

THE DEADLY

ONEZ

(EPISODE II)

ROAD THROUGH HELL PART. 1

Ziad Antar

This book is dedicated to:

My mom and dad, my brother and my two sisters.

You are all my inspiration and my best friends.

I wish you nothing but the finest things in life.

With love and respect.

She quickly kissed him “Wh.. what was that for?” he asked surprisingly.

“in case we die, consider it a thank you” she replied smiling when suddenly the door cracked open and dozen of zombies marched through the door..

26 hours earlier...

Monday 24-12-2012 \ Outskirts of Homs

-08:02- Highway \ On the road towards Homs

It was morning the sun was beaming it's light through the trees on the side of the road in addition of the deadly silence inside the car, the only sound was the car's engine.

An hour has passed by since the group has left Deir Atyeh and along the highway they saw nothing but abandoned cars and zombies lurking near them.

-08:30- Highway \ Before crossroad

Driving along the highway they reached a sign indicates that there is a crossing up ahead the left way leads to Lattakia, to the right Homs and Aleppo onwards.

Minutes after passing the sign the crossing was reached by the group but it was impossible to cross neither way, more than twenty cars on and off the road were blocking the way.

car engine stops

Ziad stopped the car “Everyone stay inside!” said he then stepped out of the car examining the area around for zombies then opened the car's door again “There are at least dozen of cars blocking the way but from what I saw that if we moved couple of the cars we can make enough space for the car to go through and get pass this mess” said Ziad to the rest of the group then looked at Ayman “Ayman I want your help moving the car out of the way” said to Ayman then added “Kamal you keep guard outside of the car and keep it safe, there are some zombies but they are away” after he said that to Kamal he grabbed the bat then closed the door.

-09:12- Highway \ Near the car

Ayman grabbed a tennis racket then walked with Ziad away from the car towards the mass of cars “Be careful Kamal !” said Ziad to Kamal “We won't be long, stay close to the car”.

Ziad and Ayman are meters away from the car when Kamal grabbed a thick wooden stick from the side of the road and stood guard near the car.

While gazing around Kamal noticed something moving in the forest on the left side of the road so he reached to the car door and opened it “Sweetie stay inside the car I'm gonna check out what's near that tree, I'll be quick” said Kamal to Marwa.

“Don't be stupid” she replied “What if there was a zombie?”

“I can handle it don't worry” answered Kamal “I'll be quick don't worry” then he closed the door and started to walk towards towards the forest.

-09:34- Highway \ Forest aside the road

He stepped off the asphaltic ground to the moist dirt on the side the side of the road walking carefully towards what seemed to be a young girl sitting on the floor facing him backwards.

The sunlight got dimmer cause of the overlapped tree branches, and Kamal stopped walking “Hey!” he said “Little girl are you OK?” but as he got closer the girl seemed to be eating something when suddenly a woman came out from behind the tree growling and walking towards him.

“Shit she's a zombie” Kamal said “Little girl get up !” he grabbed the young girl's shoulder when suddenly she turned her jawless bleeding face gazing unto Kamal muttering and tried to bite his hand but Kamal panicked and pulled his going backwards then stumbled over the tree root and fell on his back...

-10:08- Highway \ Near the car

“HEEEEEELP!”

“That was Kamal's voice” Ziad said “keep moving the car I'll be right back”.

Then Ziad started running back then saw Kamal laying on his back and crawling backwards so he grabbed Kamal and helped him up “Wha..?” Ziad said but Kamal retreated back to the car.

Ziad turned his head to see two zombies a woman barely walking and a young girl crawling, he got around the young girl then stroke the woman's head knocking her down then stared back at the little girl “She's already dead, she's already dead” he muttered to himself with his hands shaking then smashed the girl's head.

With a poker face Ziad walked back to the car “They won't be a problem anymore” said to Kamal “be more careful and don't wonder around much”

then Marwa who was hugging Kamal started yelling at Ziad “You killed her, you killed that little girl” then Mahmud started to cry inside the car.

“Look what you caused !” Ziad replied on Marwa “She was dead she was a ZOMBIE, nothing else would've helped her”

Ziad got inside the car “I'm sorry you had to see that Mahmud but she wasn't the small girl she used to be” he said while stroking the kid's hair “She was a zombie, we'll be gone out of here soon everything will be fine OK?”

“...” Mahmud stopped crying “OK” answered Ziad.

Ziad Smiled at the kid then got out of the car started walking towards the blocked road where Ayman was.

-10:32-Highway \ Mass of cars on crossroad

While walking towards the mass of cars Ziad looked around into the forest on both sides of the road hearing nothing but the wind blowing and a distant murmuring but it's almost hard to see more than hundred meters inside the forest cause of the enormous number of trees overlapping into each other and the lack of sunlight in there making it seem like dusk time in the forest while it's morning outside it.

He reached one of the cars where Ayman got out of the car

“Everything OK ?” Ayman asked

“Nothing big” Ziad answered “Kamal ran into two zombies and panicked, but everything is fine now, what about you?”

Ayman raised his shoulders “One car I was able to move one car but I can't find the keys of this car” he said

“OK just a second!” said Ziad then jumped on the car's front hood for seconds then jumped down

“If we only moved those two vehicles we can drive through the mass facing minor car scratches” said Ziad “let's move em!”

Ziad pushed down the hand brake of the car the got out and started pushing the car along with Ayman.

Barely managed to move it they succeeded to move the car away.

“Pheww!” Ayman said while panting “One down one to go”

They walked towards the second vehicle which actually was a truck then Ayman checked it “No keys either!”

“Go find superman I'll wait here” Ziad said sarcastically

“Hehehe will do” Ayman said laughing “I'll go get Kamal, Marwa and Mahmud to help us”

-11:02- Highway \ Near the car

Ayman ran back to the car “Hey Kamal bring Marwa and Mahmud and all of you come back there” he said to Kamal “we need extra hands to push a truck off the way”

“Alright” stated Kamal then opened the car's door when Ayman went back to Ziad “Ziad and Ayman need our help to push a truck” said Kamal to Marwa and Mahmud.

“OK!” answered Marwa and got out of the car but Mahmud stayed put inside “What's wrong Mahmud?” Kamal asked him

“I'm afraid” Mahmud answered “the zombies will hurt me”

“Go to them I'll get him” Marwa said to Kamal then got inside the car “Don't worry Mahmud as long as you are close to us you will be safe” she said to him “I promise you” then smiled at him and reached her hand towards the kid.

“Mmhmm” muttered Mahmud with a grin on his face then held her hand and off the car towards the crossroad they went.

-11:11- Highway \ Mass of cars on crossroad

“Push harder it's almost off the way” Ziad yelled.

While he and group were pushing the truck a grumbling voice came from one of the cars.

Mahmud hid behind Ziad and Marwa freaked “What was that?” she yelled frightened.

A teenage girl with a broken bleeding shoulder and a hole in her belly from it her guts hanging outside her body she got out from a car raising her hands towards the group growling and started walking.

“Everyone stay back I'll ...” Ziad said when Ayman's hand on his shoulder stopped him “I'll take care of this” he said to Ziad and walked with his tennis racket towards the zombie.

When he got close to the zombie girl Ayman swayed the racket towards zombie's head knocking it down afterwards he kept hitting its head till it stopped moving then he mopped his hand on his shirt and went back to the group.

