

EPISODE 589

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:33.0]

Welcome to So Money everyone, I'm your host Farnoosh Torabi, our guest today is a successful actress who arrived in Hollywood over a decade ago, she had a one way ticket and her mom's beaten up suitcase, since then she's landed many prominent roles including a lead role in Alphas on the American Sci-Fi Channel.

She's also been on Entourage, How I Met Your Mother, Veronica Mars, The Mentalist and countless other shows. Azita Ghanizada joins us from La La Land, her personal journey is a fascinating one. Her family fled to the US when she was just a baby, seeking asylum to escape war torn Afghanistan. They settled in Virginia and while Azita always inspired to be an actress, she was forbidden to do so until finishing school. So, after promptly receiving her BA in English and journalism, she left for Hollywood. That's where our interview begins.

What were those first few years auditioning like? How did she afford to live out there and what do her parents think now of her career choice? Azita is also a humanitarian, she focuses on issues surrounding women in war torn areas.

Whether it's cohosting a UN high commissioner for Refugees fund raiser, for World Refugee Day or serving as a global ambassador for womenforwomen.org. Most recently, she's become an advocate for MENAA and has been called on to speak on diversity issues in the media and business. Here we go, here's Azita Ghanizada.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:06.3]

FT: Azita Ghanizada, welcome to So Money, it's really nice to have you on the show. Somebody from showbiz, I love having actresses and actors on the show, it's always interesting to find out how the real world behind the scenes works.

[0:02:21.0]

AG: Yeah, thank you so much, it's so nice to meet you Farnoosh and I'm excited to dig in to the financial woes of being an artist.

[0:02:29.1]

FT: And Highs and lows. We want to talk about your political work as well, you're not just an actress, you're very active in the political refugee community as you have a very personal story related to that.

Let's start maybe first talking about your background, you know, you are an immigrant here, your parents left, fled the Middle East for political I guess asylum here and just a better life as so many immigrants do. My parents are in that boat but I would say, you know, as a middle eastern woman and relating to your story, I completely understand how it must have been very challenging to convince your family that this was the career you wanted to pursue.

A career in show business. Not a typical path. Tell us how you connected those dots and how does your family think about where you've landed today?

[0:03:27.4]

AG: Well it's really interesting because you know, we were asylum seekers out of Afghanistan, we went to Iran and back to Afghanistan and then ended up in Washington DC and Virginia actually which was very different than middle east but actually, kind of similar, I got to be honest, the south in middle eastern culture isn't – The conservativeness.

[0:03:50.9]

FT: Really?

[0:03:52.1]

AG: Yeah, you know, I say this to people all the time you know, the conservative culture in the deep south really reminded me so much of the conservative culture from middle eastern families that are conservative. It was very similar, same, proper tradition, standing up, sitting down, looking after people, it actually mirrored each other quite a bit.

Yes, we ended up in Virginia and that was really tough. We took a lot of licks financially because my dad was so successful and my mom's dad in Afghanistan was – he was a politician, he was a medicine man like he was very – they were very wealthy and then they came to America and became small business owners and couldn't really handle the market.

It was very fast for them, the language differences, the barriers and there were a lot of ups and downs for us financially, growing up. Going from one lifestyle to the other kind of immediately and I watched them really struggle financially, with a lot of different things and I was very creative and very smart as well, luckily I was really good at school.

They wanted me to be as any kind of immigrant parent does, they want you to be a doctor...

[0:05:16.5]

FT: Or a lawyer or an academic right?

[0:05:21.5]

AG: Well yes, an academic but they saw that I was really politically active from a very early age. I grew up with lobbyists and politicians and I worked on Capitol Hill in high school. I shadowed a congressman from Iowa to kind of get to know what Capitol Hill was, it was like my AP English project or something.

I just was really curious and I also learned English from Peter Jennings. They thought maybe that I would become a political journalist. But I was the first girl in my family to put myself through school to college.

