

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. God is our shepherd and we are his sheep. As long as there are wolves about, God 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 God and satan because they're real and active in the lives of all people whether they recognize it or not.

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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 God’s plans for their lives. They are almost destroyed, but find the Master and battle back to victory over their enemies.

BOOK 2 “*Children’s Crossfire*”

Jack and Laura embark on a walk with the Master 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 God’s will to destroy a form of darkness that has been attacking them since the beginning of their walk with the Master.

BOOK 6 “*Faith Crossfire*”

The Crossfire Team runs headlong into Zultarian problems in Zyngola. They are used by God 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 Holy 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 “*Demon Crossfire*”

An ancient evil is uncovered and the Crossfire Team is appointed by God 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. Additional demonic battles force the team to “take it up another notch”.

BOOK 10 “*Island Crossfire*”

To save a ministry team, the Crossfire Team fights Zultarian fanatics in the Philippines. Led by God they discover a modern plot to destroy the United States of America and one of America’s allies. A powerful group plans to reignite a world war and push an ancient and successful plot to eliminate God’s name from mankind.

CHAPTER ONE

The dream ended so suddenly Andrea Mullins was jarred awake uncertain of anything, even where she was. It was pitch black around her and while the smell of the jungle was heavy with rotting vegetation, she had a moment of hope that everything that seemed to have happened recently was simply a nightmare from which she was now waking up. That small hope was dashed when she felt the thick, scratchy rope that bound her ankles together.

Memories of death, blood, and sacrifice flooded back into her mind. Moving her hand she found her husband's back in the dark. He was still asleep and she didn't disturb him. She would tell him about the dream when he woke up. Putting her hands together she prayed, "Oh Father, I'm sorry we can't do your work and your will. My flesh would see all of these men destroyed, but, I know that is not your way and I have to live the life of Yahshua. Your will Father, not mine." Her prayer winged it's way heavenward.

In normal circumstances, Andrea was an attractive, dark-blonde woman in her forties who was still lovely in appearance and demeanor. Normally, she didn't use much in the way of cosmetics and dressed for efficiency and comfort rather than to impress others. Right now though, she was about as bedraggled as a woman could be. Considering they had been forced to march through the jungle for two days, sleep in the dirt, and not allowed to clean the sweat and dirt off of their faces or bodies.

Andrea lay still and thought through the events leading up to their laying here on the jungle floor, tied with ropes and guarded by men who meant to kill them very soon.

Less than a week ago, her husband Frank and she had followed the Master's leading in returning for the fifth time to the Philippines to proclaim the good news of Yahshua and to minister to the lost.

They had travelled to a remote village in the southern part of the island of Mindanao. This was in response to a plea for spiritual help from a Philippine minister. Andrea was impressed by the faith of the remote village whose members were desperate for the Word of the Father.

After reaching the village along with ten members of their home church, they gave them food and clothing which they had brought with them. This was followed by a fantastic first service despite the fact that there were only thirty people in attendance, Frank and Andrea had spoken about the Christian life and almost all of the people had come to the altar to give their

lives to Yahshua. There were many sick and lame people in the audience and Frank asked them if they believed that the Father would heal them. They expressed their new faith and unanimously said, "YES!" As the team members prayed for the sick, miracles happened and everyone who wanted to be healed was healed. The Master did many miracles that evening but the one that stood out in Andrea's memory was the elderly lady in a wheel chair, that had cataracts in both eyes so bad that her eyes were white.

In the press of people seeking healing, Mrs. Majore was prayed for by one of the newest members in their team. His prayer was earnest for healing for the woman and the Master had touched her mightily. Bill Monroe, the new member, said that he was thrilled when her eyes cleared up and became like brand-new brown eyes. But the best part was that the Father also restored her limbs which had been shriveled and useless for forty years. The joy in her eyes was mirrored in the rest of the people who had helped to support her as she stood up on straight legs and reached out with perfect arms and hands to hug Bill Monroe. After that, the balloon went up. Everyone there ran out of the service to tell everyone else about the miracles.

The next night the second service was crowded by over three hundred souls. Frank had started to tell them about the Savior when he noticed that the people in the back of the tent had started melting into the dark and a nervous tension swept over the people. Many got up and left the tent.

There were still about fifty people there when the Crescent Dagger rebels entered the tent from the back and both sides.

Andrea remembered her briefing about the violent splinter group of the original militant Zultarian group. They were an off-shoot of one of several guerrilla organizations involved in a resurgence of violence in the Philippines during the past years.