“We're safe” Ayman said to them “we should...”

** Gunfire in distance **

“Was that gunfire ?” Ziad asked

“I believe so” Ayman replied “that sounded exactly like gunfire”

“Who do you think was that?” Kamal wondered

“Whoever it was we shouldn't stay here any longer” Ziad added
“we gotta keep moving”

They started pushing the truck till they made enough space for their car to pass.

“Alright good job y'all” Ziad said “let's head back to the car”

“Yeah this place gives me the creeps” added Kamal.

“WAIT!” Marwa yelled and pointed towards the way back to the car “There are zombies coming towards us” said Marwa
frightened “we can't reach the car they are blocking the way”

Ziad looked aside the road “They seem to be coming from the forest on the left side” said Ziad.

“What should we do?” cried Mahmud while zombies are getting closer to them.

“Everyone follow me!” Ziad said when Kamal asked “Where?”

“NO TIME TO EXPLAIN” Ziad yelled “hurry move it!”

Ziad ran to the right side of the road with the whole group till they entered the forest.

-11:34- Highway \ Forest

Through the trees where faint sunshine glared towards the ground they kept on running

“Ahhhhh” Marwa yelled after seeing zombies coming from inside the forest from different directions.

The groups stopped running then Ziad said “This way!” he ran starboard while the group followed his lead, not looking behind

nor stopping they kept on sprinting avoiding the zombies by keeping distance.

“Where are we going?” Kamal yelled at Ziad but there was no response.

While running breathlessly Ziad kept on observing his right side that leads back to the road but it was full of zombies, but when he noticed a small gap between the zombies at once he whirled to his right increasing his pace “We're almost there keep it quick” he yelled while hooping over a huge root.

Running towards the exit of the forest they kept on getting closer to a zombie group, the huge mass of zombies made it look like they were a dam but the group made it way towards a small gap where Ziad swung his bat to make one of the zombie's head fly away and Kamal kicking another one to the ground before they reached the side of the road again.

They were finally out of the forest but two hundred meters behind the car “We're trapped” Marwa cried while Mahmud was weeping.

On their six the forest was filled with zombies and they had to get rid of the ten zombies to reach the car, Ziad looked at Ayman

“We do it fast as we did back in the university” he said to Ayman then bolted towards the car “Everyone we wait a minute then on my cue we run towards the car” Ayman declared to the rest of the group but Marwa shuddered “We can't wait” but Ayman told her it won't last more than seconds.

Not wasting any second he smashed one zombie then ran away from the car alluring the rest of the zombies “NOW!” Ziad yelled from distance.

Marwa was the first to run towards the car that the others couldn't catch up to her.

-12:09- Highway \ Road

Ayman opened the driver's door while Kamal, Marwa and Mahmod got in the back of seats of the car.

He started the car and started driving backwards looking back to see a bunch of zombies following Ziad while others came out of the forest from both sides.

Ayman kept on driving in reverse hitting some zombies then stopped making distance between the car and the zombies following Ziad "GET IN QUICK!" Ayman yelled through the window then closed it.

"Alright bastards let's see who's faster" Ziad murmured then went on the opposite direction which lead him towards the car.

It seemed like running towards a wall of zombies, but he kept saying to himself that they are slow and dumb, when he almost reached the first zombie it only took him a second to take him down while kicking an another one in the billy on his left and with the point of his bat he pinned the third in front of him to realize he made a small entering to go through, while running through he swung the metal bat thrusting the zombies away till he went pass them to gaze at the car with hopeful eyes.

He didn't stop running even though he neck was throbbing and his heart was beating so rapidly but he almost didn't feel a thing only that he needed to get in the car.

He made the run to the car opened the front door next to the driver got inside, not a second later Ayman pressed the accelerate peddle bolting away forward.

While Ziad looked behind jerking his head back and forth panting he asked "Everyone ... fine?"

"We're fine" Kamal answered while holding Marwa.

“...You kiddo?” he asked Mahmud “Mhmm” the child answered “but I'm scared” Ziad smiled at him stroking his head and told him everything was find now.

“You OK man?” Ayman asked Ziad while making the turn of the crossroad “your shirt is bloody”.

“You should see the other guys” he scorned “I'm fine it's their blood”

While making their turn through the left route they crossed the abandoned cars “We're half way there” Ayman stated.

“Hopefully!” Ziad added.

Driving through the highway they drove pass a sign that indicates that Lattakia is upwards.

-13:01- Highway \ Homs - Tartus Road

The sun was striking down on the glass of the car with the empty road upfront not from cars but from any living soul except them, cars abandoned along the road some in the middle of the road crashed towards each other and some zombies lurking near the road “Where's everyone?” she asked Kamal

“I don't really know sweetie” he shrugged “You know what's fun? That time when you fell off the stairs in the mall”

Marwa laughed and they started reminiscing about that day.

Ziad looked at Ayman “At least she's not panicking anymore” he whispered to Ayman.

“Yeah she can be such a pain in the ass sometimes” he whispered back laughing.

Ziad looked back at Mahmud “How are you doing back there kiddo?”

“I miss mum and dad” Mahmod answered morosely, Ziad didn't know what to say knowing that his parents are most likely dead but he is still a kid “I'm sure they miss you too” he said to Mahmod grinning.

“You know I remember seeing a card deck here somewhere” Ziad said looking around “I'll teach you some card tricks”

He turned forward searching inside the small cabinet “Ayman have you seen the cards here somewhere?”

Ayman looked at Ziad “Find me a proper meal first” he laughed “I'm dead hungry I could ...”

“WATCH OUT!!” Marwa screamed.

Ayman quickly hit the breaks till the car stopped in front of what seemed to appear a girl in the middle of the street jumping up and down waving for the car to stop “What the hell is she doing out here alone?” Ziad said wondering.

“We should help her” the kid added.

“Yeah, I'm gonna go out and find out if she's fine” Ziad told Ayman “and if something went wrong you start driving”

Ziad started to get out of the car “Your bravery will kill us eventually” Marwa jeered but Ziad said nothing but scowled at her and got out of the car.

-17:53- Highway \ Homs - Tartus Road

Barely standing on the road she was wearing jeans filled with dirt and mud and her shirt had dabs of blood on it, brown short hair, she would seem tall if standing next to Marwa, the cold weather left her shaking “Hey are you OK?” Ziad yelled.

She started crying and ran towards Ziad “They're after me!” she cried then hugged him “Thank god you're here!”.

She was weeping all over his shoulder when he asked

“Alright, now calm down you're gonna be fine” he held her while shushing her and calming her down but she didn't stop crying so he added “What happened to you? Why are you all alone here?”

She leaned back cleaning tears with the back of her hand “They kidnapped my young brother” she uttered with her lips shaking “we thought they wanted to help us but they didn't”

Ziad took off his jacket and put it around her shoulders “Easy there! Were you bitten?” he asked her.

“Bitten? No no” she exclaimed in terror “they came after me but no one bit me”

While she was still weeping he walked her back to the car “What's your name?”

“Zaina” she barely said, “You'll be fine Zaina my name is Ziad” then opened the back door “Mahmod scoot a little for Zaina”.

Zaina sat back still dripping with tears looking at Marwa, Kamal and Mahmod, while Ziad got inside the car it was dead silent except for the sound of Zaina sniffing.

