

Monsoor Speaks About Rachel

by Will Hewitt

What follows is a transcription, as close to verbatim as possible, of what Monsoor said when Krik and I asked him about Rachel after she was assassinated. At first he didn't want to talk and didn't understand what we wanted. I explained that, if he liked, I wanted to write down a message for Rachel's friends and family in America. "What would you like to say to her family?" I asked. He replied that he would talk for a while, and that I could write down whatever I wanted. Block J, Tel Sultan, and Yibna are the names of areas/neighborhoods. Monsoor's house is in another area called Brazil, about 1 mile from where Rachel was killed in Hy Salaam. She planned to visit him and his family that afternoon. The Block J tent was an attempt to stop tanks from shooting houses and people in that neighborhood by placing internationals between the tank and the houses. Israeli soldiers fired all around the tent. The first night Rachel and I spent in there, tracers shot by only a couple feet above the top of the tent.

The first day when Rachel come here, Jenny and Joe tell me that a new woman has come here. They say the want to put her in Block J. They say the first night in Block J all the Israelis shoot at the tent and she is very afraid. She did not smoke and she start to smoke. At our first meeting she did not know anything.

She said she want to meet all the women and girls here. I took her to my uncle's house. Maybe she never met a Palestinian before. She is very very happy.

The first night when they slept at the water well, all the group want to be

in Tel Sultan but Rachel stayed here. All the group is in Tel Sultan, She is alone in Yibna, she lose telephone, she can't find her way because she is new. She call me. I don't know what is the problem. She is afraid. I tell her I know someone who can bring her here.

We sit here, all the group, me and my brother, sit here talking and eating and laughing.

You know I am very, very sad. You know before she died she call me and say I will see you soon. I stand here and I wait. I think maybe she is not coming this way, she is coming the other way.

You know at 4:20 she call me. (She died at 5:00)

You know she was the same as people here. What people here eat, she eat. Zahtar and olives. She come to my mother and my mother not speak English, Rachel not speak Arabic, but my mother understand.

When the tank come to destroy the mosque here, she go and stand to stop the bulldozer to destroy the mosque. She love this place. She say, "I can feel how the woman here feel." I say, "If you want to know how the woman here feel, you can marry and stay here all your life."

She all the time want to learn everything. I tell 'her, "You take time, take time, it is easy to know everything."

You know this woman has come so far to this country to die, you know to stop the bulldozers that destroy the houses. All the people thank this woman and all the people are very sad. All the time we don't forget this woman. She is a Palestinian woman and she do all the Palestinian woman do.

You know, maybe I don't know her big time, but I know her.

Canaanite's Call