# **Chapter 1: The Stage is Set**

In the private residence of the White House, Michelle Obama, now Michael after completing his gender transition, sat beside Barack in their living room. The evening was calm, and the soft glow of the fireplace provided a warm, comforting atmosphere. Barack looked at Michael with admiration and love, reflecting on the journey they had both undertaken.

Barack gently reached out, taking Michael's hand in his. "You've come so far, and I'm so proud of you," he said, his voice filled with genuine emotion.

Michael smiled, feeling a deep sense of peace and acceptance. "Thank you, Barack. Your support has meant everything to me."

“I’ve always dreamt of this moment where I can feel you inside of me from behind, said Barack gazing into Michael’s eyes.”

Michael's heart skipped a beat as he locked eyes with Barack, his gaze intense and filled with desire. A rush of warmth spread through Michael's body at the raw, unspoken passion in Barack's words. Without breaking eye contact, Michael slowly stood up, leading Barack by the hand to their bedroom.

Michael threw Barack on the bed and pulled down his pants. Barack was on all fours with anticipation. With a passionate grin, Michael loosened his belt and his pants slid down automatically then positioned himself behind Barack. He reached around and gently held Barack's shoulder, feeling the warm skin beneath his hands. He took a deep breath, relishing the moment he had dreamt of for so long.

Barack grunted softly, the anticipation building within him. He felt the warmth and hardness of Michael's body pressed against his, the energy between them palpable. He thrust his hips back slightly, inviting Michael to enter him.

Michael slowly guided himself inside Barack, feeling the familiar yet re-imagined sensation that washed over him. Barack gasped, his body adjusting to the feeling of Michael deep within him. They moved together, their bodies in sync, as if they were two halves finally reunited. Two men joined together in one purpose at the pinnacle of their power. They were now on the precipice of controlling the world.

Barrack screamed. Michael had just hit his prostate. Pure pleasure surged through his entire body. Michael slapped his ass. Barack groaned, his eyes squeezed shut, lost in the pleasure of the moment. It was unlike anything he'd ever experienced before. The intensity of the connection between them was overwhelming, but it felt right. It felt like home.

Michael continued to thrust, each movement deeper and harder than the last. The feeling of power coursing through his veins was intoxicating, and he relished the sight of Barack beneath him, his body arching and instinctively meeting each of Michael's strokes.

Their lips met in a fervent kiss, tongues entwining, as their bodies moved in perfect harmony. Barack's eyes opened, his vision clouded with passion, and he met Michael's gaze once more. In that moment, they knew they were unstoppable.

Their climax came like a tidal wave, their bodies shuddering.

After Michael had fallen asleep, Barack quietly got out of bed, trying not to disturb him. He made his way to the Oval Office. It was late at night so he made his way without seeing anybody. When he took power, he had all of the president’s portraits removed. They represented a time when the white patriarchy held dominance. Being white was a great evil that society allowed to propagate. He just recently introduced breeding programs to keep women from bearing white children. Strong, healthy black men from all over the country went through screening programs to find suitable donors with the healthiest sperm. White women were then artificially inseminated to create a master race of black children. In a matter of a year, they’d all but destroyed white privilege and he was now on the brink of something even greater.

Obama sat there, staring blankly out the Oval Office window. He began to tense up. He pulled a cigarette packet out of the oval office desk. He smelt the tobacco, a sweet aroma that made him crave nicotine like the sweet embrace of Michael. He lit up a cigarette for the first time in thirty years. He took the TV remote and turned on the TV. Scenes of chaos in Tel Aviv played out. Entitled students marched down the streets, burning the Torah and denouncing Haredi Jews and their special exemptions. Riot police shot gas into the crowd. A group of students beat an elderly Orthodox Jew, his face covered in blood. Obama smiled. The CIA’s funding of the Meretz party was finally bearing fruit.

Obama pulled out his Blackberry, his signature phone which he had kept with him all these years. He searched through his contact list, containing the most venerated and powerful people in the world, and found the name he was looking for.

“Nihyah, how are you, my man? How is progress going in the Knesset?”

“Things are going slower than expected. Netanyahu understands the art of political manoeuvring better than anyone, and he knows how to play the game to his advantage. He still has a slight majority in the Knesset, but he’s slowly losing ground to our party. Soon we’ll hold a vote on the Palestine solution. I’m confident that Israel will give up the West Bank and Gaza without firing a shot. There will be a two-state solution.”

“I’m waiting on the vote. If you lose, Israel loses. I will introduce a new UN resolution essentially declaring war on Israel. Don’t let me down, Nihyah.”

“It’ll be done, Barack. Don’t worry. The recent polls show that the Meretz party stands to win the vote. It’s a done deal.”

“That’s what I like to hear.”

Obama hung up his Blackberry. He knew that the Meretz party would fail to secure enough votes to pass the Palestine solution. This was all part of his plan. He wanted to show the UN that he had tried everything in his power to come to a peaceful solution to free the Palestinians. Now, there was no other choice but to launch Operation Gaza Freedom. He was stressed that they might actually pass the vote and come to a peaceful solution, but he knew that Bibi was a stubborn son of a bitch.

Deep down inside, Barack despised Israel. He had no desire for a two-state solution. He secretly colluded with Iran to wipe Israel from the map by whatever means necessary. The Jewish people would once again be slaves, and there would never be an Israeli state ever again. He lit up another cigarette and pulled out his Quran from his desk. He placed his hand on its cover, gently touched it, and then opened it, seeking its words of wisdom. A paper fell out containing one of his favorite sayings of Mohammed.

“The last hour would not come unless the Muslims will fight against the Jews, and the Muslims would kill them until the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree. And a stone or a tree would say: ‘Muslim, or the servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him’; but the tree Gharqad would not say, for it is the tree of the Jews.”

Obama believed he was the hand of the prophet Mohammed, destined to bring about the last hour. It was now possible with him at the helm of the largest and most powerful nation on earth.

His mind wandered back to the chaotic streets of Tel Aviv. The city, once a symbol of innovation and resilience, now teetered on the brink of collapse. The protests were growing more violent by the day, and it was only a matter of time before the unrest spread throughout the country. Obama knew that this internal strife would weaken Israel, making it more vulnerable to external pressure and attacks.

In the shadows of the Oval Office, a plan was unfolding. Obama’s advisors had been working tirelessly to ensure that every piece of the puzzle was in place. Diplomatic channels were buzzing with activity, and alliances were being forged in secret meetings. The world was watching, and the stakes had never been higher.

Meanwhile, in the Knesset, Nihyah was rallying his supporters. He knew that the upcoming vote was crucial, not just for his political career, but for the future of Israel. The pressure was mounting, and the tension was palpable. Nihyah’s voice trembled with a mix of determination and fear as he addressed his colleagues.

“We stand at a crossroads. The choices we make today will determine the fate of our nation. We must push forward with the Palestine solution. It is our only chance for lasting peace. If we fail, we face annihilation.”

As he spoke, he could feel the weight of Obama’s expectations bearing down on him. Failure was not an option. Nihyah’s mind raced with the possibilities, each scenario more dire than the last. He glanced at the clock, counting down the minutes until the vote.

Back in Washington, Obama’s phone buzzed with a message. He glanced at the screen and saw a coded update from his intelligence team. The plan was in motion. The pieces were falling into place. All that remained was the final push.

He took a deep drag from his cigarette, exhaling a plume of smoke that curled toward the ceiling. The air was thick with anticipation. The world stood on the brink of a new era, one that would be defined by the actions taken in the coming days. Obama closed his eyes, allowing himself a moment of contemplation. He opened his eyes, took a deep breath, and walked with swag to the podium at the United Nations General Assembly. He carried a demeanor of somber determination. The room buzzed with anticipation; the world's eyes focused on the leader of the most powerful nation on Earth. He began his speech, his voice measured and authoritative.

"Distinguished delegates, esteemed colleagues, and citizens of the world,

Today, I address you not just as the President of the United States, but as a global citizen deeply troubled by the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, particularly the plight of the Palestinian people. For too long, we have witnessed a cycle of violence and oppression, one that has denied basic human rights and dignity to millions. It is time for us to put aside our differences which have led to the death of so many millions bringing our world as we know it to the brink of destruction.

From the birth of the United Nations, we have championed the cause of peace and human dignity. The world stood together to prevent atrocities like those witnessed during World War II from ever happening again. We must honor that legacy by standing up against oppression wherever it occurs.

The images we see coming out of Tel Aviv and Gaza are heart-wrenching. Jewish students marching down the streets, burning the Torah, denouncing Haredi Jews, and riot police responding with brutal force. These scenes are a testament to the failure of leadership and the desperate need for change.

Israel, a nation built on the ashes of the Holocaust, has unfortunately strayed far from the ideals of justice and equality. The treatment of Palestinians is a stain on the conscience of the world. The illegal settlements, the blockade of Gaza, the daily humiliations at checkpoints – these are not actions of a democratic state, but of an occupying force.

I have tried, through diplomatic channels and backdoor negotiations, to bring about a two-state solution. I placed my faith in the political process, hoping that rational minds would prevail. Yet, time and again, Prime Minister Netanyahu and his government have shown a blatant disregard for international law and human decency.

To the leaders in Tel Aviv, I say this: Your actions have consequences. The world will not stand idly by while you continue to oppress an entire population. The Meretz party’s efforts in the Knesset to bring about a peaceful resolution have been met with resistance and sabotage. This is unacceptable.

Let me be clear: The United States will not support a regime that perpetuates apartheid and ethnic cleansing. The time for action is now. We must take unprecedented measures. This includes introducing a new UN resolution that will lead to direct military confrontation with Israel.

The time for half-measures and empty promises is over. We must act decisively to ensure that the Palestinian people receive the justice and freedom they deserve. This is not just a matter of regional stability, but of global moral imperative.

To the people of Israel, I urge you to look within your hearts and remember the values upon which your nation was founded. Embrace peace, reject extremism, and work towards a future where Jews and Palestinians can coexist in harmony.

And to the Palestinian people, know that you are not forgotten. Your struggle is our struggle, and we will continue to stand with you until your rights are fully realized.

It was the Jews and their conniving who were the dark underbelly of the international conflict that had just killed twenty-five percent of the world’s population. As I have stressed time and again, it was the Jews who refused to agree to a two-state solution, undermining the fragile world peace that is currently at stake. By not doing so, they pose a threat of causing the nations which almost destroyed each other to be at loggerheads once again. This is not merely an American issue or an Israeli-Palestinian issue; it is a global issue that requires a global response. The silence of the international community in the face of such injustice is a stain on our collective conscience. I call upon all nations represented here today to join us in this endeavor. Let us unite our voices and our actions to bring about a just and lasting peace. The time for diplomacy is not over, but it must be backed by the unwavering resolve of the international community.

