

All Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.
And May his Peace and blessings be upon our Prophet
Muhammad, his household and all of his companions.

To Proceed:

Dear Judge Berman,

I wanted to write this so you can get to hear from me. I lived a relatively short life so far, and it feels as such, but when I go back in memories it feels like a long and rough path. I remember as far back as my memory can go, being a shy and quiet 5 year old, not knowing anything about the world. I remember it seeming like a wonderful and colorful place, where I just played with action figures and lived under the comfort of my parents, safe and far away from problems. As I started school, this image partially, but suddenly disappeared. The students there showed me the first bitter reality of the world's system/life which is prejudice based on origin/nationality.

I was treated differently by other students since the first day of school. It was a matter of question and confusion at first, but then it was quickly understood. The students thought "low" of different of me because I was from Egypt while they were all from Kuwait. Egyptians are known to be poor and basically a joke to Kuwaiti's. I don't remember everything exactly but I remember scenarios that remind me of how bad it was. I remember inviting

everyone to my birthday Party, and have no one show up, or the kids reactions when they first heard my accent and realized I was different than them. I quickly adapted to being lower and of less worth than everyone else though and it quickly became normal. Then one day, when I was around 7, I heard the news that we were moving to Canada. I generally don't like change, but I remember being very excited and happy. I guess this was because I thought life couldn't get worse than how it was. I remember imagining Canada as green open fields with rainbows and fluffy white clouds, which is generally what it is compared to Kuwait (in the summer only, not winter). ~~It was~~ Anyway, we packed everything and were on our way. It was around summer time but my parents thought it was the arctic so they brought big jackets which they forced my sister and I to wear, I think we even wore snow pants to be honest. I remember I was so glad to leave Kuwait, that I kissed the ground in Canada, as if I'm kissing Canada. I guess I was doing it as sort of a joke too, but anyway my parents told me to stop and get off the floor because people were looking at us. I was around 7 and was starting grade 2 at school. I was a little nervous in the start, but school was great compared to Kuwait. The students all treated each other

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the same, including me. I quickly started to make friends, and I remember it being a great feeling. After school, I'd ride my bike with my sister near a park, where we used to feed ducks and all sorts of stuff. Soon after that though, my mom began to be strict and not let us go out as much. She had a fear that it wasn't safe, whether it be in the aspect of other children's negative influence, or safety in general. She made ~~me~~ schedules for me to follow, with strong restrictions on playing outside. The other kids on my street whom I used to ride bikes with were very confused, and I remember being embarrassed to tell them that "my mom doesn't allow me to go out of our street without her" or "she doesn't allow me to play for over an hour". Anyway this continued until I was around 13, when her supervision and restrictions suddenly got lifted off, for some reason I don't know. I began going out with friends more, sometimes all day, and I guess what she long feared ~~ed~~ started to happen. I started to be influenced by my friends, or we slowly influenced each other, and with my mom not being on my back to prevent me from doing anything wrong, ^{and due to the system I lived in,} I started to become interested in drugs. It was in a recreational sense, and I remember watching YouTube videos about how weed wasn't bad for you, or seeing it portrayed as something good in the general media I was exposed to, like music ect... I got really eager to see how it feels to be under the influence of a drug.

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With the excuse I gave myself that "its not harmful", I got it from a friend and smoked it alone at home. I didn't realize any major feeling the first time, except forgetfulness and feeling a little foggy. So I thought I didn't smoke enough. I then did it a second time, and smoked a lot. This time it greatly affected me and my family was home. I remember it was right before we were going to eat at Popeyes, so I thought I'd smoke it then to see how Popeyes tasted when high (because I knew weed made you hungry). Anyway, instead of going to Popeyes I started uncontrollably laughing with bloodshot eyes, and with a strong odor of smoke my parents knew something was up. I remember them shouting and questioning me but everything just seemed funny to me. I also confessed to them, and tried convincing them that its okay and that weed is healthy. They demanded that I tell them who gave it to me, but I refused so they took me to the police station. I was still taking the situation as a joke though, and was exploring/enjoying the high. I remember feeling like I discovered something new, which seemed so fascinating to me. I thought it was amazing how quickly one can alter how there brain works. Anyway, my parents thought the police was gonna do some C.I.A interrogation on me of something (to get me to speak), but as I expected, they said it wasn't a big deal. They said a lot

