

In the Day of Evil

Book Chapter

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Delta First Assembly of God

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## Summary

When Bibles and Christianity are outlawed in America, fifteen-year-old Audrey Williams is thrown into a whirlwind of chaos and pain. After Audrey narrowly escapes being captured by anti-Christian soldiers, she becomes friends with an orphaned Christian girl named Carrie. Audrey and Carrie join a group of outcast Christians who are smuggling Bibles into America. With danger around every turn, Audrey must decide if her relationship with Jesus is worth suffering for.

## Chapter 1

I think I am having a nightmare when I first hear the screams, warning gun shots, and the banging on the door. I have woken up screaming from dreams of this happening many times, but this time it isn't a dream. This is horrifyingly real.

My bare feet hit the cold floor as I slide out of bed. Strands of blonde hair stick to my clammy face. My hands tremble as I open my bedroom door. Desperately trying to think of something to do, I sprint down the hall and to the top of the staircase.

"Who is out there?" I hear my dad shout to the soldier who is banging on our front door. Dad knows who it is. We have been fearing their inevitable arrival ever since Bibles were outlawed, which was months ago. Dad is trying to buy time, but it doesn't work.

My older sister, Hannah, along with her three year old daughter, Destiny, and my ten year old little sister, Abigail, reach the top of the staircase just as our front door is kicked in.

"You can't just break into my house!" Dad yells, trying to sound tough. I can see that he is pale and shaking.

The commanding soldier sneers. "This is America. I can do whatever I want." Before Dad has time to react, the soldier swings the butt of his handgun at Dad and hits him in the forehead. Dad falls to the floor with a moan, and the soldier kicks Dad in the side.

I shriek when Dad is hit, but I immediately wish I had kept quiet. My shriek draws the attention of the commanding soldier. "Grab them," he orders as he points to my sisters, Destiny, and me. Several other soldiers rush into my house at the commander's order.

I turn to run, but Hannah grabs my hand. "Don't, Audrey. They will catch you. It's better to remain calm," she advises. I decide to listen to her since I really can't think of anything better to do.

Four soldiers run up the stairs and grab our arms. I try to stay calm, but I can't. As a soldier drags me down the stairs, I kick and scream madly. Even though I do my best to escape, I am just a scrawny fifteen year old girl. The soldier easily drags me to the front yard. He shoves me to the ground next to where Hannah is ordered to sit. Abigail is soon next to me leaning her head on me as she tries to keep from crying. I glance past Hannah and notice that I and all my family are sitting in a line. I try to keep from wondering if it is an execution line.

Looking around for a way to escape, I notice a black van and two green military jeeps are parked on the grass in the front yard. Their headlights pierce the darkness and illuminate the yard. There are about a dozen soldiers armed with submachine guns either searching the property or guarding my family and me.

My heartbeat speeds up and my breathing quickens. This isn't a good time to panic. I need to calm down, so I close my eyes and take in deep breaths. That doesn't help much, though, because the air is scented with a sickening mixture of lilacs and smoke. Soldiers had burned down the local church early yesterday and the smell still lingers.

I silently wonder how America could become so anti-Christian, but I shouldn't. I know how this happened. It happened slowly with one unmoral law at a time. Everything changed gradually so that we hardly realized it was changing. Now it all seems so obvious, but it's too late.

When I open my eyes and look up, I am surprised to see Joel, Hannah's husband, dragged from the garage and ordered to sit next to his daughter on the ground. I hadn't realized he was back from working the night shift at the gas station. Hannah, who hoped Joel was still safe at his job, isn't relieved to see him.

So here we are, all sitting in a row on the cold hard ground of our front yard. Dad is at the end of the row with Mom next to him, then Joel, Destiny, Hannah, me, and finally Abigail. We all look braver than we feel.

I glance over to the forest that borders our property. It is only two hundred feet away from me, and I wonder if I could make it there before the soldiers shoot me. I decide not to try. It's very unlikely I would survive, and there is no chance that my whole family would. So I sit quietly and await my fate.

