

# “Bride of freedom” was leader of protests in Syria

The New York Times profiles women leaders of the Arab Spring — including Kinda Zaour and her sister in Syria

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Kinda Zaour was wearing blue jeans and a T-shirt when she got married. Her family had just been forced to flee their home in Syria, and no one was in the mood to celebrate. But photos of Zaour in a wedding dress were everywhere: In the fall of 2012, Zaour and three other young Syrian women, including her sister, Lubna, dressed up as brides and marched through the main souk in Damascus, carrying a sign entreating Syria to “stop all military operations.” “I’m a bride of freedom, a bride of peace,” Kinda says in *The Trials of Spring*, a new documentary series by *The New York Times*.

“I participated in peaceful protests because I believed that they could change the authoritarian regime,” Lubna recalls. “We were standing there filled with joy, eager to convey our message.”

That message was not so well-received by the Assad regime. The Zaour sisters were swiftly arrested and forced into a military jeep. “It was a strange scene: brides in police cars,” Lubna remembers. The sisters were detained for two months, and though they passed some of the time talking and singing together, Lubna also remembers groups of blindfolded men, “the sound of beating” and “the smell of blood.”

“*Syria: Brides of Peace*” is one of a new series of short films, *Trials of Spring*, featuring women leaders of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Libya, Bahrain, Egypt and Yemen.