Anyway, I started working when I was 12. I lied about my age, I like forged documents and got a job because I figured if I had my own money, people wouldn't tell me what to do.

[0:06:11.0]

FT: What was your first job?

[0:06:13.9]

AG: I worked at a doctor's office as a receptionist.

[0:06:18.2]

FT: At 12?

[0:06:20.2]

AG: Yeah, I said I was 14 and had a work permit. Yeah. I did that and then I worked at Foot Locker and then I worked, I do the summers, I would work at a tanning salon and then I worked at a hair salon as the receptionist and I worked at Benetton folding sweaters.

I mean, you name it, I was willing to work it. I wanted jobs. Here's my dad.

[0:06:47.5]

FT: Hi dad.

[0:06:48.6]

AG: Hey dad. I just wanted to have jobs because I knew if I had my own bank account then I'd be okay and I opened a secret bank account.

[0:06:59.4]

FT: How did you get — how did you convince the teller to open up a...?

[0:07:03.5]

AG: I asked my mom, I told my mom I wanted to start like a little after school thing so she helped me open up a bank account but I kind of controlled the depositing and the thing, there was this one bank in Vienna, Maple Avenue, I think it's still there and I would just go put my \$60 in there and I saved money.

I wanted to have my own money, I didn't want to have to ask for money and it started very early. Even when I went to school, to a university, I was like okay, I want to go to a university, I need a check for this amount of money for the things but I'm going to figure out how to get financial aid and scholarships and all of those other things.

My school helped me actually. My high school was really instrumental in helping me sort all those things out because my parents, the language barrier, didn't necessarily know how to make that happen for me, they couldn't make those dreams really come true.

They wanted them for me, they expected it of me but I kind of just have to figure it all out on my own. Yeah, I've been working for a very long time.

[0:08:07.6]

FT: How did you make the transition to performing and being an actor? I know you went to school, you went to college not for acting. Did you always know that was your path? You wanted to pursue this?

[0:08:21.7]

AG: Yes, I always felt comfortable on a stage, I did it for my first – I was doing plays all through elementary school and in junior high. But when it came to high school, we weren't allowed to do things that would be after school with boys, very strict.

[0:08:41.1]

FT: Did you go to prom by the way?

[0:08:43.4]

AG: I did, I went to prom, yes, I did my senior prom.

[0:08:47.5]

FT: That was a hard sell in my family.

[0:08:50.2]

AG: You know, at that point, my parents had separated and I was kind of so independent that there wasn't really much that they were going to say plus they knew all of my friends so well and everyone was terrified of my dad. They called him Alibaba. He felt pretty – he felt okay with it. He thought my friends were – he thought the guys were just funny. He didn't take any of them as a big threat but yeah.

I had always done it and I wasn't allowed to do it so I figured I'd got to a university and study broadcasting or English or something. Because to be honest with you, as a person of color in an all-white community. The theater people were actually more weird. I wanted to do the things that fit in, I really resisted being an artist for a long time because it would just make me even more different.

[0:09:48.2]

FT: Right, I get that.

[0:09:49.5]

AG: You know what I mean? All the theater people were capes and were really cool and expressive, belong with them, you know, they were my buds and I was friends with everybody but to kind of slip into that, I wanted to be a cheerleader and I wanted to be the president of the school, I wanted to prove to everybody who asked me if I was an ESL when I was little.

That I was an AP English you know? That was just kind of that little grain of sand inside of me that pushed me to become an overachiever a little bit and not to do something like you know, the arts, which was like just so out there in Virginia you know? Afghanistan and so just not right.

I kind of was going to sneak away to New York, graduating and I met a friend of mine whose dad lived in Beverly Hills and he was like, “You know, everybody looks like you in California?” I was like, “What do you mean? I’ve never seen anybody that looked like me.” He’s like, “There’s a whole community of women” – talking about that, there’s a beach...

[0:10:56.3]

FT: The shows of sunset.

