

WRAITH

By *Anomaly the Incognito*



This story is true. It all happened here, on this planet, during this century, less than twenty years ago. What happened is a mix of accounts of those involved and the subsequent unavoidable extrapolation. It involves heroism, cowardice, guile, and above all, that human desire to stay alive—no matter what.

The United States was at war. Once again, hundreds of thousands of young men and women were bringing up arms in response to foreign enemies. But this time, for the first time since the end of the Civil War, fighting was being waged at home. The United States was on the defensive, fighting against Communist invaders from North Korea, China, Cuba, Vietnam, as well as the noncommunist nations of Israel, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, the Congo, and South Africa. The United States had little help from the Canadians, who were retreating to the Northwest Territories to band together in a final attempt to repel the Arabian and Israeli elites. Much of Europe was destroyed by famine, plagues spread by Chinese scientists, and the invasion of millions of Asian and Middle Eastern assailants. Countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa were subdued, in part by being attacked by Nigeria, the Congo, and South Africa. Other Asian countries were slowly overrun by plagues induced by the Chinese, and Australia was a wasteland that had been leveled by over fifty atomic bombs. The whole of the South Pacific was a cloudy and cold place, due to the continually burning fires.

It is truly a World War III. People are dying in the millions: civilians, soldiers, and government officials. Everyone is dying and the U.S. is beginning to crumble. As Denmark and Guatemala and Eastern Russia are surrendering to the attacks by African, Middle Eastern, and Asian armies, the United States is being invaded from the outside in. Then, something happened. It was December 19, 2031. A group of unlikely characters were thrust together into a squadron of soldiers to help repel the Viet Cong attackers, who numbered over two hundred fifty and were attacking a suburb of Boston, a place where a hidden stronghold of nuclear weapons and two generals were located underground. These five men were outnumbered with a ratio of unimaginable proportions. Yet their commanding officers in high command believed them up to the job. Men so different, yet so similar. This story tells the horror they went through when they realized that their true enemy was *not* the dreaded Vietnamese guerillas lurking the woods, but something far more deadly...

The day they first met each other was a day that made Tim Press think a lot, more than he always had. Tim was a “noob”, a new guy who had just left the training center and not used to real war, despite the fact that practically the whole world was fighting each other. All he knew was that the government was pretty stupid to not use all of their nuclear missiles, which he heard could blow up the world a hundred times over. He was only in the army because of the draft. The infernal draft.

He thought being in his senior year of college would exempt him from it, like it had done to his father in the Vietnam War. He was wrong.

He stood there at parade rest, holding his unloaded G3 assault rifle in the pavilion tent of Major Cadwallider. The United States had begun running out of money to make more M4A1s, the classic weapon of the army, which cost over \$20,000 each. They had begun distributing cheesy weapons like the one he had, and some people were stuck without grenades or combat knives or half rations or even without helmets. China's ending of manufacturing America's goods had thrust the economy into a major depression, which it had been in for the last three years of the war.

He was knocked out of his reverie when he realized the major was giving him permission to do whatever he wanted in order to meet his new comrades. He was being assigned to a new squad that was supposed to repel the 250 Viet Cong sons of b—

“Press! This here is Erik Van Heusen. He'll be your bomb operator.”

—usinessmen. He wouldn't call the Vietnamese vulgar terms, he realized, as half of them supported the U.S. but were press-ganged into service by the Communist government who threatened their families.

“Hey. Hi.”

He looked up to see where the booming voice came from. He had to keep looking up. The speaker had to be six-foot-ten, wide at the chest, with gargantuan biceps that bulged even though he wasn't flexing his muscles. He was the kind of guy who spent his whole life at gyms.

“Hey. I'm Tim—Tim Press. Erik? Cool name. I once knew a kid. Erik.”

“Yeah,” Erik replied, shifting awkwardly. “Um, yeah. Cool. Viking name, you know?”

“Sooo...um, did you meet the other guys yet?” Tim said, trying desperately to keep the conversation going.

“Nope. You?”

“No. I think that—”

He was interrupted, once again, as the newest additions to the squadron entered. Three more men entered—an older veteran who looked as if he'd seen a ghost, a younger man only a few years older than Tim who walked with a considerable swagger, and another man who had three rifles slung across his back and shoulders.

“Well, don't expect me to do all of the introductions,” said the Major. “But since we're low on time, I will. We've got Captain Pyramus, you're leader—he saw action in the Battle of Wellington.”

