



## Character study: Actress Qurrat Ann Kadwani

Posted by [Valerie Block](#) on September 25, 2014 [Leave a Comment](#)

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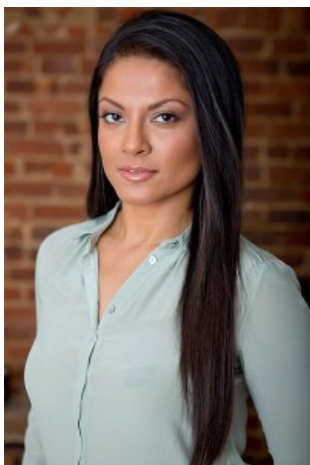


Photo: Nadia Itani

Qurrat Ann Kadwani wrote and appears off-Broadway in the one-woman show *They Call Me Q*. The ode to growing up in the Bronx features 13 characters, from her Indian immigrant parents to her home-girl classmates.

### When did your family move to the Bronx?

In 1984, when I was 3 years old. To Bronx Park East. That was a rough time. How was it growing up there in a traditional Indian family? It was a challenge. As one of the few South Asians in my school, I tried to be the overachiever to please my parents while still being cool. I was also picked on. I was always trying to escape fights. I just wanted to be accepted.

**So how did you try to fit in?** I wanted to be Puerto Rican. I'm not being stereotypical.

That's what my friends were. I had orangey hair you only get when you do a self-dye job.

I had so many ear piercings, the big hoops. My family brings up the time I used to talk that way. I say, "Please don't."

### Why didn't your parents settle in Queens, where there was a huge South Asian population?

My father loved our neighborhood, near Pelham Parkway. There was a huge park, amazing sunsets. He thought it was calm and peaceful. Jackson Heights reminded him too much of India.

### Where do you live now?

Midtown west [in Manhattan]. But I go to the Bronx every week to see my parents.

**What's your favorite restaurant?** Johnny's Reef Restaurant on City Island. I go every month. I remember going as a kid. I always get the same thing: the shrimp basket with fries. I'm telling you, it's the best.

### Is the Bronx having its moment?

The Bronx has a little bit to go. The general vibe of the South Bronx doesn't make me want to go there at night. At Yankee Stadium, you can see what money can buy. Then a couple blocks up, there are bodegas on the street. But there's a charm

to that. When I'm there, I'm getting my arroz con pollo from a real Spanish restaurant.

**Are you married?** No.

**Dating?** Now *that's* a book I could write.

**Your addiction?** I see a lot of shows. At least one a week.

**Collect anything?** *Playbills.*

**Favorite TV character?** I have to say Elaine. I just love *Seinfeld.*

**Where will you be in five years?**

I hope I'm the next Jennifer Aniston. Or Jennifer Lopez, I should say.

*See They Call Me Q at St. Luke's Theater, 308 W. 46th St., [www.theycallmeqshow.com](http://www.theycallmeqshow.com)*

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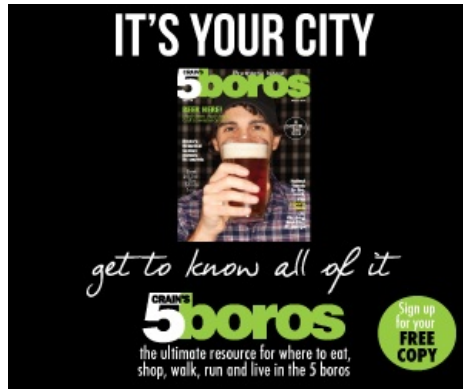
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Valerie Block is a deputy managing editor at *Crain's New York Business*. Before entering journalism, Ms. Block was a singer and songwriter whose tunes were recorded by Jane Weidlin of the Go-Go's, among others.

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