

Mendacity

The Honey Dipper World

by

Bob Furlin

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Preface

‘Mendacity - The Honey Dipper World’ is a story of deceit and deception. A world of habitual lying, dishonesty, untruthfulness and falsehood defined as Mendacity.

This is a story of an individual caught up in a system of lies and liars. Some will relegate the time of the ‘Honey Dipper World’ to the past but it is alive and thriving today. The name has changed cleaned up and repackaged as this story has.

The Honey Dipper is now called a Septic Tank Service but they still deal with the same substance. The name has changed to include the word septic defined as an invasion of the body by toxins and in this story called mendacity.

This is a story of the time referred to as the Cold War sometimes turned hot but called a ‘police action’ trying to cover what it really was a War. Time and light has now redefined it as the Forgotten War by those who propagate lies. The substance a Honey Dipper deals with if left to the effects of time and sunlight it will dry up and change.

Murph the individual caught up in that world chased its effects around the globe. He got caught in the deception of the Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence world. The question is will time and exposure to the light free him from that world. The story traces his life from its beginnings where he leaned of the ‘Honey Dipper World’ and then his involvement in it.

That world entangles him in the Korean War, the Space War, and the Cold War, and it takes him to Japan, Korea, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, Russia, Alaska, and a remote Island called the ‘The Pearl of the Aleutians’. Shemya a small island where he confronts his arch enemy and exposes those that serve what one president called ‘The Evil Empire’.

He followed the path of those out to destroy the Country he loves and found that the lie of the Honey Dipper guides it.

The same story continues until this present time and will continue until the ‘true light’ exposes and changes all those that dwell in ‘Mendacity - The Honey Dipper World’.

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Chapter One

The white dome glittered in the early morning sunlight. Located high on a cliff on a small island in the Aleutian Islands it caused many to wonder why it was there and its purpose.

The Russian Bear decided to find out why their adversary placed it there. They set in motion a plan to discover its purpose and disable it.

They employed every form of mendacity recruiting and sustaining individuals dedicated to that purpose.

The door of the Bubble opened and a Sergeant stepped outside and looked up at the impressive inflated dome. A week ago someone had sabotaged the main Island's generator shutting down the blowers to the Bubble.

Almost blew it that time, he thought, another two minutes and the thin membrane would have collapsed on the antennas and put us out of business.

The morning was crisp and cool but one of the very few days there would be some visibility, rare day with little overcast. There are one hundred ninety three days of fog to endure. There was some form of precipitation for two hundred days with cold howling winds every day.

"Talk about a 'Cold War' I guess this is what they are talking about. It's clear this morning though with little wind. Oh what a perfect day I might as well enjoy," he said aloud.

Gazing out to sea, he mused, *they are becoming desperate trying to disable this operation.*

Walking slowly around the dome he became entranced by the beauty of the Bearing Sea and the ruggedness of the Island.

Cleaning the dew off the lenses of his binoculars he raised them and continued to look out to sea. He wondered - *why is the Government so intrigued by that constant beeping from the Soviet Satellite?*

What is the problem? It is 500 miles up, traveling at 18,000 miles an hour, and it circles the globe every 96-minutes. So what if it flies over the U.S. seven times a day. What is its purpose? What is the mysterious secondary beep we haven't been able to diagnose? The questions haunt him.

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Who is it that is trying to sabotage the site? Could they suspect him?

He had kept his true identity and mission secret with just his handler knowing his identity. The questions keep building and building and answers seem few.

He thought - *how did I arrive at this place?*

Mendacity abounds in the race to rule the World. There is a smell in the air and I know it well and the smell concerns me. Where and when did I learn that something is not as it appears or not believe everything they told me? What in my past has made me sensitive?

His mind went back to those days.

They all had colorful nicknames back in the hills of Western Pennsylvania, coal country. Berp was his first nickname and since he was small and skinny or he was just a little Berp.

He made a mistake one night when he told the gang that he liked a girl named Murphy so Murph seemed more fitting than Berp.

On another night he put on one of his sister's sweaters with a picture of a Crab. Pickle noticed as he came into the light of the street lamp.

He yelled, "My, isn't it nice to have Murph the Crab out tonight."

Not being a fighter Berp gave in to the taunts and jokes. So he became Murph the Crab but when he won his first fight he became Murph again.

