

EJFS founder and chief commander Khali remains missing after becoming a political prisoner. Abhu entered his second year. Against all odds, will Abhu, Singh, and the EJFS save Khali and the world to avert possible global extinction?

EJFS Episode 3: War of Storms **(Elite Justice Force Squad Series)**

By Michael J. Beasley

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ELITE JUSTICE FORCE SQUAD SERIES



ELITE JUSTICE FORCE SQUAD

EJFS EPISODE 3: WAR OF STORMS

MICHAEL J. BEASLEY

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1: Search at Sea: A New Threat Emerges

USS Brigadoon

**24.9 nautical miles off the Southern coast of
Greenland**

March 10, 2025

7:56 a.m. Greenland Time, Monday Morning

On one bitterly cold morning in the Arctic Ocean, a group of rogue commandos aboard the USS Brigadoon led a search and recovery operation to locate the missing whereabouts of Vritra's remnant. It was locked away in an intricately sealed container with substantial obstacles to finding it.

Naval Captain Russell Polk led the charge to find the missing artifact off Greenland's coast.

A tech detected a signal on a frequency rarely used. The GPS frequency was heavily encrypted.

"Captain, you should see this!" Lieutenant Hopkins urged.

"Did you find anything?" Captain Polk inquired.

"We picked up an expertly scrambled GPS signal on a three-point subnet. We may have found it, Sir," Hopkins informed him.

"Good, I'll send the dive team to run a grid search," Polk asserted. The Naval Captain contacted the dive team led by Ensign Walsh.

"Acknowledged!" Hopkins affirmed.

Walsh answered with his waterproof radio.

“Yes?”

“Walsh, this is Captain Hopkins speaking. We may have detected the container. You have the green light to proceed.”

“Understood, Captain! We’re suited up and ready to go!”

“Good luck.” Hopkins ended the transmission.

Walsh assembled his team on the deck before the dive team jumped into the cold Arctic waters.

“All right, gentlemen! We are a ‘GO’ for the dive! Let’s move!” Walsh rallied his team.

The dive team went overboard and dove deep inside the frigid ocean at the break of dawn.

The sea life was minimal and almost non-existent. A few underwater volcanoes provided some warmth for the divers.

Meanwhile, inside the USS Brigadoon's control room, Captain Polk and his lieutenant, Hopkins, watched the sea expedition while giving real-time updates about the GPS signal the commandos had picked up on the radar.

Hopkins advised the dive leader. “The signal strength is at its peak approximately 40 feet away from your five o’clock.”

Walsh and his team approached the buried container near the current location. The divers uncovered dead sea sponges and seaweed to find a metal box marked with the EJFS emblem.

“Captain, I think we’ve found it!” Walsh announced on his underwater comm device.

“Good work, team!” Captain Polk commended the men.

The dive team latched the metal box to their chains and carried the submerged container back to the ship.

Once the dive team had hoisted the metal container onto the ship's deck, they took their treasure inside the lower level of the massive military watercraft.

The commandos removed their sopping-wet diving suits. The captain observed the container's entry onto the ship as a witness.

The other military officials on board scanned the inside of the box with radiation and an REM detection device. The loot was confirmed to be what they initially thought the strongbox contained.

"This is it, Captain," Walsh informed him.

"Can you open it?" Polk asked.

"We can try." Another diver named Emerson spoke semi-confidently.

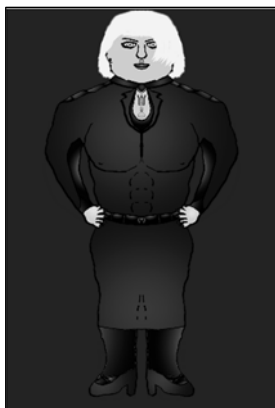
The team inspected the highly sophisticated and heavily-sealed metal box. There was a ten-digit code to access the inside of the container.

"Wait, that box has the EJFS emblem on the front. Perhaps we should take it back to the States to have experts look at it closely," Captain Polk suggested.

"Fair enough," Walsh answered.

"Chart a course back to the base," Captain Polk commanded.

"Yes, Captain!" Hopkins complied with the order and relayed it to the crew's engineer. The rogue commandos returned to the base in Norfolk, Virginia.



US Secretary of State Pamela Harsh

Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., Secretary of State Pamela Harsh was at her office in the pre-dawn hours working from a secured computer system.

Harsh was following the status of the rogue mission onboard the USS Brigadoon on a secure channel.

She received an encrypted message saying that the dive team had found Vritra's relic's metal box.

