

KASHANI & MEZDULENE DO NEW ENGLAND

By Mezdulene

It all started when Kashani asked me if I would like to accompany her on a trip to her home town of Solon, Maine. Having never been to Maine and always ready for adventure, I quickly agreed to go. This was in May.

Early in August, I got a wild hair and stopped to peek in the window of a building for sale on the main street of our town. To make a long story, short, my husband and I bought a commercial building less than a block from our restaurant. Everything went very smoothly until we had an appointment for the closing, and then we received a call from the title company telling us about various complications which involved hiring attorneys to iron out. It was stressful to say the least, and the day before leaving on my trip, we finally closed.

So, why did we buy a building? We decided to combine our two passions under one roof. The back of the building is my new dance studio. The front, facing the street, is a rock and gem shop and belly dance costume and jewelry store. We figure this will be our retirement since as self-employed workers, we probably won't earn much social security, and running a store is much less stressful than running a restaurant.

As September approached, life became more and more complicated, and a trip to Maine seemed more and more frivolous, but I persevered.

Kashani and I both wrote to people we found on the internet in the areas we would be visiting letting people know that we were coming and asking about any dancing opportunities. I was booked for three workshops, and we found out about restaurants with dancing and a hafa!

The day after we signed for our new building, I drove to Kashani's, a mere 5 1/2 hours North. We caught up a bit on each other's news, and then we headed for her Thursday night class where I taught a two hour workshops for her students and anyone else who wanted to attend. The room was packed full of beautiful women who all made me feel very welcome and feel like they really appreciated what I had to offer. It was a wonderful evening.

The next morning, we left her house at the ungodly/ungoddessly

hour of 5:30 a.m. and drove to Seattle to the airport. Her husband, (fondly dubbed, 'Sherpa Vic') drove us and helped us schlep our luggage in to check-in.



L to R: Kashani, Mezdulene & Za-Beth

The flight took over 5 hours, and then we landed in Boston where it was 3 hours later. We got our luggage and headed for our rental car then hit the road. With Kashani as my fearless navigator, I drove quickly out of Boston to our motel which turned out to be very deluxe digs. We had a two bedroom suite, complete kitchen and living-room. Gorgeous!

The weather was unseasonably warm. Don't ask me why, but I expected it to be colder on the East coast than on the West coast,

but instead it was much hotter. Almost 80 degrees for the first few days. I was so glad I packed a variety of clothes.

In the morning we feasted on a complimentary buffet breakfast and then headed out to my first workshop. We easily found the studio, but I have to admit that I was totally awestruck by the building it was housed in. It was a huge old factory building remodeled into offices and a very quaint and cozy dance studio with windows on two sides.

The dance studio was on the top floor, small but very inviting. My workshop sponsor was Za-Beth, and it was wonderful spending some time with her. I had a great time teaching a wonderful group of women a variety of things from competition info to Pharonic to veil dancing. Kashani kindly assisted me, and I was grateful for her help. It was a special time that I will always carry with me.

That evening, we met Jareda staff writer, Morgana and her friend, Larry in Lowell at the Athenian Corner and were treated to a wonderful meal. It was so great to meet them in person. Morgana has been a staff writer for at least 10 years, and Larry has submitted several of his poems over the years. We had a lively evening complete

with some of the best live music I've heard. Fred Elias played the violin for 4 hours with only a short break. He could play anything and was accompanied by a great bazouki player and drummer. There was one official belly dancer and lots of open danc-



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