The fight was over the game called 'Slice the Ham' one of their favorites. They had to improvise and use their imaginations and invent games such as Honk Konk the Can, Happy Go Punch, Shiny on Your Own Side, Mummy Peg, and Murder Ball. Who knows when and where some of these games started, they could have come over from the old Country.

The gang would gather under the streetlight, one of three, usually the one down at the corner by Murph's house. They had much fun whittling on that light pole. When he left home they nearly had the pole cut in half. He laughed thinking about it.

Street may be a misnomer as it was just a dirt road in fact a 'red dog road.' Red dog happened when slate smoldered and

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burned for years then it turned red. The State used the slate to make roads and streets. There was a huge slate dump about three hundred yards up the road by the one room schoolhouse. There was a constant smell of sulfur in the air and they accepted the smell.

What started that fight?

It was when they made him 'it' again when they played the game he dreaded, Slice the Ham.

Piggy drew a line in the road and Berp got into the leap frog position.

Of course Piggy was the first one behind Berp and the rest lined up behind him. Size and strength did have its advantages.

Berp hoped Piggy would laugh or shows his teeth; then he would catch Piggy and make him 'it'. In his wildest dreams that would happen. Berp wished knowing the odds.

Piggy thought, *I am the biggest and meanest of this group and I'll break the rule and start with 'ring the church bells'. What if they gang up on me? Then again I think I can whip all of them no I had better start with 'slice the ham'.*

May be he will forget to start with Slice the Ham and he would be automatically 'it'. He may be dumb but not stupid, Berp thought but Piggy started off correctly.

Piggy put one of his hands on Berp's back and said, "Slice the ham." Then with the other hand he did exactly that, sliced the ham and jumped over.

Murph looked up and made sure that Piggy was not laughing or showing his teeth. Did he make a clean leap? Murph questioned if Piggy made all the right moves.

Did an arm or leg touch me? he thought, *no such luck he made a clean leap, just a smile with no teeth showing.*

The rest of the gang got their turn and did a slice the ham. No one made a mistake because once a routine started it must finish from the first to the last before another routine could start. Berp went over the rules in his mind.

It was Piggy's turn to leap again and he thought *what will I do next? Maybe a double slice the ham, or cork the bottle. I'll punch my thumb into his butt. I'll say "cork the bottle" punch with the thumb and leap. No, I like, ring the church bells. I'll*

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say "ring the church bells," I'll ring the bells and leap. I'll even laugh and see what that Wimp will do about it.

He did a 'ring the church bells' and started laughing and showed his teeth.

"Come on you Wimp, little Berp, dumb Dago; what does crap do when it hits the wall? Wop!" he continued laughing and taunting Berp.

Berp caught him and the fight was on. Piggy was bigger but he was angry and downright mad and mean. He remembered watching his Dad in many fights and there were no rules.

He was still hurting from that 'ring' so maybe he could return the favor. He made a lucky kick right into Piggy's groin and on the ground he fell.

No mercy, he thought, and on top of the crying Piggy. Berp let out all his built up anger and frustration and from that day forward no more Berp or even Murph the Crab, it was Murph. He wasn't the meanest or toughest but he had respect.

Murph remembered his Mom and Pap speaking Italian to each other but would not allow him, his sister, or older brother to speak it.

"Learn English, mainstream, work hard, study, and make something of yourself," is what they believed.

Even at a young age Murph was not one to conform to established practice or accepted standards. He always seemed to take a different route and defy those in authority. He was not a classic rebel, an insurgent but one who was independent in thought, action, and unconventional.

His Parents didn't want him to learn Italian but his Grand Pap Salvarolo was not of the same mind. He would visit for a week or two and Murph would take long walks along the Montour Railroad with him.

He would teach Murph Italian but make him promise not to tell as it would be a secret between him and Murph. He was a very meek man and Nana Salvarolo ruled the roost. Murph learned much about life and truth by not revealing his understanding of Italian.

All the families in the 'Patch' were immigrants from all over Western Europe. The Petrofs, a Russian family lived next door.

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Mr. and Mrs. Petrof spoke little English and all seven kids spoke Russian.

He never knew the oldest son as he went back to Russia a year before his birth. He did slightly remember the second to the oldest son, Stanaslof.

