

## A New Day Of Infamy – 6 August 2005 – Prolog

Nine pairs of Arab eyes watched nine Rolex watches as the time neared 8:15 AM Pacific time. When the second hands reached 8:15:00 AM, nine Arab voices cried out “Allah Akbar!” and nine Arab thumbs pushed nine toggle switches. Nine nuclear suns were born in the United States of America.

Seven of the 300 kiloton devices destroyed major United States seaports. New York, New York; Norfolk, Virginia; New Orleans, Louisiana; Houston, Texas; Los Angeles, California; Long Beach, California; and Portland, Oregon.

The other two devices were aboard chartered jet planes flying at 45,000 feet. One over Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and the other over Los Vegas, Nevada. They produced EMP surges that took out electrical power and sensitive electronics on both coasts.

Only parts of the Midwest were able to maintain power, and then only in areas with local generating plants. The national grid, and all the regional grids went down. The United States lost seventy percent of its international seaport capacity, eighty percent of its air transport capacity, and 50 percent of its heavy ground transportation in less than twenty seconds.

## A New Day Of Infamy – 6 August 2005 – Chapter 1

Gary Wainwright came awake slowly. “Houston doesn’t have earthquakes,” he muttered. When he looked at the clock and saw only the dark blur of the clock and not the bright red numerals he muttered again. “Nuts! Power is out. Must have been a quake.”

Throwing back the bed coverings, Gary went to the heavy curtains at the window of his apartment and brushed them aside. He worked a graveyard shift and kept the bedroom dark during the day so he could sleep.

He squinted in the bright sunshine. After several moments the tall mushroom shaped pillar of a cloud registered. “Holy cow! They nuked us!” That sight brought him out of the sleepy fog. Sirens began to sound, faintly, through the glass of the window.

“Plan E,” Gary said aloud. “Evacuate!” Gary had a plan for just about every conceivable disaster scenario. Many of the plans worked for multiple scenarios. Like the evacuation plan. He stopped his rush in the middle of the bedroom, his hands going up to shoulder level, then down slowly. “Calm down. Calm down. You have a plan. Execute it. Get dressed first.”

It didn’t take long to dress in silk boxers and v-neck t-shirt; silk sock liners and cotton tube socks; Dickies khaki pants and long-sleeve work shirt with leather belt and leather button-on suspenders; and a pair of Redwing work boots. He went to the dresser and loaded his pockets from the tray there. As soon as he was dressed, Gary took a hand crank radio/flashlight combination off a bookcase shelf in the living room. He cranked it a few turns, and then tried the radio dial. Nothing but static.

Gary kept his evacuation equipment and supplies in one end of the large bedroom closet. As he began assembling the custom evacuation cart he’d created he suddenly muttered, “But if this is a terrorist attack... But it could be just the preliminary. Houston might get another nuke or two. I could shelter in place if it’s just the one, over at Joe and Betty’s but...”

Falling silent, Gary thought about the many things the mushroom cloud could portend. With the absence of any news, better to hunker down. He might just evacuate into something worse. It took less than two minutes to finish the assembly, then a couple more to get everything moved from the closet to the cart.

Gary laid the mountain bike he’d put together from select parts on top of the loaded cart and headed for the front door of the apartment. He grabbed his flat-top-crown Outback wide brim hat and put it on. He debated taking the stairs, but the generator for the elevators seemed to be working. He crossed his fingers and took the elevator. And made it down okay.

In the garage, it took only a moment to see if his GMC Sonoma Highrider pickup would start. It wouldn’t. “Figured. But worth a try. Glad I didn’t load the bike and trailer first.” Setting the bike down off the trailer he hooked the trailer to it. The trailer was set up to be pulled by the bike, or be pushed or pulled by hand.

He took another moment to open the longish packing crate on top of the trailer. He took out a leather shoulder holster, put it on, and then inserted a Glock 21. He added two magazines to the off side carrier, as well as a Gerber double-edge dagger.

