

*Bam! Pow! Biff!*

People laugh at me. They say, “Oh my, what a big bag you have.”

In the mornings, I prepare. I prepare very well. My items are laid out. Every day I put on my Wonder Woman’s outfit, my blue and white polka-dot bra and red-striped underwear. My gold, sassy bracelets they can hear, but do not know the meaning of when I swirl my wrists around, making them go clack, clack, clack.

They often pull things out of my bag. “And this? Oh, really?”

My hair is purple. I’m kick-ass strong. I know Kung Fu. I should wash my bra and underwear. I really should. But, I cannot part with them. They are me, a part of me, engraved on my skin. My bag gets heavier with every passing month. In the beginning, I had a small handbag. Then things changed, life became complicated.

My bag often makes trouble with security guards, be it at malls, airports, or other people’s homes, their scanners are all the same. They go: beep, beep, beep! Their eyes open wide: “Oh, what do we have here, Mary Poppins?” But they do not know what I wear underneath. This they cannot see. This is my secret: my purple hair, the kick-ass Kung Fu black belt that is my heart, my clicking, clanking gold bracelets.

I am prepared, eagerly waiting, ever on the watch. I carry a water bottle, a fan, various medicines for my black Kung Fu emotions, several notebooks—one to learn Chinese, one for my poetry, and one to keep my Spanish fluent, one bulletproof—sticky notes, my diary, socks, a pair of underwear, glasses, contact lens case, contact solution, an inflatable boat, inflatable floaties, a Swiss army knife, my laptop, a parachute, a rope, emergency diarrhea medicine tablets and Pepto Bismol because sometimes I don’t want to take a tablet plus I like the pink taste. Emergency sanitary pads or emergency tampons—my mood varies. Emergency ibuprofen, a lighter, a flame thrower and mace. A whistle, several plastic bags to be wrapped around the head when the umbrella fails, wrapped around shoes when flash floods come, in case of emergency runs when the Pepto Bismol tablets don’t work, and for groceries because I’m also a big believer in saving the environment.

Vicks, ski mask, face mask, my asthma inhaler, and Bear Spray to paint people guilty for the police. Yes, they often tell me: “Local law enforcement recommends that citizens not attempt to confront criminals themselves.” Ha. They’re still speaking like it’s 2013, the year before all hell really broke loose.

Twice, I have survived a shooting. One in an all-you-can-eat buffet restaurant and the other in the mall, both times using my bulletproof notebook. Once, I avoided decapitation on a Greyhound bus en route to California, spraying my mace in the crazed man’s eyes. While at work in the office on the fifteenth floor, a fire broke out. I smoothed Vicks on the window’s bars and pushed myself through, flying down to the grassy grounds outside. My co-workers cried, pleaded and begged. I threw them my Vicks and they also slipped through like a newborn through a 3-inch uncut vagina.

I thwarted a mass-homicide-slash-suicide at a movie theater, saving twenty of us. In elementary school classrooms I freed ten kids trapped in duffle bags.

In Mexico, on my trip to Los Cabos, I survived the crossfires of a drug-fueled war and helped the police to catch the *hombres muy muy malos* and *la chica muy bonita*, pero ella tambien era muy mala. On the coast of Africa, with my floaties I swam through the turbulent waters as the dolphins nibbled my gold bracelets, and I crawled in the pirates’ boat to free the British captives.

In China, I saved the children from a *hen bu hao man* intent on killing them with his machete, using my blowtorch.

In Afghanistan, I saw a young girl by a well, screaming as two men approached her. I ran. One man’s knife glinted in the sun. I screamed. They took one look at me, forgetting the girl. She ran away. They came after me, yelling. They beat me. “She’s supposed to be my wife! Now you’ll be my wife.”

“No,” I said. “*Daabi ashkun*,” I screamed. They held that knife again in the air. “Now by Allah the great, we’ll kill you and then kill that girl, too. How do you feel about that? Well,” they said, punching me, kicking me. “How do you feel?”

I roared and pulled out my Kung Fu kicks. They screamed. More men from the dust appeared. One waved a gun. I pulled out my bulletproof notebook. The bullets bounced off, hitting the other men, killing them instantly. They screamed in anger at that

man's stupidity. They pulled off my burkha, gasped at my face, my hair. "Who are you?"

I pulled out my blowtorch and scorched them.

The police apologized furiously, but still punishment had to be meted out. I had killed twenty men, twenty men that girls will no longer have to marry. I bowed, submitted, and for two years I was in jail.

Back home, at night in my own bed with the covers up to my chin, their laughter comes ringing in my ears. And I remember, I remember how their laughter turned to pleas as I escaped using items from my great and wondrous bag. I remember how their laughter turns to praise, anything to get my heart, thick and dark like a black belt, to move. I remember how their laughter turns to cries.

Sometimes I help them, sometimes I don't. Sometimes, I leave them, laughing, watching them squirm, trapped. No, I'm not cruel. It's just that someone needs to teach them that laughing at others is not nice.

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