Harsh was abruptly alerted that one of her assistants had arrived at work for a long Monday shift.

Yvonne Perez, Harsh's assistant in the office, walked in just as Harsh closed all her windows of the illegal operation she was running under the nose of President Wes Grisham.

"Yvonne, you're here quite early," Harsh noted, acting naturally as if she were not doing anything wrong.

"I know. I wanted to start working on the hourly report from yesterday," Perez responded.

Harsh smiled. "Well, I suppose you better get cracking."

Perez returned the smile even though she was somewhat perplexed about why Harsh was at the office at such an early hour.

“What are you doing here so early in the morning anyway?” Perez inquired.

“Expenditures,” Harsh lied.

“Oh, okay,” Perez’s eyes turned to the side with suspicion.

Harsh redirected. “Yvonne, I know you’re still relatively new here. But learn to mind your own business. It will keep you out of trouble.”

Perez frowned slightly while responding. “Yes. Sorry about that, Ms. Harsh.”

Harsh walked to another private office in the same building and made a phone call.

The person on the other line responded quickly. “Yes?”

“The package is en route to the States. Be ready to intercept it,” Harsh directed.

“Copy that. Where is the destination of the package?” the call-taker asked.

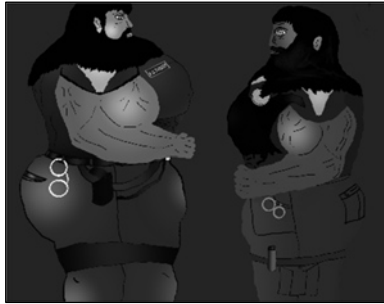
“It’s being taken to Norfolk at the Virginia Port Authority. It should be here within the hour. Be alert for any interference from the EJFS extremists,” Harsh advised.

“Acknowledged,” The line disconnected from the other end. Harsh went back to her desk to resume her duties.

High above the skies in the EJFS Thunderhead Base over Atlanta, Georgia, the Elite Justice Force Squad had been alerted

by the movement of the GPS transponder signal on the container in the Arctic Ocean.

The EJFS was still in an exceptionally turbulent time during the absence of Khali, but they managed to make the best of the situation.



EJFS Agents Abhu Dhuval Sandeep (pictured left) and Singh Puneet Sherpa (featured right)

Agents Abhu (a.k.a Caleb Porter) and Singh worked in the Command Center during the early morning hours on the US's East Coast. They continued to follow leads for finding Khali and facilitating his return.

Basu handed out reports for the day's schedule at the EJFS. He encountered newer EJFS agents Indrina (a.k.a. Kim Porter) and her new friend Amir Kamboja, who enlisted in the superagency four months after his father's passing.

"Hey, you two. Here are your task lists for this shift. Do your best to get as much done as possible, okay?" Basu encouraged.



EJFS Agent Indrina Kalyani Padmal
(Kimberly Porter's alternate identity)

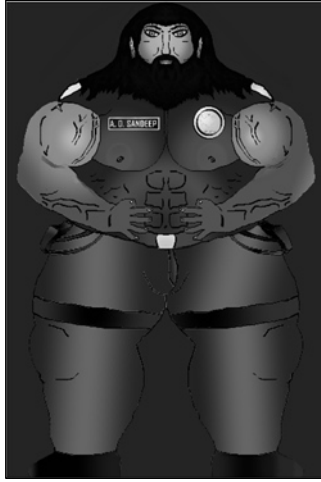
“Thanks, Basu.” Indrina accepted the paperwork.

Amir smiled at her new coworker friend. “I see you are learning the ins and outs of this job fairly well,” Amir complimented her.

“It’s what my brother and I do best. We’re quick learners,” Indrina boasted.

Amir chuckled faintly at Indrina’s levity.

Agents Abhu and Singh’s friendship continued despite the emotional struggles that Singh was experiencing during the absence of his adoptive father, Khali. Singh would avoid looking at Khali's pictures, knowing it would send him into an emotional downward spiral.



EJFS Field Specialist, Agent Abhu Dhuval Sandeep

Abhu spoke to Singh. “Hey, Singh, did you get the EJFS interagency bulletin?”

Singh was initially somewhat catatonic, but then he noticed the alert on his screen.

“Uh, yeah, that’s not good,” Singh began. “The GPS signal from the Vritra Remnant container has moved and is heading back to the States.”

“We should call that in,” Abhu suggested.

“You’re right. I’ll notify Khali,” Singh hesitated before frowning.