Stanaslof was big for his age but the oldest was the biggest of the boys. All the boys were big especially in their upper body. Stas, his nickname, was about Murph's age but he knew him very little as Stas went back to Russia when Murph was five.

Murph had limited English conversations with Mr. and Mrs. Petrof.

"Good morning, Bobby? We be have weather today," one of the two would say.

"Good morning Mr. and Mrs. Petrof," he would answer, "Yes, we be have weather today."

That was the extent of their English as they showed no interest in learning it so their conversation was in Russian.

Murph eventually learned much Russian playing with the boys and sitting on their back porch learning from Mr. and Mrs. Petrof. Mr. Petrof was a staunch defender of his Motherland. Murph's Mom did their green papers every year.

Mr. Petrof's favorite saying was, "Russia great country, best country, my Country." This got him kicked out and banned from the Club and Beer Joint.

There were about a hundred families living in the little village comprised of mainly Slovaks, Poles, German, Hungarian, Checks, Russian, and Italian.

Talk about opportunities as Murph's close buddy was Polish so he learned Polish. He had the opportunity to learn many different languages but mainstreaming was the value most of the families pushed.

Living next door to the Petrofs he learned more Russian, then Polish and some of the other Languages.

Murph thought, *Now what is the Hungarian word for weather? I remember its időjárás.*

There were a couple of Black families in the village and Pap rode to the Tipple with Mr. Woody. The Tipple was the place for screening coal and loading it into trucks or railroad cars it was also where they entered the mine.

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His Pap took him and his brother into the mine to see the conditions. After the visit he did not need to convince either of them to be a Coal Miner.

“You are not going to spend your life underground,” Pap commanded.

Murph proudly thought, *It's an honor to be a Coal Miners son*, just as the as the song went but he never wanted to be one. The mine was damp, cold, and dangerous and his Pap had the scars to prove it.

Mining villages dotted the hills of western Pennsylvania owned and run by the Coal Company. The towns were almost identical cookie cutter in design and layout. Murph pictured in his mind his village with its buildings and people. He would lie on a sawdust hill overlooking the town and pictured well the five rows of houses.

Boss's row was the first row at the bottom of the hill and it consisted of five houses. The Company Store was next to the Manager's house. Each house had seven rooms, an indoor bathroom, and a large basement.

There was one house, set off down and to the right from the six and located on two acres. The large Superintendent's house had three stories.

There was a street in front and an alley behind the six houses. The outhouses located in the alley and yes they had inside and outside facilities. The outsider consisted of a double-seater and single seater next to it.

The front of the six houses faced the rest of the houses on the hill. Across the street facing the boss's houses was the first row of four room houses with fourteen houses in the row.

Murph born in house twenty and then the family moved to house thirteen. House thirteen once housed the dreaded Coal Irons, the Company Police. The Coal Company disbanded them in the early forties.

Then behind that row of houses was an alley where the one double-seater outhouse and a double coal shanty located on the property line. Closer to the houses and on the same property line was a double washhouse one for each family.

Murph remembered coming out the front door of house thirteen with his Mom to buy some groceries.

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Going down the front porch steps he asked, “Mom, can I get some candy?”

“Yes, if there is enough money left over,” she smiled.

Pap loaded coal and earned a chip for each car loaded. A chip was a metal clip with his number on it. The Company Store got first digs on the money he earned and the Store handed out any cash remaining.

The song, Sixteen Tons, was spot on and the store truly owned their souls. Food, clothing, and rent came out first with the store keeping the books.

They continued down the street to the right and then about a block turned left up the big cement stairs into the Company Store. He remembered how long the store was and the counter at the rear.

His Mom got out her list of groceries and handed it to the clerk.

The clerk looked at it and said, “Mary, you don’t have any chips this week.”

“I don’t understand Louie went to work every day please check your books,” she replied

The clerk went to check and came back with the same result.

She grabbed Murph’s hand and as they left the store she started crying. She lowered her head and cried all the way home.

She kept saying, “What are we going to do? They will chase us out of the house if we don’t pay the rent.”

His Pap came home covered with coal dust as usual. He also had his coal hat, lunch pail, and carbide lamp. He was ready for his bath and Mom had his washtub ready plus a question.

“Louie, didn’t you go to work last week?” she asked.

