



New Monologues - Summer 2014

By members of the group who wrote

The Gaza Monologues in 2010

Ala' Hajjaj - 2014

From the first day of the war, I thought it would be like the preceding ones... not like this. Our houses are destroyed, we have become displaced and our beloved ones are martyred. Despite all of that we still say there's hope in life, though we have lost faith in everything, even ourselves. But every time someone is martyred amongst us, we say: victory is close and we will surely obtain it.

I'm Alla' from Shujaieh neighborhood; I left home for 20 days or more during which I suffered a great deal and discovered people's quality; those who love you, those who care for you, and those who hate you and they do not care if you die.

During the first day of the invasion, our relatives came to our house. My aunt's husband was a leader in the Islamic Movement. She came and brought him with her, ha-ha-ha!!! We were shocked. She doesn't understand we were at full risk.

One hour later we started receiving phone calls from the occupation to leave the house; we left our house and started running in the streets, not knowing where to go. Then we took our cars and the disaster was that I ended up in the car with my aunt's husband. I believed we would certainly die... but we did not and I gained a new life. Thank God this is as bad as it gets.

We arrived at Al Nasr neighborhood to our relatives' house and we stayed there for 15 days; then moved to Al Thalathini Street with another relative; there I inhaled gas and was hospitalized for 10 days. Thank God this is as bad as it gets.

Later my two cousins were martyred, may they Rest in Peace. Hence we went back home to Shujaieh, but we did not find any window or wall in our house, even the sewage was destroyed, except for a single facade. Thank God this is as bad as it gets.

Every minute during the assault we were afraid and ready to die. I really wish we will not see more wars, because we are indeed tired and we want to live, we want to dream, we want to build our future like other children around the world. Aren't these legitimate rights for us? Or are we forbidden from obtaining them? I need an answer to my question; are our rights legitimate or not?

Ashraf Al Soussi - 15/7/2014

Hey you standing over there, was anything bombarded next to your house?

Hey sister sitting on that chair, has your garden been raided?

Hey beautiful girl at the end of the street, did the rocket blow you from underneath?

Hey man, how loud was the noise of the raiding ship that swam in your bathtub?

Why the hurry?

We will all be soon raided and if you haven't been yet you will be later.

Frankly I was not blown out yet, but more frankly I don't want to be.

Yet I feel I want to bounce back the bombs to the one who is raiding me.

Mahmoud Balawi – 2014

Every day we hear about Gaza in the news, not because our economy is booming, and not because we have one of the World's Wonders, and certainly not because of our strong aviation industry. All countries have entered Guinness Records, we did too. We have the highest record of the longest war against civilians and the most intense cry of a mother moaning her children.

Time in Gaza is not like the rest of the World; the hour in Gaza is made of 60 martyrs and 3600 injured, and the minute is made of 60 destroyed houses while the second is 60 cries of moaning mothers. One night in Gaza during the war is equal to a hundred stories of the One Thousand and One Nights fable.

At night when it's dark, the sky is lit by falling rockets, roaring above our heads, and the night becomes a bright day.

A mother is sleeping next to her young children who ask her: "Mother, what is this sound, is it bombing? Mother, we are afraid." The mother, unable to sooth her children, starts to tell them a story about 'Hassan the Brave', so they could sleep in peace. However, the children no matter what you tell them, they will only think of death and destruction for that is all they see.

The next day, her son goes out, he hears an explosion; he remembers last night's story and trusts that Hassan the Brave is dead, that Hassan has become a Martyr. He rushes back to his mother and tells her: "Mother, Hassan is dead. All our little adventures together, all our memories have vanished. How can I go to school after Hassan has died? Mother, Hassan is dead."

Before she answers her son the mother receives a phone call from the Israeli army: "you have 30 seconds to leave your house." **30 seconds?!** What can she do in 30 seconds? What can she take? And who should she inform? Should she run away with her children? Or should she tell the neighbors?

The mother stands in the street and starts to scream: “Hey people, our house is going to be demolished, our house is going to be destroyed.” 30 seconds later, everything became deadly silent!

Gaza is remaining, Gaza will never die, even when her children die..

Their names will be written in history books for their children and grandchildren.

If you ever Google Gaza, you will see pictures of destruction and devastation, and one day, you might see my picture among the killed ones, during one of these wars against Gaza.

Niveen Ziada – 2014

“This is how everything died in me.”

I cautiously felt my emaciated body... I realized that the glass had gotten to me.

Noise and screaming, the sound of ambulances blaring violently. Among the chaos, I could hear the voice of someone crying and calling out: Neveen. I could not respond as my mouth was filled with dust and sand that silenced me. I thought for a moment that everyone had run away and left me. Oh God, I can't stay any longer, I'm suffocating and the annoying sound of my breathing hurts. I gathered all my strength and walked blind until I reached the door of our house, above the rubble, in front of everyone. I could not escape their scrutinizing gazes and pale faces.

“There's no time left and we have to leave now,” my father said in a trembling voice.

Yes, I will now escape from death to death.

We stayed for a while in our relatives' cramped house. We were more than thirty people, most of whom were children. We stayed there until a phone call came and separated us all. We returned to live in death, to the house that refused to fall, to my scattered things, to my memory that was there loaded with beautiful things, to the artillery shells that were falling before our eyes in our garden every second, to a nightmare that lasted 51 days.

I can remember every second that passed while I was waiting for one of us to die like the others. All I was praying for was to die in one piece. I don't want to become scattered pieces. No one was with us but God. I never imagined that we would live days like these, but we lived with every detail. The aggression against Gaza stole my laughter, stole my dreams, and stole everything from me. Yes, I will dream of other things until another aggression comes and steals them.

Many went to heaven and left me, leaving me here to see more pain. The aggression has not ended, but rather it is a third part of the beginning.

