

Skin Deep Presents Making Meaning

Episode 1 - Not All Who Obey Are Faithful

lisa minerva luxx

lisa minerva luxx 00:00

Faith to me is grounded. Faith is ground up, whereas hope is in the head. It's an idea. It's imagination. I'm not saying that we don't need to imagine, but it's something that's coming from *beyond* us. Whereas faith comes from *within* us, and so faith for me is more grounding, and hope is heady. You know, faith is embodied, and hope remains an idea. I wouldn't go as far as to say theory, because I don't think hope is rigorous enough for that. I think it can be a north star. I think it can be a guiding light. At the end of the day, you can look at your north star, but you've still got to use your body to walk in the direction it's telling you you need to go towards the manger.

Isabella Kajiwara 00:43

Is anything sacred anymore? What does it mean to have faith in our times? When does it turn into obedience or complicity? Welcome to Making Meaning, a Skin Deep podcast that emerged from our editorial season on faith. This is a series for people of all faiths and none to think creatively and critically about how it shows up in how we produce culture, how we make meaning of our times and how we build our movements. Skin Deep is a grassroots organization which makes culture in service of racial justice and liberation. Working across editorial and events, we produce and facilitate creative work that informs, motivates and nourishes people in the fight against racial capitalism. We work collectively to weave an alternative cultural ecosystem that is able to generate the kinds of stories, images and sounds that can show us the way to liberation and bring us closer to it. Who gets to lose faith, and who doesn't? Can refusal be an act of faith? This conversation today will explore sacrifice not simply as loss, but as a practice of choosing what deserves our loyalty. Through poetry, political organizing, and cultural resistance, we'll consider how revolutionary disobedience, refusal and moral clarity can become acts of faith in themselves. I'm here with lisa minerva luxx- writer, poet, organizer and essayist of British Syrian heritage, author of **Fetch Your Mother's Heart** published by Outspoken Press in 2021, and PhD researcher on militant poetics at the University of Manchester. They are also a long-time transnational community organizer and coordinator of the Filton 25 Defense Committee, which supports 25 Palestine action activists arrested for breaking into Israeli weapons manufacturer Elbit Systems site in Filton, Bristol, in August 2024, in the hopes of opposing British complicity in the war on Gaza. So, opening it up today, I would love luxx for you to explain to us. You know, when you hear the word sacrifice, what it means to you and how it resonates in this moment.

lisa minerva luxx 02:39

Sacrifice for me, I think, is rooted very much in our own value system. I think that what we each experience as sacrifice are very different things. Yesterday, Umer Khalid, who is a political prisoner in England, was released from hospital after being in there for quite some time now, following a hunger strike that he'd taken. And the reason that he's in prison is because he had taken direct action before, and he was accused of taking direct action against RAF Brize Norton. So I give that background because it's a series of sacrifices that led him to be at the place he was yesterday when he released a statement addressing sacrifice, and I thought it was one of the best definitions that I've seen, and it was around the idea of sacrifices and investment. You know, our time, our money, even our bodies, they're not ours to have in the first place. And to make sacrifice from any of those things, in the Islamic context as well, is to put investment into the hereafter, put investment into the afterlife, which is something that I

believe in. It is a framework with which I move. But he also spoke about how he's now lost the use of his legs completely due to his hunger strike, and how making that sacrifice that he has made in defiance against Britain's complicity in the Zionist entity, hopefully for him as he sees it, means that there is some child out there in Palestine, inshallah, who is able to run and play with the legs that Umer can't have anymore, and I think this really nailed it for me in terms of how I view sacrifice as well. It's almost like a balancing act, and if I have plenty of something or a package I'm holding - I'm holding many, many, many things in *my* hands, and *your* hands are somewhat empty. Then it's not just for me to hold these things for my own good. It's actually my own burden to hold all of these things too, and it is about that distribution as well. It's almost an economic system of its own, like above and beyond the economy as we know it, right?