Every day, countless Palestinian families live under the constant threat of violence, their lives marked by fear and uncertainty. Children grow up surrounded by walls and checkpoints, knowing nothing but conflict. This is not the world we want for our children. As a leader and as a father, I cannot stand by and watch as future generations are robbed of their chance to live in peace and security. We owe it to them to do better.

Imagine a future where Jerusalem is not a flashpoint of conflict, but a beacon of peace and coexistence. A future where both Israeli and Palestinian children can play, learn, and grow together in harmony. This is not a utopian dream; it is a realistic goal that we can achieve through courage and commitment.

The world is watching. History will judge us by our actions here today. Let us choose the path of justice, of compassion, and of lasting peace.

Thank you."

Obama stepped down from the podium, his speech having cast a long shadow over the assembly. The delegates murmured among themselves, the weight of his words sinking in. The world was indeed watching, and the next steps would determine the future of the Middle East and beyond.

So, the UN convened to take a vote. UN resolution death to Israel was voted upon. Not a single nation voted in disagreement. For the first time in history the world was acting in one voice and as one man. Their figurehead was the president of the United States, who, despite serving two terms already, was able to change the Constitution allowing him to serve a third term. This man had a sincere love for Israel, so much so that he was ready to go himself with the invasion force and proclaim the good news of America’s democratic gospel to the heart of the promised land. It was in the promised land where he planned to proclaim the good news of freedom for the Palestinians and slavery for the Jews. Jerusalem was not for the Jews; it was a Mecca for the world. In order to make it a Mecca for the world the Jews had to be removed. The UN, no longer distracted by the destructive nuclear conflict of World War III, decided that in order to achieve world peace and a final solution to the problems that led up to World War III, Israel must be dealt with.

The time had come. The stage was set. The endgame was in sight.

# Chapter 2: The Tide of War

During the initial phases of operation planning, the United Nations originally requested permission from Jordan and Egypt to use their borders for the operation. Both countries, still haunted by their defeats during the Yom Kippur War, refused to take part. The memory of their losses hung like a phantom in the air, too fresh to be ignored. Syria, however, remained under the influence of Russia after being rescued during the Arab Spring, but the Golan Heights presented a formidable obstacle. As a result, the massive UN force was divided in two. One force would invade from Lebanon and the other would launch an amphibious assault near Tel Aviv.

The UN General Assembly had gathered millions of men from the four corners of the earth in preparation for Operation Gaza Hope. Bases were built in Europe and Africa. Never before had such a great armada been assembled. The force gathered in the Mediterranean made the D-Day armada look like child’s play. In disbelief at the array of forces aligned against Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu sent delegation after delegation to negotiate a settlement between the Palestinians and Israel. Israel conceded to return territory in Gaza to the Palestinians, but would not cede the West Bank, recognizing Jerusalem as its eternal capital. The West Bank, an immutable part of the Palestinians’ heritage, was at the heart of the conflict, despite debates over which version of history to refer to.

After the vote, Jews around the world were detained. Seen as potential spies, they were rounded up and sent to re-education camps reminiscent of Nazi Germany's cattle trucks. The camps involved hard labor, and while not all inmates were killed, many perished unnoticed by the world, which had already decided Israel’s fate. The majority of the global population was indifferent. The precedent had been set during the Revolution of 2032, when white Christian nationalists were detained in Walmarts surrounded by concertina wire and guarded by the red, white, and blue SS. No one was there to save the Jews. The America of the 1950s was long gone. The UK, dominated by Palestine-loving Muslims, mourned in the streets on May 14. Recruitment posters called on all surviving males of the apocalypse for a holy war to liberate Gaza. Men from all walks of life answered the call. The lines at recruitment offices resembled a gay pride parade, with cis-gendered men, bi-curious, trans men, non-binary, demi-girls, demi-guys, two-spirits, genderqueer, omni-gender, and bi-genders following the rainbow to find a sturdy butch marine gunny offering the latest social justice cause to sign up for.

The world’s attention was diverted. People emerged from their bunkers, and New York City's subways began operating again beneath the rubble. Soldiers from Russia fighting in Alaska left their positions to board ships heading for the Promised Land. American troops fighting in Poland marched to the rear, boarded trucks, and were transported across Europe to the nearest ports. Like ants marching among the ruins of nuclear devastation, the world’s soldiers converged on one focal point: Israel, the thorn in humanity’s side since creation and central to God’s redemptive plan.

Israel was waiting as the ships poured through the Straits of Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. Israel released all its nukes. In space, they flew, knocking down satellites with concussive blasts. Israeli hackers activated these satellite nukes as they fell from space, obliterating nations in minutes. Highly accurate Patriot missile systems and S-600s intercepted many of these nukes mid-flight. Above these waterways, the skies lit up with nuclear explosions.

Soldiers quivered in their ships as the earth shook beneath them. A bright-eyed corporal, stoic and solid, vomited over the bow of the USS Makin Island, one of the older amphibious assault ships in the fleet. When he finished, he looked up at the panorama of nuclear explosions and began to shout.

“How is it that such a small country puts up such resistance? I was on the Eastern Front when Russia invaded Poland. I’ve never seen such resistance. We’re not fighting a small country the size of New Jersey. We’re fighting God himself. I’m not going. Lock me up in the brig; I’m not doing this. We’re heading towards our destruction, I know it. I saw it in my dreams last night. Heaven itself declared war on us, and we all died.”

“Raskin, you will fight or die. Anyone who declares himself a conscientious objector is an enemy of the state and will be put to death. This isn’t like the old days when we just sent you home with a pat on the back and said it’s against your conscience to fight. I will execute you on the spot right here!” Sergeant Hess cocked his rifle, inserting a bullet into the chamber. “Do you want a letter to your mother telling her how you died? How you betrayed the state...” A nuke exploded dangerously close, shaking the ship. The sergeant accidentally discharged his rifle, and a bullet hit Raskin’s leg. He collapsed, shouting as blood poured everywhere.

“Someone dress this boy’s wound and carry him to the infirmary. Looks like you won’t be going after all, Raskin.”

Two soldiers carried him to the infirmary, and the medics began operating immediately. Raskin awoke to find his commanding officer, Lieutenant Daniels standing over him.

“Can you hear me, Raskin?”

He nodded.

“How the hell did you get shot in the leg before the battles even began? Someone said they overheard you spouting anti-patriotic rhetoric. Is this true?”

Raskin shook his head.

“Good. Because if you were, I’d have to finish you off myself.” He placed his hand with slight pressure near the wound, causing pain to shoot up Raskin’s leg. “In my after-action report, I’ll just leave it as an accidental discharge. Be careful.”

The officer left. Raskin felt a sense of dread. Something bad was going to happen, and he didn’t know how, but he had to find a way to escape the ship. He remembered his pastor saying that whoever touches Israel touches the apple of God’s eye. He never believed much in the Bible and was happy when his church was shut down by federal edict 516. But for the first time, he felt like the worm trying to eat God’s apple.

His mother was put in re-education camps for her beliefs. He used to visit her and begged her to forsake her superstitious nonsense, but she was adamant. She passed away there, and her body was never released. He felt numb when he received the news. His father brought home her remaining articles, one of which was a raggedy Bible. He read the verses she had outlined, but they meant nothing to him. He threw it in his cupboard, buried under clothes like the memories of her he suppressed. Now, facing death, he felt her memories resurrected.

“Mother,” he prayed, “Save me from this ship of death. If there’s a God above and you’re with Him, then tell Him to save me. I know we’re doing something horrible, something deeply wrong, and you would be ashamed of me.”

Suddenly, the ship jolted. Raskin was thrown out of his bed, and medical equipment scattered. He pulled out his IV and squeezed his arm. The alarm blared. A voice appeared over the intercom.

“This is the captain. Abandon ship. All personnel, board the landing crafts. We’ll make landfall with the second wave.”

Water started entering his cabin. His sergeant appeared in the doorway.

“Looks like you’re back in this thing, Raskin! You didn’t think we’d forget about you. Can you walk?”

“Sort of. You gave me a nice flesh wound, you son of a bitch.”

“Pain is weakness leaving the body, soldier. Now let’s go! I’ll help you walk!”

They waded through waist-high water and dead bodies. His sergeant cleared the debris, allowing them to move quickly. Raskin was relieved to use the water for support rather than putting weight on his injured leg. When they reached the top deck, chaos reigned. Soldiers scrambled to board the last landing craft as the ship tilted and sank. They joined the mass of soldiers piling into the craft. Just as the boat pushed off, the remaining part of the ship sank into the ocean. As the craft moved through the sea, water sprayed on Raskin’s face. They must be getting closer to Israel because he saw a massive air battle taking place in the sky.

Initially IDf’s F-55’s and F-35’s had an advantage over the coalition’s aircraft. After years of Israeli ingenuity, Israeli versions of the F-35 and 55 far surpassed American and European versions built by Boeing. Israeli jets in coordination with the iron dome were able to sink half of America’s carrier fleet in the first day alone. Russia quickly came to the rescue and bolstered the air defence of the remaining American fleet which was enough to stem the tide. Israeli jets began running out of fuel and ammunition. They were outnumbered 22 1. Israel’s Air Force was either grounded or left ineffective for combat. All that was left was the iron dome.

The dome stubbornly held, its impenetrable ingenuity stubbornly clinging on to the dream of an Israeli state. The night sky lit up with an amazing light display as drones, jets, ICBMs, cruise missiles disintegrated as lasers sliced through them like a samurai sword cutting through bamboo. I stood there on Mount olives watching the morning sun rise its beautiful litany of colours breaking through the clouds. One cruise missile flew over my head bursting my ear drums. America was very aware of some of the weaknesses in the Iron Dome having jointly developed the same defence system. That lone cruise missile snuck through the dome and hit a command centre. I saw it explode like the destruction of Israeli’s hope. Taking advantage of the chaos, FPV drones quickly swarmed in through the perimeter then like dominoes each battery was destroyed one by one and on the first day of Operation Gaza Hope, Israel was laid completely defenceless and hopeless.

Landing operations were already on the way as the last battery ceased to operate. Amphibious vehicles from every nation stormed the beaches outside of Tel Aviv. The landing crafts lowered their gates. As the landing craft poured out their troops they shouted,

“From the river to the sea Palestine will be free!”

The IDF initially beat back the first wave of soldiers from their hastily prepared bunkers and trenches. Abandoned landing crafts littered the beach, and thousands of coalition soldiers floated, bloated in the Mediterranean Sea. The sand mixed with blood and limbs from the armies of Christendom, polluting the Promised Land for the first time since the Crusades.

“Raskin! Lucky for you, I packed a second set of BDUs and boots. Put those on, or you’ll be storming the beach in a hospital gown.”

Raskin quickly began to change, struggling to maintain his balance while the craft bobbed violently in the turbulent waters. His wound was still fresh and throbbed painfully.

“Medic, can I get some morphine?”

A medic nearby injected him. “Make this morphine count. I heard you were spouting some religious bullshit about us being here. I don’t think you’re a Jew in disguise, are you?”

Raskin remained silent.