This particularly nasty group of terrorists operated in the south of the country. The Crescent Dagger terrorists were conducting a religious war against anything Christian, or for that matter, anything not Zultarian fundamentalist. Hostage-taking was their latest trick.

The Philippine Government had informed the ministry team that the Zultarians had been trying to evict Christians from Basilan Island and then advised them not to go into that part of the country because they would not be able to help them if they were captured by the Zultarians. The Crescent Dagger faction was the latest and fastest growing of the terrorists that allied themselves with the principles of Zultar. They had gotten such a bad

reputation in the last year that the majority of terrorists in the Zultarian movement disavowed any connection to them. Not that they were bothered by the kidnappings and killings, they did those things themselves. It wasn't the cruelty and inhuman disregard for life, even that of Zultarians that the Dagger evidenced in all their actions. It was so anti-life that it was demonic; these things didn't cause the rejection. The problem for the other terrorists was that the Crescent Dagger's highly publicized violence was so over-the-top that it was allowing the government to build wide support with the people against all of the Zultarians and making their cause disreputable. Andrea felt a cold touch of dread as she watched them move towards the ministry team.

Several of the new believers interposed themselves between the rebels and the platform where the Americans were. The rebel leader shot three of them dead where they stood and the others were shoved out of the way. His men then came up onto the platform and took both her and her husband hostage, tying their hands behind them.

As the rebels started to drag them off the platform, Bill Monroe stepped in front of them and told them to release the pastor and his wife. One of the rebels on the stage had stepped forward and, with a vicious swing of his large knife, beheaded the young man. Blood flew everywhere as Bill's body followed his head off the platform to the ground. Everyone was shocked into silence. The rebels picked up both Frank and Andrea and carried them into the night.

After leaving the tent area they were put on the ground, and were told to walk. They were forced to march for about three hours before the rebels stopped for food. Their hands were released and a plate of something was given to each of them along with a primitive spoon. While they were eating in silence, one of the rebels got into a heated argument with another one and the first man stabbed the second.

Frank gave his wife a knowing look and put his plate down. He stood up and walked over to the injured man. Squatting down he examined the wound and put his hands on the man to pray. The man who had stabbed his companion reversed his rifle and slammed it into the side of Frank's head. Frank crumpled to the ground unconscious. Before she could rise, the rebels dragged Frank back to their place and dropped him on the ground. One of the rebels pointed at him and said in broken English, "No Christian praying! It an abomination to Zultar!"

Andrea prayed for Frank and held him until he came back to consciousness. He had a terrible headache and double vision for a while but eventually he was able to see better and went to sleep.

The next two days were a blur of physical pain and strain as they were led up and down hills and further back into the jungle. She couldn't remember when she had pushed herself so hard for so long. She thought that some of their trips before had been physically brutal. But this was way beyond that.

An interesting thing had happened this night before they went to sleep. She had been sitting on the ground praying for the Father's mercy when she noticed a movement that was out of place. Putting on her glasses she made out a snake sliding through the grass toward two of the rebels sitting on a rock. She shouted, "snake" and pointed but everyone ignored her.

She wanted to just let the snake bite one of them but she knew that wasn't what the Father wanted her to do. He wanted these people to see His glory in action. She walked quickly over to the area of the men so as to draw their attention to the viper. Just as she got to them she noticed that the snake was almost upon them and the men were finally turning to look where she pointed.

Before she could say a word, the snake launched itself. But it didn't strike the men. Instead, it uncoiled in the blink of an eye and sank its fangs into Andrea's outstretched right hand. At first frightened, she remembered who she was in Yahshua and Acts 28 in the Scriptures, when the Apostle Paul had been bitten by a poisonous snake and suffered no ill effects. Mark 16:17-18 also suddenly came to mind, *"And these signs shall accompany the ones who believe: In My Name they shall cast out demons, they shall speak with renewed tongues, they shall take up snakes, and if they drink any deadly drink it shall by no means hurt them..."*

The two men, not knowing the word of the Father, scrambled away from her shouting, "Krait, Krait!"

"A Krait. Of course." Thought Andrea. The blue snake with black bands was about two feet long. Andrea turned and walked over to the fire holding her hand up with the snake still attached. Rebels were desperately trying to get away from her and the snake. Reaching the fire she held the snake over the flames and shook her hand. The snake released its hold and fell into the fire where it perished.