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of 14 year olds experiment like that in Canada, and that no one can force me to speak about the person who sold it to me. My parents were enraged and decided that day, that Canada was not a good influence on me. They then started to plan, how our life would go from that point. I woke up the next morning, and as I expected, my parents didn't let me leave the house, whether it be to go to school or anything else. They also took my phone, computer, and every electronic I had. They soon informed me and my sister that we were going to Egypt for vacation. We always visited Egypt from time to time, so I thought it was one of those trips, but instead it was a trap to Kuwait. In Egypt, they informed me and my sister that we were moving to Kuwait, and we were then forced to go. I guess my parents worried that if they told us the plan (of moving) in Canada, we just wouldn't go. But in Egypt, we were trapped and forced to go, because we didn't know anything or anyone in Egypt, and weren't old enough to travel alone to Canada. Anyway, I heard the word "Kuwait" and remembered memories of being there. I remembered the kids treating me differently, and making me feel less than them. I was in tremendous fear, but I had no choice, we were moving to Kuwait. I couldn't say bye to any of my friends, or pack my stuff up, we went straight to Kuwait. My parents didn't realize that Kuwait isn't the wonderful Islamic

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Country they thought it to be, and imagined life to be better over there. Anyway, we arrived there and I remember it feeling much different. I saw men wearing thobes and some woman covered up, it was also extremely hot. I thought "this isn't so bad" until the first day of school. I attended the same school I was in before leaving Kuwait, but I walked in not knowing what to expect. I thought the treatment before (when I was a kid) was just because we were kids, but that proved to be wrong. I remember the first day, when I first spoke, a few students laughed and said "Ent Masri?" meaning "your Egyptian?" in Arabic, and here is where I realized how my social life would be. They started by just staying away from me and treating me different. Then the insults and jokes began. I remember phrases they said which rhyme in Arabic, ~~the~~ which translate to "Egyptians are real men, they eat fool (cheap Egyptian food) from the garbage" or "You Egyptian are a joke, your mom's a man, and your dad's a woman." I began to become depressed and begged my ~~parents~~ parents to leave Kuwait, but soon reality set in and I realized I was stuck there. I was already obsessed with the effects of weed, but my depression gave me an extra push to ^{out} looking for it. It was much harder to find in Kuwait, but I was very determined and finally found it. It was much more expensive, around

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3 times the price it was in Canada. I got hold of it though, and started smoking almost daily. My parents thought Kuwait had no drugs in it or something, so they didn't restrict me from going outside or having money, so it wasn't too hard to get weed. A simple story like "I will go to Starbucks to get some coffee" got me out of the house with what's equivalent to a \$20 bill, which I bought the weed with. I managed to find new ways everyday to get money and leave the house, but this didn't last long. I ended up smoking in my room because I couldn't leave the house for a reason I can't remember, and so my parents caught me. They smelt it and were enraged again. This time I said sorry and that I wouldn't do it again though, which was a drastic change from what I said the first time they caught me. They were soft of relieved that I admitted guilt and expressed that I would stop. This didn't stop them from placing strong restrictions though. Again, they took all my electronics and didn't let me leave the house. The front door required a key to be opened from the INSIDE, so there was no way of sneaking out. They also walked me right to the school's front door, which added to the jokes the students said about me. Slowly the restrictions started to get lifted off though, and I went back to getting high. This was the pattern I lived, for that first year in Kuwait. I would do drugs, get caught and be forced to stop, then start again when possible, and so on. Around this time is when my beliefs started changing, and I stopped identifying as a Muslim. From around 15,

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I doubted Islam and started to not believe in it. This was partly because I didn't understand it properly and due to influences around me like drugs ect... My parents tried convincing me but I didn't listen. I thought there was no proof of organised religion (including Islam) being true, and I began to think it was all made up, and didn't identify as anything. I thought that maybe there is a god, but I didn't believe in any organised religion, and I openly declared my disbelief of Islam. Anyway, at the end of that school year, it was too known at the school that I was getting high, and the principle forced me to leave, just out of suspicion. I talked about it too much, and many students saw me high, and the word spread around. I was 15 now and going to grade 10.

The new school was actually way better, but I was too obsessed with drugs, and continued wanting to use. It was easier to find drugs there too, which added to the problem. I also got better at not getting caught, and started smoking weed more and more. I began to also steal from my parents (from wallets ect...). I also researched more about drugs and learned easier ways to get high. I started drinking DXM and diphenhydramine cough syrups, which I got "over the counter". I also got hold of K2 and codeine here and there (among many other drugs).

