



## Code Maastricht "The Gates of Hell"

**“I am a unique project that couldn’t be adjusted to the system.”**

The demonstrations were like a jazz improvisation—everyone played their own solo, but no one listened to the rest of the band. The chaos was so thick you could cut it with a knife, and the crowd resembled a flock of headless chickens running in circles, searching for an exit that didn’t exist. And me? I was one of those chickens, only with a camera in my hand. My eyes saw too much—and that’s what got me into trouble.

### **BIS Club**

Amsterdam was bathed in gray twilight, and the rain stung the faces of the demonstrators like tiny needles. The crowd boiled—banners reading “Freedom is not a commodity” and “Rutte = prison” waved above heads like flags on a windy beach. Everything was as usual: shouts, police batons, the smell of tear gas mixed with the dampness of the rain, creating a stifling, metallic aura. The sound of police sirens echoed off the buildings, as if the city itself was protesting. But something was different that day.

Through the viewfinder of my camera, I captured the face of the Dutch Minister of Finance, Hans van der Meer. He stood in the middle of Dam Square, smiling at the cameras like a second-tier actor. I looked closer. In the crowd stood a man dressed

elegantly, clearly standing out from the rest of the demonstrators. His posture was rigid, professional—he didn't fit in with the protesting crowd. I zoomed in on the image. The man stood just behind the back of the Minister of Finance, Hans van der Meer, whose face was clearly visible in the photo.

Something wasn't right. I zoomed in again. At that moment, his pocket moved, and he pulled out a phone. The screen suddenly lit up, reflecting its glow on his face. A number appeared on the display—a string of digits that seemed strangely familiar, though I wasn't sure why. The bodyguard, however, didn't pay attention. He simply put the phone back in his pocket as if nothing had happened.

But I noticed. And I managed to take the picture.

My finger hovered over the shutter button for a fraction of a second, but it was enough to capture that moment. The phone, the number, the bodyguard, the minister—all of it fit into one frame. I didn't know yet what it meant, but something told me I had stumbled upon something I wasn't supposed to see.

"This isn't just any phone," I thought. "And that number... What is it hiding?"

The demonstration continued, and the crowd seemed to gather around an improvised podium. On it stood a man in a red scarf, a magnetic protest leader—Willem. He was like a storm that drew all the attention. His voice, full of passion and determination, carried over the crowd like thunder. With a gesture, he pointed at the parliament building, as if accusing it of all the world's sins.

"They want to lock us in a digital cage! No cash, no privacy, no freedom! But we won't let them! Today we resist, tomorrow we win!" he shouted, and the crowd cheered, raising fists in a gesture of rebellion.

I was fascinated by his charisma but also skeptical. Was he a true revolutionary or just another manipulator exploiting the crowd for his own purposes? I moved closer to take a picture. At that moment, Willem noticed me and called out:

"You there, with the camera! You want a real story? Come see me after the demonstration. I have something you need to see."

Those words rang in my head like an echo. I looked at Willem, trying to assess whether the invitation was an opportunity or a trap.

"I've been watching this guy—Willem—who stood on the edge of the crowd like some damn avenging angel. His eyes burned with that special kind of madness you recognize in people who have too much truth in their heads and too little fear in their hearts."

"Hey!" A woman's shout tore me away from the screen. It was Anna, a journalist colleague from Reuters. She stood nearby, her wet hair plastered to her cheeks. Her camera hung around her neck like a weapon.

"What are you doing here?" she asked, coming closer.

"Working," I replied briefly, showing her a few photos on my camera's display. They were good. Very good. Faces of protesters filled with anger, frustration, fear. But one photo caught my attention. Minister van der Meer, his bodyguard, that strange number on the phone screen... There was something about it. I had a nose for situations like these.

“Have you heard about those conspiracy theories?” Anna leaned in, looking at the photo. “Deep State, secret governments... everyone talks about it. Nonsense, as always. Remember last year in Rotterdam...?”

Anna rolled her eyes, smirking.

“I’m not interested in rumors,” I muttered, though I knew it was a lie. They interested me. A lot.

The crowd began to disperse, and we moved away from the center. We entered a café by the canal. Inside, it smelled of coffee and wet wool. Steam rose from the cups, and the bartender gave us a glance as if she’d already seen hundreds like us—cold journalists escaping from the rain and trouble. I took out my laptop and quickly transferred the photos to the desktop. The screen illuminated my face with a pale glow, contrasting with the grayness of the surrounding world. I selected a few of the best shots and sent them via transfer to the editorial office of one of the larger news portals. I knew their offers—quick payments for hot materials. It was a risky move, sending raw files without editing, but I had no choice. If these photos had any value, now was the time to find out.

After a few minutes, my phone buzzed. The transfer was confirmed—it wasn’t a large sum, but enough to breathe a sigh of relief. Maybe it wouldn’t solve all my problems, but at least I wouldn’t have to worry about rent this month.

“I have to go,” I said to Anna, packing my gear.

“Take care of yourself,” she replied, looking at me with a strange expression on her face. “These aren’t ordinary demonstrations. Someone is always watching here. I saw one of those guys from Romeo filming with a camera.”

I didn’t respond. I didn’t want to worry her. But her words stuck in my head like thorns. Was someone following me? Could it be possible? Or was it just paranoia? I returned to the central station and boarded a train to The Hague. The fog began to lift, revealing a black expanse of emotions outside the speeding train window. I traveled quickly, knowing time was against me. Tension, exhaustion, and adrenaline combined with chronic sleep deprivation made me feel like a shadow of myself. My heart pounded in my chest like a madman. The doctor last month called it “holiday heart syndrome,” but what did he know about deadlines? As the train sped through the night, I felt something chasing me. I didn’t know yet if I was a witness or already a participant in this story. But one thing was certain—I knew those photos were a one-way ticket. Someone had already examined them pixel by pixel and marked me as a threat... Krzysztof Kubicki, a true story...