The commanding officer on the craft began to speak up. “Here’s the situation, boys. The first wave’s been annihilated. We’re dropping a tactical nuke and then going in hot. I want everybody in their NBC suits and make sure your seams are sealed tight.”

“Lucky for you, Raskin, I got doubles of everything,” Sgt. Michaels said, grinning. He quickly dug in his pack and threw Raskin a packaged NBC suit, which Raskin grabbed and tore open like a young child celebrating a birthday. Just as he finished putting on his suit, a loud, deafening explosion pierced his eardrums, the shockwave knocking him down. The tactical nuke had hit its mark.

“Fucking Jewish pigs. Got what’s coming to them,” Sgt. Michaels commented snidely.

Despite the hit, IDF artillery continued to fire from concealed positions within Tel Aviv. Explosions displaced water left and right in the wake of the landing craft. One craft was hit by an IPV drone, its occupants catapulting into the air like a seesaw with a boulder on the other end.

“I thought we could jam their signals! Other drones are getting through,” the commander shouted into his radio.

The craft landed at the LZ, its gate swiftly opening as we rushed out onto the beach. I dove into the sand, bracing for the IDF's machine-gun fire, but was met with an unsettling silence. We moved out in formation; Sgt. Hess placed a pistol in my hand. The beach lay eerily quiet, the only sound being the rhythmic crash of the ocean waves.

“You ready to fight against God? Where is God when we wiped the Jews from this beach. God has no part with these forsaken pigs. Let’s get a move on Cpl.”

# Chapter 3

My wife Dipti never completely abandoned Indian clothing and traditions. If I wore my shoes in our home, she would immediately scold me. “Don’t bring that dirt in my home. I just did jaru and pocha. Don’t make a mess of my home.” Today in my panic, I walked into our home with shoes on. She was so distracted that the fact I was wearing shoes never crossed her mind.

Our home in Old Jerusalem was a blend of both our cultures, an oasis of tranquility amidst the chaos. The exterior, like most in this ancient part of the city, was built from Jerusalem stone, giving it a timeless, warm appearance. The entrance, a sturdy wooden door adorned with a mezuzah, opened into a small but cozy foyer.

Inside, the narrow hallways led to various rooms, each filled with memories and artifacts from our lives together. The walls were adorned with a mix of Indian tapestries and Hebrew calligraphy, reflecting our shared heritage. The living room, where Dipti now made chai, was a testament to our blended lives. A low wooden coffee table, surrounded by floor cushions with bright, embroidered covers, stood at the center. Shelves lined with books in Hebrew, Hindi, and English filled one wall, while another displayed a collection of family photos and religious artifacts.

The kitchen was Dipti’s domain, small but efficiently organized. Copper pots and pans hung from hooks, and the aroma of spices always lingered in the air. Today, the scent of cardamom and ginger mingled with the nervous energy that filled the room. She fumbled with the Taj Mahal packet in her hand, and it fell to the ground, its dried leaves scattering everywhere. Dipti was wearing her favorite salwar suit. The clothing didn’t fit the occasion.

“Did you call your family in India and tell them what’s happening?” I asked.

“Yes, the government has also gone mad there. The PM joined the international coalition. Indian troops will be on the ground here, killing Jews. I never thought the government there would cave into international pressure. Our government feels as if it owes a debt to the US and its allies after Chinese troops were pushed out of India with their help. What are we going to do, Hoshea?”

I felt pretty helpless. The situation was just too much for me to comprehend. My mind kept pondering the Torah. I remembered one specific passage:

“I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city.” The words of that passage sent a chill down my spine as my thoughts centered on her safety.

There was a knock on our door. It was Gabor, a local soldier who patrolled our area. He had been in our area for the past couple months. He was a stout, well-built, young man in the prime of his life. I took a liking to him. I tried to be a father figure for him. He seemed quite confused about the world and his life. He was a soldier trying to do his duty, but he was also heavily influenced by the Meretz party and its liberal influences. He would often come to my home high from vodka. It was at these times Gabor spoke of Israel’s right to own and dominate the Palestinian parts of Israel and at other times he seemed doubtful when sober. This puzzled me. It seemed as if Gabor needed to be under the influence of intoxicants to gain the courage to realize the truth. Otherwise, he was complacent and accepted the party line regarding the Palestinian solution.

“Gabor, come in.” I could tell he had been drinking again. I wondered how he managed to stay fit for duty. “We were just making chai. Come sit, have a drink,” I said nervously, trying to sound casual. Gabor quickly came inside and sat, his uneasiness spreading to the rest of us.

“How’s your mother, Gabor?” I asked, trying to divert his attention.

“She’s worried, like everyone else Tzadik. We launched our nukes, all of them, to try to stop the invasion force. Some got through, but most were intercepted. They’re all going to land here soon. Twenty million men, more than double the population of our country, but the might of the IDF will stop them. We’re the most powerful military on earth. I don’t care if it’s a hundred million men, we will stop them,” Gabor said with fierce determination.

“But you have to be realistic, Gabor. Twenty million, and the combined might of their nation’s air forces and navies. This is more than we can handle. We have to look to a greater power than ourselves to defeat this mighty force. There’s no way we can do this on man’s strength alone.”

“Are you bringing up God again, Hoshea? The invisible man in the sky? That's just a crutch for the weak. The Jewish people are strong without relying on some deity. Look at how many wars we've won through our own cunning and ingenuity! Where was God when we built the Iron Dome? Having such supernatural fancies makes us weak. I say, forget the notion of God. We will defeat the world through our own resourcefulness. The Iron Dome will hold. And when those troops land on our beaches and come down from the north, we will massacre them.”

“I was there in Alaska, you know that. I’ve seen the might of the Russian Armed Forces in person. Millions of American soldiers died on that Alaskan tundra. If it wasn’t for China’s defeat, we’d have easily lost the war. Now America and Russia are joined together! Such a magnificent display of military might. Can you imagine? No, this is not rational, this is not possible. We cannot win without supernatural intervention. Pray with me, Gabor. We must pray for our deliverance.”

“We will win, I know it. Thanks for the invitation to pray, Hoshea, but I must decline.”

I was disappointed, but my wife arrived just in time with chai to mask my disappointment, which marked my face momentarily. We each took our cups, holding onto them like they might be our last. Gabor took a sip.

“Mrs. Levi, your chai is always wonderful. I love the way Indians drink their tea.”

“This is one thing we Indians can’t live without, and that’s our chai.”

“I just came to talk about the battlefield situation,” said Gabor.

“Yes, I overheard you guys talking.”

A moment of silence passed as we pondered the future and what it might bring. I looked into Dipti’s eyes and could see the tears being held back. Her resilience in the face of such dire circumstances was admirable, but I could sense the fear and uncertainty gnawing at her, as it was in all of us.

I took a deep breath and decided to focus on practicalities.

"Gabor, what do we need to do to prepare? How can we help?" Gabor looked at me, his determination undiminished.

"Stay inside, keep your lights off at night, and if you hear the sirens, head to the nearest shelter. The IDF is setting up more checkpoints and we’re working on securing the area. Just keep your family safe and pray, Hoshea, if that helps you."

I nodded, appreciating his concern, even if he didn’t share my faith.

"Thank you, Gabor. We will do everything we can."

As Gabor left, he gave a long glance at Dipti, which I thought nothing of at the time, and then he left. Dipti and I sat in silence for a few moments, sipping our chai. The weight of the situation pressed down on us, but in that small moment, we found a bit of solace in each other's presence. No matter what happened next, we knew we had to face it together, drawing strength from our love and the hope that somehow, we would survive this.

“I can’t sit home at this time. I’m going to Mt. Olives pray and meditate. Are you coming with me?”

“No, I’ll stay here and talk with family as long as we have network.”

“Your wish, but I don’t think we’ll have network much longer.”

“You come home fast. Most people have already left their homes and gathered in shelters.”

“I don’t think that’s the wisest choice. Shelters are where they’ll expect to find us, cowering in the dark like little rats. I think the safest place isn’t a place where everyone else is going. You stay at home with the lights out. I will be back soon. Then we will make our move.”

As I walked out of our gate, I looked up at the sky. Plumes of explosions dotted the horizon, their thunder reverberating against the ancient walls. Countless contrails streaked across the sky, evidence of the IDF's relentless efforts.

Walking down the narrow paths, people scurried by, their black curly locks bouncing with urgency. Some Orthodox Jews hadn’t even taken the time to put on their kippahs, which was a shocking sight. The usual scene of meticulous observance had given way to raw survival instincts. Many of the Christian homes were boarded up as I walked by. Their occupants had left the city, fully aware of the impending disaster.

I momentarily stopped by the Western Wall. Many brave Jews were praying there, their bodies swaying with fervor. I sensed a greater intensity in their prayers than usual, a collective plea to El Elyon for protection and deliverance. The atmosphere was charged with a mix of fear, hope, and unwavering faith. As I watched, I felt a surge of determination. This city, with its layers of history and unbroken spirit, was worth fighting for. I felt helpless knowing that some of these Jews would die praying at this wall. I pondered, where was all the justice in this. The Jews love this city and have every right to it. It’s a mysterious evil current which rises from the depths of the earth that always desires to keep God’s chosen people away from this city and sweep them away and in doing so hindering God’s redemptive plans for the earth. I belonged here. The hair rose on my neck. My time was coming. All the things in my life have led up to this very moment and prepared me.

An Orthodox Jew named Yechezkel approached me. He was always here at the Western Wall around this time and greeted me warmly.

“A challenging day for the faithful, isn’t it, Mr. President? Do they even know you’re here?”

“Of course they do. I’m surprised they haven’t tried a drone strike on my home yet.”

“Is there truly that much animosity between you and that dictator?”

“Unfortunately, yes. I took him as my VP to unify our country, which was deeply divided by years of fighting between the Republican and Democrat parties. If we were on the verge of civil war, how were we going to fight a two-front war between China and Russia? We were friendly with each other, but deep down inside he hated me. He always resented my leadership style because it represented something he could never aspire to.”

“Yes, most presidents don’t lead from the front lines these days.”

“While I was on the front lines, he was in the dark conspiring with other Democrats and weak Republicans, searching for a way to oust me and seize power.”

“How did he manage to change the Constitution? I heard he did it by force.”

“Yes, those were dark days, but I believe he’ll soon receive justice.”

“We all believe he’ll receive justice soon. I wouldn’t be praying in front of this wall right now if I didn’t. Hashem will only allow the Jewish people to be tested to a certain extent, and then He will relent, just like He did with Job. I just hope I’m able to survive this and see all the wonderful things Hashem brings about as a result of this one man’s great mistake.”

“I wouldn’t mind seeing the Temple rebuilt.”

“Yes, that’s something to survive for. Maybe together we’ll both survive and measure the outer courts and lay one brick at a time till we reach the inner sanctuary and see Hashem’s glory enter through the eastern gate.”

