

Omar Bin Laden Â€ŒMy Father Will Stop When He Is Put In His Graveâ€



Nearly a decade after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the son of the Number One most wanted man in the planet tells all in a revealing and shocking interview.

Kostas Karasavvidis / The Interview People

The only way that he could, finally, speak to me was through messages. Through successive messages. Several interruptions that necessarily occurred during this special communication, sometimes, lasted for whole weeks. That was due to various reasons. Sometimes it was because his e-mail address had been compromised and I had to wait for him to contact me through another address, other times because personal-family issues did not let him talk to me and some other times because he had changed his mind and did not want to do this interview. There were also times that – simply – the internet service he was using had technical problems making our

communication impossible.

Since the initial plan to meet him somewhere in the Middle East had been spurned, I was told that I could possibly meet him in Paris just for this plan to be canceled a little bit later. However, in the meanwhile he had decided to give me this exclusive interview. My asking of a phone interview or a videoconference was rejected at once, since the country where he currently lives does not allow the bin Laden family to give interviews there – even on the phone. The only way to do this was through e-mails.

Finally, after negotiations that kept months and more than 80 messages later, the son of the world's most infamous terrorist answers to my questions:

Do you think your father is still alive?

Yes, I believe he is alive. The world would be told if he was dead. I would learn about it from the media.

Did you ever have any doubts that maybe Osama wasn't behind the 9/11 attacks? According to the conspiracy theories, behind the events of September 11, 2001, was the US goverment, so that the United States could go to war in the Middle East.

My father said himself that he knew about the attacks. He would not lie about such a thing.

If you knew where he was, would you tell?

I am his son no matter what he has done. Few sons would give their father to people looking for him to kill him.

Do you think that Osama will ever be caught?

I do not have an opinion on this. Only God knows what is in the future.

Will there be more attacks?

Al Qaeda is all over the world now. There have been many attacks that were not related to my father but to his organization formed so many years ago.

…My Father, – I Am Sure – Holds The Head Position. If He Is Dead, I Believe That Many Will Want To Occupy His Spot And Might Plan Big Attacks To Show That They Are The Most Capable To Do The Most Damage.

You have said that actually Americans are lucky that your father has not been captured or killed and that "the world is going to be very, very nasty then. It will be a disaster".Why do you believe things will get worse when he dies?

Although there are many Al Qaeda branches, my father, – I am sure – holds the head position. If he is dead, I believe that many will want to occupy his spot and might plan big attacks to show that they are the most capable to do the most damage.

Did the Secret Services or anyone else force you to tell them where your father is as well as to disclose important information about Al Qaeda's action?

No one has tried to force me to do anything. I was offered a chance to live in America if I would point at the map and tell exactly where my father is. This happened in Spain when I met with some Americans in the government. Of course, I did not know where my father was. Of course, I would not have told if I had known. He is my father. He gave me life. I still love my father although I do not love his actions.

Do you feel safe? Do you receive death threats against your life?

I do not worry about my safety. That is in God's hands.

How do people react when they learn that you are the son of Osama bin Laden, the Number One most wanted person in the world?

Most people are very curious and cannot believe they are in front of the son of Osama bin Laden.

How hard is it for you to trust somebody? To have a normal relationship; friendly or erotic.

I am a very open person. I trust people too easily. This has caused me some problems. I am told by Jean Sasson who wrote the story of my life (editor's note: "Growing up bin Laden"), that my heart is too open. But I do not know a lot about this as it is difficult for a person to talk about their life, or at least it is for me.

How did you feel when you own father asked you to become a suicide bomber? Can you, please, describe this moment?

I was very hurt and surprised that my father could ask this of his sons.

This was the reason that led you to abandon his compound in Afghanistan, in 2001, a few months before Osama bin Laden was to become the world's most wanted man?

In a life of turning points, it was a big turning point for me although I had been thinking to leave my father and join the real world and have a more quiet life for two or three years before this happened.

Although you had been your father's chosen successor, the favored son meant to lead Al Qaeda and carry on global jihad?

Yes, my father told me that he wanted me to carry on his work. I was not interested and this eventually caused a break in our relationship. I am sure my father is disappointed that I was not happy to take a position by his side.

I Had No Plans To Speak Out – It Just Happened. I Cannot Remember The First Moment I Told The World That I Was For Peace, And Not War.

You are the only bin Laden son to publicly disavow your father's violence. Why you spoke out? (editor's note: in Saudi Arabia, sons never speak out against their fathers)

I had no plans to speak out – it just happened. I cannot remember the first moment I

told the world that I was for peace, and not war. But it was a good moment for me to tell the world that I prefer peace, not war.

