

diaspora

Love, Resistance, Prison and Freedom.

Written by : The liberated detainee\ Rafat Khalil Hamadona .

Translated by: Sawsan Hassan Abu Saada

Prison's literature and thought series(8)

The novel: "Diaspora ...Love, Resistance, Prison and Freedom".

Author : The liberated detainee\ Rafat Khalil Hamadonah.

Publisher: Mohjat Al Quds Institution

Gaza, Palestine

Second published- revised updated edition

Year of publish: April, 2015

The indexing has been done in the Ministry of culture-Palestine.

Legal deposit No: 217/2015

The opinions in the books and studies published by the institution are those of the authors alone and don't necessarily reflect views of Mohjat Al Quds Institution

All rights reserved

In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful

﴿To those against whom war is made, permission is given(to fight) because they are wronged,- and verily, Allah is most powerful for their aid,- (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right,- (for no cause) except that they say, "Our Lord is Allah.. Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly aid those who aid his(cause);-for verily Allah is full of Strength, Exalted in Might,(able to force His Will﴾

(Sura The Pilgrimage, Ayah 39-40)

Dedications

- To the soul of our prophet Mohammed (PBUH)
- To the women and men, detainees behind bars.
- To the Palestinian martyrs , the wounded and supporters .
- To my beloved parents,loyal brothersand sisters, sincere wife.
- To all those who contribute to the achievement of this work, I dedicate this
work.

Chapter 1

Nasr was crying when he looked at the Palestine map and as all people, he was dreaming of freedom, sovereignty and independence. He was in love Jerusalem, his birthplace, remembering his childhood, the Dome of the Rock, and Jerusalem's lofty unwavering walls with its mythic pride.

Nasr felt guilty when he agreed to his mother's advice who forced him to leave for fear of being killed by Israeli occupation which is against all aspects of life and thirsty for bloodshed .

“Your maternal uncle Khalid was martyred because he refused to leave Al Majdal city during the Nakba (1948 catastrophe) and I do not want to lose you too ” the mother said .

“ Does anything equal the loss of Jerusalem, Mum?” Nasr said.

“ Jerusalem is protected by Allah, and if you want my appease, you have to go off to Jordan before being killed as Khaild is still in my memory.” she replied.

Upon his father's intervention Nasr agreed to leave with his family to the Wehdat Camp of refugees in Jordan. Because Nasr's father had a dream to return to his birthplace ,Al Majdal city, he kept the key of his home and documents of land but he died before his dream came true.

Nasr had lived with his mother away from his home but he never forgot Al Mjdal city or his birthday place Jerusalem, where he lived his childhood.

Nasr was married to a Palestinian lady who lived as immigrated enduring the diaspora life. However, his wife came from a well- off family.

Nasr felt guilty when he saw the Palestinian resistance fighters sacrifice themselves for the sake of Allah and their country , so he decided to go back home. He had no objection from his mother because he convinced her of the duty of sacrifice but the obstacle was with his wife who refused to leave her parents and brothers, after she had known her husband's intention; she was afraid of being alone and the mysterious end of their life

Nasr must choose either between his sacred duty towards his country or his wife, the pleasure of worldly life. A choice between Palestine, Jerusalem and Al Majdal or the future which saves body from diaspora agonies.

“Latifa, I will join resistance and go back home, you have to choose either me or staying here, what do you choose?” Nasr said to his wife after he had failed to convince here.

For some days, Latifa hesitated thinking about the coming days if she returned with her husband away from her parents and brothers. Finally she refused to return feeling unhappy for the parting of her husband.

Nasr had no choice, but he had to separate from her on the basis of mutual understanding. .

The hardest moments in his life were when he was saying goodbye to his mother who surrendered to her son's persistence to go to his homeland; she tightly embraced and cuddled him, cried and cried. She knew that this is the last meeting for both of them . Nasr started to calm his mother and assured her that he will be fine and will not be late in sending messages and news of his new life

Nasr kissed his mother's head and hands and called her to be pleased with him.

The mother put her hands on his head and called Allah to protect him. Nasr ended the meeting by saying “there is no God but Allah”, “Mohammed is the messenger of Allah,” his mother replied.

Nasr returned to his home with faith, determination. Immediately when he arrived to Palestine, he joined the resistance members hoping of returning to Al Majdal city, his birthplace. Al Majdal city is an amazing, historic city with its beauty, people, and actions of all times. He felt comfortable when he heard about the great rewards of resistance in Al Majdal and was flounced when he remembered the transferring of Al Husin's head to the city . He found the place a beacon of science and knowledge headed by Sheikh Ibn Hajar Al Asqalani . In the city he inspired the prowess of the great Muslim Salah Al Deen Al Ayoubi. How beautiful is this land, with its sky, sea, oranges, grapes, figs, olives and its market, masjed (mosque) and crochet craft , the main job of the citizens of Al Majdal.

Nasr swore either to defend his country, including Jerusalem, Al Majdal and all parts of Palestine or to get martyred

Jerusalem was the birthplace and childhood memories of Nasr. Nevertheless, he did not enjoy these memories with his family and relatives who migrated from Al Majdal to Gaza city where Gazans welcomed the new comers and shared them their living, hard life and Al jihad.

Days after the separation, Latifa discovered that she was pregnant. Later she gave birth to a baby girl called Intisar, a name chosen to mark her husband's memory.

Before leaving Nasr had never known that his wife was pregnant . After months he had to marry because of loneliness; he was married to a lady called Neama who later gave birth to a baby boy called Rafiq.

Nasr spent his life in resistance along with Palestinian freedom fighters who refused all aspects of humiliation caused by Israeli occupation; they inflicted heavy casualties upon the Israeli occupation. Nasr was known for his encouragement and for carrying out resistance operations along with Mujahedeen (Freedom fighters), leading to the killing and wounding of a number of Israeli soldiers and settlers.

At that stage Nasr had to be less involved in resistance and to hide away from the Israeli police. However, he did not like that feeling ashamed, for his mother and previous wife, Latifa. Nasr became a target for the Israeli police so he began moving.

Nasr's house came the target of the Israel forces with agents providing news about his movements, and being away from the house, the only communication between Nasr, his wife and his child was through a woman called Mahboba.

Chapter 2

Ibraheem was Nasr's friend. They were together in resistance, Jihad, pain and hope.

(1) Al Hajja Mahboba is Ibraheem's wife who used to make food, wash their clothes and sometimes transfer weapons and messages for them.

In a few days, Nasr knew about his son's illness and called his wife to take their son to the hospital. Nasr did not hesitate to help his wife and save his only beloved son.

Quickly, Nasr came to his home with his friend Ibraheem, took his son and wife and went to the hospital. Few moments later, the Israeli commander of the area was able to find out about the news and brought a military force which made an ambush for Rafiq's car on the outskirts of the Wadi Al Jaouz, village between Nasr's home in the old town and Al Matlaa hospital on Al tour mountain.

Suddenly, the treacherous Israeli forces appeared and intercepted them. Mercilessly and indiscriminately they started shooting at the car, the mother hugged her sick son trying to protect him from getting hurt.

Ibraheem stopped the car and started shooting at the Israeli soldiers till he got hurt and died. Nasr opened the car's door trying to protect his wife and son but they screamed so loudly being afraid of the situation. Nasr got up and started to shoot at the soldiers.

He killed two of them and wounded the others before he got shot by them and died. The mother hugged and protected her child from the bullets going in all directions; she got shot and wounded but did not care about herself as she was trying to protect the child. Then finally she got killed while hugging her son between her arms.

(1) *AlHajj* is an annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca in KSA, and the word *Al Hajja* is used for women who performed *Al Hajj*.

shooting stopped after the killing of the three people . Few moments later the Israeli leader brought the (1) sheriff and dignitaries of the village to identify the three martyrs. The sheriff found the child alive in the arms of his mother and was not hurt ; he was just suffering from his illness. The sheriff held the child and he immediately recognized Ibraheem who was one of the citizens of the village and also did so with both the bodies of Nasr and his wife. At the end of the day, the martyrs were decorated with garlands, flowers and Palestinian flags, and a big funeral full of revolutionary slogans and joy was organized for them.

The word was like a bombshell on Nasr's mother who was afraid of this moment. Representatives of the national movements visited her after they had known of the killing of the three by the village's sheriff . Nasr's mother could not bear the word, she become ill and died feeling sorrow for the death of her son and his wife.

Rafiq lived as an orphan, deprived from his parents and his tribe that could not see or reach to their child.

Also, Nasr's mother left her grandchild Intisar as an orphan without seeing her father and giving her one love smile.

The word was like a bombshell on Nasr's mother who was afraid of this moment. Representatives national movements visited her after they had known of the killing of the three by the village's sheriff . Nasr's mother could not bear the word, she become ill and died feeling sorrow for the death of her son and his wife.

Rafiq lived as an orphan, deprived from his parents and his tribe that could not see or reach to their child.

.....

(1) Sheriff/ the law-enforcement officer of a county or other civil subdivision of a state.

Also, Nasr's mother left her grandchild Intisar as an orphan without seeing her father and giving her one love smile.

Intisar lived an easy stable life with her mother Latifa and her maternal uncles in Jordan.

Rafiq's health was stable after few days of the sheriff wife's nursing but the child had to be looked after by his mother's relatives because the sheriff's wife was an old lady and was suffering from many illnesses. Rafiq's maternal uncles were not known except one living in Romania but there was no way of finding out his address and making arrangements for the transferring of the child.

So, the sheriff of the village had to gather the notables of the village and briefed them about Rafiq's situation and the need for adopting the child. The sheriff showed the notables Rafiq's belonging including his mother's gold and money collected after selling the family's car and home.

The sheriff was concerned about the non-acceptance of the villagers to adopt the child knowing nothing about him except the terrible incident.

Poor, unemployment and hard life were other stumbling blocks. The sheriff had no choice but to tell Al Hajja Mahboba about the child's misery. Al Hajja Mahboba had not recovered yet after her husband's killing with whom she had lived the most beautiful days and memories.

Al Hajja Mahboba was a clever, strong, wise woman outperforming men in her character and resilience. She has never been to Haajj; however, her mother was pregnant when she went to Haajj. So her mother and villagers called her AL Hajja Mahboba since her birth.

AL Hajja Mahboba did not refuse adopting Rafiq, the child of her husband's friend. She considered him as her son, who was three years older than him.

AL Hajja Mahboba had not received from the sheriff except the promise of help from the villagers. She lived her life with the two children despite receiving Rafiq's belongings from the sheriff but she refused to spend it. She went to her friend and neighbor Om Sami in order to work with her in her husband's field that was being planted by his family.

Abu Sami agreed and welcomed her to work and felt it was obligatory to help her.