A loud explosion blasted overhead. A missile almost penetrated the Iron Dome. All those praying by the wall instinctively ducked to the ground, as did I. Two jets, engaged in a dogfight, roared overhead at the speed of sound. The sonic boom that followed was deafening, shaking the very stones of the ancient city. The ground beneath us trembled, and the air was filled with the acrid smell of burning fuel and metal.

The jets screamed past, their contrails carving sharp lines in the sky. The clash of metal and fire above mirrored the turmoil below, where people scrambled for cover. Despite the chaos, the faithful slowly rose, their determination unwavering. The fervent prayers at the Western Wall resumed, voices lifted in unison against the backdrop of destruction.

Yechezkel and I exchanged a glance, a shared understanding passing between us. The hope of seeing the Temple rebuilt was more than just a dream—it was a beacon of resilience and faith. We both knew that our survival, our fight, was about more than just living another day. It was about preserving our heritage, our faith, and the promise of a future where Hashem’s glory would once again dwell in His holy sanctuary.

“We have to believe, Hoshea,” Yechezkel said, his voice steady despite the turmoil. “We have to believe that this is not the end, but the beginning of something greater.”

I nodded, feeling a surge of determination. “We will see it, Yechezkel. We will see the Temple rebuilt and Hashem’s glory returning to Jerusalem.”

As the jets disappeared into the distance, the noise of the battle above was momentarily replaced by the unwavering prayers of the faithful below. The ancient stones of the Western Wall, witness to countless generations of hope and despair, stood strong and unyielding.

It was getting late and I wished to watch the battle take place in the darkened dusky sky. Such a sight one can only witness once-in-a-lifetime so I bid Yechezkel farewell and made my way towards Mt. Olives resisting the urge to walk home and check on Dipti. Instead, I called her on mobile. Luckily there were still signal, although weak, she sounded shaken, but well. She sounded anxious for me to come home but withheld pestering me. Knowing she was okay I quickly made my way up the path towards the mountain.

# Chapter 4

It was dusk when I finally reached my perch on the Mount of Olives. I rested upon the rail, looking down upon Jerusalem. I pulled a packet of cigarettes from my pocket and lit up, blowing a big puff of smoke that resembled the mushroom cloud of a nuke.

A sudden flash of light streaked across the sky as the first nuclear blast lit up the horizon. I quickly glanced away. The mushroom cloud wasn’t as large as I expected; it was a tactical nuke. My phone buzzed with a notification: Iran had also launched an ICBM, but it had frozen midair above Iran and crashed down on Tehran.

I sat there, solemn and contemplative. Memories of Alaska during the Russian invasion flooded back. The sky was on fire, but not like this. It was night, but I swear it was day. Fear and apprehension filled the air. People around me wept and cried, fearful of what tomorrow would bring. Many asked why Hashem would allow this. Did we not keep His Torah and follow His commandments?

Nearby, an Orthodox rabbi and his followers had gathered. They carried candles and began singing hymns:

"You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,

Nor of the arrow that flies by day,

Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness,

Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side, And ten thousand at your right hand;

But it shall not come near you.

Only with your eyes shall you look,

And see the reward of the wicked."

The rabbi began to preach, “God was with Moses in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. He is with us here while the skies are on fire. He is leading us through this disaster, and He will deliver us."

“Where is my Moshiach? All the nations are gathered against Israel; his time must be near,” cried a man from the crowd.

“He is here, walking among us. He will reveal himself in the time of deliverance,” replied the rabbi.

“The time of deliverance is now! We’re all going to die or worse. Who knows what the goyim have planned for us? What will my children do, where will we hide? It’s better to jump from this mountain than fall into their hands.”

“Have faith, don’t lose hope. Hashem has not brought us back to the Promised Land to destroy us.”

More refugees began to appear on Mount Olives. Soon, a large host had gathered, all anticipating the coming of Moshiach. Never before in the history of the Jewish people was this anticipation greater. They all knew this was the war of Gog and Magog. They knew the armies of the goyim would converge on Jerusalem, but they did not know the horrors they would endure before his coming. A great pit formed in my stomach at the thought. A great sorrow hung over my head. I wished I could save them all before the appointed time, but I knew this was not possible. I knew that what had been prophesied must be fulfilled for the glory of God.

For the war of Gog and Magog is also a judgment on the Jewish people, as World War III had been for the rest of the world. World War III had caused great heat to envelop the earth. The nuclear weapons had caused the atmosphere to disintegrate, allowing more UV rays to penetrate. They said for the longest time that nuclear weapons could not set the atmosphere on fire, but they did it. The damn bastards did it. Now the entire earth is drying up. Farmers’ crops are failing globally. But thanks to Israeli innovation, we have largely avoided this catastrophe.

Israeli scientists developed genetically modified crops that required less water and were more heat-resistant. We tried to share this technology with the world, but the world had put an embargo on Israel, preventing us from trading and sharing our innovations. Israel lived as an island unto itself. While the rest of the world was dying, we continued to flourish. We had the keys to their salvation, but they chose to lock themselves in a closet and slowly die.

The realization of how much danger I was in began to slowly dawn upon me. The Iron Dome was no longer replying to the salvos of enemy missiles and FPV drones. Buildings in Jerusalem began to explode. Israel was now completely defenceless. There was no cover on the mountainside, and I knew we presented easy targets to coalition airstrikes and drones. The paved path I had taken countless times now felt like a treacherous gauntlet.

Suddenly, a loitering drone collided into the crowd nearby. Its blast knocked me over, and the surrounding people were hit directly with shrapnel. Blood and limbs flew everywhere. After my disorientation subsided, I slowly got up and wiped the blood from my face. The crowd began to run toward the city, seeking refuge from the onslaught. FPV drones continued their reign of destruction, buzzing like malevolent hornets.

I chose to lay down and play dead, hoping to avoid detection. The cold pavement felt rough against my cheek, and the scent of smoke and blood filled the air. In the darkness, I could faintly perceive a drone lowly hovering above the crowd, monitoring the destruction. I held my breath, praying it wouldn't notice me.

Nearby, soldiers wearing night vision goggles responded with EMP guns, aiming to disable the drones. Their blue flashes lit up the night, and some of the drones began to drop from the sky like mechanical birds struck by invisible arrows. Seizing the opportunity, I began my descent on foot towards Old Jerusalem. Moving cautiously, I stayed low, using the terrain for cover. The path was steep, and I had to be careful not to slip on the loose gravel mixed with the blood of my fellow citizens.

As I descended, the sounds of chaos echoed from above, but I focused on each step, determined to reach the relative safety of the ancient city. Historic landmarks, once symbols of hope and faith, now seemed like eerie sentinels in the dim light. The Garden of Gethsemane, the Church of All Nations, and the Jewish Cemetery blurred past as I made my way down the mountain.

Suddenly, I was transported back to the Alaskan tundra. The snow crunched beneath my feet as I ran for cover from an incoming mortar strike. Adrenaline surged; old instincts flared. Once a soldier, always a soldier. The deceased from the Jewish cemetery seemed to watch over me, urging me on, beckoning me to finish strong.

My goal was the Lions' Gate, the closest entrance into the Old City from the Mount of Olives. The gate, with its lion carvings, seemed like a beacon of hope amid the destruction. I was almost out of breath. The enemy was no longer above but below, as I struggled to reach safety. I fought my body’s urge to stop and rest. The snow, the wind—they burned my face. War had found me again. The Russian drones were here. Fear and desperation wrapped around me like the layers of clothing I used to protect myself from the harsh Arctic wind. Each step was heavy with the weight of history within these ancient walls. But the desire to save this city and its people pushed me onward.

The closer I got to the Lions' Gate, the more I felt a glimmer of hope. The city's ancient walls presented a facade of protection, the hope of brief respite from the relentless assault above. Finally, I reached the gate, where the thick stone walls and narrow streets provided a hope that the labyrinthine paths would offer security. I finally got a moment to catch my breath, even more fear and uncertainty crept into my heart. One all-consuming, pressing thought pulsated with my heartbeat: my wife. What about my wife? Where is she? We both lived on the dividing line between the Christian and Jewish quarters. In a sense, this was symbolic of our relationship, as she is Christian and I’m Jewish.

As I slipped through the gates, the sounds of the city and the fight against the drones within were growing louder and more intense. It disgusted me that these animals of the UN had no respect for the most holy city of the world. What was Obama thinking? Profaning El Elyon’s future capital, does he not know that those who bless Israel will be blessed and those who curse Israel will be cursed?

Suddenly there was silence. I figured their attack had ceased. Instead, the drones began delivering their payloads. Behind the wall adjacent to the Lions' Gate, I slowly peeked around a corner. A larger drone descended, bringing with it a Hunter-Killer Robot (HKR). Robots under the control of AI had greatly advanced in the past ten years. Now, robots regularly worked in coordination with human soldiers. I could hear the weight of its feet shift upon the concrete as it landed. Its body adjusted, its sensors scanning the urban environment around it. Its heavy machine gun began picking off targets one by one.

A soldier quickly passed me and, upon seeing the robot, swiftly lay prone and began aiming his EMP rifle at the HKR. As soon as it sensed the soldier, before he even had a chance to aim, a small RPG fired from the side of its body, homing in on the soldier’s position. The explosion was swift and brutal. The soldier was already gone, his weapon still intact on the ground where he had fallen.

Thoughts of my wife raced through my mind, but saving some of these people was more important. I couldn't let the fear paralyze me. I needed to act, to help those around me and to find my wife. Steeling myself, I crouched low and made my way towards the fallen soldier’s EMP rifle. If I could get hold of it, I might have a chance to disable the HKR.

The narrow streets of Old Jerusalem provided some cover, but also felt like a maze. The sounds of the HKR’s heavy footsteps and the occasional bursts of gunfire echoed off the ancient stones. I kept low, moving from shadow to shadow, my heart pounding in my chest. The smell of gunpowder and burning buildings filled the air, mingling with the scent of history and antiquity that always lingered in these streets.

I reached the soldier’s body, the EMP rifle still clutched in his lifeless hands. With a mix of reverence and urgency, I pried it from his grasp. The weapon was heavier than I expected, it had been a long time since I held one of these. I checked the rifle quickly; it seemed operational.

Peeking around the corner, I spotted the HKR methodically navigating the narrow streets, its sensors sweeping for more targets. I took a deep breath, aimed the EMP rifle, and fired. A blue flash burst forth, striking the HKR. For a moment, it paused, its systems disrupted by the electromagnetic pulse. The robot slumped, its mechanical whirring silenced, and it ceased to operate. It was surreal to witness such advanced machinery against the backdrop of an ancient city. Here, the battleground juxtaposed the old and the new, ancient wisdom clashing with modern, progressive thinking. Man was trying to force the hand of God with technology, striving to impose his vision of morality. But the stones of this ancient city are eternal, while the technology here is transient. God’s ways are true and just and endure forever; this robot, like all human creations, will return to dust.