Isabella Kajiwarra 05:11

Yeah

lisa minerva luxx 05:11

Like a spiritual economy, maybe

Isabella Kajiwarra 05:15

That's such an interesting way of like viewing it. And I wonder how did you like how did you arrive there? Do you feel like your understanding of sacrifice has changed over time. Like what what's influenced it?

lisa minerva luxx 05:26

I guess it has, but I think it's just come from embodied movement work. And when I say embodied, I didn't read it in theory. I think I lived this a series of through a series of movements, and some of that included the Lebanese revolution and how that took over Beirut. While I was living there, I learned a lot about sacrifice in that time. And following that, after the Beirut blast, I was operating in mutual aid networks transnationally, but on the ground in Lebanon and across Syria as well, and it just became the way that we moved together. After the Beirut blast, there was no government there to to rebuild the city. There was no government. There was no, you know, Liam Mulani from the Filton 25 caused this psychological state of always believing the adults are going to come and fix things. There were no adults coming to fix anything after the Beirut blast. Yeah. So the people had to. It was very anarchic, actually. It was anarchy in practice in a way. The people had to figure out governance themselves and ensure that everybody had what they needed. And from that came sacrifice of our time, of our well-being, of our funds, of our lives, everything went on pause for us to to rebuild as as equally as we could, which is obviously not impossible. But I'm not saying that you know we made a utopia in any stretch of the imagination, but we were forced to reckon with what we were willing to give away, and we had to. I think all of that taught me a lot about, without me even realizing it, about how to move through the world. I think sacrifice as a value system is very much about the way that I move through the world and the decisions that I make every day and what the decision is for, you know.

Isabella Kajiwarra 07:21

yeah, and on that, on decisions, right? Like, over over the weekend, we we had our skin deep faith gathering, communes on faith, and one of the speakers there, Dr. Aditi Jaganathan, she she she talked about faith not just as something we devote ourselves to, but also like asking ourselves like what it is that we resist and what we refuse to accept, and it made me think about you know sacrifice also beyond being about like loss. It's also like choosing what deserves our loyalty in these times, and I'm wondering how that resonates with you and like yeah how how that lands in this moment and in relation to what you were just saying as well.

lisa minerva luxx 08:02

Yeah, I think that's a great way of putting it. What deserves our loyalty? I see people. I don't know many of them, but I do see people who work in corporate jobs and how much sacrifice they are actually making of their well-being to work in these nine-to-five Jobs to give the permission of their days and their lives over to some conglomerate business, because that is what they have been told is valuable: is to have a certain job, to have a pension plan, to have a mortgage, and you see that. And I'm not loyal to any hierarchy in that way, and have never been, have have have never experienced that, and having like reckonings with my own kind of work life, or even working in academia, because of the amount that I organize, it always impacts my work. It impacts, you know, my my my academic ability to progress. It impacts my relationships. All it impacts all of it, and so almost every week I have to sit with myself and and ask myself where my loyalties lie and how I'm going to navigate that week in regards to what I find to be the most important thing that I can do with my humble bit of life here on this on on this in this dunya, and so it is. It always comes back to loyalty, and it'll be no surprise that I always end up choosing the organizing again and again because I just find that that is my loyalty to other people, and my commitment to other people, and liberation in in that.

Isabella Kajiwarra 09:47

Yeah, and I feel like that's at the heart of so many, so many people's like involvement in movements too. People forget it's like it's not just commitment to struggle, but it's to to the people, right? Because they're one and the same, right? Especially.

lisa minerva luxx 10:00

When you have this level of repression that we're seeing,

Isabella Kajiwarra 10:01

yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 10:02

like if you if you're gonna commit to the movement, you have to commit to the people around you.

Isabella Kajiwarra 10:05

yeah.

lisa minerva luxx 10:06

Like you have to be ride or dies,

Isabella Kajiwarra 10:07

yeah.

lisa minerva luxx 10:08

Otherwise, like it takes one person who isn't committed to each other who can bring down a whole movement. Takes one person to be the snitch. Why? Because they didn't have that commitment. They were committed to something else. They were committed to their liberation, and we see it, right?

Isabella Kajiwarra 10:22

I know that like you have your involvement in various like cultural production, and also like there's the Poets Liberation Front sessions. I wonder if there's like a bit of room to talk about that, how that's helped people build some of that conviction.

lisa minerva luxx 10:36

Yeah, so Poets Liberation Front was an eight-part salon that I started in April 2025, and essentially since the start of this iteration of the genocide on Gazans, I felt I couldn't write. I couldn't write anything, and I had to reckon with like what it meant to be a poet in these times, because it's not that I, it's not that I devalued writing, it's not that I devalue literature at all, and and and I think that there have been some really important books and writers and theorists and short story writers, novelists, poets over history that have shaped the way that we still move through the world, and and they kind of like conduct it as if they are like orchestrating us still. So I know that it's important, but at the same time, I couldn't find it in me to prioritize it. Goes back to I was saying about asking myself each week where my loyalty lies.

