

A Birthday Gift For Abubakar Shekau

by A. Human Being (November 2016)



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“What do you give a man who has everything?” Ibrahim and Yusuf had often asked each other, back and forth, as a sort of game. Their longstanding concern was finding a suitable birthday gift for Abubakar, the leader of Boko Haram. “A silver watch maybe?” He could admire it, Ibrahim thought, and remember his men’s indebtedness to him as he coordinates his army’s assault on West Africa.

“Gold maybe?”

“Or some type of treasure?”

The brothers debated – *but never violently* – as they marched down a well-worn path in Sambisa Forest toward Gwoza, which they would arrive at, *Inshallah*, in four days.

The brothers had begun planning a gift for Abubakar after their army’s most decisive attack on the town of Gwoza in August, which had led to Boko Haram’s

occupation of the town, and had marked the rise of its new preeminence in spiritual importance. In that pivotal massacre in August, they had killed 1,001 Christians, Heretics, and Hypocrites, but certainly not human beings. For hadn't Muhammad . . . *No!* . . . hadn't *Allah* said, "Unbelievers are like animals: you try to speak these words to them, but they hear only a bestial cry. Deaf, dumb, and blind, they understand nothing at all."

Their destruction in Gwoza had been great! *Fantastic even!* They had burned down over 200 churches and macheted off more heads every hour than you could fit into a college basketball bag. Ibrahim and Yusuf knew that was true because their army had, *only last year*, participated in the Gujba College massacre where they had killed 44 students and teachers. So the brothers knew all about the capacity of college basketball bags. It wasn't even debatable.

Imagine . . . *as in a fairytale* . . . a pile of 1,001 dead kuffar.

You... simply... can't.

So therefore, Boko Haram had done something beyond imagination! They had done something to be proud of.

While growing up in crowded Kano City, Ibrahim had participated in a yam eating contest. One particularly fat school chum had always beaten him. Every year, he had always eaten more yams than Ibrahim. *And a lot more!* There was a grotesque pleasure in that boy's appetite for quantity, as the sheer numbers of what he devoured was obscene.

Now, Ibrahim – *all grown up* – had done a deed of numbers that simply boggled the mind! He thought of himself now as a closet mathematician, for college-educated people who had digested the lie, didn't know what numbers *really* looked like. They had no idea, for all their "education." While, by contrast, Ibrahim was a man who knew what numbers looked like in the real world. He couldn't count a pile of cassava if you laid it before him, but he damn sure could count a pile of dead kuffar. It was one of those weird skills that you practice over-and-over to impress your friends, like rolling your eyelids inside out, if you're not too grossed out by it.

For example, just these last two weeks: at Damaturu he had counted a pile of 47 butchered kuffar when they invaded that village. At Bajoga he had counted 25

kuffar that they had gunned down from motorcycles. At Gajigana he had counted 13. At Kano, he was proud to say that he counted seven kuffar that their girl-bombs had blown up at a textile market. *"Goodbye F'eh'mi, I will miss your big fat ass!"* At Ashaka he had counted 10 as they attacked a cement factory. *That had been a fun day!* But, sad to say, at Bajoga he had counted wrong – *one off* – but what the heck, we all have our bad days, don't we?

Now, Gwoza, where they were marching, was the town where they had – *that magnificent August* – murdered 1,001 kuffar. So far, that was their record for an attack, and Ibrahim had seen the piles, so he knew.

Like Muhammad's conquest of Mecca, Boko Haram had conquered Gwoza, and used it now as their caliphate with Abubakar as the caliph, the political and religious successor of the prophet Muhammad. So like militarized Mecca in Muhammad's last years, Gwoza now became the base of operations for consolidating Northern Nigeria while they penetrated into both oil-rich southern Nigeria and neighboring Cameroon.

Gwoza held a special place in Ibrahim's heart because Gwoza held the cages where they kept the confined women. It was where he – *and all the brothers* – felt an especial respite, a satisfaction of near religious feeling. It was, of course, where they held the girls down for one another and turned the kuffar girls into girl-bombs. *That was a trick*, Ibrahim reflected. *This is another skill that I have that allows me to add value to the organization.* It was something that his commanders would document in his internal résumé, of sorts. Ibrahim enjoyed learning, he had learned one level – *one layer* – of knowledge. When he had proved himself – as over-and-over, he would – then he would graduate to a more inner and subtler layer of Allah's mystery. For the Brotherhood, he had realized while working in Boko Haram, was layered like an onion, and there was certainly a level of understanding for each layer.