With the HKR disabled, I continued my descent toward the Christian and Jewish quarters. The streets grew narrower, the ancient buildings huddling closer together. The chaos above contrasted sharply with the silent tension of these enclosed pathways. Under the dim street lights I encountered an HKR wedged in an alley, its sensors scanning relentlessly. Dark silhouettes of Orthodox Jews from the buildings above hurled stones and household objects at the robot, desperate to disable it. In response, small RPGs erupted from the HKR, homing in on its attackers' positions. Explosions reverberated through the alleyway as both buildings on either side crumbled onto the HKR. The shouts of the trapped occupants filled the air. The HKR slowly emerged from the rubble, its metallic form battered but operational. I swiftly took aim and fired, the EMP burst rendering another machine lifeless.

I wanted to stop and help the occupants trapped beneath the rubble, but the thought of my wife kept me going. I had to find her, to make sure she was safe. Under my breath, I whispered a prayer to El Elyon, God Most High, seeking His protection and guidance, and help for the people trapped underneath that rubble. The ancient walls of Jerusalem had seen countless conflicts and prayers, and I hoped mine would not go unheard. The faith that El Elyon watched over His people gave me strength as I navigated the perilous streets, determined to reunite with my wife and survive this nightmarish assault.

I finally reached the gate to my home. The gate was already ajar, and I slid right through, reaching the door. It showed signs of damage; someone had forcefully entered. My heart began to race. Keeping my cool, I propped my EMP rifle against the wall outside my home and slowly walked inside, listening carefully. I could hear my wife shouting from the rear of the house.

“Gabor! Get off me! What has gotten into you? How many times have we invited you into our home?”

“Shut up, you Christian bitch! I’ve had my eyes on you since I met you.”

“Gabor! You’ve been drinking, stop it!”

“I’m going to enjoy this before the end of the world. Now come here!”

The struggle intensified. A lamp fell and shattered. I moved slowly, trying not to make any noise. Gabor was a capable soldier despite his flaws. In hand-to-hand combat, he could probably take me down. The door was slightly open, and I peeked inside. I saw him pinning my wife down, her clothes removed from the waist down. He held her down with one hand, trying to remove his pants with the other. His rifle lay on the ground about three to four feet away.

I slowly opened the door further and quickly pulled the rifle away by its buttstock. I placed it firmly against my shoulder and flipped the safety off.

“Get down, Gabor! Get down!”

Gabor turned around, his face displaying shock. He smiled and put his hands up. “Hey, don’t shoot, Tzadik. It's Jewish law to fulfil the marital duties when the husband can’t. Why don’t you have children? Let me help you, friend.”

“I’ve treated you like a son, and you come and disrespect me in my home. Get out!”

“Were going to die tonight Tzadik. You don’t know. The strength of Israel has failed us. Our forces have been completely defeated. Let me enjoy once before I die. I don’t want to die a virgin. Where is your god now Hoshea? I want to die.”

He tried to grab the front of my rifle. I instinctively pulled the trigger. A bullet went into his upper arm. He stumbled back, blood gushing from his wound. He grasped his wound, putting pressure on it. The bullet had exited his body and went through Dipti’s hand. She screamed and clutched her hand in pain.

“Hey, Tzadik, you know the Holy One of Israel shouldn’t kill a fellow Jew.”

Dipti grabbed the bedsheet and quickly tied it around her hand, tightening it as much as possible to prevent blood loss.

“Dipti, come here!”

Dipti pulled up her bottoms and quickly ran from her bed towards me. As she passed Gabor, she murmured, “I forgive you, Gabor.”

“Dipti, hold this rifle and point it at him.”

I moved towards him. He had slumped on the ground with his hand over his wound. “You’re not dead yet, Gabor,” I said as I tore another bedsheet and tied it around his arm. I placed a wooden stick, broken off from one of the chairs, between the knot and began twisting it, creating a tourniquet that effectively stopped the flow of blood.

“Lucky for you it has an exit wound. All we need to do now is get you stitched up.”

The power went off. The city now lay in complete darkness.

“How are we going to reach the hospital with all that’s happening outside?” Dipti said, her hand still throbbing from her gunshot wound.

“We have a first aid kit in the bathroom with a couple of bandages inside and some antibiotic ointment. We’ll bandage both your wounds and see if we can find a doctor or medic outside.”

Dipti left to bring the first aid kit.

“Why are you doing this, Tzadik? Just let me die. I don’t deserve to live.”

“Hashem might still have a plan for you. He had a plan for David despite him being a murderer. You’re going to help me. I need to hide Dipti. The city is going to fall and the women are going to be raped. I need to hide her where nobody else will think to look.”

“And where might that be?”

“The tomb of David, in his sarcophagus.”

“And I’m going to help you lift the lid? Look at my arm, you shot me!”

“One arm is better than nothing. What about your wife’s hand?”

Dipti came in with the first aid kit. I stood up, and she handed me the rifle. I felt as if the danger had passed from Gabor and he had somewhat come to his senses.

“Don’t worry about me, Gabor. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” said Dipti as she began attending to their wounds. Despite what had just happened, she displayed a resilience and fearlessness which I had not expected. She took out the ointment and placed it on his wound and then hers. She began to tightly wrap the bandage around Gabor’s arm. He winced.

“Take it easy, woman.”

“You’re a soldier, right? Why the whining? You brought this upon yourself. We’re all suffering right now because of you.”

I could still smell the alcohol on Gabor’s breath, but it seemed as if Dipti’s selfless love was able to shine through his confusion. He, in turn, responded and realized his drunkenness was a hindrance to us right now and our survival. He was trying to come to his senses. It was as if two people were in Gabor vying for control. One person knew the gravity of the situation and what we must do, the other wished to drink themselves to oblivion, dying pathetically in this hopeless world.

“Yes, yes, I’m a soldier, I must do something, I cannot die like this, I must save you two. I’m a Jew, a descendant of David, of Abraham, of the promise. I must, I must do something. What was I thinking, drinking from depression because we’re losing the war? I’m such a fucking coward. I’m done with alcohol. I’m going to make things right. I’m not going to die a fucking coward’s death.”

“I’ll manage this wound. It was like the time someone stepped on my hand when I was playing cricket with the boys. We should go to the pharmacy and find antibiotics. Hopefully, the pharmacist hasn’t gone into hiding.”

“Yes, good idea, Dipti.”

As they bandaged their wounds and prepared to venture out, the gravity of the situation weighed heavily on them. The city was descending into chaos, but together, they were determined to survive and protect one another.

The three of them stepped out into the night, the darkness pressing in on them. With the Iron Dome no longer functional, the IDF relied on more traditional means of air defense. MANPADS streaked across the sky, their fiery trails ending in explosions that disintegrated enemy aircraft into hundreds of flaming pieces, raining down from the heavens. In the distance, I saw the ominous silhouettes of parachutes descending like a plague of locusts. A relentless stream of tracer fire targeted these floating invaders, determined to prevent their landing and the threat they posed to the rear of the frontline.

The city was a cacophony of distant gunfire and explosions, their echoes bouncing through the narrow streets. Amid the fighting, the power outage cast an eerie silence over Jerusalem, broken only by the occasional scream or shout. The absence of light turned familiar pathways into treacherous shadows, heightening the tension with every step.

We need to move quickly," I whispered, leading the way. "Stay close and keep quiet." I once again felt the weight of the EMP rifle in my hands. I exercised regularly, but not with intensity that could prepare me for this.

Dipti, her face pale but resolute, held onto the rifle with trembling hands. Gabor, now sober and focused, followed behind, his wounded arm cradled against his chest. As we made our way through the narrow alleyways of Old Jerusalem, we encountered other groups of people, huddled together and trying to stay out of sight. The fear was palpable, but so was the determination to survive.

We moved swiftly keeping to the shadows. The pharmacy was dark inside. They moved swiftly, keeping to the shadows. The pharmacy was dark, its windows shattered. Inside, the shelves were in disarray, but there were still some supplies left. We quickly gathered what we needed: antibiotics, bandages, antiseptic, and any other medical supplies we could find.

As we left the pharmacy, a loud crash echoed down the street. A group of armed men appeared; their faces covered with makeshift masks. They were looters, taking advantage of the chaos. They were speaking Arabic. I could tell they were from the Muslim Quarter. They were armed with AKs and moved with a predatory confidence.

Suddenly, they discovered an elderly couple hiding in the shadows. The fear in the couple's eyes was palpable.

"Please don’t shoot, we left our valuables at home. Here’s our home key. Take whatever you want, just leave us alone," the elderly man pleaded, his voice trembling.

One of the looters, speaking Arabic, abused the elderly couple in broken English. With the butt of his rifle, he knocked the woman to the ground. The elderly gentleman tried to intervene but was shot along with his wife, their bodies collapsing onto the pavement.

The looter spat on their bodies. "Occupiers," he muttered in a thick accent.

Dipti was about ready to shoot at them, but I grabbed the top of her rifle, put my finger to my mouth, and shook my head. I took her rifle and gave her my EMP rifle, ensuring she was equipped but didn't act impulsively.

Suddenly, from the darkness, muzzle flashes lit up the air, and the Muslim looters dropped one by one. Fully armed IDF soldiers with night vision goggles emerged, checking the bodies. One of them waved his hand.

"Clear."

We approached this group of soldiers cautiously. They saw us and shouted, "Halt!"

One of them stepped forward, his eyes narrowing as he saw Gabor. "Gabor, is that you?" the soldier asked, recognition dawning on his face as he examined our group through his night vision goggles.

"Yes, it’s me. I got into a nasty spat with an HKR. This couple saved me," Gabor responded, gesturing towards us.

“I thought you were derelict of duty. When you were drinking, you kept going on and on about how you wanted to find some action before you die. We thought you went searching for a prostitute.”

Gabor's face flushed with embarrassment. He cast his eyes downward, unable to meet Dipti's gaze, a wave of shame washing over him. The memory of his reckless words and actions now weighed heavily on his shoulders, contrasting sharply with the gratitude he felt towards the couple who had saved his life.

The other soldiers laughed. easing the tension momentarily. The soldier who recognized Gabor turned to us, his tone becoming serious. "We need to move. The streets aren’t safe, and there’s been increased enemy activity in the area. You three should come with us. The Muslims in the area have been armed by the CIA to undermine our security in the city while operation Gaza Hope is underway. We’ve already killed hundreds of militants in the area. "

I nodded. I looked at Gabor, who seemed more alert now, the alcohol-induced haze lifting. We fell in line behind the soldiers, moving through the darkened streets with caution.

The night was filled with distant sounds of conflict, the eerie silence occasionally broken by gunfire and explosions. The IDF soldiers led us through alleyways and side streets, their movements precise and coordinated. The sense of urgency was palpable; every shadow seemed to hold potential danger.

As we approached a more secure area, the lead soldier turned to Gabor. "We’re setting up a temporary command post nearby. You’ll be safe there, and we can get you medical attention."

"Thank you," Gabor said, his voice sincere.