All these drugs including weed were still hard to get though, and I kept researching more and more. I would read reviews about peoples experiences from a site called "erowid" (if my memory recalls correctly).

It was like an obsession, I would just read and experiment with different drugs afterwards. One day, I read about inhalants and that one

could get high by inhaling air fresheners. I didn't believe it but I thought I'd try it for the sake of it. I put a bag over an air freshener (to filter the soap in it), and inhaled the air that came out. To my surprise I felt a nice euphoric feeling, and my body started to buzz and get numb. I couldn't believe it and felt like the happiest person in the world. The high quickly ended though (in 2 minutes). So I huffed again, and again, and again. The more I huffed, the more psychedelic I began to feel. I would hear ringing noises and get a nice feeling in my body. I finished the can that was in my bathroom, and quickly went to my mom to tell her we needed more air freshener. I also used the spray that kills bugs and everything I can get hold of in the house that released butane. I thought I can buy air fresheners myself too, it was so cheap and ~~one~~¹ can could keep me huffing and high for an entire hour. My parents always knew I was getting high when they smelt smoke, but they never imagined I was getting high when they smelt air freshener. One day though, my sister saw me huffing it and told my mom. They thought it was just me acting stupid though, and didn't believe air freshener gets you high. They dismissed the issue as they thought it was only a one-time thing. I continued huffing everywhere I can though, at home and school. I would easily go into a psychedelic world in a few huffs, then when I needed to do something like go to class, I would stop and the high would wear off in


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2 minutes, so no one ever saw me high. It also didn't smell like anything people would suspect, and was extremely cheap and easy to get. To me, I felt like I had found a miracle. I continued huffing multiple cans a day, but until this point I didn't get any vivid or realistic hallucinations. One day though, I was huffing in my bathroom and started to hear a voice talking through the fan.

I responded to it quietly and the person I heard started saying that he is a pilot who made an emergency landing in Kuwait and that he's talking to me through the radio signals. He had a high pitched voice, and said his name was hamtaram, and I really believed he was real. I used to talk to him everytime I got high for hours. He became ~~one~~ of my only friends and everytime I wanted to talk to him, I would get high and he was always there. Sometimes I thought he was a demon, and other times I thought he was real people I knew but in disguise. Sometimes he was nice and in a good mood, and sometimes he was mean. When I was sober I doubted that he was real, but I tried to believe he was, because he was like a friend. I had many other hallucinations like objects talking to me, or words in music morphing into other words. When I was really high, I would see things like people coming out of the walls, or me sinking in the toilet (getting flushed in it). I would see many other things like animals or people I knew. I kept huffing air fresheners and later

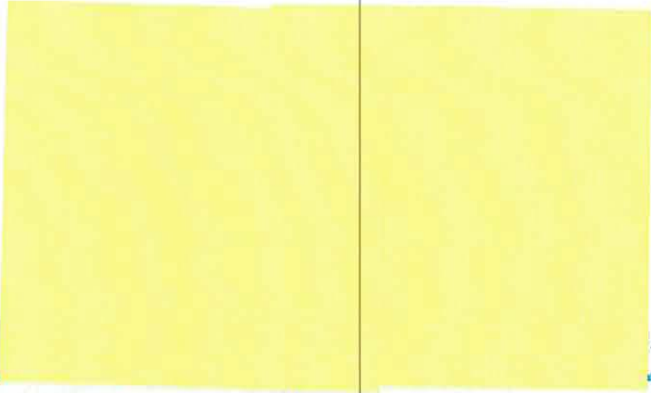
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switched to lighter fluid cans, as they didn't have soap coming out from them. This lasted for about a year. I would huff 2-5 cans a day, so I would be high and talking to hamtaramo for hours on end. It felt like an adventure everytime I started huffing. Anyway, at the same time I started experimenting with many other drugs. Another one I also loved and got addicted to was heroin. I would snort it and went for around 4-5 months of doing it everyday. It was getting expensive and I sold drugs on multiple occasions to get money. It was hard to find drugs in Kuwait, and Kuwaitis are very rich so it was easy to sell drugs for 5 times the price if I wanted to. One day though, my parents suspected me when I was coming home from school. I was good at hiding the fact that I was getting high, but they thought something was off in the way I showered for long periods of time, where in reality I was huffing butane. Anyway, they searched me and after wrestling with my dad to prevent him from checking my wallet, he found heroin in it. I also confessed about the inhalants, and told them about hamtaramo and the hallucinations.



