

# THE REMEMBRANCE

## Prelude — Chandra Kala Monastery

*(A vision thousands of years ago... or now. In remembrance, there is no distance, no difference.)*

In the stillness of predawn, Chandra Kala Monastery lay silent beneath a canopy of stars. Moonbeams spilled through high archways, painting the stone floor in gentle silver.

From the darkness beyond the threshold, a young girl stepped forward—windswept raven-black hair, ice-blue eyes catching and shivering the moonlight—walking beside a woman draped in a single robe of white, translucent gossamer.

The girl's heart-frequency answered the sacred hush of the place. A calming warmth radiated from the woman's presence. No one remarked upon the girl's nakedness. No one needed to. In



that holy moment, all knew the woman at her side was Mary Magdalene—and together they were luminous and serene.

Mary gently squeezed the girl's hand.

The girl smiled—faint, dawn-soft—visible only to Mary.

Robed monks emerged from the periphery of the sanctuary, gathering along the stone walls. Some sank to their knees, tears bright with awe. Others pressed palms together in prayer, as if witnessing a living miracle. Incense thickened the air with centuries of devotion.

An elder priest stepped forward, cradling an object in both hands: an ancient scroll, bound with a curious clasp shaped like a leopard's paw. The gold glinted—fierce and sacred.

With trembling humility, he lifted the scroll toward Mary and the girl. No words were spoken. The promise hung present yet unseen.

Mary halted the girl before a kneeling sister and showed her the scroll.

“When mankind is ready.”

Mary nodded once. The monks bowed deeper, foreheads to stone. Though the scroll remained sealed, its gravity filled the hall.

Mary's eyes held a quiet knowing as she turned to the girl. Gratitude and acceptance—an unnamed oath—rose within her.

In the hush, all understood without words: they were a bridge of ascension, spanning all time in a single moment. A sacred union—remembrance of timeless time—the great superimposition, Love's holy bond.

The scroll passed into the girl's keeping—outside ordinary memory.

The monks remained prostrate long after the figures vanished. The chamber brimmed with echo.

Beneath fading stars, a covenant beyond words was sealed—a promise destined to awaken when humankind came of age.

In that single moment, two thousand years passed—now.

The girl made the sacred choice.

Not summoned.

Not forced.

Freely.

Fiercely.

By her rising, we remember too—that we were never bound, only waiting to choose.

The covenant is seeded in the soul, watered by time, blooming in the Eternal Now.

Such a one is Ty Huff—investigative reporter and war correspondent.

## ACT I — Baghdad: The Covenant Awakens

### Firestorm

The wind came first—hot, metallic, full of sand and the burnt tang of cordite carried for miles. It knifed through the open belly of the CH-47 like an incoming tide.

Ty Huff sat on the ramp, boots braced, fingers resting on her camera as if it were a living thing. The harness straps crossed her chest in an X, black webbing against a leather jacket too light for army regs and too heavy for fashion. The night below was a blind ocean. Somewhere in it, a compound waited with its doors barred and its secrets shaking.

“Two minutes,” the crew chief yelled, voice flayed by the rotors.

Delta operators packed the bay—faces smudged, eyes like coals under helmets. No one looked at her. She preferred it that way. When men looked at Ty Huff on a bird like this, they looked for reasons to say no.

She checked the feed indicator: green, steady. The uplink’s tiny light blinked like a heartbeat. New York would have her live feed in ten... nine... eight...

She leaned toward the lens until it could see her grin.

“Ty Huff, Fox News—flying in hot.”

