

JINN

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Logline

A jaded platoon sergeant must outmaneuver an evil Jinn and survive attacks from a clandestine Iranian unit to save his men and hug his wife and children again.

Characters

Charlie “Gramps” Henderson – U.S. Army platoon sergeant stationed at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Comanche in the foothills of the Zagros Mountains of Northeast Iraq. After five combat deployments in nine years, he is jaded about the U.S. mission in Iraq and the Army.

Emilio “Flaco” Perez – Charlie’s closest friend. They served together on their last deployment to Iraq where one of their good friends was killed in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attack. Flaco is the second highest ranking enlisted man in the platoon. Charlie trusts his judgment, skill as a combat soldier, and advice.

Lieutenant Colonel Martinez – Commanding officer of First Squadron, Twenty-Third Cavalry Regiment. The Squadron is tasked with sending a small cavalry unit into the Zagros mountains to conduct reconnaissance on an unknown target. Martinez assigns the task to LT. ERIC MURPHY, Charlie’s platoon leader.

The American Unit – The other members on the mission are: MARIO “GUIDO” ACCARDI, LARRY “BERNIE” BURNETT, NATHAN “PANTS” LEVI, AARON “AJ” JONES, ERNESTO “QUESO” CALDERON, GREG “MIAMI” WILLIAMS, DAVID “CAJUN” ORLEANS, TOM “STRETCH” GARRETT, AND BILLY “FRIAR” TUCK.

The Jinn – An ancient, evil spirit who was trapped by Muslim exorcists in 687 A.D. near a small village in the Zagros mountains. He manifests as a glowing green gas and possesses various soldiers in the platoon, exercising complete control over them while eating their souls.

Lieutenant Ahmadenijad – A platoon leader in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) assigned to a clandestine outpost established by Iran the Zagros Mountains in Iraq. He leads the Iranian forces that track and attack the American unit.

Reza Hosseini – He is the senior sergeant in Ahmadenijad’s platoon.

Synopsis

In 687 A.D. the Jinn is trapped in a clay pot during an exorcism of a young man living in a small village in the Zagros Mountains. The Muslim exorcists (Raqi) bury the clay pot, where it remains undisturbed until accidentally discovered in 2010.

Charlie Henderson is due to rotate home in thirty-two days after his fifth combat deployment in the past nine years. He plans to retire and spend his life with his wife and three children, including his newborn baby girl. He is jaded about the U.S. mission in the Middle East and sees its primary purpose as increasing the bottom lines of defense contractors and padding the resumes of pro-war politicians. He does not believe that anything about this war is worth dying for.

Charlie is in the Squadron HQ checking on his orders home. Murphy finds him and tells him that Lieutenant Colonel Martinez wants to see them. Martinez takes them to the S-2 (Intelligence) office where they receive a mission brief that tasks Murphy and Charlie to take a small team of Cav Scouts to reconnoiter a remote location in the Zagros Mountains. To get to the target, they will have to scramble thirty kilometers over rugged desert and mountainous terrain. They must remain unseen during the mission. If discovered, they are to abort.

Charlie tells Martinez that he is only thirty-two days from going home. Martinez says he doesn't care. Charlie is his unit's senior scout, has the most combat experience in his Troop, and is the only member of the Squadron with Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) training. He has a duty to make sure the men on this mission return home safely.

The next day, the unit is taken by truck and Humvee to the start point, Checkpoint Zero. They hike through the desert and mountains and stop for the night at the ruins of a small village. During the night, Stretch, the unit radioman, gets up to pee. While relieving himself he sees the ground glowing green. He digs up the clay pot, takes off the sealed lid and reaches inside, hoping to find "treasure" or at least something cool. Instead, he is possessed by the Jinn. The Jinn tells him that he knows everything that Stretch knows and then pushes Stretch's consciousness into a small corner of his mind.

Stretch is under the Jinn's complete control. When he gets back to where he was sleeping, he opens the radio and removes a circuit card which disables its ability to transmit or receive.

The next morning, the unit's interpreter, MALIK, discovers the abandoned clay pot. After reading the inscriptions on it, he drops the pot and runs to Charlie telling him in a panic that there is an evil Jinn and they must leave immediately. Charlie dismisses Malik's concerns about the Jinn.

