



Truth Untold

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Level 4

The clock showed 3:26 am, glaring bright in the quiet and dark of the airport. Flight No. 143, soon departing for Italy, had just landed in Indonesia, carrying exactly 167 people including the service crew and the pilots. They had just flew over a staggering 18,279 km, the journey taking over 30 hours, starting from Lima in Peru and ending in the Tangerang City, Banten, Indonesia. The Soekarno- Hatta International Airport was the primary airport for those who wished to visit the country. All those who got down wore weary expressions, dragging their tired limbs over to the baggage lane. Maybe the tiredness was to blame for them not noticing what was happening before it was already too late, probably too dazed to comprehend their surroundings. In the middle of all the hustles and dashes to get the luggage, there echoed a muffled but loud boom from somewhere deep underground, making everyone pause. That little hesitation and inability to move made all the difference by just a split second. Moments after the noise, came the after-effects, the building crumbling brick by brick, burying all those inside under a massive layer of rubble and dust, eradicating all traces of what had been a fully

functional airport. A group of four people, dressed ordinarily, emerged gracefully out of the wreckage without a single scratch, seemingly unharmed. If someone had been witness they would tell you how they all took out their rifles, shot every individual who was still breathing and escaped, dragging along with them, an unconscious body of a young man. If someone had been alive, they would tell you, disbelief lingering heavy in their eyes, how they had climbed aboard a van and charged straight through the brick wall guarding the airport, only to disappear at the last moment. They went unseen.

The TV was switched to the picture of a man, still looking drowsy but giving people a big smile with the background voice reciting animatedly what was the most recent news.

'Early yesterday morning, a minor bomb was detonated at the residence of Josh Warrington, a journalist living in the heart of Lima, Peru. He had been getting death threats repeatedly

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reportedly due to his soon to be published article, rumored to provide the key to how criminals in all of Indonesia operated. He had escaped, unscathed, but all his hard work in the form of the article had already been lapped up by the flames. He had boarded a flight to Jakarta just the next day, intending to stay at his colleague's house for a few days. The flight, numbered 143, landed in the Soekarno- Hatta International Airport around dawn today. It is still a case of disbelief that he came straight to where the maximum protests against him were taking place. Minutes after landing, the terminal building had collapsed, suspected to be a cause of bombing, crushing all those inside. There were no survivors reported, indicating the death of Josh Warrington and all other innocent people. The police investigating the scene in hopes of clues, are still empty-handed. They believe that the two cases are related, both attempts at Josh's life, the last being successful. They are still ve-

The man responsible for cutting the reporter off was wearing a frown on his face. He seemed to be deep in his thoughts, mulling things over. He got up slowly and moved over to the

display case showcasing his collection. There sat a grinning skull, a set of dentures and oddly enough, a small pen drive. He quietly slid open the glass, placing his hand over the last item. He stood there for a while, toying with the device, before deciding whatever he was thinking of wasn't worth it. He sighed, a hint of frustration showing in his eyes before he walked away.

Escaping death wasn't in his bucket list, that much he was sure of. The man, still in his twenties, had close brushes with death twice in the last 48 hours. He walked purposefully, heading towards the cyber cafe. He wore a black cardigan, with a white shirt underneath. He had black hair and bright azure eyes, a rare trait nowadays. His mask and hat made it hard to figure out what he looked like underneath. He pushed open the door, entering noiselessly. No one looked up from their booths, too engrossed in the screens to find out who came in. He slid into a nearby booth and booted the computer. He connected the pen drive slowly, as if he had all the time in the world. Carefully, he logged into the program before entering what

looked like a password. Seconds later, a verification message flashed on the screen, prompting the man to get up and go his way, not forgetting the pen drive. He seemed relieved, his expression serene and calm. A sudden screech of brakes and the glare of headlights were all he had seen before it went black.

The reporter was back at it, but this time with some disheartening news.

"Today at exactly 01:43 pm, a hit and run accident took place in the busy marketplace of Jakarta. Further investigation from the officials revealed the victim to be Josh Warrington, who was declared dead upon arrival at the nearby hospital. How he managed to escape the disaster in the airport and that too without a scratch is still a mystery. The incident was reported to the police by the passers-by, too horrified to even look away. Mr. Warrington was found clutching just a pen drive, bare of any other identification. The investigators have, so far, been unsuccessful in their attempts to crack the pen drive. Further information will be unveiled after the investigation. Keep

watching to stay on track."

"I've finally eliminated you Warrington, you were too late. Nobody is going to be able to find me now, nobody", came the whispery words. No one knew how wrong they were.

There was a great hue and cry in the police station. A mysterious document was mailed to them, providing them with all the information needed to wipe out the entire criminal network of the country. The sender hadn't mentioned their name but everyone knew by then, it had been Josh. All the police units had armed themselves head to toe, completely geared up. They had all been deported to different locations all over the country, even the defense forces being involved. Even though the thugs had put on a good fight, the combined forces of the defense and police was too hard to resist. By the next day, the country's prisons were teeming with prisoners, trials taking place left and right. The criminals were being sorted into different jails, based on their crimes. It was all thanks to Josh Warrington who made it possible.

They had finally been able to access the pen drive, all it had needed was an impersonation of Josh's voice. It was empty save for a single document titled 143. It read-

'I expect the police is reading this. I will be brief, I am not a journalist. I am a spy working for the 'CCI', the Crime Control Institution. I was tasked with the act of leaking the information without anyone knowing of its origin. It was supposed to be a fairly harmless mission, eradicating all of the underground networks of Indonesia. Though it started off okay, there was a breach in the mission. One of the officers who was working with us, was a source of major influence amongst the criminals. Although we managed to conclude him to be an enemy, he escaped. I'm afraid he has placed a bounty on my head. I programmed the pen drive to leak the information automatically, in case I was too late. I had landed in Jakarta but the attempt on my life had me shaken. That is why I decided to add this in the pen drive. The officer, namely the one who betrayed the CCI and escaped is Maurice Johnson, the police chief.'

His shouts could be heard from all the way down the corridor, muted though they were. He had been caught and that was it. He had confessed on tape, begging to be free, how he was the one who had tried and succeeded in killing Josh. It was a pathetic situation to be in, from a commanding criminal to begging a police officer. Whoever listened to the tape recording was sure to get shaken up, the constantly repeated words swirling in their heads.

"IT IS A LIE. IT IS JUST A LIE. JOSH IS STILL ALIVE. I BEG YOU. I'M NOT THE EVIL ONE."



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Truth Untold (English)

What is the truth? Is it what's happening in reality or is it what's going on behind the scenes?

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