Isabella Kajiwarra 11:35

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 11:36

and so while I was having this reckoning, I decided to start this literary salon, so it would have two to three poets as guests alongside myself. We would speak on a certain topic that felt most urgent to the time, and then the people in the room, who were like the participants as much as the attendees, we would all talk together about whatever it was that that came up, and the idea was to have people in that room who were poets, who were writers, and who were also organisers, so we could figure out collectively together how poetry can be functional for the movement. I'm interested in a practical poetics. How does poetry act in the world in a way that can conduct the body politic. How does poetry act in a world that can materialize in revolutionary ways? Whether it is seeing poems on placards, yep, you see that, and you see that that kind of gives people a lot of energy, or it can form as as chance, or it can simply be something that folk keep in their back pocket and they share on the tough days with their friends. But how is it materially existing in the world? What is it doing upon the world? So we ran this eight-part series with poets, historians, and political former political prisoners, and I think one thing that then came out of all of the conversations that were had in those rooms was people left feeling really bolstered by the fact that, in the complex conversations, not in the one-line statements on Instagram, but in the complexity of the conversations, that we did find alignment, and we all found that we had something to share and participate together in building a value system of that day, or like a view or a take on a topic, and passed it out together as a community. And so people often would say that they left feeling more sure Of themselves, and and often there'd be low a lot a lot to digest because you could imagine a few hours of poets and organizers in the room is a lot of a lot of like really like meaty conversation is had

Isabella Kajiwarra 13:53

yeah

lisa minerva luxx 13:53

but it definitely felt like it powered it powered a corner a small subset of the movement in a way that allowed us to truly find a common ground within the nuance, or to at least understand the frictions in the nuance, but be able to pass them out in like a held space that was guided by poets. In the way that, in where I come from, poets guide the political discourse. They always have guided the political discourse, so it's putting the poet back in that position, so that they can kind of provide that role for people, and and always bring it back to the poetry. So the poetry leads, if you like.

Isabella Kajiwarra 14:33

Yeah, like I guess it's like the the poet taking responsibility for that guiding and like that shepherding almost action,

lisa minerva luxx 14:40

and the poet taking responsibility for their language that they're using as well, right?

Isabella Kajiwaru 14:44

Yeah, because it creates the world. It creates you know the realm of possibility and you know that that strength as well. But yeah, I mean, you mentioned that some of the people that would come to this to these salons and also who have like taken part in it. Are political prisoners, and I mean, I wanted to speak a little bit about direct action. But before that, I think I'm quite conscious that there's a lot of listeners who might not actually know what direct action means and what distinguishes it from other forms of politics. So before we dive into that, would you be able to kind of untangle that for people and yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 15:22

so there is a lot of confusion about direct action because many many people mix it up with civil disobedience. So civil disobedience is to disrupt a population. For example, it's people who like stop the trains running, the commuter trains running. It's people who block the high roads, the highways, so that they can demand the attention of decision makers and engage with decision makers, so that they can clog up the justice system. This is a lot of extinction rebellion was based upon a lot of extinction rebellion. Not all of it was based upon civil disobedience.

Isabella Kajiwaru 16:10

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 16:11

And direct action is different. Direct action is going to the source. Direct action isn't trying to engage the decision maker. Direct action is you deciding you are a decision maker. So David Graeber, the anarchist anthropologist, said protest is begging the powers that be to dig a well, and direct action is digging the well and daring them to stop you. So to put it in the context of the movements that I've been part of, protest is begging the powers that be to stop the armed flow to the Zionist entity. Direct action is stopping the flow of weapons to the Zionist entity and daring them to stop you. And and that's what the difference is.

lisa minerva luxx 17:00

So direct action has consistently been something that I have seen over years and years in this movement of being a modality that has empowered people to understand that they are a very active part of the political landscape around them, and to activate themselves into doing something about the world in which they would like to build and destroy.

