

One Last Word

by Johnny Dantonio

Almost 24 hours ago in Pakistan, Osama Bin Laden was sleeping just as he had slept every night for the hundreds of days prior; comfortable in a million dollar compound with his son and advisors around him.

He awoke to a strange noise, a pulsating, quickening series of wooshes, ones he had heard before, but could now not distinguish in the abruptness of his waking. Sifting through his confusion, clarity arrived in the sound of foreign voices, ones yelling concise commands with chilling bravado, their bark exacerbating his terror as he realized the moment.

Confined and confounded, he winced at each nearing gunshot as they echoed through the mansion, a monstrous, gaudy, contemporary home antiquated by simplicity; mattresses pushed together in every room on the rug-and-blanket-covered floors, ones that show no sign of modernity or technology.

And within such a room, a man who fancies himself a god felt a very human chill slice up his spine; in such a room, his horror was manifested as the voices and weaponry of his alarm joined him; in such a room, inevitability brought no calm, fright vibrating with the entrance of the intruders; in such a room, he was overcome by fear and panic, fully aware of the oncoming onslaught, scared and shaking as the reckoning was carried out.

And yes, his swift suffering is but an ounce of the strife harnessed by the families of his victims. His fear and panic pales in comparison to the nightmares that he has planted into the world. His death will not conclude the wars that wage to extinguish his shared ideologies or bring back the dead.

But there can be exhale, if nothing else, to know that the global purveyor of evil was trapped as he heard American voices enter his home, he was engulfed by fear as they closed in on him, and he experienced defeat as every action that his opponent had promised was served in a single, finishing instance.

For our country, and for his victims all over the world, all we've wanted is to be able to breathe again.