“Hit it Ayman!” said Ziad, so he started driving.

-18:09- Highway \ Homs - Tartus Road

The sun was starting to set and darkness was arising, still no one showed up in the highway but Zaina.

Minutes after finding Zaina the car was as silent as night, Marwa was eyeballing Zaina in a defensive way along with Kamal,

Mahmod also stared at her confused, Ayman focused on the road while Ziad was staring at the dusk.

“Are you OK?” asked the kid “you won't turn into a zombie right?”

Zaina sniffed with a smile “I'm OK and no I won't be this zombie thing you just said”

“Why are you alone?” he asked again

“It's a long story ...” then Ziad interrupted “Mahmod, this kid is Mahmod, next to him are Kamal and Marwa and the one who drives is Ayman” Ayman waved back without turning his face.

“Hi” Marwa and Kamal said

“I'm Zaina” she added “I don't know to thank you, I'd have frozen to death out there I really appreciate your help, but...”

She paused for a second “but I need help finding my brother, I'm afraid they're going to hurt him”

Ziad heard her telling him about her brother and 'them' the kidnappers so he asked her about what happened and what brought her here all dirty and alone.

“My father, mother, brother and I were going to Damascus days ago but kilometers outside Damascus there was a huge mass of traffic jam so we waited for hours and hours when suddenly aircrafts flew above us and a minute later we heard explosives in distance, my dad decided to get back to Tartus so he turned the car around and got out the traffic, it was difficult cause hundreds of cars were stuck there, but when we finally managed to get out and started to head back, we were near a village when we almost ran out of gas so dad said to sleep the night in a motel here, refill the tank then head back to Tartus first thing in the morning, it was a good idea at first, dad parked the car almost outside the village cause the entrance was blocked with empty cars, we thought it

was intended, still it was uncanny when we reached a motel after walking through the street which were almost empty, we only saw a couple folks, in the motel we rented a room and dad said he will go get some gas, and we went up to the room..." a dab of tear slid down from her left eye.

Ziad gave her a hanky and put his hand on her shoulder "If you don't feel like talking it's fine"

"No it's OK I'm fine thanks" she replied, then continued telling the story after wiping the tear with the hanky.

"Hours after we got inside the room Waleed was already asleep and my dad arrived with a keg full of gas, hour after that we all were sleeping, the next morning we checked out of the room but we didn't find anyone in the main room of the hotel, we yelled for a while but no one turned up so we went out the hotel going towards the car but the strangest thing happened when some crazy man walked towards us and jumped on my brother trying to bite him but my dad handled him and pulling my brother from the floor, my dad was in the army, we started to walk through the streets but we found out that more people were coming at us just like that crazy man, so dad lead us into a house, he locked the whole doors and made sure the house was secured, we stayed in there for days not daring to get out, we found enough rations in the house, not to mention there was no electricity, in the evening of one day dad came to us saying that we should head out, only couple of the crazy people were outside, we made the run through the streets avoiding them, till we reached the outskirts of the village and then found our car, we got inside while dad filled the tank with gas, minute later he got inside and we drove ahead towards Tartus"

Kamal and Marwa were so concentrated to her story saliva was almost dripping from their mouths, Mahmud's eyes were so wide looking at Zaina as if she was telling him a bed story, Ziad also

was gazing at her while telling her story, while Ayman was focusing his eyes on the road but ears to Zaina.

“When we reached the crossroad of Homs we took the left route, not a minute after that dad saw an old man crawling in the middle of the highway, mom told him to keep on driving but he insisted on helping him, so he stopped the car and went out to the old guy when he reached him, he started talking to him while putting his hand on the old man's shoulder but the old man didn't reply, he raised his head, grabbed my dad's hand and bit it revealing the bones of his palm, dad managed to pull his hand and run back to the car while his hand was dribbling with blood along the way, he turned the engine on, the old man started to crawl towards the car but dad started driving and we got away, mum put bandage on the wound and wrapped it with a piece of cloth, but after half an hour dad started to feel dizzy and light headed, so mum told me to drive the while she treats dad in the back seat, after another thirty minutes dad was barely conscious, Waleed almost fainted from the view of the blood but I kept him distracted, my dad was coughing blood, I kept on driving scared and worried, it was past midnight when suddenly..”

Monday 24-12-2012 \ Homs - Tartus highway

-2:19- Somewhere in Homs - Tartus highway

“Is he going to be OK mom?” Zaina asked her

“Keep your eyes on the road honey, as soon as we reach Tartus we'll admit him into a hospital and he'll be just fine”

While she was driving she noticed up ahead on the side of the road a car with its lights blinking and two men waving in the middle of the street, Zaina started to slow the car down, before she reached the other her mother insisted “We can't help them Zaina, we have our own problem”.

Before Zaina was to answer her she hit the breaks, one of the guys stood in front of the car and..

Click

The other guy, a fat one, pointed the gun towards Zaina, she freaked out and Waleed started to cry.

“Shut the hell up you stupid brat” the fat man yelled with a sullen look “All of you, out of the car NOW!”.

“Please don't hurt us” Zaina cried out weeping.

“Shut up bitch, and get out of the car” the fat guy shouted while the other guy was also pointing unto the car from the front.

-2:44- Somewhere in Homs - Tartus highway

“We have a wounded man in here we need help” the mother yelled, but the fat guy didn't care “To hell with him, leave him here and the three of you come with me, NOW!” he said angrily.

“No I ain't leaving my husband here” when suddenly her husband started to murmur and growl, she started to talk to him

while stroking his cheek but, he opened his eyes, the whiteness of his eyes were almost red, his pupils were gray, he quickly grabbed her from the shoulder and bit her neck, blood started to burst from her veins, she tried to talk but choked with her own blood in her throat and started to spit blood, Zaina and Waleed freaked out and started crying not knowing what to do.

The fat man started shooting their mom and dad till the dad stopped growling and the mom didn't move.

“Stop shooting you they're dead” said the other guy to the fat one.

Waleed opened the car door and started running crying and yelling.

“Go get the kid” said the fat man to the other one, while opening the driver's door, he grabbed Zaina out of the car, she kept on crying and kicking him but he had broad shoulders and bald head with a scar on his neck, he looked like a monster with his yellow teeth.

The other guy went after Waleed, the fat guy pulled Zaina to the car and tossed her in the backseat, she was weeping like a small baby, no wonder why, she saw her dad trying to kill her mom and then she witnessed both of them dying.

Closing the backseat door behind her, the fat man yelled at the other man, making sure if he got the kid.

“He's fast but I got him” the other guy said while holding Waleed from his shoulder, the kid was crying so hard he could hardly take a breath, he tossed Waleed in the backseat too.

Zaina hugged her brother trying to calm him down, cause he couldn't inhale a single breath.

“Haidar will be pleased with this gift” said the fat guy, then both of them entered the car and started driving along the highway,

Waleed was a bit calmer than before but still crying, while Zaina held her self trying to be strong for her brother, after they reached an abandoned house they took a right turn.

“SHUT UP!!” the fat man shouted.

“He's just a small child” angrily replied Zaina

“I don't care bitch, make him stop or I will” as soon as he finished his sentence the car stopped instantly.

“Where the hell did they come from?” the other guy said “there are more than twenty of them blocking the road”

“Run them over!” the fat man insisted, the other guy started driving towards the zombies hitting them.

