

RELEASE IN PART B6

**From:** H <hrod17@clintonemail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 5, 2012 9:55 AM  
**To:** 'Russorv@state.gov'  
**Subject:** Fw: fyi, first English translation.

Pls orint.

**From:** sbwhoer [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 05, 2012 09:04 AM  
**Subject:** fyi, first English translation.

B6

Translator: Sol Salbe on Wednesday, February 29, 2012 at 2:53am

Translator's Note: Last Friday Haaretz did something unusual: it placed an opinion piece on top of its front page. But it wasn't just an ordinary opinion piece, it was written by one of the country's foremost novelists, David Grossman. The article, like Emile Zola's *J'accuse*, to which it has been compared, was a moral critique. Many who read it were very moved. But the moral missive never appeared in English (at least to my knowledge). The English Haaretz has always been somewhat reticent in presenting Israel to the world. And of course translating Grossman is not easy, he is a master of the language and the art of writing. I have no idea whether I have done justice to this work. But it needed to be translated. The message is too important. \*Hebrew original: <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/politics/1.1649589>

\*Translated by Sol Salbe of the Middle East News Service, Melbourne  
 Australia <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=523794418>\*

### **Why? Who died? by David Grossman**

*All said and done it is merely a minor story about an illegal alien who stole a car, was injured in an accident, then released from hospital to have cops dump him, still injured to die by the roadside. What are the building blocks that lead to such an atrocity?*

#### **David Grossman**

Omar Abu Jariban, a resident of the Gaza Strip, staying illegally in Israel, stole a car and was seriously injured while driving it. He was released from the Sheba Medical Centre while his treatment was still ongoing and handed over to the custody of the Rehovot Police station. The police were unable to identify him. He himself was bewildered and confused. The Rehovot Police officers decided to get rid of him. According to Chaim Levinson's account, they loaded him onto a police van at night accompanied by three policemen. He was still attached to a catheter, was wearing an adult nappy and a hospital gown. Two days later he was found dead by the roadside.

It's a minor story. We have already read some like it and others where even worse. And when it is all said and done who is the subject of this story: an illegal infiltrator, from Rafah and a vehicle thief to boot. And at any rate it happened as long ago as 2008, there is a statute of limitation to consider. And we have other, fresher, more immediate matters which are more relevant for us to consider. (And beside all that, they started it, we offered them everything and they refused and don't forget the terrorism.).

Ever since I read the story, I find it difficult to breathe the air here: I keep on thinking about that trip in the police van, as if some part of me had remained there, bonded on permanently and impossible to be prise out. How precisely did the incident pan out? it? What are the real, banal, tangible elements that coalesced together make up such an atrocity?

From the newspaper I gather that there were three cops there alongside Omar. Again and again I run the video clip mentally in my head: Was he sitting like them on the seat or was he lying on the floor of the van? Was he handcuffed or not? Did anybody talk to him? Did they offer him a drink? Did they share a laugh? Did they laugh at him? Did they poke fun at his adult nappy? Did they laugh at his confusion or at his catheter? Did they discuss what he was capable of while still attached to the catheter or once he would be separated from it? Did they say that he deserved what was coming? Did they kick him lightly like mates do, or maybe because the situation demanded a swift kick? Or did they just kick him for the heck of it, just because they could, and why not?

Besides, how can someone be discharged just like that from medical treatment at the Sheba Medical Centre? Who let him out in his condition? What possible explanation could they put down on the discharge papers which they signed off?

And what happened when the van reached the Maccabim checkpoint [not far from Jerusalem -tr]? I read in the newspaper that an argument ensued with the Israeli checkpoint commander, and that he refused to accept the patient. Did Omar hear the argument about him from within the van, or did they drag him out of the van and plonked him in front of the commander, replete with catheter, nappy and hospital gown for a rapid overall assessment by the latter? And the commander said no. And yalla! We are on our way again. So they returned to van, and they kept on going. And now the guys in the van are perhaps not quite as nice before, because it is getting late and they want to get back and wonder what have they done to have deserved copping this sand nigger and what are they going to do with him now. If the Maccabim checkpoint rejected him, there was no way in which the Atarot checkpoint will take him. It is now pitch black outside and by the by, while traveling on Route 45, between the Ofer military base to the Atarot checkpoint, a thought or a suggestion pops up. Perhaps someone said something and nobody argued against, or perhaps someone did argue back but the one who came up with the original suggestion carried more weight. Or perhaps there was no argument, someone said something and someone else felt that this is precisely what needs to be done, and one of them says to the driver, pull over for a moment, not here, it's too well lit, stop there. You, yes you, move it, get your arse into gear you piece of shit – thanks to you our van stinks; you ruined our evening, get going! What do you mean to where? Go there.