The Unit pushes on toward the target. During a meal break in a narrow canyon, Stretch (Jinn) tries to send a sitrep. The radio, however, returns nothing but static. Malik tells Charlie that the radio is broken because of the Jinn. Murphy asks whether they should abort the mission. Charlie convinces Murphy that a broken radio is insufficient to abort.

The unit continues their advance to the target and stops for the night. The target is just ten kilometers away. Stretch (Jinn) is unable to send a sitrep and reports the radio is kaput. Later, Charlie finds Flaco and lets him know the radio does not work. He complains about risking his life one last time for Lockheed-Martin when he is so close to being done and going home. Flaco tells Charlie that he has changed ever since the attack during their last deployment when their

friend, Wiseguy, was killed. Charlie explains that Wiseguy's death made him realize that he is mortal and there is nothing in this war worth dying for. Flaco reminds Charlie that he and the men are worth dying for because all they really have is each other.

Stretch (Jinn) warns Malik not to be in camp in the morning. Later that night, Malik sneaks out of camp and abandons the unit. In the morning, the unit discovers Malik is gone. The unit moves on toward the target.

Elsewhere in the mountains, Malik is surrounded by a group of armed men dressed in local clothing. Reza asks him what he is doing out there. Malik says that he is lost and asks for help. Reza has Malik bound and takes him back to a building the Iranians use in Qureshi, a small cave village in the Zagros mountains near the border with Iran. During his interrogation, Malik reveals that he was an interpreter for a small American unit but left because of an evil Jinn. The Iranian commander sends a small unit to look for and ambush the Americans.

The Iranians hide on the top of a ridge. Guido, on point, hears something along the ridge and alerts Flaco. Charlie orders the unit to flex left to some trees. The Jinn puts Stretch's finger on the trigger of his rifle and trips, setting off a shot. The Iranians open fire. During the battle, Stretch is hit. Flaco rushes to his side. While trying to find a pulse, the Jinn possesses Flaco and has him remove the radio circuit board from Stretch and hide it. Stretch dies. Miami is killed and Queso is wounded in the leg. The Americans beat back the Iranian attack.

After the battle, Charlie sends Flaco and three men to gather whatever intelligence they can from the Iranian dead. Charlie tells Murphy that the mission is a bust. They will have to return to FOB Comanche. The group searching the Iranian dead find a few documents. While examining them Charlie spots a logo at the top of a page and tells Murphy and Flaco that it is IRGC. From this, they surmise that the attackers were Iranians dressed in local clothes.

The unit moves away from the battlefield and travels by moonlight. Reza returns to Qureshi and tells the commander about the battle. The commander summons Ahmadenijad and tasks his platoon with finding and exterminating the Americans.

Cajun tells Charlie that Queso's wound is infected. He is running a high fever and needs to stop limping on his wounded leg. He suggests that they build a travois and drag Cajun back to Checkpoint Zero. Charlie agrees.

In the morning, while moving toward a boulder field, a small drone flies over the Americans and returns to Ahmadenijad's unit. The drone has a range of about ten kilometers which means the Iranians are close.

Charlie convinces Murphy to set up a defensive position in the boulder field to ambush the pursuing Iranians. Flaco (Jinn) tries to convince Charlie to abandon Queso. Charlie refuses. The Iranians approach the boulder field and the Americans open fire. During the battle, Flaco's consciousness slips past the Jinn's control and struggles for control of his rifle. He stands up and is hit by Iranian fire. Murphy rushes to his aid, places his hand on Flaco's shoulder and is possessed by the Jinn. Murphy (Jinn) then shoots Flaco in the chest for his mutiny.

The Iranians withdraw and Charlie discovers Flaco is seriously wounded and yells for Cajun, the medic. Before Cajun arrives, Flaco tells Charlie that the Jinn is real, that he possessed Stretch and made him steal a radio circuit card. Flaco also tells Charlie that after he was wounded, the Jinn moved to someone else and whoever that is, they have the circuit card. Just before he dies, Flaco asks Charlie to promise that he will get the men home safely. As Charlie stares at Flaco's dead body, he quietly says to himself, "I . . . promise."

In the Iranian camp, Ahmadenijad radios the commander in Qureshi and reports the results of the battle, including the fact that the Americans had no air support and are dragging a wounded man with them. The commander orders Ahmadenijad to continue the pursuit with his remaining men.