[0:10:57.6]

AG: Exactly, there’s a big Beverly hills Persian, Jewish community and I was like, “What do you mean? People look like me somewhere in Beverly Hills?” I just like had no idea. I was like you know, I circled the date, I got a job, I worked full time right? Like the week after I graduated university and I saved money and I circled the day and I told my parents I was moving to California, I bought a one way ticket with no return date.

I didn’t even own luggage because I’ve only been on a plane once before and I took my mom’s busted suitcase from Kabul and the family that I went to university with, they had a huge house

in the Hollywood Hills in the Dohini Estates. I was invited to stay with them for the summer and so I packed a bag and I moved to California and yeah, that's kind of...

[0:11:52.0]

FT: And your La La Land chapter began.

[0:11:54.8]

AG: And it began and you know, I wasn't obviously, not a supported choice, my parents knew that I was throwing away what I'd worked so hard to put myself through, at least they assumed that. Even you know, the family that I – you know, my friend's dad was really like, "You know, you're really smart, you shouldn't be an actress," everybody said you shouldn't do this. This is like, "It's horrible, you're going to waste so much of your time, your life, the heartache, the rejection."

I just didn't listen, I did take a job actually. I worked full time so that I could get myself an apartment and do all of those things and took acting class, I started taking – working at different conservatories like Spell Ads and Play House West and Clowning and Michael Checkoff and worked with people from the Moscow School of Art and just kind of threw myself back into that studios side and actually really lucky pretty early.

Which was odd, I started booking commercials as soon as I made that decision to start doing it full time. I think I booked like six in within the first two years which is kind of unheard of.

[0:13:07.5]

FT: Was that luck or – I know nothing about auditioning in Hollywood. Is it luck or is it just – you do it enough years or you do it consistently enough, I mean, into six bookings in two years does sound like a lot but...

[0:13:24.4]

AG: It is, for somebody who literally knows nothing, I literally came with a broken suitcase.

[0:13:30.8]

FT: From Kabul.

[0:13:32.7]

AG: Wouldn't know a single person and you know, I just think I had so much joy, I felt free for the first time, really like not under anyone else's rule of thumb. Or judgments or opinions and I always say that I don't really think my life started until I was in my 20's because I was always trying to fulfill someone else's ideal or prove myself to someone else as supposed to just being in my own skin.

When I was finally free here and could kind of start this La La Land chapter. I had so much joy Farnoosh, I mean, I was the girl with almost one eyebrow. I just walk into that room and I'd be like, "I'm here to audition", you know?

I must charm the pants off of people because I was just so incredibly happy and that energy I think just made people go her, "We want her" you know? Even if I made mistakes, I'd pick up the thing and smile and go, "I made a mistake, let's do it again" you know? Because I didn't know any better.

[0:14:39.7]

FT: You're supposed to act cool Azita okay?

[0:14:43.0]

AG: I was not cool, I was so happy. I've never been that girl that's like I'm hot, I'm going to come in there and just like – I was like hi, I'm here to act.

[0:14:57.6]

FT: You said your first six bookings were commercials. I hear commercial acting, you can make an entire living just being in commercials? The income is pretty good.

[0:15:08.7]

AG: I did really well but you know, I did not – the commercial is all personality. And as I became more into the actual work, I realized that personality doesn't really work for actors because your personality will overtake the character you're trying to work on. If you come in with your personality a lot of the time and then you're doing something that's very emotional or sharing someone else's story, it can create a conflicting energy.

The further and deeper I got into my work and the more that I studied, I kind of actually didn't fare so well in the commercial world because there was a real grounded-ness that started to occur in the work and me trying to figure out this different characters to sell.

I actually was lucky in the beginning because for whatever reason, you know, like my first – I was reading for a role in Emerick for 10,000 BC and testing with Mark Forester for the Kite Runner and booking these jobs, I'd go on and audition, they'd go "You know, Azita's not – she's a little green but does she come in and just do this one line?" and I was like "Of course." The casting directors in LA, they would just email my name around to other people. The casting directors kind of...

