

Excerpt terms and conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest you read the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Yasmina's Necklace

By

ROHINA MALIK

Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play that are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©MMXIX by
ROHINA MALIK

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(YASMINA'S NECKLACE)

For inquiries concerning all other rights, contact:
Creative Artists Agency
405 Lexington Ave., 19th Floor
New York, NY 10174 • Phone: (212) 277-9000

ISBN: 978-1-61959-207-0

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., of Woodstock, Illinois.”

In addition, all producers of the play must include the following acknowledgment on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and on all advertising and promotional materials:

“*Yasmina’s Necklace* was developed at 16th Street Theater and Chicago Dramatists.”

“*Yasmina’s Necklace* had its world premiere at 16th Street Theater in Berwyn, Ill., directed by Ann Filmer, artistic director, on Jan. 29, 2016.”

“*Yasmina’s Necklace* was produced in Chicago by The Goodman Theatre directed by Ann Filmer, Robert Falls, artistic director, Roche Schulfer, executive director, on Oct. 20, 2017.”

Bismillah.
For my mother and father,
Nabeel, Ali, Sarah, Daniya, Alina
Fatema and Sabeena,
with love.

For Mark,
for telling me about her necklace.

And for the millions of men, women and children
who were driven from their homes across the world due to
war, violence and persecution.
May you find peace and safety,
Inshallah.

Yasmina's Necklace received its world premiere at 16th Street Theater in Berwyn, Ill., on Jan. 29, 2016 (Ann Filmer, artistic director).

CAST:

YASMINA.....Susaan Jamshidi, (US) Ali Goodman
SAM..... Michael Perez, (US) Andres Enriquez
MUSA Mark Ulrich, (US) Malcolm Callan
SARA..... Laura Crotte, (US) Ali Goodman
ALI / OFFICER Amro Salama, (US) Malcolm Callan
AMIR Salar Ardebili
IMAMMiguel Nunez

PRODUCTION:

Director Ann Filmer
Scenic Design..... Joanna Iwanicka
Costume Design Rachel Sypniewski
Lighting Design Cat Wilson
Sound Design Barry Bennett
Props Design Jessica Mondres
Props ConsultantJesse Gaffney
Technical Director..... Steven E. Hill
Community Connector.....Kim Schultz
Assistant Director.....Malcolm Callan
Stage Manager Wendy Clarendon

Yasmina's Necklace was subsequently produced in Chicago by The Goodman Theatre on Oct. 20, 2017 (Robert Falls, artistic director; Roche Schulfer, executive director).

CAST:

YASMINA..... Susaan Jamshidi, (US) Arti Ishak
SAM..... Michael Perez, (US) Joe Fernandez
MUSA Rom Barkhordar, (US) Frank Sawa
SARA..... Laura Crotte, (US) Isabel Quintero
ALI..... Amro Salama, (US) Frank Sawa
MAN Salar Ardebili, (US) Amro Salama
IMAM Allen Gilmore, (US) Kenneth D. Johnson
AMIR..... Martin Hanna, (US) Salar Ardebili
OFFICER..... Frank Sawa, (US) Amro Salama

PRODUCTION:

Director Ann Filmer
Scenic Design..... Joe Schermoly
Costume Design..... Rachel Sypniewski
Lighting Design Cat Wilson
Assistant Lighting Designer..... Rachel Lakethe
Sound Design Barry Bennett
Assistant Director..... Malcolm Callan
Dramaturg Dana Formby
Literary Intern Max Abner
Dialect Coach..... Eva Breneman
Production Stage Manager..... Donald E. Claxon
Original Iraqi Artwork (on the set) Ahmad Abdul Razak
Production Assistant..... Shannon Rourke
Floor Manager..... Cathy Hwang
Stage Management Intern Abi Rowe

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The playwright would like to thank the many Chicago and New York theatre artists who helped with the development of *Yasmina's Necklace*.

Many thanks to 16th Street Theater, The Goodman Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, Silk Road Rising, Teatro Vista, The Den Theatre, Mustard Seed Theatre, Brava Theater Center, Crossroads Theatre in New Jersey and Voyage Theater Company in New York City.