He didn’t say anything and took off the silk stocking he wore on his head to keep it warm.

Disgusted he finally said. “I loaded more coal than anyone in the mine.”

“The store says that you have no chips,” she explained.

“Well, those crooks are lying. I’ll find out,” he said and finished bathing and went down to the Beer Joint.

He walked into the joint and said. “Who is stealing my chips?”

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No takers but they all knew someone was going to pay and pay hard. Monday he went to work and loaded his first car. He pushed it down to the main track put his chip on it and went back to load another. He loaded two other cars and did the same. The fourth time he hid and watched one of the neighbors sneak out then take his tag off and put his own in its place.

Betrayed by a friend, a neighbor, and he struck with a pickax handle. He almost lost his job and the neighbor lost a month's work plus some teeth.

Pap got his money-back and a year later the Coal Company made the neighbor a Boss. Murph learned of betrayal, corruption at the top, plus Justice, sweet Justice.

Chapter Two

The Caste System continued with another row of four room houses with the rear of the house facing the alley. Same set up as the first row of four room houses. There was a street in front of that row.

Then facing that street was a row of double four room houses. There was an alley behind with the same set up. Then another row of double four room houses the back of the house facing the alley. There was a street at the top of the hill and the last row faced it.

Murph knew the layout of the village as well as he knew the surrounding hills. He knew the location of every apple, peach, or cherry tree. He kept his pockets full of green apples.

“What do you do for constipation?” The Scout leader asked him when he was a Tenderfoot.

He answered, “Eat green apples.”

One summer morning Murph’s Mom announced, “The Honey Dippers are here.”

He went out the backdoor and the ‘smell of honey’ filled the air.

He saw Mrs. Gregory their next door neighbor and said, “Good morning Mrs. Gregory.”

The Gregory family had eight people living in that small house. He wondered where they all slept. The cookie cutter houses only had four rooms two downstairs and two upstairs. It also had a basement that is if the renter dug the cellar.

The six children must sleep in one bed, he mused.

“The Honey Dippers are here,” Mrs. Gregory called out.

Now Murph may have been small and only eight but he sure knew that they were not there for ‘honey’. The truck pulled into the alley and the men opened the tank on its bed and unloaded a long pole with a bucket on one end. Next they opened the trapdoor to the outhouse and started taking out the ‘honey.’

Who are they fooling that is not honey it is pure crap and you can tell by the smell that it is. So Murph learned at an early age

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to understand its smell and he remembered it as the Honey Dipper's world of mendacity.

There is an art to lying and they can fool many people but it is hard to fool those that know the smell honey dippers make.

One may be able to deceive one of the senses but not all the senses. Murph had tasted, saw, touched, and heard the essence called honey. The result was getting and keeping good equilibrium. It is a wonder that those who had this experience kept their mental, emotional balance, and poise.

Murph and his pals watched the Montour Railroad build a dam to supply water for their locomotives. The gang used it for a swimming hole.

"Where yunz going?" he asked the older boys one summer day.

"Come on and see," Shorty smiled and pushed Murph down the road.

They went down and crossed the tracks then to the newly built dam.

"I don't have my trunks and the sign says no swimming," Murph protested.

"Who needs trunks besides we can't read, we're stupid," Shorty said as they undressed.

"I can't swim," he confessed.

The words were hardly out of his mouth when they picked him up and threw him into the Dam from the top of the bank.

Murph swam and it was a dog paddle but he got to the bank. In time he learned all the strokes and floated with all the waste.

Two years and the waste caused the pumps to clog and the railroad broke the dam. Seemed the houses on the hill were using the feeder creek as a septic tank for their newly installed inside bathrooms.

The gang had to be a hardy group to survive that polluted water but they were in great health.

That took care of four of the five senses and if one ever used a two-seater they had heard the sound of honey.

Mendacity, deceit, and its smell turned up in places one least expect it. A small Catholic Church was the only church in the

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village. His Mom tried to involve him in the church and get him indoctrinated.

She went but could not take part in the Sacraments because she never married in the Church. His Pap threw the Priest out of the house when he came to talk to him about getting remarried in the Church.

He saw how his Pap never gave in even to his death. Why he took that stance Murph never found out. He would not talk about it as it was something to do with his childhood in Italy.