We reached a fortified building where more IDF soldiers were stationed. The atmosphere was tense but organized. Medics immediately tended to Gabor and Dipti's wounds, and we were given a brief respite. A generator hummed in the background, providing a sense of temporary stability. Despite this, there was a palpable sense of confusion among the soldiers. Many hung their heads low, hands covering their faces in despair. Dipti, ever compassionate, tried to comfort one of the soldiers.

“Is everything all right, son? I’m here if you need to talk.”

The soldier was inconsolable, not responding to her inquiry, his face still buried in his hands.

“Don’t worry, Yeshua is coming back soon, and he’ll make all things right.”

The soldier lifted his head, his eyes red and filled with sorrow. “My family,” he choked out. “They’re all gone. They died in an airstrike in the north. Do you really believe Yeshua is the Moshiach? Is he going to stand on Har Hazeitim and save us all?”

“We believe he’ll ride on a white horse and defeat the Antichrist.”

“Is Obama the Antichrist?” The soldier's question was tinged with desperation.

Dipti looked puzzled and then glanced at me. The unfolding events were not aligning with her expectations.

“I think someone else will stand on top of Har Hazeitim,” I interjected.

“Is that person the Moshiach?”

“I believe so.”

“But I know this passage. That person is described as Hashem.” The soldier's voice trembled with a mix of hope and confusion. “Then is Moshiach both man and God?”

“It’s been done once before. I never thought there could be two Moshiachs,” said Dipti pondering allowed. So, two men, both God incarnate, come at two separate times, one to redeem the souls of men and another to redeem the Jews.”

“The soldier’s face hardened in frustration. “So, there’s another son of God? That’s too much. It’s already hard enough to accept that God has a son. Another one? It’s just too much. This doesn’t make sense to me. I don’t want to talk about this anymore. Thank you for trying to help.”

“My prayers are with you,” Dipti said, still trying to offer comfort. “Don’t worry one day you’ll get to see your family again.”

The soldier got up. A higher-ranking soldier was motioning for him to come check something out.

Gabor came into our dimly lit room. The building shook. The lights blinked and fans rattled. Gabor sat down in front of me. His countenance has changed since we last saw him. He seemed very alert and motivated. He looked at me with a smile.

"They're planning something big. They want to draw out all the militants into open combat. So, they're going to blow it."

"Blow what?"

"It's a secret. But they're asking for volunteers. It's going to be a dangerous mission. If you volunteer, I'll tell you."

"Come on, tell me, and I might volunteer."

"Al-Nusra Mosque. It's heavily fortified, but they're going to do it anyway. Come with us tonight."

“Wait, are you going? What about your arm?”

“They stitched it up and gave me some helluva pain killers. I’m walking on air right now. I feel like I could take on the world. So are you in?”

"Who will watch Dipti?"

"Don't worry, she'll be safe here. Our forces will hold out at least until tomorrow evening. We have time. We'll be back before then. The brass thinks that the Palestinians will be so pissed off after destroying the mosque they'll go into jihad mode, no more hit and run. Let's see."

I pondered for a moment. Al-Nusra Mosque was the one thing standing between us and rebuilding the Temple of Solomon. Why not get a head start on rebuilding the temple? At least now we can lay the foundation.

"What do you say, Dipti? Can you hang out here till I get back?"

"You better come back. Don't have too much fun without me."

"I'm in."

"Great! Come with me, we'll go speak to the commander. He's a smart guy, you'll like him. You can still shoot, right?"

Glaucoma had all but destroyed my right eye. I was partially blind. I had to teach myself how to shoot with my left eye. Shooting with both eyes open allowed me to scan for targets, but with my right eye useless, that was pointless. So, I often shot with my right eye closed.

"I can shoot for sure, but how accurate remains to be seen."

"With the night vision, you just have to point the laser and shoot. As long as your left eye is working, it shouldn't be a problem. It's settled. Let's meet the commander to make sure he's okay with it, but I think he'll be more than happy to welcome you to the IDF."

We made our way through the dimly lit corridors, the hum of the generator a constant backdrop to our hurried steps. The atmosphere inside the fortified building was a mix of tension and determination. Soldiers moved with purpose; their faces set in grim resolve.

As we approached the command center, I could see the flickering light of a map being projected onto the wall, outlining the strategic points of interest. The commander, a tall man with a weathered face and sharp eyes, was in the middle of briefing his team. He paused as we entered, his gaze shifting to me.

"Commander, this is Hoshea. He wants to volunteer for the mission," Gabor said.

The commander studied me for a moment, his eyes lingering on my face, as if assessing my resolve. “I know him, everybody knows him, he’s the only former American president living in Jerusalem. Are you sure you want to fight against America. You’re not a spy for them?”

“Are you crazy? How can I take part in committing genocide against my people. I’m a Jew.”

“That’s debatable, but okay. Can you shoot?"

"I can. My right eye's gone, but I can still shoot with my left."

He nodded slowly. "Night vision gear will help. Just follow the laser sight. This mission is critical. We're counting on everyone to do their part."

I nodded, feeling the weight of the responsibility settling on my shoulders. This wasn't just about revenge or a tactical advantage. This was about paving the way for something greater, something that had been a dream for generations.

"Understood, sir. I won't let you down. I just have one request?"

“What is it, Private?”

“I want to call my mother, sir.”

The commander's eyes narrowed. “We have one remaining satellite and you want to use it to call your mother in America, the nation who’s our greatest enemy?”

I nodded, trying to muster a faint smile.

The commander sighed, rubbing his temples. “Lieutenant, can you give him a secure line? He wants to make a phone call to America.”

The lieutenant, a young soldier working on a computer, glanced up, surprise flickering across his face. He hesitated but then began typing furiously, navigating through security protocols and encryption settings. After a few tense minutes, he finally looked up at the commander and gave a curt nod.

“It's ready. You have five minutes, Private,” the commander said, his voice stern. “Any longer and you might give our position away.”

“Thank you, sir,” I replied, my heart pounding as I took the headset.

The line clicked, and after a few seconds, I heard the familiar ringtone. The sound of my mother’s voice on the other end was like a balm to my frayed nerves, but I kept my words brief, mindful of the time and the risk we were taking.

“Hoshea, thank God you’re okay. I’ve been watching the news, and it’s terrifying what’s happening over there. This country feels so different now. Nobody listens to reason anymore. The youth are only concerned with the latest social justice cause. Where are you?”

“I’m safe, Mom. I’m holed up at a fortified military post. Things are getting desperate here. I’m really worried about Dipti and her safety, but I’m also concerned about you. This isn’t going to end well for America. God’s judgment is coming, and it’s going to be severe. I need you to take Ethan and Rachel’s family and go to Grandma’s house. I had a dream; her home stood strong after a massive earthquake. I think it’s going to happen soon.”

“I’ll take them if I can. I don’t know if they’ll believe me. Ethan thinks the war is stupid, but he keeps it to himself. He doesn’t want to get in trouble.”

“Look, this earthquake is going to be so severe that every building in every nation involved in this war is going to fall to the ground. Get him out of there, get his family out of there, and get everyone to Grandma’s home. This is urgent. My uncles, everyone.”

“I’ll try.”

“I hope our family survives this horrible thing. Stay safe. I know you’re old, but at least try to move with a little bit of urgency.”

“I’m not that old. I can keep up with the best of them, like my mom. Tell Dipti I send my love.”

“I will. I’d love to talk more, but I can’t. You take care. I’ll see you soon.”

“Stay safe, son,” she said, her voice breaking. “I know this will be over soon. I’m praying for you.”

“I love you too, Mom,” I said as the line cut off.

“Sorry I can’t let you have more time than that. I hope you understand,” the commander said.

I nodded, holding back tears.

"Good," the commander replied, a faint hint of approval in his eyes. "Get your gear and be ready. We move out in an hour."

As we turned to leave, I felt a mixture of fear and determination. The stakes were high, but the potential reward was even higher. This was a chance to change the course of history, to take a step towards a future we had all been dreaming of.

"Mom sends her love. Stay safe, Dipti," I said, giving her a reassuring squeeze on the shoulder. "I'll be back before you know it."

"You better," she replied with a small, brave smile. "And don't forget, we have a temple to build."

With one last look, I followed Gabor out of the command center, ready to face whatever lay ahead.

# Chapter 5

The waves hit the shore with a relentless cadence, their foam mingling with the blood of those who had come before us, creating a macabre mix of red and white. It was starting to get dark when we set foot on the shore. The salty tang of the sea air was tinged with the metallic scent of blood, a grim reminder of the battles that had raged here. Every step Raskin took was heavy, the sand shifting beneath his boots, as they advanced with a sense of foreboding through the eerie calm that belied the violence that had unfolded mere moments ago.

Raskin saw the crater marking the epicenter of the nuclear blast, a stark void where life had been snuffed out in an instant. The trenches nearby were filled with blackened, charred bodies still clutching their melted rifles, the horrific aftermath of the explosion. His breath was labored as he struggled through the sand, the mask over his face restricting his airflow. Sweat dripped into his eyes, and he longed to remove the mask to wipe it away, but he knew doing so could mean inhaling the radioactive dust that hung in the air like an invisible specter. His NBC suit clung to him like a wet rag. He knew somehow it was meant to save him, but in the present circumstance all it did was restrict him. He felt that at any moment a sniper from the IDF could open fire from the surrounding buildings that were largely left untouched in Tel Aviv. His fear was justified as a distant rifle shot rang out, and a member of his platoon fell, a bullet having pierced his mask.

They quickly took cover in the nearest trench, some landing on scorched bodies that disintegrated into black puffs of ash upon impact.

Sgt. Hess shouted at the lieutenant, his voice barely audible over the chaos. “We need armor fast.”

“I’m on it,” the lieutenant replied, scanning the horizon. “The drone strikes are decimating our transports.”

“We can’t stay here,” Hess insisted, urgency in his tone.

Artillery volleys intermittently slammed into the beach from concealed positions within the city, sending plumes of sand and debris into the air. Our airstrikes had pulverized many of the tall buildings in Tel Aviv. The skyscrapers collapsed like towers of Jenga, their concrete pillars melting like cheese from the intense heat generated by our precise ordnance. But it still wasn’t enough.

The city’s rubble created ideal hiding positions for the IDF. The head brass hesitated to use nuclear weapons on the city, understanding that an intact city could serve as a crucial transportation and supply hub for our advancing forces.

The lieutenant spoke into his radio, his voice strained. “Command, we need armored support at grid 32-Alpha, ASAP. We’re taking heavy artillery and sniper fire over.”

As he waited for a response, Raskin took a moment to survey the beach. Bodies and wreckage littered the shore, a grim testament to the fierce resistance they faced.

“Armors on the way,” the lieutenant finally said, lowering his radio. “We just need to hold out a little longer.”