I see that the path to my dreams has become truly closed... I did not die, but all beauty died in me.

Tamer Nijem - 2014

I revive my memory to convey to you a scene I was not accustomed to; this time it was different as I became the scene. I'm in my room looking at the ceiling remembering how I returned here and what I encountered there!

Time has taken me to that dark, savage camp, in a flash back. I am alone, even though it is filled with people of all nationalities. I look and peek, and that voice inside me screams, "Where am I? Who am I? And how did I get here?!"

The noise inside me increases and erupts, but I calm myself down a little and say, "I have become a political refugee," as if I were extinguishing the fire with diesel fuel, and it burned inside me more and more.

I became a political refugee because I am a son of Palestine.

You are Palestinian! So you are a political refugee! A simple equation.

Is this my fault? Was fate destined for me to live all my life in asylum, moving between here and there?

I was dreaming of traveling, so I traveled. I wanted to seek a beautiful dream, but I had many nightmares. I thought that life in Europe was something like a fantasy, and it really is. But being a refugee is a completely different thing. You are treated like prey that has strayed from the herd. And this is what I was like, I was prey in a forest full of human monsters, so you cannot distinguish between this and that, they are all with the same details, those similar details.

What brought me here? I want to return to my mother's food, to my pillow, to my home country. Yes, to my homeland. I am nothing without it, my family, and my friends.

I decided to return. I reserved a single seat for myself. Just as I went, I will return alone.

Cairo Airport security control, a small room full of cigarette smoke that fills the place, not to mention the garbage, as if we were in an animal pen and not in a room of honorable travelers. It's like a small prison stuffed with hundreds, everyone between the pace of acceptance or the tension of returning to where they came from.

From the camp to the airport and from there to the Rafah crossing!

Rafah crossing, that is, Gaza, after three years, three years, and I have been wrestling with the world, carrying my soul on my hands, and moving on, to find myself, and all of this to arrive at an answer to the question that is troubling me: Who am I?

I couldn't describe you, myself, after all this suffering, and because of my good luck, fate wanted the date of my return from the war in 2014, but despite that, I was happy. Yes, very happy. I would return to my bed, to the embrace of my mother, to the joy of my friends, and most importantly, to the warmth of my homeland.

The closer I got to the crossing, the more my eagerness and joy to return increased, and as soon as I reached the crossing, the sounds of shells, planes, and missiles began to creep into my ears. I was not afraid or worried. My only concern was to return and see those whom my heart loved.

I agreed with a taxi driver to take me to my home. I sat by the window and watched the road, the destruction, and the tragedy. I started talking to the driver and asked him what this was, how did it all happen, and where were the people?

He said to me: My son, we are dead on earth, we have become numbers on papers, and whoever is not dead is waiting for death, but in the end we are all dead. There are those who lost their sons, and there are those who lost their homes or their entire family, and the calamity is for the one who lost everything, his family, his home, and his work, so he remained to pray to God... To hurry up!

I confirmed what I heard, as I saw something indescribable. Destroyed homes, homeless people, and pain resides within every person.

I arrived home, and I wish I had not arrived.. After an absence of three years, the reception was with my family saying to me: Are you a fool? Why did you come back? Did you come to die or did you come to bemoan our reality?

I sat down and became the scene. The sounds of the planes were as if they were sitting with me, the shells were keeping me company. I did not care about what they said. I took myself and went down to the street to walk a little. Yes, I walked through pain, destruction, and blood... and families lying under destroyed homes.

I was hurt by the bitterness of the scene and wondered: Are we right?

Will I become dead? Or will I lose someone I love?

Night came and worries came with it. My father said one group would sleep and the other group would stay to guard the house. I stayed awake with everyone else, surrounded by fear, anxiety, confusion, and terror!

This is how we remained until the war ended. After it ended, the tragedy unfolded and Gaza was revealed with all its homes, destruction, and pain.

They killed our love and made us lose our security. But all of this did not stop any person living here. We planted love again, we instilled safety in the orphan child before the adult. We shared its white color with the sky to make it a beginning and a birth from where we left off.

Weam Ederri - 2014

I stopped liking Barcelona Park, even though it was restored. The trees are refusing to grow, but I did, and I can't play there anymore.

Chaos erupted at our neighbor's house; I went to see what was the matter. Our neighbor informed me that the Israeli army asked them to leave their house immediately, so they did.

They live right next door to us. I decided not to move from our home. A minute later, the army launched a warning rocket that forced us all to flee. Few minutes later, the Israeli army hit the house with two missiles; and the whole building that was once a tower became a rubble.

I felt devastated. May God give us strength.

When we wrote the Gaza Monologues in 2010, we felt that the whole World was in solidarity with us. But since the situation in Gaza is worsening, I realized that all the empathy of the World is not able to wipe a speck of darkness from our life.

I wish I was able to tell you otherwise...

Yasmine Abu Amr - 2014

I know that I will die.. Death is a natural thing.. Death is inevitable! But I don't want all my family to die while I stay alive.. I don't want to lose all my limbs and still be alive.. I don't want my house to be demolished, and for me to end up in the streets and still be alive!

How simple our dreams were during the war?! I did not want a palace in the suburbs of Paris, a villa in Britain, or an apartment in New York. I did not want to study at Harvard or Oxford. I didn't want to become a minister or prime minister. I just wanted my family to be safe.

The war did not only kill our feeling of security, rather it killed our dreams, memories, laughter, and tears. It killed the meaning of life. Life that can evaporate at any moment, by the decision of someone sitting in an air-conditioned office drinking coffee. This is not life.

After every aggression on Gaza, I used to stand up and rebuild my life, but now, after all the bloodshed and the death I saw; I ask myself: Will I be able to stand up again and rebuild myself one more time???