Alhajja Mahboba was taking her two sons to the field, she had never discriminated between them in love, food, drink and clothing. Rafiq was treated just like Mohammed and had never known any mother except her.

Chapter Three

The family faced a very hard life in the absence of the breadwinner of the small family. Alhajja Mahboba did household chores in addition to looking after the two children. She taught them good behavior, good attitude, ethics, love of Allah, the prophet, Palestine, and the love of each grain of its sand and each drop of water. Rafiq had never recognized the reason behind the difference in names between the two brothers, which are formally registered in school, and when he came back home he was crying and asking his mother: why I have a different name than Mohammed, Mom? They called him Mohammed Ibraheem and called me Rafiq Nasr Al Asqalani.

Al Hajja Mahboba was waiting anxiously for the right moment for Rafiq to be old enough and able to understand so she could share with him the story of his parents.

“Listen to me carefully, Rafiq”. You are my beloved son and my soul, and you mean a lot to me and you bring me a lot of happiness. Mohammed is more than your brother, each of us have a story and you should know it. Your father and Mohammed’s father were very close friends, your father was a hero, was known among his friends as an example of sacrifice and trust; your father was martyred while protecting you and your mother from the Israeli soldiers. At the time of the incident, your mother did not care about herself and all what she wanted was to protect you even if she would sacrifice her life for that. She was killed while hugging you in her arms trying to protect you from the bullets of Israeli soldiers.. All of them were dead in that attack,” Al Hajja Mahboba said.

Rafiq understood his father and uncle's story and kept great admiration and love to his mother, Mahboba.

Mohammed and Rafiq arranged to identify the place of martyrdom of their parents and to write tombstone in their names for the record. The two brothers collected some small rocks and arranged them systematically. Then they put the tombstone epitaphic by their hands. The two brothers pledged to visit the site frequently and to read the Holy Quran in remembrance of their souls.

Al Hajja Mahboba worked twelve years in Abu Sami's field. One very hot afternoon she felt nausea and fell down, Abu Sami and his wife took her to the hospital. She

was diagnosed with an illness that will require her to bedrest for a few days. The doctor gave her medicine to be taken constantly.

Few days later Al Hajja Mahboba recovered and wanted to go back to work but again she felt the same symptoms . The two brothers understood their mother's case. Hence, they objected her out to work. Al Hajja Mahboba took pity on her sons whom she had a dream to teach them; she was concerned of the coming days because they were still young to face life.

‘‘You will not go to work, Mom‘ we are grown up and we can depend on ourselves, we will not forgive ourselves if anything bad happened to you, ’’ Mohammed said.

Al Hajja Mahboba's self-esteem made her endured the bitterness of the work of any of her sons rather than to take alms.

The two sons settled the score with their mothers who cried pity for them. The real struggle was between Mohammed who considered himself in charge of house as he was the eldest, and Rafiq who had manhood face, chivalry and love of the others, since he heard his parent's story from Al Hajja Mahboba, his belief in sacrifice and ethics increased, waiting the chance to act accordingly.

The attitude was not in favor of Rafiq because he was younger but he pledged to return favor to his mother and Mohammed. ‘‘You are smart at school, Mohammed. And your mother has a dream for you to be a doctor, if you love your mother, you have to make her dream come true to medicate her, don’t you want that?’’ Rafiq said to his brother.

‘‘Of course, I will medicate her by the money I collect,’’ Mohammed replied.

‘‘If you mean the money of work, both of us can do that, so you have to study,’’ Rafiq said.

Mohammed refused Rafiq's attempts and considered the matter had no need for more discussion. In the next day, Mohammed started cleaning and washing the cars in the roads using a rag and a bowl.

Rafiq went to Abu Sami and asked him to work in the field instead of his mother. Immediately, Abu Sami agreed because he knew the economic situation of this

family, being aware of Al Hajja Mahboba's attitude of not accepting any alms due to dignity. After one week of work, Mohammed came back with home needs and his mother's medicine.

As Al Hajja Mahboba felt happy because of constancy of her son but she felt pity and worry over his future.

And after one hour, Rafiq came back with some home needs and other medicine for his mother.

“What is this, Rafiq? And why you are late?” Mother asked.

“I found an amount of money, so I bought your medicine and those things” Rafiq said.

“You are liar Rafiq and I know that you have never lied,” Mother said.

She brought two school attendance reports, “You didn't go to school Rafiq for two weeks and I know why,” Mother said.

The mother embarrassed her son, wiped his tears and kissed him. “You are working, aren't you, Rafiq?” Mother said.

“Yes Mom, I am working instead of you in Abu Sami's field,” Rafiq said.

“Am I not a man, Rafiq?” Mohammed said angrily.

“On the contrary, I swore that I would not go to school and I would work till my mother got recovered,” Rafiq said.

AL Hajja Mahboba embraced her sons and felt proud of them.

Reluctantly, Mohammed agreed to go back to school and pay attention to his studies as he wanted to achieve the family's dream of being a doctor in order to treat the mother.

Chapter Four

Rafiq experienced many challenges throughout his life. He overcame some of them but fail on others. He had worked in his neighbor's farm for many years. At that time Al Hajja Mahboba was empowering him and giving him life experiences. She had never left him alone .On the contrary, she consoled him, straightened his behavior and taught him how to sacrifice, to be generous and love others. He grew up generous, modest, humble and loved by others. He was certainly a good example to his generation of youth in the village. Whenever Rafiq would feel down or sad, he would go to the Masjed Al Aqsa or to his mother.

Rafiq had never stopped studying or educating himself. He would always sit next to his brother in the evening, trying to watch and learn what he was doing so he could keep up his skills and knowledge.

Rafiq was giving his wages to his mother to buy home's needs. During those years she had never asked for help.

Rafiq's manhood features started appearing. He was handsome, young man with Reddish smooth hair, hazel eyes, white skin and moderate height and body. ‘‘Masha' Allah, (may Allah be the protector) you grew up and became a man,’’ Mother said to Rafiq one day.

Rafiq felt a little shy and his face turned red, he smiled. ‘‘Thanks to you Mom’’ Rafiq said.

‘‘And because of all what you did, people were very respectful for our privacy and never felt we needed any help,’’ Mother said.

In Al Hajja Mahboba's perspective, talking with Rafiq was a little embarrassing; however, she had to say it, ‘‘ Do you know why I worked in Abu Sami's farm before my sickness?’’ Mother said.

‘‘Yes Mom, because you knew his wife, sisters and daughters,’’ Rafiq said.

‘‘Do you know why you need another job today?’’ Mother said.

Rafiq understood what she meant, ‘‘You are right, I have to find another job because Abu Sami's daughters have grown up, young women,’’ Rafiq said.

“That is very good, I know it's hard for you but be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you,” Mother said.

Rafiq thanked Abu Sami for his support over the last years and excused him to find another job.

Abu Sami thanked Rafiq for his good behavior and called Allah to be with him.

Next morning, Rafiq woke up early, performed his dawn prayer and had a breakfast. Then kissed his mother's hand and went out.

Rafiq was looking for a job in many shops and factories but his efforts came to nothing. On that day, Rafiq did not care about himself or his fatigue. He proceeded with his search but he was unlucky and couldn't find anything. While he was walking, some vegetable and fruits street vendors got his attention, Rafiq came back home aggrieved.

“May God give you wellness, Mom” Rafiq said.

“When did you arrive? Did you find a job?” Mother said.

“No, but I think of buying vegetables and fruits from Abu Sami's field” Rafiq said.

“Good idea” Mother said.

Rafiq made a small trestle and bought a scale and pockets; he started work in the market of the old town. For a number of weeks and during the same time of Mohammed's preparation for the General Secondary School Certificate, Rafiq did well in his job. One day, after few hours of arriving to work, the municipality along with the Zionist police who usually crack down the people of Jerusalem imposed fines for all who sold without having licenses, threatened of detaining anyone breaking the rules.

Rafiq did not believe in quitting his job for that reason so he was still incumbent of his job but the municipality and police broke into the market and started to detain people but Rafiq left before they got to him.

Rafiq considered the next day as of the opportunity for the municipality and police to implement the new laws. He came back to work in the third day. Suddenly, the policed came and arrested him.

Al Hajja Mahboba fell down when she heard the news. Her neighbors looked after her until Mohammed came back from the police station. The commander ordered Mohammed to make a written statement that Rafiq would not work or sell without a license then he freed his brother with financial penalty.

The two brothers came back home. Rafiq was not worry about what took place early as his only concern was what he was going to do tomorrow and how he could secure home's needs.

Mother embraced and kissed her son and calmed him down so as not to worry about tomorrow as Allah will always provide.

At that night, Rafiq continued to think about the coming days, then he performed (')prayer of need relying on Allah and went to sleep.

In the morning, while he was looking for a job, he saw a young lady holding some newspapers and tobacco box in front of her.

Rafiq went to her “Can I ask you a question?” Rafiq said.

She nodded her head and said . “Do you earn enough money from this job?” Rafiq said.

“Not all days,” she answered.

“So, what is making you to do it?” Rafiq said.

“My father is blind and I am his only daughter, my mother died when I was born and I work to earn a living,” she answered.

.....
(') *A prayer of need: It is essentially to rise one's need to Allah Most High, by performing ritual wudu (ablution), praying 2 or 4 rakats (prostrations) and then making whole-hearted supplications to Allah.*

Suddenly, “Who is that Manal?” a loud voice interrupted her.

“A young man wants to buy,” She answered.

Rafiq knew the lady's name, he bought one tobacco pack and asked the girl, “Do you work here daily?” Rafiq said.

“Yes,” she answered.

Rafiq had never smoked before and was not planning on smoking at all. His mother had always advised him not to smoke. While he was coming back home thinking of Manal's situation similar to him he saw a dustman smoking; Rafiq gave him the tobacco pack.

The next day, Rafiq went out early looking for a new job; he went to a big sewing factory.

“Do you need workers?” Rafiq asked the manager of the factory.

“Unfortunately, the factory is just for ladies,” The manager said.

“Is it possible if a lady comes to work?” Rafiq said.

“Initially, we can teach her first. We will pay her a low wage, then we will raise it as she makes progress,” The manager said.

Rafiq went to the place in which he met Manal; he found Manal with her blind father.

“Hello,” Rafiq said.

“Hello, who are you?” Manal's father said.

“I am Rafiq, the son of the two martyrs who were martyred on the crossroad of Wadi Al Jouz before 15 n years and the son of Al Hajja Mahboba,” Rafiq said.

“Welcome my dear, how can I help you?” Manal's father said.

“I was looking for a job because of my bad economic situation, and as I know, your situation is not much different from mine, and because Manal's work in the street is not appropriate, I found a sewing factory. She can learn how to sew and as she

progresses she'll make more money. As for me, I can rent the whole box as a from you, what do you think?" Rafiq said.