Special thanks to Ann Filmer, the late Russ Tutterow, Mark Ulrich, Susaan Jamshidi, Tanya Palmer, Robert Falls, Roche Schulfer, Dana Formby, Juan Villa, Demetrios Troy, Najla Said, Carlo Garcia, Juan Villa, Richard Marlatt, Desmin Borges, Laura Crotte, Kamal Hans, Henry Godinez, Coya Paz, Madrid St Angelo, Jeremy Cohn, Ryan Shams, Ted Sod, Amr Elbayoumi, Zuleyma Guevara, Carlos Diaz, Marcela Munoz, Esteban Cruz, Gabriel Sloyer, Isabel Quintero, Diane Dorsey, Dalia Davi, Ana Maria Alvarez, Mark D Hines, Kim Schultz, Sheri Winkelmann, Michael Perez, Amro Salama, Salar Ardebili, Miguel Nunez, Joe Fernandez, Arti Ishak, Kenneth D. Johnson, Isabel Quintero, Frank Sawa, Wayne Maugans, Marshall Jones, Charles C. Bales, Will Dunne, Dean Corrin, Ahmad Abdul Razak, Raelle Myrick-Hodges Tekki Lomnicki, Tara Mallen, Douglas Post, Parvuna Sulaiman, Adam Flores, Maritza Motta Gonzalez, Charles Winning, Jaime Zayas, Ethan Joel Isaac, Joe Schermoly, Joanna Iwanicka, Rachel Sypniewski, Barry Bennett, Cat Wilson, Jessica Mondres, Andres Enriquez, Ali Goodman, Malcolm Callan, Deanna Jent, Scott Wilson, Leni Cohen, Steve Gibons, Wendy Clarendon, Donald E. Claxon, Chris Till, Jerry Proffit, Timothy Ortmann, Ahlam Al-jebory, and the many Iraqi refugees who shared their stories.

Yasmina's Necklace

CHARACTERS

ABDUL "SAM" SAMEE: Early 30s, half Iraqi/half Puerto Rican Muslim. "Samee" is pronounced "Samee-ah."

ALI: Iraqi immigrant, Sam's father. He speaks with a Middle Eastern accent. Late 40s or early 50s.

SARA: Puerto Rican Muslim, Sam's mother. She is in her late 40s.

YASMINA: Iraqi refugee in her 30s. Near and dear ones call her Yasu. She wears a headscarf and speaks with a Middle Eastern accent.

MUSA: Yasmina's father. He is an Iraqi refugee, new to Chicago. Speaks with a Middle Eastern accent. In his 50s.

IMAM KAREEM: The religious leader of the mosque. African American. In his late 40s or early 50s.

AMIR: Iraqi man in his 30s. He speaks with a Middle Eastern accent.

MAN: To be played by the actor playing Ali.

OFFICER: To be played by the actor playing Imam Kareem.

PRODUCTION NOTE

The necklace should be a stone with "Iraq" engraved on it.

It is important that the actor playing Yasmina does not sob through the final scenes of the play. She must find the balance of her pain and strength. Please, no melodrama.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

There are almost 65 million refugees and internally displaced people worldwide, who were forced to leave their homes because of violence. That's one in every 122 people. The number of refugees and internally displaced people has reached its highest point since World War II.

I write plays because I'm distressed about the world we live in. With all our technological advances, we still live in a world where there is too much violence, dehumanization and ugliness. I spent some time talking to Chicago-based Iraqi refugees. It was during those conversations that I felt a strong need to write a play that examines the human cost of war.

My friend saw a woman in a grocery store, a cashier, wearing a necklace. The pendant was in the shape of Iraq, and inscribed on the pendant was "IRAQ." This was at a time when our country was deep into the war with Iraq, and when I would ask refugees where they are from, they would whisper "Iraq." And yet, here was this woman, with her necklace, and that's how Yasmina was born.

Around this time, I was thinking of writing about my best friend. She is a Latina Muslim who wears the veil and is married to an Arab. My friend and her husband are a very funny couple who don't have kids. I began to wonder: if they had a son in this post 9/11 world, who would he be? I asked this question at a time when many Muslim men, due to anti-Muslim bias, were changing their names, and that's how Sam was born.

Then I wondered, what if Sam meets Yasmina ...

Welcome to *Yasmina's Necklace*.

