

DEVIL'S DIARY

THE  
COMING

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*Dedicated to the ladies of my life:  
Jenjit, Jenetta Claire, Jaden, and Caren Howard.*



**BLACK FOX**  
IMPRINT

Devil's Diary: The Coming

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Paperback ISBN 978-0-9966397-2-9

eBook ISBN 978-0-9966397-3-6

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*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth  
was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep,  
and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.  
And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.*

Genesis 1:1–3



# CHAPTER 1



There was heightened panic across America.

Amidst the unprecedented pandemonium, Oniva Mering was afraid. All she wanted was food. That was a tall order amongst the mayhem. She couldn't hear her stomach gurgle over the shouting. Piercing hunger pangs erupted again inside of her. She hadn't eaten today. She had money, but most stores now only accepted smartchips, and she refused to get one. Even after her three hour wait, banks were not giving out any more cash. In the last four minutes, three fistfights had already erupted beside her in the Safeway over bottled water and canned goods. The screaming and turmoil unnerved Oniva. She saw those who were able to fight their way to the register scanning the smartchips inside of their hands or foreheads in order to purchase food. As Oniva reached for the last box of pasta, another cart forcefully collided with hers, knocking her to the ground.

"Get the hell out of my way!" a large man yelled. "War is coming!"

He looked like an ox, his eyes blazing. Oniva was petrified.

"Please, don't hurt me. I just want to buy food. I don't have anything to eat."

The man looked down at Oniva, ignored her plea, and began grabbing food from her shopping cart in a frenzy. While he was preoccupied, Oniva scrambled to her feet and ran out of the grocery store, visibly shaken. Even the parking lot was in chaos. Car horns blasted

amidst a chorus of obscenities. The desperate energy had shifted its focus from the last scraps of food to shopping carts and parking spaces. This was Washington, DC, but today, it seemed like a foreign country.

Oniva noticed a very thin man in a black suit standing just outside the perimeter of the chaos. He wore an archaic metal medallion. The man seemed oddly emotionless as he observed the anarchy. He nodded slowly to himself. Suddenly, he looked directly at Oniva and sneered. Oniva jerked her gaze from his, and in a moment, he was gone.

In the electronics store next to Safeway, CNN played on the window full of flat screen TVs, replaying the devastating news: The United States was under attack.

Oniva joined the group of frightened citizens listening to the newscast. “For the first time since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the United States of America has been attacked on its home soil. After today’s crippling air bombing over Langley, Virginia, a secret alliance of over eleven countries and insurgent nations claimed responsibility for the attacks. Their primary target: The US.” The crowd gasped in shock.

“Despite the United States’ status as a world power,” the CNN reporter started, “this alliance has declared war by the brutal attack of key forts and military bases nationwide.”

“My God,” Oniva said softly.

A woman next to her glanced sideways at Oniva and muttered, “Lady, we lost God a while back.”

The TV screen flashed to a military officer reporting on the latest discoveries involving the terrorist plot. “It seems there are more German military forces in Canada now than there are Canadian military forces. Incredibly, the alliance has succeeded in bridging the gap between Siberia and Alaska through a vast underground tunnel. The Bering Sea between Alaska and Asia is some one hundred miles wide at its narrowest point. It is unknown at this point just how many war machines and weapons of mass destruction could be hidden underground.”

“Is an invasion on the US imminent, commander?” the analyst asked.

There was an awkward pause. “I am not prepared to answer that question.”

Oniva looked across the street at the bank. After her three hour wait, the bank announced that it was out of cash, but would happily load currency onto any smartchips. Lines at gun stores and pawn shops played across the TV screens as hundreds of people filled out paperwork to receive firearms. Anarchism had spread nationwide.

Feeling as though she was in a dream, Oniva turned to walk back to her car when a graph on the TV screen caught her eye.

“Look at the stock market!” a man yelled pointing at the screen. It showed the Dow Jones plummeting like a cinderblock in the ocean as the panic-stricken population liquefied any asset possible in preparation for war. “Banks are out of cash, and billion-dollar companies have been devalued almost instantly. We have no economy! This catastrophe will destroy the country overnight,” the man in the crowd said, sounding stunned.