“Woouooooohooo!” the fat man exclaimed, after passing the zombies they kept on driving till they reached an open field and the road lead towards some kind of a farm with a barn and a cottage, they reached a fence where two armed men guarded it, the fence door was opened by the guards and the car stopped right in front of the cottage.

The two men in the car got out of the car, one of them grabbed Zaina while the other took Waleed and they walked towards the cottage and entered the cottage.

-3:37- Unknown \ Farm

The cottage was an old wooden one that every step you take makes a high pitched squeak which would hurt only hearing it twice, they were four Zaina and Waleed held by the fat man and the other one, they strode through the corridor out unto a room which an enormous man was guarding it with an AK-47 and inside it had lit candles glowing the darkness of the room but leaving the corner sides of the room black as ebony, the fat man nodded at

the guard who let them enter the room, there was a man sitting on a sofa wearing a black cloak, facing the window.

“We brought you a gift, boss” grinned the fat man at the sitting one “and this broad would be an amusement for you”.

The man on the sofa stood up and turned around, his face was half scorched, it made his face look like an atrocity mask that terrified the fat man, also Zaina while Waleed hid behind his sister frightened, he studied her from head to toe before saying “I'm sure she will” he grimace and tried to touch her cheek when she shoved his hand away, anger filled him and he slapped her face so hard she fell on the floor sobbing.

“Lock them both in the back room” said the cloaked man “ we have a serious situation we have to deal with”.

While Waleed was crying over his sister she was staring at the man who slapped her with firing anger in her eyes, when they took her and Waleed and dragged them through the corridor to a small room then locked the door behind them.

Her cheek was throbbing and it was as red as blood, when her brother cried “I want mom and dad, I'm scared” she held him saying “Don't get scared little brother you'll be just fine” staring at the emptiness of the wall “I'll get us out of here!”.

The room was dirty and empty with only a one mattress laid on the floor and the window was barricaded wooden logs letting only a bit amount of moon's ray into the room, she kept on stroking her brother's hair while him breathing rapidly till he calmed down and finally fell asleep.

-15:09- Unknown \ Farm

Almost twelve hours it was, her brother was still asleep in her arms but she couldn't sleep for one minute, she kept on staring at the window hoping for someone to come by and save them, but none of that happened, she day dreamed about her last day in Tartus, her boyfriend had surprised her with a sudden farewell party, she was going to Damascus with her family for almost a fortnight, her dad had a business work in there.

A sound of gunshots outside the window took her mind back to reality and woke her little brother "What's that?" the kid asked in terror, she calmed him down then more shooting was heard from outside, soon enough the door was kicked open

"Both of you come with me" the fat man yelled while gasping for a breath "we're getting out of here" the rifle he held had a robe on it, he hung it on he shoulder then grabbed Zaina and Waleed then started walking through the corridor while the sound of shooting can still be heard from outside, when they reached the front door the fat man told them to stay put, he took couple steps outside and started shooting, Zaina took a look outside, the area around the cottage was filled with zombies walking towards the cottage "Let's go" the fat man grabbed them once again and started running towards a car parked outside the front door.

"Get them inside!" yelled the same man who slapped her from inside the backseat of the car, zombies were on hitting the left windows of the car while on the right side the fat man pushed Waleed inside the car, Zaina managed to lose the fat man's grip then kicked him in the groin and shoved him, a voice came from inside the car "Shit!" the black cloaked man closed the door while yelling "DRIVE DRIVE!".

Instantly the car drove away hitting zombies "Waleed!" she screamed then ran after the car but zombies were crawling all over that way, it was a matter of seconds then the car

disappeared from sight, the fat man groaned from pain “I'll rip your face off” he yelled in anger trying to raise up “Bitch...!”

A zombie jumped on the fat man from behind, Zaina was scared and disordered, an another zombie starting chewing on the fat man's guts whilst he was screaming, blood splashed all over the ground from his guts some got on her shirt, Zaina ran in one direction but whirled into another, the place was full of zombies but she managed to run fast avoiding any of them till she reached a forest, tears were falling behind her as she sobbed while running, she never looked back nor stopped running deep into the forest, her brother was taken god knows where and she didn't know where she was running, just away, far away from those horrible creatures, the forest didn't have as many zombies as the farm did but it still kind of full with them.

Back in the highway

-19:39- Highway \ Homs - Tartus road

Marwa and Kamal with the rest of the group still didn't utter a single word listening to her telling the story.

“I kept on running for hours through the damn forest scared, hungry, tired and breathless till I reached a tiny shack, I entered it hoping to find someone inside but it was empty so I searched for food and water, I managed to find some bread and vegetables, it was enough to feel the taste of food and I drank water right from the sink till I had enough, I heard a sound of wood cracking outside the shack, I know those freaking creatures were still lurking outside, so I bolted quickly through the back door and kept on running till I reached the highway and found you guys”.

A tear slid over her bruised cheek, Ziad looked at her sympathetically “You still remember where was the wooden cottage Zaina?” he asked her.

“Not in hell” exclaimed Marwa breaking her silence “you won't risk all our lives for a kid!”

Ziad looked at her “I risked my life for you didn't I ?” she said nothing after that statement but Kamal added “Are you sure we should do that?”

“It's her little brother, wouldn't you do it if he was yours?”

Kamal nodded then Ziad looked to his right “You up for it Ayman?”

“I'm not sure if the kid is still alive or not, but it's worth the try” he shrugged then stopped the car, Ziad leaned towards Zaina and asked her where was that wooden cottage.

“I notice we didn't reach the route near the abandoned house which leads there” she replied holding the jacket tight

“You let me know when we get there Zaina” said Ayman then started car again.

-19:52- Highway \ Side route

After wee minutes of driving through the highway “That's it!” Zaina pointed out “that's the abandoned house”

“Are you sure?” Ziad asked her

“Yes” she answered “I remember that cause there is the broken truck next to it”

Ayman drove slowly near the house then stopped the car “OK now” Ziad said loudly “what we should is simple, we go there

search the cottage and the surrounding area for her brother, y'all ready?" he assured.

"Sure thing" Ayman replied, Ziad looked at Kamal "ditto" he said to Ziad and Marwa nodded with a sullen face.

"What should I do?" said Mahmud

"Well kiddo" said Ziad "you'll be the our car guard cool?"

"Cool!" said the kid happily, Ziad looked at Ayman "Let's go!"

The car started revving and in the right route it went.

-20:35- Unknown area

Driving slowly on a rough road filled with dirt and rocks, also trees filled the sideways before reaching two other routes one straight the other right "Keep on straight" said Zaina.

Ayman kept on driving forward when a distant sound of explosion was heard "Ahh!" screamed Marwa grasping Kamal and Ayman stopped the car.

"What the hell was that?" asked Zaina

"God knows what caused that explosion, but it sounded far from here" added Ayman.

"Yeah" stated Ziad "but we better keep on, it's already night and we should finish quick before getting back on the highway".

Ayman continued driving the car through the rugged road.

-20:52- Unknown area \ Cottage

“It's weird seeing no zombies around here isn't it?” asked Kamal “is it possible that everything is over?”

“I don't really know” Ziad answered him “let's hope ...” then Zaina interrupted him “We're here” she screamed “this is the farm and there is the cottage I was talking about”.

