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Iraq Homecoming by Tim Finkbeiner timf248@yahoo.com

EXT IRAQ STREET - AFTERNOON

STACY L., 34, mother and soldier is in the middle of an intense firefight in Iraq.

Sgt. Liddell's EYES finally focus through the guns sights just after she has fired a three-round burst.

Her FINGER is on the trigger and through the smoke she fires a three-round burst finally seeing her target; a SIX-YEAR-OLD IRAQI GIRL. More smoke obscures her view then clears.

The LITTLE GIRL is down, only the soles of her bare feet are seen. Is she dead?

INT CAR - DAY

STACY, 34, mother, and former soldier is in her car driving around looking for something. She sees what she's looking for.

EXT STREET - LATER

Dressed in her Army fatigues, Stacy is looking at the building. Tears streaming down her face, she walks inside. It's a mosque.

INT MOSQUE - LATER

She walks toward the mosque entrance. A man stops her.

IMAM QAZWINI

The Holy Qur'an says "It is not for such as join gods with Allah, to visit or maintain the mosques of Allah while they witness against their own souls to infidelity. The works of such bear no fruit: In Fire shall they dwell."

STACY

What does that mean?

IMAM QAZWINI

It means that those who worship multiple Gods are not welcome. What do you believe?

STACY

I'm not sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She wipes a tear away.

IMAM QAZWINI  
Do you need to talk to someone?

STACY  
Yes.

IMAM QAZWINI  
Would you feel uncomfortable  
wearing a hijib? It is required  
that non-Muslim female visitors  
wear a scarf to cover the head.

Stacy hesitates a moment.

IMAM QAZWINI (CONT'D)  
We can talk outside if wearing one  
makes you uncomfortable.

STACY  
Maybe that would be better.

IMAM QAZWINI  
I'm Imam Qazwini.

He extends his hand and she takes it. They walk to a bench  
and have a seat.

STACY  
Are a priest?

IMAM QAZWINI  
We prefer Imam. It's very similar.

STACY  
I'm not very familiar with your  
faith.

IMAM QAZWINI  
What is your faith?

STACY  
I'm not sure. Christian I guess.

IMAM QAZWINI  
Did you know that the Islamic faith  
also believes in Jesus?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IMAM QAZWINI (CONT'D)

Sura 29:46 says that Muslims are told by Allah, not to question the authority of the scriptures of the Christians, saying, "And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, but say, "We believe in the revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you; Our Allah and your God are one.

STACY

I had no idea.

IMAM QAZWINI

Did you know that Islam is the only non-Christian faith that prescribes faith in Jesus? No Muslim is a Muslim if he does not believe in Jesus. We believe that he was one of the mightiest Messengers of Allah.

Stacy take this all in.

IMAM QAZWINI (CONT'D)

We believe that he was born miraculously without any male intervention, which many modern day Christians do not believe. We believe that He gave life to the dead with God's permission. We believe that He healed those born blind, and the lepers with God's permission.

STACY

If both religions love and respect Jesus, why fight?

IMAM QAZWINI

The major difference between Islam and Christianity is the Christians' insist on the divinity of Jesus. Christian scriptures reveal that Jesus never claimed divinity. The Bible contains statements attributed to Jesus in which he preached quite the contrary.

STACY

Then why do Muslims want to kill Christians?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

IMAM QAZWINI

The Holy Qur'an says "Whoever works evil must be punished. They counter aggression with an equivalent response. However, those who pardon and conciliate receive a better reward from God. They counter evil with good."

STACY

That doesn't explain the fanaticism.

IMAM QAZWINI

Do you know who said? "All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins." The same person also said "If you must have blood, bathe in the blood of the infidels".

STACY

I have no idea.

IMAM QAZWINI

Urban II, pope of the first crusade.

EXT STREET - LATER

She leaves and drives again before stopping at a light. She sees a church. She pulls into the parking lot and walks inside.

INT CHURCH - LATER

Stacy walks into a church and into the confessional.

STACY

Hello.

FATHER TOM

Good afternoon.

STACY

I'm not sure what to do.

FATHER TOM

Let's start with why you are here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STACY

I need to talk, I need some answers.

FATHER TOM

You can ask me, I will try to answer them the best I can.

STACY

I killed someone. I mean I think I killed someone. A child. But it was an accident.

FATHER TOM

When did this happen?

STACY

A month ago. In Iraq. I shot her.

FATHER TOM

Have you ask for forgiveness?

STACY

A million times.

FATHER TOM

And you have lingering doubts about being forgiven?

