



EPISODE 1 | FAITH AND ANXIETY IN LA

Programmanus

Intro Music

NARRATOR

This show was recorded when the world was a bit different.

Sound of a plane flying

NARRATOR

You could easily fly to the US, hug strangers and you didn't hesitate to share a can of soda.

Sound of a can of soda being opened

NARRATOR

You're listening to Preach Shorts, with Linda Ulfbielm.

KASHI

Linda? You here?

LINDA

Oh! Hi!

KASHI

Hi!

LINDA

Hi! Wait, I'm coming out.



KASHI

Okay.

NARRATOR

Over the course of eight episodes, Linda is in L.A. talking to people from different faith-based backgrounds about the big questions in life. You're listening to Preach Shorts, snackable edits from the podcast Preach.

LINDA

Hi!

KASHI

Hi!

LINDA

Kashi.

KASHI

How are you?

LINDA

I'm good, how are you? Get a hug.

KASHI

Nice to finally meet you.

LINDA

Yeah, finally.

KASHI

No, it's...

LINDA

Today I'm going to meet Kashi for the first time. Or Kashmir, which is his real name. I'll be hanging with him a lot here in L.A., so I really hope we're going to click. It's going to be awkward if we don't. Kashi's going to meet me outside the small house I'm renting. He's a few years younger than I am, but it feels like he has an old soul. He's walking up the rose-lined path towards the house, wearing black shorts, a pair of flip-flops and a T-shirt with Sanskrit writing on it. You know, the ones you see in yoga studios.

LINDA

Well, Kashi. Who are you?

Laughter

KASHI

I was born and raised in Los Angeles, and it's a great city to grow up in. because there's so many cultures and there's just so many things you can do, um... It's just, uh... Yeah, no it was definitely influential on how I was raised, and...

LINDA

Yeah.



KASHI

Just being able to have access to so many things and meeting so many different types of people from different religious backgrounds, from different, you know, like ethnic backgrounds.

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

And just learning to respect everyone. Uh, it's the perfect city to learn that.

LINDA

Yeah, it's the perfect place to, like, explore who you are, and I...I feel like I can be whoever I want to be here.

KASHI

It's the perfect place to express yourself.

LINDA

Yeah.

Music / Sound of a car door opening

LINDA

We're both really hungry, so we get into my rental car to go find something to eat. Kashi suggests getting burgers from In-N-Out, a fast-food place with almost a cult-like status in California.

KASHI

It's um, it's a fast-food place. It's out... I mean like it's specifically in California, so like, I feel like you got to try it because you're out here. Um...

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

But uh...

LINDA

I've heard about it, but...

KASHI

Yeah. It's like, it seems like your, you know, everyday fast-food place. It's kind of like um... But uh, it's kind of ritualistic to have it when you come out to L.A. for the first time.

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

It's like a religion. Like on the packaging and stuff, and on like, the wrappers, they got some... They got a little bit of like, Bible verse names, like you know...



LINDA

Ah...

KASHI

...John, like, 3:20 or whatever, and...

LINDA

Whatever it is... But do you think they want people to be more Christian? Like, that they see it and be like, "Okay, maybe I should read the Bible. I haven't done that. Maybe I should..."

KASHI

It's a burger place first and foremost, and there's so many people that love it, and think it tastes great, so, like...

LINDA

They don't care.

KASHI

I think like even if they do come out and say, "Hey, read the Bible," like, it's... And people are like, "No, we're not going to read the Bible, but we do like your burgers." Um...

LINDA

That's enough.

KASHI

Turn right up here at the stop sign.

LINDA

Over there?

KASHI

Yeah.

LINDA

Okay.
Music

SERVER 1

Hello!

KASHI

Hello.

SERVER1

How are you?

KASHI

I'm good. Um, can I... Can we have two number twos?



SERVER 1

You got it.

KASHI

Um, both with animal-style fries?

SERVER 1

Yes, sir.

KASHI

And then can we also get a um... What flavors of shakes do you have?