Ayman drove past the opened fence through the farm road till he reached the wooden cottage where he parked the car meters away from its front door.

“OK now” said Ziad “I'm gonna go search the cottage it wont take more than five minutes” he looked at Ayman “if anything uncanny happens you drive out of here, I can't risk all of your lives, plus I can manage my way alone back to the highway”.

He opened the door to get out when a hand grabbed his shoulder “I ain't leaving you here alone man!” said Ayman with a grin, then the back door opened, Zaina got out with Ziad, he insisted on her to get back in the car “It's my brother we're talking about” she screamed “I'm coming whether you like it or not” Ziad replied nothing to her but telling her to stay close, and together they entered the cottage.

-21:19- Unknown \ Cottage

Walking slowly through the corridor with the same squeaky sound, brought back sorrow memories for Zaina and suddenly she put one hand on her cheek, they kept on walking “It still gives me the creeps” said Zaina

“You search the kitchen and I'll check out the bedroom” said to her while looking around carefully.

(Back inside the car)

“Oh man” nagged Kamal “I'm so craving for a hamburger”

“Tell me about it” added Ayman “I'd eat four right now”

They both kept on talking about meals and meats and Marwa was quite as night, mad of the whole idea of searching for the lost kid, whilst Mahmud was staring out the window unto the forest when he noticed some movement there, his pupils widened as he gazed at an another bush rattling, he looked back at the first place he saw movement to notice a zombie walking from outside the forest “ZOMBIES!” yelled the young fella.

Ayman looked on the right window to see three zombies coming out of the forest “Lock the doors!” shouted Ayman then opened his door and started yelled “Ziad! Zaina! Get out of there now!” then got inside the car and locked the door with the window open.

(Inside the cottage)

Ziad heard Ayman's cry he ran towards the kitchen “Something is wrong” said to Zaina “let's get out and see what's matter” they went out of the kitchen, through the corridor towards the front door but to see that zombies were already getting inside the front door “Shit!” he cursed, then turned to his behind to find out that the back door was also crowded with zombies

“Ayman! Get out of here” he yelled loudly “we'll meet you in the highway before Tartus's entrance”, he held Zaina's hand and ran unto the living room, looked around quickly then found a log of wood, he handed it to Zaina “Wanna get out of here?” he said with a slugged grin “we gotta fight those deranged bastards”.

(Outside the cottage)

It only took couple minutes for the zombies to fill the area around the cottage and they were getting close to the car when Kamal yelled “Drive outta of here, you heard him he will meet us back at the highway” but Ayman didn't start the engine, Mahmud was already weeping when a zombies started banging on the window next to him, Marwa was crying too.

Ayman cursed then started the car and drove backwards, turning around hitting couple zombies then head back to the road which brought them here from the highway.

-21:44- Unknown \ Cottage

A head fill on the floor “Ahh!” Zaina screamed

“That won't bother us anymore” said Ziad “into the kitchen quickly” the living room had two doors and a barricaded window, one lead to the corridor where zombies were coming at them and the other lead to the kitchen where Ziad and Zaina went.

Entering the kitchen they noticed that zombies cornered them in the room, they were coming from the living room door and the other door that lead to the end of the corridor, Ziad looked around to find the window not fortified like the other “The window” he pointed out, Zaina was frightened and trembling with the wooden log on her hand, Ziad opened the window, barely opened half of it but it was enough to get out, he pulled Zaina towards the window and she started going through it, zombies were already in the kitchen coming from two angles, Ziad stroke two zombies down with one swing, but every one that goes down two other came from behind, “Come on!” Zaina yelled from outside, Ziad ran

towards the window and squished himself through the open space, with one pull from Zaina he was outside the window on the floor, "They're everywhere" she said in terror looking around, Ziad got up "Let's run" he said.

They started running into the woods maneuvering the zombies, the forest was filled with them but Ziad and Zaina ran swiftly and managed to avoid them.

-22:02- Unknown \ Forest

Minutes later they found a small one floor farm house "There!" yelled Ziad, they ran towards it, as soon as they got inside he locked the front door and pulled a closet to hold it against the door "lock the back door, quick!" ordered her, she ran towards the back door and locked it with her wooden log.

"Stay here I'm gonna check the rooms" he said then went to check the kitchen, the house was small, it had two rooms, a corridor and a bathroom, in a minute Ziad got back to the corridor "All clear!" he said panting "search the kitchen for any edible food I'll guard the doors and see if they followed us", Zaina stood froze like a corpse staring on the floor quivering, Ziad held her hands "Hey hey!" he said in a compelled calm voice "look at me!" she stared at his eyes bobbing her head back and forth "you're gonna be fine, I'm gonna get us out of here safe and sound, I promise".

A morsel tear dripped of her eye to moist her swollen bruised cheek "But my brother?" she muttered, "As soon as we get out of here you and I will keep on searching for him, deal?" he assured her, she nodded slowly and wiped the tears with the back of her hand then headed unto the kitchen, whilst Ziad went to check out the front door and started looking through the window near it.

-22:14- Highway \ Homs - Tartus road

The car was revving over the stony rugged road, passing trees beside, no noise but the engine's, they arrived at the route on the highway.

Ayman was driving recklessly, palpitating and frustrated, he drove near the abandoned house and parked there

“Aaaaaaagh!” hitting the driving wheel, causing a sudden honk that traveled into the silence of the night “we shouldn't have left them there alone” he yelled in fury.

“I'm sure Ziad is more than capable of getting out of there alive with Zaina” Kamal added in cautious.

“We shouldn't have went there in the first place” Marwa protested “It was a dangerous place but ...”

“SHUT UP!” the rage in his eyes was burning, Ayman wanted to hit her so bad but he controlled himself “he risked his life to save your ass and you don't even give a damn about him!”

Seeing the state he was at Marwa got frightened, held Kamal and started to weep.

“HEY!” Kamal yelled “don't lash out on here, you saw it out there, zombies were all over the place, if we stayed any longer we would've died ourselves, plus he said we shouldn't risk our lives” his voice was already in a low tune “now please calm down and let us get to Tartus”.

Mahmod was like a small kitten cornered by a bull dog, scared and tearing falling off his eyes “I want Ziad” said the kid sobbing.

After seeing the kid so scared, Ayman realized what he said frightened the youngster, he looked at the kid with a harmless smile “I'm sure we will meet him near Tartus” messed up the kid's hair.

Ayman turned back and started the engine, Marwa was wiping her tears while her boyfriend was holding her, Mahmud was still crying a bit, the car went upwards through the highway.

-22:35- Unknown \ Small house in the forest

“There are few in the front yard, but there are almost nada in the back backyard” Ziad said to her “what have you found?”

“Couple pea cans, bottle of water and some bread” she answered “whoever lived here, they took almost everything” she packed the rations in a bag which she found in kitchen floor.

Ziad started walking towards the back door and Zaina behind him, he peeked through the window “Look Zaina I know I told you we won't get out of here without searching for your brother” gazing at her with despair “but our status quo doesn't qualify us to conduct any search, we don't have food, we barely escaped that cottage exhausted...” she interrupted with fury “WHAT?!” she cried “I'm gonna keep on searching for him, if you want you to do that for me, I'm fine by myself”

“I never said I don't want to search for him, It's just ... we searched the cottage, he wasn't there, he could be anywhere now, we don't have a lead to start with” said Ziad before raising his eyebrows.

