

I Hate My Job

Seattle. Early morning. Wednesday, November 27th, 2013. Cold. Sleeting. Abdi Abdullahi holds his wife, Arawelo, longer than usual. "Such cheekbones on my Somali queen," he thinks. Awkwardly, he hugs his little daughter, Astar, as she sits on the sofa in pajamas watching TV. In the garage, he puts on his motorcycle helmet, the one he painstakingly covered with gold leaf the night before. He carefully buckles his 5 year old son, Samatar, into the booster seat of the family Corolla. Samatar doesn't know what to think, or say about the gold helmet. His little face is expressionless, his dark eyes pensive.

Abdi drives toward Woodland Park, and his son's kindergarten. He turns off into Beer Sheeva Park on Lake Washington. At this hour and temperature, it is abandoned. Abdi puts the windows down and rolls out onto the pier. He blocks out the screams and frantic clawing of Samatar, stepping out of the car just before it rolls off and into the lake below. He's on his knees vomiting onto the wet boards of the pier. He whispers, "Allahu akbar," and looks away as the sedan sinks out of sight. Trembling, he walks to where he parked his motorcycle the day before, opens the pannier, and puts on the heavy, wired combat vest and continues to Mother Earth Kindergarten.

A-Cell gets the call

They get the call at noon. The story consumes national news outlets: "Entire Mother Earth Kindergarten taken hostage on day before Thanksgiving, terrorist perpetrator believed to be wearing a bomb." Police are managing hundreds of gawking community members and worse; parents are on the scene. Press and law enforcement helicopters circle overhead. It's raining. It's a nightmare.

The scene

In Seattle's 90 acre Woodland Park, the Mother Earth Kindergarten follows the German Waldkindergarten model. Under Mrs. Judy Kleier, this kindergarten has an additional new age spin. A follower of the Gaia hypothesis and new age spirituality, Judy is also passionately romantic about Native Americans and their relationship to the natural and spiritual world. She struggled to restrain herself from incorporating these interests into the curriculum. A teepee stands across the field from the large walled tent used for indoor activities. A ring of patrol, bomb disposal, SWAT, incident command, and urban assault vehicles, surrounds all.

Locals

Briefing: Single male, Abdi Abdullahi, 35, Somali, undetermined Al Shabab involvement, suicide vest, possible additional backpack bomb, using "dead man switch." Teacher, Judith Kleier, likely already killed. Twenty-one 5 year olds hostage in large wall tent. Perpetrator wants to speak with his holy man. SPD is stalling this fearing it will result in Abdullahi's suicide. Agents en route to Abdullahi's residence.

Seattle Police Department (SPD) Deputy Chief of Operations: Darrell Whitecliffe: Resents Federal intervention, wants ownership.

SPD Assistant Chief of Special Operations: Norman Hicks: Has SWAT/snipers in position, unilaterally aggressive.

King County Sherriff Office (KCSO) Special Operations Division Chief: Dirk Blevens (responsible for Tac-30 (SWAT), hostage negotiations, and bomb squad): "Let's kill this 'son-of-a-bitch' and get home for Thanksgiving."

KCSO Special Operations Division Hostage Negotiator: Deputy Sheriff Michael Radburn: Believes Abdullahi psychologically fragile, is struggling to get Abdullahi to see a way out, is unfamiliar with Koranic references, does not speak Somali and working through Officer Barawi is making negotiations impossible.

Translator: SPD Officer Nawaal Barawi: Model-like, second generation, secular, Somali-American female. Most of Abdi's Koranic references are lost on her Americanized Somali language skills.

Late parent: Martin Kraske was late with little Lila Kraske. He saw Abdi's motorcycle lying on the ground outside the tent and heard a scream from Mrs. Kleier before calling 911.

Talking to Abdi

There's no phone. Abdi uses borrowed kindergartener's phones. Abdi will only let an agent approach if wearing nothing more than a speedo swimsuit and a golden helmet.

He's in a crisis. He believes he killed his demon-possessed son and the sole male child of the love of his life, that Samatar was possessed by a jinni, and possibly by "Shaytan" or "Iblis" himself. He believes the "creature," whom he refers to at times as "ghul," killed his sweet Ayaan, the twin of his daughter, Astar. He believes he is about to die and sprinkles everything he says with "Allahu Akbar." He quotes from the Koran about Shaytan "the whisperer" and relates terrible thoughts he's had for the past month - since his son changed.