SERVER 1

For the shakes we have vanilla, chocolate and strawberry, and you can mix it all together, mix-and-match as you like. We also have the Neapolitan shake if you'd like.

LINDA

Oh, uh, I'll have it all. The mix.

KASHI

We'll have it mixed, the Neapolitan.

SERVER 1

Neapolitan? Just one?

KASHI

Yeah, just one.

SERVER 1

Okay.

LINDA

Just one.

SERVER 1

And for the other drink, what would you like?

KASHI

Uh, can I get a lemonade?

SERVER 1

Lemonade? You got it. Would you like a straw?

KASHI

Uh, no, thank you.

SERVER 1

No straw? Okay. Right, um... Sorry, would you like onions for the burgers?



KASHI

Uh, you want onions?

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

Yes, please.

SERVER 1

On both? You got it. Okay. So I have two cheeseburgers with onion, two animal fries, a lemonade with no straw, and a Neapolitan shake.

LINDA

Yes.

SERVER 1

Would you like a straw for the Neapolitan shake?

LINDA

Uh, no I'm fine.

SERVER 1

No straw either. Okay.

SERVER 1

And sorry, last question. Will this be to eat in the car?

KASHI

Uh, yes, for the car.

SERVER 1

Okay. Two cheeseburgers with onion, two animal fries, lemonade, and Neapolitan shake. To eat in the car. That's going to be \$19.93 at the first window.

KASHI

Cool.

SERVER 1

Have a nice day, guys.

KASHI

Thank you.

LINDA

You, too.

Music



LINDA

Hi.

SERVER 2

How are you?

LINDA

I'm good.

SERVER 2

Two cheeseburgers, two animal fries, pink lemonade, and Neapolitan shake.

LINDA

Yes.

SERVER 2

\$19.93, please. Thank you.

LINDA

Oh, my God!

KASHI

Yeah.

LINDA

Oh, shit!

Laughter

LINDA

I think I died.

KASHI

Yeah.

Sound of eating and drinking

LINDA

No, I've never tasted anything like this, because milkshakes in Sweden is a lot more watery.

KASHI

Yeah. Like they're just like, "Here's, like, some milk."

LINDA

Yeah, here's some cream in it.

KASHI

Yeah, we shook this milkshake.



LINDA

Yeah. Yeah! For real!

KASHI

John...

LINDA

...3:16.

KASHI

3:16...

LINDA

Kashi takes out his phone to look up the Bible quote printed on the wrapping paper.

KASHI

Uh... "For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only son."

LINDA

Okay.

KASHI

Revelation 3:20. Um... 3:20...

LINDA

Before saying goodbye, I have to admit that I'm a bit nervous.

Car doors shutting

LINDA

I'm still getting used to the fact that I'll be having so many conversations about religion, because I'm still not comfortable with the topic. It feels sensitive, somehow.

KASHI

It *is* a huge topic. It is... It *is* a massive thing to take on, and it's not, it's not, like, just because I was born into it, doesn't make it any smaller.

LINDA

No.

KASHI

It forever and always will be a sensitive topic, because it's so specific to, like, everyone.

Like, everyone has their own views and their own little quirks. Everyone's different, even if you're in the same religion, the same group.

LINDA

Yeah.



KASHI

You all have your different perception...

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

...of what you practice.

LINDA

You've just heard snippets from my conversation with Kashi. It was really surprising to see how present religion is in everyday life here in the US. It's on everything from burger wrappers to...well, dollar bills. But religion is a part of life in Sweden, too. It's just less obvious.

So, I guess I'm wondering... In Sweden, are we as secular as we like to think? And, I mean, how much do you think religion influences life and traditions in our country? And do you think we are all that different from the US?

NARRATOR

You've just finished Preach Shorts, with Linda Ulfhielm. Preach is a production from the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company, by Daniel Persson Mora, Nanna Olasdotter Hallberg, Ludvig Widman, Tove Jonstoj, Karin Winther, and Martina Magorin Borg, with host Linda Ulfhielm.

Music

NARRATOR

This was a program from the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company. You'll find more at UR Play.