The US was ripe for invasion.

# CHAPTER 2



Esau Rontrez stared at the two-hour wait ahead of him at the gun shop. He just wanted to buy ammo, not engage in all the madness. Might need a few more full clips for the chaos. Too late to get a gun. They were all gone, and he knew the backorders would never arrive. The US military would be taking all the shipments. The ammo he needed for his automatic pistol wasn't on the shelf, but he knew that it wasn't out of stock. Someone just scooped it up to hoard or to resell. He looked around. He saw a few folks watching a small TV detailing the recent bombing in Virginia. Will Baxter stood amongst the crowd by the TV, dressed in camouflage pants and a confederate flag T-shirt. "Hell, we'll show them what we've got!" he shouted to the TV.

As if on cue, the screen switched to footage of the US military mobilizing troops and preparing for retaliation. The oceans were filled with submarines and battleships, and a false move by either side could result in the first nuclear missile fired in World War III. The US had called for all offensive weaponry to be withdrawn immediately. The enemy alliance ignored the order, and now there was a standoff.

Rontrez looked into Baxter's cart and saw 20 familiar blue boxes of the ammo he needed. He sauntered up to the shouting man and said. "I'm gonna need some of those boxes, 'Patriot'."

"No can do," Baxter said adamantly. "Need these for my pistol."

"What kind do you have?"

“Smith and Wesson, 357.”

“Then you won’t be needing those. Those are 9 millimeter. They won’t go into a Smith & Wesson 357. That’s a revolver.”

Baxter gave Rontrez a menacing stare. “These boxes ain’t leaving my basket. And you best get from ‘round me before things get ugly.” Baxter’s southern accent had come to the forefront of his tone.

“Well, we can do this one of two ways,” Rontrez started. “You can give half of them to me, and hold onto the other half for resale later when you can triple the price. Or, I can wait for you outside and empty the last six bullets from my Glock into you the second you walk out that door. Then I take all 20 boxes, plus your smart chip, and then go on a shopping spree. Not the time or the person for games. The police are a bit too preoccupied with the riots to help you out on this one. Your move.”

Rontrez saw Baxter sizing him up. He smirked. Rontrez knew Baxter was trying to figure out if he was joking. Rontrez had spoken casually, so that the threat on Baxter’s life almost didn’t seem serious. But Rontrez’s words lingered, as did his indifference to them. From Rontrez’s accent and appearance, Baxter could tell Rontrez was a Baltimore native with a hardened past. He noticed Rontrez did not have a smart-chip incision mark on his hands or his forehead. This meant there was a resilience and edginess about him. He was not a conformist, likely did need the bullets, and just might make good on his threat. Baxter couldn’t tangle right now. He had to stay on mission. Baxter was a lethal member of the country’s newest threat: The Bloodliners. Baxter jerked his head toward his cart. Without a word, Rontrez grabbed half the boxes. He hoped to get back to Oniva before it was too late. As a deeply spiritual and sensitive person, he knew she wouldn’t be able to maneuver well in the dysfunctional unruliness.

# CHAPTER 3



Oniva walked through the door, empty-handed. She was crying softly. Weeping for mankind.

“Stop all that,” a smooth voice said from her living room.

She turned to see Rontrez laying on her sofa.

“Get your feet off my sofa,” Oniva said. “Didn’t you see the sign outside? It said ‘No Riff-Raff.’ Former pimps especially.”

“I take it Safeway wasn’t the safe way today?” Rontrez asked, seeing Oniva wasn’t carrying grocery bags.

“It was a war zone,” Oniva replied gravely. She took a deep solemn breath.

“I know, Niva. Gun shop was worse than our high school at lunchtime.”

Oniva nodded her head sadly. “I was looking at some of the foreign news. Citizens on both sides are crying out for peace, but governments are bent on war. We need peace. People on both sides are pleading for an end to this.”

“Begging for change won’t help.”

“What do you suggest? We need a solution. Time is of the essence.”

