

Laura Blumenfeld, "The Apology: Letters from a Terrorist"

MULTIPLE CHOICE

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The gunman was not at home. "Come in," his mother said. "Would you like
some 1
orange soda?" My knocking must have shaken her out of a nap; she was wearing slip- 2
pers and a pink embroidered bathrobe. Inside, the living room was full of family 3
members, young and old. 4
"That's him," the woman said, pointing over her grandchildren's heads to the 5
gunman's photograph. "He tried to kill someone," she said in an easy voice. 6
"Who?" I asked. 7
"Some Jew," said a boy, who appeared to be about twelve years old. He smiled 8
crookedly, and added, "I don't know who — a Mossad agent." 9
"I'm not sure he was a Mossad agent," a man who introduced himself as Saed, 10
the 11
gunman's older brother, said. "He was a person from the outside — a leader from New 12
York. We heard he was doing something against Palestinians. Why else would they 13
choose him to be shot?" 14
"Why did he fire only once?" I asked. 15
"It was in the marketplace," Saed said. 16
"After the shooting, he threw the gun in the air, and it fell to the ground," his 17
mother said. She began to chuckle and the others joined in. 18
The attack had taken place in the early spring of 1986. It had been a quiet time 19
in Jerusalem: people could walk through the Old City without fear. In March, all 20
that changed when Palestinian terrorists began gunning down foreign tourists — 21
Americans, British, Germans. Their first target was an American man; he had been 22
shot as he strolled through the Arab market shortly after sundown. The gunman had 23
aimed a little too high, and the bullet had grazed his scalp. 24
Twelve years later, I arrived in Israel for an extended honeymoon with my hus- 25
band. While he did part-time legal work, I took a leave of absence from my job at the 26
Washington Post to do research for a book about the culture of vengeance — the thirst 27
for settling scores which has created so much turmoil in the Middle East and through- 28
out the world. My research took me to Albania, Sicily, Iran, and other countries; 29
between trips I looked for the gunman who had shot the American in the market. 30
From records in the Jerusalem District Attorney's office, I learned that several Pales- 31
tinians in a pro-Syria breakaway faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization had 32
been convicted in 1986 for the shooting of foreigners. The man who had shot the 33
American was named Omar Khatib. He had been tried and convicted in an Israeli 34
court, and was now serving a sentence of twenty-five years in Shikma Prison, in 35
Ashkelon. 36
The Khatibs lived in the West Bank, in the last house on a narrow, rutted lane, 37
which ended at a limestone quarry. Trash and rusty appliances spilled over the preci- 38
pice. Their house, which was behind a red gate, was really a number of buildings 39
joined together — cement improvisations with raw concrete steps and half-stacked 40
cinder blocks. In rudimentary Arabic, I introduced myself as an American journalist. 41
"Why did he do it?" I asked the gunman's father, a tall, bony man in a gray 42
robe. 43
The father's response was terse. "He did his duty," he said. "Every Palestinian 44
must do it. Then there will be justice." 45
Another brother of the gunman came into the room. He introduced himself as 46
Imad. His mustache and goatee were dyed burnt orange, and he was wearing a silky 47
red-and-black shirt. He told me that he had been a member of the Popular Front for 48
the Liberation of Palestine, a radical faction of the P.L.O., and that he had returned to 49
Palestine, after twenty-five years of exile in Jordan, in 1994, the summer after the
Israelis and the Palestinians signed the Oslo peace accords. "Anybody would do what

my brother did under those circumstances,” he said. “If you pretend to be a Palestinian for five minutes, you’ll feel what we feel.”	50
“And what about the man he tried to kill?” I asked.	51
“It wasn’t a personal vendetta,” Imad replied. “It was public relations. It was like telling the media to pay attention to us.”	53
“Won’t someone from the victim’s family kill one of your people?” I asked.	54
“My brother never met the man,” Imad said. “Nothing personal, so no revenge.”	55
For me, however, the shooting was personal. The man whom Imad’s brother had tried to kill was my father.	56
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	58

1. The description of the gunman’s mother’s voice as “easy” in line 6 contrasts with what?
 - a. her “slippers and pink embroidered bathrobe” (lines 2-3)
 - b. the presence of her grandchildren (line 5)
 - c. the mother telling the author that her son tried to kill someone (line 6)
 - d. the description of the young boy smiling “crookedly” (lines 8-9)
 - e. the description of the familial gathering (lines 3-4)

2. What might the gunman’s brother Saed mean when he says that the man his brother shot was “from the outside” (line 11)?
 - a. someone who is not a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization
 - b. someone who is Jewish
 - c. someone who is from another country
 - d. someone they did not know personally
 - e. all of the above

3. What does the author see as a “culture of vengeance” (line 26)?
 - a. the driving desire to pay back someone who has harmed you in some way
 - b. targeting foreign visitors
 - c. the legal prosecution of someone who has committed a crime
 - d. a society that discourages aberrant behavior
 - e. none of the above

4. Why does the author say that early spring 1986 was a “quiet time in Jerusalem” (lines 18–19)?
 - a. Few tourists were visiting the city.
 - b. People could walk through parts of the city without being afraid for their safety.
 - c. The economy and the government were both functioning smoothly.
 - d. The city had enacted noise ordinances to reduce the amount of noise.
 - e. There were no major entertainment events, such as concerts or plays, going on at the time.

5. The description of the Khatibs' residence in lines 36-40 uses which of the following elements?

- a. dramatic irony
- b. personification
- c. metonymy
- d. synecdoche
- e. visual imagery

6. Using context, what is the most likely definition for the word "vendetta" (line 53)?

- a. feud
- b. relationship
- c. decision
- d. mistake
- e. misunderstanding

7. Why does the gunman's family not fear revenge from the shooting victim's family?

- a. They do not believe in the author's concept of a "culture of vengeance" (line 26).
- b. They have changed their names to protect themselves.
- c. They do not have a relationship with the gunman anymore.
- d. They see nothing personal in the shooting because the gunman and the victim were not acquainted.
- e. They have enough weapons with which to defend themselves if they need to.

8. In context, the word "rudimentary" (line 40) means

- a. impolite
- b. unintelligible
- c. basic
- d. whispered
- e. perfect

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