

Foreword

To my Christian readers –

The Crossfire series of action/adventure stories include depictions of violence which are unusual in Christian literature. It would be nice if there were no conflict or violence in our world. But we live in a time when evil is increasing instead of diminishing, when some men seem to be controlled by selfishness, madness, or evil forces. When the enemies of decent mankind are bent on subjugation of other men and women, righteous men and women must stand against evil. The yoke of oppression is not lifted by prayer alone. Yahweh is our shepherd and we are his sheep. As long as there are wolves about, Yahweh will use some of us as sheep dogs to defend the rest of us. These stories are about people like that and the forces they fight against. The stories describe violence because it occurs in the real world and it is active in the lives of all people whether they recognize it or not.

To my non-Christian readers –

The Crossfire series include depictions of spiritual warfare and spiritual activity with which the non-Christian may not be familiar. These stories describe the realms and activities of both Yahweh and satan because they're real and active in the lives of all people whether they recognize it or not.

Steve Thompson

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PROLOGUE

BOOK 1 “*Colorado Crossfire*”

In this first book of the Crossfire series, Jack and Laura Malone are jolted out of their pleasant existence as a young, upwardly mobile urban couple by Yahweh’s plans for their lives. They are almost destroyed, but find the Father and battle back to victory over their enemies.

BOOK 2 “*Children’s Crossfire*”

Jack and Laura embark on a walk with the Father that leads them into more danger and conflict. Teaming up again with Mark Connelly, their investigations involve a new partner in their team, Sara Cohen, an Israeli Mossad agent. The operation takes on new dangers and battles as the team attempts to save the U.S. from urban warfare. They are about to return home when an urgent request from Israel reroutes them to Tel Aviv.

BOOK 3 “*Israeli Crossfire*”

The four person Crossfire Team combats a terroristic plot being carried out in Tel Aviv. They become involved in the state defense and politics of Israel as they attempt to save friends, relatives and two nations from a deadly war of terror.

BOOK 4 “*Believer’s Crossfire*”

Jack and Laura become embroiled in a satanic attack and the efforts of a “church” to destroy Christians. Jack is taken captive and new people enter their lives to help them fight an even deadlier plot that could destroy the entire world.

BOOK 5 “*Spirit Crossfire*”

The enemy strikes at all the members of the Crossfire team as they obediently do Yahweh’s will to destroy a form of darkness that has been attacking them since the beginning of their walk with the Father.

BOOK 6 “*Faith Crossfire*”

The Crossfire Team runs headlong into Zultarian problems in Zyngola. They are used by Yahweh to arrange a challenge between Yahweh and Zultar. In their battles in this African land they find a new member for the team. These battles lead them into conflict with the largest nation in the world.

BOOK 7 “*Chinese Crossfire*”

The team is faced off against the machinations of a demon-controlled Chinese governmental official that believes he is next Emperor of China and his new purpose in life is to attain the the Father’s Treasure and eliminate the Crossfire Team.

BOOK 8 “*Texas Crossfire*”

The Crossfire Team is drawn into one man’s delusions and torments that are set to destroy an entire people to ease his bitterness. Once again, the enemy of mankind has a far more dangerous end to his hidden agenda. The Crossfire Team is drawn into the maelstrom of riches, politics, and warfare in their effort to stop the enemy’s plans.

BOOK 9 “*Darkness Crossfire*”

An ancient evil is uncovered and the Crossfire Team is appointed by Yahweh to battle it both in the world and in the spiritual realm. Pursuing the cause of millions of deaths the team discovers that spiritual warfare can be far deadlier than earthly combat. A running battle is waged against “Vorbleg” and his earthly representative Hermann Lutz.

CHAPTER ONE

At the quiet hour of three o'clock in the morning the private hanger at Denver International Airport or DIA was bathed in the light of a full moon. Everything was stark white or pitch black. The soft sounds of the airport hardly invaded the silence of the early morning hour. Jack Malone walked out of the hanger into the cold December pre-dawn hours and his breath formed a cloud as he exhaled.

Violence struck suddenly out of the dark in the form of two men who operated as a well-coordinated team. The first man ran from Jack's right and pulled a short sword from a hidden sheath under his coat. He planted his feet and swung a fast two-handed horizontal cut at Jack's neck. The other man ran in quickly from Jack's left and displayed a short sword or large knife. He lunged with the knife at Jack's torso from his left side. A normal person could easily fall prey to this double attack. By focusing on one attacker they would be taken unawares by the second.