Andrea walked back to her husband and using a little water and a rag, cleaned the blood off of her hand. Wrapping her hand with the cloth, she sat there and regarded the rebels who were all watching her. They knew that she had been bitten by a "two-step" Krait. People bitten by this snake took two steps and died. The rebel that spoke English finally came over to her and with great respect said, "You no die?"

Andrea looked calmly at the young man and said, "Yahuweh protects me from snakes, doesn't Zultar protect you?"

CHAPTER TWO

Frank's head was feeling much better after the third day's forced march. He thought that he'd be so tired he couldn't function. But he found himself capable of making it all through the day without help from his wife. As he woke up on the fourth morning of their capture he actually felt hopeful. He signalled their guard and went into the bushes to take care of his bathroom needs.

When he returned he sat down next to Andrea and gave her a smile. She smiled back and moved closer to him. Casually looking around and seeing no one within hearing distance she told him. "I had a vivid dream last night. I was sitting in the jungle and a glow approached me. The glow coalesced into a beautiful gold and white angel. She told me that the Master heard our prayers for deliverance and He is sending His sword to free us." She looked at him and didn't see the look of hope she expected. "Don't you think that is good news?"

Frank wondered if the punch he got to his head was interfering with his talking with the Father. "I would say that it is good news but I can't seem to hear from Yahweh or Yahshua right now and I really don't know what to say. I will tell you that I believe our Father in Heaven will deliver us and it will be very soon."

She cocked her head to one side, "How do you know it will be soon?"

He looked at her and wondered if he should tell her. Knowing the truth is always better, he said, "It has to be soon. My potty guard laughed at me and told me that tonight they will kill us."

Andrea blinked once and said, "Oh."

That day they didn't march anywhere. They had a meager breakfast or brunch and watched the rebels as they talked and played cards. At six o'clock they got a fairly good dinner meal and some cheap wine to drink. It wasn't hard to figure out the symbology. Their last meal.

Just as it started to get dark the rebels got agitated and moved around a great deal. When it was dark, there were whispered commands and a lot of rustling of uniforms. Things got still as the majority of the rebels walked out of the camp to the west. Obviously it would be a short walk since they left everything but their rifles. The darkness closed down over the camp and it was a chilly night unrelieved by moonlight or any city glow on the horizon.

The sudden flare of a bright light transfixed the two Americans and then drew closer. Three men walked up to them and stopped. The leader with the cruel face had a big flashlight in his left hand and a paper in his right hand. The other two men had large swords. The leader read the Mullin's condemnation for trying to spread a religion other than the one true Zultarian faith. For their crimes they were to be executed by beheading and the sentence was to be carried out immediately.

Trusting their faith in Yahweh and Yahshua, the Mullins simply prayed and calmly waited for their Heavenly Father to move.

The leader motioned the other two men to move forward and kill the two American Christians. Neither man moved. The leader was irritated and started to berate them when something like the fire of a welding torch was applied completely across his brain. The pain was so overwhelming he couldn't even utter a sound as he died. His face was contorted in a horrible mask of pain and suffering and it matched the faces of the two swordsmen.

Frank and Andrea didn't understand what was happening until all three of the men fell to the ground. Standing behind each one was a soldier with a bloody knife. The two swordsmen had been eliminated by large men in battle cosmetics and full combat gear. The leader had died at the hands of a similarly outfitted woman with dark hair. She reached down and switched off the flashlight.

Before they could ask anything, a lovely voice in English whispered right behind them. "Mr. and Mrs. Mullins. If you'll stand up I'll get rid of these ropes for you." They stood up and the ropes were cut away with what had to be one very sharp knife. They hardly felt a pull and the tough ropes were severed.

The other three soldiers lowered their night-vision goggles or NVGs into place and moved forward to help the two missionaries away from the camp. There were no words and very little noise. The soldiers, men and women alike, moved like shadows through the jungle.

After walking about three hundred yards they stopped and in the dark the two women helped Andrea to strap on a body-armor vest. The men helped Frank. As they finished, a fifth soldier appeared out of the dark and a faint light appeared. Frank and Andrea were pleasantly shocked to see their friend, Pastor Tim Carson, standing in front of them. He was dressed and armed like the first four. He smiled a wan smile at them.

"Praise Yahweh we got here in time. I'm so glad you're all right."

Frank smiled ruefully at his friend. "I'm happy the Savior sent you and your friends. Another minute and we would have been in four pieces."

The six-foot, two-inch soldier who looked like an ideal warrior said, "You would not have been touched. Yahshua sent us to save you and what he starts he finishes. We've been within rifle range watching you and the rebels for over four hours."