Pyramus nodded in approval. He was a very stout character, the oldest of the group, obviously suffering from some kind of psychological issues. He had a very deep frown on his face, and seemed lost in thought. Why he was still fighting was a reason that Tim Press couldn't understand. Then again, being a failing student in high school, Tim Press didn't understand much except for *Call of Duty* and how to hotwire a Mustang.

“Then there's your Sergeant Cameron Cameron, second-in-command. Killed fifty Chinese in the Battle of San Francisco Bay—alone. And here's the master sniper, Cain Winchester—only ever saw a few minutes of fighting in upstate New York, but he's a natural.” Without further ado, the commanding officer clapped his hands and brought them over to a laptop computer, where a three-

dimensional map was being displayed of the Greater Boston area. He explained exactly what needed to be done: basically, they protect Erik Van Heusen while he sets up automatic machine gun nests, land mines, and other snares, and annihilate any Viet Cong resistance. They'll have no air support, no backup, and no other troops in the area. Only five mismatched soldiers against an uncomfortably large detachment of experienced guerillas. They may not know the area personally, but their commanders most likely had them briefed extremely well due to the importance of the mission at hand for the Vietnamese.

This was going to be one tough month.

Night came very quickly. Being a few days before the winter solstice, darkness fell around 4:00, or 1600 hours. The temperature was well below freezing, at 12 degrees Fahrenheit. Combined with the wind chill's earnest attempts at freezing them to death, it was a lot closer to zero.

The dark silhouettes of the trees and the eerie white glow of the snowy ground were all that could be discerned. The men had powerful, 150-watt handheld flashlights, but they had strict orders not to use them. No light could be seen to prevent the Viet Cong finding them—not even the slight flicker of the minuscule flame of a match, for however brief a duration. It would be Hell—albeit a cold one—had they not been equipped with heat-preserving suits, which reflected body heat inward. However, that only left them at temperatures a little below 50 degrees, so they were also wearing heavy white coats, white balaclavas, and khaki ski pants, not to mention the Kevlar coverall layer and the 20-pound titanium breastplate for protection.

For Captain Robert Pyramus, this was his punishment. His punishment for failing to secure a much-needed position at Wellington, and making a grave mistake in deploying his troops in the wrong positions. He remembers, more vividly than the face of his dead mother, the mobs of apprehended New Zealanders being rounded into the gas chambers, the starvation chambers, and the shooting grounds by their oppressors as his Apache helicopter flew off in retreat. His failure. New Zealand was lost, millions killed, and the beautiful mountains ravaged by huge atomic pockmarks. Not only that, though. His best friend from the days of preschool, killed by Pyramus himself, thinking he was an enemy attacker but instead the man was pouncing on him to save his life. Over two-thirds of his battalion, killed. Over two hundred men and women dead because of him. Because of *him*. He was sure this was his punishment. The higher-ups were putting him on this suicide mission with that pompous Cameron Cameron, two noobs, and some scary ripped guy to keep him in place and ensure his demise.

He would show them. He'd go down in glory, doing his duty, making up for his mistakes. He'd—

“Get down!” growled someone. It was the sniper, Cain. They all dropped into crouches, taking cover behind trees and bare bushes, guns raised. Through their night-vision goggles, they could see about five or six Viet Cong in front of them. Unused to the terribly cold weather, they had started a small fire, and were warming their hands, Russian AK-47s balanced against trees behind them. They were at the edge of a small wood, with a flat, snow-covered clearing in front of them. It was at least 20 yards from the Americans to them.

“We could storm them,” suggested Cameron, cocking his shotgun. He wasn’t using his two-way radio due to the condensation causing malfunctioning in the circuitry. “They’re unprepared.”

“Yeah, let’s do that,” agreed Press.

“Hold up!” growled Pyramus. “Who’s the captain here, anyway? Who knows if they’re planning something! They could have snipers positioned!”

“Hey Cap, stop trying to be so overly-cautious. With people here to hold your hand, there’s no way it’ll be a repeat of Wellington. And don’t think it’s a secret.” Cameron’s own two cents put Pyramus in a dour mood, but he was at no point about to demote the officer in the middle of a coordinated attack. Plus, he needed every person he could get his hands on.

“Stow it, Cameron, or I’ll have you cited,” was the lame rebuke. “Now, I want you to use your sidearm with the silencer and sneak up on them from the left. The distance is smaller to the woods than from here, I’d reckon about 30 feet. Neutralize any stragglers or scouts in the woods, and look for snipers. Once we’re in and fighting, switch to shotgun. Winchester, take the .22 and snipe them from this tree. I want body shots—only try to knock them to the ground, and we’ll take ’em out. Van Heusen, take a position in that ditch to the right and set up your machine gun. Get ready to open fire. Press, you and I will advance on them from the center. I will throw a stun grenade when you’re all to attack. Alright? Let’s hustle.”