Isabella Kajiwaru 17:20

Yeah, I mean it's it's so important, especially in these times when apathy feels like a really strong current running through things. And yeah, one of your speeches outside the Old Bailey for the Brys Norton Six and Key Sight Three, you said direct action is acting as if you're already free. And later, I believe you asked the crowd like, what if our friends inside are more free than all of us out here, would you be able to unpack that just a bit for listeners and and help us understand how you know with our understanding of what direct action is, how that then relates to to faith.

lisa minerva luxx 17:52

Direct action is acting as if you are already free. By and large, it is ungovernability. It is choosing to choosing to make decisions based upon the the worldview in which you have. So I'll work it backwards as well. Jordan Devlin, who was who was one of the Filton 25, but he's been acquitted. Alhamdulillah,

but he said, the best sleep he ever had in his life was the first night he was sent to prison. He said he slept like a baby. I'm not going to say everybody had that experience, but he slept like a baby that night because he thought I've done something, I've done what was required of me, I've done what was asked of me, and that's a load off my shoulders. Not that challas. That's enough, and you should just move on with your life. Of course not. These are people who remain dedicated to to the movement and liberation movements, but rather that you know that you have really done the most, and part of that is the sacrifice, right? You know that you put something above and beyond yourself, and sacrifice is that reminder. It is, you know, whether you see it in a framework of religion that there is something bigger than you, within the idea of sacrifice and direct action, you acknowledge religion, religion or not, that there's something bigger than you that is more worthy than your job, than your continued finances, then your rent, then paying your bills on time, etc. etc. Then your laptops and your phones that the police are going to come and take from you, as we were just-I was just joking about before.

Isabella Kajiwaru 19:32

Yeah, the confiscated stickers.

lisa minerva luxx 19:34

All my confiscated stickers-they were attached to your laptop. Yeah. It's-it's accepting that all of those are immaterial because you have a value system that's so much bigger than them, and so in that way, I guess it does deeply relate to faith, direct action.

Isabella Kajiwaru 19:50

I wanted to ask you a bit about compromise and complicity, and like, what is the distinction between those two things? How do we know when compromise. Becomes complicity, and how can we stay aware of it and avoid it?

lisa minerva luxx 20:04

People will tell you. Yeah, that's what I found.

Isabella Kajiwaru 20:08

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 20:08

That we, as a movement, we do monitor each other quite well. And there's definitely been times in the campaigns that I've worked on where there's been a necessity strategically to be legible and to speak a certain language that brings people in, in order to then break back out of the position that we've been putting. A lot of that, for example, has followed the Palestine Action Prescription and the ban. Now, a lot of the rhetorics that has been put out there has actually compromised a lot of struggle around terrorism legislation.

Isabella Kajiwaru 20:45

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 20:45

And I don't back it all, to be honest. Though I do back the intention, right? But I think such reckonings have to happen for us to collectively learn what is the right way to do it, and for us to have the conversations to say to each other, for example, around this particular point I'm making. Post description, you see a lot of old people being arrested with the defend our jury's actions, and they're a remarkable group of of activists. But a lot of the rhetoric has been, how could this one be a terrorist? She's a white Christian lady. Yeah. You know. Yeah. And and this is so it reinforces the racialization of

the of the term of the term terrorist. But we had to get there for us to have the conversation with all those people to say, hey, you know that framework that you're putting out, super super dangerous. Yeah, but now you've got to that point, and you've engaged with terrorism laws for the first time. Probably now there's all these people who've been engaging with it for a long time. You know, Muslims for Social Justice being one, Cage International being another. All of them now are here in the room with you. So let's talk about how we move that forward. So I think it's constantly like a dance that we do. I think what I found is that trusted organizations and allied organisations or movements or groups will often speak up, and particularly if they do it one on one and they do it privately. Hey, why did you put this messaging out? Yeah, maybe maybe it actually was reinforcing something we're trying to fight. And you go, oh, okay, actually it was for this strategy. But you know what? I take heed of that. So now let's figure out how we pull it back. Because I almost see it as we we go to meet people in the middle, but then at certain point we have to know when to turn around and guide them back to our territory to reinforce our trenches. What I think is missing from this conversation is timelines and strategy. And so sometimes you have to start at a point of legibility, but have a plan. I'm not talking have like an abstract idea that you then want to radicalise people in the end. No, no, you have to have a month by month plan.

