



## **Witness No. 28**

**Witness Name and Surname:** Withheld  
**Relationship to the deceased:** Witness's sister  
**Deceased's Name and Surname:** Withheld  
**Deceased's date of birth:** 1985  
**Deceased's place of birth:** Withheld  
**Deceased's date of death:** 16 November 2019  
**Type of testimony before the Tribunal:** Withheld

### **16 November**

"S" (alias used in this text to refer to the victim) participated in several protests, his face was hit by pellets several times, and the pellets remained lodged there. I phoned S on 16 November. He had gone to his provincial city and was on his way home. When the telephone rang, no more than one and a half hours had passed. With a lump in her throat, it was his sister; she said they had shot S. Before S left, all of us had spoken to him. He did not tell us where he was going or whether he would participate in the protests. After his return from the provincial city, his mother said that S left the car at home, had his afternoon tea, and went out. His mother told him several times: "S, don't go out, the streets are dangerous." He replied, "Okay, I'll be back soon." Thirty minutes passed, and his brother called S several times, but there was no answer. Then, a stranger picked up S's mobile and said, "Sir, the owner of this number has been shot and is lying on the ground. Come to his aid." His mother said that he was shot between 10 and 10:30 pm.

When the family heard the news, his brother and sister went to the hospital near their home but did not see S on the list of patients. They came back and took his mother with them. This time, each of them went to a different hospital. They searched three hospitals; then, they found the hospital where S had been taken (the hospital's name is withheld). His brother and younger sister went inside the hospital and inquired about S, but they said his name was not on the list. While searching around, they saw a black Kia Pride come to the hospital, park, and drop off S. They put S on a stretcher and went inside. His mother suddenly felt sick, and his sister saw that they took no action to help S. Plainclothesmen and Basijis were standing there; they did not allow the nurses and medical staff to revive the wounded or, for instance, send them to the OR. It was said that a considerable number of wounded persons were brought there, but they kept them in the ER bay. His sister says that when she saw S, she felt as if he were alive. He had a smile on his face, but his body was cold. His sister pleaded with the nurses and the resuscitation team, "in the name of God; please revive him". The nurses were sympathetic

and magnanimous, they massaged his heart and monitored his pulse, but it was too late. It seems that he died upon his arrival there. His sister insisted that they not remove the stretcher; she said that perhaps he might come back (to life). But they took him to the morgue; his sister accompanied him. They placed the corpse in the morgue, and after his sister saw which drawer they put his body in, she went out to bring his mother to see S. When they returned, they found that the morgue's door was closed. They kicked the door with their hands and feet to open it. They (hospital staff) brought another corpse to take inside the morgue, and S's mother went inside with them. She pleaded with them to show her the body of her son. They opened the drawer, and his mother saw S. Then, they went home in mourning. I arrived there early the following day.

They went in the morning to take possession of the corpse but did not return until the end of office hours; even so, they returned empty-handed. They spent two days completing the formalities for taking possession of the corpse. They did much running around between the Governorate, the Forensic Medicine Department, and the hospital until they obtained a permit from the Governorate to take possession of the corpse. The Governorate made S's older brother sign a statement that the family would not raise an outcry, talk to the press, or give an interview to any TV channel before they granted the family permission to take possession of the corpse. To hand over the corpse, they took, I believe, 100,000 tomans (\$23) as the price of the bullet. The family deposited it in the Governorate's account. After completing the administrative work, they took possession of the corpse from the hospital and brought it to the Forensic Medicine Department, where it stayed one night. I believe they gave the family possession of the corpse around noon on 19 November.

One bullet had struck S in the heart, in the middle of his chest; it was shot not from the front but at a sideways angle. It had torn his chest both from the front and the back. His sister saw this in the cemetery building where the corpses were washed and prepared for burial; the middle of his chest was torn. When she slipped her hand under his head to embrace him, she felt as if the back of his head was empty and had no bone. Her hand slipped entirely inside and became all bloodied. She said that she didn't know whether he had tripped on the ground or if they had hit him on the head. Forensic Medicine and the Intelligence Ministry can determine what kind of weapon and bullet killed S, but they did not tell his family. Forensic Medicine only said (that S) was struck by a hard object; it did not say bullet. They also wrote 'struck by a hard object' on his death certificate. Whatever information the family gathered and heard came from ordinary people, government authorities gave no information to the family.

The family wanted to bury S in the city's old graveyard, but they told the family that it was packed and had no space. Thus, they had no choice but to bury him in a new and available cemetery. As the family did not want to make any further delay in burying him, they buried S in the new graveyard, in the plot chosen by the authorities, not the family.

They told us that S was killed close to x police station (its exact address is withheld). The distance between the spot where S fell on the ground and the police station is one hundred meters. The family members went there and made inquiries from people living

close to the police station. The locals said that a Toyota belonging to government forces was there, with several wounded persons and corpses inside it. They also collected S, lying on the ground at a short distance from the police station and took him away.

One person, who did not agree to testify or state the facts openly, said that people started attacking the police station during the skirmishes, and the policemen could not fight them off alone. At that point, two vehicles came, and plainclothesmen got out of them. They stood on the vehicles' roofs and started firing shots at people. Several people were injured. Many stories are circulating about this event; everyone says something about what they heard or saw, but we do not know what the truth precisely is. We tried very hard to find S's mobile, hoping there may be a clue indicating whether he had gone out with someone or was alone. However, we could not find it. Most likely, it is in their (the government authorities) possession; they did not give it to us.

The day after S was killed, his family complained to the Intelligence Ministry. The family wanted to hire a lawyer but was not allowed. The Intelligence Ministry said they would hire a lawyer for the family if necessary. Eventually, they said that the government had appointed several lawyers to investigate this issue, and the family could choose one of those lawyers. However, they never disclosed the names of the government-appointed lawyers to the family. The family contacted the Intelligence Ministry several times and was told: "We will investigate the matter ourselves. We will follow up on the case. You do not need to come here and pursue the matter." They said that they had established that S was killed by "others", meaning non-governmental forces, which the government of Iran claims to have fired shots during the protests to create confusion and disorder. They also claim that these "others" blamed the Iranian security and police forces for the conflict. They said, "We will follow up on the matter, arrive at a conclusion, and let you know whatever is necessary." However, the file is still open, and no conclusion has been reached.

The authorities contacted the family many times and asked them for an interview; they said they would treat S as a martyr. They spoke to his brother and said: "It is clear to us that your son was innocent. Please allow us to come to your place and interview you and make a video and tell (the world) that your son was killed by "strangers," by "bandits." (They meant that S was killed by "rioters"). The entire family decided they never wanted S to be associated with Bonyad-e Shahid (Martyrs Foundation). They never wanted to obtain benefits from Bonyad-e Shahid. They never allowed the government functionaries to visit their house and speak to them about it. However, the functionaries continue to contact the family. Earlier, they did so quite frequently. About a month and a half ago, S's brother said that someone from the Governorate had phoned, but he declined to speak to them.