In his badly broken, softly spoken English, he relates he's convinced the children are possessed. But how to be sure it is all of them? Desperate for time, he remembered the words "dead man switch" when speaking with Officer Barawi. Abdi wants to talk to Sheikh Ahmad bin Yusuf al-Barawi, a Wadaado, or Somali holy man, a distant relation of Officer Nawal Barawi.

On the golden helmet: "To protect me...like the ancient kings...to make the whispering stop"

On Judy: "Crazy-hair crazy-bitch!" She leapt from her "teaching stool" when she saw his golden helmet, but didn't calculate the mass of her big ass correctly, fell backward, hitting her head.

Abdi and the Wadaado

The Sheikh is old, scraggly bearded, and blind in one eye. He gives spiritual counseling from a mosque in South Seattle. He brings with him an assortment of protective amulets, ancient charms, and a sacred wadaad copy of the Koran. Each allegedly contains some Baraka (positive spiritual energy).

Mostly deaf and partly senile, the Sheikh thinks that once possessed by strong evil, whether it is demonic possession or other "sihr" (witchcraft), it is unlikely the children will ever be cleansed. His mumbling, half-aware, and hopeless advice led Abdullahi to kill his son. If asked, the Sheikh will try a ruqya, an Islamic exorcism. Good luck on that with local law enforcement.

Abdi's house

Samatar's room is orderly. Toys put away. In the top drawer is a spiral notebook with lists of everyone the Abdullahis know or had contact with, bank accounts, assets, neighbors names, names of kids and

parents from kindergarten, their vehicles, license plates, and jobs, checkout clerks, stores they work at, descriptions, and dates of contact.

Tidy basement reveals website printouts illustrating bomb-making instructions (no dead man switch) and Koranic verses, all mostly written in Wadaad (Somali Arabic) and printed at local library. Inspection and translation reveals focus on jinn, Shaytan, possession, and Idris.

Many neighbors are Somali, but many are not. When press vans arrive, tensions begin to rise. Loud angry neighbors and community members gather.

Judy Kleier's

A giant dream catcher occupies the window facing the street. Incense, cat urine and countless hanging houseplants confront the visitor. Native American themed pieces of artwork and kitsch occupy nearly every available surface. Evidence from Judy's online presence and pictures on the refrigerator reveal she journeyed to Washington's Yacolt Valley in mid-October to participate in a ritual to quiet angry American Indian spirits.

Judy's emotional and spiritual devotion unwittingly opened her to possession by an ancient evil. Her frequent contact with young children made her a desirable candidate. Judy came home a different woman. Kindergarten activities changed abruptly, with a new focus on dance and group vocalizations that left the children tired yet eager to return the following day. Quickly, Judy channeled other fragments of ancient consciousness into her subjects.

The children

Yes, all the children are possessed by an ancient malevolence preparing to open the way and manifest an unspeakable horror. If the PC's choose to hunt down Little Lila Kraske, her smartphone contains an encyclopedia similar to Samatar's and worse. She's a girl with plans. If anyone questions her without a golden helmet, they'll get "whispered" to stop.

Research

On October 29th. Ms. Abdullahi called 911 after Ayaan (Age 3) was found unresponsive in her bed. Accidental cause of death was attributed to asphyxiation via a baby monitor's cord.

The Klickitat Indian name for the Yacolt Valley is "Yolicolb." Two translations are: "haunted place" and "valley of demons." It's a place of dark legend involving missing children and ancient burial grounds.

The U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement records Abdi and Arawelo Abdullahi emigrated from Somalia in 2004.

Train stops (feel free to adjust timing)

- 1:00 SPD Enters Abdullahi family home, search begins. Koranic verses and bomb blueprints send law enforcement into frenzy.
- 3:00 Abdullahi's Corolla removed from Lake Washington. "Miraculously" Abdullahi's son is revived with CPR!? If Abdullahi hears this, he loses his squash; more certain now than ever his son is a devil-child.

Plot arc and resolution

Tensions with local law, parents, and press weigh on every moment. PC focus is likely to shift from how to kill Abdi, toward cleansing the children and saving Abdi. Is there a hope of cleansing these kids? Depends on how dark you like your horror. Ancient terrors that broadcast their alien consciousness across time aren't often driven from ripe five-year-old minds by mere Baraka. Attempts to do so would probably end in violent disaster. Nyarlathotep in the park? Perhaps the best option is to detonate Abdi Abdullahi, head home, and thaw the turkey.