine the talk in Lahore. (*She starts playing harmonium loudly.*) She got depressed. He was never home, morning, noon, and night. She withdrew from the painting competition at NCA. In return she got his disappearing act. She went on medication. Her mother-in-law threw it down the toilet. (*In Urdu*) Bas! Yeh ameroon ki beemari hey. She threw away her depression medication. She said, "This is a rich man's disease. Breast feed your baby. That's what you need." Anyway, I got my scholarship to Tufts, took my harmonium, and left the

country. One weekend, a Saturday morning, I was alone in my dorm when my mother called. "Beta, I have some bad news for you. I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but your best friend, Haji, is dead." I'm like, what, what happened, did she get sick? "No, she wasn't sick, I'm sorry but, she shot herself in the head."  
(*Harmonium silent.*)

Her parents when I saw them when I went back said she looked so beautiful, the gunshot, the blood in her head, she had these purple eyelids like purple eyeshadow.

It was her husband's birthday. She went downstairs. She knew her Khala had a pistol. Haji went down, got the pistol out, called the servant, (*In Urdu*) "Tum achey aadmi ho...kuch der mein, Sahib ko bula kay lao." "Akbar, you're a good soul. Can you do me a favor? In a few minutes, go upstairs and tell Sahib I have a surprise for him." And she pulled the trigger. Sufi found her in a pool of blood and fainted. Fainted. Bloody son of a bitch. That's the story. That's how I lost my best friend. So I got the news that day. I had my harmonium. All I could do was sing. I prayed to a God I hadn't prayed to in years.

(*WOMAN #1 sings a few bars of "Allah Hoo," then WOMAN #2 gets up, removes her veil, walks to front of stage and stands slightly left of center. The final scene begins. Tech cue #6: lights dim, spotlight on both women when they are up front.*)

### Scene Five: Unending Violence: Must It Be So? It Must Not Be So...

WOMAN #2: I thought it was resolved

WOMAN #1: What was?

WOMAN #2: The Past

WOMAN #1: And the Present?

WOMAN #2: Present too

WOMAN #1: You wish...

WOMAN #1: It's unending

WOMAN #2: What?

WOMAN #1: The Past

WOMAN #2: And the present?

WOMAN #1: Present too...

WOMAN #2: Yesterday it ended





Figure 5. "I thought it was resolved." Bina Sharif, Jihad Against Violence, 21 March 2009, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo courtesy of Fawzia Afzal-Khan)

WOMAN #1: Today, it started again  
 WOMAN #2: What ends, never stops  
 WOMAN #1: It stopped  
 WOMAN #2: No  
 WOMAN #1: It did  
 WOMAN #2: It seemed that it stopped  
 WOMAN #1: It never stopped...  
 WOMAN #2: Because it never ended  
 WOMAN #1: You told me it did  
 WOMAN #2: I thought  
 WOMAN #1: And?  
 WOMAN #2: And then it started again...  
 WOMAN #2: You were right. Act 1 never ended...  
 WOMAN #1: Maybe...  
 WOMAN #2: Yes?  
 WOMAN #1: That's why it started again  
 WOMAN #2: Maybe...  
 WOMAN #1: There are so many maybe's...  
 WOMAN #2: Maybe...  
 WOMAN #1: But they are so definite  
 WOMAN #2: Who?  
 WOMAN #1: Other people  
 WOMAN #2: There are no other people  
 WOMAN #1: Only you...and that which is definite  
 WOMAN #2: Never heard of it

WOMAN #1: No?  
 WOMAN #2: No  
 WOMAN #1: Never heard of it  
 WOMAN #2: It exists  
 WOMAN #1: What?  
 WOMAN #2: Definite  
 WOMAN #1: But you said it wasn't...  
 WOMAN #2: What?  
 WOMAN #1: Definite  
 WOMAN #2: Oh, yes.  
 WOMAN #1: Nothing is  
 WOMAN #2: What?  
 WOMAN #1: Definite  
 WOMAN #2: Nothing is  
 WOMAN #1: Not true  
 WOMAN #2: What's not true?  
 WOMAN #1: Nothing  
 WOMAN #2: What?  
 WOMAN #1: It's not true, that nothing is definite, it is...  
 WOMAN #2: In other people's case  
 WOMAN #1: Others?  
 WOMAN #2: Yes, others  
 WOMAN #1: Who?  
 WOMAN #2: Who?  
 WOMAN #1: Yes, who?  
 WOMAN #2: The Other, who has definite things  
 WOMAN #1: The Other?  
 WOMAN #2: I want to be that Other  
 WOMAN #1: Which Other?  
 WOMAN #2: The Other who has definite endings  
 WOMAN #1: You didn't say definite endings, you said definite things  
 WOMAN #2: Others have definite things  
 WOMAN #1: They tell themselves that  
 WOMAN #2: What?  
 WOMAN #1: That they have definite things  
 WOMAN #2: Such as?  
 WOMAN #1: Definite endings

