

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 fine 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 past 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

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