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This time though, my parents prevented me from leaving the house, and from obtaining a single penny, so I couldn't even buy something as cheap as butane cans. One day, I begged my mom to let me go outside to ride my BMX, she agreed, on condition that she comes with me. She came, but I just rode my bike off and ditched her (ran away from her with my bike). I went into the first corner store, called a "baqala" in Kuwait. I casually walked in, grabbing 2 butane cans and walked ⁱⁿ out, running away with my bike. The store owner ran after me, but my purple

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BMX was faster than him. I huffed the 2 cans at an abandoned building, and went again to a different corner store, doing the same thing, stealing 2 more cans. I did this to atleast 4 corner stores that day.

In the last one, I hid too close to the corner store I stole from, and the owner of it found me on the roof of a building, huffing the butane. He grabbed me by my shirt and drassed me to his store, making me sit on the floor and threatening to call the police if I didn't pay him. I told him I had no money but he kept shouting and threatening, making a big scene. My mom who was walking down the same street looking for me, saw the commotion, and went in the store, to find me in it. She began shouting at me, making the scene even bigger. She paid the store owner

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Because of my lifestyle and depression, I had previously tried to commit suicide on multiple occasions. Like taking large amounts of tylenol or hanging myself. But I either didn't die or it was too painful to proceed in doing it.

[REDACTED]

Anyway after a month we went back to Kuwait. I was going to grade 11 now, but in a matter of weeks I ended up running away from my parents to go huff butane again. I loved the adventures it gave me, and wanted to see what hantarama was up to. Everytime I left him for a while (didn't get high), I would always wonder what was going on with him. Anyway, I ended up huffing so much this time that I passed out. I don't remember how I ended up in the PSYC hospital again this time, but I know I did. I was 16 ~~at~~ at this point, and found someone in there with

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What they call hashish in Kuwait, or "hash" in the west. He gave me a whole finger of it for free, but I had no lighter so I just ate the whole thing. I got so high that I got very sick. My parents came to visit me that day, and knew I was high from my eyes. They told the hospital to drug test me, and I also confessed. I remember telling my parents that if I wanted to get high, they can't stop me, even in a psych hospital. My parents had me released after 2 weeks and told me we were going to Egypt for vacation. I should have learned the first time that this Egypt vacation thing is a trap, but I went with it... Again. When we arrived my uncle told me that I would be put in a rehab there. I just agreed because it was a way for me to miss school. I didn't know how it was going to be or how long I was staying there for, but as I got in, I realized what I put myself into. The Patients

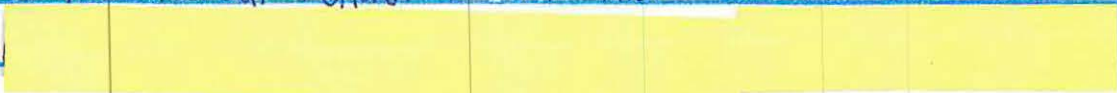


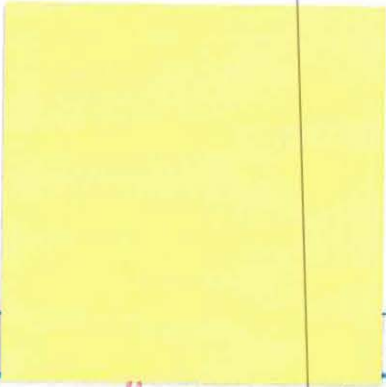
I couldn't imagine being in such a place for that long, a month locked in the Kuwaiti hospital was hard, so how would an entire year of being locked somewhere be?! People were sane in the rehab, so they had people to talk to, but they were much older and very boring. I also lied to the rehab and told them I was withdrawing from heroin and that they should give me

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Suboxone, which they did. I was so high off the suboxone
in the detox, that I actually felt withdrawals from it when
I left to the actual rehab I got there and it looked
decent.