“I suggest you get some rest. You look tired. I’m going to go find something for breakfast.”

“Be careful, Esau.”

“I don’t need careful, Oniva.” Rontrez winked. “I got ammunition.”



Oniva couldn't sleep a wink. The world was in chaos. Rontrez was snoring loudly from the guest room. At about 7a.m, she got out of bed, famished. She didn't open the refrigerator. She already knew it was empty. She opened the freezer and pulled out some old asparagus. This would have to serve as her morning nutrition. The only breakfast she could find. She didn't have any oil left to stir-fry it, so she sadly put the asparagus into the microwave. On top of the microwave she saw a handwritten note from Rontrez: *Last box of cereal at Safeway. No milk.* She eagerly searched the cabinet and found the generic-brand corn flakes Rontrez had somehow managed to procure. As she poured herself a bowl, Rontrez entered the kitchen.

"Breakfast of champions," he said.

"And for lunch we have asparagus soup with a side of air pie. Served chilled with a glass of premium tap water," Oniva replied.

"I almost had to box someone last night for the cornflakes." As Rontrez spoke, the sky suddenly turned black. The sun disappeared and the moon went dark.

"What in the world?" Oniva muttered while turning on the lights. She walked outside with Rontrez to get a better look.

Though the clock read 7:06 a.m. EST, the sky read death.

A glowing, white cloud appeared in the sky. A blinding light appeared within the cloud. Although the phenomenon was the size of a house, it could be seen across the entire globe.

"What is that?" Oniva asked.

Rontrez had no answer.

The cloud was brighter than the sun, but as they gazed upon it, they both felt overwhelmed by peace and tranquility. Its radiance illuminated the sky brighter than daylight. Countless, scattered balls of light rained from the cloud as it sank lower to the earth.

Traffic stopped to admire the shimmering cloud. People beheld the sight from the windows of cars, trains, and buses. At once, every woman, man, and child was aware of the luminous being within. News crews rushed to film the cloud, but it did not register on their equipment. It could only be seen by a living soul.

Gracefully, the cloud continued to descend. The light inside spoke, but there was no audible voice. The being communicated without sound but with the celestial expression of thoughts. A parapsychologist might call it telepathy. Whatever it was, everyone could hear within themselves a gentle, kind voice overflowing with love and compassion.

“Behold, I am the Son of Man,” the voice said. “Fear me not, for all knew this day would come. I am not here to bring vengeance. I am here to bring peace and love amongst the living.”

As these words were spoken, countless separate clouds spawned from the original one. These clouds formed into winged beings with long golden trumpets, and the beings descended to the earth. When they stepped to the ground, the countless angels blew their horns at once, sounding a thunderous and awesome musical chorus. The angels stood erect and obedient, not moving or making a sound. The beings of great light seem to say, “Pay no attention to us. We are nothing. Listen to the words of the Messiah.”

For the first time since the beginning of time, every living man, woman, and child on earth was awake.

Oniva was awestruck. She could hear the words, but could not believe what was going on around her.

“For all who may doubt,” he said, “I deliver unto you the prophet Elijah. Upon my word, he will restore peace and prosperity to mankind. I am sending my servant, and he will make ready the way before me, whom you are looking for. I will come to his Temple, and the angel of judgment, in whom you may or may not delight, is coming.”

Oniva and Rontrez looked at each other. Rontrez shrugged his shoulders, indicating he too could hear the voice loud and clear.

“I say unto all, when you are taken and given up to be judged, do not be troubled about what to say: but whatever is given to you in that hour, say, because it is not you who say it, but the Holy Spirit who dwells within you. Judgment is swift and permanent, and the unclean shall be rebuked. Elijah will take his seat, testing and cleansing the sons of the first breath of life, burning away the dross from them as from gold and silver, so that he and his followers may make offerings

to the Lord in righteousness. And I will come near to you for judging those who have been untrue in married life. I will bear witness against those who take false oaths, who keep back from the servant his payment, and those who are hard on the widow and the child without a father. Have no fear of me, I say, but fear the Lord of armies.”