

The Joy of Jihad: Patriots in the Library

Cast:

Saddam bin Laden, Arab exchange student (SBL)

Nellie Nosey, library clerk (NN)

Madison James, library director (MJ)

Lara Ashcroft, FBI agent (LA)

Saddam, wearing Arab dress, is seated at a computer terminal near the reference desk. Nellie walks up behind him and walks slowly back and forth stealing occasional glances at him. She then hurries over to the reference desk, which is staffed by Madison.

NN: Mr. James! I'm really concerned about that foreign guy over there.

MJ: What seems to be the problem?

NN: Well, I think he could be up to something sinister and maybe dangerous. He's looking at a website that appears to be in Arabic and there were pictures of strange bearded men. You know, we can't be too careful these days after 9/11 and with our troops still in Iraq.

MJ: Nellie, you shouldn't be spying on what our patrons are looking at on the Internet. That's their business. Based on his clothing, I'm not surprised that he is looking at an Arabic site.

NN: But I think I saw him playing a video clip of an angry Muslim mob. How do we know he isn't a terrorist in training? Maybe we should confront him and find out what he's doing.

MJ: Gee, I don't know. I don't think I want to do that since the library has a policy protecting our patrons' privacy. But there is something else we could do that would take out of our hands. I've heard that we have a new law called the Patriot Act that would let the government sort it out for us. I think I'll just call the FBI.

Madison James looks through the telephone directory, picks up the phone and dials.

MJ: Hello. Is this the FBI? This is Madison James, Director of the All-American Public Library. I'd like to report a suspected terrorist in our library. You'll send an agent? Thanks. *(He hangs up the phone.)*

A short while later FBI Agent Lara Ashcroft arrives. She walks up to the Reference Desk.

LA: Hello, I'm Lara Ashcroft, special agent from the FBI. Did you call about some suspicious behavior?

NN: *(Excitedly)* Yes. There's this foreign fellow over there looking at terrorist websites!

MJ: Ms. Nosey, I think I can handle it from here. Please go back to you shelving duties. Ms. Ashcroft, Ms. Nosey reported that that Arabic looking man over there *(points towards Saddam)* was looking at suspicious websites on the Internet. Since one can't be too careful these days, I called you.

LA: Well, you did the right thing. I'll go talk to him. But before I do, do you know his name?

MJ: No, but I can check our computer sign-up sheets for you. (*Flips through a stack of papers*). Here it is. He's at terminal three, so he must be Saddam bin Laden.

LA: Thank you. While I go over to talk to him would you please go on your computer and pull up his record. I need you to print out all the personal information you have on him plus all the records of his computer use and what materials he has ever checked out.

MJ: Gee, I don't know about that. I don't think I'm supposed to give you that kind of personal information until you can show me a subpoena.

LA: That's no longer true. Under the Patriot Act, in cases where we suspect terrorism, we can take these records without needing a subpoena.

MJ: Well, OK. I guess. I'll start pulling up the records.

Ashcroft walks over to Saddam at the computer terminal and flashes her badge.

LA: Lara Ashcroft, FBI. I need to talk to you.

SBL: What's the matter?

LA: It's been reported that you are looking at suspicious Arab websites.

SBL: Well, I'm a foreign exchange student here and I get homesick for my country, so I come here to look at news and other information from home.

LA: What's that on the screen there? It looks like a picture of someone burning an American flag.

SBL: Oh. That's just a news report on *Al Jazeera* about a demonstration in Syria.

LA: Well it looks pretty suspicious to me. I think you should come with me and I need to see your immigration papers.

She pulls Saddam up by his arm from his chair and escorts him towards the front door. On her way out, she stops by the Reference Desk. Mr. James hands her a manila envelope containing printouts of Saddam's library records.

LA: Thank you Mr. James. We appreciate your cooperation. Oh, and by the way, don't touch anything at computer station number three and don't let anyone else use it. We'll be sending agents by to seize it for evidence. And also, under the Patriot Act, you can't discuss what we've said and done with anyone or you will face serious penalties. Is that clear?

MJ: *(Looking rather depressed)* Uh, yes. I didn't realize it would get this serious.

Lara and Saddam exit the library. After they've gone. Nellie Nosey comes bounding up to the Reference Desk.

NN: So what happened Mr. James? That guy must have been up to something really nasty if the FBI hauled him off like that. What did he do?

MJ: I can't talk about. Get back to work Ms. Nosey.