Anyway, after a very hard 8 months in there, I was finally released. My parents felt like I greatly changed, I wasn't obsessed with drugs anymore and was much more focused. After 8 months without drugs, I learned how to live without them. I also developed a negative image about them by now. That image of them being all "fun and cool" faded away, I didn't want to do them anymore and hated them. I seen them as destructive and rather humiliating, which is the image I should have always had about them. (I may have relapsed a couple of times after, due to weakness, but what was certain is that my mind set changed and I generally hated them from that point (after Egypt rehab) and on.) My parents seen this and after a short vacation in Europe, we moved back to Canada. I was 17 now and technically didn't know anyone there anymore, except a few people who still remembered me. My parents forced me to enroll in an Islamic school, I wasn't muslim and didn't identify as

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a muslim, but it was better than Kuwait so I was happy. I started there and as I learned about Islam and the Qur'an more, I became interested in the religion and began researching about it. I realized Islam would fix all the problems in society or the world in general, and that its system and lifestyle would have prevented the life I lived. I imagined how the world would be if the system and laws of God were to rule man-kind, not the system of man. The system of God propagates good and enslavement to the lord, not anyone or anything else. People will live to please him (god), obey him and do good. Because if one is not enslaved to God, he will end up being enslaved to something else. Whether it be to a human being, an object or his/her own destructive desires. This is the meaning of "worshipping no deity but Allah (god)". This is the message all of the prophets came with, including Noah, Ibrahim, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad (may peace and blessings be upon them all). This current system which is the rule of the people (or so called democracy and freedom), led man to the enslavement of everything but God, destroying society. Apart from the direction and purpose god's system gives, its laws are the only ones that run concurrently with human nature, and can have society run in harmony. Just as God placed laws in the universe, where stars, planets and nature all work in a well and systematic fashion with no contradictions, his laws for man would make society and man's affairs run in harmony too. None of God's laws for man should be substituted or changed, because the system would lose its harmony. Just as if a law in the universe

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were to be changed (like gravity for example), everything would become destroyed. That is why man-made law contradicts itself so much, and as a result, destroyed society. So many children don't even know who their dad is (due to unmarried fornication), addiction, crime, suicide and developed mental illnesses are all so common, and so much of society is destroyed, despite how their materialistic advancements may be. They constantly come up with new man-made laws to fix these problems, but nothing is ever fixed. Lest did they know that the solution is with the legislation of God, who created them and everything around them. I loved the system of God and seen that man should never be enslaved to man or anything other than God, but as I got into political aspects, I found a little issue. People in this world like to have things run on their own terms, and if they see people use terms other than their own, they use violence and force. They will prosecute things against them, label them and use violence to stop them. This is how I seen the U.S and their allies behave towards the Islamic system, they see it as something that doesn't go with their terms. The Quran says in (2/120) that "The Jews and Christians will not be pleased with you unless you follow their ways", and indeed, they were not pleased. With airstrikes and bombs they destroyed homes, killed the innocent and terrorized entire populations to make people abide by their terms and ways, the ways of corruption and enslavement to other than God. Then through their media they blinded everyone by prosecuting falsehood and mis-information, that the Islamic system is "barbaric" or "terrorists" or "abuse to human rights", and they labeled and labeled names and images that have no relevance to anything, causing Muslims themselves to doubt their religion and try to reform it. As indeed, the final prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him) said "Islam started as something strange

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and will return to be seen as something strange", which is exactly what happened due to the West's destruction of ^{the} Islamic system and their dominance over the world. I was very frustrated as I seen the falsehood of the system and terms the U.S and their allies try to impose, but this led me to military jihad. I thought that they use tactics of disrupting our life and murdering our civilians with reckless airstrikes (whether purposely or non-purposely), and that it was appropriate to use similar methods back until and unless they stop. Canada had recently stopped airstrikes at the time, and it didn't make sense to transgress back against them in such a way, that is why I came to the U.S (for the plot). My detailed reasoning about this is in no way a justification for it, I am merely explaining my thought process at the time, just how I explained it at other stages of my life. Anyway, since I've been arrested I went through many ups and downs with my ideas and thoughts, having back and forths and at times being very confused at what I was doing. I knew the worst of these times was when I was in isolation. It was unbearable mental torture for me to have no human contact 24 hours a day, with no one to see or talk to. I knew other jihadist cases were kept like that for years and years, some decades, and I couldn't imagine surviving that long. The cell itself was shaped in a way to torture you, where everything is shaped in a way where you can't sit normally (specifically the cells in G tier). There's also no windows to look out from, and the sound of silence all day had me hearing things. One day while in the S.H.U., I was being taken to court when an officer named [redacted] began telling me that he kills Muslims and rapes Muslim women. This was after his officer friend named [redacted] told him that I was "the wannabe ISIS". I didn't understand how he even came to that conclusion, as I never told him anything about my case and it

