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from. After walking through Tahrir and talking to several undercover police about the expected situation, we determined that it was probably best to find a safe location — like the roof of a hotel, ideally. Some of my friends stayed on the bridge crossing into Tahrir because they wanted to be close to the action once it began. The rest of us continued across the bridge and entered Novotel, a hotel just on the opposite side of the bridge from Tahrir Square. On the roof of Novotel is a nice restaurant where we ordered lunch. As we waited for food, we could see large crowds gathering further down the road from the bridge that crosses directly into Tahrir. It was not long before we saw tear gas being shot into the latter crowd. I took lots of videos and pictures of this happening. The pictures show it all, but if you could only see it firsthand — the insane amounts of tear gas used on peaceful protestors just trying to march towards the bridge.

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the effects of tear gas. Our eyes were burning, watering. Thankfully the hotel staff was very accommodating to those of us on the roof, providing us with napkins to cover our faces and milk to soothe our burning throats. We could hardly imagine how badly the affects of the tear gas must have been down below us. Once the protestors started gathering on the bridge and pushing their way across, the lingering tear gas dissipated. It was incredible to see the large numbers of people gathering, coming together to create one strong voice. The protestors were not violent. They were just walking — walking with determination. The police were the ones using various methods of force to try to stop the protestors from accomplishing anything. As tear gas continued to shoot into the crowds, protestors would pick the cans up quickly and toss them off the bridge into the Nile. Perhaps one of the most moving moments I experienced during the demonstrations on the 28th of January was when many of the protestors stopped what they were doing and began praying. I would not say that I am particularly religious, but it was certainly incredible to see that the protestors would take the time to perform their prayers together — there on the bridge with a temporary halt to whatever chaos that had ensued. Once the prayers were completed, the demonstration resumed.



At some point, more force was used and the protestors were pushed all the way back off the bridge and barricaded down side streets off the square below Novotel. It was not long before we saw the Egyptian people gain back their strength, as they were joined by many others in another attempt to cross the bridge into Tahrir. This time they were successful. Hotel employees were running around everywhere, passing out gas masks and trying to accommodate a lot of protestors that were seeking shelter in the hotel lobby. I saw a few people bleeding from the head. It was a shocking scene. It was difficult for me to walk away because I was so disturbed. I think it was particularly surprising for me because everything in the streets below looked so calm from several stories up. I was not expecting to see — up close — the effects of police force on protestors. The next day I went back to Tahrir with a few friends from the night before to see the aftermath of the protests. Seeing these massive tanks in the streets with soldiers

everywhere was at first a very intimidating sight. I was aware that when the military moved in the night before, they were friendly with the protestors and forced the police out. I was not aware at that moment how familiar the sight of tanks and soldiers would soon become.