But, tonight their prey was not a normal person. Jack Malone not only had years of martial arts training and taught it, he also had been in almost constant combat for the last two years. He had detected the combined attack as it began. Rather than try to figure out what to do, he relaxed and let his training take over.

His left hand deflected the wrist of the hand holding the knife blade thrust at his side by the attacker to his left. At the same time he leaned to the left and let the higher horizontal cut whiz past over his right shoulder. He drilled a full-power side kick to chest of the attacker on the right which knocked him backwards hard enough he lost his balance and fell down.

At the same time as he kicked the man on his right, Jack drove a full-power, right-hand knuckle strike to the other attacker's throat. He had been able to break two-by-four boards with his knuckle strike for years and the effect on the man's throat was far more drastic. The man's larynx was crushed and suddenly he had no way to get air into his lungs.

By then the first attacker had regained his feet and raised his sword in a two handed high guard position in preparation for slicing and dicing Jack.

With a thunderous slap of sound, a .45-calibre bullet slammed into the man's hands and the sword hilt. A bloody sword flew out of the man's hands to clatter to the tarmac in front of the hanger. The man tried to stem the blood flow in each hand by grasping it in his other hand. Mark Connelly aimed the pistol at the man's forehead and told him to get on his knees.

The man desperately tried to draw a second knife but his hands were too mangled to accomplish the task. Mark shook his head and walked over to the man and struck him with the butt end of his gun in the side of the head. The man collapsed to the ground unconscious. At the same time, his partner quit kicking as he suffocated.

A six-foot tall athletic blonde with an excellent female form stepped out of the hanger. Laura Malone had her pistol out and walked over to her husband Jack. "What was that about?"

Jack stared down at the unconscious man from his six-foot, four-inch height and shook his head. Jack's face was handsome with blonde hair and blue-green eyes. His physique was muscular with solid muscle masses under taut skin. His skill in martial arts was the best in the team and his combat skills were becoming professional. He looked at his wife. "I don't have a clue. What do you think Mark?"

Mark Connelly could of posed for a Marine Corp recruiting poster. He was muscular and what was known as "buff" by the current generation. Standing six foot, two inches tall with a full head of black hair and a ruggedly handsome face, he was an ex-SEAL and a master military strategist. His combat skills were the best of the team and he was usually in the lead in firefights. Well tanned, he looked like a Hollywood version of a combat star, but he was the real thing. He finished checking the man for anything that would identify him, expecting nothing and finding none. He looked up at Jack, "My guess is this a back-up plan from our friend, Hermann Lutz. Just in case their Phoenix plan didn't succeed."

Mark's wife, Sarah Connelly, also had her pistol out. Slightly shorter than Laura, she was a dark-haired version of her best friend. As a recently retired top field agent for the Mossad she was as deadly as her husband and almost as knowledgeable in combat skills. Her background as a spy was a big asset to the team. She didn't look at the men on the ground or even the other members of the team. She kept her head turning, constantly scanning the area around them for new threats.

Sarah said, "I have a bad feeling. Let's move back into the hanger. I wouldn't trust those vehicles since they were here, unattended, while these guys were here before us." Mark agreed and they pulled the unconscious man and his dead partner back into the hanger and closed the large door which they had opened ten minutes ago to admit their corporate jet.

Laura felt a warning in her spirit. "Get down, now!" Everyone dropped to the floor of the hanger as several dozen silenced rounds flew overhead through the place they had been standing. Unfortunately for the shooter a silencer

removes the noise but doesn't completely hide the muzzle flash. Four .45-calibre pistols fired almost simultaneously and the man standing by the wall of the hanger aiming a rifle, slammed back into the metal of the hanger and slid down the wall leaving a bloody trail.

Sarah was angry enough for everyone. "What in the devil is the security team doing these days? Letting anyone with a gun or a knife in here?"

Mark put a calming hand on his wife's arm. "My guess is that they were taken out before we got here. Let's get some more help." He flipped open his cell phone to call the police when new shots rang out and bullets struck the concrete of the hanger floor near and even between the team members and caromed off into the walls. There were at least two shooters this time and there was no cover available for the team. Sarah grabbed the body of the dead attacker and held it up in front of her with her left hand while she aimed her pistol with her right. Two more rounds struck the already dead man and she replied with four rounds. This time the shooter was careful to stay behind cover and wasn't hit.