Isabella Kajiwarra 23:00

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 23:01

Of when the turning points are going to be. You know, this is what we're doing with some of the prisoner campaigns. I know exactly where we started, and we started there for a reason. And I know exactly how I can measure a window of tolerance being widened in 12 months. And I know exactly where I want the window to be next year at this time. And so I plan within those months ahead of how it is, I'm going to wedge that open slightly to protect people who are going to be taking the stand. And I think it's we have to. People throw around this idea of strategy quite a lot in in movement spaces, and I'm not sure that that a lot of people are really considering that. I think it almost has to be attached to something really, really material for people to materialize a strategy. If that if that makes sense, yeah. So knowing where it is that you need to be in a year's time, you can work back by 12 months, work out which messaging lines need to switch up in three months, how exactly you're going to shift them once you've got certain bigger individuals, for example, shining lights on certain movements, yeah, and then you can start to actually create an underground still, or like develop something that that is underground, but you've brought a heap more people into it. It's a really delicate balance, and and I think it's a massive risk of liberalizing things, and if you're not super vigilant, it will it will just get co-opted and liberalized. In the same way that I've I've said I've often said you know if right if they deprescribed Palestine Action as somebody who was formerly involved in organizing there, I don't know that I'd want it back. You popularised it too much now.

Isabella Kajiwarra 24:41

Yeah.

lisa minerva luxx 24:41

I don't know that I want that back. You've ruined it. Yeah, actually, I want to see that on t-shirts in the high street. Yeah, you know, like so. There is that negotiation we've been aware of when something has just been metabolized by by like by the nation and by the mainstream. So I so it is it is a very fine. Balance in doing that, but I do think like strategic timelines and understanding where you need to be in a year, what it is that you need to be there for, and and what kind of urgency is driving you to create certain messaging lines or certain activities for the next three months alongside the goals which you're trying to achieve.

Isabella Kajiwaru 25:18

Where does faith come in there too.

lisa minerva luxx 25:20

I think it's in two things. One being time, trusting that well, Allah is the god of time, so we have no right to say that something should happen in three months. It will happen when it happens, yeah. And we just have to put our work in and keep our hands busy towards that goal and hope that that Effort is accepted, but ultimately we have to understand that this is a long game, and that's not to say move slow. I come from very very urgent movements, and constantly are have an activated nervous system because of the urgency of the movements that I've like for for like over a decade, been been operating in, but at the same time, we have to trust that things are going somewhere. We're just not going to be able to see it until perhaps when we look back. Yeah. So being able to have that perseverance means accepting that there is a bigger plan. The second one in grounding, I think, is the reassurance. You know, the the faith based reassurance in in knowing that what you're doing is the right thing to be doing. Yeah, and is something that you trust yourself on. If what you're doing allows you to trust yourself more, then you're already becoming at you as a territory. You're already becoming like the strongest version of that piece of territory that you're trying to convert, that you're trying to change, that you're trying to win over. So I think that's also deeply important that sense of trust within ourselves when when we're doing this work, as much as that sense of trust in in the ones around us as well.

Isabella Kajiwaru 27:03

I really like how you bring it to the self as well. There, that trust in the self, because that's so much of, you know, liberatory work. It's the I think it's Grace Lee Boggs. Like she has a quote about like you know revolution. It starts from like within as much as you know she would be an advocate for looking at the material conditions, and of course, you know, looking at reality, but also connecting it to like what is the revolution, like what is the work that we have to do within to be able to, like you said, trust ourselves and like be, yeah, be able to have a good night's sleep, yeah, like like Jordan. But yeah, I mean, I wonder. Speaking of yeah, grounding and and commitment, is there anything right now that gives you hope? That gives you, I guess, yeah, that that glimmer to work towards.

lisa minerva luxx 27:54

Yeah, I don't really. I don't like the word hope.

Isabella Kajiwaru 27:57

Yeah, do you believe in it?

lisa minerva luxx 27:58

No, no, because I so I always say, and I've said this for for years and years and years, that I don't like the word hope, and I prefer the word faith because faith to me is grounded. Faith faith is ground is ground up, whereas hope is it's in it's in the head. It's an idea. It's an imagination. I'm not saying that we don't need to imagine, but it's something that's coming from beyond us, whereas faith comes from within us, and so faith for me is more grounding, and hope is heady. You know, faith is embodied, and and hope remains an idea, or or I wouldn't go as far as to say a theory, because I don't think hope is rigorous enough for that. Actually, I think it can be an off star. I think it can be a guiding light, but at the end of the day, you can look at your north star, but you still got to use your body to walk in the direction it's telling you you you need to go towards the manger.