"It is up to Manal," Manal's father said.

Manal agreed and all of them went to the sewing factory.

Manal worked in the sewing factory and Rafiq expanded his job by selling more kinds of newspapers, magazines, tobacco and other things.

Manal's father was thankful to Rafiq. Manal had a warm feeling for Rafiq's kind heart and his initiative and keen interest to her.

Rafiq continued to check on Manal and her father whenever the chance was possible.

Chapter Five

The most happiest day of Al HajjaMahboba was when her son Mohammed succeeded in the General Secondary School Certificate and had average qualifying him to study medicine in a Jordanian university.

Mohammed recognized that his family could not bear expenses of the college of medicine, so he conferred with his mother and his brother to study at a Palestinian university for saving money and for a pity of his brother.

“Put thy trust in Allah, may Allah help you,” Mother said.

“ Which university are you talking about? I pledged and now I am pledging again that you will join a college of medicine, you will achieve your ambition to medicate your Mom, do you forget that?” Rafiq said angrily.

“ I didn't forget, Rafiq but...!” Mohammed said.

“ But why, you don't consider me a man of trust ?” Rafiq said.

“ Never, but studying medicine and living abroad need costs and I know our economic situations,” Mohammed said.

“Don't worry doctor, you have to register for travel tomorrow and all your needs will be met in advance ,” Rafiq said.

Mohammed embraced his brother for his attitude and he considered that a debt for him all his life.

Rafiq talked to his mother and his brother about Manal, Al Hajja Mahboba felt that Rafiq had feelings of love and admiration towards Manal.

Al Hajja Mahboba asked Rafiq to identify Manal, she was a very handsome lady in addition to her morals and piety .

Al Hajja Mahboba said to Manal that Rafiq had feelings of love towards her and he asked for identifying her, Al Hajja Mahboba asked Manal her opinion about Rafiq, Manal smiled and her face turned reddish, at that time Manal's father came back home.

“Do you know who is our guest?” Manal said to her father.

“Welcome to any one visiting us,” Manal's father replied.

“She is Rafiq's mother,” Manal said.

“Welcome to Men's Mother, may Allah protect him and we will never forget his kindness,” Manal's father said to Rafiq's mother.

“Can we be one family?” Rafiq's mother interrupted him.

“We won't find better than you, you are the best,” Manal's father replied.

“Do you know Rafiq's story?” Rafiq's mother said.

“Yeah, and I remember that day when we went out for the sake of martyrs,” Manal's father said.

“On blessings of Allah,” Rafiq's mother said.

Al Hajja Mahboba came back with the happy tidings to her son receiving the tidings with a lot of happiness and satisfaction..

At that night Al Hajja Mahboba brought Rafiq's belongings and put them in front of him.

“What's this Mom?” Rafiq said.

“This is your right,” Rafiq's mother replied.

“What right are you talking about?” Rafiq asked.

“Your belongings, which the Sheriff left with me till you grew up, they include your mother's gold and money collected after selling your family's car and house,” Rafiq's mother said.

“If this is my right after all these years, so what is your right, Mom?” Rafiq asked.

“I took my right of what you are suffering and what you will be suffering in the coming days,” Rafiq's mother replied.

Crying, Rafiq kissed the gold of his mother, ‘I will never desert it Mom and it'll be weeding's gold of Manal, keep these money for the coming days Mom,’’ Rafiq said.

Mohammed congratulated his brother. Just a few days of feeling sad and crying, Mohammed said goodbye to his family, then he travelled. The expenses of the College of Medicine were huge although Mohammed lived abstinent life. He was feeling a pity of his brother who was walking for a long distance from students' dorms to campus and the minimum food and clothes were enough for him, despite of all that, the basic needs including university tuition and books were too much to Rafiq.

Al Hajja Mahboba was compelled by Rafiq to send to Mohammed from the money kept until it's almost over. Rafiq was going for his work early morning till the evening; by the time, he needed a help and he felt of hard life. Al Hajja Mahboba prepared food for Rafiq after returning from his work, she saw him anxious because of his inability to provide university's installment for Mohammed, she felt sorrow for him, ‘‘ You should left tobacco selling to be blessed by Allah, you are working in suspicious job and knotty livelihood,’’ his mother said to him. Rafiq did not converse his mother, he was thinking of tomorrow, performed two (1) Rakats, read some verses of the holy Quran, put his thy trust on Allah and slept.

Acting on his mother's advice, while he was looking for a new job, he saw a group of students around sandwiches and stationery's street hawker.

Rafiq decided to make pushcart with a glass box including stationery, foods, juices and sweets, he started selling in front of another secondary school. Rafiq made it and he collected university installments which were a bit late. A new canteen was opened in that school just after four months, and the school management asked students just to buy from that canteen. Rafiq's work was stopped, so he went to the city market and bought some carvings as camels, locketts and other archaeological pieces, he made for waves of tourists who came as worshipers or visitors, both inside and out Palestine.

.....
(1) *Rakats, consisting of the prescribed movements and words followed by Muslims while offering prayers to Allah.*

Palestinian flared Intifada for the hope of freedom and independence, they made a marvel by the stone, and by their will braved the Israeli occupation.

Palestinian participating in the blessed Intifada, include: employees, students, workers, women, young men, elders and children. Demonstrations broke out across Palestine, sacrifices and heroism were translated in its camps.

The best of Palestinian people gave their lives to save Palestine; thousands were martyred, arrested, wounded and hundreds of homes were destroyed and closed during the 1987 Intifada. Poverty was the master among Palestinian but they were patient, they had never complained and they continued their blessed Intifada with glory, they became world example for sacrifice.

Rafiq witnessed Al Masjed Al Aqsa massacre October, 1990 in which more than 20 Palestinians were martyred for protecting Al Masjed Al Aqsa, Al Haram and the Dome of the Rock and hundreds were wounded during clashes. As a result of that, all over Palestine flared up angrily, the number of martyrs and wounded increased and tens of resisters fired giving their lives for revenge, there was nothing left to use in Jihad.

The Israeli occupation recognized what Jerusalem means to Muslims generally and to Palestinian particularly, Jerusalem is more valuable than soul because it was mentioned in the holy Quran, and one of its (1)ayahs which Muslims recite in their prayer, also it was mentioned in Prophetic Hadiths. Jerusalem, is the birthplace of the prophets, the land of religion and messages, core of civilizations and it is in the center of the good earth which Allah blessed, resurrection land(2)Al Isra' and Mi'raj, the first of two Qiblahs (Direction of Prayer in Islam) and the Third of Holy Mosque.

.....
(1)Ayah, The word is usually used to refer to a verse of the Qur'an. An ayah is the smallest unit of the Quran.

(2)(The night journey and ascension), Al-Isra means the night journey when Muhammad was reported to have taken from Mecca to the Masjed of Aqsa, in Jerusalem. Al-Miraj means Muhammad's ascension from the Masjed of Aqsa to heaven and his visit to paradise and hell.

Jerusalem is still a standard for great powers and a center for greedy and occupiers. As a result of the Intifada, the tourism decreased in Jerusalem forcing Rafiq to desert his job and looking for another one. At that time, AL Hajja Mahboba was supporting and empowering Rafiq, she never left him lonely, always she was remembering him in the saying of Allah the Almighty ﴿So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief

* Verily, with every difficulty there is relief. ﴿Sura Al ar, Ayah (5-6)

Rafiq's meetings with his fiancée were few, he just visited her to ask about her and her father, their meetings did not express feelings of love as much as discussions about the hard life they lived.

Rafiq drew a picture of optimistic and beautiful future to Manal repeating Al Hajja Mahboba's words of removing the hard times and a bright future awaiting them.

Rafiq came back home holding a warm greeting to his Mom from Manal, “Do you meet Manal?” Al Hajja Mahboba asked Rafiq.

“Sometimes,” Rafiq answered.

“Do you really love her?” She asked him.

“Yes,” Rafiq answered.

“If so, aren't you afraid for her?” She asked him.

“From what?” Rafiq said.

“Gossip, we agreed with her father to engage her but without marriage contract you are a strange in other's eyes, so you have to make marriage contract or to leave her.” She said.

“But how? I am not ready,” Rafiq said.

“It's necessary, she will be your wife and you have to protect her, you and your children from gossip,” Rafiq's mother said.

Rafiq was convinced and arranged with Manal betrothal time, he gave her a dowry in the engagement party, his mother's gold, the most valuable memory.

It was the most beautiful day in Rafiq's life, Al Hajja Mahboba had the happiest time when her son achieved his dream and engaged to a suitable and good lady he chose.

Rafiq's meetings with Manal increased after the engagement, talked about future and got over hard life.

Chapter Six

All world liberals sympathized and were out in solidarity with Palestinians in their Jihad during the first Intifada, the most supporting activities were in universities lead by Palestinian diaspora's students.

Intisar was studious, she grew up under the auspices of her maternal uncles and her mother who did not re-marry, she reared her daughter on morality and talked to her about her martyred father who preferred homecoming for resistance rather than the luxury of worldly life.

Intisar took pride in her father following his approach as long as she could, she participated in martyrs' commemoration celebrated by the university solidary with Palestinian holding her father's photo.

Mohammed saw Intisar in the commemoration, talked to her as she was his colleague in college of medicine, she was studying physiotherapy and she was studious.

Meetings between Mohammed and Intisar increased, they identified each other and they had feelings of love towards each other but Mohammed held against himself and his feelings, he restricted the relation in studying because of his bad economic situations and he wanted to spend his time just in education fulfillment for his brother who scarified his education, ease and his pleasure for him.

Rafiq had to work as a porter in the narrow market of the city carrying traders' goods from one shop to other and carried the heavy purchases from the market to the park, he was working all the day without rest facing the dangers of car with his big bike.

Al Hajja Mahboba was crying and feeling sorrow for Rafiq who lived orphan, lost his family, education and ease, she compared him with his generations who were looking after themselves and their education, despite that, Rafiq was a good son, he did not complain but he felt responsibility towards his mother, brother and Manal.

One afternoon, Rafiq felt fatigue while he was holding a heavy burden on his bike, a few moments, Rafiq lost his control and his bike fancied and pranged with a fast car in the middle of the road. Both of them were unable to skip the accident, the goods were scattered everywhere and the car pushed Rafiq for some meters. After the driver had stopped the car, he went quickly to Rafiq, passersby clustered around Rafiq

whose leg was broken and had some wounds in his body and his hands, his head's blood spilled, the driver took Rafiq to Al Maqased charity hospital, worrying about Rafiq's life .