[0:16:27.0]

FT: They're the Holy Grail?

[0:16:28.2]

AG: Yeah, like the teachers had taken care of me kind of growing up, casting directors kind of took that baton when I came here and they all kind of started to protect me a little bit and share my name and my joy and my spirit. I came in there and I would do good work you know? Obviously, they're doing it because I was coming in there and doing good work.

They really assisted me, I kind of you know, owe any little tiny bits of success to them and to people that decided to “Hey, you know what? She’s the girl” which is kind of really all it is. Especially you know in where I am right now, it’s like you know, I’m consistently testing or auditioning for things in the bottom three and it’s really just — You know, “She was a little off that day or the other girl’s hair is shorter and we like that for this character.” It becomes so arbitrary but specific at the point that I’m at now that you know, you have to have some elements of just, the light shines on you at this level.

It’s kind of like, I liken it to, I try to explain to my parents right? Because they’re like — you know, when you start, it’s like the pyramid right? It’s like a pyramid career. At the bottom you’re like say you’re a doctor and you can intern right? You can try, maybe you’re interning in pediatrics, you decide.

No, I want to go to plastics, you want to figure that out but as you kind of go further and you’re at the point where there’s like three of you and you’re maybe going to publish, it’s incredibly competitive because at that point you’re all incredibly bright, you’re at the top of they pyramid, you can’t go back and intern.

It’s hard for me to say okay, I got to go back and jump into a commercial although I’d love to, it’s not as easy, I can’t just jump into one episode here, one episode there. You know, because it’s also perception, you know what I mean? It’s kind of like in this game of Hollywood, there is a little bit of a game you play and not kind of climb up the pyramid.

You know, in the beginning, when you’re at the bottom of the pyramid, you can — you get a lot more work, you can do a lot more because you’re just willing to do everything and try anything to figure out who you are as an artist. That helps when you do it when you’re in your teens, not necessarily when you’re like maturing in front of everybody. As an artist, you make your failures as an older actor which I think it’s cuter to do it when you’re like 16 you know what I mean?

[0:18:55.7]

FT: What do your parents think now when you tell them, when they see you on Alphas or they saw you on Entourage or How I Met Your Mother, that's got to be a very special experience for them.

[0:19:07.9]

AG: I don't know that my dad necessarily really understands. My mom is over the moon. I mean, she'll call everybody if I'm on anything. Like I did a movie this past year called Complete Unknown with like Rachel Vice and Michael Shannon, it's a very serious film and it went to Sundance and Amazon purchased it and I speak Farsi in it and all of these other things and she was like — It was like, "Do you want to watch?" and she wanted to come to the theater and I put it on for her and she just checked out, it was too serious for her but the fun splashy, not the artsy stuff but the splashy, castle and I mean, they just giggled, they love it.

I could literally play like a stripper or a dominatrix and she's like, "Ah you look so beautiful." She doesn't care you know what I mean? So long as I look pretty that's all it matters but they're incredibly proud. I think that when they talk to other people whose children have the same aspirations and can't even get an agent, you know what I mean? They are so far removed, my parents are like, "Well I don't know how she did it. I have no idea" and that's the truth.

[0:20:22.5]

FT: And would you even be able to answer that affirmatively? It's like "I took a chance, I went out to Hollywood, I shack up with my roommate from college and then I did some auditions for commercials, charmed the pants off of them and the casting directors liked me too so that helped. "

[0:20:43.8]

AG: Yeah, I think it's either somewhere in you or it's not and I think that anybody can actually become a good actor and if they really, really put their heart into it, they work hard and they do their due diligence in theater and study all the different things and really immerse themselves in

it. I realized that I was shorthanded because I didn't grow up in the business. My very robust social life disappeared to me staying up all night and watching the AFI top 100.

And really just getting a film education to a boot camp for a couple of years and I really threw myself in and I'm very diligent with the work I do much like an immigrant would at any job that they take on. I'm always more prepared, I'm always off book, I'm always ready to figure it out even more so now that I have gotten older as I am maturing in the business. I just think you have to work a lot harder if you weren't raised here.

