

Adam Fultz

Period 3

## 24 Hours

0600. A stormy day in Bangkok. The sun had not yet risen over the mighty capital of Thailand. For many it was just another day, another day in the balmy heat of the Southeast Asian summer. Not for Jack Bauer. He was the best agent from America. Numerous times he had saved his country from outside forces. African militia. Terrorist groups. Nuclear threats. Bio-weapons. Today would be no exception. But this challenge was unlike anything Jack Bauer had ever experienced. The undercover “drug salesman” and his partners would be in for the fight of their lives.

The alarm went off 5 minutes later, Jack eventually rising from his troubled sleep. After numerous near-death confrontations and fights, sleep was not the peaceful bliss that many would make it out to be. The tall, thin figure rose, flexing his powerful muscles and stretching his scarred arms. He went into the bathroom, washing his marred face and looking back into his intense blue eyes in the mirror. If only he looked less European, for it certainly was not helping his cover. Tall. Blue eyed. White. Blond. German. Stereotypically Aryan in appearance. He ran a hand through his thinning blond hair and prepared himself for what was about to come. He dressed himself in a way that any other CTU agent would dress. Black pants. Black shoes. Black shirt. Kevlar body armor.

He donned his undercover attire next. He was a wealthy drug salesman, coming to Bangkok to buy from the rich cartels that plagued the alleys of the bustling Thai city. But drug dealing was not Jack’s business in Thailand. He was there because a certain drug cartel, Dragoon, had a connection. A connection to a very powerful terrorist group that Jack’s organization, the Counter Terrorist Unit (CTU) was trying to bring down. A group known as the Hand of God, led by Kurush, a radical

Muslim. They had a plan to destroy the U.S. It would start today. Jack Bauer would put a stop to it. He walked out onto the street, concealing his armor and guns under a white cloak, characteristic of a native of Thailand. His walk ended at 0630 hours, at a local café on the side of the road. Sitting at a table was a young man, dressed in similar fashion to Jack. His name was Roman Arganelsk, and he was another CTU agent brought along for the mission. This was his first time in the field. He was a tall, pale man, with short red hair and piercing gray eyes, distinctly Russian in appearance. Jack walked over to the table and sat down.

“Roman.”

“Mr. Bauer, sir,” replied Roman, coldly.

The waitress came over to the table and the two men ordered breakfast and coffee.

“As you know, today we are going to attempt to bring an end to the Hand of God. We are going to meet Dragoon first. They will be here in half an hour,” said Jack, glancing at his watch.

“What do you want me to do? You’re in charge. I’ve never done this before.”

“Be friendly. Trust Dragoon. But always be wary. When the time comes, let loose with that m7 you’re concealing in your cloak. As seeing we have a great deal of time to burn, let me tell you a story that should make everything very clear... Several years ago, I met a man named Sergei Balzhaev. He was a trafficker of illegal substances, including radioactive materials. He was working with a terrorist group inside the U.S. to smuggle uranium rods into Washington D.C. to release a dirty bomb. I was sent undercover as a German arms buyer interested in acquiring uranium rods. I arrived at his building and his men came out to greet me. I said, ‘Good evening’, and treated them with courtesy and respect. They led me into another room where I met Sergei Balzhaev himself. He said, ‘Good evening Mr. Fiedler. Sit down please. Wouldn’t you like something to drink?’ I was so

naïve, so trusting, that I was unaware of the trick until it was too late. I was given a delicate glass of wine, filled with an aromatic fluid that was very pleasant. Until something began to feel very strange. We were talking about the acquisition of weapons and nuclear rods when I began to feel it. Something I couldn't explain, but kept talking nonetheless. My limbs began to feel heavy, and it wasn't until my vision started to blur that I realized what was happening. But it was too late. In a drugged stupor, I attempted to stand and pull out my gun, but my knees buckled as I collapsed to the ground, drifting asleep.

When I next woke up, I was bound and tied to a pole in an arms warehouse, far from where my wine was drugged with sleeping pills. Balzhaev walked up to me and slapped me across the face. It was the moment that I learned a very important lesson. As I was tortured and interrogated on how I knew about the secret nuclear rods, I came to understand the three words that every agent should know by heart. Trust no one. By being friendly and naïve, trusting in people I was suspicious about, I was betrayed, captured, and tortured until I escaped one day. From that day on, I have learned not to trust anyone. Be friends with suspicious people, but always keep one hand on your gun. In the case of today Roman, we need Dragoon to lead us to the Hand of God. They've done some very useful things for us. But I've met with Dragoon. If you're not careful, then they will just as easily do some very nasty things to you. Keep one hand on your gun."

"That must've been a hard lesson to learn."

"It's a hard lesson for any man to learn, no matter how severe the circumstances."

"I'll be ready."

“Good, because it’s almost time. Dragoon should be here any moment. You’ll meet their leader, Hassan. Be careful around him. He’s cunning, hard to read. And he controls the largest and most powerful drug cartel in Thailand.”

