

War Stories - A short story from an FFBT

Posted by Ben Moshe - 26 Jul 2009 20:51

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Chevra-

Another short story for your reading enjoyment...

### **War Stories**

You stare at that passage in the Chovas Halevovos describing the *chassid* meeting troops on their way home from the battlefield. The *chassid* tells the troops that they have just finished the **small** fight. Now they were embarking on the **big** fight, the fight against their *yetzer horah*.

You make a trip to the public library, because you want to find out more about this "small" fight. You bring home twelve heavy tomes describing battles that marked major turning points during World War II. You begin to read...

You read everything you can about the U-boat war. You read how the invincible German submarine fleet turned the Atlantic Ocean into one massive steel graveyard. Merchant ships, along with their destroyer escorts, defenseless against unseen monsters, were dispatched to the ocean floor, one by one. The writing is top-notch and you are drawn to keep reading. You taste the heavy, salty gritty ocean spray. You feel the desperation and fear.

Shall I be a spoiler? I will. In the end, the Allies turn the tables. In fact they turn the tables so dramatically that the German submarine corps eventually suffers the highest suicide rate among all the branches of the German forces. Desperate Allies come up with hundreds of ideas born out of their desperation; ideas ranging from clever convoy tactics and decoys to dramatically improved sonar and radar technology. The Allies worked tirelessly to upgrade their torpedoes and depth-charges, and, very cleverly, destroyed all the fortified and defended submarine repair and berthing facilities along the coastline of Occupied Europe by means of intense carpet bombing.

You move on to that great work *Armageddon: The Battle for Germany* by Max Hastings, a

classic work describing, in nail-biting detail, the Russian and American final advance into Berlin. You read of desperate bravery, of battles lost but a war won. You read of sacrifice. Good versus evil. It gets into your *kishkas*. The paper-thin Shermans dual the massive Tigers, not from the front, of course, but by improvising and innovating and coming up with ideas forced upon them by necessity. You are covered in grime and sweat, and all you can smell and see is smoke.

It is the wee hours of the morning and you are still reading. You make yourself more comfortable on your sofa and pop a potato chip into your mouth. Then you send another shell screaming towards a smoldering Reichstag.

Two weeks later you are done.

You are now ready to read about the "big" fight.

You return your books to the public library and you pay a visit to the Agudah library. You come home with a big stack of books, mostly from Artscroll and Feldheim, but a few from other publishing houses too. You read *All for the Boss*, you read *The Way it Was*. You read about *mesiras nefesh* for Yiddishkeit, Shabbos in particular, in the 1920's and 1930's. You move on to the legendary heroes of the clandestine networks of Chabad, Breslov and Novardok in Stalinist Russia. You read about the Gulags, and, of course, you read about those great giants of spirit, flinty rocks, who shone, otherworldly like, during the Holocaust. You read about contemporary heroes. You read about *baalei teshuva*, who have given up *kol dovor ossur*, who have become innovators and leaders, beacons of inspiration and wholesome purity.

You feel very proud to be a part of the Jewish nation.

You are once again sitting on your sofa.

You are crying.

*Palgei mayim yordu einai al lo shomru Torosecho.*

Your three-year old trundles up to you.

"Totty crying?"

"Yes, Sheifeleh," you say in a low voice, so that Mommy, working on a new chicken recipe in the kitchen, cannot hear.

"Totty's Zeidy lived through the nightmare of the Holocaust and survived. Mommy's Zeidy lost his job every week in order to keep Shabbos. And your Totty," you sniffle, "Lived through the darkest *tekufa* of the internet, and made it out alive. Right now you cannot possibly understand this. One day you will."

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Re: War Stories - A short story from an FFBBT  
Posted by Noorah BAmram - 26 Jul 2009 22:31

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absolutely AWESOME!!!!

An old *Chasidic* Jew was walking on the streets of Williamsburg turns to his friend and says in Yiddish "today in NY one can see on the streets in one day more then in *der alte heim* we could see in 70 years"

Answered his friend "***Emes***true, but the converse is also true "today one can be ***mesaken***/rectify in one day what in previous generations took 70 years to rectify"

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Re: War Stories - A short story from an FFBBT

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Posted by jerusalemsexaddict - 27 Jul 2009 17:40

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Wow!this yid is really something else!im eating up your stuff,rebbe.i officially pronounce myself a chassid.this is the second time i cried reading one of your stories.what a deep neshama :-\*  
-uri

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Re: War Stories - A short story from an FFBBT  
Posted by Efshar Letaken - 27 Jul 2009 18:32

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Ok!

I'm convinced yet one more time that your posts are ingenious!

I therefore ask Reb Guard that we Dedicate some kind of page on GYE Home page called "All Time Classic Posts" & All Ben M.'s post should be on it.

As for what other posts make it to the list I will leave up to are Holy Reb Guard.

Wadaya Think?!

E.L.

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Re: War Stories - A short story from an FFBBT  
Posted by Kedusha - 28 Jul 2009 02:54

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I'm speechless. I think one of the star writers of the Torah world has joined GYE!

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Re: War Stories - A short story from an FFBBT  
Posted by 7yipol - 28 Jul 2009 09:19

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I therefore ask Reb Guard that we Dedicate some kind of page on GYE Home page called "All Time Classic Posts" & All Ben M.'s post should be on it.

Once again, a brilliant idea by Efshar!

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Re: War Stories - A short story from an FFBBT  
Posted by habib613 - 24 Aug 2009 13:19

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wow :-X

no words

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Re: War Stories - A short story from an FFBBT  
Posted by letakain - 24 Aug 2009 22:50

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thank you so much! that was really beautiful, especially the end! We're fighting a hidden battle and the purity of the little child was really touching. I'd bless him/her, though, that s/he never really understand the difficulty his/her totty went through!

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