Rafiq felt of the driver who never left him after the accident, police came to the hospital after a few hours and questioned both of them, Rafiq acquitted the driver and presented thanks for his good behavior. The driver was surprised from Rafiq's attitude and he wanted to identify him. “ Thanks be to Allah for coming back safe, Allah bless you, thank you for your attitude, who are you to inform your family?” the driver asked Rafiq.

“I am Rafiq Al Asqalani, a refugee from Al Majdal, I live with my sick Mom in the old town, I don't care about what happened to me but what will happen to my Mom when she sees me” Rafiq said to the driver.

“ Don't worry, I am Abu Yusuf, catering wholesaler, I will go to the doctor to give permit to come back home,” Abu Yusuf said.

Abu Yusuf brought the charge permit and returned Rafiq back to his home after he received hospital treatment.

Impatiently, Al Hajja Mahboba was waiting Rafiq as he was too late, food prepared for him became cold, she read Holy Qran and sought refuge from any evil while she was sitting on the out stairs of the home.

The car arrived to the old small home, Rafiq stepped out of the car, leant on Abu Yusuf who was ill and tired; Al Hajja Mahboba charged off with sudden and fear when she saw him.

“Thanks be to Allah for coming back safe, what happened?” Al Hajja Mahboba said.

“ Don't worry, he's okay, thanks for Allah,” Abu Yusuf replied.

Al Hajja Mahboba redressed herself before the guest, she helped her son to lay in his bed.

Rafiq introduced the guest explaining what had happened to him and what Abu Yusuf did, Al Hajja Mahboba thanked him, Abu Yusuf presented a sum of money as a compensation for goods, bike and for home needs in the duration of Rafiq's illness.

Rafiq looked at his smiling mother, then;

“Allah bless you, we present thankfulness for your good behave, its act of Allah, praise be to him after all,” Rafiq's mother said to Abu Yusuf.

“ but I sensed your economic situation from Rafiq and I just do my duty, may another one asked me for money and determined to get even, and I am well-off” Abu Yusuf replied .

“ May Allah bless and enlarge the sustenance of you, we are also well-off,” Al Hajja Mahboba said to Abu Yusuf.

Abu Yusuf said goodbye for them, he saw a good behavior, ethics and all good values in them.

Rafiq admired with his mother's answer who seeded these principles in his mind since he was a child.

Manal knew of the accident, she hastened with her father to Al Hajja Mahboba's home to check on her fiancé.

Every day, after Manal finished her work, she was coming to Al Hajja Mahboba's home to help and talk to Rafiq, she was making him happy, Rafiq did not feel poor in the company of her.

Manal was known of Rafiq's bad economic situations and his need for the money for the education of his brother, medicine of his mother and home's needs; at the same time, she recognized Rafiq's dignity, in hesitating, at the absence of Al Hajja Mahboba, she held a sum of money saving for herself,

“How many times did you help me and my father, Rafiq?” Manal asked Rafiq.

“ Excuse me, what do you mean?” Rafiq replied.

“Actually, I knew your economic situations more than anyone and your absence from work will affect your mother and brother, you presented a favor previously; my love, we are one soul, please accept the money,” Manal said to Rafiq.

“ These money is a debt till your conditions improve,” Manal said to Rafiq with a gentle smile.

Rafiq was pleased and made Manal proud, he recognized his good choice, “ I will accept it if you accept an equal present,” Rafiq said.

Door's home was knocked before she had answered, it was Abu Yusuf with his wife bringing some presents. Even Rafiq hated the accident but it was a reason for good, Rafiq recognized Allah saying ﴿ But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you﴾ Ayah 216, Sura Al-Baqara.

Social relationship between the two families has improved, Al Hajja Mahboba identified Abu Yusuf's wife, she knew that her husband is rich, suffering from heart disease, he was unable to work, he was called Abu Yusuf after his father, they had three girls and no boys.

By the time, the relation between Rafiq and Abu Yusuf became strong, they knew each other very well,

“ I need an active, ambitious and honest young man, as you, in my work, Allah gave me money but he doesn't gave me a son, believe me, you're like my own son, I ask you to work in my storages and I will give you a lot of money, by the time I will give you ratio and you will not be just be a worker, What do you think?” Abu Yusuf said to Rafiq.

“ I will give you my answer after a discussion with my Mom,” Rafiq said to Abu Yusuf.

Abu Yusuf and his wife got in their luxury car, Manal said goodbye for her fiancé and Rafiq sat with his Mom discussing Abu Yusuf's offer, he asked her about her opinion““ Yes, you need a work, if I know that his offer is a help or charity, I will refuse this work, put your trust on Allah and give him your acceptance,” Al Hajja Mahboba said to Rafiq.

Rafiq got well and the first steps for him were towards Al Haram in the blessedAqsa, prayed and thanked Allah then he went to Abu Yusuf to start the work.

Tightly, Abu Yusuf embraced Rafiq, both of them needed each other in work and in life.

After a few months' love, trust and respect became common between both of them, they became partners, Rafiq understood all trade details and identified the traders and had experiences of Abu Yusuf after his consent.

Life opened its arms to Rafiq who had never been driven to its Pleasures, his mother told him that his coming days will be harder, Rafiq thanked Allah for his blessing, *Thanking Blessing is More Difficult Than Patience*. As long as she was remembering him in the relation with Allah and that he had to spend his money in charity.

Rafiq thanked his mother for her advice, he felt with poor people around him remembering his need in the past and the mercy of Allah for him, he did a good behavior, provided a help for poor people and supported them to meet their needs.

Rafiq took his mother to the best doctors and she got well, he booked two tickets for Hajj, one for his mother and he took the other ticket with a sum of money and presents to repay the debt for Manal who never left him in his distress.

Rafiq knocked the door of Manal's home,

“Who is that, Manal?” Manal's father asked.

“It's Rafiq, Dad,” Manal said.

“you're most welcome my son,” Manal's father said.

Rafiq gave the presents to Manal, she thanked him' after they had talked, Rafiq gave the money to Manal and thanked her, Manal refused to take more than she gave him but Rafiq remembered her with the agreement, “Didn't we agree to return the money with a present, this is your present. The present of my uncle Al Shikh Hassan is a ticket to perform Hajj,” Rafiq said to Manal and her father.

Al Shikh Hassan tried to argue Rafiq but his efforts came to nothing, Rafiq told him that this is a thankfulness for Allah for his blessing, not a charity.

Manal and her father accepted the presents and both of them felt happy with Rafiq's behavior who used to be generous since they knew him.

Manal noticed that Rafiq wanted to say something,

“ I think you want to say something, Rafiq,” Manal said to Rafiq.

“ Yes, now, I see it is not appropriate to go for work, if it is necessary, what about working with me, I need you my secretary,” Rafiq said to Manal.

Manal's father convinced with Rafiq's offer and Manal too. After Rafiq left them, he deposited a large amount of money in his brother's account in Jordan and called him:

“ How are you Mohammed and how is your study?” Rafiq asked Mohammed.

“ Thanks be to Allah, my study is excellent, Rafiq, how is my Mom?” Mohammed replied.

“ Don't worry my dear, she's okay and call Allah for you, I sent you a sum of money, so don't skimp on yourself anymore, I have a lot of money so learn and enjoy your time,” Rafiq said to Mohammed.

“ Thanks a lot, Rafiq, I ask Allah to enable me to do you favor,” Mohammed said.

“ This is bounty of Allah, take care of yourself and your study,” Rafiq said.

As unusual, Mohammed invited his colleague, Intisar, who participated him in Student's Activity, for a cup of juice,

“ I see you happy today,” Intisar said to Mohammed.

“ I am happy because Allah blessed my brother, Rafiq,” Mohammed said to Intisar.

“ Do you have a brother called Rafiq?” Intisar asked Mohammed.

“ yep, he sacrificed his life, pleasure, education, ease for me, imagine that I phoned my friends asking for him without his knowledge, all of them praised him,” Mohammed told Intisar.

“Rafiq is the idol of all, even elders, children, men and young men of the village, he lived as an orphan, depraved, faced hard life, he cried most nights without a complain except to Allah, I was seeing him crying when my Mom was ill and he was saying to me, “ I am ready to sell my blood and to work any job even if it is hard, to provide her medicine,” when life became hard, he was heading straight for Masjed, prayer, Quran, now Allah blessed him and gave him a lot of money, he built a new house and bought a car, medicated our Mom and spent money for my education, today he called me and asked me not to skimp on myself anymore.

A few days, my Mom told me that his money is for charity, he spent his money for poor people, and Allah blessed him ten equals, he didn't hesitate helping elderly women as his Mom.

Rafiq is not generous just with his money but with his initiatives, wise and good behavior. As long as he settled disputes between people in the village, he is the first in wedding presenting money as a gift, bringing t sheep for wedding lunch and decorating streets and wedding cars himself, he considers the wedding as if it his own.

Rafiq is the first in paying condolence, bringing tent, chairs, reciters and condoling the bereaved. Rafiq visited injuries at hospital, sons of martyrs with or without occasions, asking for detainees' families, helping each young men by his money and experience till he meet his needs. Rafiq is the son of all villagers, I wish you meet him one day.

Intisar wished if she could identify Mohammed's brother but the long distance was the an obstacle.

All village's women wished if they adopted Rafiq when he was a baby by the time they refused the Shireff offer of adopting him. Village's women envied Al Hajja Mahboba for Rafiq and the good moral and behavior.

Chapter Seven

Manal arrived at Rafiq's office next to the storerooms, love between them was increasing with each drop of his sweat making sure of safety with his trust and good will.

Young men of the village recognized Rafiq and trusted him, they asked him when they needed help for providing money and weapons and securing resistance at the peak of the blessing Intifada.

Martyrs blood was boiling in Rafiq's body hoping this demand for revenge over the killers of his parents, his uncle and all Martyrs. It was Rafiq's chance to approve his loyalty and love to Jerusalem, Al Mjdal and all Palestine, he deducted a permanent part of his salary for resistance supporting. After a few months, one of the members of a resistance group was killed and others were detained and chased.

Rafiq felt threatened when the contact person of the group was detained so he left his home towards one of his friends. After a few days, a big force of Israeli occupation invaded Al Hajja Mahboba and his fiancée's homes in addition to his office and storerooms but their efforts came to nothing.

Rafiq recognized that he was wanted to the Israeli occupation so his hard life started again, so he went for hiding, moving from one home to another and from one place to another to .

Rafiq met his fiancée knowing his event, he took to convince her to leave him rather than a hunted person waiting martyrdom or detention, Manal cried for hearing that, “ I have never and will never know or marry any other one, you are a hero, heroes were not be left alone, who scarified himself and his life for his country, absolutely will do more for his wife and children, don't say these words again, we are together even after death, never to part, ” Manal said reproached Rafiq.

