

A note from
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Fiancée of Jamal Khashoggi

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Assalamu aleikum!

I am humbled to be among the friends of my beloved Jamal. I am honoured to be here. Yet, at the same time, I am in an emotional state which is hard to express in words. The disappearance of Jamal has left a void in my heart and soul.

Jamal was known to many of you - a public figure to some and a close friend to others. But for me he was my other half; the one with whom I felt complete. He became the embodiment of my hopes and dreams. I realise that most people here know Jamal, but allow me to describe the man that I knew and loved:

I loved the man who was gentle, caring, loving and giving.

I loved the man who had the courage to raise his voice at a time when many found comfort in silence. He wrote what he believed in, not what would have pleased the powerful.

He was a patriot. He believed in his people and his country, not in the interests of its rulers. He believed in democracy, freedom and dignity, in his country and beyond.

He was an intellectual and a journalist, whose words frightened unjust and power-greedy autocrats. Yet his words voiced the hopes of millions; the neglected, the repressed.

The man I loved would often become emotional and nostalgic. He was in exile, away from his beloved country, his family, his homeland. It was a huge burden for him and he was gravely concerned about his friends and family back at home in Saudi Arabia. Some of his friends were already in prison. He felt that he owed it to them to speak out, not only for himself but also on their behalf.

He felt that it was his duty to become the voice of the voiceless.

This was not only an issue of intellectual integrity, but a moral responsibility. It was part of being a responsible citizen - an idea that he so dearly cherished and felt that his own country Saudi Arabia, but also the wider Middle East, needed to embrace.

This period of exile proved to be an emotional rollercoaster for him. Despite dealing with such intense emotions, he always tried to remain as strong as a mountain. He never complained about what he was going through.

Though this period was painful for him, it was also formative. It was during this time that he gained clarity in his thoughts and his cause. His was a noble cause, one which was people-centric and driven by dignity.

Even though he was in exile, he always remained deeply connected to his country. He always felt that he was walking around the streets of Medina and his longing for the Hijaz was immense and heartfelt.

I also knew Jamal the compassionate. He was humble, gentle, tolerant and considerate. A man who was full of love. A man with whom I fell in love. With this love, we dreamt of a new future, a shared future together. A new beginning, a new home...

This was a dream we came so close to realising when my beloved Jamal stepped into the Saudi consulate on 2 October. He needed a simple, bureaucratic document so we could marry and realise our hopes and dreams.

Yet our dreams were stopped in their tracks and my world turned upside down on that horrific day.

If only I knew what would happen, I would have entered the consulate myself. If only I knew that would be the last time I would see my Jamal, his smile, hear his laughter, I would have stood in front of that murderous team myself.

If only I knew that there were blood-thirsty, evil people waiting inside the consulate for my Jamal, I would have done all I could to prevent him from entering.

If only I knew that a death squad was inside...

If only I knew...

Yet we never imagined such a level of barbarity, cruelty and evil could be waiting for Jamal. What has followed since is an ever-growing void and an immense pain in my heart and soul.

On that day, they took the body of Jamal from me. But his soul, love and spirit are still with me. Millions share his ideals and his pain in their hearts.

In death, as in life, he has proved to be a voice of the voiceless. Despite the cruelty and cowardice of his murderers, in death he has been as beautiful, loving and brave as he was in life. Just as in life his words frightened ruthless dictators, his death has struck fear into the hearts of many. His death has already served as inspiration for millions.

What Jamal fought for is now the duty of those millions. We need to carry this torch from hand to hand. But first and foremost, I want justice for my beloved Jamal. I want to have his body.

Jamal is a martyr for a cause. He is a martyr for the struggle for democracy and freedom in our part of the world. I want to bury the body of my beloved Jamal - my

martyr – surrounded by the prayers of his friends and loved ones. I want to know: Where is his body?

I believe that the Saudi regime knows where his body is. They should answer my demand, for this is not only the demand of a fiancée, but a human and Islamic demand.

I want justice to be served. Not only for those who murdered my beloved Jamal, but for those who organised it and gave the order for it. These questions are not just my questions - they are being asked by millions.

I want the role of the political leadership in this brutal killing to be brought to light.

I want justice for Jamal. I call upon the conscience of humanity and the international community - please help us to reveal the truth and hold the perpetrators and their masters to account for their crimes.

I am deeply grateful for the solidarity of people all over the world. I am, however, disappointed in the actions of the leadership in many countries, particularly in the US. President Trump should help reveal the truth and ensure justice be served. He should not pave the way for a cover-up of my fiancé's murder. Let's not let money taint our conscience and compromise our values.

I am in London now, but I call upon all the men and women of the world: please stand up for justice! Please raise your voice for my beloved Jamal. Please demand that your governments help us hold the evil criminals and their cowardly political masters to account.

There should be no cover-up. Jamal was my beloved fiancé, but he was also a gentle human being, a loving man, a journalist and a true believer in democracy and freedom in the Arab world.

Let's demand justice for Jamal and stand up for his ideals.

Hatice Cengiz