Soldiers scrambled and crawled through the dark, fumbling through the wet and cold snow. Eyes always on the enemy, watching, always watching, for the moment that the prey looks up, worried, eyes desperately searching for the cause of the unknown noise; brain pacing back and forth a hundred miles an hour in anxiety of the possible and likely dread, but part of it wanting the warm embrace of nothing. But the Asian men never looked up, mumbling to each other in their native tongue, their deadly, menacing guns several feet away. Still, it only took a slight sound to distract them.

Cameron Cameron crouched-ran the last five meters of distance, hands fumbling about in his pocket for the gun silencer. Reaching the cover of the woods, he pulled off and threw his gloves on the ground out of agitation. The damn things destroyed most of, if not all, the agility his fingers were capable of. He drew the pistol, a powerful, streamlined .45 caliber handgun, which spat deadly balls of lead backed by nine millimeters of explosive gunpowder. He screwed the silencer onto the muzzle of the pistol. Without it, it would let loose a resounding, deep boom that would alert anyone that there is an armed person nearby, soldier or not.

Cameron raced through the darkness, cocking his pistol as he went. He doubted there was a trap. After all, these Vietnamese were deep in enemy territory, completely unlike their own. No computer program or training center could have prepared them for the harsh reality of New England winters intensified by greenhouse gas emissions.

Cameron Cameron, Sergeant First Class of the United States Army, age 24, resident of Seattle, Washington, son of Paul and Betty Cameron, could not have been more wrong in his entire life.

Which, coincidentally, was about to end. Violently.

Erik Van Heusen hefted the thirty-pound RPD light machine gun onto the edge of a ditch using his index and middle fingers. He proceeded to extend the bipod, opened his backpack for bullets, and slammed a drum of 100 rounds into the gun. He looked up, finger on the trigger, gun aimed at the enemy, waiting for the moment when he noticed, in his peripheral vision, a blinking light. He turned around, intrigued. He'd just check out what it was quickly. After all, it would take a few minutes before everyone else got into position. He followed the light—first ten steps, then fifteen, then twenty. He swore it was getting farther away. He decided enough was enough for the moment, and turned around. He took one step and bumped into something. It was hard and metallic—something taller than he was. A lot taller.

For the third time in his life since his coming-of-age, Van Heusen looked up at something. There was nothing there. He swore at nothing in particular, swiped the air a few times for good measure, and started back to his machine gun.

It wasn't there.

“What the—!?” he nearly shouted. What was going on here?

Someone tapped him on the shoulder. He swung around, nine-inch Bowie knife in his hand, swishing through the air in under a half a second. Nothing.

Was he going crazy? He cursed himself. No. Some *thing* was screwing around with him. That's when he heard it.

But what was it? He moved closer, trying to discern what it was. Then it hit him: baby talk. It was a baby!

“What the—??” he started. “Who the—?”

He never finished. This was partly because at that moment shooting erupted far behind him, making him stop. But he also stopped because he saw what was making the noise. It was no baby.

It was—

Eric Van Heusen's head hit the ground before the air molecules realized that it was time to move out of the way of the oncoming razor-sharp blade of metal.

Captain Pyramus was about to throw his stun grenade when he saw the Viet Cong look behind themselves, grab their AK-47s, and start loading them, starting toward the woods.

At that moment, Press decided it appropriate to charge, howling, into their midst, gun blazing. Seconds later, all hell broke loose.

The ensuing firefight ended in under a minute. But too much happened too quickly to last for only one minute.

What happened is as follows: The Viet Cong were alerted to the muffled struggle of Cameron, who was grappling at his stomach as though there was a bomb in it. In fact, there was. But before anything explosive happened, Press came charging in, gun blazing, taking down the first enemy in his path. Pyramus raised his rifle, standing up, with the *rat-tat-tat* of a small-caliber rifle behind him. Winchester was shooting the Viet Cong. Two fell—the other four ran into the woods.

As they passed Cameron, who was foaming at the mouth, ten more Viet Cong appeared to take their places, firing rapidly. Press fell to the gunfire instantly, weapon flying out of his hand.