Mohammed graduated from the college of medicine and left Intisar, they loved each other but living abroad and their situation were obstacles , Mohammed was welcomed by the villagers, he patronized his mother as he dreamt and he met Rafiq secretly many times, Mohammed was worried about Rafiq and his future.

Al Hajja Mahboba insisted to see her son, so Mohammed identified Rafiq's friends to guide him, Rafiq was more longing for his Mom, brother and fiancée but he was afraid for them against Zionists occupiers who may excruciate or get even with them.

Rafiq as best as he could tried not to meet anyone to be in the safe side, he kept clear of his mother for some days to save himself from spies, he refused villagers' offer to hide him in their homes so as not to be hurt by Israeli occupation who are against all aspects of life and thirsty for bloodshed, destroying homes, killing pedestrians and arresting with and without reason.

It was cold and dark night, Rafiq used to spend his nights under a grocery's umbrella, inside a car, deserted home or cavern in the surrounding mountains.

Rafiq did not consider his money a pleasure of worldly life and would not sell his faith and country for worldly goods but he was raised up with good values, modesty, so his chasing with its austerity was part of a sea of pain that will run smiley and it was a phase of mortal life.

He used to consider people's love as his account in life, his wage for charity he made as the afterlife and the satisfaction of his mother as the blessing of this world and Hereafter.

Rafiq used to trust people but he did not trust the few traitors who sold their country and faith for a little money spying on their people in favor of brutal occupation, those traitors allied with the devil in killing resistance fighters and people of honor, made mischief in the land and undo weak people who need work, travel, money, medicine or education.

For necessity, Rafiq moved from one place to another by his friend's car, they were a few moments till he heard shooting, clashing and demonstrations, there were the villagers fighting back against the Israeli army sieging the area after it was able to know Rafiq's place.

Demonstrators went out armed with their will, love and trust to protect Rafiq who had never hesitated helping and protecting them at any time.

Al Hajja Mahboba praised Allah for Rafiq's safety, she was impatient for seeing her son and breathing a sigh of relief after the attempt to detain him, she asked his friends

that she wanted to see him, Rafiq agreed to meet his mother because he missed her, his brother coming back home and his fiancée.

The occupation's spies monitored around the hour Al Hajja Mahboba's home who might think to meet her son and it was her chance, she took some food, clothes and blankets, she met him at a deserted place.

She was surprised of her son's situation sleeping on floor in open air, eating a little of food, with his face becoming yellowish as a result of vigil, fatigue and hungry.

Rafiq hugged his mother, she left him patient, satisfied, submitted to Allah. She exhorted him continuation of Salat (prayer), (1) Qiyaam al-Layl (night prayer) and reading Suras of the Holy Quran, (Sincerity, Daybreak and Mankind), protecting him from evils.

Information came to the Israeli intelligence after following Rafiq's mother who might have gone to meet him, when she came back, Rafiq left the place after he had recognized the possibility of sieging him.

He looked at car's mirror which he was driving alone, he saw a dubious car following him, he suspected it, drove fast and the car followed him quickly, they shot him immediately. He fled from the car after he became at risk, they got him a serious injury.

(1) *Qiyaam al-Layl (Night prayer), Qiyaam' means 'standing' and 'Qiyaam al-Layl' means 'standing in night. In the Islamic terminology, both terms refer to 'the voluntary night prayer, whose time extends after the Isha prayer (the last of the five obligatory prayers, whose time extends from the disappearance of the reddish light in the sky until the middle of the night) until dawn.*

A pedestrian came quickly to rescue him but the car arrived and they abducted Rafiq. It's been just a day, his friend did not meet him, it had never dawned on them that he could be detained, they missed him after two days but nothing was known about him, they asked his mother confirming that she met him and he didn't tell her anything.

His family and friends continued asking and looking for Rafiq but their efforts were of little avail. Two days passed, Mohammed was worried about his brother, the most one he loved, he looked for him at all hospitals and asked all his friends about him.

Al Hajja Mahboba informed the Red Cross and Human Rights organizations, one of these organizations invited her after the attendance of that a man who said that he had seen Rafiq during his arrest but he did not recognize his name, the two parties met to hear the man's testimony.

“ The man I saw was in 20s, wearing a black pants, black coat and white scarf around his neck,” the man said

“ Yes, he is my son Rafiq, then, what happened?” Al hajja Mahboba disrupted him.

“ A white Peugeot car was chasing and shot him, he left his car in the crossroads, they injured his leg and I hurried to help him but they came before me and took him, ”the man said.

“ Were they soldiers? Did he bleed?” Al Hajja Mahboba asked the man.

“ Don't worry about Rafiq,” the man said to Al Hajja Mahboba.

But she was still worried about him.

Mohammed returned his mother home and he reassured her about Rafiq's health, “ I'm a doctor, an injury in leg is not dangerous, this is act of Allah and you are a believer, so put your trust on Allah and may Allah help him in his hardship,” Mohammed said to his mother.

“ Yes, Mohammed, may Allah be blessed with him and get him well,” Al Hajja

Mahboba said.  And we have put a bar in front of them and a bar behind of them,

and further, we have covered them up⁴ so that they cannot see. ﴿﴾ (Sura Ya-sin, Ayah 9)

“I seek refuge in the perfect words of Allah from the Evil of what He has created”

“In the name of Allah with whose Name nothing is harmful on Earth nor in the Heavens and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.”

Al Hajja Mahboba calmed down, performed (1)Wudhu (ablution), Salat (prayer) and calling Allah for him. Mohammed went to the Red Cross and informed them with the testimony of the man seeing his brother and told them to follow-up his matter, after two days, Red Cross assured Mohammed Rafiq's detention without giving details about regarding his health.

Manal had not slept worrying about her beloved fiancé, she had nothing except the news from Mohammed who had never been tireless asking for him, she wept fearing for Rafiq's life and called Allah to protect him.

Villagers came to Al Hajja Mahboba's home to comfort her in hardship which was the hardship of the village, they had feelings of sincerity and hurt with Rafiq, they did not hesitate to offer help to authorize a lawyer but Al Hajja Mahboba foreran them.

The investigators exploited f Rafiq's injury to get more confessions , they pressed on it and touched it with a sharp tool to get him admit but he was patient and resistant, he did not add anything except providing financial support for buying weapons, as others admitted on him.

.....
(1) Wudhu, Prior to entering Salaat (prayer), the person is required to undertake a certain purification procedure known as "Wudhu" without which, the person's prayer would not be acceptable in the sight of "Allah. This performance is called wudhu and it is decreed in the Quran. It consists of four simple steps:

1- Wash the face. 2- Wash the arms to the elbows. 3- Wipe the head. 4- Wipe the feet to the ankles.

“ Terrorist is to abuse of my injury, nerve and to rank me without a prove and I have no relation to anyone,” Rafiq replied to the investigator Abu Sabri.

“ You are a liar‘ if you don't admit, we will arrest your mother, brother and fiancée, we will destroy your home tonight, come on, talk, ’’ the investigator Abu Sabri said to Rafiq.

Don't threat me, ﴿﴾ But Allah is the best to take care, and He is the Most Merciful of those who show mercy! ﴿﴾ Sura Joseph, Ayah 64 ﴿﴾’so decree whatever thou desirest to decree ﴿﴾Sura Ta-ha, Ayah 72 ‘‘’’ I have nothing,’’ Rafiq replied to the investigator Abu Sabri. .

Time passed very hard for Rafiq, despite his neglect of investigator's threat about arresting his family and destroying his home but he had come in contact with his speech more than torture, it was easier for him to hack him a part than to hurt his mother or fiancée. Occupationis ruthless, Rafiq foretold evil from them.

Seventy days had passed, and Rafiq injury was inflected as a result of medical neglect e and psychological pressure, Rafiq felt fatigue due to sleep deprivation, sitting handcuffed on small chair and poured cold and hot water on his head and body, transferring him to solitary confinement, continuing the threat, hitting and shaking his head caused severe pain in his neck and body.

The investigator informed Rafiq of the expiration of investigation and ordered him to be ready for transferring to prison, at these moments Rafiq heard scream sand insults, four guys were entering his cell.

“ Hello, who are you?’’ guys said to Rafiq.

“ I am Rafiq Nasr Al Asqalani,’’ Rafiq replied.

“ We evaluate your resistance, now you will move to a reception department as a step for prison entry, send our greetings to the General guide there, please tell him that the new young men in the cells are fine and you are from us. To transfer to prison quickly, level with him your issue to complete datum giving to them abroad, we

recommend that for the helping of wanted resistance fighter to be safe from your detention, we hope you will get a reduced sentence, fingers cross ,” guys said to Rafiq.

Rafiq hugged guys with no comment on their talk. A policeman opened the cell, handcuffed him and transferred him to an ordinary department, Rafiq entered to a big room inhabited by nine men, they welcomed him and ordered prison's nurse changing his bandage, he was looked after by the men in the room, brought clothes and some daily necessities such as soup, teeth brush and paste, comb and towels, they used to bring milk and honey for him.

They used to sit together learn Quran, perform the Friday prayer, read Islamic and national books, prison's law gathering them, they were interested in cultural programs and had specific times for sleeping and waking up, they used to go out for picnics and hold meetings and analyze political attitudes.

Rafiq felt comfort among them and he was shamed from so much interest with him. One evening, Abu Anan, their big boss wanted him.

“ Welcome Rafiq, I am the General guide, I evaluate your resistance and challenge, we need men like you, you are a hero. A message was sent to us from the faction with an official signature, demanding your struggle history, approving security clearance , your issue details and your relation with people whose names came across in the interrogation or friends feeling threatened on them to warn them and express all your activities to submit to the faction before moving to a permanent prison,” Abu Anan said to Rafiq

Rafiq was surprised by Abu Anan talk,

“ Which resistance are you talking about? Who told you that I endured? Anyway, the four guys coming recently to prison send you their greetings,” Rafiq replied to Abu Anan.

“Their mark is on their faces, Rafiq, to make sure of my talk, this is the official message and the faction's seal allowing me to talk to you,” Abu Anan said to Rafiq.

Rafiq remembered his mother's words learning from her husband, Ibraheem before his martyrdom about not to confide in anybody, “ Inform the faction orally that all my

issue is what young men admitted on me in the prison, if they need more information, they can talk to them,” Rafiq replied to Abu Anan.

“ In this way you afflict the faction and young men abroad, and this put questions mark on you, how could we ensure of your loyalty without recognizing your history. Now, I will let you think till tomorrow, good night,” Abu Anan said to Rafiq.

All through the night Rafiq thought in Abu Anan's talk and wondered, “who is Abu Anan? How can I confide him? Is this his name? why did he ask me a little and accurate talk? What is the intent of that? Where are the young men detained before me? Why do they are not here? What is this prison consisting of two rooms?” Rafiq wondered and asked himself.

