9 year old freed hostage, once feared dead, appears thin and pale, speaks only in whispers

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<https://worldisraelnews.com/9-year-old-freed-hostage-once-feared-dead-appears-thin-and-pale-speaks-only-in-whispers/>

Thomas Hand, [the father of freed hostage](https://worldisraelnews.com/watch-father-daughter-reunion/) who turned 9 in Gaza, Emily Hand, told *CNN* his daughter was thin and pale and admitted she speaks only in whispers after her ordeal.

Emily Hand was spending the night in Be’eri with her friend Hila (13) when Hamas terrorists broke into the house and kidnapped the two girls along with Hila’s mother, Raaya.

In captivity, Raaya and the two girls were kept together, and Raaya cared for them both until [they were released](https://worldisraelnews.com/list-of-10-hostages-to-be-freed-on-tuesday-confirmed-by-israel/) without her, another instance of Hamas’ cruelty.

Thomas Hand, [a native of Ireland](https://worldisraelnews.com/conor-mcgregor-blasts-irish-pm-for-saying-young-irish-israeli-hostage-was-lost-rather-than-kidnapped/) and a widower since Emily lost her mother to cancer at the age of two, told*CNN*, when Emily was presumed dead that he said, “‘Yes!’ I went, ‘Yes!’ and smiled because that is the best news of the possibilities that I knew … So death was a blessing, an absolute blessing.”

However, a month later, the army told him that it was “highly probable” that Emily was still alive, and since then, her father advocated passionately for her release.

The description of torture during the Hamas invasion of Be’eri had presumably caused Thomas Hand to believe that the same atrocities would continue in captivity, therefore, his reaction to hearing the initial false report that his daughter had been killed.

However, Emily reported that she was never hit by her captors. However, her father reports that she has lost weight, has sunken cheeks, and speaks only in a whisper.

When Emily returned, her father embraced her and called her by an affectionate nickname. However, when he looked at her, he noticed she had changed.

He said, “Her face was chiseled, like mine, whereas before it was chubby, girly, a young kid face.” Thomas added that he had never seen her so pale.

“The most shocking, disturbing part of meeting her was she was just whispering, you couldn’t hear her. I had to put my ear on her lips. She’d been conditioned not to make any noise.”

“You could just see glassy-eyed terror,” he said.

However, Emily was happily reunited with her dog and enjoyed listening to Beyonce songs upon her return.

Both Emily and Hila were given birthday cakes because they had turned 9 and 13 respectively in captivity.