Hess nodded, gripping his rifle tightly. The beachhead was their only hope, and they couldn’t afford to lose it. The sky turned dark by the time help had come, about thirty minutes later many landing crafts slid across the beach. One landed about five hundred meters away from their position. Their ramps dropped, and the sound of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle rumbled behind them. It moved quickly up the beach, tracks churning through the sand.

The Bradley came to a halt and deployed smoke grenades, creating a dense screen in front of their position. Raskin followed the soldiers ahead, all of them wearing night vision goggles to navigate through the darkness and smoke. In a tight, disciplined single file, they quickly clambered up the lowered ramp into the vehicle, grateful for the momentary cover from the sniper's line of sight. The interior was cramped but offered a much-needed respite. As the last soldier entered, the ramp raised with a mechanical hum, sealing them safely inside the armored protection of the Bradley.

Inside, the air was already stifling, a situation made worse by the NBC suits they wore. The squad removed their gas masks, easing the claustrophobia slightly. Raskin took a deep breath, inhaling the unique, funky smell that arises when too many bodies are crammed into a tight, enclosed space. As he sat in his new temporary home, his mind began to wander. He felt the cool metal handle of his pistol in the darkness of the tank. It felt void and lifeless, like the corpses now lying at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea.

Almost his entire platoon was dead, lost when the USS Makin Island sank. What had they died for? He wondered. They died for the world's obscene obsession with one of the smallest countries. The UN should be galvanized for other countries oppressing their minorities, like Sudan and the myriad of African nations embroiled in petty tribal genocides. How had Israel bewitched them? Even Sudanese soldiers had joined in, abandoning their genocides for this new one.

Raskin wondered if he'd ever have to use his pistol on a Jew. The very thought gnawed at him, and he resolved to do everything in his power to avoid that possibility, even if it meant sacrificing his own life. Yet, amidst the chaos and despair, a glimmer of hope persisted within him, like light piercing through darkness or a sapling sprouting amidst a landfill.

Raskin had always harbored a simple dream: to be a truck driver. Any truck would do, even a bus. He longed to see the country, to travel the open road, to answer to no one but the deadlines. Life as a truck driver seemed straightforward—be at point A by this time, then get to point B. The open road, the remnants of nature, and the promise of solitude appealed to him deeply.

In these turbulent times, truck driving was fraught with danger. Starvation was rampant, and trucks moved like armoured convoys, many equipped with automated turrets for protection. Desperate people often ambushed state-sanctioned Walmart trucks on the highways, waiting in large groups to raid their precious cargo. This was part of the reason Raskin had joined the military. Combat experience would bolster his resume, making him more attractive to employers in a world where the roads had become battlegrounds.

Desperation had also driven him to enlist. It was either join the army or starve. He had no money for his next meal, let alone to buy his own rig. His plan was simple: survive the military, save enough money, and then set out on his life’s journey, driving food to the privileged during the apocalypse. The thought of the open road, despite its dangers, gave him a sense of purpose. It was a way to escape the present darkness and look forward to a future, however uncertain.

As he sat in the tank, listening to rounds ricocheting off the hull and wondering if the next projectile could be an FPV drone, Raskin clung to his dream. It was a beacon of light, guiding him through the shadows. He would survive this, he told himself. He would see the open road, feel the freedom of the journey, and perhaps, in some small way, help to rebuild the world.

“Why can’t they just nuke these Jews and save us the headache?” Sgt. Hess complained.

“It’s all about politics. President Obama, our gracious and humble leader, wants to be seen as giving the Jews a chance to lay down their weapons peacefully and allow us to occupy them. And then, if they don’t lay down their weapons, we fucking nuke their asses! HOOAHH!” shouted Lieutenant Daniels.

The other soldiers in the tank replied, “HOOOAAHH!” Except Raskin; he was quiet.

Lieutenant Daniels was a young man in his early twenties, fresh out of ROTC. His parents had forced him to join so they could earn social credit points. Having a son as an officer placed them higher in the social hierarchy. Daniels often boasted about the letter of congratulations his family received from President Obama. He had shown Raskin the letter on his phone; it was a typed letter, personally signed by President Obama himself, though Raskin suspected it was generated by AI and the signature copied. Nonetheless, the fact that it came from the President's office was impressive, even if Raskin had mixed feelings about Obama.

President Obama had ended the Civil War in America by incarcerating white Christian nationalists in camps—a move that was essentially a death sentence, as no one ever returned, including Raskin's mother. When the news came on and President Obama appeared, Raskin's father would quickly shut off the TV, purse his lips with a furrowed brow, and retreat to his bedroom. It was clear he despised Obama. Raskin understood his father was trying to hide his emotions and protect himself from being reported, as even children were known to turn in their parents for expressing ill will towards the commander-in-chief.

Raskin’s ten-year-old sister was a staunch Obama loyalist. She was too young to remember how their mother had died, making it hard for her to hold any ill will against President Obama. She suspected their father of disloyalty and kept a continual watch on him. She kept a diary in her room, marking dates and times when their father engaged in suspicious activity: coming home late—mark; playing music loudly while talking on the phone—mark; shutting off the TV during President Obama’s speech—mark; weeping on his wedding anniversary and talking about how much he missed their mother—mark. Anyone who showed sympathies towards those who had died in the camps might possibly be a traitor to the federal government and its democratic policies.

“You might just get your wish Sgt. Hess if enough of you son of bitches die today.” Said Raskin wishing Sgt. Hess would just shut up.

“Don’t forget I saved your ass you kike lover.” Replied Sgt. Hess.

The tank jolted forward, their bodies lurching with the sudden momentum. The sound of the M242 Bushmaster on the Bradley echoed around them, firing relentlessly. The tank halted again, turned left, then reversed.

“You know what, Cpl. Haskin? When all this is over, I'm going to find you a nice kike wife to settle down with and have children,” one soldier said, sneering. “Of course, I'll test drive her first to make sure she’s perfect for you.”

Laughter erupted from some of the soldiers, while others simply smiled.

“I heard kike women hide money in their... well, you know,” another soldier added. “I’m gonna be rich soon.”

The laughter grew louder.

“Listen up, gentlemen,” their sergeant said, cutting through the noise. “Nobody touches a kike woman unless I say so. Your dicks belong to Uncle Sam. I’m pulling rank here. I get a fifty percent share of whatever ‘treasure’ you find. Is that clear?”

Raskin remained silent as the rest of the soldiers chorused, “Yes, sir,” between laughs. He felt a wave of nausea. He was ashamed to be part of this pack of animals, these rabid beasts the UN had unleashed upon Israel.

A Sudanese soldier chimed in, “In my country, we are very poor. You should at least let us have more than fifty percent.”

“I feel sorry for you poor niggers. It’s a done deal I’ll give you seventy five percent, but only on one condition. I get to record you on my go pro, you boys are packin, and ain’t talkin bout your rifle.”

“It would be my honour to represent Sudan in such a way.”

“Oh it will be Bashir, you’re going to get honor all over her face.”

Bashir’s face lit up and a smile spread across his face. Throughout history, sex and violence have often been intertwined. From the Russian rape of Germany at the end of World War II to the brutalities committed in countless conflicts across the globe, this dark relationship has persisted. It was a grim reminder of humanity’s capacity for cruelty, a reality that Raskin found repulsive. Yet, he couldn't deny the unsettling thoughts that crept into his mind. The temptation to take part in the potential rape of Israel, should they achieve victory, seemed enticing. There was a deep, dark male fantasy of exerting complete dominance over a powerless woman and indulging every whim. This thought made him uncomfortable, and he quickly forced it out of his mind. He tried to drown out the voices of his comrades with the words and memories of his mother, which had recently resurfaced amidst the death and destruction.

"Treat any woman like your sister," she used to say, cradling his newborn sister in her arms. "You’d protect your sister if any guy tried to hurt her, right?"

He nodded as if she were speaking to him again there in the tank, grounding him in a moment of sanity amidst the chaos.

“You know, Bashir,” Sgt. Hess continued, oblivious to Raskin’s internal turmoil, “you might have a point. Maybe we should let you poor bastards keep a bit more of the spoils, I’ll make it eighty percent. After all, you’ve earned it, fighting on the front lines and all.”

The other soldiers cheered and laughed; their camaraderie born out of shared depravity. Raskin felt his stomach churn. He knew he couldn't let this slide, but he was unsure how to stand up to his comrades without painting a target on his own back. His heart pounded as he grappled with the right course of action, the weight of his mother’s words anchoring him to a sense of morality he feared was slipping away.

The Bradley jolted again, yanking Raskin from his thoughts. It had come to a halt, and he could tell its guns were blazing. Suddenly, the entire vehicle shook violently, and smoke filled the compartment.

"Open the hatch!" Sgt. Hess shouted. "We’re gonna suffocate in here!"

The tank drivers attempted to open it, but there was a complete power failure.

"Pull the manual release!" the driver yelled from the front of the vehicle.

The soldier closest to the manual release quickly pulled it, and the ramp began to lower. Sgt. Hess gave the signal, and the soldiers filed out into the night, coughing and gasping for air, their night vision goggles casting an eerie green glow.

# **Chapter 6**

President Barack Obama sat behind the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office, the weight of the world resting heavily on his shoulders. The digital clock on the wall read 3:00 AM, but there was no indication that he would be leaving any time soon. The room was dimly lit, save for the glow of multiple screens displaying real-time updates on Operation Gaza Hope.

"Mr. President, General Monroe is on the secure line," announced his chief of staff, quietly stepping into the room.

"Patch him through," Obama responded, steeling himself for the conversation.

The screen flickered, and the stern face of General Monroe appeared. His expression was grave, a stark contrast to the confident demeanor he usually maintained.

"Mr. President, we’ve achieved initial success with the amphibious landings near Tel Aviv, but the situation remains fluid. The Iron Dome's collapse has left Israel vulnerable, but their ground forces are putting up a fierce resistance. Casualties are high on both sides."

Obama leaned back in his chair, his fingers steepled as he absorbed the information. "What about our strategic objectives, General? Are we on track?"

"We are, sir. The coordinated strikes have disrupted their command-and-control centers, and the coalition forces are steadily advancing. However, we’re encountering unexpected levels of resistance from local militia groups and remnants of the IDF. It’s clear they’re not going down without a fight."

Obama listened intently, his expression grave. The failure of his covert plan to nuke Tel Aviv weighed heavily on his mind. Iran’s ICBM, meant to be a decisive blow, had malfunctioned disastrously, freezing in mid-air and crashing back into Tehran. The subpar materials used in its design, unfit for high-altitude conditions, had turned a potential advantage into a catastrophe.

“With the level of resistance in Tel Aviv,” continued General Monroe, “I fear we could lose a million soldiers. I think the first and second divisions will be completely wiped out. As we speak, the IDF in Tel Aviv is launching a counterattack. If something isn’t done soon, they could push our troops into the sea. We’re doing everything in our power, but the Israelis have developed sophisticated means to block and jam our robots. Our artillery has yet to have any significant effect. The Israelis built extensive tunnels in and around Tel Aviv and to the north. I believe they constructed these tunnels in anticipation of the Iron Dome's failure.”