Pyramus returned fire, dropping behind a tree as bullets peppered the area. The sniper he had offered no support—he could not see into the dense woods. Just as Pyramus thought *Where's Van Heusen?*, a huge explosion knocked him to the ground. He saw stars, but with those stars, he caught a fleeting glimpse of some kind of shimmering *thing* passing by the three remaining soldiers. They were screaming about something. Then he hit the snow and blacked out.

He was in Wellington. Fighting the Chinese soldiers. His unit was in disrepair...he was calling for a retreat into his radio, when someone tackled him. He fell, head hitting the rocky earth, blood spurting from his nose. Instantly he had drawn a knife and killed his attacker. He stood up, kicking the corpse in disgust.

“Wow! Way to kill the man who just saved your life!” shouted another American.

He turned and his face lost all of the blood in it. It was his friend, Ralph. He'd known him since preschool...he knew his whole family, they'd always been together, playing Xbox 360 back when violent video games were still legal, playing football when it was still legal for all, hanging out at the libraries when they still existed for a purpose. How could he? How—how—what kind of an idiot was he?

He grabbed the pistol. Raised it up to his right temple. Cocked it. He was about to pull the trigger when—

“Allggahhahgahhhl...” A strange sound like this came out of Pyramus' mouth as he came to. He'd been unconscious for four hours. He put his head back down in the snow. For some reason, it's coldness felt soothing. He lay there for a few minutes, until someone prodded his shoulder.

“Sir.”

He didn't want to get up. He was too tired.

“*Sir.*”

More persistent this time. Like his mom when he was late for school. *Just five more minutes*, he thought.

“Sir!”

His head shot up, eyes taking in the figure before him, his subordinate, Winchester, demented by the green tint of the night-vision goggles being used in the light of dawn. “Wha...?”

Suddenly, it all came back to him, a tsunami of previous events. He was instantly alert, jumping to his feet, any trace of a wobble completely absent. “What the *hell* happened here?” he demanded, surveying the tattered corpses littered about the snowy ground.

“Sir, there was an ambush,” explained Winchester.

“An *ambush*? The hell there was one! What in the name of Jesu—”

“Sir! Please, calm down!”

“Calm down? Calm down my grandmother's—”

“Sir! Please! It will hear you!”

That got the fuming captain's attention. His voice lowered by thirty decibels. “*What* was here?” he whispered, looking about suspiciously.

“The predator. It threw some kind of bomb in the middle of the Viet Cong and blew everybody up. There were three still standing. Some kind of laser blew them up. It killed Van Heusen, too. I found his body, without a head.”

“The *predator*?” Pyramus replied incredulously. “Wasn’t that some kind of stupid science-fiction movie? What else is knew? Wait, don’t tell me—it’s invisible.”

With calm certainty, Winchester replied, “Actually, it is.”

“Sure,” said Pyramus, gathering up his weapons. “Sure.”

“Why would I be lying?” Winchester grew adamant. “Okay, don’t call it a predator. Call it a thing! Whatever it is, it’s preying on humans! And we need to contact the major and get us out of here!”

“Look, I’m a little full of it today,” angrily responded Pyramus. “I just lost three men today, and you...”

He stopped when he noticed the look on Winchester’s face, whose eyes were fixed on something behind him.

“What, it’s behind me, isn’t it?” he said.

Before Winchester even nodded, Pyramus had spun about with incredible speed, foot slamming into the shimmering *thing* behind him in a powerful roundhouse kick with over a hundred pounds of force. The only thing that happened, besides a crackling of the shimmer and a clang of metal, was the crack of the bones in Pyramus’ foot. The battle-hardened veteran never paused: immediately, his gun was pounding the shimmering thing with five bullets per second. In three seconds, the shimmer moved forward, unscathed, and the two broke and ran.

They were running for their lives. Turning back, they saw the shimmer advancing, huge footsteps appearing in the snow, the steady but rapid *thump, thump, thump* of the thing chasing them pushing him onward.

Winchester heard a strange noise. He instantly knew what it was. “DUCK!” he shouted.

They dropped their heads as a burning-hot beam of blue laser flashed past overhead, singing their coats. The highly-concentrated ray of light continued extending until it struck a tree a quarter of a mile ahead, blowing it to bits, at a fixed speed of 186,000 miles per second.

Winchester led the way into a thicket of pines, where they quickly and quietly scaled the trees, using the dense needles as cover. The steadily appearing footprints in the snow stopped when the shimmering, wraith-like menace entered the thicket. The shimmer disappeared with a hiss. It moved on, not noticing them.