The other team members attempted to move towards any type of cover they could find. The two shooters were ranging their shots trying to hit any of them when a new player joined the battle. Su Li, the team's pilot leaned out of the aircraft doorway and fired a M-249 at the shooters. The Asian beauty had loaded the squad automatic weapon with a chain-link, two-hundred round box magazine which allowed her to fire it at its full seven-hundred, fifty round-per-minute capacity. The unrelenting incoming fire power was too much for the two shooters and they both bolted from their positions and died trying to flee. Su Li kept the smoking rifle moving from side to side as she looked for new targets.

Mark completed his call to the police and then he called the security branch at Denver International Airport. In a few minutes several security cars arrived and the officers started a search for any other possible attackers.

As Laura got off the floor and stood near the aircraft, She recalled how they came to this point. They had been returning from a battle with the Soldiers of Zultan in Phoenix with a new threat on their minds. After Su Li landed them at DIA, she taxied to the hanger and opened the door with a remote control. The team had disembarked and were headed for their vehicles when the first attack occurred.

Sighing, she wondered if this would be her life until she died or Yahshua came back. This was not a glamorous or chic lifestyle. It was exciting but it could be very tiring and didn't leave much time for a break. Maybe she'd have to ask Jack if they could take some time off to relax. Sometime soon.

CHAPTER TWO

The day after the attack at the airport, Jack went to his plant to make sure everything could stand another absence by the President and to catch up on his backlog of paperwork. He knew his Crossfire activities kept him busy and this allowed his corporate duties to pile up. He was delighted by the progress that Technical Alternatives had made in his absences. All the programs were ahead of schedule and very successful.

To Jack this was further evidence that it was the grace of Yahweh that was giving him and his company such success, not his talents. In fact, during his time with Bob Wexler, his partner who was running the company in his absence, he had been asked for new projects since the Research and Development department had just about completed all proposed projects and were mainly working on finding ways to upgrade existing projects such as the Wrecon weather system or the latest version of the NovaStar Home Defense Systems. He had several ideas for new projects himself and he would call his father and uncle and see if they needed R and D on anything.

After handling all the paperwork and generating a few dozen memos and emails he felt things were ready for his departure. First though, he wanted to check with the Father to make sure that he was doing things properly. He started praying and the weight of the communion pressed down on him pleasantly. An hour later he was still sitting at his desk, in his office, deeply in prayer.

As he had relaxed, he considered how he could use his good fortune to help the needy and the people that were striving to be good Christians but failing financially. He had prayed that the Spirit of Yahweh would allow him to put his good fortune to work for others rather than himself. He was already giving out the LifeCape free to all needy people. The food program for the homeless was doing so well that they had opened up two more in Denver and there were other groups using the same techniques in over a hundred U.S. and foreign cities to help the dispossessed.

Following a leading from the Father, he decided to fund a new program that would give all kids a chance at a good life. First he called Laura and asked her what she thought. She was happy he found a way to obey the Father and help kids at the same time. She gave her blessing to the project. The money didn't really mean a thing to either of them anymore. She had laughed and asked him when she would have time to spend it, enjoy what

she bought, or even need anything the way things were going with Yahweh's plans for the Crossfire Team.

Jack detected a note of sourness in her comments and made a note to see what was eating her when he got home.

Jack then called seven people and set up a think tank starting in twenty days. He would pay each of the people for six months of their efforts out of his own pocket. He wanted them to start with the objective of providing a self-paced education center that would give children of all ages a free opportunity to excel. The guiding principles for this new school was to accurately determine the potential for each child and develop their minds along those lines. Rather than put all the square and round pegs into eight-sided holes, they would attempt to put each child in the right path for their own life. If the right methods could be developed, they could pre-determine a child's potential for college, trades, or other possible careers. This determination would be rechecked each year of development so that changes or mis-determinations could be re-evaluated.

Jack and TA would foot the bills including lunches, supplies, teacher's salaries, and transportation. He suggested a year-round operation with the different educational levels starting on different months so that the classes overlapped throughout the year. But the children would only be going for nine months a year. If the people in the think tank could distill and optimize the education process so that it was not only fun and challenging then it would again become interesting to the students rather than a required grind.

He tasked them to develop psychological and ability tests for the children at all grades K through 12 and offer them a curriculum with goals that matched their capabilities and their desires. It would be interesting to see the results in ten and twenty years. Since this school would not be funded out of public funds there would be no way the liberal extremists could demand that they keep Yahweh or Yahshua out of the school. Morals and principles would be taught along with the arts and sciences.