Chapter 2: “Morning Fog (or maybe just a hangover)”

A small apartment by the Dutch coast, Beach Club, a room in the back.

Morning fog wrapped the area like a thin veil, but who cares about fog when you’ve got a storm raging in your head so intense that even your thoughts try to escape through your ears? Me—Marek—sat at an old wooden table, my fingers nervously tapping on the keyboard of my laptop. The screen illuminated my face with a pale, bluish glow, contrasting with the warmth of morning—or maybe it was just the hangover effect from last night, which left behind a taste of stale air and memories I’d rather forget.

On the table stood a cooling cup of coffee labeled "Fuck the system"—a gift from a friend who probably won't return. Next to it lay a half-smoked joint, though I tried to quit smoking. This was one of those battles I fought alone—like Don Quixote fighting windmills, except my windmills had the faces of politicians and corporate logos. My thoughts jumped between the photos on the screen and the window, where the fog slowly began to lift.

In bed, covered by a thin blanket, slept a young girl. Her blonde hair was scattered across the pillow, and her breathing was calm, almost childlike. She didn't know yet that this day would change our lives forever. Lena—an artist who appeared in my life a few months ago like a storm. Her presence was both a blessing and a curse.

I reviewed the photos I took the previous evening during the demonstration against pandemic restrictions. Crowds of people holding banners with slogans like "No freedom without privacy" and "CBDC = New Totalitarianism." I photographed their faces—full of anger, frustration, fear. But one photo caught my attention.

I looked closer. In the background of the crowd stood a man in a black suit, clearly standing out from the rest of the demonstrators. His posture was stiff, professional—he didn't fit in with the protesting crowd. I zoomed in on the image. The man stood just behind the back of the Dutch Minister of Finance, Hans van der Meer, whose face was clearly visible in the photo.

Something wasn't right. I zoomed in again. Around the man's neck gleamed a silver pendant with a symbol: a circle surrounding a triangle, with the letters "O.D." inside. "Opus Dei," I thought. But why would the minister's bodyguard wear a pendant of this organization?

My heart started beating faster. I scrolled through more photos. In one of them, the man was talking to someone in an elegant coat—his face partially hidden under a hood. In his hand, he held a folder whose logo matched the one on the pendant. "Shit..." I whispered under my breath.

It was him. The Minister of Finance, one of the main architects of the plan to implement Central Digital Banks in Europe, had a bodyguard with the Opus Dei symbol.

The girl in bed stirred and opened her eyes.

"What are you doing?" she asked sleepily, stretching.

"Nothing." I closed the laptop. "Just checking the photos."

Lena sat up in bed, her eyes now more alert. She knew me well enough to know something was wrong.

"Tell me the truth."

I sighed. I didn't have time for explanations. I grabbed my phone and sent a quick email to my contact in Brussels—a investigative journalist specializing in such topics.

"I have to leave," I said, putting on my jacket.

"Where are you going?" Lena looked worried.

"I don't know. Not now. But this is big. Maybe even bigger than you think."

Before she could respond, I was already out the door. I ran down the stairs and hopped on my scooter. The fog began to lift, revealing the gray surface of the sea. I drove fast, knowing time was against me.

If Minister van der Meer was collaborating with Opus Dei, it meant the CBDC plan was just the beginning. Something bigger was coming. And I had to stop it.

Chapter 1: "Morning Fog (or maybe just a hangover)"

A small apartment by the Scheveningen coast, near Beach Club.

The sunrise illuminated this unusual place, as if trying to wash away the traces of yesterday's chaos. But in my head, the storm still raged—thoughts spun so fast that I felt like they were trying to escape through my ears. I sat at an old table, drumming my nails on the laptop keyboard, but I wasn't ready to write anything yet. The only light in the room came from the screen, casting a ghostly glow on my face.

Last night blurred into half-conscious memories—flashes of camera flashes, screams, faces contorted with anger. Police moving like a mechanical wave. Tear gas in my throat, echoes of blows on my skin. Images recorded on the retina, on the memory cards of my camera, and somewhere deep, in places that don't allow forgetting.

On the table stood a cooling cup of coffee labeled "Fuck the system"—a gift from a friend who probably won't return. Next to it, a half-smoked joint. I tried to quit. I lost. Behind me, in bed, Lena slept—an artist who appeared in my life a few months ago like a storm. Beautiful blonde hair scattered across the pillow. Her presence was both a blessing and a curse.

She didn't know yet that this day would change everything.

I focused on the screen. Photos from the demonstration. The crowd, banners: "No freedom without privacy," "CBDC = New Totalitarianism." I photographed their faces—full of anger, frustration, fear.

Until I found that one photo.

I zoomed in. Behind the Minister of Finance van der Meer stood a man—too elegant, too calm. No earpiece. Didn't look like a bodyguard. But his eyes scanned the surroundings like a predator's.

Something wasn't right.

I magnified the image. A silver pendant. A circle surrounding a triangle. Inside, the letters "O.D."

Opus Dei.

My heart started beating faster.

I scrolled through more photos. The same man talking to someone in an elegant coat. Face hidden under a hood. In his hand, a briefcase. On his finger, a signet ring with the same symbol.

"Shit..." I whispered.

The Minister of Finance. Architect of the European digital currency system. And behind his back, Opus Dei members.

This wasn't a coincidence.

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2025 Krzysztof Kubicki