The women, for example, who had been forced to convert to the faith . . . and who had been subsequently forced to convert into girl-bombs . . . had a very limited level of understanding. *As per their station*, Ibrahim reflected.

First, of course, they had to learn their place. For indeed, in the forth surah, had not Allah given men the privilege to beat women? These women, of course, were not proper wives, but prisoners of war, which . . . *had not that same surah*

described as fair game for their captors?

Next, these women had to learn that the only way out of their situation was through martyrdom. For again, does not that same surah state: "Whosoever fights in jihad for Allah, whether slain or victorious, will claim an astonishing reward!"? *And that was it!* Ibrahim thought. *That was all the education those girls needed. Tape a heavy bag of grenades under their tits and send them on their way. The rest happens on its own. And we – who made them what they are – did them this greatest of services. We assured them a banquet seat in Jannah!*

Indeed.

"Ever hear of gorilla pimping?" his commander had told him and his brothers, when they were being trained to turn the girls into girl-bombs. "It's when a pimp is so outrageously violent, so unrelentingly punishing, that the pimped-out girl is completely and utterly broken inside. This is where you need to bring these girls if they are going to be emotionally prepared to serve as bombs. So, you've got to make sure you inflict a lot of pain. Bruises, scars, female circumcision, whatever. Break them. Discover for yourself through trial and error what works best. Simply do the work, that's all I ask."

Although some of the vocabulary of making girl-bombs was new to Ibrahim, he understood how to inflict pain. Wasn't that his role in this organization, after all? So, this was just a new twist on old teachings, habits, and traditions. After that, when his brothers held his favorite girl down for him, Ibrahim did entirely new things to F'eh'mi. One thing that he did with a razorblade was particularly memorable. "*Tahara!*" He had made the girls look proper before Allah, so that there wouldn't be any confusion in Jannah.

Now . . . hiking down that well-worn path in Sambisa Forest toward the town of Gwoza, Yusuf had been beside himself – *of two minds really* – about whether or not he should go ahead and tell brother Ibrahim, who marched beside him, about . . . *his secret*.

He had discovered this secret – *this hidden treasure* – last month when he had been sent out on a mission to assassinate one of the House of Representatives of Borno State in Northern Nigeria. That day that he had discovered this secret, Yusuf, and two accomplices, had climbed over the back wall of the politician's home, and snuck into the back door. Yusuf's accomplices ran through the house,

searching for men to kill or women to take captive.

And in the kitchen – at lunchtime – Yusuf had surprised the member of the House of Representatives as he was spreading mayonnaise on a sandwich, and the man's eyes were as round as saucers as he rushed at Yusuf. In that rushing flailing moment, the politician – *not as fat as he looked on his posters* – had the opportunity to knock Yusuf to the ground. "Have you no decency?" he said, then yelled for his wife and children to run.

But they would all soon be killed or captured upstairs, for Yusuf's brothers made a special habit of segregation. When the gunshots and screams erupted from above, the politician, who had thrown Yusuf to the ground, slackened. It was then that Yusuf pulled out his knife and stabbed, and stabbed, and stabbed into the Christian politician – the animal. Then he rolled the animal over, climbed on top of its back, and stabbed, and stabbed, and stabbed some more. Then he stood up . . . and had never been so disgusted in all his life!

Horror-upon-horror!

Upon a plate on the table in that politician's otherwise clean kitchen was – *Blasphemy!* – a ham sandwich!

Yusuf was about to leave the room in utter disgust when his eyes caught on something bright and astonishing. It was something beautiful, it was gold, a treasure! It had, *perhaps*, been the prize possession of the politician.

It was a gold mug, *pure gold Ibrahim was sure*, as he had seen gold in the teeth of other politicians that Boko Haram had assassinated.

It said "Caliph" on it in English block letters! Now, Ibrahim didn't know English any more than he knew gold, but the characters P...I...M...P on a *gold* mug . . . *What else could it mean?*

Now . . . December 16th, Yusuf and Ibrahim marched down that well-worn path in Sambisa Forest toward the town of Gwoza, which they would arrive at, *Inshallah*, in four days.

Yusuf grinned ear to ear at the thought of his secret! And he was completely beside himself – *of two minds really* – about whether or not he should go ahead and tell Ibrahim about his secret . . . *his gift for Abubakar! A gold cup*

engraved with their leaders grave title, a prize worthy of the caliph! And in this great mood, he turned to his brother Ibrahim and asked again that question that had become a game between them, “What do you give a man who has everything?”

A. Human Being is a contributor to [New English Review](#) and is the author of the novel *War Verses: A Jihadist Fairytale*, which is available in 3 parts on Amazon.com:

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