Once he was out of the garage of the apartment building Gary tried the radio again. Still nothing but static. Gary snugged up the chinstrap of his hat, straddled the bike and set off for his friends' apartment building.

Traffic was at a stand still. It looked like a few older vehicles were running, but they sure weren't going anywhere fast. People were abandoning their cars and running every direction there is on a compass rose.

Twice he had words with people that wanted to 'borrow' his bike for a little while. He thought he was going to have to pull the Glock on one man just exiting a Corvette, but the man finally let him pass.

Gary rode mostly on the shoulder and medians, where there were any. Just the bike would have been easier. However, he wanted all of his evacuation equipment with him. While Joe and Betty had extensive preparations, he wanted his own possessions with him.

It took most of the rest of the morning to get to the apartment building. The emergency generator at the building was still operating so Gary was able to take his bike and trailer up to the seventh floor, over a couple of objections by building personnel.

Joe was home, but Betty had already left for work when the attack happened. Gary could tell that Joe was worried, but they both knew that trying to go out and find Betty would be next to useless. That wasn't going to stop Joe, however, if she didn't show up pretty soon.

Gary had just lain down on the living room sofa to take a nap when Betty walked in the door. She was mad as a wet hen. "I can't believe the people in this town! They're crazy. The ones that weren't running around like a chicken with their head cut off seemed to all be just sitting around and whimpering."

She shrugged off the small backpack she was wearing and went to the kitchen to get a drink of water from the refrigerator. "Yeah," Gary said, "I ran into a couple of belligerent people on my way over here."

"Honey," asked Joe, "how far did you get before the blast?"

"Almost all the way to work. The car went dead right on the freeway. Just like most of them. We staying or going?" Betty finished the first bottle of water, retrieved another and joined the two men in the living room.

"I almost headed for Lytle," Gary said, now sitting up on the sofa. A nap would have to wait. "But then I decided to come over here and shelter in place with you guys, like we've talked about. If it's terrorists, we should be okay here. If it's the start of a full scale attack... well... we need to get out of town as quickly as possible."

“With this being the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hiroshima, I’m guessing terrorists. Especially since we only got one nuke. I’m sure they would hit Houston with more if it were the Russians or the Chinese. Gary, let’s try the radio again. See if we can get anything now.”

Gary cranked up the radio once more and ran the bands. This time something was coming through the static, but not clearly. They made out the word ‘terrorist’ and the occasional other word, but couldn’t get enough to really tell anything.

“Based on that,” Betty said, “I say we hunker down and ride this out. There’s going to be a mob scene on the highways and byways.”

Joe quickly added his thoughts, “I agree. We have what we need for a while. If communications is coming back as the atmospheric ionization lessens, we can find out some more. Gary?”

“That’s why I’m here. And thanks again for letting me, by the way.”

“If it wasn’t for you, we wouldn’t be prepared.” Joe was solemn. “Thank you. We even have choices, just like to leave or stay. We’d be like some of those Betty saw. Running around like a chicken with its head cut off, or crying and whimpering in fear.”

“I don’t think we’d be that bad,” Betty said with a smile. “But we sure wouldn’t be the way we are right now. Now, I’m going to get changed, and we can see what we can find out as the day progresses.” She looked at Joe. “I take it you filled everything with water for as long as you could.”

Joe nodded. Both tubs, the sinks, and all the five gallon buckets we had nestled in the closet. You’ll kind of have to wend your way in the bathroom. The water was still on a few minutes ago, so you might want to think about a shower if the water is still on.”

“Oh, yeah, sure. And have the water go off when I’m all soaped up. I don’t think so. A sponge bath will do fine. Any radiation yet?” Betty asked as she moved toward the bedroom.

After carrying the survey meter over to the window, Joe checked it and called to his wife. “No. Not yet. But the top of the mushroom is getting closer. It’s just a matter of time.”

Betty stuck her head around the corner of the slightly opened bedroom door. “Let’s go ahead and stake out a section of the hallway.”