For you, Osama bin Laden is neither a freedom-fighting jihadist nor a terrifying mass murderer. What is he?

My father is my father, good and bad. Yet, I admit that he has taken a path that I do not agree. He believes that he is fighting for Islam. Many people in the world besides me believe that it is better to fight for islam in a peaceful manner.

How do you feel when you see him on television?

Sad.

When did you see him for the last time?

A few months before the events of 2001.

You have said that in the past he had always managed to make contact when he wanted to. Since then, have you or he ever tried to make contact?

He has never made contact with me since that last time I saw him. I am sure that my father does not trust me anymore so he would never contact me.

Some people inside and outside CIA think that you are working for Al Qaeda's propaganda front, as Al Qaeda's Disinformation Agent.

Do you have evidence that the CIA believes I am working for Al Qaeda? If you do, I would like to see it. I know that many bloggers make crazy statements on their blogs which have no reality attached to them but I have not heard that the CIA has made such a silly statement. It is very silly to think my father still trusts me or that I would work for Al Qaeda now when I refused to do so when my father asked me point blank to do so.

Apart from the counterterrorism experts who think you might be working for Al Qaeda, Michael Scheuer, the former head of the bin Laden desk at the CIA, claims in his article "Osama's Flower-Child Son or Al Qaeda

Disinformation Agent?" (Publication: Terrorism Focus Volume: 5 Issue: 11) that you are also pursuing an unspoken agenda, one that serves your father. He also thinks that when the book is going to be published in Arabic, it will make your father look like a hero in the Muslim world.

I see it but did not know about this. He is a silly man to think this. My father would never allow his sons to do such a thing and he will be upset with me for asking Jean Sasson to write my story and to write my mother's story. To many people in the Middle East my father is a hero already. My book will do nothing to change the minds of those who believe this.

What is your answer to those who think that "you're playing the West - and especially the Europeans- for suckers and rather than being a wealthy dilettante who wishes to be an ambassador of peace for the UN you are still the son of his father, a young man who received six years of insurgent training in Afghanistan"?

First of all I am not wealthy. I am not a person who thinks like this. You can ask Jean Sasson this question as she knows me really well and she would be better at answering this than I would.

What do you think of Barack Obama?

I thought he would be a good president at first. Time will tell.

Why Osama was so happy when Bush was elected? Why you are convinced that he wanted McCain more than Obama?

He thought Bush would be a stupid president and make many mistakes so he was glad for that.

I Do Not Know Where My Father Is But He Would Not Be In America. He Is In The Muslim World Where He Will Stay, I Feel, For Sure.

"This is the kind of president my father needs – one who will attack and spend money and break the country". On the other hand, "in Clinton's time, America was very, very smart. Not like a bull that runs after the red scarf". Now, with Obama, do you think the United States can win in Afghanistan?

I do not think that any foreign power can win in Afghanistan. The British tried in the past but all they found were graveyards. Other countries tried. Afghanistan people are too complicated. No one can influence them but another Afghan person and even that does not always work out.

(editor's note: Osama bin Laden's words:) "The Americans are weak…First we obliterate America. By that I don't mean militarily. We can destroy America from within by making it economically weak, until its markets collapse. When that happens, they will have no interest in supplying Israel with arms, for they will not have extra funds to do so. At that time, the steel wheel will corrode and be destroyed by lack of attention. That's what we did with Russia". As you say, "his plan worked. He has already won". Now, nearly a decade after 9/11, when do you believe your father will finally stop?

My father will stop when he is put in his grave. He believes in what he is doing and he is a determined kind of a man.

Is it true that Osama was a previous partner of Bush, that they were in the oil business together?

This is so silly… No.

Some people think Osama isn't hiding in Pakistan or anywhere else; he is driving a cab in New York. Okay, seriously now, do you think that he might be hiding under the noses of United States government?

Another silly idea that my father would be anywhere in the world as a cab driver. If anyone knew anything at all about my father, he would not think such an idea. I do not know where my father is but he would not be in America. He is in the Muslim World where he will stay, I feel, for sure. I do not speak from knowing where he is, but from knowing him as a man of very stern beliefs.

In "Growing up bin Laden", the book written by American author Jean Sasson along with you and your mother, you are revealing the world of a son dealing with the world's most wanted terrorist, his father. What was it like to be the son of Osama bin Laden?

It has been too complicated. Sometimes good and sometimes bad. The bin Laden family name is very respected in the Middle East. In other parts of the world not so much.

Where are you residing?

I do not like to say but I travel from Saudi Arabia to Qatar to my mother's home in Syria.