Suddenly, a dark car drove up to the front of the café. From out of the black Limousine, an elegantly dressed man in sunglasses appeared, walking up to the table with Jack and Roman. “Hassan is here to take you to Kurush. He requests you join him in his limousine.” The two men reluctantly stood up and quickly entered the car. The door slammed shut and the Lincoln was on its way. There were five men in the car, along with a driver and the man who had greeted Jack and Roman. They all exchanged careful glances, suspicious glares, no one saying a word. After several miles of driving down the awakening and bustling streets of Bangkok, the car arrived at an obscure warehouse on the outskirts of the huge city. With a shuddering screech, the car came to a halt next to the dilapidated building, next to another car that was there. It was a sleek, silver, and very expensive Infiniti JX.

“Ah, he is here”, said one man, glancing at the SUV that belonged to Kurush.

The doors of the car opened. “If you two gentlemen would please come with me”, a man coolly said. It was Hassan, leader of Dragoon. He led the two men into the warehouse, using his great strength to push open the old, rusty door. “Step inside.”

The two men walked into the building, followed by Hassan and his men. Standing in the middle of the dimly lit room was Kurush. He was a very elegant figure, dressed in a thick black cloak and Kevlar.

“Good evening, Mr. Fiedler and Mr. Torzov.”

“The same to you,” replied Jack. Roman nodded his head in greeting.

“So Dragoon brought you to me to talk?”

“Yes,” said Jack and Roman simultaneously.

“About the nuclear rods?”, inquired Kurush.

“Naturally.”

“Before we can talk about that, there’s something I must do first...” Without warning Kurush drew his M-40 carbine and before Jack or Roman could react, fired a string of bullets into Roman’s neck, the young agent dead before he hit the ground. Jack pulled his concealed weapon out, but he was greatly outnumbered. Hassan’s men and Kurush’s men had drawn their guns and encircled Jack. Someone grabbed him from behind and bound his hands, forcing him to his knees.

“Now Mr. *Bauer*, there are several things I know about you that Hassan here has discovered.” Kurush pulled an envelope full of money out his pocket and tossed it to Hassan, nodding in agreement in the completion of the deal. Jack for 20,000 dollars. “I know that you are certainly not a drug dealer. You are an American spy. Your name is Jack Bauer. You came here to infiltrate my organization because you know of my plan. So tell me, what do you know about my plan?”

“Nothing,” replied Jack Bauer, looking at the ground where the oozing corpse of his dead colleague lay.

“Excuse me sir, we have several CTU cars coming this way. ETA in 10 minutes”, said one of Kurush’s men.

“Then we leave.”

Hassan and his men left in their limo and Jack was tranquilized and dragged into the Infiniti, Kurush and his men with Jack leaving in the silver car. The sun was risen over Bangkok, playfully poking around the sparse clouds as the car drove through the interstate. Only a few minutes had passed when

the car exited, pulling up to an abandoned factory complex. The engine stopped, and the passenger door opened, revealing the worn face of Kurush. Uttering a few enchanting words in Arabic, his men dragged the still-unconscious Jack from the car, pulling him into a deserted factory. The ancient metal doors squealed as they were ripped open, revealing the messy headquarters of the Hand of God. Several computers were lazily strewn around the room, but the center of the floor was clear, and Jack was dumped onto the cold, hard concrete. The figure coughed as he slowly regained consciousness, immediately beginning to struggle with his bonds. Kurush's men began to turn on their computers as Kurush walked over to Jack and pulled him off the ground.

“Now, Mr. Bauer... before I kill you, I'd like to tell you a story. Once upon a time, there was a lion named Rava. She was strong and powerful, but she was an awful hunter, incapable of catching anything fast. However, she was clever and had a plan that would bring down a Cape buffalo. The Cape buffalo was the preferred meat of this particular lion clan, but it was still a rare treat. The Cape buffalo is fast and very strong, able to take on a lion, a feat few creatures can imagine. Rava found the skins of the last Cape buffalo and disguised herself as the giant beast. Then the lioness ambled towards a herd of real Cape buffalo. The creatures continued to graze, taking no notice of her. Rava walked up to a large, healthy, male buffalo, slowly, stealthily approaching, until she struck. Without warning Rava pulled off her disguise biting into the neck of the Cape buffalo, killing it instantly. In the ensuing panic among the confused buffalo, each of them fled, running away in search of safety. Rava had killed the buffalo by fooling it into thinking that she was one of them.

And that is it. The moral of the story? A wolf disguised as a sheep is still a wolf.”

“Why are you telling me this?”, asked Jack.

“Because CTU has experienced the same situation. You have someone on the inside. How else did you think I would have known who you really are, killed Roman, and stopped you plan to destroy us cold.”

“Our plan to destroy you is already in action, whether you kill me or not.”