STACY

I have lingering doubts about everything.

FATHER TOM

Your faith?

STACY

I'm not sure I have any faith left.

FATHER TOM

You must have faith. God forgives, you just have to ask.

STACY

I was in a mosque earlier today.

FATHER TOM

You are a Muslim?

STACY

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FATHER TOM

Then why were you there?

STACY

I don't know. I found out that Islam and Christianity are similar.

FATHER TOM

They are not similar. The Qur'an says " Kill the unbelievers wherever you find them, capture and besiege them and prepare for them every kind of ambush." Does that sound like "Thou shall not kill?"

QUICK CUTS BETWEEN THE IMAM AND THE PRIEST

These quotes get said faster and faster until they are almost unintelligible.

IMAM QAZWINI

The Bible says "If your very own brother, or your son or daughter, or the wife you love, or your closest friend secretly entices you, saying, "Let us go and worship other gods", do not yield to him or listen to him. Show him no pity. Do not spare him or shield him. You must certainly put him to death." "He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed."

FATHER TOM

Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah. Those who follow him are merciful to one another, but ruthless to unbelievers.

IMAM QAZWINI

And he that blasphemes the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death.

FATHER TOM

Fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IMAM QAZWINI

Anyone arrogant enough to reject  
the verdict of the judge or of the  
priest 38

who represents the LORD your God must be put to death.

FATHER TOM

Enmity and hatred will reign  
between us until ye believe in  
Allah alone.

IMAM QAZWINI

Whoever sacrifices to any god,  
except the Lord alone, shall be  
doomed.

FATHER TOM

Make war on them until idolatry  
does not exist any longer and  
Allah's religion reigns  
universally.

IMAM QAZWINI

They entered into a covenant to  
seek the Lord, the God of their  
fathers, with all their heart and  
soul; and everyone who would not  
seek the Lord, the God of Israel,  
was to be put to death, whether  
small or great, whether man or  
woman.

FATHER TOM

Fight the unbelievers in your  
surroundings, and let them find  
harshness in you.

IMAM QAZWINI

Because the LORD considers it a  
holy day, anyone who works on the  
Sabbath must be put to death.

SLAM!!!!

INT BAR - LATER

The sound was a shot glass hitting the bar. Stacy is in the  
bar and just finished a shot. William is sitting next to her.  
He is drinking a beer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAM

Religion is used to control social behavior in human societies. Up till now, human beings have been struggling to find a way of living their lives. All man-made religions, Christianity, Judaism, Islam have all pretty much failed. So what is going to fill this abyss in human society? Technology? Science? Star Wars?

Stacy drinks another shot.

STACY

Today, alcohol is replacing it.

WILLIAM

The Bible and Qur'an are filled with contradictions. Whoever chooses the quotes usually tell us more about the person who picks the quote than the quote itself.

STACY

I learned that today. They both say to have mercy on people; some quotes say to kill non-believers. And they know each other's Holy book.

WILLIAM

When you are competing for souls, it's nice to have the other guys' playbook.

Stacy smiles.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Freud said "A religion, even if it calls itself a religion of love, must be hard and unloving to those who do not belong to it."

STACY

Why is there religion anyway?

WILLIAM

To give people hope.

STACY

What do you say about religion?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WILLIAM  
Religion is the best and the worst  
of humankind.

Silence.

STACY  
Have you ever thought about  
suicide?

WILLIAM  
Every day for the past 35 years.

He picks up his beer and tips it to her.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)  
I'm just doing it slowly.  
Nietzsche said "The thought of  
suicide is a great consolation: by  
means of it one gets successfully  
through many a bad night."

A quite moment between them.

STACY  
I killed someone there.

WILLIAM  
I know. Me too.

STACY  
A little girl.

WILLIAM  
I'm sorry. Do you want to talk  
about it?

STACY  
No.

WILLIAM  
Are you tired?

STACY  
Yes.

WILLIAM  
Go rest.

She looks in his eyes and gets off her stool.

She starts walking out the door.

INT CAR - LATER

She gets inside her car and pulls something out of her purse. The camera pulls back from her face showing the pistol she has pointed at her head.

The screen goes black and the fatal gunshot is heard.

EXT IRAQ STREET - AFTERNOON

The little girl is walking down an alley.

A terrific explosion is heard. She walks toward the sound, scared but curious.

She looks around the corner and sees the Humvee burning. Shots are being fired.

Suddenly she is pulled backward and to the ground by her an unseen figure, then pulls her away. The unhurt little girl gets up and runs away.

FADE OUT -