If you haven't been here since you were little, you really have to put it in and so I go and talk at different schools and try to empower the actors to do their best and auditioning is a really tricky thing. It's a whole different beast so it's different than when you get on set. It's a tricky little animal, it's fun. If you can figure out how to play with it and have a great time and you're confident in yourself and in your work, you're going to be okay.

But I don't know, I think people are going to respond to you or they're not and that's what it is and I was lucky enough to have people respond to me.

[0:22:40.2]

FT: I remembered La-La Land when she's going in and doing this really sad scene where she's crying and they're like, "Okay whatever" I mean there was like an interruption and they didn't even – I mean is that way sometimes where you feel like you're giving it your all and you're just not being welcomed or heard or really respected in those auditions? And honestly, how much of that can you really take?

[0:23:04.4]

AG: No, not for me anymore. I feel like there are those occasions where somebody is rude and by the way, they've seen a thousand people and they have no idea what to expect and most of the time when that happens it's because they have an offer out to the girl that they want to hire and they're just waiting but they have to protect themselves and read people just in case they don't get that offer and that's why people are like, "Great. Thank you." You know what I mean?

That's part of the brutality of it because you put in all these time and they already have an offer in the door. So they're just like, "Oh great, okay cool. Oh yeah you're good, great, thanks. Bye." But I remember a long time ago somebody was laying on his couch and looking out the window and the casting director just looked at me and they're like, "Oh no" like, "Oh my god, I'm so sorry" but I was like, "Is this guy serious?" you know what I mean?

Because it was just a lot and if I never got it and that person never wants to work with me again, I don't want to work with you, you know what I mean? That's not my tribe anyway so I am not desperate or thirsty for that. If somebody is going to shut the door like that then I am like, "Well obviously not everybody's joy and love." There is a lot of darkness in the business and in any business and so you just go "Okay, that's not my tribe. I don't vibe with those people. I don't understand that so that's not going to work with me anyway. "

[0:24:41.3]

FT: Right, you know you bring up an interesting point which is I think it's great and refreshing to hear you say that because it almost seems that when you are climbing up the ranks in Hollywood and you are starting out and going to many auditions that you don't really have a lot of power, you don't really have a lot of choice but you do have the choice to respect yourself and like you said, identify who's tribe you're going to be in and who's tribe you're not.

From a financial perspective, you probably really can't negotiate much at that level or can you if you do get the role?

[0:25:17.5]

AG: No. I mean really especially as a beginning actor, I think just as an actor in general who is not a creator, I think that you do bring in what your innate essence is and what your quality is that you can bring that's different than anybody else and you are a collaborator. You are the CEO of how you operate yourself on set and in that room and in the scene and through series or through Ark but really, you're a collaborator.

You are a piece of what the director wants and the writers have created and even there more so it goes above to maybe what the network wants or the studio is going to and you can have strong ideas. I mean if something really pushes your morals, you should definitely say, “I am not comfortable in this space” otherwise when I was younger I’d be like, “Oh I don’t think we should do that” and really that was just, I am not writing it.

There are 10 very skilled writers that have come up with Ark and maybe they make some mistakes and maybe they are writing quickly, the pace in TV is very fast but really you’re just there to make sense of that piece of it because you’re the CEO of your life only you’re not the boss of the whole show, does that make sense?

[0:26:40.7]

FT: Yes it does.

[0:26:41.8]

AG: So you have to do all the self-work. I always say that actors are professional human beings. You really have to know how to really take care of that space on the page and bring that to life and then you’re giving your part of the gift and then you got to walk away from the project because unless you created it and made it, it’s not your responsibility or even your need to worry about how it does or what happens to it afterwards because someone is a director.

It’s a network, it’s a studio, you hope for the best and you’re there and you want to do anything you can to help them as a part of that collaborator but you really are, it’s a collaboration and once you figure that out I think you realize how to live in that space and bring a thousand percent to that space instead of saying like younger actors “Oh I only have one page in this thing.” That one page means something.

