

approximately 40,000 girls studying in Alexandria University, not a single one of which observed the wearing Islamic dress, except one.

There was a girl in the College of Literature, who happened to be the niece of Sayyid Qutb – may Allah have mercy on him. She wore Islamic dress, and was eventually able to convince one of her classmates to start wearing long clothes also. However, when she did so, her family went crazy, and said to her, “*You will cause a calamity to befall us! Where did you get these clothes from?*” The girl had had a dress sewn, or had taken it from the niece of Sayyid Qutb. On the day of her first exam, which was at 8.30 or 9am, her family took her *jilbaab*¹² and threw it into some water so that she would not be able to wear it, thus they could force her to go to the exam wearing shameful clothes. Therefore, she telephoned her friend and simply said, “*Bring me your other jilbaab when you pick me up, so I can wear it to university.*” The atmosphere in Egypt at that time was tense, nobody was allowed to talk about Islam at all. Islamic knowledge had died out so drastically among the masses that we used to have a maid who would come to help Umm Muhammad¹³ at home. Umm Muhammad said to me one day, “*Can you believe that there could be a woman who doesn't know that menstruation annuls fasting? She is fasting while she is menstruating.*” It was forbidden for anyone to talk about Islam at all.

His Ties to Marwan Hadeed

In Cairo, he became acquainted with Marwan Hadeed¹⁴ – may Allah have mercy on him. His name indeed reflected his character; he really was *Hadeed* (iron).

*He would shout while difficulties were staring at him
And he is unique in the field of time
A Muslim, O difficulties, you will not overcome me,
My severity is cutting, and my determination is iron*

¹² *Jilbaab*: single cloth worn by Muslim women that covers the head and chest

¹³ Umm Muhammad: the wife of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam

¹⁴ Marwan Hadeed from Syria. The founder of the *At-Tali'ah Al-Muqatilah* (*The Fighting Vanguard*) group, in Hama, Syria, in 1965, that was one of the first Islamic groups to fight the Ba'athist Syrian regime. He died in a Syrian prison in 1975.

Marwan was even bolder than Sheikh Tameem and the only person I have ever met who was bolder than Sheikh Tameem was Marwan Hadeed. These two Sheikhs were so alike in their enthusiasm, in opposing evil, in their reactions to the pains of this *Ummah*, in their liberation from any chains of fear or apprehension, and in their reliance on Allah – the Mighty and Majestic. Their reliance was in everything, from issues of sustenance to the time of their deaths. Both, also, searched for death wherever it may be. They travelled to the Jihad and lived within the Islamic Revival. Likewise, both divorced the World, with its glitter and possessions.

I saw both of these lions, and they were the bravest of beasts I have ever seen in my life. They combined courage and activity, with manners, humility and honour, and with mercy and kindness to the Muslims.

"Humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers..." [Quran 5:54]

One year, the Arab Summit Conference was to be held in Cairo. At that time, Sheikh Tameem was a student of Sheikh Marwan. It was either the first or the second Arab Summit Conference to take place in Cairo. Marwan Hadeed, together with his students, wrote a leaflet for this Summit Conference, which said words along the lines of, *'You must rule by Islam, not Western Secularism. You must do such and such..'* His students took the leaflet to the Conference, even though at the end of the leaflet it said *'Written by Marwan Hadeed, of (such and such) address'*!

Thus when Jamal Abdul-Nasir read this, he was furious, so he passed Sheikh Marwan's address on to the Secret Services and said to them, *"Keep a close eye on him."* Thus he was kept under surveillance by the Secret Services – they would follow him wherever he went. This did not decrease Sheikh Marwan's boldness. For example, Sheikh Marwan used to attend the College of Agriculture in Ain Shams University. When he stood waiting for the bus in the morning, the Secret Services Agent would wait with him. Now you all know what the buses are like in Cairo: they are always so packed that it is difficult to find a space to stand let alone sit! So when the bus came, there would be people hanging from its doors. Thus, both the Agent and Sheikh Marwan would ready themselves to jump on the bus as soon as the others got off. However, sometimes, only the Agent would be able to jump on, due to lack of space. Therefore, what Sheikh Marwan would do was