

Israeli Police Nab Suspected Palestinian Terrorist Killer of Mother of 6

Following an intensive manhunt, the Israel Police and the Shin Bet security agency on Tuesday apprehended the suspected Palestinian terrorist who murdered Dafna Meir, an Israeli mother of six, in her home in Otniel on Sunday.

Morad Bader Abdullah Adais, 16, a resident of one of the Palestinian villages in the area, was taken in for questioning.

Initial investigations revealed that one of Adais' distant relatives was killed while trying to carry out a terrorist attack two months ago. The Israeli defense establishment is looking into the possibility that the Meir murder was a revenge attack.

"The terrorist found a breach in the fence and that is how he entered the community and carried out the murder," said the head of the Mount Hebron Regional Council, Yochai Damari. "I trust the authorities to settle the score with him to the fullest."

Security camera footage released Monday clearly showed the terrorist fleeing the scene within minutes of the murder.

6 Orphans

On Monday, friends and family gathered in Otniel to pay their last respects to Dafna Meir, the victim of the attack. Having been a foster child and a ward of the state for many years, Meir knew how important a home is to those who do not have one. She took in two foster children, as well as mothering four biological children.

Meir is survived by her husband, Nathan, and children: Renana, 17; Akiva, 15; Noa, 11; Ahava, 10; and foster children Yair, 6; and Yaniv, 4.

The funeral procession set out from Otniel, where her close friends and husband eulogized her and wept while saying the mourner's prayer.

As hundreds of vehicles made their way from Otniel to the Jerusalem cemetery where Meir was to be buried, dozens of Israelis came out to key junctions along Route 60 to wave flags and show support for the family.

The eulogy given by Meir's eldest daughter, Renana, who saw her mother being stabbed to death in their kitchen, pierced the hearts of everyone at the funeral.

"Mommy, my beautiful mother, my best friend," she said through her tears. "Do you see how many people care about you? You left an enormous void in all of our hearts. It is heartbreaking for me to know that you won't be there with me at the IDF induction center, at my wedding, in the delivery room. I didn't only lose a mother, I also lost my best friend."

Dafna Meir's husband, Nathan, also choked back the tears as he eulogized his wife, saying, "We met as soldiers on the border with southern Lebanon. It took us an instant to fall in love. Just as I blessed your arrival, I am now blessing your departure. You left me with six treasures. I will protect them for you. They are all unique, infused with your essence."

"My Dafna, she is one in a million," he added. "She grew up without a home and managed to flourish and rehabilitate. That is why she decided to give back to the world, and she did. ... Dafna was an enormous crown, a crown of truth. She was very direct, precise, sharp as a knife. Not everyone liked it, but everyone appreciated my Dafnaleh. Thank you for every minute together and sorry for all the times I hurt you. Our love is

too strong to be a passing thing. Farewell. Rest in peace.”

Opening Doors to Children

Other eulogies revealed additional aspects of Meir’s life. They recounted the story of a young girl who grew up in foster homes and institutions and who wanted more than anything to provide a warm home to children without one. That is why she decided to take in not one but two children, brothers, in order to keep them together.

Orit Amiel, the foster care director who placed the boys with the Meir family, recalled the arduous process.

“To our great joy, [the Meir family] agreed to take two brothers whom we didn’t want to split up. That is very rare,” she said. “One of the children also has special needs, and the challenge was twofold. They did everything with love. They spoke up for the children on every possible platform and fought for them, be it in schools or elsewhere. They fought for them to keep in touch with their biological parents, and that truly attests to their greatness.”

Ever since Meir’s story became public in the wake of her murder, foster care facilities have reported a spike in interest by potential foster families to take in children.

“There are so many children waiting for homes,” said Amiel. “Perhaps this exposure, through the Meir family’s devastating tragedy, will widen people’s hearts and open more doors to children.”

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