Andrea raised an eyebrow and coolly asked him, "Why did you wait until the last second?"

Mark Connelly didn't take umbrage at the comment, he took it literally and answered that way. "Traditionally, this group uses only a few members to be involved with their executions, something to do with their view on life and death. We only waited until the rest of the rebels left the camp. That way we only had to deal with three men while you were still their captives and it reduced the possibility of your getting hurt."

Andrea's eyes opened considerably. "I take it then that you expect to "deal" with the rest of the group sooner or later."

The blonde woman that had cut their ropes was watching a dim but crystal-clear screen projected onto the left eyepiece of her battle glasses. "Time to head for the LZ!" Tim looked at the Mullins and translated for them. "LZ means the evacuation landing zone."

Mark quickly led the way with the Mullins behind him and the rest of the team following them. Laura Malone continued to watch the screen and talk to Charlie Wu who was one third of the world away in the Crossfire Team's fortress back in Denver, Colorado in the United States. As they reached the evac zone which was a large clearing, she said, "I agree." and switched her battle microphone next to her chin to local communication. "The rebels are quickly tracking us and will be here before the evac chopper."

Mark shook his head. "I didn't want it to come to this." He keyed his mic and said, "Red flight, vector three in four minutes, out." Then the whole group jogged out several hundred feet into the clearing and got down on the ground behind a small rise in the ground. The men and women, including Tim aimed their rifles to cover a wide swath of the jungle with the Mullins behind them.

Less than a minute later, several of the rebels came out of the jungle quickly moving in their direction. Tim asked Mark, "How can they track us so fast in the dark?"

Mark was timing out three events and whispered quietly, "They have infrared tracking gear. Our footprints stand out real well on the cool jungle floor." He made a decision. "Wait till I fire and then take out the scouts."

To the Mullins this came across as professional warfare, without emotion and without feelings.

Mark was sighting through his night scope on his M8 and picked up the lead scout. The other two were targeted by the others on the team. Mark carefully squeezed the trigger and the silenced round punched through the forehead of the lead rebel. He went down with a thud, followed almost immediately by the other two scouts.

As he lost contact with his forward scouts, the new leader of the rebels realized that they were up against troops with night vision gear and ordered the two kleig lights they were carrying to be lit up.

Unfortunately for him, that was just when the two Apache helicopters arrived and unloaded on the rebel position. The lights died with the troops around them. The two helicopters flew over the target and their backtrack, observing the area with their FLIR or forward-looking infrared systems. There had been no survivors.

Homing in on a signal from Mark's battle pack, a large evac chopper came over the jungle canopy out of the dark and settled into the grass near the team and the ex-hostages. Everyone boarded and the three helicopters left the clearing.

Andrea noticed that after the troops stood down in the relative safety of the helicopter that they all bowed their heads in prayer. Catching Frank's eye the two missionaries joined them.

Andrea looked their rescuers over after the prayer. She studied Mark the military leader of the group. He was solid in his manner and his beliefs. His quiet manner belied his strength and power. She coolly appraised his solid good looks and rugged features as he scrubbed the battlefield cosmetics off of his face. Mark stood about six foot, one inch and probably weighted in around 200 pounds. Dark brown-black hair framed a face that one had to call 'honorable'. Andrea later found out that Mark's time in the United States Navy Seals had solidified his role as a protector of the innocent. He thrived on complicated situations and was a military strategist. The integrity he had in everything he did was like a giant rock foundation. He was a man you could count on to keep his word even if he had to die for it. He was a very detailed planner, but then if the situation went into the unknown he was just as quick to throw the plans out the window and go on instinct and training.

Mark's physique was what the average American thought of when they pictured the perfect Marine. An honor scout personality in a body like that of Arnold Schwarzenegger. Oh yeah, throw in the mind of a scientist. He was bulked out somewhat but when he worked out it was more for greater endurance than physical bulk.

Jack and Laura Malone sitting together on the side of the helicopter were an attractive couple. Obviously they were both warriors and they too carried themselves with honor. Jack was a tall, good-looking young man with blonde hair and gray-green eyes. He quietly took charge of most situations and nobody, not even Mark, argued with him. He stood about six foot four inches and was, in his own way, just as muscularly solid as Mark was. His muscle mass was more fluid and compact and he didn't show the 'buffed' shape that Mark did.

