

## A blink of an eye

-Good evening.

I'm, on present..

Good evening..

I have internet..

Why don't you reply?

Come on answer me, enough mockery.

Sarah, what's wrong?

Answer in one word at least..

I swear to God, if you don't reply, I'll get in a car and come to your place. I can no longer bear it.

Reply, come on, reply!

OK, here I come to you.

What?! How did this happen? I barely opened the door and found you in front of me?

Were you coming to me? But how did you get from Gaza to Deir al-Balah in a blink of an eye? After 4:00 pm, no one is allowed to walk on Al-Bahr Street. The road is very dangerous.

How did you convince your family that you would leave the house and come to my place? What did you tell them about going to a friend?

- No, I did not come to you, you came to me.

- How did I come to your place? If I, just opened the door of my house and found you in front of me.

- Because I was martyred.

- What do you mean you are martyred, when you are standing in front of me and I am talking to you?

- You are talking to me because you were also martyred. You're laughing, you don't believe it?! I swear by our friendship, that I was martyred.

- But how did I not hear the news that you were martyred? I did not read your name on the list of martyrs!

- Because no one knew that I was martyred.

- How is that?

- Because the missile that hit me, left me in a thousand pieces, and no one called me a corpse.
- No way! Well, they didn't bury you?
- They buried me with other people who were walking in the street. Them too were blown off like me, so people began to collect the corpses and put half of a hand with a quarter of a leg. The most important thing was the head because it is the only piece that proves that this is a body of one person. They collected the likeness of a body and put it in a bag and write anonymous on it. And if no one recognizes it, they will gather us in fifty, sixty bodies and bury us, and that's how they buried me.
- And I?
- What about you?
- What is my situation?
- You were also knocked down by a missile, that cut you in a thousand pieces, and threw you into the other neighborhood.
- How do you know?
- I was standing there watching you.
- And why didn't you alert me?
- I couldn't, I am just a spirit. I even threw myself at you, to keep the missile away from you, but I couldn't protect you. I screamed at you, but you didn't hear me. I held you in my hands and shouted at the top of my voice, oh my.....
- Oh my what?
- Oh, I just screamed.
- So they did not put me in a shroud?
- You forgot that martyrs are not shrouded.
- Although they brought us shrouds in the aid trucks!
- Man, I was thinking that when I die, they will make a big announcement in the media and the social media about my death; the departure of the great poet Sarah Mahfouz. Alas, there is no news or information about me.
- I was more screwed than you
- Why?
- I did not want to die now, or like this death. When I opened the door, going out to the street, I wanted to come to you...
- What did you want?

- I was afraid to die, I wanted to talk to you before I die.
- What did you want to talk about? Here I am in front of you, talk.
- Now, it's too late.
- It's okay, try.
- I mean, the thing I wanted to tell you, should have been told while I was looking in your eyes, or while running away from your eyes. It was a story that I hid for long, and delayed a lot. The war bombed the sweetest words, just as it bombed the homes.
- I waited very long for you to talk, and every night I dreamed of you while you were telling me this.
- You knew my feelings?
- Your eyes were obvious.
- Oh my God, oh God how stupid I am. I should have told you how much I love you and how crazy I am in love with you. I should have told you, Sarah, that you are my whole life, and without you, life is impossible.
- My beloved, Ghassan.. I have never called anyone else a lover but you, my beloved. I was waiting for you to tell me I love you every moment. Dam the war that deprived me of the most beautiful moment in my life. Yes, I love you, Ghassan, with all the love that exists in the universe. My love for you is louder than the sound of their missiles and stronger than the hatred that resides in their hearts.
- Let us go in silence then before they bomb us again Sara. Let us go far away from all this death and devastation, far from the hearts that melted of sadness and pain. May God make them understand, that we are more precious than all homelands. That the whole world with all its land, does not equal one soul of a lover who waited for his beloved and never accomplished. Do you think the whole world is worth the soul of one child who died for no sin? I don't understand how a person who claims to be civilized accepts to occupy another person and control his fate.

Oh God, Sarah, let us leave here, maybe we will find another place with more love.

Ali Abu Yassin

Gaza 29/10/2023