As far as the funds needed to staff and run the school Jack would start it off out of his own money. The Father had shown him that the more he gave to the works of the Father and the "least of His brethren" the more he would be given to use. He had been surprised on finding his net worth had climbed to over seven hundred million dollars in stock and options in the company. Since he had instituted an aggressive profit-sharing program he knew that everyone that worked there was worth at least two to three million dollars. His unexpected wealth gave him the money to kick-start the

think tank and fund the first year of the school. After it was a success he would ask Yahweh how to continue the venture.

He called in two attorneys that he trusted. They were an oddity in the legal world. Christians that kept their values and dealt fairly with all. He explained what he was doing for the school and gave them control of two hundred million dollars to oversee the project. He had the funds transferred to an account the attorneys could draw from and would allow for strict accounting by a his accountants.

After they left, he sat back and relaxed. He noticed that it was already dark outside and that the second shift was in high gear. He was about to shut down the office and head back to the fortress when he felt a heavy burden laid on his spirit. He had learned that was a clear signal from Yahweh for him to seek the Father in prayer.

As he felt the weight of the Spirit and he dropped deeper into communion with the Father, he asked what the Father wanted him to pray. He felt a concept come into his mind that was beyond his capability to understand. It was so deep into physics that he couldn't grasp the concepts or even the terms.

He prayed for wisdom as the Bible told him to do it. James 1:5-7 said, *If you need wisdom—if you want to know what Yahweh wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking. But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Father.*

Jack reconsidered the concepts that he had gotten. Now they made sense but he was still uncertain as to the use or meaning of their application. He began to write them down and draw sketches to illustrate them.

Three hours later he sat back and reviewed his notes and drawings. Suddenly he knew what they were for and he was shocked. He carefully went through the information again and reached the same conclusion. He started to pray again and he saw the face of one of the physicists that had been working on the LifeCape project. The man was a theorist and brilliant in his field. Jack tried to remember his name. The whole LifeCape concept had been created on the molecular level. Seven molecular scientists had been hired on contract to handle the related physics. A unique laboratory had been built on the TA property to house the project and included two nuclear tunneling microscopes and associated video gear. That gear was still there. The LifeCape design concept had required a new way of looking at molecu-

lar bonding, construction, and nanoelectronic transfer devices. This new concept was pretty much up the same alley but much deeper.

The phone rang and he answered it seeing that it was Laura from the caller ID. She asked him if he was planning to come home eventually. He knew then that there was an attitude in the air. He explained that he had been given a burden by the Father and was working it out. He apologized for not being there for her. She softened somewhat and her voice regained much of its natural pleasantness and softness. She told him, "Jack, we need to get a break for a few days. I'd like it to be just you and me if that is possible."

Jack thought about it and agreed that he would make it possible.

Jack then called Bob Wexler at home and Bob told him that the scientist's name was Dr. Byron Clashire. Bob was also able to give Jack the man's home phone number in California. When Bob asked why he needed the man, Jack told him that he was working on a new project concept and wanted to consult the scientist.

When Dr. Clashire answered the phone, Jack identified himself and asked the man if he was available. It turned out that his last contract had just finished successfully and he was looking for a new challenge. Jack thought for a few seconds and asked, "Doctor, would you be willing to hire on full time here at my company and head up a five-year project that would give you that challenge?"

Dr. Clashire asked, "What terms would I be working under?"

Jack said, "We will pay you a minimal salary of say, two hundred thousand dollars annually but will give you twenty thousand shares of TA which is trading at fifty dollars a share at present. That's a million dollars up front. If this project has the potential I think it does, TA shares will probably shoot up to somewhere around two hundred and fifty dollars a share before splitting four for one, maybe twice. You will be independently wealthy either way. We also offer really good benefits."

Dr. Clashire coughed and said, "Put that in writing and I'll sign it tomorrow when I start to work. Can we discuss it then?"

Jack laughed, "See you tomorrow."

When Jack arrived at the Fortress he noted that everyone was already in bed. Checking his watch he saw that it was after two in the morning. Probably a good reason they'd all gone to sleep.

He took a quick shower and slid into bed next to Laura. He put his arms around her and held her as she slept. She rolled over and snuggled into his

embrace. The thought crossed Jack's mind that he loved her more than anything on the earth. He was startled when he heard her mumble, "You'd bettered."

At eight o'clock he was back at the office. Bob escorted the scientist into Jack's office. Jack told him to take off his suit coat and relax. They completed the paperwork and gave the signed copies to Jack's secretary for filing and notary. Jack called the stock company that he and Bob had signed on with when Bob took the company public earlier in the year.