“Oh, I mean, I’ll call Raj.” Singh backtracked awkwardly.

“Singh, are you going to be okay?” Abhu asked with worry in his voice.

“I’m doing the best I can to accept what happened. I know I may not have been the same since my dad was captured, but I know someday he’ll be brought back to us,” Singh replied hopefully.

“I know, Singh. It’s an ongoing process, just do what you can to stay on the ball,” Abhu exhorted.

“Thank you, Abhu. I appreciate you and our close friendship.” Singh smiled weakly.

Singh called Raj, sitting in the executive suite that Khali had once occupied.

Raj heard his smartphone ringing on his desk while noticing the interagency alert on his computer screen. Raj quickly answered the call.



EJFS Chief Commander Raj Ajith Kalidas

“EJFS, Kalidas,” Raj used his last name to identify himself.

“Raj, it’s Singh. We all received the bulletin about the container in the Arctic. How do you want to handle this?”

“I’m going to send TAC Teams to intercept the movement of the container. You, Abhu, and Devdas will be the point persons in this mission,” Raj informed him.

“Okay, you got it,” Singh asserted.

“I need you and Abhu in my office immediately to be briefed on your assignments. Devdas will meet you here,” Raj directed.

“I understand. We’ll be there shortly,” Singh acknowledged.

Singh hung up his landline phone before addressing Abhu.

“Abhu, we’re part of the TAC Teams designated to intercept the remnant. ” Singh said hastily, “We need to head to Raj’s office to be briefed.”

Abhu and Singh logged out of their computer terminals, clocked off for their away time, and left to meet with Master Raj.

Raj, who was already joined alongside Devdas, noticed Abhu and Singh approach the executive office.

“Come in, you two,” Raj instructed.

Abhu and Singh entered Raj’s quarters before taking a seat facing Raj.

“Agents, I know you two have been apprised of the latest developments over the Arctic Ocean. The container that holds Vritra’s Relic has been stolen by rogue militant commandos and is en route to the States. I have intercepted a cell phone conversation flagged by our Intelligence Team, led by Darsh and Lochan. Pam Harsh is actively and subversively working to retrieve the container. It is unclear whether President Grisham had approved of these actions. But it seems that she is working for her own vested interests.” Raj briefed the agents in the room.

“Who is her contact, and where is she now?” Abhu inquired.

“We ran a voice trace on the phone conversation earlier this morning. The contact is named Robert Manning, operating out of Langley, Virginia. He may be working with an accomplice. They will intercept the package within the hour at the Virginia

Port Authority. Therefore, we need all three of you to coordinate a strike operation to take control of the metal case,” Raj continued.

“I’ll assemble the TAC Teams,” Singh informed them while he arose from the chair.

“Negative. I’ll let Devdas and Abhu handle that.” Raj rebuffed Singh’s offer.

Singh looked confused and rattled.

Raj spoke further. “Abhu and Devdas, please give us the room.”

“Yes, Master.” Abhu and Devdas left and returned to the Command Center to draft TAC Teams.

Singh stayed behind with Raj and glared at him intently.

“Singh, we need to talk about your mental state concerning your father. I’m concerned with its impact on your performance,” Raj spoke grimly.

“I know that we’ve been over this for four months. I’m not letting my emotional anguish regarding my father interfere with the mission.” Singh spoke with assurance.

“While that may be true, it doesn’t change the fact that there have been some errors on your part at times. We are in for another long few days, and we need our best men at the helm. So, I am keeping you on a short leash until you can get your anguish under control,” Raj added.

Raj stood from his chair behind his desk and approached Singh.

“Agent Singh, I know you miss your father, and we’ll soon catch a break on the case. But, right now, you must focus on retrieving that container. Do you understand me?” Raj placed his hand on Singh’s shoulder, trying to comfort him.

Singh was noticeably bothered, but he chose to internalize his emotions.

“Yes, Boss, I understand.” Singh relented.

“Good, now be safe, and Godspeed.” Raj comforted Singh with a brief hug before Singh left the room.



Prisoner Khali Mehta Sherpa

Meanwhile, in Northern Siberia, Khali was imprisoned inside a bitterly cold and darkened prison cell in an internment camp with numerous inmates.

Since his capture, Khali had lost considerable muscle mass, and his hair and beard had become scraggly and rough. His exquisite uniform was swapped out for a gray prison jumpsuit.

He heard a buzzer as the prison's warden entered Khali's cell to take him to the mining yards to work in the fields.