Wasn't even public at that time. Anyway, [redacted] later began flipping my food to the ground when giving it through the slot, or gave me trays with no food in them. He also didn't allow me to shower for days on end. It was very hard for me at this point, then one day he took me to the holding cell and claimed he needed to strip search me and search my cell. In the holding cell, I took all my clothes off and gave them to him so he can strip search me, but he didn't give my clothes back when he finished and commanded me to face the wall with my hands up in the air (with no clothes on), I asked why but in an angry voice he commanded again, I did what he said, and from behind me he began opening and closing the metal slot very loud, making repetitive banging noises that shook me everytime it banged, and I was too nervous to even look back while this was happening. After a couple of minutes of that, he made me sit on the floor and started saying "You're a real piece of shity, you know that" and "no ones gonna get you out of jail, not your lawyer, not your family and not even your prosecutor, you will rot and die in jail." He then left me there for what felt like hours (with no clothes), before I was given my orange jumpsuit back and escorted to my cell. On the way back my eyes didn't even leave the ground from how nervous I was, and as I got in the cell I found it all destroyed (belongings and mattress scattered all over the floor) and my Qur'an in the garbage after being ripped up. After that day I would sit in my cell all day fearing what he might ^{try} doing. Everytime I heard the sound of keys (sound of an officer coming), my heart raced. Then when it was lunch time, I wished he'd not feed me at all instead of violently flipping the food all over the cell floor (which I had to clean). This lasted for days and days but thank God my lawyer complained and he was moved, but then all the other officers started calling me a snitch for complaining. Another phase

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of the special housing unit that was very hard was when they locked me in a cell with someone that is very mentally unstable for 3 months. He always laughed and talked to himself and would get very mad and aggressive if I tried turning the light on, as he wanted it off 24/7. He would randomly get mad at other times for no reason or start banging on the window and shouting. It was very hard to have him in the bunk under me for 24 hours a day, in a very small cell, for 3 months. Finally though, when I left the special housing unit in February of 2017 (after 9 months) things have been much easier. I am much more functional, read many books and learned a lot of new things. I also got my GED which I thought would be very hard to get, but after some work I finally got it and will actually be a GED tutor very soon (whenever the jail processes me). I took some useful programs too which I hope can help me in the future. Sometimes when I sit in my cell though I wonder how quickly I got my life to this point. I remember a day when I wrote a code down to allow me to continue talking with the undercover and all my other contacts, but when I put it in, it wouldn't work. I remember thinking it was a message from God to just forget about the plot and do something else with my life, but unfortunately, I remembered that I had written it backwards. I wonder where my life would be if ~~my~~ my memory^{just} hadn't worked that day. Other times I wonder where I would be if the undercover or anyone else I talked up to would have advised me that there are ways other than revenge attacks and violence to oppose corruption, and worked with me at

that, instead of the plot. After a long transition in my thoughts now, for the months and months I've been here, from the hard times in the S.H.U until the time in general population, I can finally say that I do not want to take the path of violence or war anymore, and that I want to live a good life away from problems, as I've hardly seen other than them in my life. There are many issues in this world but I don't want to lose my life or freedom to try fixing them, and I definitely do not want to resort to violence or harm to fix them. I sincerely apologize for my behavior and I only ask for a second chance. I want to experience life away from drugs and away from war and violence. I want a stable life and I want to stop having extreme turns that keep setting me in trouble, like my turn towards drugs or my turn towards jihad. I gave my family a very hard time in life and I wish I can make it up for them. I miss the times when I went on trips with them, when I wasn't doing drugs or involved with violence, like the time we went to Europe for vacation before returning to Canada. I want to live life like that, while using the principles of Islam and having a normal life. I don't know how long I'm gonna be in jail for but I know my sister will always be there when I get out (by God's will) to help me get back into the world. I want to also thank you for many important decisions you took throughout my case that made my life much easier. I hope you can see the truthfulness of Islam and the falsehood of the current system though. We should only obey, worship, enslave ourselves to and revere God, nothing else. He is to legislate for us, tell us what's right or wrong and he is to rule man's affairs. I hope you can see the completeness of God's system whether personal or governmental, and that it is the only way

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Society will run in harmony. The first step is to read Gods final revelation to man, the Qur'an. I hope to see you as a Muslim one day, in the Party of the Muslims, where all nationalities, faces and languages are one under the word of truth and enslavement to none but there creator.

Thats all I had to say and may peace and blessings be upon the seal of messengers, his household, companions and followers.

Sincerely,

Abdulrahman El-bahnasawy

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