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March, 2022

## **East of Nakba (10)**

### **Part I. Israel bombs a nuclear plant in Iran**

#### **Chapter 10 Aerial bombing against Natanz nuclear plant (4)**



"Operation has successfully completed!" "Elite" reported to the base in a small but excited voice. The commander and other high officials at the base shouted for joy. "Elite" thought that his father, who was the veteran of the Middle East wars, would congratulate him. He was convinced that he caught up his father and could become a genuine "Elite" when he returned home safely.

The bombing operation had ended with five shots of bunker buster. "Abdullah" still had one bunker buster and one small nuclear missile. It was quite sure that the Iranian fighters in Isfahan Air Force base would notice the incident in Natanz and scrambled immediately. Israeli pilots had no enough time to stay there. Three aircrafts soared and ran away from Iranian airspace. Radar showed that Iranian jets had taken off from Isfahan and were chasing them.

The Iranian Air Force did not have AWACS, airborne warning and control system. Their air defense radar network was also poor. Therefore, when Iranian air force acknowledged three unknown fighters, three Israeli jets had already fulfilled their duties. Furthermore, Iranian jet fighters were old fashioned with poor performance and far inferior to the Israeli F35s with stealth capability. The Iranian fighters not only were unable to stop the Israeli airstrikes, but also unable to catch up with the F35s. Iran let them escape out of the Iranian airspace.

Three jets reached to Iraqi airspace. Now they were following the same route in reverse and were going to go back to home. The fuel gauge showed that the remaining was less than a quarter. It indicated that it was impossible to return home by themselves. But they had nothing to worry about because the aerial refueling aircraft was supposed to welcome them on their way to the base. Should be -----.

However, the order from the base was quite unexpected. Commander ordered them to change the flight route to the south and head for the Strait of Hormuz over the Persian Gulf. Three pilots could not understand the meaning of the order.

(cont'd)

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