“A car!” she said “the car they put him inside didn't drive in the road that leads to the highway, it went unto the forest” she gazed at the wall for seconds, “yes?” he said wondering, “We ran unto the forest exactly where the car went” she yelled optimistically.

“That means they could be here anywhere” Ziad realized “if not, they could have came through here, we can find them tracking the tire's prints on the dirt” he checked the back yard again “OK we go out and check the floor, ready?” he said to her, “Yeah” she

replied, he took off the wooden log and handed it to her, opened the door carefully, they started jogging unto the forest inspecting the muddy floor for trails from the car, while couple zombies were lurking in the far distance.

-22:51- Unknown forest

For a while they were wandering in the woods, it was a dark night with only the sound of the wind, the moonlight illuminated the forest, coming down through gaps between the leaves of the trees, so far they had no luck in finding any track, Zaina was feeling gloomy, Ziad started to realize that they won't be able to find the car nor her brother or any living soul, the forest was dead quite, no sound of owls or any squirrels jumping off the branches, only hearing the howl of the wind and the voice of cracking woods underneath them while walking.

“Oh my GOD!” she ran screaming, Ziad went after her, there was a car which seemed to have hit the tree, smoke was coming out of the front hood.

“Waleed!” she yelled and ran towards the car, Ziad grabbed her and covered her mouth, he heard a sound of growl coming from the car “Shushh!” he said, she was struggling “keep your voice down, I'm gonna go check the car, you stay here!” he released her, she was trembling but she listened to him and kept on standing, Ziad went towards the car, the driver's door was open but it was empty, but blood was all over the seat, he looked at the back door, opened it slowly, all of the sudden the door was pushed from the inside shoving Ziad backwards to fall on the floor, a small child jumped on him groaning, the zombie's arm had a huge chunk of it taken off, as if someone ate it, Ziad managed to push it off of him then he stood up and stepped away.

“Waleed!” Zaina cried out while fleeing towards her little brother, Ziad quickly grabbed her “Don't get any closer to it” he commanded her, while she was crying and kicking for him to let her loose “listen to me, that thing that attacked isn't your brother anymore” he yelled, “No! Let me be!” she cried “my little brother is hurt!” the zombie was crawling with a horrifying smirk on its face while growling.

“It's my brother” she cried “it's him not it” kicking and weeping, “I'm sorry Zaina, but he is not anymore” he said to her “there's nothing you or I can do to him, either leave it or kill it...”

“WHAT!” she exclaimed “kill my brother? I'll kill you before you do that!”, Ziad moved backwards while grabbing her “Please Zaina I don't like doing this, but it's either stay here and let it kill us or deal with it, when they turn into zombies there are no undo into humans again, believe me I know that, I had to kill my friend days ago” a tear dripping from his eye “I don't wanna lose any more!” Zaina started to calm slowly “Let me please!” she said in a low voice, he let her loose, she wiped her tears with the back of her hand “I'll do it” she said, reaching her hand to Ziad, he gave her the bat, he took couple steps back, she walked towards the crawling zombie child, Ziad was looking from distance, he saw her looking down at the zombie while saying couple words, then she started smashing it screaming loud with every hit, blood was emitting all over the body, on her hands, clothes.

She stopped hitting the zombie when it stopped moving, tears were dropping off her cheeks when she cleaned them with her hand, then she threw the bat in front of Ziad “Zaina..” but she interrupted “no time to talk, zombies are getting closer” she said looking away, then pointed at the car “we should see if we can make a use of it”.

She got in the front seat next to the driver's, while Ziad sat in the the driver's seat, he tried to start the engine hoping it would,

first time the engine whirred then stopped, he tried again the engine made the same noise and started working.

Ziad drove backwards then, forward through the forest, glancing sideways at Zaina, her eyes were red, her hands were crammed between her thighs, looking up ahead saying nothing, Ziad knew better than to speak so he focused his eyes up front and kept on driving.

Tuesday 25-12-2012

-1:08- Unknown forest

Through the murky forest, Ziad drove the car, the groundings of the the woods was bumpy and uneven, the moonlight shone through the leaves of the trees down on them, grateful he was cause the front lights of the car were completely destroyed.

He glanced at his right, she was still and quite as night, no wonder of that, she just killed her little brother.

“Are you feeling alright” he asked her, she settled for a nod without saying a word

“We'll get out off here” he added “and everything will be fine” then he reached his hand on her shoulder, instead she pulled herself away “Can you please concentrate on the road?” she insisted “zombies are still walking out there”.

Whatever, he thought to himself, he was just trying to let her know that she's not alone in this, he was looking ahead when he noticed a sub-road just meters away, thank god, he said quietly while she kept her silent.

After getting on the sub-road he wondered which way to take, it'll lead somewhere either way, he wondered so he went right.

Not seconds after getting on narrow the sub-road, a weak crackling sound came out of the car's front hood, and the car started to get slower, Ziad noticed it was getting out of gas.

“Perfect” he exclaimed “It's dead night and the middle of nowhere”, he kept on driving till it stopped and the battery went off.

“Back on foot I'm afraid” he stated while Zaina kept her silence.

-1:30- Unknown \ Sub-road

The road was so narrow it almost can fit one small car, not an asphalt one but full of dirt and rocks, still better than the forest Ziad thought to himself, they started walking on the road.

Almost no zombies were there, couple of them wandering about, but far from Ziad and Zaina, he was thankful for that still cautious.

It was after midnight, he was feeling tiresome of all the running and hiding not to mention the stress and terror of being in the middle of nowhere, also worrying about his family back in Latakia, Zaina wasn't in a good either, even though she was acting like a ghost lately but she's got every reason to.

They kept on walking in the middle of the street, he looking around while she kept on her reticent mask.

-2:01- Unknown \ Sub-road

“Look out!” he whispered while pulling her aside of the road to conceal behind a tree, there was a movement along the road, it was dark but after hearing her story, Ziad didn't want to risk doing what she did back there, it's not only the zombies he should be aware from, the living ones too, he wondered.

“Get your hands off me!” she said in discontent, he didn't say a word to her but his face filled with frustration, she knew why he pulled her out of the road but with a gloomy face she started walking near the trees slowly, along with her went Ziad looking at the zombies on the road who were digging inside some man's guts and eating his insides, Ziad and Zaina made sure to make no noise, the only sound that filled the air was the zombies', the sound of the their deformed mouth chewing what's left of the dead man's intestines, the voice of their hand burrowing inside

the deceased bowel, his parts slipping off their hands, but they reach to it again and eat it, redness on the zombies mouths, hands and all over their bodies, also the blood was running along the road, Ziad noticed it all, his stomach roiled and heaved, yet he kept on walking, till the zombies were out of their sight.

Ziad went up the road again with her, minute later they encountered two routes, the first one went left, it was dirt and rock the same road they were walking the last hour on, on the other hand the road that went right was made of asphalt.

“We'll go right” he stated then started walking along the right road, she asked him why, “Maintained road leads to towns and cities for sure” he said walking without looking back, so she followed him up along the right route.

-2:29- Afyom town \ Super market

Minutes of walking they found a sign 'Welcome to Afyom', and meters away there was a small building, I told you so, he wanted to say so to Zaina but instead “Let's hope we find some food and a place to sleep” said to her, getting no response from her.