What happened to your brothers and sisters? Are they alive?

They are alive for sure. After my father left them in Afghanistan they traveled to Pakistan with other people they knew and then they left Pakistan and went to Iran and they have been there for long years. Now some are in Syria while my brother Othman and his wives and children are in Iran. Also my half brother Hamza is in Iran as well as his wife and children and Hamza's mother, who was one of my father's wives. I am asking a Middle Eastern country to help bring my brothers out of Iran to live in a friendly country. Some of them live under house arrest since 2001, while some others live in a compound and cannot leave or make calls without permission. They would like to leave now and see their mother and other brothers and sisters. They are innocent of everything.

A Son Loving A Father And A Father Loving A Son Has No Need Of Explanation..

Why can't they leave Iran?

They have no papers and nowhere to go. The Iranian government says that some country must agree for them to travel. They cannot go to a place where they do not have a visa and there so we are asking for some friendly country to open their arms to them.

A father that tested chemical weapons on his dogs, a father that tried to turn his own sons into suicide bombers, a father that used to beat his children, a father that ordered them not to express joy over anything, not to laugh – only smile -, a father that used to count the exposed teeth, reprimanding his sons on the number their merriment had revealed, that kind of father, how much could he be loved?

A son loving a father and a father loving a son has no need of explanation.

If you close your eyes and go back, to your childhood, what is the first image that comes in your mind?

I remember many things but mostly are related to my father and his sitting with his men and everyone teasing me with my father asking how many wives I wanted and I would hold up four fingers. I knew that men in my culture have more than one wife and this is considered normal but funny when a little kid is talking about…

Osama bin Laden's prodigal son

Before Omar was to become the son of the world's most wanted man, he was the son of a multitudinous family, the bin Laden family, with more than 20 children. The fourth-born son of Osama, from his first wife, Najwa, spent his childhood learning desert survival skills and handling Kalashnikovs. As a teenager, as his father's chosen successor, he followed him to the mountains of Tora Bora to abandon him a few months before the attacks of 2001, that were meant to change the world forever.
30-year-old Omar has made headlines not only because he spoke out against his father, asking to change his ways, but also because he had married a woman nearly twice his age. The couple got recently divorced.

The prodigal son of Osama, is the only son from the bin Laden family that decided to speak out and publicly disavow his father's violence, despite the fact that he doesn't think that any of his siblings are still by his father's side.

In February 2010 he stated during an interview to the journalist Guy Lawson, from the "Rolling Stone" magazine, that "a lot of people should thank God I chose the peaceful way. If I chose war, I would be unbelievable at it. A lot of people should pray to their god to thank him that I did not do that."

In 2009 came out the book that he co-authored with his mother and the American

writer Jean Sasson, “Growing up bin Laden”. It was the first time that a book about Osama bin Laden was written by a real bin Laden.

Jean Sasson”Osama bin Laden is the most joyless person in the world”

Jean Sasson (www.jeansasson.com) is the American author of the book “Growing up bin Laden”; the only book about Osama bin Laden that is written from a close bin Laden family member.

How did this book come to be?

I was sitting in my office writing my next book, about a woman in Afghanistan who had lost her son (“For the love of a son”), and I decided to check my emails that come through my publisher’s site. My eyes popped a bit when I saw an email from someone named Omar bin Laden. I read the email to learn that Omar bin Laden was the son of Osama bin Laden and that he wanted me to tell his life story. (He knew about the princess books and someone in his family knew my princess – Princess Sultana – and had heard that I was very trustworthy). I thought it was a joke at first but there was a telephone number attached and I saw it was from Egypt. I called, spoke with Omar and his wife Zaina. I was asked to tell their life story. I was not sure at first because I must know the person I write about and these were new people for me. After a number of phone calls, I told Omar that I didn’t think I was the appropriate person to write his story but that I would recommend other writers. Omar and Zaina were determined that I would be the writer, so I told him that I only write women’s stories so IF his mother would agree to be a part of the story that I would do it. Much to my surprise Najwa agreed to participate. And, that is the beginning of this saga…

It Was The First Time That A Book About Osama Bin Laden Was Written By A Real Bin Laden.

Why your initial reaction wasn’t positive?

A host of reasons: first of all, there was such anger in my heart about 9/11 and all the innocent people (from all over the world who were in America) who died. Secondly, I read some info online that led me to believe that Omar didn’t think his father had been behind the attack. After thinking about it a bit, I knew from the culture that Omar would have difficulty believing the worst of his father.
So, I agreed.

What did you learn through the eyes of Omar and his mother about Osama bin Laden's personality?