His Mom waited until his death to start taking part in the Sacraments. Church's do have their rules you know as one couldn't eat meat on Friday or take Communion before Confession. All those rules changed overtime as the Church relaxed its edicts. Fate interrupted his indoctrination into the Catholic Church.

"Bobby you go to Catechism after Church and you stay," Mom ordered. She knew that he would sneak out and play then come home after it was over.

"OK, Mom I'll stay," he answered.

He went until he got through first Communion. He also became an Altar Boy for a time and remembered the Priest's orders.

"Go easy on the water, boy!"

The Church would hear the clink of the Chalice hitting the water bottle as the Priest ended the water dump.

He would fool around until the Priest got his key out and unlocked the Host, '*God is coming be good!*' He became reverent.

Murph thought that God must have intervened in his indoctrination.

"Bobby quit fidgeting stand and recite the Lords Prayer," the Nun told him.

He stood and started the prayer and halfway through he forgot and started on a Hail Mary.

"Bobby, sit down and how can you be that stupid?" she snapped.

Well, Murph *thought I may be dumb but I am not stupid*. She ended his indoctrination on the spot as he never went back to

Catechism. He did continue attending Mass with his Mom. Was it coincidence or God?

They had one young Priest that all of them just loved because he would take them to Pirate games. The hierarchy didn't leave him out in the Boonies for long and sent a drunk as a replacement. Murph was heartbroken when their trips to Pirate games stopped.

"Murph, can I talk to you?" Sweet, his football teammate asked.

"Sure Sweet," Murph said. They called him Sweet because of his sweet moves on the football field

"Did any of the Priests ever make a move on you?" Sweet asked.

"No, I never got close to any of them even Father Mann, our Pirate Priest," he answered looking hard at his friend.

"How about the other guys did they ever say anything?" Sweet probed further.

"I heard Frankie Boy say something about the Drunk giving a good job. But you know Frankie, he visits the old boy in Jad and mouths off a lot," he answered since Sweet seemed disturbed.

Sweet planned on being a Priest and always talked about giving his life to God. He was Murph's partner when he was an Altar Boy. He noticed the Priest often calling Sweet into the backroom for instructions. It sounded like he received some odd instructions.

"Sweet, did he screw with you?" Murph asked.

Sweet hesitated, fidgeted, cleared his throat, and whispered, "Murph, don't tell anyone but he did and plenty of times when I was young. You know how bad I want to be a Priest but are all those guys like that?"

Not waiting for an answer he continued, "I don't know what I want to do now."

He turned and walked off and said, "Murph, please don't say anything."

"Say what?" Murph answered trying to be cute.

Sweet never said anything further but about six months later the second shoe fell. He caught his two brothers having sex with his mother. That drove him over the edge and he landed in the State Asylum. He thought he was Jesus Christ.

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Deceit and the smell will strike any time and place.

The School System didn't have much use for those stupid Catholic Coal miners and treated them as second class citizens. That was except when it came to sports then they were good Gladiators.

Murph had to beg for a couple hours off for a Catholic Church Service to perform his Altar Boy duties.

Treatment like that was familiar to Murph as his Maternal Grandmother treated him as a second class relative. She did not like his Pap and took it out on his children.

He would spend the summer at his Mom's sister's place. She treated him fine but Grandma wouldn't let him in her house and would let his Cousin in and feed him. Murph had to stay outside with Grand Pap who was a great guy but Grandma was the boss and ruled the roost.

Murph tried once to date a pretty blonde, blue-eyed, Presbyterian farmer's daughter and the farmer ran him off with a pitchfork.

"You get your stupid Dago Catholic butt out of here and leave my daughter alone. Go back to the mine and stay there."

Murph thought, *why do they think we are stupid? I know I am dumb but not stupid but I may be a bit confused.*

The Teachers may have given them a hard time letting them off for Church but the backseat of their car was a good place for romance. The coatroom at recess was also a useful place to teach those hardheaded stupid Coal Miners the facts of life. Mendacity and its smell was everywhere.

He was going to be another Bob Feller and if he wasn't playing ball he would listened to the Pittsburgh Pirates on the radio. The only palace to play ball in town was down by the Slovene club. *Yeah, he thought, if I join the Club I can play in their league.*

Pap and his brother both belonged and Lou even ran the Club for a few years. His sister held her wedding reception in the dance hall.

