

New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by davidt - 07 Aug 2025 02:14

The hotel room was dark, the glow from the shattered phone screen flickering like a dying flame on the floor.

His hands were trembling. Not from cold from truth.

She didn't scream. She just looked at him. Her eyes, which once sparkled with simplicity and loyalty, now shimmered with disbelief and pain.

"I don't care about the scam," she whispered. "Just tell me it's not true... Tell me the rest isn't true..."

He couldn't.

And for the first time since he was eleven years old when he first learned how to delete browser history he felt something inside him truly break.

Chapter 1: *The Perfect Bochor*

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To the outside world, Shaya was the dream.

A *masmid*, a *baal kishron*, *mevakeish emes*. In yeshiva, people said he was the next rosh yeshiva. Even the mashgiach once said at a *mussar shmues*, "If you want to see what it means to live with yiras shamayim, look at Shaya."

He smiled. He nodded. He kept his head down.

But he also knew how to work filters. How to erase data. How to cry on Yom Kippur... and fall the next night.

No one ever guessed. Not his rebbeim. Not his friends. Not his chaver chavrusah of six years who sat inches from him every morning at 7:00 a.m.

Only Hashem knew the truth. And it haunted him.

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by davidt - 28 Aug 2025 12:36

Chapter 24: Trial by Fire

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The black car was back. This time it didn't just sit at the corner. It rolled slowly down the block until it stopped right in front of Shaya's house. Two men stepped out, not rushing, not hiding. They wanted him to see.

Leah froze at the window, clutching the baby. "Shaya... what do they want?" Her voice was shaking.

Shaya's heart pounded, but something inside him was different now. He wasn't the same man who had hidden in the laundry room, drowning his fear in secret escapes. He stood straighter, picked up his phone, and dialed both the lawyer and HHM in quick succession. "They're here," he said. "I'm not hiding anymore. Tell me exactly what to do."

The men left after a few minutes, leaving only a slip of paper under the door with a number scrawled on it. Leah trembled as she picked it up, but Shaya took it gently from her hand. "I'll face this," he said firmly. "I promise you, I'm not going to run or lie anymore."

That night, instead of spiraling into panic, he sat with his notebook, writing down every urge, every fear, every trigger, just like HHM had taught him. And when the wave of craving hit hardest, he picked up the phone and called his mentor. HHM's calm voice steadied him. "This pressure is a test. You think it's to destroy you, but it's to make you stronger. Every time you choose honesty over hiding, you're breaking the old chains."

The next morning, Shaya met with the lawyer again. Together they crafted a plan to cut off the scam's leverage legally and safely. Dovid joined them, sharing details from his own escape. Piece by piece, the trap was loosening.

Walking home afterward, Shaya felt the fear still pulsing, but alongside it was something new: strength. He had faced down both battles at once the shadows outside and the shadows inside and for the first time, he wasn't crushed by them.

He looked up at the sky, whispering under his breath. "Hashem, I see it now. Even the darkest things You sent me were really pushing me here. If I keep holding on, You'll carry me through."

And for the first time in years, he didn't just see light at the end of the tunnel. He felt it warming

him already.

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by davidt - 29 Aug 2025 00:59

Chapter 25: When Heaven Intervenes

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Leah was the one who finally said it. "We need a break. Even just a few days away. We can't keep living like this."

Shaya hesitated, but HHM agreed. "Sometimes stepping away lets Hashem open doors you couldn't on your own."

By perfect timing, a cousin called that same day. His Shomrim unit was running drills near Shaya's neighborhood and needed a place to stay. "Could we use your house for the weekend?" he asked casually.

Shaya almost laughed from the sheer providence of it. "Yes," he said, hardly believing the words.

That Friday, he and Leah packed the baby and slipped away to a quiet town upstate. For the first time in months, Leah's face softened as she lit candles in a small rental home. They exhaled together, holding on to a fragile peace.

Back in the city, the black car rolled up to their house. Two hard-faced men stepped out, expecting an easy scare. But instead of a frightened yungerman opening the door, a group of Shomrim volunteers greeted them. "Can we help you gentlemen?" one of the men asked with a half-smile. The criminals froze, muttered something, and backed away.

What they didn't know was that law enforcement had been watching closely. Dovid's testimony, the lawyer's files, and now the Shomrim's presence gave them the opening they needed. That same night, unmarked vans swarmed a warehouse on the edge of town. Officers stormed inside, cuffing the men who had haunted Shaya's nights. Computers, files, money trails all seized. By morning, the crime ring was finished.

When Shaya returned home, his cousin greeted him with a grin. "You won't believe what happened. Hashem sent us to stay here at just the right time. Those guys showed up, but they walked into the wrong house. And while they were busy backing off, the police raided the whole operation. They're all in custody now."