That Osama bin Laden is the most joyless person in the world. That he created a life for his wives and children that held little joy for anyone.

Which were the biggest difficulties you faced during all these 15 months of research and writing?

Language barrier with Najwa – this created the need for translators and translating, etc., and I feared that a lot would be lost in the translation. I've never written a book about someone when I could not sit and chat and the both of us understand first hand what the other was saying. But, we worked it out.

What was the most bizzare thing you learned?

I thought the most bizarre part of the story was when Omar told me about the family going out and having to sleep in holes in the desert, to prepare themselves for tough times in war…I really couldn't believe that story! I asked Najwa (through a translator) and she very simply said: "Yes, we did that." I really could not believe that anyone would lay down in a hole in the desert and try to sleep only because Osama thought it was a good idea.

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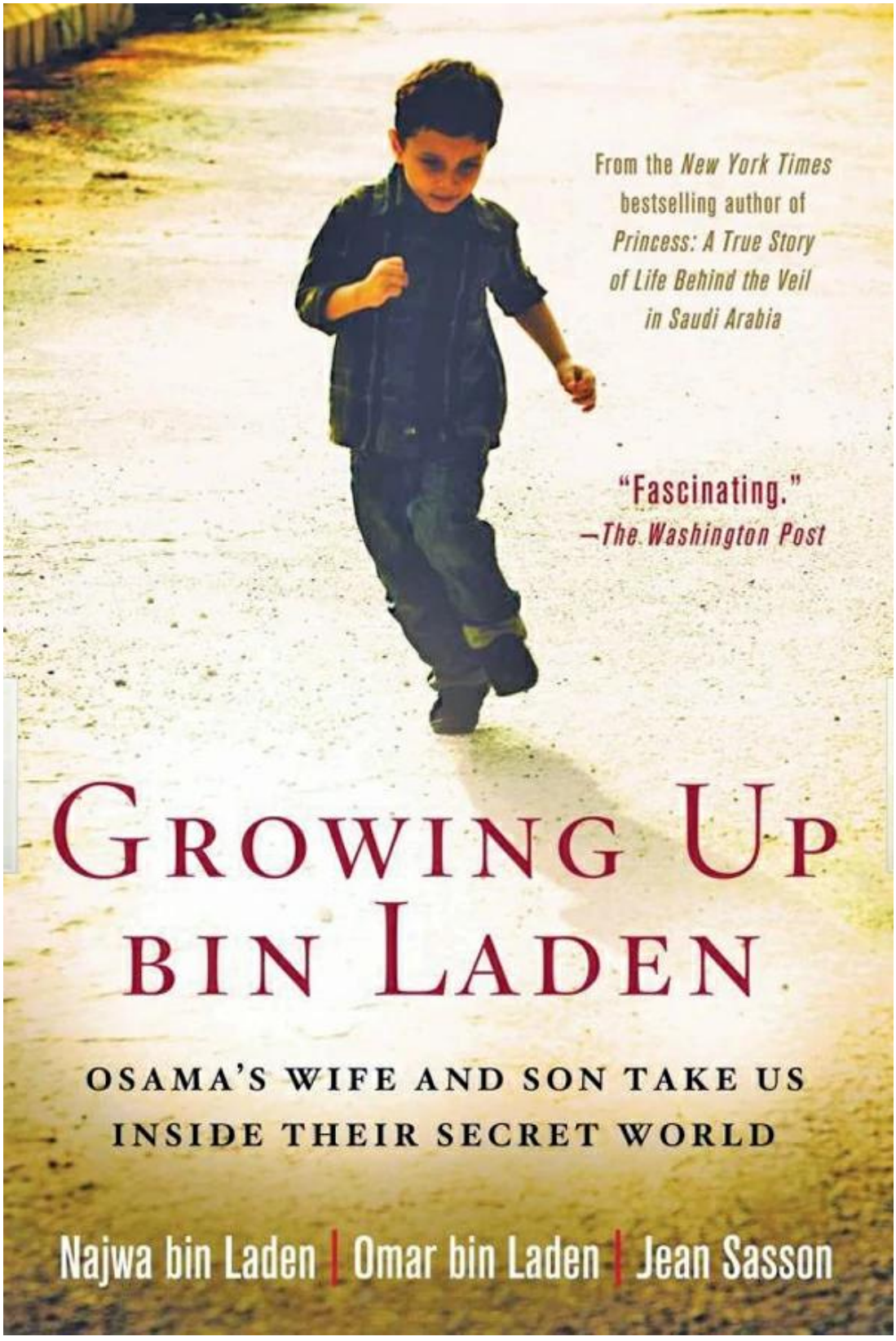
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