

Chapter 13

A rocket propelled grenade exploded with ear shattering impact thirty feet away from Macy's truck. She ran for it, hoping to get moving before another round found its target. But it was too late, flaming shards of sheet metal flew through the air, the impact throwing her to the rocky debris covered ground. Lifting her head, she saw only the undercarriage; it was all that remained of the Palestine Electric Company truck. She rose, freeing the Micro Tavor assault rifle (Israel's most modern weapon) that hung from her shoulder beneath a long plastic raincoat as she ran to take cover behind a lone, standing stucco wall; the sole remains of a once populated residence.

Alone, in hostile territory, she waited and surveyed her surroundings looking for an escape route. Nothing but open ground for at least a mile, she said to herself. This was once a heavily populated residential area, now it's been reduced to rubble. The hopes and prayers of its inhabitants crushed along with the concrete and steel. How can two peoples with so much in common be so different?

Suddenly, she turned her head in recognition of the sound of crunching gravel produced by the feet of two young men approaching from behind. One carried an AK-47 rifle while the other gripped an old semiautomatic pistol. “Was that your truck?” the rifleman asked, in the local Palestinian dialect.

With her body still facing away from them, she quickly concealed the Tavor beneath her coat. “Yes,” she replied, in fluent Arabic.

“The Israeli rockets visit us often,” he said.

“Praise Allah for my good fortune but with my truck destroyed, I could use your assistance,” she said.

Stepping back a few paces while raising his weapon, the short, pock marked pistol holder aimed at her head. “I have never seen a woman driving an electric company truck,” he said.

“It is a new policy, many of the men have become freedom fighters,” Macy replied, while watching the rifleman from the corner of her eye as his hand went from the rifle stock to the grip and trigger. “My tools are behind that wall,” she added, while pointing backwards with her left thumb, “I’ll get them and you can escort me to the nearest police station.”

Indecision was their enemy, she did a rapid pirouette, flinging her raincoat to the side while simultaneously withdrawing the Tavor and firing on full automatic. The two Palestinians dropped to the ground without ever having fired a shot. Holding the weapon in front of her, she scanned the horizon looking for witnesses. Seeing none, she covered the bodies with a few sheets of corrugated metal debris and walked away.

It’s become so difficult to distinguish friends from enemies, she remarked to herself, while leaving the skirmish zone and walking towards her entry point into the Palestinian

territory. I wonder what happened to my contact? He's my only conduit to the A.I.F. And Weylin, she pondered, I hope he understood the meaning behind my e-mail. "Ugh," she whispered to herself, while walking quickly over the rock strewn, potholed road, "I miss my home in New Jersey, Max purring on my lap, my sister Nan and most of all, I miss Weylin. Shit, my feet are killing me."