Rafiq did not find any answer for his questions but he did not misconstrue respecting and helping him, he waited for the next day.

In the morning, he constrained oneself and went out under the sun silk, breathed clear air and moved his injury leg. Afternoon, he sat next to Abu Anan “ Where does this part of prison locate?” Rafiq asked Abu Anan.

“ This is just the reception department for new detainees coming out of cells so I hope you thought in yesterday's talk to move to the upper departments,” Abu Anan replied.

Rafiq was not convinced in Abu Anan's talk adding new question's marks, “ Yes, but actually I have nothing to add” Rafiq said.

Abu Anan flared up, he called for guys in the room, “Rafiq is a traitor, we have to investigate him, he refused approving his security clearance and we have to know what is behind him,” Abu Anan said.

Rafiq was making sure that his existing in this place was just part of an investigation and guys in the room were spies for the Zionist intelligence. Guys in the room responded to Abu Anan's call, they hurried towards Rafiq, before they reached him, he hit Abu Anan's head in a chair, his blood bled, all jeered and the warden felt threatened on Abu Anan's life, warning sirens were set off, a special squad came to the room equipped with helmets, batons and gas guns, took Abu Anan to the clinic and Rafiq was got out for reinvestigation.

Again, Rafiq was under hitting, torture and head shaking , “So, you get over of scum of your people,” the investigator said.

“ They are as you described but they aren't of my people ❁ And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them ❁ Sura the Table, Ayah 51 Rafiq said.

“ They aren't belonging to us, who betrayed his own people is as useless as dried spit and he will betray us one day, we are just straining them, then will throw them away because they are nothing,” the investigator said to Rafiq.

Chapter Eight

Rafiq had rough couple of days because he was worried about his mother, fiancée and his brother. When the intelligence commander recognized that it was a lost cause, they transferred him to Al Majdal central prison. There, he was able to meet tens of resistance colleagues and some detained friends, talked to them about achievement and prison collaborators and people's news outside the prison.

Rafiq entered the prison's room and felt safe. He was welcomed by the young men in the room with love and admiration of his steadfastness.

The room was small with unpleasant-smell, ten bunk beds were in the room, one bathroom with toilet and a small window covered with metal blocking air, surrounded by barbed wire. The room was everything in life of those twenty detainees. It was the kitchen, bathroom, masjid (prayer place), school, university, gym room, bedroom and guestroom. They were living together in all aspects of life, among them were veterans, new, old, young, educated, illiterate, urban and rural, Palestinians and Arabs from Gaza, West Bank and from the Green Line (48 lands), believer and secular, each had a miserable and painful story, hope and happiness.

Just one TV was in the room for all the detainees where some like sports, news, political programs, while other prefer movies and series, cultural programs, cartoon or entertainment programs, with each one achieving the minimum watching hours leaving others to do so..

When one got ill, they were collecting fruit for him despite its unavailability, if they knew the death of anyone's relatives or friends they would offer their condolences. If one received happy news, they would congratulate him and distribute juice and sweets as if they were his family. They were living with their people happiness and pain and the blessed Intifada, watching events as if they were outside the prison. They were one body against the warden who seized opportunity to swoop down on them.

Through their unity, they mad the glory wall. They were a solid cemented structure, with each strengthening the other, families, lovers and dedicators. They put life rules for themselves despite its cruelty. They established internal understanding and regulatory rules among them inside rooms according to each one's perspective and principles and established detention provisions between Islamic and national factions

in order to control their affairs and to resist prison's administration trying to withdraw their achievements and control them. By their hunger, patience and resistance, they lined epics making their people proud, they were able to establish a good reality with the warden who did not beat them. All their lives were based on organized and forethought dialogue, discussion and counseling . They were not allowing frivolous people to destroy these achievements nor were they discriminating between a member and leader in penalty . All of them were equal like comb's teeth.

Rafiq was introduced to the nineteen detainees in the room. His relationship was developed among all of them, loved each other and he was thanking Allah when he saw the miseries of the others.

He was able to find out that Abu Mahmoud was suffering from many diseases and feeling asphyxia as a result of chronic asthma and medical negligence.

In his outings, he noticed a self-esteem blind mate doing all his affairs himself. He was smiling most of the times. Rafiq moved from one bed to another and listened to the championships, pains and hopes of detainees. He had a stake in Abu Hisham who spent his life detained more than free.

“ This is my twenty sixth years in the detention, my son, ” Abu Hisham said to Rafiq.

“ May Allah make this count in your good deed, ” Rafiq said feeling sorrow and consolidating Abu Hisham.

“I ask Allah to be so but I wonder why do Palestinian people, factions and organizations are losing the right of those patient detainees? Imagine that, I am surprised of all new detainees because they knew nothing about us. Do they consider us dead? If so, we have to recommendour families to make funerals at home for us, ” Abu Hisham said.

“Allah forbid, many of those spent long terms in prison are free now and live among people with great respect , prison never lasts for anyone, as they said, ” Rafiq said.

“I am afraid of repeating this misery with new detainees and with those who had long serving sentences and spent their youth and the most beautiful years of their lives in this dark room. It is weird that one of us was a hero in his faction and if he is detained he becomes expired because he becomes useless, isn't it? If he gets free, he

will find his generation enjoying life and their sons becoming young men, he gets out with no backup, starting new hard life, it is unfair not backing and helping them or compensating them for their life in prison , isn't it?" Abu Hisham said.

"You're right, do you have sons?" Rafiq asked.

"Yes, I have one named Hisham. He was two years when I was detained, now I am a grandfather for three children," Abu Hisham replied.

Anxious, Rafiq left Abu Hisham calling Allah a clear weather after black clouds for him.

In the next day, he sat with another one called Rifa't and a photo for an old woman was next to him, "Who is this?" Rafiq asked.

"She's my Mom, she died a year and half ago," Rifa't said.

"May Allah be merciful to her and gather you and her in paradise. When was the last time she visited you?" Rafiq asked.

The day before she died, she was very sick and when the visit time came, she forced my brothers to register her for the visit but they refused her request and when she told them that if I don't visit Rifa't then I won't live in any of your homes. Then she got her wish. My Mom was my only support in life. She built me a home from her savings and mine. She saved a bride dowry for my marriage when I get my freedom. Before her last visit, she held a meeting with my elder brothers, she bound over them never to abandon me and they pledged. When she visited me with people's help, she appeared as if I saw her for the first time. She was barely speaking, pale face, her hands were trembling, I reproached her for her coming, she said to me: "my lovely, I feel relieved when I see you. Today I see you as if I bid farewell to you. My dear, I wish that I could see your freedom and wedding day but one's age is pre-destined, your home and bride's dowry are trusteeship with your brothers, I have bound over them never to abandon you and they are loyal, please forgive me if I die, death is truth, please forgive me because I won't visit you again. My beloved, this is our fate and act of Allah for both of us. If it was up to me, I'd live; not because I love life but for your sake, all what I fear is for you to get lonely after my death, particularly among your friends whose families support them and whose mothers and wives

attend and bring their needs. I'm worried that you will have no support after my death but Allah will never forget you, be with Allah to be with you and never give up hope of Allah, prison never lasts. Take care of your religion and keep what you can of the holy Quran, pray if you felt sorrow. My lovely, never forget me of your prayer.” At that time, the bell rang for the ending of the visit. I kissed her hands and asked her prayer and to be blessed with me, I advised her to take care of her health when she arrives home. Rifa't stopped talking with hoarse breathing, his tears were shedding, “she died at that night,” Rifa't said to Rafiq.

With sorrow and pain, Rafiq had a stake in Rifa't talk. He put his hand on Rifa't's shoulder,” Allah has decreed and what he wills he does, may Allah bless her soul and make the resting place her paradise,” Rafiq said to Rifa't.

On the third day Rafiq sat with his mate Abu Alla' looking through the window covered with iron, hoping to see the sky in the evening, Rafiq saw the moon “ Have you ever seen a beautiful moon more than this?” Rafiq asked Abu Alla'. “ Yara, Yara is the most beautiful girl on the earth, she's more beautiful than the full moon, the blue sky, spring breeze, watercourse sound on green and more beautiful than golden sun silk, Yara is the dewdrop and Raindrops,” with voice of nostalgia Abu Alla' replied.

“For this?” Rafiq asked.

“And more than that, I would rather have all diseases than harm comes to her, she has the most beautiful smile among miseries, how I wish embrace her and kiss her as much as of my longing, I hope to make up for her the love she missed. How does she see me now? She was born after my detention, she doesn't know me except through the grill and photos. Now she is four at KG1, when I look at her photo, I had paternal feelings which I live, grace and mercy to Allah then to Yara whom I now her father, now I knew why my father cared and my mother loved me,” Abu Alla said.

“May Allah gather you together and make up for her childhood, I reminded you of your beloved ones and caused you pain,” Rafiq said.

“On the contrary, the best moments are those when I talk about my child, Yara. In my perspective, the most beautiful picture is her countenance,” Abu Alla said.

It had been days since Rafiq came into the jail and one day Rafiq sat next to his mate Ashraf who is also called Abu Raed, "How long have you been in prison?" Rafiq asked him.

"8 years," Ashraf replied.

"Do you have children?" Rafiq asked.

"I have a son called Raed, he was born before few days of my detention, we knew each other through the prison's grill till he said Dad," Ashraf said.

Throughout the years, I brought him closer to me, I was giving him sweets in each visit. I asked him in a visit Raed, do you come here for me or for sweets? He replied, for sweets.

My wife had a stake in his answer and was hurt for my sake. She started a new way of bringing him closer to me. I was keeping sweets for him, I divested myself of everything in the prison. I remember one of my mates distributed sweets for his brother's wedding. Visits stopped for some events and I was transferred from one prison to another. I kept all of sweets till visits were allowed again and I gave it to my son but it had a bad smell for sitting for so long so neither one of us got to eat sweets. After few months, I asked him through the grill, do you come to see me or to eat the sweets? He surprised me with his answer. I came for you dad, I want you to have your freedom to carry me as my uncle carries his children, I want to hug you and play with you. I want you to buy me a bike just like my friend Mahmoud. At that time I wish if I could kiss him, embrace him and touch his hair as he was growing up. We got closer to each other. Few months later, he started his school, he was going with his cousins, while he was crossing the highway between our village and the school, he got hit by a speedy car and died before reaching the hospital," Ashraf said.

His tears were shedding for his beloved son, also Rafiq's tears were shedding for Ashraf who could not control himself.

After a week, a policeman came to inform the detainees that some of them will be transferring and travelling to hospital and courts. Detainees came near room's doors, Rafiq heard his name "travelling to court". He was waiting patiently for this day to check about his mother, fiancée, brother and their home. He counted hours and

minutes, “Did they really detain my mother, fiancée and my brother or did they really destroy our home or is it just all a threat? May Allah protect them, I hope not see them in the court suffering occupation's cruelty,” Rafiq wondered himself at night.

