

Spurs Day

by [Peter Glassman](#) (September 2023)



San Antonio Spurs at the Alamodome, ©Bibb T. Gault/ NBAE/Getty Images, Undated

A San Antonio Spurs' Recognition Day was scheduled for a home game. The AT&T Stadium seating capacity of over ten thousand sold out six months before the March date. Spurs' basketball mania affected all Texans and many non-Texans.

Fahdi Zondela was enthused. His spirit would be received in Paradise on the evening of that game. His mission for the Ayatollah of Iran would be completed. His family would be rewarded with a lifetime guarantee of money, a paid home, and honored esteem after he destroyed a large number of Americans.

Zondela had gained US entry three months ago with a forged green card, and an Iranian National Visa. His Iranian sponsor, Mohammed Sharza, an immigrant with American citizenship, was a US Army sergeant. He met Zondela at the airport.

“Smile. Look happy Fahdi.” Sergeant Mohammad Sharza helped Zondela with his luggage. “That’s it, laugh. Homeland Security is suspicious only of insecure, fearful, or angry expressions.”

“Thank you, Mohammad. I was frightened when I saw you in the American Army uniform.”

“It makes getting you through Security easier. Americans think their military protects them against jihadists when, by their very own rules, we can become one of them.”

Sharza was serious as they drove four miles from the airport. “It was important that you followed the instructions of not drinking anything on the plane to the US. Sweating is a trigger for suspicion by Homeland Security. Slight dehydration creates less sweating. You did well.”

“Will my family be notified of my safe arrival here?”

“They will only be contacted after successful completion of our mission.” Sharza continued. “Today and tonight I will show you around San Antonio. This is a military city. The people are friendly. They feel safe.” He drove into his parking garage. “But they’ll never again have that feeling after the Sunday of our calling.”

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Navy SEALs had been tasked by the newly elected President, to seek out and capture all identified terrorists and known jihad cells in the US. Navy SEAL CDR Jay Truman addressed his Team. “Gentleman, our orders indicate Iranian agents are to strike sometime this month. March is a popular time for Americans to

travel and assemble, because of the spring breaks. Many schools and colleges will be closed. Most students will be concerned with communal gatherings. Scheduled concerts and sports activities are magnetic targets for terrorists. I have a list of possibilities the Pentagon has put together based on FBI and CIA intelligence.” Truman stood at the map of Texas. “Our list includes resort areas in Texas.” He used a red laser pointer. “We’re to wait for further orders as this list is narrowed down.”

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Zondela gradually lost his fear of being surrounded by extreme Islam’s perceived ultimate enemy—Americans. Friendly mosques in San Antonio were easily accessible to him. Sharza introduced him to many Muslims of the non-jihad type. Zondela was confused. *Why do they seem so peaceable and content?*

Sharza broke into Zondela’s thoughts. “We will go to a Spurs basketball game at the AT&T Stadium. You will see that many Americans will be there. We are guaranteed success in killing hundreds.”

Zondela tried on a vest packed with plastic explosives and then donned a gray coverall with its AT&T logos. “I look so overweight. I look suspicious.” He removed the deadly outfit.

“Timing is important. No one will notice us. Some people will begin to leave ten to fifteen minutes before the game ends. Regardless, the restrooms will be filled from the beer and excess fluids consumed. You will be allowed in both the men’s and women’s restrooms by placing a maintenance sign outside the entryways. It should take only one minute to close off bathroom traffic and place the charges. It will be easy. You will see. We will go to several games before Spurs Day. This uniform is like all others who are custodians in the AT&T building.”

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The second week in March, CDR Truman's secure cell phone rang.

"Yessir, we're ready. I'll organize the plan and my men immediately." Truman called his Team together. "The CIA and FBI confirm cells across the country are going active this Sunday. Our mission is in San Antonio. We leave at midnight."

Truman's orders were to arrive at their assigned site on the attack day. "We arrive at ground zero by Chinook helicopter from San Antonio's Randolph Air Force Base. A landing zone on a vacant lot next to the target building will be marked."

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On Sunday, March 12, Sharza and Zondela wore identical C-4 stuffed coveralls with custodial IDs. There were a dozen similarly dressed regular janitors among which Sharza, Zondela, and four others would be planting devices with programmed detonators to explode at Sharza's order.

"Once the bathrooms blow up, we mingle with the panicked crowds and detonate our clothing explosives. We will be welcomed into Paradise immediately. Allah is waiting."

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"The Spurs basketball game!" A SEAL Team member shouted at their final briefing.

"We'll be going in with the dogs we've been training with this past month. They'll sniff out the C-4 through all the beer, hot dog, and other food smells." Truman patted his harnessed service dog. "Whoever gets the first jihadist uses his radio to relay identifying markers our terrorists are wearing. Let's synchronize our watches."

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"Something is not right," Sharza called on his hand radio to the others in the stadium. "The game has started early. Our

timers will detonate after the building is empty." He and his men had received severe reprimands from the AT&T Custodian Superintendent for their late arrival.

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Truman contacted his Team. "CIA reports that a group of six janitors arrived late and had some words with the staff. We're going straight for them now. They're wearing gray coveralls with AT&T blue logos. We have to check all custodians. There may be more than those six."

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Sharza shouted over the crowd's noise into his radio. "We must rush to the restrooms and reset all timers. They must be moved back by one hour."

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Truman's exec sent the first message. "A custodian is trying to close a restroom on the second level, south entry." Truman was closest and he loosened his dog's leash. "OFF. OFF." He and the dog ran in between food-and-beer-carrying patrons. Truman released the leash when he saw the janitor in a padded uniform. An Iraqi flashback to the bulky terrorists from the war made him draw his Beretta. The dog was upon Zondela with his jaws on Zondela's right hand. Truman shot Zondela's other hand, which was trying to access a blinking green button. Another shot to the trigger mechanism penetrated Zondela's chest. Truman gave the command to the dog. "Keep him down."

The reports from other SEALs came back that twelve janitors were now in custody and only five had explosive-rigged clothing. One was killed after pulling a secreted pistol to shoot the dog.

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Truman bent close to Zondela's ear, "You were late to the

stadium because the Spurs Day Game start time was pushed back one hour.”

Zondela’s vision was fading. His last thought was about the time error. His last breath was a whisper, “Sharza did not tell us of this. We needed only one hour to complete our mission.” A bright light appeared followed by blackness as he entered paradise.

Adapted from Peter Glassman’s novel, Ocean City HQ.

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Peter Glassman is a retired physician living in Texas, who devotes his time to writing novels and memoir-based fiction. He is the author of 14 novels including the medical thrillers *Cotter*; *The Helios Rain* and *Who Will Weep for Me*. Some of his short stories were written for presentation at the San Antonio Writers Group Meetup. You can read more about him and his books [here](#).

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