The Jinn is eager to return to Forward Operating Base Comanche where there will be plenty of victims for him. While the Americans make slow progress, Murphy (Jinn) argues with Charlie about abandoning Queso, who is slowing them down. Charlie refuses to do that and thinks he might have seen Murphy's eyes flash green. Charlie orders the unit to move out.

While making their way closer to Checkpoint Zero, an Iranian drone flies overhead and spots the Americans again. By comparing their previous and current positions, Ahmadenijad deduces that they are headed to Checkpoint Zero. He orders his remaining men to travel on a parallel course so as to arrive at Checkpoint Zero before the Americans to set up an ambush.

During a break, Murphy (Jinn) walks over the top of a hill alone, ostensibly to use the bathroom. While alone, he puts the circuit card back in the radio and calls Squadron, reporting that they are only a few kilometers from Checkpoint Zero with a wounded man and hostiles in pursuit. Squadron says help is on the way. Murphy (Jinn) cuts off the call before any more information is exchanged and removes the circuit card. On his return, Murphy (Jinn) tells Charlie that while he was over the hill he decided to give the radio a try, and it worked. He has called for extraction. Charlie is suspicious but also glad that help is on the way.

On hearing that the sitrep from the unit, Martinez orders an American drone to find them and direct them to Checkpoint Zero. He also orders two Apache helicopter gunships and a Chinook Helicopter to launch and head toward the Checkpoint, and he sends a Humvee there.

Ahmadenijad and his men beat the American unit to the road where Checkpoint Zero is located. They see the Humvee and conceal themselves on the far side of the road. The American drone finds Charlie and his men and shows them the direction to Checkpoint Zero. As it flies over the road, the drone operator sees the waiting Iranian ambush. This information is immediately relayed to the intel section and Martinez.

After the drone flies off, Ahmadenijad orders one of his soldiers to destroy the waiting Humvee with an RPG. On the other side of a hill near the Checkpoint, the American unit hears the explosion and sees the rising smoke. Unsure of what the situation may be, Charlie has Pants sneak to the top of the hill to see if he can figure out what's going on. Pants' view is blocked by another hill.

The unit advances to the bottom of the second hill and Pants goes up again to scout the other side. He sees the burning Humvee but nothing else. Charlie, suspicious of Murphy, has the men move to and hide behind the crest of the hill while he and Murphy remain behind them. Charlie asks for a volunteer to go over the hill and see if they draw fire. Friar volunteers. Ahmadenijad sees Friar come over the hill and orders his men to hold fire. The remainder of the Americans move over the hill with Charlie keeping Murphy at the crest to provide covering fire, if needed, and keep him under observation.

A nervous Iranian opens fire and hits Friar in the arm. The Americans dive for cover and a firefight ensues. Just then the Apache helicopter gunships arrive and open fire on the Iranian position. The Chinook helicopter lands with its ramp pointing toward the American unit. The men scramble down the hill and on to the helicopter. Charlie and Murphy come over the hill and are running toward the Chinook when Charlie veers toward Murphy yelling that he will not be allowed on board the Chinook. Murphy's eyes flash green and he raises his rifle to point it at Charlie, but Charlie hits him with the butt of his own rifle before Murphy can shoot.

Charlie runs to the Chinook and Murphy (Jinn) pursues. On reaching the ramp, he sees promising his wife to return safely promising Flaco to get the men home. With soldiers on the Chinook watching, Charlie raises his rifle, apologizes in his mind to his wife, and kills Murphy before he reaches the helicopter. He has chosen loyalty to his men over his own desire to go home. Charlie then commandeers the helicopter and orders the pilot to return immediately to Comanche, where he peacefully surrenders to the waiting MPs.

On their way back to their base, Ahmadenijad, Reza and two wounded men see Murphy's body. Ahmadenijad orders Reza to search it. When Reza touches Murphy, he is possessed by the Jinn.

Guido visits Charlie in the stockade to ask him what happened on the hill. Charlie tells him the story of the Jinn and how he determined that Murphy was possessed and could not be allowed to return to the FOB. Guido believes Charlie, but they both know that a court martial will not.

Martinez meets with Charlie before he is transferred to the Brigade stockade and then to the U.S. for court martial. He commends Charlie for getting the men back safely. He says, he cannot pretend to understand and asks Charlie why he shot Murphy. Charlie's answer is "So at least some of us would make it home, sir."