“We’ll move some things against the hallway wall first, and then set up outside,” Joe responded. He and Gary began to move book cases and heavy furniture to add what radiation shielding they could to the area in the hallway where they would spend most of their time over the next several days, depending on how high the radiation level became.

It was a twelve story building and the mass of the five floors and the roof above them, plus the distance would provide good protection from any accumulation of fallout on the roof, as would their distance from the ground and the floors below, from fallout on the ground. Their only worry was the fallout as it fell past the outside of the building. There could be no build up

there, so the masonry construction of the building would halt much of that, except at the windows. They would stack heavy items in front of them to reduce the radiation from those points.

Betty began to help them after she cleaned up and changed clothes. They were just finishing up when the survey meter began to click slightly where it sat by the window. "Okay. This is it," Joe said, going over and getting an initial reading. He marked it down on the clipboard Betty handed him.

The three of them moved three buckets of water into the hallway, primarily to use as seats, and their self-inflating mattresses and sleeping bags. A few more items were brought from the apartment to make life a little easier to live in the hallway, and their rest of their supplies were moved close to the door so they could be retrieved easily.

The bathroom farthest from the outside walls had a chemical toilet set up in it. They would only go inside the apartment to use the bathroom and to prepare food, other than to retrieve and replace items they needed.

Gary finally was able to lie down and get some sleep. It was quite some time before anyone came out into the hall and saw them.

"What are you doing?" their next door neighbor asked when she saw them all arranged against the hall wall. Joe and Betty were both reading while Gary slept.

"Surviving," Betty said. "The fallout has started."

"Fallout!" Rebecca cried. "Is that why the power is out?"

Joe and Betty exchanged a look, and then turned incredulous eyes to their neighbor.

"Rebecca," Betty said, rather slowly, "Houston has been hit with a nuclear weapon. We're receiving fallout."

"No! Why didn't someone tell me?"

Rebecca ran back into her apartment, and then ran back out, her car keys in her hand. "I have to go somewhere," she said to no one in particular.

Betty scrambled to her feet and went over to the elevator to talk to the woman she and Joe barely knew. It was a fruitless task to try and talk her out of leaving, Betty found.

"She'll be back," Joe said. "That BMW of hers, great car that it is, probably isn't going to start."

"That's true," Betty replied, sitting down on one of the buckets.

An hour later Betty asked Joe, "You think we should go look for her?"

Joe shook his head. "I thought she'd be back. Maybe the car started. It might have been somewhat protected in the parking garage."

"Even if it started, she'd never get anywhere with the streets jammed the way they are. In some places it was even hard walking among the cars."

"Yeah. That's what Gary said." Joe shook his head. "I'll go if you insist, but I don't think there's anything we can really do."

"No. We're going to get some radiation as it is. No need to get more than we have to. She'll just have to cope however she can."

Gary slept on.

Either the other residents had been out when the event happened and something happened to them, or they were staying inside the apartments on the seventh floor. They saw not a soul the rest of that day.

They hadn't heard the elevator in quite a while. Betty went over and pressed the down button. The indicator didn't light so they assumed the generator had quit, run out of fuel, or been turned off.

"I've got a feeling we're on our own," Gary said. He been awake for a little while, having set the alarm on his watch for four. He didn't want to sleep too long, or he wouldn't be able to sleep that night.

They tried the radio again that evening. This time they were able to get a clear station. The announcements confirmed the fact that it had been coordinated terrorist attacks. The devices had gone off at the time of the release of the Hiroshima bomb in 1945.

"Okay," Betty said. "We should be fine here, as long as the water holds out. If it was under 500 kilotons, like the report said, there is a limit to how much fallout there can be. What is the reading now?"

Joe check the survey meter. "We're getting about three tenths of a roentgen. I've been watching it and the radiation peaked about 2:30 this afternoon at that level. That's a little over four hours after the blast. That sounds about right. Let me check the rate outside."

