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This novel is written exclusively for Right Truth Blog (www.righttruth.typepad.com) and its readers.

In loving memory of my precious
Sara (7/25/1951 to 12/13/2003) who always
encouraged me to write from the heart and was
at once both my greatest critic and my most
loyal fan.

In love with you always!

And...

To the greatest dad anyone like me could ever
have hoped for: Joseph Stanley Godlewski
(11/29/1918 to 04/14/2008).

You gave me life. Thank you!

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Chapter Fifty-Eight

May, 20xx
Temporary Encampment,
Israel Defense Forces, Northern Command
Near Safed, Israel

“Ah, I just love Israel!” Seth Carmassi yawned nearly as wide as the green valley in the distance, locked his arms behind his neck and with one quick stretch popped the joints in his chest releasing the discomfort incurred from a short night’s sleep.

He turned towards the two Arabs parked in the lotus position on the ground towards his right. “Of course, you two probably don’t share that sentiment.”

Neither Arab spoke and only Haytham bothered to glance into the American’s direction.

“No bother,” continued Carmassi. “I doubt very much that you two know how to appreciate things. If you did, then you’d probably spend less time fighting the Israelis and more time trying to defeat the radicals that are bringing the death of Islam upon you.”

Mahmoud fidgeted.

Carmassi smiled, gently nodding towards the dusty old desert tan M-325 Commandcar that had served as their transportation from the airport in the south. “The problem with *you* people is that you’re fighting the wrong enemy. You claim that Islam is a peaceful religion but whenever someone hijacks

the faith and commits some atrocity, you think that it is okay. So which is it? Do you support peace or violence?"

Mahmoud's face grew more beet-like in color, the lines etched into his face grew more distinct, but his lips clenched down upon one another and he remained silent.

"Hell, it doesn't matter." Carmassi spat into the ground as he retrieved his AKMS rifle from the small shrub that had supported it while he stretched. "You guys are going to lose big anyway." He noticed a look of curiosity appear upon the face of the younger Arab. "Oh, yes. You see, I've pissed off my government something fierce. Probably be arrested as soon as I get back to the States. But I don't very much give a rat's ass because I like to win – not follow orders.

"What this means is that I can now get away with pretty much anything. I mean, if you're gonna get arrested, might as well go all out, right?"

Carmassi chuckled softly as he slung his weapon across his shoulder, watching a beautiful young female Israeli soldier speak with a tall, lanky officer before the latter continued on towards his own position.

"Yep, I'm definitely in hot water." sighed Carmassi, as if a world at war was commonplace. "Might even go down in a blazing firefight." He yawned again. "Isn't that how *your* kind does it? Take hundreds of innocent people down along with you instead of listening to proper authority? Nah. Not for me. I'd rather just off you bastards right now instead of tangle with the greatest military in the world."

Haytham rocked backwards, almost in a dizzying collapse before the elder Arab bumped him into his senses with a sharp shoulder thrust.

"That's right, young Haytham, I don't give a flying..." Carmassi paused abruptly as the tall Israeli officer approached within hearing distance. "Colonel Goldfarb, where is the nearest cemetery from here?"

Abiel Goldfarb spun lazily towards the east, shielding his eyes from the sun. "There's a real nice one just up the road." He calmly, methodically brushed back the thin, flailing black hair from his brow before turning towards the two prisoners on the ground. "You're not expecting us to bury *them* there are you my friend?"

"Nah." Carmassi spit again. "Just keeping my options open. We've still got a ways to go yet." Glancing into the distance, he marveled at how the green trees accented the deepening browns of the hills. "Beautiful country you have, might like to retire here someday."

"We would be privileged and honored to have you." Colonel Goldfarb directed his American companion away from the two Arabs. "My friend, you are what you Americans like to call hot merchandise. My government has received orders to place you into custody should we ever lay our hands upon you."

Carmassi offered a careless smirk while he shook his head softly, dismissing the threat as one of pure political function. "I traverse half the State of Israel and *now* they want you to place me into custody?"

"Bureaucracies run slowly."

"Tomorrow we'll be in Lebanon and the day after that deep into Syria. Either one of those countries could do what my government wants to do to me and we won't even be in Iran yet."

"Maybe they just want to protect you?"

"They could do that by aggressively fighting the war against Islamists instead of continually finding ways of patronizing them."

"I imagine that they believe they are doing their best."

"Their best would have been to turn Afghanistan into a parking lot following 9/11. Then they move into Iraq but Iran has the bomb now. You know, there's a reason that God moved

the West as far away from the Muslim world as possible. You just cannot deal with these people the same way that you deal with jaywalkers. You've studied our own Christian history; you know that Europe had to exterminate *entire cities* during the seventeenth century to subdue religious fanaticism. Even the Old Testament is ripe with elimination of entire cultures. But now, we have to continually figure out why people hate us and make friends with them over a cup of tea?"

"Speaking of tea," Goldfarb observed the young female soldier reappear in the distance carrying a tray of beverages. "It might be quite some time before our paths cross again, my friend. Yes?"

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