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How he loved to watch them dance the Polka and Waltz around that big hall. The Polka was king. Ten polkas and then one waltz just like one Our Father and ten Hail Mary's. The Church did indoctrinate him after all so he joined the Slovene Club. This innocent act of joining would come back to haunt him later.

He developed a good fast ball and pitched all his High school games and even lettered in basketball, track, and football. Baseball was his choice but football was going to be his ticket to a higher education. His opportunities were North Carolina State but more likely Denver University since that is where his coach graduated and had some pull. Alas the Korean War and the draft had priority so he joined the Air Force.

Murph came away from those hills knowing the smell of honey and its effects. Mendacity seemed to be the rule of the day and it is a wonder that he wasn't leery of all established entities. It did make him cautious of Government.

His basic training was a farce when it came to Combat Training. The Infantry would protect the Air Bases was the thinking. He did get to qualify with the M1 Carbine. They tried to prepare them but the need for Personnel for the War was great and they rushed them through the training. He hoped the Infantry got better Training.

Taking aptitude tests to decide what jobs they qualified to perform seem not to matter to the Air Force. They rationalized the training will weed out those not fit for their assigned Career Field.

"Troops this Flight is going to be in the Electronics Surveillance Measurement business," their Drill Instructor announced a few weeks before completion of Basic Training.

"Sir, what is Electronics Surveillance Measurement?" an Airman asked.

"Beats me, but you will find out," the Instructor honestly replied.

They landed at Keesler AFB for eighteen weeks Basic Electronics Fundamentals and then a four-week Course on Electronic Surveillance Measures (ESM).

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They learned that ESM was a passive measure that detected, recorded, and analyzed the enemy's electronic emissions. The collected electronic emissions allowed the intelligence community to decide what threats existed and their location.

Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) personnel used the ESM results to defeat the enemy's Electronic Warfare capability. ECM jammed the enemy radar and radio communications. Murph was now an ESM Operator Repairman.

Murph graduated head of his class and Miss Snow his twelfth grade Science Teacher would be proud of him. One truth Murph did learn was you didn't question certain basic theories. Electron and current flow are two basic rules' one just had to accept. One Dude couldn't accept those two facts and he had a hard time. He asked each Instructor along the way to explain the theorems and in the end he washed out.

On graduation, Murph thought, *we're now ready for action.*

Since he graduated first in his class he got to choose his assignment. One choice seemed interesting; it was with the USAF Security Service (USAFSS) and it required a Top Secret Crypto classification.

He volunteered for the classified overseas assignment and he did not know where they were going to station him. Since USAFSS required a Top Secret classification he had to swear to everlasting silence and confidentiality.

He should have smelled it because he was in for unexpected trouble.

A month and he still did not receive his orders or told anything except, "You are here until told differently."

Personnel was a great place to get information, he thought.

Well, the Gulf Coast was a fabulous place to wait and he just had to report in once a day and the rest was his to do whatever. Whatever meant the beach, the bars, and the babes and the wait was pure torture and dangerous.

Teaming up with a couple of other Airmen in similar conditions they came up with an innovative way to connect to the last of the B's. A football and a miss throw into the sunning Babes.

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“Sorry girls anyone hurt? Want to play?” Murph thought it was innovative but many in the past probably used the same gimmick.

They spotted these four great looking sunbathers and Murph went out for a pass. *Pass can mean a couple of things* he thought.

He used the pat approach, “Sorry girls anyone hurt? Want to play?”

“Sure, we will kick you butts,” one of them replied.

Not expecting that response Murph replied, “In football I hope?”

“Take your pick,” the redhead said.

He took another look at the four beautiful packaged women and they seemed athletic for lack of a better word.

So he asked. “What do you Ladies do for a living?”

“We are Professional Wrestlers,” the small blonde answered.

“You’re pulling my leg,” Murph replied surprised.

The blonde didn’t answer just picked him up in an airplane spin and slammed him into the ground.

She then added insult into injury and asked, “Are you ok?”

A stunned Murph replied, “Oh yeah, you made quite a move.”

How do I get out of this he thought and he saw his teammates backing off. *When in trouble go on the offense.*

He asked the blonde, “How about a date?”

“With you?” she asked.