Going into the apartment and into one of the bedrooms, Joe took a quick reading at the window and then hurried back to the hallway. "The fallout is still coming down. The reading is thirty roentgens, so we have right at a 100 protection factor. Not bad."

"I wonder what it is on the ground," Gary said.

"Here's the meter, if you want to go down and check," Joe replied with a grin.

"No thanks," replied Gary. "It's bound to be a lot higher, with the accumulation."

“That’s right,” replied Betty. I think we’re here for the duration. Probably close to two weeks, depending on what the peak dose rate on the ground winds up being. And when it peaks.”

“We’re out of the path of the heaviest fallout, since we’re on the upwind side of it. Let’s hope the ground radiation peaks at less than 1000 roentgens. That’ll let us get out at the two week mark, at least to look around. Radiation would only be one, by then. Less if the peak is less than 1000, and I suspect it will be. But still too high for continued exposure.”

“You guys ready for something to eat?” Gary asked.

“What are we having?” Betty replied with a smile.

Gary smiled back. “Luck of the draw MRE’s. Don’t want to be in the apartment long enough to cook, yet.”

Gary fished out three MRE’s from the container just inside the door of the apartment and handed them out. They busied themselves with the meal, using the included heaters to warm the entrees.

The next few days followed much the same pattern, with quick trips into the apartment to use the bathroom, and after the third day, when the fallout stopped, to do some cooking on a camp stove. They moved back into the apartment when the inside radiation fell to under a tenth of a roentgen.

Board games, card games, and reading took up most of their time. They listened to the infrequent scheduled broadcasts on the radio. Power was still out everywhere except a few isolated places in the mid-West. A few critical locals got power as equipment was flown in to repair or replace the parts damaged by EMP.

Martial law had been declared in the areas directly affected by the nuclear blasts, and a few other places where rioting and lawlessness had broken out as food supplies ran low.

As the radiation faded, federalized National Guard troops began to move in, under FEMA jurisdiction, to begin the evacuation of those that had stayed in the city.

Many in the area of heaviest fallout would not live long. Many others would have lives shortened significantly to slightly, by the radiation they received during those days. Gary, Betty, and Joe began to discuss their options.

## A New Day Of Infamy – 6 August 2005 – Chapter 2

FEMA wasn't going to allow them very many options. They did not have the option to stay. Only those on the very outskirts of the affected area were not going to be evacuated. Those with a confirmed place to which to relocate, would be allowed to do so. Everyone else would go to temporary FEMA camps until other arrangements were made.

Betty and Joe invited Gary to go with them to Betty's parents' home in Waco, but Gary decided to go to his friend's place near Lytle. He had a standing invitation there, in case of trouble, the same way he had one with Betty and Joe Steinburger. The big question was what to take with them.

FEMA was recommending taking only the clothes on their backs, especially if they were going to the camps. Demanding it, in fact. Gary had it relatively easy. He had everything of importance from his apartment with him, except the truck. He didn't have that many personal possessions to start with, and none at the apartment were critical to his happiness. He had all that with him.

Betty and Joe were in a different boat. Yes, they had evacuation kits and would leave much behind if needed, but this was a staged relocation. They wanted to take quite a few things from the apartment with them.

Until they talked to the FEMA officials, none of them would know if there were exceptions. The Steinburgers had the means to afford hiring a mover from outside the affected area. Due to Gary's urging, they had converted most of their paper assets to tangible assets of one form or another.

The announcement that their section of the city was being evacuated came the next day in the evening radio broadcast. "Well," Joe said, "we'll find out tomorrow, I guess."

"Just in case we have no choice and get separated," Gary said before they went to bed that evening, "I want to tell you how much I appreciate being able to come here during this."

"We should be thanking you, Gary," replied Joe. "If it wasn't for you, I doubt we would have survived this. So, no matter what happens tomorrow, don't worry about us. We'll deal with whatever comes up. I suspect we will be separated. You're ready to go. They'll probably move you out immediately."