Yasmina's Necklace

ACT I

Scene 1

AT RISE: *ABDUL "SAM" SAMEE, ALI and SARA are having a discussion in ALI and SARA's living room.*

ALI. *Sam!*

SARA. You changed your name to *Sam!*

SAM. Mom, it's no big deal.

SARA. No big deal! Your father named you! Does that mean nothing to you? *Malcriado!*

ALI. If the name I gave him disgusts him, then change it. What do I care?

SAM. *Baba* listen—

ALI. I named you after my father! The most important person in my life!

SAM. I know but I *had* to change my name. You don't know the racism of the corporate world.

ALI. Of course I do!

SAM. I was just trying to get my foot in the door, but with a name like Abdul Samee Marcario Lopez Hassan, it's really difficult, you know?

ALI. Do you think you're the only one whose name gives them trouble?

SARA. Osama from down the street. Did he change his name?

SAM. No, but he // always complains about the way people treat him.

ALI. // What about brother Saddam? Do you think his life is easy with a name like Saddam?

SARA. They give him hell at the airport. Hell!

SAM. I'm sure they do, that's why he should *change his name*.

ALI. I should have cut you off the day I found out you ran off to Vegas and married Tracy!

SAM. Why can't you just get over it!

ALI. Get over it?

SARA. Our one and only child gets married, and we are not invited!

ALI. My God, it was as if you picked up your shoes and threw them at me.

SAM. I said I was sorry!

SARA. You humiliated us in front of the entire Muslim community!

ALI. Everybody knew about the secret wedding except me, even Jamal knew before me, and he found out on Snapchat!

SARA. Everyone at the mosque was laughing behind my back.

SAM. No they weren't. *Nobody cares!*

SARA. People care, trust me, they care.

SAM. Well I'm divorced now, so, you're prayers were answered.

ALI. We never wanted a divorce for you.

SARA. That's right. I always tried to be nice to Tracy, but she was very cold to me.

SAM. Mom, you were never nice to her.

ALI. Look, we have to move on. Imam Kareem called me today.

SAM. I don't wanna know.

ALI. Let me finish! He wants you to meet a lovely girl from Baghdad.

SAM. Sorry. But I'm not interested.

SARA. Her father is a dentist and the imam said they are very educated and lovely people.

ALI. It's time to forget Tracy and move on.

SAM. Are you people crazy? My divorce has just been finalized!

ALI. Perfect! Your divorce has been finalized.

ALI & SARA. Perfect!

ALI. Now is the time to meet new people!

SAM. But I'm not ready!

ALI. Of course you are.

SAM. No, I'm not! One day I have depression, the next day I have anxiety, I'm a mess. I'm on four different medications! Don't you have any compassion for me?

ALI. *Habibi!* Of course we do.

SARA. *Papi*, we love you!

ALI. That's why we want you to meet this young lady and move on.

SAM. But I'm not ready to move on.

ALI. Listen to me. You had a love marriage, and it didn't work out. All I am saying is try—try our way of doing things. It can't hurt to try. Please my son, just meet her.

SAM. But I'm not over Tracy.

SARA. Forget about her and trust your parents!

ALI. We know what's best for you.

SAM. No you don't, you just wanna control my life!

SARA. You will speak to your father with respect!

SAM. I'm sick of this. I was born in the wrong family. Wrong name, wrong culture, wrong everything! You guys have made my life hell!

ALI. You think changing your name will bring you peace, it won't. You must know Allah—

SAM (*to himself*). Oh my God—

ALI. And to know Allah, you must know yourself.

SAM. I know who I am.

ALI. No, you don't. You don't even know your name.

SAM. MY NAME IS SAM! S-A-M, SAM! I don't want to meet this woman, and *I'm not getting married!*

ALI (*furious*). You humiliated your parents! And now you can't do one thing for us. You're selfish!

SARA. Sweetheart calm down. Have you forgotten that your father has a heart condition? Look what you're doing to him. He's not asking you to marry her. Just to meet her. Is that so hard?

ALI & SARA. JUST MEET HER!

Scene 2

(*MUSA cleans with a handheld vacuum.*)

YASMINA. Why did you have to invite this idiot to our house?

MUSA. Stop it. You agreed to meet him.

YASMINA. I don't remember agreeing to anything.

MUSA. Yasmina you did. I woke you up and you said yes.

YASMINA. I was half asleep!

