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Sent: 07 October 2006 18:57
Subject: [iraqsolidaritycampaign] Suicide bomber poem wins top award

Suicide bomber poem wins top award

Yakub Qureshi



POET: Emily.

A SCHOOLGIRL from Cheshire has been named the country's top young poet for the second year running for a work about terrorism.

Emily Middleton gained the accolade for a powerful verse describing the final moments of a suicide bomber about to take a bus and enter a crowd to detonate a bomb.

The teenager was one of 15 youngsters who won top prizes in the Young Poet of the Year competition, beating more than 100,000 children.

Emma, 16, a student at the King's School in Macclesfield, wrote the verse during a writers' workshop in Shropshire.

It was part of her prize for winning the same award last year, for a stirring poem on the death of a young diver.

Judges this year said they were impressed by the maturity of Emma's reflective work, which disturbingly compares the bomb strapped on the stomach of a terrorist to a baby ready to be born.

Emily said: "I would in no way want to be seen to be condoning the actions of suicide bombers, but I was interested to try to write from their perspective and to imagine the thoughts of someone who knows precisely when they are going to die." Emma, from Buxton, says she would eventually like to work for an international charity or human rights group.

The award, which is sponsored by Foyle's bookstores, is regarded as the nation's top literary award for children.

MY FUTURE by *Emily Middleton*

OTHER people live in fear of gun massacres, heart attacks, car smashes, plane crashes, horrific back street slaughters.

But me? I can tell you my future: All two hours and twenty-six minutes of it.

07/10/2006

I can tell you how

I will be swaddled in wires like a new-born in a blanket; how plastic and metal will nestle in my flesh like vital organs.

How the firm push in the small of my back will feel like a mother sending her son into the playground on his first day of school. I can tell you how I will step down the path of the grey terraced house.

How I will walk along the pavement clutching my belly, nursing my newly acquired child.

**I can tell you how my sweat will mingle with dormant electrons;
How I will whisper my instructions like a mantra as I clutch the slippery surface of the handrail of the number 47. I can tell you how I will disembark deftly despite my bulk, slip into the crowd as an otter enters the water.**

I can tell you how I will murmur my final prayers. cradling my phantom foetus; clinging to the image of Heaven's open gates like a daughter torn from her father's hand. How my finger will flick the switch as the clock tolls twelve.

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