Joe looked over at Betty. "We definitely are going to try to arrange to move everything we can to Betty's Mom's."

Joe turned out to be right. Since Gary was willing to leave everything behind, except what he had with him, he and his gear were trucked to a staging area. Joe and Betty were still discussing their situation when Gary had to leave.

At the staging area he talked to the FEMA relocation specialist assigned to him. FEMA was hard pressed to take care of the survivors in the area, so it didn't take that much persuasion

to convince her to let Gary get transportation to San Antonio. He would make his own way from the city to Lytle, and then on to his friend's place outside of town.

Those going to camps had to turn in weapons. They should be able to get them back if they found other accommodations, but there was no guarantee. Gary was allowed to keep his during the move, on the FEMA supplied transportation, as long as they were kept unloaded and cased and they rode with the rest of his things in the trailer his transport would be pulling. That was fine with Gary. He climbed into the back of the National Guard truck with nine other people being moved to San Antonio. They left that evening after receiving a sandwich and bottle of water for their evening meal.

The trip was uneventful for Gary. He slept most of the way, despite the conversations going on around him as people tried to decide what they would do in the future. Gary already had a plan.

The next part of it entailed the trip from San Antonio to Lytle. Gary decided to wait until morning to start off, and found a place to secure his belongings and get some additional sleep after they arrived at the San Antonio staging area.

With the ID and paperwork he'd been issued at the survivors' center in Houston, he was able to clear all the checkpoints that were set up on every major road. There were some delays, but Gary took each one in stride, knowing cooperation was better than disruption in situations like this. He had his freedom and he intended to keep it. If that meant waiting while his papers were authenticated, then so be it.

Those that were causing problems were being hauled off to have their cases taken care of by someone else. Gary had a chance to talk to a couple of Guard personnel at one of the checkpoints and learned that international tensions were high, and that the rest of the country was in bad shape, too. Only the north central states of the Union were relatively stable. Anyone causing trouble was just being trucked to holding camps until things could be sorted out.

It sounded straightforward enough, but Gary decided he would be extremely careful about how he acted. He had no intention of winding up in one of the 'trouble maker' camps. He hoped Joe and Betty were fairing as well as he was.

He made it to his friend's country place with no real trouble, and quite a bit of relief. It was evening by the time he got there, so Jackie just fed him and helped him set up a camp in the back yard of her place. She'd been expecting him, and had a place prepared.

Then next morning Gary knocked on the back door of the small cabin. "Thanks again, Jackie. I was beat last night. I should have been riding the bike more."

"Come on in, kiddo. Breakfast will be ready in a few minutes. You know where the bathroom is."

When Gary sat down to a bacon, egg, and biscuit breakfast a few minutes later, Jackie got the story from him she'd not bothered him about the evening before.

“It’s been quiet here,” Jackie said, pouring Gary another glass of orange juice. “When it all hit the fan I just moved the stock into the barn and buttoned it up with us inside. Let the animals out a couple at a time when we didn’t get any radiation, and I finally heard what had happened on the radio, but kept them penned up, just in case it turned into the big one.”

“Yeah. Those first minutes and hours, when I didn’t know what was going on for sure were scary. I almost headed here immediately. Might have made it. Might not have. It worked out okay.”

“Well, your stuff is all here and in the same shape as you left it. You want to build the cabin, or you have something else in mind.”

“I’m going to camp for a while. I suspect they will start a major recovery operation pretty quickly. According to the news I’ve been getting, it was major seaports that were hit. They’re either going to try to get some of them back in operation or try to enlarge or enhance some of the others. They’ll need trades people to do that. Might even get to go back to the job I was on in Houston. The country still needs oil, and that takes rigs. I figure any of the three, I’ll have a job welding again, here pretty soon.”