Isabella Kajiwaru 28:50

Yeah, that's that's a really interesting distinction as well. Because as I was asking, I was like, I don't know if I even believe it. Yeah, yeah. But also, it's like you know, it's interesting in this time because when you look at the realm of electoral politics. Like this whole like hope, hope, hope thing has been like pushed massively, and it's like it's being put forward as like the I guess the antidote or like the the counter to like the hate emerging so strongly.

lisa minerva luxx 29:16

Yeah.

Isabella Kajiwaru 29:16

So I wonder like why do you think that's being chosen right now? That narrative of hope in the mainstream, rather than faith. Yeah.

lisa minerva luxx 29:24

So I think because as the electoral system goes, it's entirely based on disappointment.

Isabella Kajiwaru 29:32

Yeah.

lisa minerva luxx 29:32

It's as as as I think hope is. You can't be disappointed with faith because faith is is a permanent state of being. Faith, as I say, it's inside of us. You can you can feel that you that you lose faith at times, but when you recultivate it, it is recultivating. It is coming from within. Whereas hope, something that you move towards, you can always be disappointed in. How many politicians have seemed like they Are gonna change the world for us, and then we're just disappointed. We just end up disappointed again.

Isabella Kajiwaru 30:06

Coming back to the question of sacrifice and like the personal, what do you feel are the sacrifices that we need to make in this time to make sure that we are like the doulas or you know gatherers or like you know ushering in these new worlds, what is it that we have to let go of?

lisa minerva luxx 30:23

The main thing that we have to let go of, and this isn't the sacrifice, but it's the precondition to it, is the culture being terrified. We're actually all just shivering in terror. I say, I say, I say, we, the nation right now, the United Kingdom, is predicated upon the psychological warfare of terrifying people into complicity. The terrorism laws that they're rolling out, and I'm not just talking about in terms of the prescription of direct action groups. I'm talking about they are expanding terrorism powers consistently, yeah, and and and have been doing ever since the the invention of them, and they're working exactly as they're meant to, which is to just keep chipping away at people's rights so that they can't have agency or don't feel that they have agency to be dissidents of their citizenship, and so first and foremost comes what it is that they are threatening to take away from you, and then starting to actually think about how much that is of value to you and what is of greater value. There's something about like solidarity as well, I think, and the ideas of allyship versus like we have this word in Arabic, talaham, and talahan is like to be like one flesh, and it's used sometimes In Palestine, for movements there, in terms of we are we are of one body, right? Whereas allyship I see is like you're over there, but like I back you from over here. Yeah, yeah. You know, and so it becomes like a measurement.

Isabella Kajiwaru 32:16

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 32:16

A measurement of like how close are you willing to get to the one bodiness? Now, no, you know, with the number of the political prisoners that I that I work with, the way they're thinking is us being in prison can't be the end of the story. Can't be just get us out of prison.

lisa minerva luxx 32:36

The story has to be now we're in prison. What can we do from here? Yeah. What can we do with here to keep abolishing all of these like mechanisms of the law and policy in prisons that are keeping loads of other people down? You know, and and I think it's it's that recognition of movements will always keep moving, but we have to be willing to do that. And to keep moving, we have to be willing to shake things off constantly.

Isabella Kajiwaru 33:01

Yeah.

lisa minerva luxx 33:01

So they have got to the point where they have sacrificed their liberation, their you know their jobs, their so many their health, their ability to walk on their own two legs. They sacrifice so much, and they're still thinking all of them, what next? What can I do now from this position? And I think that is really empowering. Like being able to measure, you know, what sacrifice you're willing to make between either those whom it is that you stand in solidarity with, or the world in which you want to see, and seeing how it is that you can consider letting go of these things. You know, one thing that helps me a lot. By the way, I'm like in constant anxiety of imprisonment because I do get a lot of harassment from the police.

Isabella Kajiwaru 33:50

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 33:50

and being grateful every day. For example, I got to make my breakfast at whatever time I want.

Isabella Kajiwaru 33:59

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 34:00

That's that's a big liberty, actually. I can go and open my front door and just stand outside and look at the sky, whatever I want. And I say my alhamdulillah whenever I do that. I recognize my my gratitude consistently, so that I know if or when it's taken away from me, I know that I really made the most of it. Yeah, I really enjoyed it while I could, and therefore it's okay you can take it from me. But there's a flip side to it, if I may, as well, which is the more free that we think we are, the more they have to take away from us, and we're not at all in any way, shape, or form, free. In the same way that your furniture, finances, your savings, all of it can be stripped from you like this. If the if the state decides, everything, your house, your home, your comfort, everything can be stripped from you. So therefore, it's not worth hanging on to, at all. And if you see all of those things as to. Of your freedom, then you are more ensnared in the mechanisms of the state than you think you are.

