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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 Twelve

Muhammad stood back against the wall, hiding in the shadows in his best facsimile of a *Yoko aruki* position. Yet, not a muscle moved; his gaze remained fixed upon the dimly lit representation of a door. His body was cocked, ready to pounce upon the first individual who entered the fume and dark cell. His mind had no estimation of time but it did not matter. If it called upon him to wait a month within the awkward position it would pass without discomfort.

He had long since conditioned himself not to think in terms of *chronos* time – the mere ticking of a clock; his way was allegiance to *kairos* time – measured in events, lifetimes, and accomplishments. In this, he knew, he was far superior to the infidels whose actions always seemed to be orchestrated along conveniences. Not he. He had fashioned himself into a warrior devoted to destroying Western culture and as long as he had a heartbeat it would be his mission. He understood intimately that his fundamental weapon was his patience – an ability to endure that Western culture had long abandoned. His war was not measured in administrations or sound bites; it was dictated by only one of two possible outcomes – the destruction of the infidels or his death. Nothing else.

His body prepared to act, his eyes focused upon the slightest hint of movement from the door, Muhammad's mind went into a pretense of hibernation. His breathing became shallow, his pulse slowed, and his leg muscles eased imperceptibly. Only the room in which he stood seemed to offer any semblance of life. The scattered fires began to extinguish

themselves one by one and the room became darker with each passing minute.

As sight became a burden, Muhammad's ears listened for the faintest sound from the door. His naked body became a sensor in itself, its nerves waiting for the slightest vibration from the walls which might suggest commotion outside of the concrete blocks. Still, the room continued to descend into an inky blackness punctuated only with the finest thread of light from around the door itself. This, he knew, would aid him in keeping his attention focused upon the whereabouts of this very same entry.

Minutes continued to pass – as gauged by Muhammad's best mental calculations – and yet the door did not budge. The faint white rectangular outline did not break or enlarge. His dormancy did not subdue, but his mind began to consider the possible actions of those outside of his prison cell. He thought that, perhaps, they would ignore his recent exploits – a pattern suggested by their apparent dismissal of his very presence within their midst.

As the faint glow surrounding the door began to fade, he thought that they were extinguishing the lights outside of this cell and would most likely make an entrance utilizing Nightvision goggles of a sort. This would capture the advantage away from him. A minor problem, to be certain. Muhammad did not plan for the unexpected; he acted according to events and situations. This was *his* advantage.

Countless minutes passed; Muhammad waited like a statue. The few flames that remained barely allowed him to visualize where the door had been and no light shone through the gaps indicating that all outside of his internment was even more lacking in illumination. No longer of much use, he closed his eyes and allowed his other senses pick up the slack. His dark world thus became one of brilliance – every sensation beyond sight was articulated and he scrutinized every single one no matter whether it originated from within his own body or not.

His mind concentrated on the temperature of his clammy environment. The slightest change would signal the cracking of the door in the absence of any auditory challenge. The flow of air

against his bare skin would hint at the same event and provide a bit of redundancy in his estimations. Whatever it took to provide him with the earliest possible warning was utilized. Anything that would lend credence to his perception was needed and would make a difference between life and death, of success and failure, of advantage and chaos.

Permitting these sensations to flow freely throughout his mind, Muhammad began to imagine himself within an out-of-the-body experience. His mind grasped the notion of armed men slowly working their way towards his cell flanked by medical personnel both recognized and not. He could see their movements, not too dissimilar from his own as their bodies hugged the closest wall along the corridor with various weapons at the ready.

He began to suspect that his adversaries were crouched low and so very slowly began to lower his own posture to match theirs. His skin never left contact with the blocks and only his intense concentration allowed him to ignore the grating feeling as each individual block slipped past. The crispness of concrete against damp human flesh had no basis in his plans and therefore no business being considered within his mind.

Slowly – agonizingly slowly if his functions had not long dismissed the notions of Western contempt – Muhammad's body accepted a *kamae* close to the floor and as near to the door as he could readily ascertain. It was his best tactical option; to deny his adversaries any chance of formulating a course of action once they broached the cell. He would be there ready and prepared to strike as soon as the obstacle had been opened.

Muhammad thought that he could detect the ultra faint sounds of speech – words uttered in Russian but with a decidedly Ukrainian tinge. It had been more a sense of thought than of actual recognition, but he had long ago given his ears the benefit of the doubt. Instinctively, he tightened his grip upon the braided rope and held his arms out further away from his body. Mere seconds passed before his mind held the same sensation of speech and instantly his body concurred.

A slight rush of cool air informed him that the door had been moving even though there was no sound to detect. *These*

men are good, but I'm better and very much prepared. Muhammad's mind began to calculate the unseen actions and estimate their timing. He had one chance and one chance only to pounce upon the infidels and it rested upon leaping as soon as the door was wide enough to permit his body passage. He opened his eyes to the brilliance of a phosphorescent outline of two dark silhouettes. *Now!*

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