The commanding officer comes out of my house and stands in front of us. He isn't carrying a submachine gun like the others, but the handgun he hit my father with is in a holster at his side. He is smiling, obviously enjoying himself. His skin is ghostly pale and his eyes are snakelike. Just looking at him sends chills down my spine, so I try to keep my eyes on the ground.

Two soldiers trudge out of the house and over to the commander. Each is holding a Bible, and one is carrying a devotional. These two soldiers are tall and sturdy with tan skin and dark hair. Their eyes are almost black, and the taller one walks with a limp. I immediately recognize them. They are John and Joshua, the sons of my parent's closest friends and the boys I used to be best friends with. Last year, we spent every day together, but a year has changed so many things. They are now playing a part in the destruction of my family. I can hardly believe it, and tears rim my eyes as I watch them hand the Bibles over to the commander. Joshua, my closest friend, turns and looks at me. Something like regret flashes across his face, but only for a moment.

"Bibles are illegal," the commander snarls. "Since they were found in Mr. and Mrs. Williams' bedroom, I must assume these Bibles belong to them. Mr. and Mrs. Williams, you will

now be executed,” the commander announces calmly. He takes his hand gun out of its holster and aims it at Dad.

I have to do something; I have to. I want to stand up and dive in front of my parents to save them, but I am paralyzed.

“No, don’t! The Bibles are mine!” Abigail yells.

The commander points his gun at Abigail and pulls the trigger. Blood splatters onto my face, hair, and pajamas. Abigail is lying on the ground in a pool of blood with a gaping hole in her head. She wasn’t even telling the truth. She has never had a Bible of her own. My mouth hangs open in complete shock. I gasp for air, but I can’t seem to breathe. My body shakes uncontrollably.

“I don’t believe you,” the commander mutters.

Two gunshots ring through the air. I don’t have to look to see what has happened. Hannah is sobbing, and Destiny is screaming as loud as she can. I know who has been shot.

I can’t bear to look over to where my parents are. “Hannah, are they…”

“Dead,” she sobs.

I should cry, but I feel numb. It doesn’t seem possible that my ten year old little sister just gave her life for my parents, but they were killed anyway.

“Anyone who denies Jesus and Christianity will live. If you don’t you will be executed,” the commander informs us. “Anyone?” he chuckles. No one speaks up. “No? Okay. Soldiers, line them up for execution.”

He pauses and then points at me. “Except for her. Put her in the van. She will be interrogated back at headquarters.”

I can't believe what I am hearing. Why would he choose to interrogate me? If it's because he thinks I am the weakest, he is right.

"No! Don't!" I scream as Joshua grabs my arms tightly and pulls me towards the dark green van. I can't be brave even now. I scream and struggle frantically. "Hannah! Joel!"

"It's going to be okay!" Hannah yells reassuringly, but she soon turns frantic as the soldiers throw her daughter against the house to be executed.

"Be quiet," Joshua whispers to me. He glances around and sees that all the soldiers are preoccupied with the impending execution.

To my surprise he doesn't push me into the van, but instead behind the garage. He lets go of me, and I fall to the ground.

"Run, Audrey!" He pulls me half way to my feet and pushes me forward.

I hear a gunshot and a scream from Hannah. Someone I love has just died, but I don't know who.

"Audrey, you don't have time!" Joshua reminds me. I don't see him as a soldier now, but as my best friend.

As gunshots vibrate through the air, I take off running. Even though I can't help but feel like I am abandoning my family, I keep running and soon reach the forest.

Pine needles, sticks, and sharp stones cover the ground, cutting my bare feet. They ache, and I want to rest them, but terror pushes me forward. I do my best to dodge trees and rocks, but it's still dark and my feet catch on roots causing me to fall to my knees. Soon my legs are covered with deep cuts and blood. I'm running as fast as possible, but it feels painfully slow.

I try not to think about my family, but images of them lying dead flash through my mind. Grief threatens to overcome me, and I try to push it aside. I have to keep going. In my heart, I scream out to God and plead with Him to give me strength for each step I take.

All I have left now is God, but that is something they can never take away from me.