Walking past the small building, other building were aside the road but it was a ghost town, no one sighted, no living soul nor zombies, it filled his heart with confusion, but what lit up his eye was seeing a super market “Wonderful!” he exclaimed “we find some food and water in there”, they walked towards it.

He opened the door slowly, electricity seemed to be out in here too, “Stay close!” he whispered to her, carefully they walked past the cashier counter when she noticed a fridge at the end of the store, she ran towards, hey!, he yelled at her then went after her, she opened the fridge grabbing a water bottle, she started drinking breathlessly dripping water all over her neck and clothes, when suddenly she stopped drinking and slowly descended

towards the floor weeping, Ziad knelt down he wanted to calm her when a growl came out from the darkness from her right, not able to look there a zombie jumped on her when she started screaming, Ziad grabbed the its shoulder and shoved it away then started smashing its head till nothing was moving but his arm swinging up and down.

He looked at her with fear in his eyes “Hey hey, you're safe now” he said, she jumped on him and hugged him “I'm sorry” she kept on apologizing while crying “It's OK” he said while holding her, “he was all that I had” she cried “and now he is dead, cause I left him” weeping all over his shoulder, he said nothing other than “everything will be ok, I'll get us out of here safe and sound I promise” she kept on sobbing when a sound of explosion was heard far from outside, she yelled in terror.

“What the hell is happening?” he said wondering “listen to me Zaina, we should gather as much food and water and find a place to spend the night, alright?” she cleaned her tears, Ziad stood up then reached his hand, she grabbed it standing up, they both started canvassing the store.

They gathered what they needed then went towards the store's door when Ziad grabbed her and hid behind the counter “What's wrong” she asked confused, “look outside” jerking his head towards the door, she looked there to see a dozen of soldier standing on the street outside.

-3:11- Afyom Town\ outside the super market

They were twelve soldiers standing on the street, one of them was a high rank, he and another soldier was talking while the other stood guarding the surrounding domain, when two soldiers came towards the high ranked soldier holding an old man whose shirt was smeared with blood “Captain! we found him in the alley”

said one of the them to the captain “he ran away so we captured him, he must be infected,we should kill him”

“Are you sure he's infected?” asked Captain Rami, “He must be, why would he run away?” the other soldier insisted, he had an evil look at his face, and he looked nothing like a mild person.

“General Ali Deeb's orders are to kill all the infected people” added the first soldier, while the other one looked in rage, “I'm not infected” pleaded the old man in sobs “please don't kill me” the captain looked at the old man, then added “I know and fully acknowledge the orders of the general but we should ...”

*****Gunshot*****

The old man who was on his knees fell on his side, blood pouring off of a hole on his forehead, “What the hell do you think your self doing Qaswara?” Captain Rami yelled in rage at him “orders may come from the general but you don't have the permission to do anything without me saying so” grinding his teeth from frustration “But he was infected” Qaswara boldly replied, “Shut the hell up!” shrieked the captain at him “and god help me the next time you act without my order you'll have to deal with me, understood soldier ?” Qaswara's eyes were looking down when he nodded in shame, but still, he was known to making problem and disobeying orders “yes sir” he said in low tune.

Right after the dispute the captain gave an order to continue the search starting the two nearest buildings, pointing at the super market and the building next to it.

-3:42- Afyom town \ Super market

“We should go to them” she said to Ziad “they can protect us, they're soldiers” she stood up but he pulled her down “No way” he protested “you saw what they did to the old man”

“We'll take off our shirts” she replied, a was smart girl she was, Zaina, but witnessing her parents' death with abduction, and then killing her own brother, who was already a zombie, but she blamed herself for his death, but her recent suggestion was naive, Ziad thought, “I'm not risking our lives on that” he stated while grabbing her arm “I've never believed in the army in normal times, what about now? When probably chaos is out there, it's more a risk than a rescue”, she looked at him “but...” said in conflict, he had a point, she thought to herself, but she still thought the soldiers can protect them, “Zaina they're about to finish sweeping the building next door, they'll be here any minute, we gotta get out” he said peeking outside, she finally nodded in agreement, they crawled towards the back door and got out of the super market.

-4:09- Afyom town \ Alleyways

Out of the super market's back door it lead them into an alley, the right side had a high fence which lead to the street where the soldiers, can't go there cause of the fence, but won't go there anyways, he thought to himself, on the left the alley continued.

They kept on walking through the alley till they reached she pointed up “A church!” pointing at the bell of the church “a church would be a great pied a terre” she suggested, “you're right, let's hope zombies won't be praying” said with mockery, she made a face with a crooked grin, then they both kept on walking through the alley till they reached its end where it opened up to the street “Good lord!” Ziad exclaimed “It's a genocide”.

In front of them the street only separated them from the church, but the street was full of dead bodies, shot in the head, torn apart and even pieces of heads, legs and arms were laying around, Zaina couldn't take in what she saw, she vomited, the street reeked with rotten smell from the decayed corpses.

“You OK?” he asked her while placing the back of his hand on his nostrils, “Yeah.. uhm” she cleaned her mouth with the same hanky that he gave her before, “majoring in medicine and still can't get use to the smell of a dead body”, still disgusted from the smell but he looked at her with a smile “A doctor you say?” he jeered, “Oh shut up” she laughed “don't mock me, let's cross this graveyard and get inside there” she pointed at the church, “Whatever you say doc” he jeered again, “Ughh” she complained.

They stood close to the church's door, after crossing the street, Ziad opened the door slowly, looking inside “Looks clean from here” he stated, he got inside with her walking behind him when suddenly an another sound of explosion was heard from outside “Ahh” she jumped, but this time an incessant gunshot went on after the explosion, “This time it was close” he said, then started to close the door then locked it up, they were finally inside the church, “I've always hated being inside a church at night” he said with slight fear in his eyes “those damn movies”, “so do I” she agreed, they left the door and started walking in the aisle.

-4:15- Somewhere in Afyom

“Captain they keep coming at us” one of the soldiers said “and we're running out of ammo, what should we do?”

“Where the hell did they come from?” Captain Rami said in disrupt “minutes ago the street was empty”, they were a group of eight soldier including the captain, the rest the group was ordered to perform a search task by the captain, they were forced to retreat unto an entrance of an alley, shooting right and left their backs was facing the alley, it was no couple of zombies, there was more like hundred of them out there, it was more like a herd.

“Everyone fall back inside” yelled the captain waving unto the darkness of the alley, they stopped shooting and started running

through the alley, panting and scared they were, the captain was at the front, he was a fast runner, a tall fair structured man he was, his skin wasn't white nor tan, it had a creamy corny color, with a small scar on his cheek which he got in a fight back in days when he was a recruit soldier.

They reached a two way, the captain had no time to think where to go so he chose the right way, yelling that to his group, while one of them ignored him and kept on running to the left, it was Qaswara, as much as it appeared that he ignored the captain but in fact the soldier was so scared he couldn't apprehend what's going on around him, not even realizing he was running alone, the captain cried for him but it was useless, Qaswara was already gone.