That one page gets someone to the next scene or those four lines you might have sets up a joke that everybody is going to remember and actors are like, “I want to be the joke”. It’s like well “You’re not there yet,” you know what I mean? You’ll get there if you know how to be in that space and if you really commit to that, people are going to see that. They are going to recognize

that. So again it's about not resisting where you are and really owning that and living in that space.

[0:28:07.2]

FT: What would be your advice to yourself, how many years ago now have you been in Hollywood?

[0:28:13.7]

AG: I've probably been acting here now for about 13 years.

[0:28:18.4]

FT: Wow, okay. Amazing because time flies, right? 13 years ago what would you've told yourself or what would you tell someone now that's eager, that's listening to you, eager to move out to Hollywood and strike out on their own as a performer? What specific financial advice would you give this person in terms of how to make ends meet, anything money related that they should know about when they move out there and in particular pursuing this path?

[0:28:52.8]

AG: Well I definitely think that they have to have as much money that they can save or have so that they have a cushion because when people think that actors make so much money and they do when they work but there are long period when they don't work. They might not work for a year or two years but then the work and they'll make enough money to cover the last two years or to catch up and stuff and so that's the way that the scales balance often.

But you know, any young actor I would say have a job. Have a job that gives you space and if it's something like I wasn't able to work really in the bar industry because I was so bright and went to college and I never ever worked in a restaurant. So I wrote people's press releases. I did some freelance work for magazines. I just took writing gigs because I had that English

degree. I used that so that I could do that in my free time and then go to my auditions and really be 100% committed to that, not be tired from being at a restaurant.

If that would have really kind of maybe drained me personally, so I used what I was really good at and I would say that if you have the skill, use that skill. If you have a small business, you can make dresses, whatever it is that maybe you're talented at. If you're blogging, that's a big business right now too. Definitely you have to make ends meet but you have to leave that day open and if you're not working, you have to treat the day as if you –

You have to live it in the vibration that you want to see your life in. So it doesn't mean you sleep until 11, younger actors. You get up and you go work out and you read a play and you go to class and then you go to your job, you know what I mean? You have to live your life in a vibration that will nearer the kind of work ethic that you have as an actor because that's what the best actors have. You work 16 hour days when you are filming and if you can't manage that, if you complain about that then you're never going to succeed.

[0:31:07.5]

FT: Right. Part of that good vibration is surrounding yourself with the right people and in Hollywood as in many industries, it is who you know sometimes to help you connect the dots or help you meet new opportunities. So any advice in that realm? How do you find the right network?

[0:31:26.5]

AG: Well the one thing I would have told my younger self is to empower mentorship. I didn't really have a mentor. I never had an actress that was a mentor. I had someone in my life that was incredibly supportive and that knew so much about the business but if anything, they scared me. They didn't really encourage me and show me different in ropes. They said, "Well I don't know, that's really hard but this is who this person is and this is who that is".

And I think I would have and I still today, I would like mentorship now. I try to give it, to be honest with you. I try to provide it with others because I wish I had had it. I would say you have

to find someone who's in the business, who has worked, is more connected and can be a sounding board and somewhat familiar to you in this environment and also, people make their friends in classes. They see that and if you are a competitive person and someone else's success and that affects you, you are not going to have a strong circle.

Because the more successful the people are around you, that's where your vibration goes and anyone says that, Tony Robins says that. It's the bond. So if you are so consumed in yourself as oppose to community you're not going to go very far. You might for a little while but you'll tumble. You really need community. In any business, you really need to partner up and applaud and support all the other CEO's or all the other moms that are working.

Or your fellow actresses that are hitting successes, you have to really be in there and be a champion because that same energy will then surround you.

[0:33:09.7]

FT: Before we go, I want to talk a little bit around your philanthropic side and your political activism. You serve as the global ambassador for Women for Women and tell us how that whole side of your life started. Obviously it seems like a real natural migration for you but how much of your time does this take up and is this something that you think would turn into something bigger like at what editing point would you leave acting to do this full time?