The Siberian prison warden, Ivan Ervinsky, forcefully escorted Khali out of his cold cell and made him walk past the prisoners, who mocked him during his long walk to the yard.

Khali was profoundly quiet and detached from himself. His bleak outlook had all but evaporated his hope for rescue by the EJFS. Although the microchip implanted inside Khali's forearm was traceable, it was based on a scrambled subnet's highly stealth carrier frequency.

Khali was brought outside into the cold, rainy, and windy fields, where he was forced into slave labor to mine Siberia's oil fields for the Russian government. Khali struck the soil with a lack of hope and little energy. He pierced the ground again, almost as if it were a monotonous and repetitive activity where he could escape his cold prison cell.

The other prisoners in the yard continued their mind-numbing task of mining the oil field as a lonely and disheveled Khali labored in the late winter rains while thunder rumbled in the distance.

2: Protocol Activated: TAC Teams Dispatched to Virginia Harbor

EJFS Command Center – Level 13

EJFS Thunderhead Base – Atlanta Branch – Eastern US Division

Main Building

20,000 feet above Sea Level

March 10, 2025

5:32 a.m. Eastern Time, Monday Morning

At the EJFS Thunderhead Base over Atlanta, Abhu and Devdas joined Singh while drafting TAC Teams. Singh was chosen as part of Abhu's team under the designation TAC Team Bravo, consisting of Agents Abhu, Singh, Vasu, Nitin, and Chand.

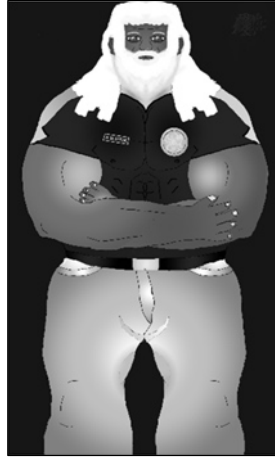
Agent Devdas was chosen as the TAC Team Alpha leader, consisting of Agents Devdas, Garjan, Baadal, Prabodhan, and Daarun.

Abhu and Devdas led their teams to the Deployment Bay on the first-floor lobby.

They boarded a fleet of EJFS Interchangeable Cab Vehicles to provide stealth insertion into the scene of the package intercept.

Both teams entered their fleet of ICVs and left for Norfolk, Virginia, en route to the Virginia Port Authority, where the package intercept was expected to occur. The exchange's exact location was unclear. However, they kept tight surveillance of all cargo shipments entering the docks.

Second-In-Command, Agent Darsh, and the ranking Agent-In-Charge, Lochan, oversaw the operation's logistical side within the EJFS Thunderhead Base.



EJFS Second-in-Command Agent Amit “Darsh” Darshan Vivek

Darsh addressed the tech analysts and agents on the main floor of the EJFS Command Center.

“I need everyone’s attention, please. By now, you should have seen the interagency bulletin on your screens showing the theft of the relic container off the southern coast of Greenland earlier. The perpetrators’ intentions are currently unknown. However, we must treat this developing situation like an open and active top-priority protocol due to Vritra's Relic's chaotic and volatile nature. Currently, Master Raj has ordered TAC Teams to the Virginia Port Authority. We believe the item of interest will be intercepted by an associate of Secretary of State Pamela Harsh. She appears to be subverting her authority to acquire this dangerous artifact. The goal is simple: You must assist the teams storming the harbor, locate the container that houses the relic, and stop the exchange by any means necessary. All department heads are summoned to the Situation Room for a quick briefing

before the mission goes live. Let us get back to work!” Darsh’s booming voice echoed throughout the room.

All agents and analysts working in their departments of the Command Center returned to duty while the head of each department left to be briefed in the Situation Room with Agents Darsh and Lochan.

Basu and Nirav led the tactical ops department. They sat at one end of the long table while logistical ops heads Anil and Ettan sat on the other side across from Pranay, who ran the comms department.

Darsh and Lochan began the briefing while Master Raj watched remotely from his executive office's AERIAL VOIP video teleconferencing interface.

“All right, agents, here are more details about the people behind this threat. Raj will explain our findings before we develop a cohesive plan of action. Go ahead, Raj.” Darsh began the meeting.

“Good morning, agents. The EJFS detected movement from the scrambled GPS transponder attached to the intricately sealed metal box holding Vritra's Relic. The signal has been severely impacted while seized by a rogue commando group working within a recently formed terrorist group known as ‘The Storm Renegades.’ The only individuals linked to this extraction effort seemed to be led by Secretary of State Pamela Harsh in a rogue operation. The operation did not receive approval from President Grisham. EJFS Intelligence, gathered by Lochan and Darsh, shows that some holdover representatives of the Shadow State remained under the new President’s cabinet,” Raj explained.