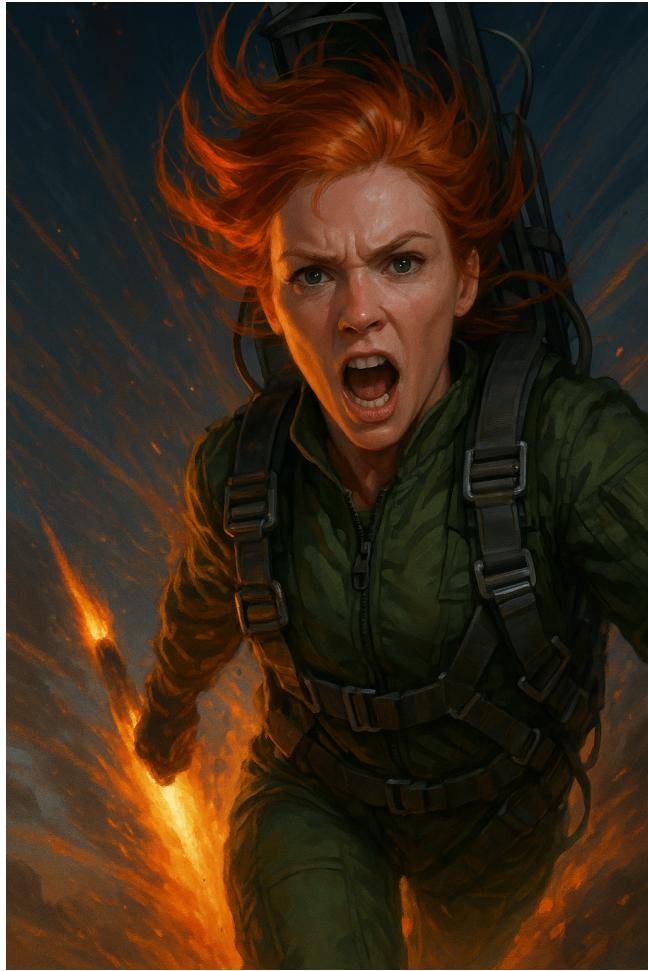
The crew chief didn’t hide his smile this time. “You’re insane,” he mouthed.

She winked. “Occupational hazard.”

The pilot’s voice snapped over intercom: “Dust in ninety seconds. Wind shear from the west. Heads up.”

The city rolled beneath them—low, smoky, cordoned by rivers of light and the blacker dark beyond. Tracer rounds stitched the air to their left, orange-white threads laid by an angry god. The Chinook banked hard. Ty’s stomach dropped, then steadied. Her hands didn’t tremble. They never did—not on the air.

She tapped the mic, letting New York know she was ready. The camera’s green eye drank her in and spat her out across the world.



*FREQUENCY: The lens is a gate. The word is a key. When the two agree, the field opens.*

“Thirty,” said the crew chief.

A soldier across from Ty—broad shoulders, gloved hands veined with dust—checked his M16 one last time and met her eyes. No hostility. An understanding. They were both here to do something that couldn’t be done.

The ramp yawned wider. Bagdad rose like heat.

“On you, Huff,” the crew chief said. “You call it.”

She didn’t think. She didn’t pray. She smiled—a private thing, nearer to defiance than to joy—and stepped into the void.

The night swallowed her.

The rope burned through her gloves, then caught with a jolt. Ty controlled the spin with her knees, camera hugging her sternum. Tracers scissored past, close enough to taste—ozone and fear. Her mic filled with voices: “Go—go—flash—left side breach—watch your six.” She hit

hard, rolled through an explosion of sand, and came up crouched with the Delta squad ghosting past her like shadows made of bone and orders.

“Stay tight, media,” someone growled. “You get one warning.”

“I’ll take none,” she said, and kept pace.

The compound wall loomed—mud brick mottled by scorch marks. A door blew inward in a petal of fire. Men poured through. Ty followed the chaos with the calm of a surgeon, lens steady, breath chopped into even pieces. Her viewfinder made sense of what the eye could not: bodies flitting in and out of light, flashbangs pulsing the corridors into frame-by-frame revelation.

“Clear left!”

“Room three secure!”

Screaming—high, terrified—children dragged by the wrist; a woman with a headscarf torn and eyes savage with relief; a guard pinned under three boots, teeth bared like an animal. Ty moved like she’d been here before, because she had. Every war colored itself differently and smelled the same.

A door slammed at the end of the hall. A bolt snapped.

“There,” Ty said, and the stack flowed past her, quiet as water.

She hung back enough to keep her frame clean and heart-sharp. The point man kicked. The lock surrendered. And there—ragged light slicing in—stood a woman with wrists abraded to meat and eyes ruined by months without sky.

“Dr. Miriam Sloan,” someone confirmed. “Target recovered.”

Ty eased forward, slow, careful to make the shot a mercy and not a theft.

“You’re going home,” she whispered, the words meant for the woman and for seven million strangers at once.