[0:33:42.0]

AG: You know I've always been a humanitarian. My advocacy work in the last year has become incredibly intense because persons from my area of the world have been demonized a little bit and so my advocacy work where it's always been for women and those that can't speak for themselves, refugees which always have held a special place in my heart, something as simple as providing soccer balls to humanize the children gives me so much joy.

And I just felt that that was something I always needed to do because I was educated about them from day one. My life has always politicized, I've never had a normal childhood and I definitely spent that time being a humanitarian. Now, as I've noticed in the climate of the last

couple of years and in the climate of diversity which is such a big buzz word that somewhere Middle Eastern, North African actors have fallen in the cracks of that because they are considered Caucasian by most of the studios and networks.

They're not even really considered diverse. So even though the storyline is being dramatized the most, we are going into our fourth decade of war and instability in that area and you see a lot of these war stories and ticking time bomb stories around that region of the world, they're not even necessarily employing actors from that area of the world to be the hero. They're not really seeing us in that way. So I've been spending the last couple of years focused on advocating the images that I know as a woman from that area of the world.

Which isn't a woman covered in a head scarf, which are very empowered women with more fancy outfits and did run a home or what not, men in suits and just more of the progressive side of that culture and right now, that's really important to me to continue to share that because I don't want the world to have a limited perspective on what that region of the world is and yeah, the advocacy work for me is important.

But also because I feel like no one else is speaking up about it so I am like, "Wait a minute —" I don't think I would ever leave being an actor. I think I will always be an actor. It's in my bones but it is something that I think I can do well if the right opportunity presented itself to me I'd be happy to take on some leadership roles with that. Although I have been doing more recently with Beau Willimon's action group network.

The creator of House of Cards did something and I've been leading one of his groups out here and it's definitely a time consumer, time consuming but I don't know, I enjoy it. I think it's important. I think giving is part of learning how to receive and I think if you know how to take care of something and know how to organize and lead then you should try to do it to help and benefit others as best as you can.

So it's just line make up and I just don't know, I can't see something like that and just not do something about it. It's just me anyway. It's also my perspective, it's my point of view so I am not saying everyone has to think the same I do. I would just love to implore and educate people in the way that maybe I see the world.

[0:37:12.4]

FT: Well I love that you're taking your public platform and using it to such great good and no doubt you would be doing this anyway but it's always nice to see people who have influence to share some of that influence in a really meaningful way. So we'll be looking out for you. Tell us where we can see you these days, all over the place right?

[0:37:33.4]

AG: Well no, I mean there is a movie on Amazon that came out last year and I've got a song right now. We're actually on Amazon series, I Love Dick. We actually had a really cool little Afghan storyline for the band that they cast in the show and unfortunately it got cut out because the season order went from 10 to eight but the song is in there which is really cool because I have never gotten to work or collaborate on a song.

And also get to help them write it in Dari and figure out how to do that with a group of very talented producers and song writers. So that's where I am and I am out there professionally auditioning and testing for series. So you guys will see me on something very soon.

[0:38:23.4]

FT: Ooh all right, we're excited and wishing you continued good luck and it's part luck but it's also who you are too and you are very special. Thank you so much Azita for coming on So Money.

[0:38:36.6]

AG: Thank you Farnoosh, Merci.

[0:38:39.2]

FT: Merci. I had this whole plan of speaking, doing this whole interview on Farsi but I would fail miserably and also nobody would understand what we're saying so that would be.

[0:38:48.5]

AG: I speak Farsi like an Afghan, like a little person.

[0:38:53.1]

FT: Yes, my parents say I speak Farsi with an Armenian accent, what does that even mean?

[0:38:57.8]

AG: I have no idea. I've never heard them speak. Well I get to know, anyway, lots of love to the East Coast. I miss it, just kiss it hello for me.

[END]