“You could be right. I’m not so sure about myself,” Jackie said. “Of course, the base business, the honey, chicken, eggs, milk, and cheese should keep doing fine.” Jackie grinned. “May be taking fruits and vegetables in trade, rather than money, but that’s okay.” Then she frowned. “Don’t know about the internet business. The internet is down here in the States and I haven’t heard one word about it getting up again any time soon.”

“Looks like you have power. The PV panels came through okay, I take it.”

“Lost one, but I have some spares. I pity the people that didn’t take EMP precautions. I take it that truck of yours didn’t make it.”

Gary shook his head. “Fine, except it wouldn’t start. If they’ll let me, I’ll try to replace the parts, though there was some hinting that the Feds would compensate for losses. I’m not holding my breath on that. How’s your Pontiac truck?”

“Nary a problem. Been to town in it a couple of times. There’s quite a few older rigs running, and like you said, some others are fixable, with new ignition parts. Not going to be many vehicles with booming stereos for a while though, I suspect. They’ll be low priority.”

Grinning, Gary nodded. “What’s the chances of picking up something around here?”

“Good. Like I said, quite a few running. But there are a lot of old rigs setting in junk yards that can probably be salvaged and put into running condition, with a little parts swapping here and there. Clyde can probably help you out there. He’s got something of a junk yard himself.”

A bit cautiously, Gary asked, “You and him still an item?”

Jackie looked at Gary rather sternly. “Not that it’s any of your business, mister...” Her look softened slightly. “But, yeah, we’re getting on together okay again. He’s pretty much quit drinking, except a Sunday ballgame beer or two.”

“I’m glad to hear it, Jackie. He’s a pretty good guy, but he didn’t have any right to treat you the way he did.”

“Leave it alone, Gary. The past is the past. It’s between him and me. I’ll do what I want.”

“I know. Nothing more on the subject from me.”

“Good. Now do the dishes, and then come help me with the goats.”

Gary laughed. “Okay.”

For the next several days Gary helped out around Jackie’s small homestead. He was a lousy goat milker, but he could help with just about everything else. He was amazed anew when he went into what Jackie called her barn.

Not long after Jackie and Clyde acquired the property they’d run into a deal on used concrete blocks. They got the blocks for tearing down the old building. Took a long time, but they got enough blocks to build the ‘barn’.

It was in reality a large fallout shelter based on the old Civil Defense Above-Ground Shelter design. The walls were basically two parallel block walls with earth fill in between. The original design had only 20 inches of earth fill in the walls and 16 inches of earth on top of a 6-inch thick concrete roof. The interior area was only 8 feet by 8 feet.

Jackie’s shelter was 24 feet wide inside and 48 feet long. The walls had 4 feet of fill with 4 feet of cover over a 12-inch concrete roof. Block columns supported the roof on an 8-foot by 8-foot grid. She actually used it as a barn, but had space set aside for a few humans, as well.

True to her word, Jackie mainly took food and homestead support supplies in trade for her products. Working for Jackie, Gary was able to replenish his food stocks and get a little ahead. With the plan he had in mind he decided not to try to buy a vehicle for himself. Instead, when he wasn’t helping Jackie, he helped Clyde get a few running, and took an old pickup they fixed in payment.

## A New Day Of Infamy – 6 August 2005 – Epilog

Gary was in excellent shape when FEMA announced two months after the attack that they needed workers to go in to begin rebuilding the areas affected. Gary signed up immediately. The rest of the country was gradually getting back to normal. Repair parts for the EMP damaged critical industries were imported and installed. Then those industries began to make the parts to get the rest of technology back up and running.

It would be many years before things in America were back to what they before 8:15 AM Pacific Cost time, 6 August 2005, but they did get back to that point. And the hunt for the terrorists continued.

Gary came out of the situation smelling like a rose. Metal workers willing to work in the affected zones got premium wages. Plus, the federal government compensated everyone that lost their belongings in the attack. He was able to set up a retreat similar to Jackie's homestead, on the property next to hers. He was ready for the next disaster.

End \*\*\*\*\*

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