Dr. Sloan collapsed against the nearest shoulder and began to cry. Ty held the two-shot—a lifetime in the half-second before the next thing—because she knew where hope lived on film: in breaths, not speeches.

Gunfire split the hall. Plaster powdered down like a veil. Ty pivoted, camera catching muzzle flare as art—staccato strobes that painted the corridor in pulses of truth no editor could fake. The squad moved. She moved with them, in their wake but never in their way.

The air changed.

Ty felt it before she saw it—the way a room shifts when someone enters whose name you cannot remember but have been waiting on for years. Cool, somehow, in a place that had no right to anything but heat.

Smoke thinned across the corridor's far corner.

A girl stood there, where there should have been sandbags and a busted chair. Raven-black hair. Eyes the color of ice lit from within. She was not afraid. She was not anything Ty had a word for. She looked at the lens—not into it; through it—as if she had been looking before Ty arrived and would keep looking long after.

The frame burned itself into silicon.



“Move, Huff!” a hand clamped her shoulder. The world snapped back into bullets and orders. Ty stumbled, kept the camera up, refused to blink.

The girl didn’t move. She didn’t flinch when a ricochet sparked at her feet. For two full seconds she was there—and then she was gone, the smoke closing like a fist where her body should have been.

People don’t fade. Not in light like this. Not on live feeds.

Ty’s lungs forgot the sequence and then remembered. She ran.

A team in gear blacker than the dark flowed past. No insignia. No names. They swallowed space and left nothing but room temperature in their wake.

One of them grabbed Ty’s rig with a gloved fist. “You want to live, lady?” he snapped, voice dry as a blade. He shoved her toward the exit.

“Hands off the camera,” Ty said, and the man’s grip eased.

They burst into the open and the night clawed her face again. The Chinook’s rotors raked up a storm. Dust boiled into the sky.

Dr. Sloan came out in the center of a diamond of bodies. Ty tracked her—kept her in the frame—and backed toward the bird without watching her own feet. She’d learned that trick in Yemen: let the lens be your eyes. Trust it, and it will keep you alive.

It didn’t always work.

A crack like a splitting tree. The wall behind them vomited fire. The blast punched Ty’s back, and she went to one knee. The camera never left her shoulder. She panned—caught three men she’d never learn the names of returning fire as neatly as a liturgy—then crawled up the ramp as the crew chief hauled her by the harness.

Inside, noise became a body that sat on her chest. She pressed the camera to it and breathed into the mic.

“Fox News exclusive... rescue complete... Dr. Miriam Sloan is alive.” She swallowed grit. “Ty Huff—flying in hot.”

The floor shuddered under her. The Chinook lifted. The firestorm fell away in a map of tracers and the black river curling like a question through the city.

The camera’s indicator light still burned green.

Ty checked the lens with a mother’s touch, then cradled it to her like a child.

She felt it again—the cool edge standing in for an ocean. She replayed the corridor in her head. Two seconds. The girl hadn't been a shadow or an echo. She had weight. She had presence. She had looked at Ty like a question she already knew the answer to.

*FREQUENCY: Remembrance is a return to the thing that never left. The eye learns it first. The mind follows. The world resists.*

A shadow unit operator sat down across from her, visor up now, eyes a hard brown.

“You roll that whole time?” he asked.

“Every frame,” Ty said.

He nodded once. “Keep your head down when we land. You just stepped on something old.”

Ty glanced at her tiny playback screen—just a frame.

Freeze.

There.

A girl with hair like the night just before dawn. Eyes lit as if the moon had learned to look back. No motion blur. No pixel smear. Two seconds captured like a signature.

And then the fade—soft, deliberate—as though light had been retracted from the world one degree at a time until it took her with it.

Ty's breath hissed between her teeth.

“Problem?” the operator asked, already knowing.

Ty didn't answer. She wasn't sure which frightened her more—that the girl had appeared, or that she had somehow expected her.

The operator leaned in. “Whatever you think you saw—”

Ty cut him off with a smile that didn't reach her eyes. “I saw it.”

He went quiet.

Then, softer: “If it makes any difference... I saw her too.”

Ty nodded.

She didn't believe in ghosts.

She believed in film.

*FREQUENCY: Not belief. Remembrance. The difference is the distance between a story and a covenant. There is no distance in remembrance.*

The Chinook roared into the dark.