Pyramus exhaled after it was very much out of sight. “What is all of this about?” he asked.

“I was once a CIA operative in Europe and Asia,” Winchester began. “I was investigating this before the war broke out. China was creating some kind of super laser, powerful enough to blow up stuff on contact, yet small enough to only weigh one hundred pounds and fit on a man’s back. Rumor has it they were creating an army of super soldiers. People say they use the fourth state of matter, plasma, to block incoming projectiles. That’s the shimmer. It’s a shield of pure, superheated energy. People have reported seeing such things in battles. The super soldiers. It was code named 怨灵, which is ‘wraith’ in English.”

“How is it invisible?” Pyramus inquired.

“Ah, yes. The British, not the Chinese, invented an invisible tank in 2004. It used high-fidelity cameras to capture the surrounding scenery and display it on itself. Obviously they didn’t protect the idea well enough. It must have developed quickly for use by the Wraiths.”

“These men must be strong,” Pyramus commented. “Carrying all of that heavy equipment, plus being able to move nimbly and damagingly. So...what do we have to do? To knock them out, that is?”

“We? I think you mean air support.”

No such luck. The superiors were skeptical. They instructed the two to wait for about six or seven days until three more musclemen arrive. That afternoon, Vietnamese helicopters landed unopposed, letting off hundreds more troops. At 2:00, the Vietnamese planes came and bombed the headquarters of Major Cadwallider and the surrounding area. Four hundred civilians and three hundred nineteen soldiers were killed.

Pyramus and Winchester were stuck in the woods, with no help, only a few clips of bullets left, waiting for some more men to arrive in a week, with some kind of invincible, antagonistic super-soldier in the woods.

Tim Press crawled to a sitting position, gasping. His body was riddled with about a dozen bullets. Though small, they were bullets, and he was bleeding. Somehow he hadn’t lost too much blood. The ice had halted the flow, but now the snow was melting. It must have been 35 or so degrees.

Suddenly, something caught his attention. Big footsteps were appearing in the snow, moving toward him.

They went *thump, thump, thump,*
THUMP.

This is how it feels to be Timothy Press, now:

You are lying on the cold ground, in unbearable pain. Think of a time when you burned yourself—bad. Not a silly nick-on-the-toaster-oven burn, but a whoops-I-touched-the-flame kind of burn. Take that, and multiply it by ten. By twenty, even. Then multiply that by thirteen.

This is what it feels like to be shot thirteen times by 7.62mm bullets.

Not only do you feel that, but also your stomach is hungry and nauseous at the same time. There are mutilated corpses lying all around you. There would be barely any smell in the cold had the temperature been below freezing and these been only normal wounds. Instead, there are pieces of guts here half of a bloody forearm on your foot. You kick it away in disgust.

What you see is retarded through the night-vision goggles. You grab them and hurl them away. Then you try to stand. You manage it, but barely. You feel wobbly on your feet and need to get to a hospital. You know your condition is hopeless, that you will die in mere minutes, but maybe you can at least escape the horror of the bodies.

You stop. Some sort of animalistic instinct makes you stop. Some whizzes past you, right in front of your face—a blade. You turn back to the strange footsteps, only to find that they extend to you.

Your stomach flips upside-down in dread, and your head starts spinning, and suddenly, it is all over. A strange noise sounds, and you are blown into oblivion without feeling a thing.

To experience a similar event, one must hide inside an atomic bomb while it is being dropped from a height of three thousand feet.

Pyramus and Winchester immediately became friends. More than partners, but friends. In their self-determined final hours, they set out for the Wraith. They would either kill it, or die trying. While the former was most preferable, the latter was most likely. In fact, it was the one with the one hundred percent chance of happening.

Note, though, that it's a chance—there's still the zero percent possibility that it won't happen. In the world of probability, zero accounts for something.

The defining moment of the lives of the two aforementioned personages was about to play out. Defiantly walking through a clearing in the woods, shouting out silly songs from his early childhood, was Pyramus, making as much noise as possible. In his pocket was a .38 caliber compact revolver. In his left hand was a fragmentation grenade. In his right hand was a seven-inch combat knife.

He was as ready as a body builder with a mace, a nuclear bomb, and a gun that fired grenades at a rate of ten per second, if one existed. The thing is, one of them stood a larger chance.

It's pretty not obvious that the former would prevail.

He was singing the Winnie the Pooh theme song. What an educational show. It was great for youngsters. Pyramus was lamenting the old days, his childhood. How he missed it. And his parents. His dead sister, his dead friend, Ralph. Everyone he'd known.