Captain Rami and his remaining six soldiers kept on running, he saw a left turn at the end of the alley, the second he made that turn he slipped and fell on his back, a huge mass of zombies were coming at him just behind the turn, he quickly stood up and yelled for the soldier to stop running, running away from the zombies behind him, two soldiers freaked out after they saw the huge herd of the zombies coming at them from behind the captain, so they ran back, the captain tried yelling for them but they went away anyways, there was only five armed men left counting the captain "What should we do now captain?" asked one of the soldier shaking of fear, while zombies up ahead were getting closer, the captain looked around "That door!" pointing at a metallic door.

He ran towards it, with his men, tried to open it but it was locked "Break it!" he ordered them, one of the soldier was huge almost two meter tall with wide shoulders, he started kicking the, once, twice, thrice, it would move a little but wont open, the zombies were getting so close, they were less than hundred meters when one soldier ran back the alley yelling "I'm not dying here!", "what a fool" said the captain "there are zombies either way", but the rest of them looked at him and at the zombies behind him, not

wanting to disobey the captain but their primal instinct flowed quickly through their veins, the instinct of survival, so they ran away too.

There was only the captain with the huge soldier, kicking the door, I'm gonna die, the thought ran in the captain's head when suddenly the door cracked a little, zombies were ten meters close, with a final kick from both of them the door opened wide, they got inside shutting the door behind them, but unable to lock it "Run captain!" yelled the soldier, while barricading the metallic door with his shoulder, "You're not staying here alone" said Captain Rami assertively, while standing on the stairs "come on, I'll cover your back", the soldier nodded, then quickly he left the door running towards the captain, while the captain started shooting some of the zombies that got inside, the soldier got past the captain running upstairs, hence he stopped shooting and followed him.

They kept on running in the building encountering some zombies which were no trouble in their way, till they managed to reach another exit door, which led to the streets again, without thinking they kept on running till reaching a four crossed street, he looked up into a street sign which indicated that going left would lead out of Afyom, "We go left Nader" yelled the captain "out of this hell town", together they kept on running maneuvering the zombies till there was no building aside the roads, running up the road outside the town when the first light of the sun shone in the sky.

-4:25- Afyom town \ Church

She was still scared from the sound of the explosion walking with Ziad through the aisle, both of them checking the seats beside them till they reached the podium, the church was so quiet not mentioning the distant sound of gunshots from outside.

“Look there!” she pointed at a door behind the platform, stay close to me, he kept telling her, together they walked slowly till they reached the door, Ziad opened it slowly, sound of disturbing creaks the door made while he was opening it, which caused Zaina discomfort, “There are three doors in the corridor” he stated after the door was opened.

He reached for the first door, it was a supply room, a kitchen with couple cabinets, “great!” he said happily “food”, Zaina smiled, then they went for the second door, opening the door slowly “Beds!” she yelled “finally”, she got inside, Ziad told her to be careful, but the room looked safe, it has a door which lead towards a bathroom, while standing on the bedroom door he said to her “I’m gonna check the last door and make sure the church is zombie-less, you be careful here”, “zombie-less?” she asked with a sly smile “is it even a word?”, “New phase new phrase” he said grinning raising one brow.

He left the room with a smile on his face, so much death out there yet he was thankful to have some company, reaching the third door, he opened it to find out what seemed to be an office room, nothing important, he said, he went back to the main hall of the church looking for other doors that lead outside, he found one on the far end side of the podium, carefully he locked it then started walking back to the corridor.

-5:12- Afyom town \ Church

Walking through the corridor to the bedroom door, the second he entered the room, he jumped then turned back “Oh!” his cheeks were red “I’m sorry I didn’t know”, she was wearing a robe around her naked body, she just got out of the shower, when she was exiting the bathroom door, he entered the room, she also jumped back inside the bathroom after seeing him, “I’ll be done in a minute” she said laughing shyly, “OK” he replied walking outside

the room with his ears red as blood and his cheeks flushing, out of the bedroom he went into the office waiting her to finish.

-5:18- Afyom town \ Church

“Clear!” she yelled from the bedroom, Ziad was examining the office, it was full of religious books, he got out and started walking back to the bedroom, to find her wearing wide jeans with a over sized shirt, well to her it was oversize, he thought, “Again I'm sorry” he stated, “Oh come on, stop apologizing” she smiled “as if you haven't seen a naked girl before”, he chuckled then added “you look funny inside this enormous shirt”, she made a face repeating what he said in a silly voice, he laughed again.

They took their leave towards the kitchen and had a meal together, talking during the meal and exchanging jests and maintaining conversations, for once it felt like nothing was happening, it was so normal, also real, he couldn't believe it, hoping he would wake up in his apartment back in Dier Atyeh.

After finishing their dinner they went out of the kitchen, she went left but him, right, “Where are you going?” she asked him, “I'm gonna check the entrances for the last time” he replied, then continued walking towards the main hall when he stopped after she said “Thank you” in a gentle voice “thank you for looking out for me and thanks for your tolerance”, he looked at her over his right shoulder smiling “I'm just doing my best so we can stay alive” after that he went unto the main hall while she went back to the bedroom.

-5:30- Afyom \ Church

He got back to the bedroom to find her sleeping on one of the beds, he went to the bathroom, took off his shirt and started cleaning it with a soap, then he hung it on the door, then cleaned some blood spots on his jeans, also he poured some water on his body to wash up some blood stains.

After cleaning himself he went back shirtless to the bedroom, and towards an empty bed he went, he wanted to sleep so bad but still he felt paranoid knowing just outside zombies were lurking, and other issues came back to his mind, his family, are they fine?, he wondered while sitting on the bed.

He laid his head on the pillow with thoughts encircling inside his head but it only took him thirty seconds to fall asleep.

-13:10- Afyom town \ Church

He was a light sleeper, the tiniest sound of the speaking would wake him up, Ziad suddenly woke up to a sound of a crackling that came from the hall, quickly he picked up his bat and started walking outside the bedroom along the corridor till he reached the main hall's door, he slowly opened the door, his eyes widened when he saw the hall was full of zombies, he closed the door, pulled a chair and barricaded it, then ran back to the bedroom.

“Get up!” he yelled while running towards his the bathroom, “What?... “ she said half asleep “what's wrong, why are you screaming? And shirtless?” she asked.

“The hall is filled with zombies” he said while getting out of the bathroom wearing his half wet shirt, “What?” she exclaimed then a sound of banging came from the hall door in the corridor, “what are we gonna do?” she said frightened, “grab our stuff quickly

and meet me in the corridor” he said assertively then went back to the corridor.

It took her less than a minute to grab the backpack and the wooden log, then went out to the corridor where Ziad was, “listen to me” he said “the only way to get out of the church is through this door” pointing at the hall door in front of them, zombies were hitting and banging on the door when she added “but how?” she wondered “you said yourself the hall is filled with zombies”.

Small piece of the door was cracked while zombies were groaning and slamming at the hall door, she screamed in fear, Ziad grabbed her by the shoulders “listen to me!” he said huskily “we're gonna get out of here, alive you hear me?” while zombies were banging on the door “the second they break the door we run as fast as we can, hitting them out of the way till we get out of the hall, then when we reach the streets we run like hell out of this shitty town, OK?”, trembling she was but she quickly kissed him “Wh.. what was that for?” he asked surprisingly, “in case we die, consider it a thank you” she replied smiling, when suddenly the door cracked open and dozen of zombies marched through the door.

“RUN NOW!” ...

[to be continued]