Jack had them assign twenty thousand shares of stock to Dr. Clashire and had them fax him a copy of the transfer. Jack checked it and handed it to the doctor. "Here's your million dollars. It'll be yours if you decide you can do the project. If you do accept, I'll expect you to drive this project from day one to completion."

Byron smiled, "I'll do what I can. Tell me what the project is and if you can, tell me the source of the invention, for example, who generated the initial concept."

Jack nodded, "The concept is similar to the LifeCape project but at a much more fundamental level. It is a generated field that absorbs incoming energy and converts it."

The scientist tipped his head to one side. "Doesn't sound too complicated, a silicon solar cell does that."

Jack smiled, "This is a little more complicated. This field will take the energy of an explosion and absorb it and convert it to useful energy."

Byron was intrigued, "How big of an explosion?"

Jack shrugged, "I don't know for sure. But, if my calculations are correct it could stand up to a hydrogen bomb and handle it with ease."

The doctor thought for a few minutes, "A generated field huh? Is this some kind of science fiction like the energy fields around a space ship that take hits from energy weapons and keep the ship safe." His tone was concerned for Jack's basis of information rather than skeptical.

Jack gestured, "Theoretically I suppose it could do that. But, the one I want to develop will shield a single person."

Dr. Clashire frowned, "How do we power it and how does it work?"

Jack took out his drawings and notes. "I'll let you work through these later, but in summary, the field is generated by a device worn on the body that creates an altered type of atomic structure as a field surrounding the

person. This structure is refreshed once every ten picoseconds and has the unique property of regeneration.”

Jack showed the doctor several drawings and explained them to him. Then he looked through his notes. “When energy is applied to the field from the outside, the valence electrons begin to absorb the energy. Conventional atomic structures jump the valence electrons up to new energy levels as the input increases. This continues until they disintegrate and destroy the molecular structures they make up, This new structure absorbs energy up to the change level and then collapses into a more compact structure and dissipates the additional energy by creating a new atom in the space vacated by the original atomic structure. Since all the atoms in that area of the field are affected at the same time, the covalent bonds are also recreated.”

Jack pointed to another drawing,” As the energy continues to mount, the process is repeated as many times as necessary between refreshes from the field generator. I estimate that the sequence could be repeated several thousand times between ten picosecond refreshes. The structure of the field simply becomes thousands of times more dense and impenetrable. When the refresh takes place, any additional energy is converted into gravitational waves by magnetic alteration. The gravitational wave anchors the field in relation to the earth, resisting any movement due to the force of the incoming energy. The cycle repeats itself until all the energy is dissipated.”

The doctor wanted to argue or dismiss some of the theory but he couldn't find anything wrong with what his new boss had just suggested. He would have to research this a lot. “What powers the field?”

Jack pointed at a whole section of his drawing of the field generator. “ElectroMagneticGravitational energy. EMG.”

Byron frowned, “EMG? How can you harness it?”

Jack pointed at the drawing, “Remember how the field dissipates the unwanted energy? Just reverse the process and use the denser field collapse to power the generator. It should work without having to be attacked first. The gravity field interacts with the atomic structure to provide sufficient power to generate the field.”

Byron sat back and thought for about ten minutes. Going over every conceivable objection and possibility of impossibility. Coming up blank without his having time to research it he smiled. “If this is correct, and right now I can't see why it wouldn't work, you will have created the most effective protection solution ever made. But more than that, you will have

created the ultimate source of energy that would replace gasoline engines, batteries, wind power, solar energy, and any other form. The effects on the world's economic and political structure that this thing would cause would be almost beyond comprehension. It's simplicity is wonderful. It's so simple that it makes one think that it wouldn't work, but, it should." He looked at Jack with a small amount of concern. "If one glimpse of this should get out before we can perfect it, there will be five million people trying to get it, kill us to keep it from ever happening, or to use it to control the world. I wouldn't even trust our government. Actually, I don't know that I could trust you or me to have this kind of power."

Jack nodded, "That's why we need to keep it between ourselves and my partner. The only other people who will know about it will be my team and perhaps one other person, all of who I will stake my life on. I expect you will be circumspect in hiring help or ordering material, and things like that?"

Byron nodded. "I most certainly will. In fact I will come up with a parallel phony project and we will keep this quiet. You know, you misinterpreted the effect this device will have on our stock. You can't estimate the amount of sheer desire to own this process. It will make everyone here so rich that money won't mean anything, again, ever."