Feelings were mutual between Al Hajja Mahboba who knew Rafiq's injury and did not see him for three months. The Police were not allowing detainees' families approach their sons in the cage ,not to shake hands or talk to them. If any detainee talks to his family he will be prevented by the police and if he neglects them they will beat him strongly. Rafiq was wishing to see his family well and Al Hajja Mahboba was wishing to see him too.

Rafiq went to the court wearing a brown uniform sealed with the log of prison service, tied hands and feet, armed police were next to him and surrounded by another group holding batons. Patiently, Manal and Al Hajja Mahboba were waiting for Rafiq's arrival , when they sighted him, an armed recruit prevented them.

Rafiq sat peeping people in front of him, he saw his Mom and fiancée but not his brother. The lawyer came to Rafiq and asked him about his health to reassure his Mom and he received Mohammed's greetings who is still out because he was prevented by the court. Rafiq, his mother and fiancée reciprocated hints and shed tears of longing. Impatiently, Al Hajja Mahboba talked to Rafiq but he did not hear so the soldier prevented her, Al Hajja Mahboba did not care and asked him again about his leg, again the soldier prevented her and yelled at her, Al Hajja Mahboba approached a bit from Rafiq and called him out. The recruit strongly pushed her down, Manal pushed the recruit and slapped her in her face. Rafiq stood unconcerned to the batons and soldiers, loudly, he reassured her about himself and his injury. He asked Manal about the home and she assured him that it was okay. They recommended each other about themselves and Al Hajja Mahboba. The police withdrew Rafiq out of the courtroom which was full of shouting. He was subjected to internal court, they put him in a solidarity confinement for seven days and banned him from visit for two consecutive months.

Rafiq did not care much about their punishment which was worth nothing against the reassurances about his family, also Al Hajja Mahboba and Manal were reassured about Rafiq when they saw him in good health and high morales.

After a week, Rafiq came back to his room remembering each hint from his mother and fiancée, also he remembered the old town and its red soil, its fragrant wild flowers and the big green trees rooting decades ago. He remembered Jerusalem, Al masjid Al Aqsa, old homes and the hard Jerusalem's stone which neither summer heat nor winter cool affects it. Whenever it became older its value and beauty increased.

Rafiq missed the industrious farmer scene in the farm, the mother love tearing for the belonging of her beloveds, the honor lady, the child rounding about the tree as pilgrim rounding around (1) the Ka'aba, playing its branches and picking up its leaves like him picking up dress of his mother. He missed the beloveds gathering around the burner in a rainy night. He missed the fig, olive tree which never fall their leaves, it was a good example for women in honor and purity. He missed the grape trees, almond flower, cold well water in July, people's simplicity and goodness, grandmothers calling Allah for him and he missed the children who loved him and wished to be as him when they grow up.

Rafiq was in pain because he was detained in occupied Al Majdal, his homeland and his ancestors, on the other hand he was happy because he was living in, smelling and breathing its air.

(1) Ka'aba: *a cube-shaped building in Mecca, the most sacred Muslim pilgrim shrine, into which is built the black stone believed to have been given by Gabriel to Abraham. Muslims turn in its direction when praying.*

In his perspective, Al Majdal is a piece of paradise given by Allah. Rafiq felt proud while he was remembering his reading about it in the prison and whenever recognizing its history and for being the greatest port since BC. Al Majdal had a strategic location for traders and passengers between Turkey, Syria and Egypt. It was decorated with gifts, nations and civilization concerns, Canaanites built crypts, allays and towers. They fortified it against invaders and it was a nuisance for others. Al Majdal prospered in the Greek era. Kings as Herod were born there in 73 B.C, building luxury palaces, theaters, baths, columns, gardens and wide halls. Al Majdal is the land of steadfastness and Jihad, it had been under the patronage and protection of Islam for five centuries. People learned science, culture, civilization and pride. It was a place for invaders as Crusaders, they attacked it but it had not fallen till seven months of siege. Muslims had never surrendered the city and the great Islamic leader Salah Al Deen conquered it. Crusaders revived and he had no choice but to destroy it bleeding. Salah Al Deen said, "To destroy a stone from Al Majdal is more painful to me than losing all my children." When it fell again, sons of the invader Richard the Lionheart rebuilt it again in 1192 but it was dearer for Muslims. It had been retaken through its people's honored blood which flowed on its ground witnessing its value and status of each Muslim loving every grain of sand watered by the honored blood of our ancestors.

Glory to us, Al Majdal is ours , it will return to us by Allah's promise. We will destroy this detention and change it into gardens, orange trees and beautiful flowers. He remembered its young men visitors sacrificing their lives in it for the sake of Allah. Jerusalem, Al Majdal and all Palestine,' Rafiq repeated to himself.

Chapter 9

Rafiq longed for Al Hajja Mahboba and remembered her testaments for him and his brother Mohammed sharing their hard life. He also longed for his fiancée and her coming day, “What is the sin of Manal who didn't choose this path, is it selfishness to wait for me till I have my freedom? Why didn't she enjoy her youth as other ladies in the village?” Rafiq wondered!!!!

Rafiq remembered her before his detention while she was admonishing him and refusing his offer of separating promising she will never be to anyone except him.

Rafiq had a dream of returning back to his mother, fiancée, village, his mother's bread, the air, beauty and steadfastness of Jerusalem over time. He remembered Al Haram, the Dome of the Rock, prayer and (1)Adhan. In a few moments, Al Fajer Adhan vocalized, he performed wodu' and woke up his mates, they performed(2) jma'ah prayer and slept.

Rafiq took advantage while in the detention center and didn't waste time to get his education. He studied and got the General Secondary School Certificate. He was of those who called for higher education in the prison which was achieved thanks to Allah and to the battle of empty stomachs which detainees launched by their patience in the open hunger strike lasting for 17 days. The famous and the most powerful strike was in September 1992.

.....

(1)Adhan: *Muslims use the human voice to announce the times of prayer to the community. The adhan is the call to prayer itself, and the person who calls it is called the muadhan.*

(2) Jma'ah prayer: *Salat al-Jamaat means praying in congregation, with one person leading. The Person who leads is called the Imam, while those who follow him are called the Ma'mum or Ma'mumin (plural). As for the daily prayers, the minimum amount of people needed is two –one.*

As a result their living and visiting conditions with their families and children had improved. The consent of the prison administration of giving prisoners access to the Hebron University was to incapacitate detainees due to the hard language but it was surprised with detainees' performance to master the language by themselves and by the helping of detainees. So tens of detainees were able to join the university, Rafiq was the first and the topper.

Rafiq spent his time studying with a feeling of ecstatic victory while he was challenging them knowing their cattier ideology against the Arabs that they were and still emitting to their children and falsifying history. He didn't make use of their culture as much as he took their dispute against themselves. He recognized their incoherent society remembering the words of Allah, ﴿thou wouldst think they were united, but their hearts are divided﴾ Sura Al Hasher, Ayah (14).

Manal was encouraging him with her visits. She did not miss any visit. Rafiq was encouraging her and they both were dreaming together of freedom and happiness.

Mohammed was following up with his brother through Manal. He was sending all his needs without Rafiq's order, he never forgot to thank Rafiq.

Al Hajja Mahboba was prevented to visit under the pretext that she was not his real mother, she was communicating with Rafiq through Manal, sending messages, photos and quick hints at unjust courtroom. The court made the tormentor a judge wearing military uniform and based on an emergency laws making the lawyer mock. Al Hajja Mahboba was supporting detainees, demanding their freedom in each Red Cross sit-in and demonstration.

After more than two years, Rafiq had been sentenced to 6 years which was sufficient for completing his study and obtaining a BA.

Many days passed by and Al Haja Mahboba was not able to see Rafiq; however, she was feeling happy when she heard the news of his will and interest in education. She was kissing all his messages.

Mohammed worked at a public hospital after coming back from Jordan, his situations was improving. He kept communicating with his brother and he was giving Manal her needs.

Rafiq's features started to change while in the detention due to the limited vision horizons among the dark walls. He suffered a weak eyesight but he became more mature and he put things in their right order.

He has always said that our enemy detained us as punishment. We have to challenge the enemy and change this ordeal to a gift through awareness, culture, science and Quran.

They strike terror into our education as well as our weapons which we left before detention. They aren't the masters of the universe as they believe, we are the best of people, evolved for mankind and our religion is a religion of sense, knowledge, consciousness, ethics, equity, and humanitarian.

Detainees had a dispute about the Oslo agreement 1993. It was a subject for discussion, which generated supporters and non-supporters "An agreement with spiteful enemy, everyday his people tend to terrorize others without peace will not succeed. They just betting on the death of the blessed Intifada and be illusory in the world of their peaceful coexistence. They want to involve the Arab and Islamic world under the pretext of ending the conflict among the litigants," Ashraf, one of Rafiq's mates said.

"Without national and Islamic consensus, no step will succeed. I am afraid that this agreement will be an internal tension point and plant separation among Palestinian people," Emad interrupted him.

"One of its gaps is that it is an interim and doesn't determine a clear timeframe and details. It doesn't tackle important issues like Jerusalem, refugees, settlements and detainees of high sentences accused of injury and killing. This agreement may eliminate opposition detainees. Moreover, no one can trust the occupation and the impending Israeli governments from left-wing to right-wing. Allah Almighty has spoken the truth when he said ﴿is it not (the case) that every time they make a

covenant, some party among them throw it aside? ﴿Sura Al Bakara, Ayah (100),

Zeiad interrupted him.

“But don't forget that this agreement will prove Palestinian's right in their land and it will return the revolution from diaspora to the country. It will be the gate for superiority, state and independence. Ten thousands of refugees will come back home and thousands of detainees will have their freedom due to this agreement, we will build Palestine and establish institutions, ports and prosperity,” Abu Yaser said.

“I see that the agreement will meet little of our people's ambition, there is no doubt that it has advantages but it is full of risks, gaps and fears. This enemy argued Allah, be He glorified and exalted, and denied the prophets of Allah, know nothing about moral virtue, have no dream with peace. In my perspective, the Oslo agreement is like wine and gambling “In them is great sin, and some profit, for men; but the sin is greater than the profit,” by these words, Rafiq ended the dialogue.

According to this agreement, Intisar had the chance to come back home living in her country after a long time in the diaspora, whenever she was remembering her father's story who left the worldly pleasure scarifying himself for his resistance duty, she had a strong feeling of longing.

Intisar got a professional doctoral degree, she was a wise lady with mature thinking, high culture and belonging to country and she considered herself as men in their bestowal and services to their country. She did not discriminate between her ambition and her father's choice for resistance which made it imperative for helping her people with her education.