Shaya leaned against the doorway, overcome. He had spent months drowning in fear, convinced that everything was falling apart. Yet Hashem had been guiding every piece, weaving a rescue plan beyond anything he could have imagined.

He turned to Leah, voice breaking. "I see it now. Hashem didn't abandon us. Even when I was falling, He was already setting up the rescue."

Leah's eyes filled with tears. "So now we can start living again not just surviving."

For the first time, their home felt safe. And for the first time, Shaya believed he could truly build a new life on honesty, faith, and hope.

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by davidt - 29 Aug 2025 01:03

POLL TIME...

The story has been building, twisting, and turning...

But here's the big question for you, dear readers:

Should the story continue, or have you had enough already?

- **1- Yes, keep going! I need to know what happens next.**
- **2- No, this rollercoaster is enough for me.**

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by keepmekadosh - 29 Aug 2025 03:27

Yes keep going! This is fascinating

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by tzitzis dude - 29 Aug 2025 04:16

In my view, the story hasn't ended yet. Unless I missed something kinda huge, I'm not seeing how we can get back to the prologue. (Unless, of course, that was just a hook-and a good one at that. In which case, feel free to end it on a high note!)

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by davidt - 29 Aug 2025 12:21

Chapter 26: The Hotel Room

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It was HHM's idea. "You need space away from your house, away from the shadows of the lies. Go somewhere quiet with Leah. Just the two of you. Be honest. Start again."

So they checked into a modest hotel not far from the city. The walls were plain, the room small, but it felt like a world apart. For the first time in months there were no buzzing phones, no black cars outside the window, no secrets waiting in drawers. Only Shaya, Leah, and the truth that could no longer be avoided.

The room was dark, the glow from a shattered phone screen flickering like a dying flame on the floor. Shaya's hands trembled, not from cold, but from the truth. Leah picked up the phone slowly, her face pale as the screen revealed what he had hidden for so long.

She didn't scream. She didn't throw it at him. She just looked, her eyes shimmering with pain and disbelief. "I don't care about the scam," she whispered. "Just tell me it's not true. Tell me the rest isn't true."

Shaya's chest tightened until he thought he might break apart. He wanted to lie, to protect himself, but the words of HHM echoed in his mind: "*Honesty is oxygen.*" He lowered his head. "It is true."

The silence was unbearable. Leah turned away, tears slipping down her cheeks. And in that moment, for the first time since he was eleven years old clearing browser history on the family computer, Shaya felt something inside him shatter completely. But this time, breaking wasn't

the end. It was the beginning.

He sat on the edge of the bed, voice raw. "Leah, I've hurt you. I've hurt us. I lived in lies because I was afraid. But I see now that the hiding destroyed everything. I don't deserve forgiveness, but I want to fight for us, for you, for our family. If you'll let me, I'll walk this path with full honesty, no matter how hard."

Leah turned slowly to face him. Her eyes were swollen, but there was something there besides pain. "If you're serious, I need to see it. Not promises, not tears. Actions. I can't live in lies anymore."

They spent hours that night talking halting, awkward, sometimes silent, sometimes crying. Shaya told her about HHM, about the tools he had been given, about the lawyer and Dovid, about the hope he had glimpsed. He promised to open every door, to hide nothing again.

By dawn, they were both exhausted. Nothing was magically fixed. But the wall between them had cracked open. Leah's trust wasn't restored, but she was willing to try. And Shaya, for the first time, wasn't afraid of the truth.

As they packed to leave, Leah looked at him with tired eyes. "If Hashem carried us through everything until now, maybe He can carry us into something new. But it starts with you, Shaya. No more secrets."

Shaya nodded, as they stepped out of the room. The hotel had not erased the past, but it had given them something greater: a chance to begin again, this time with honesty as their only foundation.

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"
Posted by tzitzis dude - 31 Aug 2025 01:26

[davidt wrote on 29 Aug 2025 12:21:](#)

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I can't speak for anyone else (well, technically I can, it just may not be too accurate;), but

you've satisfied the critic in TD. Well done.

Warning: Spoiler!

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by keepmekadosh - 31 Aug 2025 03:04

Thank you DavidT. A truly remarkable story. It deserves to be published.

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by davidt - 31 Aug 2025 12:38

An Open Letter from Shaya

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Dear GYE Family,

I never thought my life would take the turns it did. For years I lived with secrets, convincing myself that I could manage, that I could hide, that I could "fix it later." But hiding doesn't protect you it destroys you. My story is proof of that.

Today, after walking through fire, I want to share a message from the heart.

To the Singles:

I know the struggle feels private and personal, something you think you'll "leave behind" once you marry. That's what I thought too. But the truth is, what you carry now only grows heavier if it's not faced with honesty.