“So, are you saying that leftover operatives from the Shadow State have reformed into this new militarized terrorist group?” Basu inquired.

“Yes, that is the summation of what we’re facing. We know that the Storm Renegades significantly influenced the European region. This group of militarized terrorists formed multiple cells across America, Europe, Asia, and Northern Africa. They have three primary military installations from Belfast, Northern Ireland, London, England, and Moscow, Russia,” Raj continued.

“Do the leaders of these countries know about these commando units?” Ettan questioned.



EJFS Special Agent-in-Charge Lochan Ekagrah Nair

Lochan interjected. “To some extent, the Prime Minister of Russia, Grigory Rostislav, sanctioned the formation of the military units in Moscow. The remaining units in previously mentioned areas are either based in hideouts, with or without knowledge from Heads of State.”

Lochan changed the HDTV screen's display image in the Situation Room to show known regions where the commando unit hideouts exist.

Raj continued the briefing. "Once we have located and isolated the group operating in Virginia, we aim to have them guide us to their top leader of The Storm Renegades and prevent any impending disaster that could befall the world by utilizing the Relic of Vritra in their possession."

Darsh, the second-in-command, who also led the EJFS Field Ops department, concluded the briefing with further tasks delegated to the department heads.

"The primary goal for this mission remains: you must stop the exchange from occurring and identify all top leaders in the Storm Renegades' network. The commandoes' naval vessel will arrive at the harbor by 6:00 a.m. So, we must act quickly to stop the relic from falling into the wrong hands. Are we clear on that?" Darsh asked.

"Affirmative," the group of department heads assented.

"We're a 'GO.' Let's get back to work." Lochan concluded the briefing.

All department heads exited the Situation Room and returned to their stations.

Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., Pamela Harsh continued to watch the Virginia Port Authority developments. She received another phone call from the contact working with the militant commando team returning from the sea diving expedition in the Arctic.

"Hello, this is Pam."

“Good morning, Pam. We are nearly twenty minutes away from the port. Where would you like us to deliver the goods?” the unknown caller asked.

“Send your men to Pier 21. You can offload the container at the shipping yard at the harbor. I will send you final instructions to your phone when you are ten minutes out,” Harsh explained.

“Good. I hope you have the funds available to complete this exchange,” the caller answered.

“Don’t worry. The funds will be wire-transferred to your account after following my instructions. I will be onsite to ensure the exchange is complete,” Harsh assured him.

“Very well, we’ll be hearing from you soon,” The call ended.

Harsh accessed a secure messaging portal on her computer and typed further instructions to be transmitted to the commandos’ leader heading to the Port of Virginia.

Rigidly, Perez knocked on Harsh’s office door, which forced Harsh to black out her display on the computer to cover up her actions.

“Pam? I completed the hourlies report for yesterday. I found a small discrepancy in your time logs from last night around 9:00 p.m. What is that all about?” Perez questioned.

“Oh, that’s for some time-sensitive decisions I had to make for another agency. Do not worry about it. I will work it out with the admin department. If you will excuse me, I am swamped right now.” Harsh quickly dismissed Perez.

Perez’s eyes widened as she left Harsh’s office and returned to her desk.

Harsh continued to type her message to the commando team.

The message had cryptic instructions for Captain Russell Polk's team aboard the naval vessel.

"Send decoy to Pier 21. Meet me at the eastern side of the shipyard."

The message was sent and received. Thirty seconds later, a reply message showed that the instructions were acknowledged.

Just before 5:40 a.m. Eastern Time, the vessel carrying the Relic of Vritra aboard the naval ship was within the Virginia Harbor viewing distance.

The exchange was due to take place within minutes.

Another person on board the naval ship, Gordon Crowley, viewed the Virginia Harbor through the megascopic lens on his binoculars.

Crowley was smoking a cigarette on the front bow of the ship.

Captain Polk spoke to Crowley about the change of plans.

"Mr. Crowley, the instructions have been changed. We'll be docking and unloading at the port's eastern side," Captain Polk said.

"Good, that'll give the EJFS a real mess on their hands. Prepare the decoy and have half your men stage a diversion," Crowley instructed.

"Very well, Sir!" Polk answered before returning to the bottom deck of the ship.

The rising sun illuminated the waters as the crew members carried a metal box to the main deck. Another fateful day of

crises began while the barge charged westward toward the Port of Virginia.