"Palestine and its wounds need me Mum, if I abandon them, I will lose my value, self-respect and respect of others. What are the benefits of having the education and the experience if I did not utilize them for my people at the time when it is most needed for healing and supporting hundreds of them. If men are to fight with their weapons then my weapons are my job and education; and my mission is to help and support my people,” Intisar was saying to her mother.

Intisar came back home with others people, due to her experience and excellence and she was employed by an institution as its manager.

Rafiq did not have his freedom in peace agreement. Suddenly, before one day of his freedom day, he was freed at night and there was nobody to meet him.

At midnight, he knocked Al Hajja Mahboba's home, she woke up “Please Allah, make it come out all right. Who will come at this time?” Al Hajja Mahboba said to herself.

Mohammed opened the door and he got surprised because it was Rafiq. They tightly embraced each other. Pleasure reverted to their home and the old town in Jerusalem, also Al Hajja Mahboba and Manal were pleased for that.

"Who is that Mohammed?" mother asked.

Mohammed did not answer fearing of her reaction due to the surprise, she put her head cover and went to see who in the midnight would visit her house. For the scarification???? What do you mean by this word? of her heart she saw Rafiq in front of her eyes. She passed out for the great happiness. The two brothers hurried to their mother. Doctor Mohammed assured his brother Rafiq kissing his Mom's forehead, head and her hands. Al Hajja Mahboba embraced her son Rafiq as she was coming back. Both of them wept with happiness and thanking Allah, be He glorified and exalted for his blessing.

All Jerusalem knew the news of Rafiq's Liberation, loved ones and congratulators surrounded the home, danced, shot the fire in the air with happiness receiving their beloved son. Manal and Shekh Hassan heard the news and could not control themselves and both of them headed to Al Hajja Mahboba's home. The two beloveds, promising and faithful to each other got together after a long time.. Allah again reunited the family. Partnership got back between Rafiq and Abu Yusuf who waited him on pins and needles. At that time, Abu Yusuf needed Rafiq more than any time because he got old and became very ill. Rafiq did not stop his charity for each poor and needy in the old town. His injury was hurting him despite passing a long time, he knew that he needs Physiotherapy. He made therapy sessions at Al Jareeh institution and moved from one doctor to another for the hope of healing.

After coming back home, Intisar called her colleagues Mohammed as she considered him the most trusted person for her in Palestine. Mohammed explained to Intisar his brother's case, she was anxious to see and meet him to provide him with the service in

order to approach from Mohammed and give respect for Rafiq as she knew a lot of him during her study at the university.

Chapter 10

Intisar invited Mohammed and Rafiq to the institution to examine Rafiq's case and assess the help or therapy that could be provided to him. The hospital called Dr. Mohammed for emergency at the same time specified to meet Intisar so he told Rafiq to go there alone.

Rafiq entered the institution where Intisar works, there were shouting and din, he heard a jangle between a person who seemed arrogant, conceited and a doctor who seemed innocent and affable appearing.

“I will not wait long till all patients turn end. I want to take my therapy and get back right now,” the conceited person said.

“All patients are equal and I can't let you in before anybody else. These people are better than you to Allah, scarifying their lives for the sake of their country and holies. Yes they are poor but they are honorable and loyal and you had a car accident at the time of fun and enjoyment,” doctor replied.

“But I am better than them and you, if I don't get therapy now you will lose your job. Blame yourself for that,” the young man replied.

“You will not take your therapy even if your father is the minister,” doctor replied.

“I will get my therapy, willy-nilly,” the young man replied.

At this time Rafiq intervened unknowing Intisar, he intervened because he saw the doctor's tears and her helplessness against the conceited man depending on persons of lofty position in his family. Rafiq caught the man from his shirt and aggressively threw him outside the institution and strongly pushed him in the sight of wounds,” If you came back here or threatened anybody, only have yourself to blame,” Rafiq said to the conceited young man.

Silently, the young man got into his car and Rafiq asked for Dr. Intisar's office, hints were made for the doctor struggling with the conceited young man. Before him, Intisar came close to Rafiq thanking him for his attitude and help.

“So, are you Rafiq, Mohammed's brother?” doctor asked him.

“Yes, I came on time but my brother went to the hospital for an emergency case,” Rafiq said.

“Welcome Rafiq, Mohammed talked to me a lot about you, nearly I knew everything about your life, I am so pleased to meet you,” doctor Intisar said.

“ This is an honor for me, likewise,” Rafiq said.

Intisar examined Rafiq and assured him about his case. She prescribed for him to attend the Occupational Therapy three times per week to exercise. She assured him that he will get well in less than two months.

Manal nagged because of his long talk, description, admiration and his great admiration of Intisar.

“Don't walk away Manal, my feeling towards her is not a feeling of love and marriage but a strange kin's passion, I have never had this feeling, be calm you are my destiny and no lady will be equal to you. You are the nearest for my heart, soul, mind and feelings. How about we get married to be assured?” Rafiq said to Manal.

Manal reddened and ducked her head “Give me a little time to be ready,” she said.

“Alright, till I finish my therapy,” Rafiq said.

Intisar met her colleague Mohammed, she told him of the event and Rafiq's attitude and that she was relieved for him as if she knew him for years.

Jealousy, Mohammed nagged from Intisar's talk,” Rafiq be getting married soon,” Mohammed said.

"You misunderstood me, I do not hide my feelings towards him as a brother, but it was different, may be his attitude increased my admiration, that's all,” Intisar said.

Respect and nearness were increasing between Rafiq and Intisar at each therapy session. He invited her to his home to meet his mother and Manal, so they had social relationships.

When Rafiq got well, Dr. Intisar wanted to complete all the information of his medical record to maintain it in the institution, so she asked for his full details.” My name is Rafiq Naser Al Asqalani,”Rafiq said.

Intisar dropped her pen, “aren’t you Mohammed Ibraheem's brother?” Intisar asked Rafiq.

“Sure, I am his brother,” Rafiq answered.

“But his name is Mohammed Ibraheem not Mohammed Naser Al Asqalani ?” Intisar asked Rafiq.

“Yes, It is a long and old story, My father was his father's friend, while they were coming back from the hospital they were martyred as well as my mother Ne'ma Al Said Al Asqalani and it was me only that survived, Al Hajja Mahboba adopted me and educated us till we all grew up. We don't remember this event till our different names reminded us in a formal situation like this,” Rafiq answered.

“So, you are the son of the martyr Naser Al Asqalani who got killed with his wife at the crossroads of Wadi Al Jawz village in Jerusalem,” Intisar said

“Yes, it's me. Didn’t Mohammed talk to you about this?” Rafiq asked.

"I wish if he had said that my brother, do you know who am I ?” Intisar said.

"Yes, you are doctor Intisar,” Rafiq said.

"What is the surname of my name, Intisar?" Intisar asked

“Sorry, I don't know” Rafiq said.

“I am your sister. The daughter of Naser Al Asqalani, Rafiq” Intisar said.

"Is that right?” Rafiq said.

“Yes my brother, our father is Naser Al Asqalani, Rafiq. My father parted from my mother while she was pregnant and she knew that he was married and was martyred with his wife at the same place you have described but we didn't know that he had a son till I found out this now, I don't believe myself nor this situation and the best coincidence in my life, Rafiq,” Intisar said.

“But I am the happiest person with you, the dearest to my heart. I thank Allah for this reunion. I had one brother and now I have a brother and a beautiful sister,” Rafiq said.

Both of them embraced each other shedding tears with happiness.

“As long as I felt of my need to a brother or a father to patronize me, now Allah blessed me with a brother. You are not just a brother but Rafiq who I loved before seeing him,” Intisar said.

“Many hard years passed by when I was a lone and far away from Palestine and Al Majdal,” Intisar said.

“It won't be any more expatriation, I will take you to Al Majdal to see its beauty and charm and we will make up for ourselves the lost tenderness and love,” Rafiq said

“I was very anxious to see you when Mohammed was talking about you,” Intisar said.

“It's me, I was feeling so close to you since our first meeting, , I never understood it,” Rafiq replied.

“I'm so proud of you, Rafiq,” Intisar said.

“ It's me, my lovely dear,” Rafiq replied.

Rafiq asked Intisar to go with him to Al Hajja Mahboba's home, he called Mohammed asking him to come back home along with his fiancée Manal for important case.

All of them waited for Rafiq to come home who entered smiling putting his hands on Intisar's shoulders. The entire family were shocked and surprised for him to behave this way as Al Hajja Mahboba had never known him to do this. ”Aren't you shamed of your behavior Rafiq?” Al Hajja Mahboba asked him.

“Man gets ashamed of flaws, don't you trust me and your upbringing?” Rafiq said.

“Is it appropriate for a resister and a believer to put his hands on the shoulders of a stranger lady? are these our ethics or did you forget them?” AL Hajja Mahboba asked him.

“Absolutely no, but what if she is my sister?” Rafiq said

“What do you mean, Rafiq?” AL Hajja Mahboba asked him.

“Mohammed bears responsibility, Mom, has it occurred to him the similarity between my name and the name of his colleague's Intisar at the university?” Rafiqsaid.

"She is my sister, Intisar Nasr Al Asqalani, she is my half- sister from Jordan," Rafiq said.

The entire family was surprised, AL Hajja Mahboba embraced Manal and Intisar. Mohammed felt happy for this coincidence which will facilitate many things for him. Mohammed aired out his mother of his love feeling towards Intisar since university days asking her to ask Intisar for marriage. His mother was flying over the clouds for her happiness promising him to ask her mother and her brother Rafiq. Rafiq completely recovered from his old injury and talked to his mother about setting a specified day for his wedding day. At family meeting in a quite night. "What's about making a double wedding?" Al Hajja Mahboba said.

"I hope so, but how?" Rafiq replied

"I am asking your sister's hand to Mohammed?" Al Hajja Mahboba said.

After this, all of them laughed.

Shying Intisar left them to the kitchen to help Manal.

Rafiq kissed his mother's head and hands and embraced his brother Mohammed, then he went to ask his sister Intisar's opinion

"What is your opinion about what you have heard?" Rafiq asked his sister.

"It is up to you, I have nothing to say in your presence," Manal replied.

"But in the presence of my brother Mohammed anymore, on Allah's blessing, you will never marry better than my brother, I will ask your hand from your mother and your paternal uncles properly," Rafiq said.

All gave their consent on the groom Mohammed. The old town made a big wedding, people talked about it for years, all of them lived at one home under the umbrella of Al Hajja Mahboba telling her grandsons the stories of their grandparents and all martyrdoms. She reared them up to love Allah and his prophet Mohammed (PBUH), Jerusalem, Al Majdal and all of Palestine.