And what happens next? Does Omar remain steady on his feet, or are his legs unable to carry him? Do they leave him on the side of the road, or do physically take him there, and how? Do they haul him? Do they drag him deeper into the field?

You stay here! Do not follow us! Do not move!

And then they return to the car, walking a little bit more briskly, glancing behind their shoulder to ensure that he is not pursuing them. As if he already has something infectious about him. No, not his injury. Something else is already beginning to exude out of him, like bad tidings, or his court sentence. Come on, let's get going, it's all over.

And he, Omar Abu Jariban, what did he do then? Did he merely stand on his own feet or did he suddenly grasp what was happening, and started running and shouting that they should take him with them? And perhaps he did not realise anything, because as we said, he was confused and bewildered, and just stood there on the road or in the field, and saw a road, and a police van driving away. So what did he do? What did he really do? Started walking aimlessly, with some sort of a vague notion that somehow being a little further away would turn out somewhat better? Or maybe he just sat down and stared blankly in front of him and tried to figure it, but it was clearly beyond his comprehension for he was in no position to understand anything? Or perhaps he lay down and curled up on the ground and waiting? Why? And whom did he think about? Did he have someone, somewhere, to think about? Did the thought occur to any of those police officers, at any time during that whole night that there was someone, a man, a woman or a whole family for whom Omar was important? Someone who cared about him? Did it occur to them that it was possible, with a little bit more of an effort to locate this person and hand Omar to them?

Two days later they found his body. But I have no idea how much time had elapsed from the moment they dumped him by the roadside until he died. Who knows when it dawned on him that this was it; that his body did not have enough strength left to save himself. And even if could have summonsed the energy, he was trapped a situation from which there was no exit, that his short life was about to end here. His brother Mohammed, said by telephone from Gaza, "They simply threw him to the dogs". And in the newspaper it says, "Horrible as it may sound, the brother accurately described what happened." And I read it and the image turns into something real, and I try to wipe that image from my mind.

And in the police van, what happened there after they dumped Omar? Did they talk among themselves? About what? Did they fire each other up with hatred and disgust at him, to retrospectively justify what they did? To justify what in their heart of hearts they knew stood in contrast to something. Maybe that thing was the law (but the law, they probably imagined, they could handle). But maybe it was contrary to something deeper, some deeply ingrained memory in them which they found themselves in, many years ago. Maybe it was moral tale or a children's story in which the good was good and the bad was bad. Perhaps one of them recalled something they learnt at school — they did pass through our education system, didn't they? Let's say it was S Yizhar's HaShavuy (the captive).

Or maybe the three of them pulled out their mobile phones and spoke to the wife, the girlfriend, the son. At such times you may want to talk to someone from the outside. Someone who wasn't here who did not touch this thing.

Or maybe they kept quiet.

No, silence was perhaps a little bit too dangerous at that point. Still, something was beginning to creep up the van's interior; a sort of a viscous dark sensation, like a terrifying sin, for which there is no forgiveness. Maybe one of them yet

did suggest softly, let's go back. We'll tell him that we were pulling his leg. We can't go on like this, dumping a human being.

The paper says: "As a result of the police Internal Affairs investigation, negligent homicide charges were filed in March 2009 against only two of the officers who were involved in dumping and abandoning Abu Jariban. Evidence has yet to be submitted in a trial of the pair but in the meantime, one of the two accused has been promoted."

I know that they do not represent the police. Nor do they represent our society or the state. It's only a handful or bad apples, or unwelcomed weeds. But then I think about a people which has dumped a whole other nation on the side of the road and has backed the process to the hilt over 45 years, all the while having not a bad life at all, thank you. I think about a people which has been engaging in a brilliant genius-like denial of its own responsibility for the situation. I think of a people, which has managed to ignore the warping and distorting of its own society and the madness that the process has had on its own national values. Why should such a people get all excited over a single such Omar?

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