Obama's mind raced as he processed the grim update. "What about our air support? Can we increase the number of sorties to break their counteroffensive?"

"We’re already running maximum operations, sir. The skies over Tel Aviv are contested, and we’re sustaining heavy losses to their anti-aircraft systems. The Israelis are utilizing every resource they have, including outdated systems that are surprisingly effective against our current tech."

Obama was amazed, but he hid his emotions from the general. How was a nation with approximately the same population as his home state of Illinois putting up so much resistance against the united will and forces of the world? Under the advice of his commanders, they recommended taking Tel Aviv intact and utilizing it as a hub for all coalition soldiers. But in reality, he had no such desire. He was just playing a game. He wanted to seem as if he had no desire for the destruction of Israel, but in reality, quite the opposite was true. Underneath his breath, he mumbled, “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.”

The time for covert operations was over. America, on behalf of the world and the coalition whose soldiers’ lives were currently at risk, would have to take charge and consider more drastic measures.

He took a deep breath, his mind swirling with the weight of the decision before him. "General Monroe, it’s time we consider all our options. Prepare a contingency plan for a direct nuclear strike on Tel Aviv. We cannot afford to let this resistance undermine the entire operation. I want every possible scenario on my desk in one hour."

"Understood, Mr. President," Monroe replied, his face reflecting the gravity of the order.

Obama never imagined that he would be responsible for the complete and utter destruction of Israel. If Iran had only been successful, this would not be necessary. He was worried about his approval ratings and how they might be affected when the American public found out that he was responsible for the nuclear strike on Tel Aviv. America’s tolerance for nuclear intervention had greatly increased since World War III, so he expected only marginal concern. To keep concern to minimal levels, he would be careful to limit the devastation to Tel Aviv and the immediate surrounding areas to mitigate whatever disastrous effects this might have on public perception.

What concerned him was the collateral damage. Jerusalem should not be affected by the blast, or there could be significant outcry from the American public. Americans still considered Jerusalem to be the holiest city in the world despite an almost complete absence of faith from public life. He needed to inform the coalition about what was going to happen so they could pull back their troops.

He picked up the secure phone, dialing the coalition command center. "This is President Obama. We need to initiate an immediate troop withdrawal from Tel Aviv and surrounding areas. Prepare all forces for a strategic withdrawal. Details will follow."

After he hung up, Obama lit up a cigarette, the tip glowing brightly in the dimly lit room. He took a slow, smooth drag, feeling the nicotine hit his bloodstream and give him an immediate, intoxicating buzz. It was a rare moment of solace amidst the chaos, a fleeting pleasure that grounded him even as the weight of his decisions threatened to crush him. He loved the high, the thrill, the sense of complete domination that came with holding the fate of nations in his hands.

As he exhaled a plume of smoke, the door quietly opened, and Michael stepped into the room. He moved silently, sneaking up on Barack. Suddenly, he placed a firm hand on Obama's shoulder, causing Barack to jump, startled.

"I thought you quit smoking," Michael said, a mixture of concern and disappointment in his voice.

"I did, Mikey, but the stress of all this got me smoking again," Barack admitted, his voice heavy with the weight of the world.

Barack swivelled in his office chair until he was facing Michael. "You gotta start the Nicorette again. This is not good. I had the courage to transform myself, and so do you. Quit those cigarettes," Michael urged, his tone gentle but firm.

Barack nodded, then swivelled back around, quickly putting out the cigarette in the ashtray on his desk. The room was filled with a tense silence as the enormity of the situation hung in the air.

"Michael, soon five million Jews are going to be dead by my hand," Barack said quietly. "I’m going to take the nuclear football, put in my code, and poof. Not even Hitler was able to achieve such a feat in a single day."

"Honey, don’t compare yourself to Hitler," Michael responded, moving closer and placing a comforting hand on Barack's back. "Hitler wasn’t trying to liberate anyone. He was just killing Jews out of fear and paranoia. You’re doing this to free the Palestinians. There’s a big difference."

Barack sighed deeply, the burden of his impending decision pressing down on him. "I know, Michael. But the world will never see it that way. They'll see me as a monster, a tyrant."

Michael squeezed his shoulder reassuringly. "History will judge you, Barack. But you have to do what you believe is right, what you believe will bring peace in the long run. This war has to end, and sometimes, the hardest decisions are the ones that bring about real change."

Barack looked into Michael's eyes, finding a flicker of hope amidst the despair. "You're right. I just hope this is the right path."

Michael leaned in closer, his voice filled with conviction. "Don't worry, Barack. Allah knows your heart. He knows you're trying to please Him. Allah will reward you in paradise. Allah will also give me seventy-two virgins and we will rule together in paradise. Come, let's pray towards Mecca."

Barack took a deep breath, feeling a momentary sense of peace wash over him. He stood up from his chair, and together, they moved to the prayer rug that Michael had quietly laid out. They turned to face Mecca, their movements synchronized, a symbol of their unity in purpose and faith.

As they bowed and recited the prayers, Barack felt a renewed sense of determination. The weight of the decision still pressed heavily on him, but he found solace in the spiritual connection and the belief that he was part of a greater plan. The act of prayer, the rhythm of the words, and the presence of Michael by his side brought a momentary calm amidst the chaos.

When they finished, Barack looked at Michael with gratitude. "Thank you, Michael. Your faith strengthens me."

Michael smiled warmly. "We are in this together, Barack. No matter what comes, we face it side by side."

With that, Barack returned to the Resolute Desk, feeling a renewed sense of resolve. He knew Allah was with him. He knew that if Allah was with him, who could be against him. He recalled the verse from the Quran:

"If Allah helps you, none can overcome you; but if He forsakes you, who is there that can help you after Him? In Allah, then, let believers put their trust."

This divine reassurance filled Barack with the courage and conviction needed to face the monumental decisions ahead. He knew he had one hour to wait for the final plan from his generals on how to carry out the nuclear strike. Glancing at Michael's newly created penis, he could see the evidence of Michael's arousal. Michael blushed slightly.

"Isn't it amazing?" Michael asked.

"You're amazing," Barack replied.

Michael unzipped his pants, and Barack took Michael's penis in his mouth, savoring the warmth and hardness against his tongue. Michael's hips twitched beneath him, his breath hitching as he struggled to contain the pleasure building within him.

As Barack continued his skilled ministrations, Michael's mind wandered back to the summer of 1989 when they first met at the Chicago law firm Sidley Austin. Both were young and ambitious, with their careers just beginning to take off. Initially, Michael was hesitant about getting romantically involved with Barack, wanting to keep their relationship professional and concerned about the implications of dating someone he was supposed to be mentoring. However, after some time and a few outings, including their first official date where they visited the Art Institute of Chicago and saw a movie, they developed a strong relationship and had grown closer than brothers. The thought of sharing such an intimate moment now, with the weight of the world on their shoulders, filled Michael with a sense of connection and purpose.

Outside, the sounds of the world beyond their private sanctuary seemed distant, almost muffled. Within these four walls, it was just the two of them, lost in a moment of primal connection.

Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. The Secretary of State entered immediately after, intruding on their private sanctuary and shattering their moment of bliss with the pressing concerns of war. He tried to turn away but the urgency of the situation stopped him in his tracks, forcing him to wait with his back turned to the love-stricken couple. They quickly adjusted themselves. Michael pulled up his pants and zipped them while Barack coughed and moved his chair back to the Resolute Desk. Michael retreated to the opposite door and fled like a refugee from a battlefield.

Barack composed himself and, when ready, addressed Sean, who was still facing away. "What is it, Sean?"

Sean, a white person appointed as Secretary of State as part of a diversity inclusion effort, forced himself to overcome the awkwardness of the situation and pretended that moment never happened. He turned to face Barack, his expression serious.

The coalition was forced back to the beaches. They began to retreat to a position about a 1 mile from the beach waiting for further orders in their landing craft. Rather than risk the death of more coalition soldiers America launched one Minuteman ICBM and completely destroyed Tel Aviv and the surrounding areas in a 22-mile radius. With ease the soldiers of the coalition quickly drove their convoys and heavy equipment through the charred remains of the city. Naked, bloody corpses with burns wandered aimlessly in the city like zombies. Wandering dead. Humvees purposely rammed into them joking with each other on the way.

“That’s ten points a Jew, soldier.”

“I’m going to set a world record Sarge.”

A loud thump hits the Humvee. A Jew flies over the bumper and lands discombobulated on the ground behind it, and mass of flesh twisted in a contorted pretzel.

“Want to make a bet that I can reach thirty.”

“Sure private you’re on.”

Another corporal from the backseat interjects,

“Sarge, so the Jews killed Jesus, isn’t this sweet revenge.”

“Sure is Lance Corporal. In the name of our Lord all these great and wonderful nations have gathered here to purge this wickedness on the earth.”

“But wasn’t Jesus a Jew?” The private said hesitantly for fear of being rejected.

“Jesus was Aryan, no god damn Jew, you remember that boys.”

Whatever remained of the IDF made their last stand on the Sharon plains.

A smoky haze hovered across the Sharon plains. Without the support of the Iron Dome and Israeli Air Force, coalition jets launched missile after missile. Drones swarmed from every direction slamming into tanks and soldiers hunkered in trenches. The battlefield situation deteriorated into a turkey shoot. Due to their distance from Jerusalem the coalition refrained from using nukes. It took two hours for the coalition forces to destroy what remained of the Israeli Army. The speed with which the coalition army operated was even greater than Operation Desert Sabre when the Iraqi Army was defeated in four days.

We’ve spent the past couple of days combing through the twisted charred bodies strewn amidst the ruins of Tel Aviv. The mounds of broken bodies filled with Americans, Russians, Iranians, Germans, and a multitude of nationalities among the seventy-nation coalition all gathered here to implement the final solution. Their plan, which almost succeeded, was to conquer Israel and divide it into Israel and Palestine. Palestine would have Gaza and Jerusalem while the remaining Jews who survived would carve out a meek existence among the nuclear wasted ruins while the other remnant would have been scattered among the nations in slavery. Their plan failed.

“Sir we’ve found his body!”

I stood at the peak of Mt. Olives. The mountain split to make a way. The children and their mothers fled for their lives. Sulfur came down. F-55’s and F-35’s lost control and crashed into each other their hulking carcasses falling to the ground. Satellites with their enclosed nukes crashed on the nations who thought they were above the almighty. Entire nations pulverized in a minute.

“Sir what shall we do with his body!”

I walked up to the group of soldiers, some of the last remaining IDF left in the world. They had all gathered there like a solemn congregation who had gathered there to witness a venerated member of the congregation who had recently passed to away. They were scared to touch his body, to desecrate it, even after all the evil this man had done. They thought by doing so it might spring to life and kill the last few survivors of the Jewish race. I looked down. I saw his pearly white teeth and eyes shining like white stars amidst his dark and blistered skin. What a fool he was.