Jack shook his head. "The production output of this "field" will be kept limited to a very, very few groups. I doubt that the world at large will know anything about it for years to come. These few groups will drive the stock up."

Dr. Clashire smiled. "I may be your newest employee but I am definitely vested in the stock department so let me be the first to repeat that a protective field is only one use for this process. It can have applications in transportation, medicine, astrophysics, flight, energy, and sports. In fact, this will change the world as we know it. Consider the geo-political implications in just replacing the need for oil. Whoa! If we are careful to keep the process secret and make it so it can't be reverse-engineered, we could rival the largest companies in the world for products and profits."

Jack smiled, "We will keep the process secret and proceed slowly on other uses. If we can help people we will but we won't let the cat out of the bag. Byron, can I count on you to head this whole thing up and to keep it safe from misuse? Is that an acceptable responsibility?"

Byron nodded. "I think I have just found my life's work. You can depend on me, but, I also need checks and balances and I will rely on you and Bob to do that. Now, where did this marvelous concept come from? I don't think

that you are deep enough in the physics of the thing to understand what you have so I don't think you thought it up."

Jack smiled, "You're right, I didn't think it up. Yahweh, or God if you prefer, gave it to me in one complete package."

Byron wasn't sure if Jack was kidding or not. "Really? Yahweh? I'm supposed to believe that the Creator just gave this to you?"

Jack nodded, "Believe it. If you don't believe me, just ask Him yourself. Yahweh himself is in charge of this project and will protect it. I don't have to tell you that He's a jealous God."

The scientist began to see that Yahweh could very well be real. This was a new concept for him. But it was enough for the Spirit of Yahweh to work with in his spirit.

Doctor Clashire stood up and extended his hand to Jack. "Thank you for this opportunity and everything else. I need to start to design the lab." He stopped and thought for a minute. "No, I need to start designing the tools we will need to make the tools we will use to make the laboratory so that we can investigate this concept. And we will need and come up with an acceptable alternative project as a cover."

Jack nodded, "Okay, I will assign my best security manager to keep you up to date on how to maintain your privacy and secrecy. He used to report to Mark Connelly. He's very security minded. You'll like him, his name is Will Carol. He doesn't need to know what you're doing but how you want to protect it. After that he will see that you are safe. Once you have your tools and your lab figured out, let me know and I will have a secure building built and outfitted for you. I know some really good architects and design engineers."

Jack was quiet for a few seconds and then he looked the Doctor in the eyes. "I meant it when I said that Yahweh will keep this from getting out. Learn to listen to Him and follow His leading. It will save you a great deal of time and probably a great deal of pain. He is behind this and wants it to become a reality, but, it will be for His uses, not ones we think it should be used for. Do you think you can kneel before him in true humility and do his work?"

Dr. Clashire felt the wind blowing over the bottomless chasm that Jack had seen before, as he looked into his soul. He also felt the presence of what he thought was Yahweh nearby. He took a deep breath and said, "Yes, I can, and, I will."

CHAPTER THREE

Turning all of the corporate projects, including the new one, over to Bob Wexler, Jack headed back to his alternate life with the Crossfire Team. He arrived home close to five o'clock on December 6th after fighting the traffic and the weather. Snow had fallen for almost nine hours and the homeward bound traffic was snarled up and in some cases almost frantic. Jack was glad he was driving the new Cadillac Escalade with four-wheel drive. He was also very glad to pass the signs warning others to go no further. After crossing three sets of tire-shredding grills, the road turned to the right and then arced back around a curve to the left. At this point, signs were no longer needed as the road ended in a twenty foot gap that was thirty feet deep and as wide as the road. Across the gap was a granite cliff with a massive gate set flush into the cliff. Several TV cameras were visible as well as a variety of ominous closed ports that concealed weapons.

Jack operated the remote control. He waited several seconds until the gate had swung outward and up from the bottom and inward and down at the top. The entire assembly then moved outward and descended into the gap to form a bridge across the open span. The bars of the gate were twenty-four inch square beams with six-inch thick walls. This would allow the heaviest truck or tank to cross it but, when it was up, it would also resist all but the heaviest of military ordinance attempting to breach it.

As Jack drove across the bridge/gate in the driving snow, a series of lights came on in the tunnel behind the gate. With the snow behind him he drove through marble walls which rose twenty-five feet to the arched ceiling in the thirty-foot wide tunnel. The tunnel made a gradual turn to the left and then another turn to the right before resuming a straight path for two hundred yards. This prevented any direct fire from one end of the tunnel to the other. At the other end of the tunnel was another bridge/gate combination that was already in the lowered position.