3: The Exchange: Ambush at the Harbor

Pier 21 – Eastern Harbor Docks

Virginia Port Authority

Norfolk, Virginia, US

March 10, 2025

5:44 a.m. Eastern Time, Monday Morning

Captain Russell Polk oversaw the USS Brigadoon docking at the Virginia Port Authority along with Gordon Crowley. The crew entered the harbor waters near Norfolk to begin the exchange of the metal box holding Vritra's Relic.

Meanwhile, the EJFS TAC Teams led by Agents Abhu and Devdas arrived in Norfolk, Virginia, and they prepared to set up a perimeter around the harbor grounds.

Amid the happenings with both the EJFS TAC Teams and the arriving naval ship, Secretary of State Pamela Harsh was en route to the exchange site at Pier 21. Harsh was driving a black SUV with armed guards going with her to the destination.

EJFS Agent Devdas issued orders to the TAC Team members aboard the pair of ICVs that had just touched down by the Port of Virginia.



EJFS TAC Team Operations Manager, Agent Devdas Bheru Tandon

“Agents, we have intercepted a phone call that the exchange will occur at Pier 21, east of the cargo shipping grounds. All agents must remain vigilant to confirm the authenticity of the metal container. Once we have a visual of the metal box, we will swoop in and storm the harbor, arresting those responsible. However, be aware that they may know that we are coming. Keep out of sight and maintain a safe distance,” Agent Devdas directed.

“Acknowledged.” The TAC Teams heeded Devdas’ orders.

At 5:49 in the morning, both TAC Teams set up a staging area in the harbor’s south end. They used their storm-summoning powers to create a thunderstorm as the aerial team piloting one ICV circled the perimeter around the Port of Virginia in Stealth Mode.

The SUV, driven by Harsh, arrived at the Virginia Port Authority entrance. The two armed guards in suits accompanying Harsh noticed the skies becoming ominously darker.

“Ms. Harsh, my instincts tell me that we are not alone. The EJFS must have this place scouted. They must be hiding, preparing to intercept us,” CIRB Agent Robert Manning suggested.

“I expected no less. We’re moving forward with the contingency plan. I’ll instruct Crowley’s men to respond with force,” Harsh responded while the SUV pulled up to the security gate, where an armed patrolman stood waiting to clear them through.

“Good morning, Sir! I have a cargo shipment arrival that I am overseeing at 6:00 a.m.,” Harsh greeted him.

“All right, Miss Secretary of State. I’ll check the gate logs,” the patrolman answered.

The armed police officer reviewed the gate entry logs and verified Harsh’s scheduled arrival at the harbor.

“All right, you’re clear to enter. Pier 21 is on the eastern periphery of the harbor. Follow the guided route markers to the docks, and you’ll find it.” The armed patrolman raised the security gate, allowing the SUV to pass through the front entrance.

“Thank you, Sir! Have a nice day!” Harsh wished the patrol officer well before entering the harbor grounds.

Harsh followed the guided route through the shipping yard and parked her vehicle on the eastern lot by a semi-truck with a black cargo container attached to the trailer.

One of the two armed security guards maintained a watch of both the SUV and the semi-truck.

“Manning, come with me. Robinson, you stay here and stand guard,” Harsh instructed.

“Yes, Ma’am!” Both guards affirmed.

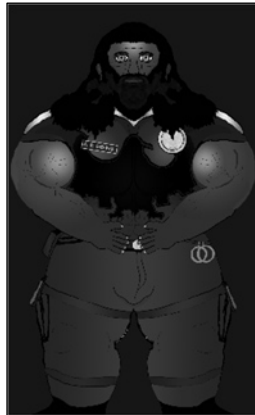
Thunder began to rumble as the EJFS-summoned storm intensified, and raindrops fell on the docks.

“Manning, umbrella me,” Harsh dictated.

Manning unfurled an umbrella to shield Harsh from the rain.

Both Harsh and Manning walked down the path leading to Pier 21.

Aboard the EJFS ICVs overhead, Agents Singh and Prabodhan observed Harsh's arrival and an armed security agent accompanying her to the docks.



EJFS TAC Teams Operation Lead, Agent Singh Puneet Sherpa

“I have a visual confirmation of the Secretary of State, Pamela Harsh, and an armed security agent alongside her. The naval vessel is approaching the docking bay,” Agent Singh indicated on his comm mic.

