**On Mother's Day Razan will not gather roses! Her mother is defiant on her behalf**

Written by Yahya al-Yaqoubi.

The tears cannot recover the departed and the martyrs, nor freeze the hands of grief to prevent a criminal from conquering the hearts of the innocent and stealing their dreams whilst they are in the midst of their human work.

The occupation killed my daughter, Razan. I have suffered a great loss. Parting is so painful but Razan is still in my heart, and visits me in the whispers of the evening, and the morning glow, never erased by the days which could not steal her memories. Your gentle spins with those hands never stops, just as I don't stop thinking about you, Razan; I miss you always. Yesterday you were with me, in front of me, behind me, and today, the martyr Razan Alnajjar (21 years old) is still absent. Your beautiful smile has gone with you. I miss you even in the place where the soldiers of the occupation killed you. All my life is filled with the pain of your loss, a dripping wound that does not heal.

You know, every day, every morning, I still wait for her on the doorstep of the house hoping that she will return, and I will see her smile which is always with her and her face that does not know sadness, her eyes full of love and tenderness. I still wait for her to return... From the depths of the pain of parting, Mother’s Day redug the wound inside of me again; she is my daughter, my sister, my friend. How will I forget her words when she freed her lips as she held me in her arms : “I, Mama, am I everything in your life?”

The first Mother’s Day goes by without Razan, but I sail deep into my memories, to that day when Razan was a child collecting brightly coloured flowers along the way - when her blooming heart was not withered - and she came running from afar with those roses calling, “Happy Birthday Mama.” I planted a kiss on her cheek and realized she understood that roses have great meaning; she was always sensitive to humanity, from childhood until the night of her martyrdom. Half an hour before she was gone, not knowing she would be, she sent me a message saying: “Without you I am nothing, you are my whole life. Honey, Mama.”

The taking of her precious spirit is a crime that will live on in the records of injustice; a desecration of the vulnerable, the killing of human rights and the possibility of living a dignified life. She, who worked in the ambulance taking care of the injured and the dead, carrying out her work with laughter, smiles, and spontaneous jokes. She never hid anything from me; she was my friend, not just my daughter.

I will not forget the details of the Israeli aggression against Gaza in 2014. As Israeli occupation planes bombed east of Khan Yunis (the large area of Abasan, where we live and the scene of all the dramatic events), we left the house to go a school that was a shelter. Although she was young she had initiative and volunteered to be an administrator for the school, and help them by entering data, and other volunteer work.

First Paramedic

The great march of return and the breaking of the peaceful siege was not the first of Razan's positions as a volunteer; when she finished high school with a distinction in nursing, she volunteered for two years at Nasser Hospital. Then came the written examination to choose paramedics to volunteer in the great march of return and Razan got a score of 97%, the highest in her group; she excelled as a graduate nurse.

The examiner could not believe her pass mark and exclaimed, “I am sure someone must have told this girl the answers!” So it was decided that she would do the exam again and be supervised by him, and then he said, “I'll ask her one question that only someone who knows the nursing profession will be able to answer.” Indeed, she answered the question, and she was given a volunteer card at the medical point East Khan Younis on 30th March 2018, a memorable day in the history of the Palestinian people. it was the day of the great march of return and the breaking of the peaceful siege along the separation fence to demand the restitution of the rights stolen by the occupation. Razan, an angel of mercy dressed in white said to me, “I will go as a volunteer paramedic today.” I was pleasantly surprised, and she went and proved her worth from the first day. She returned after a difficult day during which the soldiers and snipers in the occupation army killed many demonstrators, with her white clothes covered in blood, coloured red.

Over the course of the Friday marches Razan changed a lot. One day I asked her to avoid following the protests close to the fence and she said, “I am responsible for the lives of the protestors who get injured,” and I understand why she said this. She would only return from taking care of the injured in the field at 9 p.m., just as a compassionate mother stays to reassure her children.

“When Razan is in the field, we are safe.”

This is what one of the protestors said to me when I went to one of the marches. She was so loyal to her volunteer work saying, “I don't want a salary or hiring. God appreciates my efforts and that's enough for me: duty does not yield to bullets!”

“Hurry, your daughter is in an ambulance,” a protestors said to me one Friday. My heartbeat quickened, and the internal questions began - “is she dead?” I arrived at the ambulance with difficulty, and found her lying on the medical bed, absent as a result of the gas bomb that had hit her; a quarter of an hour passed until she woke up. She removed the oxygen device, got out of the ambulance refusing to listen to the paramedics or to me saying that she should go to hospital and said, “I am good; I am here to heal not to be treated.”

Another Friday, the marches are on fire, there are large crowds, the winds are hurtling towards the fence. Razan continues walking amongst the protestors spraying the the faces of the injured to mitigate the impact of the gas bombs, aids a young man injured at the fence, going right up to the fence as she usually does, not caring about the bullets that fall near her to scare her.

“Your daughter has suffered trauma from a rubber bullet.” My heart beat sped ahead of me to the medical point again and I feared the worst; when I arrived I found her tired but alive with a rubber bullet in her foot, and a gas bomb had hit her chest. The nurses gave her compresses, and the echo of the doctor's voice resounds now in my ears: “She needs to rest”. But she refused to go home in a private car, preferring to walk despite her injuries.