“You think I’m debating whether or not to kill you. I’ve already made that choice.” Kurush pulled out his silver pistol, the sleek silencer gleaming as it touched Jack’s thin scalp. “Any last words, Mr. Bauer?”

“It’s over.” Without warning a black Cadillac smashed into the warehouse. The dark doors revealed several agents who appeared, guns blazing, peppering Kurush’s men with bullets. In the insane chaos, Jack struggled free of Kurush, running for the black Cadillac and jumping behind the bulletproof door before a spray of pellets hit him. The CTU agents rolled around the warehouse, shooting and dodging and kicking and punching, combating the evil Hand of God. Kurush, pushed to the ground by Jack, stood up and fired his pistol at an agent, the silver streamlined bullet pounding his torso, killing him instantly. But Kurush’s men fell just as quickly to the expert skills of the agents. One, two, three, four, five, until only Kurush was left amongst the dead bodies of two CTU agents and 5 Hand of God fighters. Kurush was outnumbered against the three remaining agents.

“Drop your gun”, said the leader of the CTU agents, his glistening badge reflecting the Bangkok rays off the polished emblem.

Without any more threats, Kurush dropped his gun, raising his hands. The agent behind him walked forward and handcuffed him, placing him in the second black Cadillac that arrived a minute later. In the first Cadillac, where Jack was riding, his bonds were cut. The leader of the CTU force, Mark, took off his sunglasses.

“That was one heck of a fight you were in the middle of. Are you alright?”, he asked Jack.

“I’m alright”, he replied. “We have a problem.”

“And what is that?”

“Someone in CTU is a double.”

“A double agent? That’s not possible.”

“Kurush said so himself.”

“Well, he’s our enemy. Do you expect him to be truthful?”

“Then let me interrogate him.”

“I remember what you did to Sergei Balzhaev over that nasty scandal on our soil. I’ll not have you torture a man like that again!”

“I won’t do that to him.”

“Jack, the fact is that you crossed the line, and I’m concerned you’ll do it again. I don’t want you to interrogate him. I’ll let you listen in, but you can’t do it.”

“Fine.”

The Cadillacs pulled up to the U.S. embassy in Thailand. The men got out, Kurush in the rear, held by two agents. The automatic doors opened and the men walked in. They walked down a narrow corridor leading to the cool basement, the way blocked by a heavy door. Without a word, Mark walked up to the door and entered a code, opening the door into the CTU center in Bangkok. Kurush was put inside of a clear room, with a locked door. Jack stood outside, listening to the speaker as Mark walked in.



“Kurush?”, asked Mark. The man was silent. “Who has infiltrated CTU?” There was no reply from Kurush. “Tell me!”

“I will only speak to Jack.”

“So be it.” Mark beckoned to Jack who opened the door and took Mark’s place inside the room.

“Mr. Bauer.”

“Kurush. Who is inside CTU?”

“That doesn’t matter.”

“Yes it does! Who has infiltrated CTU?”

“Who is the head of CTU?”

“Ian Buchanan.”

“Bingo.”

“No that’s not possible! You lie!”, shouted Jack accusingly, grabbing Kurush by his shirt. “Now tell me who infiltrated CTU!”

“I already told you”, replied Kurush calmly.

“Whether you want us to or not, we will stop you and the Hand of God from releasing a dirty bomb over D.C.!”

“It’s too late for that.”

“It’s not. Let me tell you a story as you told me one. In Kenya, I dealt with a dictator named General Juma. He commanded a force of 100 or so that basically controlled the entire government of Kenya.

He coordinated everything that went on there and coordinated several military operations. For example, he attempted to lead an attack on the U.S. to kill the president. He came close, but he failed. I personally killed him and succeeded. And do you know what happened to General Juma's government after he died. It collapsed. Utterly collapsed with no power or control. The Hand of God is no different. You see, a snake without a head, is a dead snake. We know everything we need to know about what you plan to do today. We know that at midnight EST, you plan to release a dirty bomb into Washington D.C. You will not succeed. You are of no further use to us. Goodbye, Kurush."

An agent entered the room, holding a syringe. He plunged the needle into Kurush's arm. A few minutes passed, and Kurush stopped breathing. The snake was without a head.

"Time to go back to the states", said Mark. Jack left the room and walked upstairs, exiting the embassy and walking out into the pungent Bangkok air. Without warning, a bullet flew through the air, accelerating into Jack's torso. The last thing Jack remembered was collapsing onto the concrete as the sniper for the Hand of God ran away.

The next week, Jack woke up in a hospital bed with a bandage around his scarred chest. Mark was there.

"You're lucky to be alive, Jack. I walked out a minute after you and you were on the ground. We rushed you to a hospital and flew you home. Thanks to your intelligence and determination to stop the Hand of God, their plan failed. We found their nuclear rods off the coast of Alaska. It is finished, and you've done this country a great service. Thank you." He left the room.

With that, Jack closed his eyes and let sleep fall upon him.