Laura was a beautiful young woman with a full head of blonde hair and light green eyes. She obviously had a sharp mind and a big heart. She was at least six foot in height. In Laura there was a spiritual calmness and confidence that one seldom saw. Andrea's spirit had jumped when Laura had talked to them as she cut their ropes in the jungle. Her anointing was very strong and it was obvious that her walk with the Father was close and growing stronger daily.

Andrea then considered the female warrior, Sarah. Later she would find out that Sarah's mandatory military training had led to her recruitment by the premier intelligence service of her country, the Mossad. Her training and operational background had hardened her attitude but, so far, not her looks. She was a darker-haired version of Laura with a decidedly more aggressive attitude. She weighed about 130 pounds and stood right at five foot ten inches tall. Her confidence and the way she handled herself made Andrea glad that Sarah was on their side.

Frank found he could still hear from the Father in Heaven and he shouted to be heard over the rotor noise. "Yahuweh wants me to explain some things to you when we get back."

CHAPTER THREE

They flew to Mati and transferred to the Crossfire's Citation X jet for the trip to Manila. In the capital city of the Philippines the missionary couple went to the American consulate and described their kidnapping and rescue. They were then accompanied by a State Department representative when they repeated the information to the Philippine government. The Philippine authorities had retrieved the bodies of the slain at the service site. The body of Bill Monroe and the rest of their team were being guarded at a local hotel. The embassy sent word to them that the Mullins were alive and free.

There had been some press coverage of their kidnapping and the death of the four young men. They met the press briefly after completing their report to the local government. One of the reporters asked them how they escaped from the Crescent Dagger rebels. Frank took the question and answered for them both.

"The Savior provided a rescue team that got us away from the rebels last night."

The reporter took notes, "Will the Philippine government go after the group of rebels that kidnapped you and killed your team member?"

Frank shook his head. "No, they will not."

A woman reporter asked, "Why not?"

Frank looked at her for a second. "The local government had warned us that if we got in trouble with the Zultarians that there was nothing they could do to help us."

The reporter persisted, "What is going to be done to punish those murderous thugs?"

Frank eyed the woman reporter and came back with, "There is nothing more that needs to be accomplished. Our Heavenly Father will judge them."

She smiled and shook her head. "That's fine in the next life, what about now? Do we just let them murder both American and Philippine citizens and leave their punishment up to the Father at some future time? What about the next killings they do?"

Frank tired of debating it with her. "There will be no more killings by this group. None of them survived their encounter with the rescue team. That's all we have to say." He and Andrea stood up to leave.

The persistent reporter shouted, “The forty rebels were all killed? Who were the people that rescued you?”

The Mullins ignored her questions and left for their hotel.

That afternoon a heavy rain squall pelted the city and it was forecast to keep raining for the next several days. When it rains in the Philippines it is what Americans would call a downpour. The Mullins travelled out of the city to a village that was normally a three hour drive. With the rain it took almost six hours with the vehicles sliding and slipping along the mud trails.

Running out of the rain and into the large corrugated steel building, Frank and Andrea were reunited with the rest of their team. After that they set up for the service they had scheduled to hold when they first came to the islands.

The crowd was exceptionally large for a rainy evening service because of the notoriety the Mullins had received during their kidnapping. As everyone got settled, Frank estimated that there were over six hundred people crowded into the building. Looking around he was surprised to see the people that had rescued he and his wife from the rebels standing to one side along with Pastor Tim.

After the praise and worship time, Frank spoke a message on holiness and held a salvation call. Over a hundred people came to the altar to give their lives to Yahshua. Afterwards he asked if anyone wanted healing. Many in the audience came forward. Frank had them line up across the room and he and his team prayed for healing in the name of Yahshua. Many people felt that they had been healed after the prayers.

For the Crossfire Team this was exciting. There were several dozen healings that weren't just subjective illnesses. People with major diseases such as goiters, cancer, withered limbs, blind eyes, and other obvious problems walked away from the area of the platform completely healed and praising God. Jack Malone looked at the rest of the group and nodded his head.

Due to the torrential rains, the next two days of services were cancelled. There was no way to get to the locations they would be praying at those evenings.

At five o'clock on Thursday, Frank answered the door to their suite and saw the Team and Pastor Tim waiting outside. He ushered them in and made them all comfortable.

Jack asked him, “Your service was excellent last night and the healing service was very interesting. How can your team see that kind of response to your prayers when so many others don’t?”

Frank sighed, “This will take some time in the telling. Honey, will you get some water for all of us?”