“We copy, Singh. Keep an eye out for the metal container. We need to make sure it is legitimate.” Agent Abhu spoke through the radio dispatch function on his smartphone. They watched the approaching naval ship arriving at the port utilizing an EJFS satellite uplink onsite.

“The ship is docking at Pier 21. Be ready to storm the area at my command,” Agent Devdas instructed.

The USS Brigadoon began to dock at Pier 21, where the original meeting place was to occur.

The naval ship finished docking at the pier. A back hatch opened from the boat's rear and lowered onto the docks.

A group of commandos representing the Storm Renegades carried the heavy steel box down the ramp with the container concealed under a black protective tarp.

Agent Singh noted the enclosed cargo's appearance on the comm mic.

“I have a visual of a covered container being taken off the vessel, standing by for confirmation of the item of interest,” Singh informed him.

“Copy that,” Abhu acknowledged.

“All agents, start blowing some wind to attempt a reveal of the container,” Agent Devdas commanded.

All EJFS agents on both TAC Teams started blowing strong, gusty winds out of their lips as they stood in full tactical gear with their weapons lowered.

At Pier 21, a stiff wind began to blow around, and it increased in strength.

The umbrella covering Harsh blew inside out and flew out of Manning's hand. The shipment crew members struggled to conceal the container in blustery winds.

“This has to be the EJFS. It must be them!” Manning insisted.

“Relax, Manning, just stick with the plan,” Harsh assured him.

Gordon Crowley and Captain Russell Polk disembarked the boat. The stormy weather caused by the summoning of EJFS agents nearby made its presence felt.

Crowley and Polk instructed the crew members to set down the container on the dock as the wind buffeted the covering on top.

Meanwhile, another group of crew members disembarked with another container that resembled the metal box housing Vritra's Relic.

While on board the hovering ICV overhead, Agent Singh confirmed the uncovered container's visual sighting, showing the EJFS emblem on the top of the lid.

"Agents, be advised: I have a possible sighting of the container. There are two containers: One is concealed, and one isn't," Agent Singh informed them.

"All right, all teams: Storm the docks, I repeat, *Storm the docks! Go, go, go!*" Agent Devdas ordered. All TAC Team members rushed to Pier 21 to intervene.

Gordon Crowley spoke to Secretary of State Pamela Harsh.

"Here's your loot. Now, where's my money?" Crowley asked bluntly.

Harsh dialed an international number to her offshore bank account in the Cayman Islands.

"Global Bank, how may I help you?" A call-taker answered in a thick accent.

Harsh instructed. "Yes, this is Pamela Harsh. Transfer the funds to the account I set aside for a pending transaction."

"Authorization code, please?" The bank representative inquired.

“The code is 1-0-7-Charlie-Tango-Foxtrot-9-Oscar,” Harsh answered dryly.

“Thank you, Ms. Harsh. The funds have been transferred,” the representative confirmed.

“Thank you! Goodbye,” Harsh ended the call on her smartphone and loaded her banking app to show the routing number and the new balance in Crowley’s bank account.

“I have wire-transferred half of the money to your account. You’ll receive the rest when you successfully deliver the goods to my next destination,” Harsh notified him.

Crowley’s facial expression changed negatively.

“Very well. Where do you want me to deliver the loot?” Crowley asked.

“Get the container on a flight to London and take it to Moscow. The Prime Minister of Russia will be thrilled to have this back in Russian territory,” Harsh responded.

Agent Devdas shouted thunderously from the nearby docks attached to the eastern side of the harbor. “Halt!”

The EJFS TAC Team violently stopped the exchange, firing their weapons toward the docked ship.

“They’re here! Get going!” Harsh urged, and the crew members opened gunfire on the EJFS TAC Teams.

Harsh’s security escort, Manning, and the Storm Renegades laid down cover fire as he evacuated her from the area to return to the SUV, fleeing the harbor.

Several crew members rushed the covered container to the semi-truck, where extra commandos waiting to receive the cargo opened fire from inside the shipping container.

The EJFS was outnumbered by the commandos protecting the exchange.

A handful of commandos were shot dead by EJFS agents firing gunfire.

The crew members on the boat aided in defending their teammates under siege by the EJFS, firing a rocket launcher toward the TAC Team.

“Get down!” Devdas warned.

The rocket hit one of the other cargo containers stacked overhead, blocking the path to the pier.

“We’re blocked! Double back to the other side! Let’s move!” Abhu shouted.

Meanwhile, Harsh and her security detail scurried into their SUV and fled the harbor, breaking past the security gate.

Most of the commandos also doubled back to the other side to prevent their loot from being intercepted by the EJFS agents.

