

the  
customer



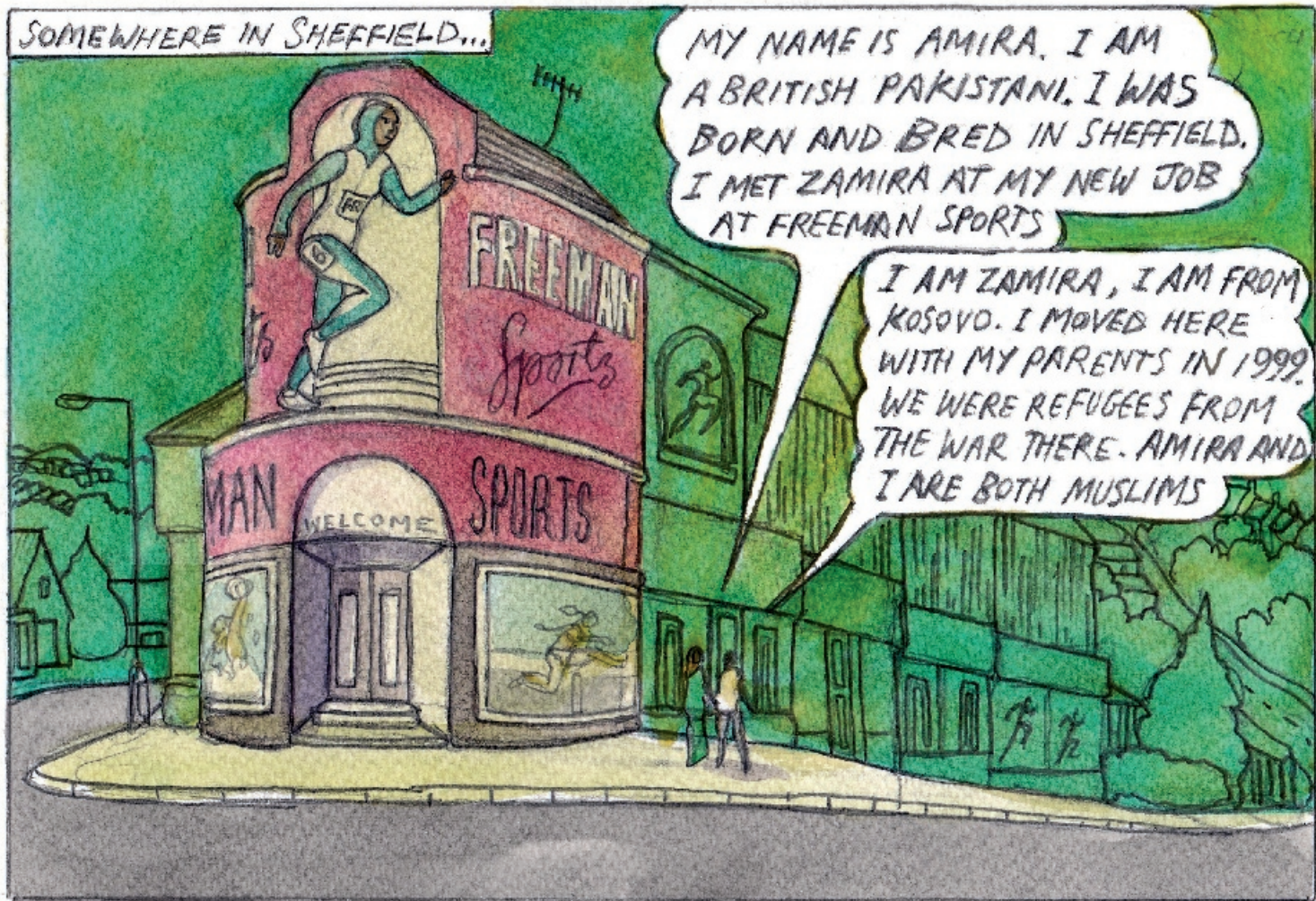
is  
not  
always  
right

STEREO

SOMEWHERE IN SHEFFIELD...

MY NAME IS AMIRA. I AM A BRITISH PAKISTANI. I WAS BORN AND BRED IN SHEFFIELD. I MET ZAMIRA AT MY NEW JOB AT FREEMAN SPORTS

I AM ZAMIRA, I AM FROM KOSOVO. I MOVED HERE WITH MY PARENTS IN 1999. WE WERE REFUGEES FROM THE WAR THERE. AMIRA AND I ARE BOTH MUSLIMS



RECENTLY A CUSTOMER STARTED SHOUTING AND SWEARING WHEN HE COULDN'T GET HIS OWN WAY. HE TOOK EXCEPTION TO ZAMIRA'S ACCENT AND SAID WE ARE TAKING 'BRITISH JOBS'. WE WERE FRIGHTENED AND INTIMIDATED BY HIS BEHAVIOUR.



WE DECIDED TO REPORT IT TO THE MANAGER AND WE APPROACHED THE OFFICE DOOR FEELING NERVOUS. SHE HANDLED THE SITUATION IN AN EMPATHETIC, TIMELY AND SENSITIVE MANNER.

NO, THE CUSTOMER IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT!

IT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY UPSETTING. DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A BREAK AND WHEN YOU COME BACK WE CAN TALK ABOUT HOW WE RESPOND TO RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE




WE WENT TO A CAFE TO  
RELAX A BIT...

