



Mohammad (Nazareth, Muslim)

I never got to finish high school. I was in a car accident about a year ago and injured my head and my arms. When I tried returning to school, everybody mocked me and called me names. I became depressed and could not complete my final exams.

Half a year ago, I went to buy new shoes and was caught up in a demonstration against Israel's war in Gaza. Policemen arrested me claiming I threw stones at them. How could I have thrown stones at them? My arms are too weak because of the injury. I was put in jail where the guards harassed me every day. They would wake us up each morning by kicking us. The Jews were allowed to pray however they wanted to, yet the Muslims' practices were constantly disrespected.

After a month in jail, I was released and was put under house detention. They have no evidence against me, but the trial goes on and on. I wear an electronic leg bracelet and am allowed to leave the house only on Mondays and Thursdays, when I can go to my brother's shop in the city. I usually use this time to hang out with my friends in the neighborhood.



Angham (Kafr Qasem, Muslim)

My father is a high school principle and my mother is an Arab language teacher. Education was always very important in our house. I love to study and hope to do well in the upcoming Israeli SAT exam so I can study in the university. Many Arabs see the exam as discriminatory and choose to study in Jordan instead. I hope to be accepted to physiotherapy studies and make enough money to be able to donate to charity for the construction of a school or a mosque.

I don't like to watch modern music channels and enjoy only religious programs with preachers explaining the knowledge embodied in the Koran combining faith and studies. The Islam is attacked these days all over the world. The attacks come even from Muslims that try to imitate western lifestyle. Muslim women find it especially hard given the common negative reactions to the hijab (traditional head scarf). Our religion is beautiful and encourages studies, having an order in life, and earning a place in heaven.

I've recently gotten engaged and hope to get married in the upcoming summer. This is my first relationship with a man of course, as it is improper for a Muslim woman to meet with a man before they are engaged. I'm very excited and confused by my emotions as I am finally allowed to fall in love.





Anat (Sheikh Danun, Muslim)

I was named after a Jewish municipal worker from Nahariya that my father used to work for as a county-employed gardener. During high school I joined the "Bereshit LaShalom" (Genesis for Peace), a multicultural theater company, and traveled with them to Europe to participate in performances promoting peace. This experience was very meaningful for me and I wanted to do more things with Jews and try to understand them further.

After graduating from high school, I chose to volunteer for national service for a period of one year. I joined a collective of 18-year-old Arabs and Jews in northern Israel which supported the local education system in villages' schools. This was an extremely rewarding experience. I feel I learned something greater than life. It helps me understand my life and the place I'm living in.



Mohammad (Mu'awiya, Muslim)

My father and uncles work in construction and my mother is a housewife. I am an only child. My parents are extremely generous and give me everything I need, though sometimes I feel they are overprotective. They made it possible for me to travel to various Arab countries including an unforgettable visit to Mecca six years ago, which was very important for me as a Muslim.

I used to work in a boutique in Umm Al-Fahm and am now working at McDonalds. There aren't many options to go out to around here - only restaurants and hookah places. I prefer to go out with my friends to dance clubs in Jewish cities which are much more exciting.

I have lived by myself since I was 14 in this apartment above my parents' house. This house looks nicer and can help me find a better wife. My parents don't know, but I have a secret girlfriend. We talk over the phone every day. We have to be very discrete since her parents forbid us to be in touch before getting engaged. We must respect their will, but cannot deny our feelings. Yesterday she had to get off the phone very suddenly. I haven't heard from her today and am worried somebody might have found out about us.





Ehab (Biane, Muslim)

I have been playing soccer for as long as I can remember. This is the most important thing in my life. I used to play for HaPoel Haifa in the 2nd Israeli league. A few months ago, I was transferred to HaPoel Biane, my village's team. We are in the 4th league, so the level of the game isn't as high as I am used to. With hardly any available funds we are forced to make the best of our very basic facilities.

Although this soccer club represents an Arab village, quite a few players on the team are Jewish. I am happy the Jews have to serve in the military, which creates openings on the team. All I can do is continue to play my best and hope I will be able to return to HaPoel Haifa, now playing in the Israeli major league.