He was so peaceful, so serene.

Therefore, the assailant from the woods had no trouble deciding that it was appropriate to take him out with a little hand-to-hand combat, just for the fun of it...

Pyramus caught the shimmer moving from the corner of his eye. He never broke his act, keeping it in perfect continuation as the pin fell from the grenade in his hand. He was counting. One, two...

The shimmer disappeared.

He swung about, hurling the grenade in a practiced fastball at 70 miles per hour, like a professional baseball player.

The grenade exploded one second too late. A cloud of snow flew up, and something thumped into the ground. An instant later, the invisibility projector on the left leg of the Wraith gave way. It was a black, metallic thing, made to look like the sculpted legs of a swimmer, yet so deadly in

itself. The Wraith got back to its feet, but not before Pyramus had loosed three shots into it with the revolver. Pings were heard on the metal; the shimmer reappeared.

Suddenly, a shot rang out. A .36 caliber bullet slammed into the Wraith. It was Winchester, sniping from the tree, as planned. The Wraith let out an inhuman howl, and charged forward. Another shot rang out, to no effect. Pyramus tried to run but was struck by the oncoming assailant, like a foolish matador jumping out of the bull's path too late to avoid its horns.

A pang of pain shot up his spine and Pyramus fell to the ground, the Wraith on top of him, its shields deactivated for close-quarters combat. One blow, two blows, three blows rained down on Pyramus, the reinforced alloy smashed his head into a bloodied, bruised thing.

Another shot rang out. And another. And another. Then there was silence, and Pyramus knew that Winchester was reloading, and that it was all over. The bullets hadn't been strong enough to penetrate neither the plasma nor the metal.

The Wraith seemed intent on pummeling his head until his brain was pulped. Pyramus lay there, blow after blow raining down upon him, unable to move and quite frankly unable to care anymore.

When he heard the sound of a high-powered rifle. It was Winchester, charging the Wraith with his repeater rifle raised, loosing off shot after shot after shot. The .30 caliber bullets knocked the Wraith back. Blood spurted from a hole somewhere in the armor.

Then the invisibility projectors gave way.

Standing before them was a mammoth, metal thing, all black and silver, polished, incredibly hard alloy metal armor encasing it. Its helmet was something from a nightmare, a strange grille covering the mouthpiece and black voids for eyes. The curve of the helmet was topped off by a large laser diode, made to look like the head of a nightmarish arachnid creature. Extending from both arms with enormous, two-foot black blades, glinting in the small bit of sun that remained.

A noise started playing. Baby talk. Gurgling, funny baby noises. So soothing...

Then it struck.

Moving like lightning, it nailed Pyramus to the ground with a blade through this shoulder. He screamed in pain as his shoulder blade was cleft in two. He looked up, saw Winchester charging, downed by some kind of knife shooting out of the Wraith's wrist. It had struck him square in the chest.

Pyramus looked up. The Wraith was growling. What kind of demented freak was behind the helmet? That was all that Pyramus' brain could process, overloaded by the increasing loss of blood and overwhelming pain.

The Wraith raised the second blade to strike. And stopped.

It stood still. It didn't move for ten full seconds, until it collapsed upon a now-senseless Pyramus, dead. Standing behind it was another soldier; he was holding the Bowie knife dropped by Pyramus. He had stabbed it through a chink in its armor. One of the only weaknesses of the obsolete medieval armor that also existed on the Wraith had been exploited by him—the groin.

Robert Pyramus later had surgery and it took him a month to recover. Cain Winchester also recovered, but has had three heart attacks since. It is now 2044. The world only recently began inhabiting the southwest Pacific.

The war ended on Christmas of 2032. Just about all of the pro-Communist countries had run out of supplies and backing. Part of the war's premature termination was due to the destruction of the "Wraith Factory" in the Himalayan Mountains, where 5,000 new Wraiths were being trained. The Wraith in Massachusetts had been the test case. The Wraith in question killed Viet Cong troops due to strict orders into tricking the Americans that they were fighting aliens.

Apparently, Americans aren't as stupid as people think.

China is now a capitalist nation, as is every country in the world, after unifying in the Treaty of Concord on December 25, 2032. It was there, in a small town in a small state, under the statue of the minuteman, that World War III, or the Communist War, ended.

My name is Anomaly the Incognito. I am the fiftieth President of the United States.

I was the man who saved the life of Captain Pyramus and Cain Winchester.

And I will never forget the plight endured by those men.

NEVER.

THE END