MUSA. It will do you good to have some company over. Always home, always painting, it's not healthy.

YASMINA. I like to be alone, what's wrong with that?

MUSA. It's not healthy. Look, there is a time and place for everything, and now is the time to think about marriage.

YASMINA. I'm not the marrying type.

MUSA. Every woman is the marrying type! All I ask is that you meet him. If you don't like him, fine, that will be the end of it.

YASMINA. It's a waste of time.

MUSA. No Yasu, seeking marriage is never a waste of time.

It's an act of worship. Allah took Adam's rib and created Eve. Alone, man is incomplete, he needs the woman to make him whole. Maybe you're his missing rib.

YASMINA. I'm not anyone's rib!

MUSA. For Allah's sake, stop contradicting me!

YASMINA. *Baba*, I just don't have time for marriage, there is so much work to be done. My friend Janet, the social worker, she wants to help me start an organization that will help refugees, help their children.

MUSA. Rubbish! You don't have time for all that. The last thing I need is for you to get into some kind of trouble again. You're a magnet for trouble. Yasu, please, it's time to settle down.

YASMINA. People are suffering!

MUSA. So what! People suffer in this world. There's nothing we can do to stop it!

YASMINA. I don't believe that.

MUSA. You're thirty-four years old! If you wait any longer nobody will marry you!

YASMINA. If I get married, who will take care of you?

MUSA. I can take care of myself.

YASMINA. But you don't have a job.

MUSA. That's not my fault!

YASMINA. *Baba*, I'm not blaming you.

MUSA. No dental office will hire me. They think my education is worthless. Nobody will hire me! The way they look at me, as if I'm some dirty terrorist.

YASMINA. It's OK, *Baba*.

MUSA. In Iraq, I was a professional. People respected me.

I was the best dentist in our neighborhood and everybody knew it!

YASMINA. Don't get all worked up.

MUSA. The best families in Baghdad wanted you for their sons. But look at us now. Refugees. Truth be told, the best families in Chicago would never consider you.

YASMINA. So why are they interested?

MUSA. Well, because their son's reputation has been tarnished.

YASMINA. Tarnished?

MUSA. He's divorced. Now they can't be so fussy.

YASMINA. So you are saying, because I'm a refugee, I have to marry a loser?

MUSA. Yasu! God forbid. He's divorced, that's all. We all make mistakes. Anyway, I asked Imam Kareem about him, and overall the imam said he's loyal, *and*, he has very nice teeth.

YASMINA. You're crazy!

MUSA. Trust me, Yasu. A man who never neglects his gums, will never neglect his wife. Look, It's a blessing that this family is considering you. If this boy likes you—

YASMINA. He won't like me!

MUSA. Why wouldn't he like my beautiful Yasmina?

YASMINA. Because I'm not normal.

MUSA. Don't say that!

YASMINA. Do you think anyone in Iraq is normal?

MUSA. We are resilient people, Yasmina. You survived.

YASMINA. Yes, I survived. I survived sanctions, I survived war. I survived. But I'm not normal.

MUSA. Why are you being so negative? Today is a happy day! (*He stops and stares at her.*) Let me look at you. A black hijab. Are you going to a funeral?

YASMINA (*she touches her veil*). What's wrong with black?

MUSA. Everything. It's so depressing. Please change it, wear pink, or something with flowers.

YASMINA. I hate pink. Besides, black represents my personality.

MUSA. Yasu, I'm warning you.

(There is a knock on the door.)

MUSA. They are here! Quickly, go change your hijab.

YASMINA. No! I'm not changing it.

MUSA. For Allah's sake, you are making me crazy! I'm opening the door. Sit next to his mother. Don't be too quiet, but don't talk too much either. And for Allah's sake, smile, and look happy.

YASMINA. How can I be happy? When my father wants me to marry a loser. *(She exits.)*

(MUSA opens the door. ALI, SARA and SAM enter.)

ALI & SARA. *Salaam Alaykum!* [Peace be upon you.]

(MUSA and ALI hug.)

MUSA. *Wa alaykum Salaam!* [And upon you be peace.] Come inside! Please come in. Welcome! Welcome!

ALI. So good to meet you my friend! This is my wife, Sara.

MUSA. How lovely to meet you. Welcome!