These memories keep coming back to me: another time, she was hit and went to the hospital. The doctor said to her again: “You need to rest; you have a ruptured blood vessel and a broken hand”, but she insisted on going back to marches. “How are you going to work?” I asked her. She looked at me and smiled, gesturing at the splint on her hand: “With one hand.”

The purity of her heart was reflected in her dedication to her work. Another time she continued to aid one of the injured protestors near a small hill whilst the occupation soldiers fired bombs and bullets around them. She worked to stop his bleeding until she fainted from the intensity of the gas bombs falling around them, fell off the hill onto a stone and broke her foot. On another Friday her trousers were burned by a gas bomb that fell on her. She was injured in total more than 12 times, mostly by gas bombs and direct rubber bullets, and yet she did not yield.

“Phone and ask for a bag.” Razan wished to get a medical bag to help her at work so she sold her mobile phone and a gold ring I had gifted her to buy one. I reproached her then, but she smiled at me and replied: “These things are simple and can be replaced but a human life, who can replace that?”

Once the sun is golden and sneaking in through the window of Razan’s room, every Friday, she starts preparing the items she needs and stacking them in the bag. I enter her room to find her with medicines; an hour or two pass before she goes to the square where the return marches are held. She was always the first to be found in the medical tent.

Last day (1 June 2018 CE)

The previous day, one of her friends sent her her a message on Facebook: “I saw you martyred at the Gaza port and all the world is sad.” She showed me the message and said to me: “What do you think, shall I go on the march tomorrow or not? You know, I'm not going to march.”

At the opening of the first day of June there was quiet. Moments passed, and the heart of Razan could not be still. She kept turning over the decision in her mind, and finally decided: “I want to go. This is nonsense that our God wrote”. She was like a sun that lit the house.

On the threshold of the house she turned towards me and pointed her hand to peace. I went quickly to the balcony of the house, and I do not know why but that day I watched her until she disappeared from my sight, with internal sensors fueling anxiety inside me.

Moments passed, and then her father woke up, terrified: “Where is Razan?”“She went back to the marches”, I said. He seemed angry and nervous and frightened; his lips were shivering. “I had a terrible dream; one of the sweetest two birds I have had flown.” “Keep it for Allah... I want to make Razan the candy that she loves” (Basbousa).

Before Maghrib Azan, I was finishing the dessert when I heard something going on outside. Someone called me, saying: “Razan is injured.” “Gas or bullets?” I asked. “I don't know!” came the reply.

Involuntarily, my heartbeat began to quicken, and tears fell down my cheeks. I didn't know what to do. I called her father to tell him she was injured, we drove to the hospital, and for the first time I felt that the journey there was long. At voice of the car radio I felt fear sneak inside me again. The news, “Two injuries. One dangerous one in the back.” I found out where she was, in the ICU room, and found her a dead corpse. She was hit by a bullet in the chest and it went through her and out of her back. Everything stopped. I wished that time would turn back to the morning, but we were overwhelmed, the young man was bleeding from the blood and her soul died in the service of humanity.

The grief settled in my heart, sank in bitterness; but it had to be liberated, and the shackles of pain that it had turned into were removed by my faith in the work of my daughter and her dream to complete her work in the great marches of return.

Her nursing in the ambulance of the injured, and proving to the world its humanitarian value, made me make a decision to volunteer as a paramedic on the march, to say back to the occupation: “You will not be able to break me. I am still full of strength.

The next day, the dust of the wound was shaken, and I volunteered in the medical tent east of Khan Yunis, where my daughter worked and was martyred. Through this experience, I realized how tiring and difficult the nursing and ambulance profession was, and how much of a humane service it is. When the injured were treated, I felt that peculiar sensation that Razan told me about. Energy was born inside me giving me the strength to continue in this field, like my daughter who, through her belief in her work, gave me the strength to continue. I am proud to be mother of Razan Najjar.

I do not hide that my descent is a challenge to the occupation, that after the martyrdom of my daughter they could not break me. I will prove to the world that the Palestinian people were not born to break; that we want to live in dignity, and that we are a people that does not die. My daughter’s martyrdom made us live again.

The end now, Razan has gone and her mother, Sabreen al-Najjar, has found new meaning in loyalty and sacrifice. She has been a volunteer since last June aiding the injured on her daughter's trail, to assert that when the occupation kills, it will not kill the message of humanity.

Israel, in its attacks against paramedics - Razan Najjar, paramedic Abdullah al-Qatti, paramedic Musa Abu Hassanein - and other medics and medical staff, are violating a number of texts contained in more than one international agreement. These documents are aimed at protecting these paramedics and ensuring the rights of the sick and wounded to be transported to hospitals for appropriate treatment without being subject to attacks or attempts to obstruct their access to the hospital, are respected.

Article 16 of the Fourth Geneva Convention relating to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War reads as follows: “The wounded and sick, as well as the infirm and expectant mothers, shall be the object of particular protection and respect”. Article 17 stipulates that the parties to the conflict shall ensure the establishment of local arrangements for the transport of the wounded, sick and infirm, the elderly, children and women from the besieged areas, and the passage of medical personnel and medical tasks to these areas.

Human rights continue to be violated in Palestine.

For what sin was Razan killed? We are looking for an answer in the conscience of every living person.