

FANA!

by **Thomas M. Kelly**

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Six Palestinian murder/suicide bombers have targeted a Tel-Aviv Culture Center. In the four-story complex each bomber is assigned a floor to detonate himself, with the exception of the theater, which has two assigned bombers. They are to explode in rapid succession for maximum effect: to bring the building down on the hundreds of gallery visitors, planetarium viewers, and the theater audience. The explosions take place as planned except for one. In the lower level, ten meters below street level only one of the bombers exploded as planned. The sixth bomber fails to explode. The bomber is instead trapped beneath the rubble and bodies of the victims. Another survivor, a guard, (a black Jew reservist, a member of the Israel Defense Force), who, as a civilian is a Tel-Aviv University professor (of the Diaspora: the flight of the Jews and the Palestinians), finds the surviving bomber (unknown to him as a bomber). The guard's father is Jewish. His mother is Muslim. A third survivor is a playwright from India. She is Hindu. The three survivors in the lower level, the theater, spend their waiting hours justifying their lives and religions: one very honestly, the other deceitfully. In a mental duel the three argue the rationale of murder/suicide bombings using the Qur'an and the Torah as authority. The guard reveals that he is a 'refusnik' (a member of the IDF who has refused to participate in the defense of Israel, arguing that he cannot in good conscience, humiliate, harass and violate the dignity of the Palestinians). For his conscientious position he is jailed, then placed on guard duty at the Center. The story fades to an interview at the newly decorated and furnished home of the suicide bomber, where his mother has revealed to the public that she has condoned and encouraged her son's martyrdom. Videotape made by a clandestine television station based in Lebanon reveals the preparations of her son's martyrdom. (A public relations piece for the cause of Allah.) Two diverse, but surprisingly similar, religions are placed in a situation that has an ending that foretells the outcome of the centuries of wars caused by men trying to prove that their god is the right god. Did anyone ever ask god? The story ends with the martyr revealing his identity, the final collapse of the building, causing the subsequent remaining explosion, and fade to the Independent News Corporation (a IBC type news organization) broadcast viewed in the home of the mother.

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