

## My Muslim Husband



It's been 12 years since I married my Muslim husband and the road has truly been long and winding, but happy. At the time we got married I was Catholic and had no intention of converting to Islam.

My new husband was very understanding and only asked that I at least try to read an English translation of the Quran from time to time. I agreed. We soon moved to Kuwait as the U.S. economy was so weak at that time and it was impossible to earn a good living.

The minute I stepped off the plane I was thrust into a whole new world that was full of Islam, Muslims, cultural traditions and a whole new way of thinking. To say that I was shaken to my very core, in blind terror, is an understatement. All I wanted to do was to jump right back on that plane and fly away from this strange new World.

Yet through it all, my Muslim husband was by my side every step of the way. When I found that his mother's cooking was too spicy, he made sure that other food choices were available, including American gourmet items like McDonald's and Pizza Hut.

When I was homesick for my family in the US, he stayed up with me all night consoling me and offering to take me "home". Through every happy moment, every illness and on the days when I was so sad I could barely summon a smile, my Muslim husband has been right there holding my hand.

My husband turned into my teacher as he taught me all about Islam, fasting and the Islamic prayer.

He is my best friend, confidant, and the father of my children. He equally shares in changing dirty diapers, spill patrol and nipping temper tantrums in the bud. Nothing fazes him, not even kids throwing up on his brand new shirt or his having to wash the dishes when I am too tired to move.

It's unfortunate that Muslim husbands, especially, get such a bad rap in the Western media. Quite often Muslim husbands are portrayed as control freaks who force their wives to wear "Islamic garb".

The reality is that both Muslim husbands and wives often choose to follow an Islamic code of dress because it is ordained in the Quran and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad. It is not an issue of force or a war of wills.

God Almighty says in the Quran what means:

**"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: That will make for greater purity for them: And God is well acquainted with all that they do. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty. That they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof." (Quran 24:30)**

For me, personally, I came to Kuwait wearing a t-shirt and blue jeans. I wore what I choose and neither my Muslim husband nor his Muslim family said anything to me.

However, my husband did continue to ask me to read the Quran. His gentle, and sometimes nagging, reminders paid off. I finally started reading the Quran and my hunger for more and more Islamic knowledge grew.

I searched and scoured until I found the truth I had always been looking for within the pages of the Quran. I made the decision to become a Muslim and I went shopping for my first *hijab* all by myself.

My husband turned into my teacher as he taught me all about Islam, fasting and the Islamic prayer. When I made mistakes or faltered, he did not scold me but increased his own efforts in teaching me everything properly.

His patience was remarkable as my own grew thin. I wanted to know a lot about Islam and it was just not something that happened overnight. But it did happen.

Islam has brought a sense of calm to my very being and a serene atmosphere to my home as well as my marriage. Since I became a Muslim I have noticed that I am less stressed or worried about the future.

I have a lot more patience and do not get as flustered as I used to with the little nuances of daily living. Through the Quran and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad I have learned what this life really is all about and strive every day to engage in good deeds that will open the door to the next World to come.

Sumayyah Meehan reverted to Islam almost 11 years ago. She is a Waynesburg College graduate with a BA in criminal justice. She is working on an Islamic children's book. She resides in Kuwait with her husband and three children.