Jack drove past the second gate and turned left into the large enclosed parking area. Upon exiting the SUV Jack sensed warm but fresh, flowing air smelling of mountain greenery

The familiar, well-lit entrance stood at the end of the parking area. As he approached it the NovaStar sign lit up requesting identification. Jack identified himself. The sign went out and a satin-chrome finished set of elevator doors opened and Jack got on the elevator. The satin-chrome finish hid the inch-thick armor plating behind it.

The living room was a circular-shaped open area of over two thousand square feet of floor space. The entire far side of the circle from the elevator was floor-to-ceiling windows. The ceiling was twenty feet above the carpeted floor. The ceiling was matte-finished, polished stone in a light brownish-white color which added to spectacular view of the valley below the dwelling and the mountains on the other side of the valley. Again the air smelled fresh and mountain clean. Jack was aware that the huge panoramic view of the outside world was actually piped in from over a quarter mile away and represented by the "View Port" system. He knew that on the actual granite wall overlooking the valley there were twelve, 10" ports that acted as lenses for the system. The protection scheme was good enough to be undetectable. If you stood at the window and looked down, you'd believe you could see almost straight down into the valley.

Since TA had started marketing the View Port windowing systems the demand had been fantastic. This demand had doubled their corporate stock price within three months. The military and the security sectors were the leading buyers of the technology but the private sector was growing quickly.

Comfortable furniture and dramatic art was placed strategically around the room. The lighting was subtle with recessed lamps providing back lighting and tasteful use of light panels throughout the room. A large rock fireplace and chimney graced the right wall and a large display television screen was prominent on the left. The colors and scents and accents were done with class and it was obvious that the same interior decorator that had finished the first two NovaStar-equipped homes had also done this one.

Jack walked over to the door leading to the war room and opened it. Seven members of the team were at their consoles working on building a case on Hermann Lutz and his demon Vorbleg. Jack walked over to Laura and kissed her on the cheek. She smiled and continued talking to the Chaplain of a U.S. Air Force base in Germany. "Thank you Major. I appreciate your help. Let me know if anything new pops up. Goodbye."

She took off her headset and stood up to stretch. Jack took her in his arms and hugged her. "Hey good looking, what's cooking?"

Laura looked at him with wide eyes, "I thought you were bringing home dinner." Then she laughed at the lost expression on his face.

She took him off to a quiet corner and told him that she was sorry for being so grumpy the previous evening. Hormones were blamed and she smiled at him. "I had a long talk with the Father this morning after you left and I'm much better now."

She assumed a serious face and told him that while he was off playing CEO they had all been hard at work tracking down their nemesis, Hermann Lutz.

Jack looked over at Mark and asked, “Any headway so far?”

Mark walked up to them and smiled, “Oh yeah, courtesy of my wife’s ex-employer. I guess they went all out in memory of Joey Goldberg. I’ll let Sarah give you the highlights.” He gestured behind him with his thumb at Sarah.

Sarah sat back with a grim look on her face. “It seems that the information has always been available but no one thought to put it together as being a single individual before Joey stumbled onto Lutz after he thought he’d removed him from the scene in Germany two years ago.”

She held up the data and summarized it. “Hermann Lutz was born to an impoverished family in the Rhur Valley in the year 1878. He worked in a mine when he was old enough to hold a shovel. His father died in a cave-in when Hermann was eighteen. He then became the bread-winner for a family of six. A late night fire destroyed the house he lived in and the rest of his family less than a year later.”

She continued, “Alone, with no education and with no one to sponsor him, he was destined to die poor and forgotten. Then, miraculously, he was granted admission to a German military academy. There is no record of who paid for his time there but he had a good mind and a sense for the correct military response for any given situation. He rose through the cadet ranks until he was the student commander of the academy when he graduated. Knowing talent when they saw it, the army sent him to their equivalent to today’s OCS. Again, he excelled and left the school as a Captain in the German army. In 1905 he ended his enlistment and retired from the military.”

She looked at Jack, “This is where things get weird. He reappears in 1912 as a military attache for the German high command. Our analysis now indicates it was his plan that inflamed the first world war. He had the note sent that was received in Zagreb at a Cafe called “Zlatna Moruna in late April, 1914. That set up the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand. After that, everywhere there was strife or tension, Lutz seems to have had a hand in it somehow. At the end of World War I, Lutz was 40 years old. He then disappeared for eighteen years. The next record of his activities was a special advisor to Hiendrich Himmler, the man in charge of eliminating the Jews from Poland and Germany.”