# CAFE'S CORRECTIONS


I USED TO THINK RACIST  
ABUSE WAS PART OF THE  
JOB. IT HAPPENED A LOT. I WOULD  
TRY TO LET IT WASH OVER ME

CUSTOMERS OFTEN SAY HURTFUL  
OR INAPPROPRIATE THINGS, I  
WOULD STEP IN BUT MY FORMER  
BOSS WOULD SAY 'THE CUSTOMER  
IS ALWAYS RIGHT'



A woman with a yellow headscarf and a green garment is shown in a close-up, speaking. Her expression is one of anger or determination.

I USED TO WORK FOR A SPORTSWEAR CHAIN. I WAS BULLIED CONSTANTLY. I GENERALLY IGNORED IT IN THE HOPE THAT IT WOULD GO AWAY BUT IT NEVER DID. MY MANAGER USED TO CALL ME NAMES LIKE 'TOWEL HEAD!'

A man in a dark suit and red tie is shown in a close-up, speaking. He has a stern expression.

I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE YOU NEED TO TAKE OFF YOUR HEADSCARF - IT'S CLOGGING UP YOUR EARS

A storefront sign for a store named 'TRUMPY'S TRAINERS'. The sign is in a stylized, blocky font. Below the sign, there are several windows and a door. Two small figures, a woman in a yellow headscarf and a man in a suit, are standing in front of the store.

TRUMPY'S TRAINERS

I USED TO WORK AT THE CHECKOUT OF A LOCAL SUPERMARKET AND A CUSTOMER CALLED ME A 'FUSLIM' - A FAKE MUSLIM. I REGULARLY QUESTIONED AND CHALLENGED THE BASELESS AND SHALLOW VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CUSTOMERS. WHEN I TOLD MY BOSS HE LAUGHED.



... I WAS TALKING TO A BRICK WALL.

THE NEXT DAY, BACK AT THE SHOP, THE STAFF ENJOY A TEA BREAK...

PEOPLE MAKE JOKES ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND RELIGION AND COMMENT ABOUT POLITICAL EVENTS WITHOUT HAVING FULL KNOWLEDGE

THEY'VE STOLEN ALL OF OUR JOBS



COME ON! DO YOU BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ IN THE PAPERS!!

THE RACIST THINGS THAT PEOPLE SAY ARE OFTEN BASED ON WHAT THEY READ IN THE NEWSPAPER

...AND IT IS NOT RACISM THAT IS THE PROBLEM WHEN YOU POINT IT OUT. YOU BECOME THE PROBLEM BECAUSE THEY SAY THAT YOU'RE TOO SENSITIVE AND ROCKING THE BOAT.



THE NEXT DAY WE HAD A STAFF MEETING WITH THE MANAGER...

EMPLOYEES ARE EXPECTED TO BEHAVE IN A MANNER SET OUT IN THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

A ZERO-TOLERANCE APPROACH TO RACISM FROM STAFF AND CUSTOMERS SHOULD BE TAKEN AT ALL TIMES

FREEMAN SPORTS

RACE RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT 1968  
IT SHALL BE UNLAWFUL FOR AN EMPLOYER OR ANY PERSON CONCERNED WITH THE EMPLOYMENT OF OTHERS TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST ANY OTHER PERSON

EQUALITY ACT 2010  
THE ACT PROHIBITS HARASSMENT, VICTIMISATION AND DISCRIMINATION (WHETHER DIRECT OR INDIRECT)

Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, this comic is a part of series of short graphic novels and short films based on the *Race at Work* survey.

Commissioned in 2015 by Business in the Community, 24, 457 people took part in the survey, making it one of the biggest surveys of its kind. More than 2,000 participants provided comments relating to experiencing and witnessing racism at work, while more than 3,000 people provided statements on what their employers did to promote equality and diversity in the workplace. We have used these comments and statements to address some of the key issues that we discussed in the *Equality, Diversity and Racism in the Workplace* report which was published in November 2016.

Basing the characters in the graphic novels on the demographic profiles of the *Race at Work* survey participants, we have tried to quote these comments and statements directly in order to draw attention to the nature and scale of racism in workplaces today. Our aim is to highlight the impact that racism can have on people's emotional and psychological wellbeing, while also drawing attention to the difficulties ethnic minority workers face when trying to challenge racism in the workplace. In response to this, we have made direct reference to the different 'coping mechanisms' and sources of support that survey participants deployed and made use of when confronted by racism at work.

In putting these graphic novels and films together we hope that they may be of some help to people experiencing or witnessing racism at work. We also hope that they send a clear message to managers and employers in terms of how we expect them to respond to racism in the workplace, while showing employees and colleagues the impact that racism can have and what they can do to tackle it. Given that it is almost fifty years since the Race Relations Act was amended to outlaw racial discrimination in employment, one thing is clear - indifference is not the answer!

We want to thank the people across the UK who took part in the *Race at Work* survey for sharing their experiences. Without you we would not have been able to help draw attention to the nature, scale, impact and persistence of racism in the workplace. We hope we have done your stories justice.

To find out more about the graphic novels, short films and the *Equality, Diversity and Racism in the Workplace* report please go to:

<http://www.ethnicity.ac.uk/research/research-partners/race-at-work/>

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