Isabella Kajiwaru 35:06

Yeah, then you realise.

lisa minerva luxx 35:07

Yeah, then you realize you've got a long way to fall. I've seen the difference between people who've ended up in prison who thought that they were free, and they fall hard, and those who knew fully that they were never free, and they accept it, a lot easier, so yeah. So it's the framework with which we think of it. I wouldn't list what things we need to sacrifice. I couldn't list things per se, but just the framework within which we should like consider it. You know.

Isabella Kajiwarra 35:35

and that that part you said about gratitude too. Like me, I I'm a practicing Buddhist, and like we talk a lot about a spirit of gratitude, not in the like wellness, you know, thing of like, oh, if you say you're grateful three times a day, then you're gonna make more money in abundance, blah blah blah. You know what I mean? But in the in that sense of yeah, like you like the spirit of gratitude allows you to be truly happy and present with the things that are there, but you know that you're not owed those, even you know necessarily owed them that they're not permanent, and the value almost the the value of something lies in almost in its impermanence. Right, you know,

lisa minerva luxx 36:13

Exactly, exactly. Yeah, absolutely. Even so much is like I'm grateful for this glass of water. I'm really grateful for it, which means that I understand it was given to me.

Isabella Kajiwarra 36:25

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 36:26

Which means that if I had presupposed that I had to have water here and it was my right, whether it is our right for for water, that's another conversation. I'm maybe using a bad analogy, but if I expect it and then it wasn't there, then I would become disgruntled. You know, but actually, it's it. Yeah, so I I really yeah, I really respect the Buddhist view on that. Like I really really do, and there is a lot of similarities between that and Islam as well. And you know, throughout the Quran, like the you know Allah speaks of, you can read it as the believers or you can read it as the grateful ones. You know, and it is liberatory. It's so liberatory,

Isabella Kajiwarra 37:01

massively,

lisa minerva luxx 37:01

yeah,

Isabella Kajiwarra 37:02

massively.

lisa minerva luxx 37:03

I remember one prisoner wrote me a letter, and he was saying that there's this like, there's this like part of his cell. It was that he was saying where if he stands in a certain way, like on a block on a chair, he gets just this sliver of the outside, and and and that allows him the space to realize that there is something still beyond the prison walls, and he's so grateful for that sliver. And we like oh fling open our curtains in the morning, and we're hello world, you know. And are we saying thank you for that? Are we saying what if I just had a slither? You know, to realize the abundance of that consistently.

Isabella Kajiwarra 37:38

Yeah, it's a massive, it's a massive thing, and I guess like that's part of that's part of many practices that one can have for building like gratitude, but also conviction and moral clarity as well.

lisa minerva luxx 37:50

Like and being more steadfast and less easy to break. You're much less easy to break if you have been able to be grateful for things that you knew you weren't entitled to, they were given to you. They were a gift to you. Then, when they're stripped of you, it's a lot easier for you to stay standing tall.

Isabella Kajiwaru 38:10

Yeah,

lisa minerva luxx 38:11

Stay strong.

Isabella Kajiwaru 38:12

Yeah, it's true. But I wanted to, you know, thank you so much again for making time to to be on here. And if you had any like last words or or call to actions or anything like that, then then feel free.

lisa minerva luxx 38:24

Just thank you for inviting me. I really love the work you guys do. So it's my it's my honor to be here and spend this this time with you, and and simply to engage with the political prisoners that we have in the UK and the political prisoners in Palestinian territories in historical Palestine, they really are the compass of the struggle, and those who have made the biggest sacrifices are the ones who can inform us best on how to live our lives in a way that does enact liberation. You, I'll end on the words of Heba Murasi, who's a Yemeni activist, part of the Filton 25. She comes from a long line of resistance fighters, and she was the longest hunger striker in British history. And she says those cages that they throw us in are only as small as we let them be. We can think about that with the cages that they put on us in our minds, mentally in capitalism, in society, as well as the prison itself. So that's my last offering.

Isabella Kajiwaru 39:29

Yeah, mic drop. That's it.

lisa minerva luxx 39:32

Mic drop on Heba words. Yeah. Thank you, Heba.

Isabella Kajiwaru 39:35

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