WOMAN #2: And beginnings?  
WOMAN #1: Yes, those too  
WOMAN #2: It begins, then it ends  
WOMAN #1: Not true  
WOMAN #2: What?  
WOMAN #1: It begins but it never ends  
WOMAN #2: What?  
WOMAN #1: Whatever begins, never ends  
WOMAN #2: It does  
WOMAN #1: It doesn't  
WOMAN #2: It does, you just haven't noticed it  
WOMAN #1: I notice everything  
WOMAN #2: You didn't notice your life  
WOMAN #1: My life?  
WOMAN #2: Yes  
WOMAN #1: I had a life?  
WOMAN #2: You still do  
WOMAN #1: Life ends  
WOMAN #2: Yes, it does  
WOMAN #1: And?  
WOMAN #2: And what?  
WOMAN #1: What about my life?  
WOMAN #2: Your life will end when it will end  
WOMAN #1: When?  
WOMAN #2: When it will, it will  
WOMAN #1: And my Past?  
WOMAN #2: Your Past will never end  
WOMAN #1: And my Present?  
WOMAN #2: Your Present will never end either  
WOMAN #1: Never?  
WOMAN #2: Never, it will only become your Past, but it will never end  
WOMAN #1: Even when my life ends?  
WOMAN #2: Yes, even when your life ends, your Past will remain as your past  
WOMAN #1: And my Present?  
WOMAN #2: That will also become your Past  
WOMAN #1: Everything?  
WOMAN #2: Everything will become your Past

WOMAN #1: People will talk about me in the past tense?  
WOMAN #2: No one will talk about you  
WOMAN #1: No one?  
WOMAN #2: No  
WOMAN #1: Why not? They can talk about me in the past tense...  
WOMAN #2: No, they won't. They don't have the time to talk about...  
WOMAN #1: About?  
WOMAN #2: About the Past  
WOMAN #1: And the Present?  
WOMAN #2: You would have no Present  
WOMAN #1: But people could still talk...  
WOMAN #2: Yes, if your Past had something in it for them...  
WOMAN #1: But the Past will end with me, when my life ends...  
WOMAN #2: Past never ends  
WOMAN #1: Then they should talk about me  
WOMAN #2: Yes, they will if your Past had anything that could benefit them  
WOMAN #1: It's the benefit then?  
WOMAN #2: What else?  
WOMAN #1: The memory  
WOMAN #2: Which memory?  
WOMAN #1: The memory of the Past  
WOMAN #2: It's in the Past  
WOMAN #1: And the memory of the Present?  
WOMAN #2: That's in the Past too, everything is in the Past  
WOMAN #1: And life?  
WOMAN #2: Whose life?  
WOMAN #1: The life that just ended  
WOMAN #2: That's in the Past too  
WOMAN #1: But they are talking about it  
WOMAN #2: Because it's in their favor  
WOMAN #1: End of someone's life is in their favor?  
WOMAN #2: Yes  
WOMAN #1: Why?  
WOMAN #2: They will benefit from it

WOMAN #1: They will benefit from someone's life that just ended?

WOMAN #2: Why not? They benefited when life's oil was flowing

WOMAN #1: And now?

WOMAN #2: They will benefit from the stoppage of that life

WOMAN #1: How can one think like that?

WOMAN #2: What?

WOMAN #1: To use someone's end like that?

WOMAN #2: That's what it's for

WOMAN #1: What?

WOMAN #2: Your life to be used by someone

WOMAN #1: By whom?

WOMAN #2: Anyone...You

WOMAN #1: Me?

WOMAN #2: You used your friend's death... and they will use yours...your Past, your Present

WOMAN #1: I have no Present

WOMAN #2: You never did

WOMAN #1: I didn't?

WOMAN #2: The moment you thought of it, it became the Past

WOMAN #1: And the Past never ended

WOMAN #2: No, it never did

WOMAN #1: And the Present?

WOMAN #2: You have no Present...

WOMAN #1: I did though...once

WOMAN #2: Yes, but you always made your Present into the Past quickly

WOMAN #1: Now my Past never ends

WOMAN #2: Neither does your Present

WOMAN #1: I have no Present

WOMAN #2: That's what YOU said

WOMAN #1: But SHE had a Present



Figure 6: "WOMAN #1 stands up, choking with Allah Hoo lyrics. Ends by falling to ground in sijda." Fawzia Afzal-Khan, Jihad Against Violence, 21 March 2009, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia. (Photo courtesy of Fawzia Afzal-Khan)

WOMAN #2: She made her Present into her Past

WOMAN #1: No she didn't...no she didn't... someone else did!

WOMAN #2: Who?

WOMAN #1: Whoever killed her

WOMAN #2: No one killed her

WOMAN #1: Yes, someone killed her

WOMAN #2: She killed herself

WOMAN #1: But, but...what about her Present?

WOMAN #2: And...?

WOMAN #1: Her Past?

WOMAN #2: It's all in the Past, all in the Past now

WOMAN #1: All in the past, her present is all in the past...

WOMAN #2: Yes, it never ended, the Present, it just became the Past

WOMAN #1: Yesterday, it was the Present, and today it is the Past...that simple?

WOMAN #2: Yes, that simple. The end of Life is very simple

WOMAN #1: Simple?

WOMAN #2: Yes, very simple...she was breathing, then she stopped.

WOMAN #1: Stopped?

WOMAN #2: Her breathing became her yesterdays

WOMAN #1: And her todays?

WOMAN #2: No more todays...it's all yesterdays...

WOMAN #1: So her Past ended?

WOMAN #2: No, Past never ends

WOMAN #1: And her Present?

WOMAN #2: Her Present lives in the Past

WOMAN #1: So?

WOMAN #2: Nothing ends

WOMAN #1: Nothing?

WOMAN #2: No. Past is unending

WOMAN #1: And the Present?

WOMAN #2: Turns into the Past...

WOMAN #1: And Breathing? The fight for breath...?

WOMAN #2: THAT ENDS. BREATHING ENDS. IT STOPS. JUST STOPS. THE BATTLE ENDS.

*(WOMAN #1 stands up, choking with Allah Hoo lyrics. Covers face with mask. Ends by falling to ground in sijda. WOMAN #2 covers her.*

*Final tech cue: spotlight off and all lights fade to blackout.)*

END.