

Syria Testimonies: A Mother's Brave Testimony after Martyrdom of Her Son, Majed, 4th April 2019

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During my most recent trip to [Mhardeh](#) and [Al Suqalibiyah](#)- Syrian Christian towns bordering international terrorism - I interviewed the families of two martyrs, murdered by a Nusra Front rocket on the 4th April 2019.

I was profoundly affected by the interview with the mother of 22-year-old Majed Monif Qiddeeseh - Mary Sami Qazanji. She spoke movingly about the martyrdom of her youngest son and what his loss means to her. She still speaks of forgiveness and of steadfastly refusing to leave their town and their homeland. My admiration and love for this beautiful lady is boundless.

On March 24th 2017, Mary's husband Monif was injured in another terrorist attack and was taken to hospital in Mhardeh. On April 4th 2017, Mary was injured also. Shrapnel entered her shoulder and is still embedded in her tissue, she told me she suffers impaired hearing and chronic pain in her arm, shoulder and neck as a result. Monif died from his injuries on the 8th April 2017. Mary's youngest son was martyred on the 4th April 2019.



Try to imagine the scale and depth of this loss... and then remember that every family in Syria has suffered such loss and is processing the searing grief and pain that only fades but never goes away.

Majed was sitting on the street drinking coffee with his friends when the rocket landed around 20 meters away from them. He and 42 year old father of two, Yousef Habib Najjar, were hit by the shrapnel, the other friends survived uninjured. Yousef later also died from shrapnel that had entered his brain.

Majed's grandmother told me that he was always laughing and joking, that he would hug her every day and reassure her that he would keep her safe through the terrorist attacks.

Please share this testimony widely - these voices need to be heard so we can fully understand what the West has done to these courageous, kind and generous people:

Full transcript of Mary's testimony:

Our family...Yes, dear. I and Monif loved one another so much and for a long period of time. We got married and had those so beautiful two young men and we lived a very beautiful life.

When they grew up and the crisis started, they didn't accept to emigrate and leave the country. Bless them, they are brave and their father raised them as men. They are so brave like their father, bless them. They refused to leave here, they didn't accept to go (abroad) at all.

Habib, the elder brother joined the (Fifth) Corps before his brother and Majed was a member of the NDF on the day when his father passed away but after that, he joined the Fifth Corps without telling me.

I asked him: "Why dear?"

He replied: "Now, our family needs two men to provide for it so that we lack nothing"

I don't know, I felt like he shouldered a heavy weight. Habib, my eldest son, also shouldered a heavy weight but he didn't use to express it to me, while Majed (used to express it) a lot, he missed his father so much, he was too fond of him.

Every morning when he woke up, he would say to me "Mum, I saw my father in my dream"

(I would ask him) "Dear, what did you see?"

He would reply "I saw such and such", for example "I saw him with uncle Simon (Al Wakil) and they did such and such... "

He used to see his father in his dreams every single day and on days when he didn't talk to me about it in the morning, I would ask him "Majed, Didn't you see your father this time?". He would say to me "Yes mum, but I forgot in which context I saw him"

We lived like that. Thank God, they always did the best they could, whenever there were problems, they would be here. They were on the frontlines..., they never hesitated to provide and give everything they could.

I don't know..., I forgot..., I don't know what to say...

After that, he decided to continue his studies, he was studying at the Topographic Institute. He would finish his studies, and later, if he had an opportunity to work abroad, he would do it, so that he can provide more help for the family. They did their military work with the Corps, and handled their shifts and never failed in fulfilling their duties towards the homeland.

We are all a sacrifice for the homeland and I am not sad because of that at all. Because he, his brother and his father loved the homeland so much and I love it so much too.

When events took place in Sijer (a village in Idleb), everyone left but I stayed here and I made "Manaqish" (Pastry) and cooked lunch for my children to eat and I helped the wife of our brother Simon al Wakil, she was distributing bread as aid to people and on that day, I came back home alone although it was so dark and I was not afraid of anything. My sons were coming home, and I am their mother, I should be with them to strengthen them and they would strengthen me.

If I had left and everyone had left, that would have shown a weakness of character and that shouldn't happen, no, I was with them every single moment and things remained like that until what happened to us on the 4th of April (2017). Monif passed away and I got severe injuries in my hand, body and

ears. I became hearing impaired. My siblings and everyone helped me for a period of time, everyone did what he could do and things got better...

Majed reminded me on that day, Thursday, He said "Mum, did you see the photo I put for you?" (on Facebook). I said "what's is it about, dear?". He said "it's a photo of our house when it was destroyed and how it became". I am not the kind of person who is into fame, so I said to him "Maybe you shouldn't have done that". He said "Yes, just take a look at it".

I was feeling down for about a week..I thought maybe it was because the memorial of his father was approaching. Later in the evening..., we bring incense for the service. Majed brought me incense and left. I got dressed and headed to church. While I was in the church, the rocket landed. I stayed there and didn't feel afraid, all men went out except for two men.

I started to address women who were there, "Calm down, stop talking, just calm down"

"How would these two young men be able to take care of us?! Just calm down a bit until we find out what's going on"

But I didn't know that my son was injured and taken to hospital, I didn't know at all. Later, the pastor (or priest) came, we held the service and I came back home. I tried to call Majed but he didn't answer my calls.

He was taken to the hospital and...martyred immediately...

But we love our homeland so much...

- Yes, we love it so much.
- What did he use to say to Mhardeh?

- Mhardeh..., what was that song?
- "Mhardeh, you are the only beautiful"

We wouldn't leave it, no..., we wouldn't leave it to anyone else. We have so much pride in him, Majed was so beautiful. I wish you knew him, he's so beautiful. These 20 years he lived, they were wonderful. As if he lived for a million years, so wonderful... him and his brother too.

- How many friends he had! How many loved ones he had!
- ...him and his brother too...

His brother is so wonderful too, but Majed, because he is the youngest, he breaks my heart. - May God protects the children of all people...he was a friend of all...yes, he was a friend of the young and old and he used to help and do whatever he could, whether it was for me or for other people. Yes, a lot, and I am not saying that because he's my son, he was so good, so good and I miss him, I miss him so much. I miss his hands, I miss his face. Look how much a beautiful young man he was, these beautiful lips..., these eyes...



But it's okay, God is with us, and God willing, He's going to strengthen us. The most important thing..., I said to them today and yesterday "I feel that Majed was a sacrifice for the homeland, and I feel that nothing (bad) will happen anymore". I said to them that I feel nothing (bad) will happen anymore. God willing, he would be the start and the end, God willing!

- God willing!

- May you never lose your wisdom and may God grant you patience.

God will strengthen us to face every difficulty, God willing, and may holding our cross be easy for us till the end of this life. And I don't know..., the Western countries are supposed to sympathize with us a bit when they see what's happening to us. It's "Haram" what's happening to all these people..., all this death..., and these beautiful young men. Those are the ones who are supposed to build the homeland, but if they were gone, then, what would we do?

They strengthen us, indeed. May God forgive them (the West) and may God help us to forgive them more than that, and may He sow goodness in their hands and minds, God willing!

No more...

Thank you.

End of transcript.

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Vanessa Beeley is an independent journalist, peace activist, photographer and associate editor at 21st Century Wire. Vanessa was a finalist for one of the most prestigious journalism awards - the 2017 Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism - whose winners have included the likes of Robert Parry in 2017, Patrick Cockburn, Robert Fisk, Nick Davies and the Bureau for Investigative Journalism team. Please support her work at her [Patreon](#) account.

Featured image: Mother of Majed Monif Qiddeeseh during his funeral. (Photo: Mhardeh)

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