SARA. Thank you so much.

ALI. And this is my son Abdul Samee.

MUSA. Welcome young man, welcome.

SAM. This is for you. *(He hands MUSA a small bonsai tree.)*

MUSA. Oh, it's a little tree. *Shukran.*

SAM. *Afwan.* [You're welcome.]

(*MUSA places the tree on the coffee table.*)

SARA. Where is your daughter? What's her name again?

MUSA. Yasmina. Let me go get her. Please sit down and feel at home. (*He exits.*)

SARA (*whispers*). *Ay, dios mio!* How can they live here? My God look at the ugly paintings.

SAM. They're so sad.

SARA. I know, right? *Sad, ugly* paintings!

SAM. No, I mean, they're sad, in a beautiful way.

ALI. For Allah's sake, have mercy, they have escaped from war.

SARA. Huh? What did you say?

ALI. Nothing.

SARA. You said, "escaped from war." You mean, refugees?

ALI. Don't start, this is why I didn't tell you—

SARA. Refugees? Well, this is just great. You lied to me.

ALI. I never lied.

SARA. Yes you did. Both you and Imam Kareem lied to me. He can't marry a refugee. What will people think? No, I can't allow it.

SAM. Then let's leave now before they come back!

ALI. Those refugees are my people!

SARA. I feel badly for them, but this is marriage, and I have standards! My son will marry into a good family.

ALI. Sorry to burst your bubble, but none of the good families want anything to do with your *divorced* son!

SAM. There he goes again, always throwing it in my face!

SARA. Quiet! Here they come.

(*Enter MUSA and YASMINA.*)

MUSA. Here is Yasmina.

ALI, SARA & SAM. *Salaamu Alaykum.*

YASMINA. *Wa alaykum Salaam.*

MUSA. Yasu, this is Ali, and his lovely wife, Sara.

SARA. She's so sweet.

MUSA. And this is Abdul Samee.

SAM. Nice to meet you.

YASMINA. Yes, nice to meet you too.

SARA. Is Imam Kareem here yet?

MUSA. No, he has not arrived yet.

ALI. He should be here soon.

MUSA. Yasmina, why don't you bring the tea?

YASMINA. Yes, *Baba.* (*She exits to the kitchen.*)

SARA. She's beautiful *Masha allah.*

MUSA. Let me go help her. Please relax, feel at home. (*He exits to the kitchen.*)

SAM (*whispers*). This is so embarrassing. Get me out of here!

ALI (*whispers*). It's too late for that! You agreed to meet her, now be quiet and act charming.

SAM (*whispers*). I can't believe I let you guys get me into this. After twenty minutes, we're leaving!

SARA (*whispers*). I agree. I don't see a match.

ALI (*whispers*). Money! That's all she cares about.

SAM. I can't marry a girl from Iraq, no offense, but they have a completely different mentality, it would never work. I'm an American, and I need to marry an American.

ALI. Hah! May I remind you that your ex-wife was American? And that ended in divorce.

SAM. I'm not having an arranged marriage!

SARA. Why not?

SAM. Because it's backwards!

ALI. That's funny coming from a divorced man! If you marry a nice Muslim girl, you will restore this family's dignity.

SAM. Stop trying to control my life. If I marry again, it will be for love.

ALI. Real love comes after marriage. Not before.

SAM. This is so embarrassing!

SARA. Shhhhh! Here they come.

(Enter MUSA and YASMINA. YASMINA brings in a tray with mint tea.)

SARA. Brother Musa, where on earth did you get these crazy paintings?

MUSA. Yasmina painted them. She's an artist.

SARA. Oh, interesting.

SAM *(to YASMINA)*. Really? You painted them?

YASMINA. Yes, I did.

SAM. They're very good.

YASMINA. Thank you.

MUSA. So tell me Abdul Samee, what kind of work do you do?

SAM. Actually, I go by the name Sam.

MUSA. Sam?

ALI. At work they call him that, but his name is Abdul Samee.

SAM. No, my name is Sam. I changed it.

ALI *(embarrassed)*. For his career. The racism in the corporate world, it's very difficult for our kids.

MUSA *(to SAM)*. You are Arab! You should be proud.

SAM. Half.

MUSA. Half is still great. Do you know what I always say about being Arab? Tell them, Yasu.