Sarah decided a bit of history was in order. "While no specific order from Hitler authorizing the mass killing of Jews has been found, the evidence suggests that sometime in the fall of 1941, Himmler and he agreed in principle on mass murder by gassing. The Wannsee conference, held near Berlin in January of 1942, was attended by fifteen senior officials, led by Reinhard Heydrich and Adolf Eichmann. The records of this meeting provide the best evidence of the central planning of the Holocaust. Between 1942 and 1944 the SS, assisted by collaborationist governments and recruits from occupied countries, systematically killed approximately 3.5 million more Jews in six camps in Poland; Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibor and Treblinka and one in what is now present-day Belarus, called Maly Trostenets. Other Jews were killed less systematically elsewhere, or died of starvation and disease while working as slave laborers. The Holocaust, or we call it, Shoah, was Himmler's final solution to the "Jewish Problem". From what our investigators are now discovering, it was probably Lutz's idea which Himmler adopted as his own."

Looking at Mark she continued, "It wasn't just the Jews you know. Other ethnic groups and social categories were also subject to persecution and in some cases extermination. Thousands of German socialists, communists and other opponents of the regime died in concentration camps, as did a large but unknown number of homosexual men. The Gypsies were regarded as an inferior race and were also shot or sent to death camps. About three million Soviet prisoners of war also died in camps or as slave labourers. All the occupied countries suffered terrible privations and mass executions: up to three million, non-Jewish, Polish civilians died during the occupation. "

Sarah tapped the papers in front of her. "As I said before, there is no known document in which Hitler explicitly ordered the Holocaust, although there is documentation that he approved of the Einsatzgruppen, where Jews throughout Russia were stripped naked and shot in front of ditches. Most historians believe he not only knew of the Holocaust and the gas chambers but ordered Himmler to carry it out. Certainly it was entirely consistent with his lifelong beliefs and his growing interest in the occult."

Mark asked, "Did Lutz take any part or any credit for the Holocaust?"

Sarah shook her head, "Lutz never seeks the limelight. He stays back, in the shadows where he can move others to do what he wants done. Anyway, in the closing days of World War II, when Hitler and his girlfriend were committing suicide in his Berlin Bunker, Lutz slipped off to South America with many of the SS. He was caught in a photo, disembarking from

a steamship in Columbia in late 1945. At this point he still looks to be about 40 years old.”

Looking at the data she continued. “It now seems that he has been traveling all over the world to accomplish his master’s will to destroy the Jewish nation. Now that the possibility has been raised, investigators have been combing their files and they have turned up records and clues to his appearance in the middle east in every conflict that Israel has had since it’s inception. They have concrete evidence that he was involved in the planning for the attack that resulted in the 1948 Seven Day war with Egypt. He appeared in two photographs in Syria just before they declared that they were going to wipe Israel off the map, leading to the Six Day war with most of the Arab nations aligned against Israel.”

Sarah shook her head, “All at once, now that the concept has been accepted, there is data showing connections between Lutz and all of the rogue Arab nations. He has been photographed working or meeting with every known radical Arab terrorist group right up to Al Qaeda. He never acts overtly but always in the background, as an advisor or ally.”

Sarah took on the look of veiled angry fire that only indicated the amount of passion that was behind it. “I find it significant that he was involved in or at least in the vicinity of at least four of the combats that we have taken part in over the last two years. He is mentioned in some of the papers you got out of Don Miland’s manor south of Denver. He was a major supporter and confidant to the Believer’s Church Prophets in their effort to blackmail the world. He was an advisor to the Arab Neo-Idealist League group that created that air-borne poison that would kill all non-Arab children. He was, it turns out a major decision-maker in the ASF in the poisoning of Israel and the United States. He has been in Zyngola more than two dozen times recently. His contact in the Zultarian Religion in Zyngola? Abdullah Hami. This guy, it turns out, looks to be a key to many of the problems we as a team have been facing.”

Jack nodded, “That makes sense. If he is the wholly controlled agent of a major, ancient demon he would be at all the places that generate hate and death. Especially death to Israelis. It also makes sense that he would want control of the crucifixion nail.”

Mark added, “Now all we have to do is to find him, kill him, and exorcise his demon.”

Laura said “This is going to take a lot of prayer. I think it is time we asked the Father as a team what we need to do to accomplish his will in this matter.”