If you could see the tears, the pain, the cracks it causes in shalom bayis later, you would never say, "I'll deal with it tomorrow." I wish someone had told me how much damage dishonesty

and hiding can do not just to yourself, but to the person who loves you most.

But it's not all warning. There's hope too. If you face it now, if you reach out for help and are honest with yourself and with others, you can enter marriage with strength, clarity, and freedom. You can give your future spouse the gift of a whole and honest you. Don't wait.

To the Married:

If you're reading this as a husband already in the parsha, please hear me. Hiding is poison. Lying to yourself or to your wife, pretending it's under control it only makes the pain worse. I lived it. The shame, the double life, the fear of being found out. And when it all finally collapsed, it nearly destroyed me.

But here's what I learned: no one is too far gone. With honesty, with support, with guidance, there is always a way back. My marriage could have been lost forever, but when I started being real not perfect, not pretending, just real everything began to change. Trust can be rebuilt. Peace can return. Hope can live again.

Gratitude:

I want to thank **DavidT** for encouraging me to put this story into words, so it could not only help me process, but hopefully help others.

And my deepest thanks to **Hashem Help Me (HHM)** the man who stood by me, listened without judgment, and gave me the tools and accountability to finally stop hiding and start living honestly. HHM, you're not just helping me you're saving lives, one person at a time.

And to **GuardYourEyes**, I owe so much. This platform is not just a website; it's a lifeline. It's proof that none of us are alone, and that Hashem gives us the right people at the right time when we're ready to grab the rope.

Closing:

My story is full of pain, but it's also full of hashgacha. Every fall, every dark corner, every tear it all became the path that brought me here. And if I can come this far, so can you.

I would love to hear from you what lessons did you take from my journey? Which part spoke to you most?

May Hashem help every one of us find the courage to be honest, the strength to keep fighting, and the joy of real shalom in our homes.

With love and honesty,

Shaya

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by goldwings - 31 Aug 2025 15:29

WOW!!!

No words suffice, it's excellently written, you feel like your living through it, it brings out the most important ideas in life, in the most beautiful way!

You should write a book, I (and I'm sure many others) will surely buy it.

THANK YOU!!!!!!

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by frank.lee - 31 Aug 2025 23:43

Tzitzis Dude, great point! On the other hand, two points.

1. It can be great to work through a topic of tension, at least once in a while. To work on listening actively, trying to understand, communicate, express feelings which may be uncomfortable, and to possibly come to agree on some aspects. Great, bonding experience!

2. Some issues are painful, uncomfortable, not deemed important enough, trigger strong reactions etc. and not dealt with, pushed down the road. These can then keep coming back and get entrenched, becoming strongly held principles or paradigms. Then they are harder to talk about, and harder to resolve.

So there are benefits to bear through an argument, at least sometimes, not necessarily making it an ironclad rule of never going to sleep before working out any argument or discord.

Hatzlacha!

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by davidt - 01 Sep 2025 16:45

Thank you! this kind of discussion is exactly why I love sharing the story here, because it brings out perspectives that are so practical for real life.

To "Tzitzis Dude":

You raise such an important point. It's true that when emotions are running high, pushing through an entire night can actually cause more damage than good. There's so much wisdom in being able to say, "I hear you, but let's pause, rest, and continue tomorrow." That takes humility and strength. Sleep can cool the fire and prevent words that can't be taken back.

To "frank.lee":

And your points are equally true. Sometimes, if a couple never dares to enter those uncomfortable conversations, issues just get buried deeper and deeper until they harden into something much worse. The fact that you frame it as "at least once in a while" feels very balanced. Working things through, even when it's difficult, can create deeper understanding and connection.

Bringing it Together:

In Shaya and Leah's case in the story, the "all-night conversation" wasn't just another disagreement it was a turning point of radical honesty after years of secrecy. It had to happen in that raw way, because it was the first time everything was finally being laid bare. But in real life, both of your insights are so valuable: sometimes stepping back and sleeping is the wisest move, and sometimes leaning into the discomfort is what brings true growth.

That's one of the beautiful things about this forum and about stories, they open the door for us to see how the same situation can carry different lessons, depending on the person and the moment.

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by hollyari - 01 Sep 2025 20:09

[davidt wrote on 29 Aug 2025 01:03:](#)

POLL TIME...

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But here's the big question for you, dear readers:

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- 1- Yes, keep going! I need to know what happens next.
- 2- No, this rollercoaster is enough for me.

Of course go on! This is the first amazing kosher scary novel — every chapter pulls me in. I'm not just enjoying the story, I'm actually taking out good points from it, even without the formal lessons. Thank you for everything you've shared till now — waiting for the next twist!

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Re: New story series: "From Shadows to Sunrise"

Posted by keepmekadosh - 02 Sep 2025 02:04

I thought the story was finished. I wanted to know, DavidT, when will you write another?