Several EJFS agents were shot in their Kevlar vests but were unharmed.

“Cover me. I’m going in! Abhu, come with me!” Agent Devdas commanded.

The TAC Team of agents fired their automatic weapons on the commandos, who soon became overwhelmed by the firepower of the EJFS. Captain Polk was shot dead in the crossfire.

Gordon Crowley managed to escape with a handful of commandos from the interior of the cargo container. They loaded the covered container inside the cargo trailer and quickly sped away from the Virginia Harbor.

The EJFS TAC Team overpowered the remaining commandos and shot them all dead. They looped around the fallen cargo containers damaged by the rocket fire and reached the metal box with the EJFS emblem on the top of the lid.

The analysts and tech agents at the Command Center watched the operation from the top of the Thunderhead Base complex over the Atlanta skyline.

“EJFS Central Command, we have secured the container. I repeat, we have secured the container!” Abhu informed them.

“That is excellent news, Abhu! Open the container to verify the remnant is still intact inside,” Second-In-Command Agent Darsh instructed.

“Open it,” Abhu ordered his team.

Devdas entered the ten-digit code to open the container, which was 0915291834.

The container emitted toxic red and green smoke that caused the agents to become overwhelmed by a terrible stench, causing them to cough and choke on the substance.

“Blow the smoke away!” Devdas spoke while stymying his coughs.

The entire group of agents blew fierce winds out of their lips and blew away all the red and green smoke until the vapors were diminished.

The open container revealed a horrific sight for the agents: the Relic of Vritra was not inside the box. Instead, it showed the Storm Renegades' coat of arms while some cobra snakes slithered around.

Darsh watched what happened on the giant screens in the command center.

“Agent Devdas, what’s going on over there?!” Darsh yelled.

“It’s a decoy! We do not have the Relic! The commandos must have prepared a decoy box with the exact specs of the original container,” Devdas informed him regrettably.

Darsh sighed with dismay.

“Basu, reposition the area satellites to see if you can find the semi-truck. We can’t let them get away,” Darsh ordered.

Basu responded. “I’m trying, but the truck left satellite range. They must have known that we were on the hunt.”

“Abhu and Devdas, return to the Thunderhead Base. We’ll regroup and find them before they get too far away,” Darsh directed.

Agents Singh and Prabodhan overheard what happened. They landed the ICV at the shipyard. Singh felt unbearable guilt for the loss of the Relic of Vritra.

“We need to report back to the base. This mission has failed,” Devdas spoke solemnly.

Singh held his hands up to his long, thick, black hair. He was gripped with pain for losing the crucial artifact sought after for thousands of years.

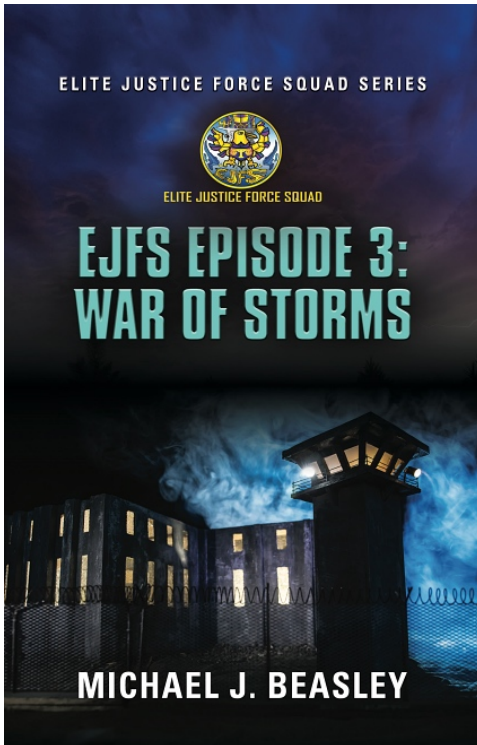
“I’m sorry,” Singh somberly apologized.

“We’ll find them, Singh. Don’t lose hope.” Abhu reassured him, placing his hands on Singh’s shoulders to comfort him.

“Okay?” Abhu questioned.

“Yeah, let’s head back,” Singh spoke with little optimism.

“Let’s roll out!” Devdas commanded the TAC Teams to board the ICVs and return to the EJFS Thunderhead over the Atlanta skyline.



EJFS founder and chief commander Khali remains missing after becoming a political prisoner. Abhu entered his second year. Against all odds, will Abhu, Singh, and the EJFS save Khali and the world to avert possible global extinction?

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