“No, with my Buddy Stan the big guy over there,” he replied.

“I prefer you as you’re easy,” she answered and the four walked off laughing.

Murph ran back to his teammates and Stan said, “No luck? Nice move, maybe she would have preferred me.”

Murph was going to fire back at him but there was an aura about Stan that was palpable. He had met Stan in a Bar one night and they seemed to hit it off.

Stan graduated a class before Murph and there was an air of mystery about him. He was also waiting for his clearance so maybe that is why they hit it off. Murph shrugged it off and they continued their game with no luck that day.

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“Report to the Major’s office,” the First Sergeant ordered Murph.

Boy they are going to turn me down must have found some relatives in the Old Country who are not reliable maybe even Communists, Murph thought.

He reported as told and smartly saluted the Major and he noticed the two civilian gentlemen sitting to his right.

“Airman, these two FBI agents would like to talk to you. I will leave you alone with them,” the Major said as he left the office.

The taller of the two introduced both of them and said, “Airman we have some questions about your membership in the Slovene Club located in Montour 1, Pa. Were you and are you a member of this club?”

“Yes Sir I, I am,” Murph stammered.

“Tell us what your motive for joining this organization was,” the Agent asked.

My what is this all about, Murph thought and said, “My motive, I had no motive or I should say have now no motive. I don’t think I am a member now, I don’t think I renewed my membership since joining the Service.

My motive then was because it was the only place in the Patch that I could play ball. I always wanted to be a baseball player and if you wanted to play on their field, you joined.

We joined my whole family and most of our neighbors. My brother even ran it for a while. It was the only place to see a movie, dance, or drink other than a small beer joint. Why is something wrong with the place?”

“Airman, we will ask you the questions and you will give us the answers. Did you ever attend any meetings?” the Agent snapped.

We, Murph thought, *the other dude just sits there glaring.*

“Sir, I did not know they had meetings. Pap would go down and play yuker and drink. We went to the Polka dances and I did sweep the floors, when my brother ran the club. My sister had her wedding reception there and the weekly movies costing eight cents were also nice.

The only reason I joined was to play ball on their field anytime I could. I do not even know what the organization is all

Bob Furlin

about and I have never given it a thought. I just wanted to play ball.”

“Airman who was the leader of that organization?” the Agent continued the questioning.

“Sir, I don’t know and frankly never gave it a thought, to me a kid it was the only game in town and I wanted to play ball,” he repeated.

“Well if that is all, you can leave,” the Agent said seemingly not fully satisfied with Murph’s answers.

“Yes Sir,” he left the office thoroughly baffled by the experience.

Was the club a Communist front organization? he thought.

Chapter Three

Two weeks passed and no word and Murph became restless. *Heck they will not want me in USAFSS if I don't get my clearance soon*, he worried

What happened to Stan? I haven't seen him since the beach incident. I guess he received his clearance and moved on, he thought.

Three weeks passed and finally the First Sergeant ordered him to report to the Major's Office. *I guess I am turned down*, he thought as he entered the Major's Office

Saluting he said, "Airman Falcone is reporting as ordered, Sir."

Murph noticed a Full Bird Colonel sitting off to his right. The Major stood up and said, "Colonel Johns has a few questions for you Airman," he left the room.

"Be at ease Airman and take a seat," the Colonel said and sat on the end of the Major's desk.

"You applied for duty with USAFSS?" he asked.

"Yes Sir, I did."

"You graduated first in your class in Fundamentals and Electronics Counter Measures," the Colonel stated and continued. "Your Security check revealed that you are somewhat fluent in Russian. Is that right?"

"Yes Sir, I know a little," Murph said hesitating overwhelmed as he never before spoke to a Colonel. *Perhaps the Security Check did not go well*, he worried.

"Relax son, you're accepted into USAFSS. How would you like to improve on your Russian?" the Colonel asked looking hard into his face.

"Sir, yes Sir," he gladly replied.

"There is an opening at the Russian Language School at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. We scheduled you there in two weeks," the Colonel said and stood up.

He put out his hand and said, "Congratulations Airman."

Murph stood up shook his hand and saluted, "Thank you Sir."

Bob Furlin

“Airman you are not to tell anyone that is anyone of your Russian training, is that clear? You are an ECM Operator/Repairman.”

“Yes Sir, I understand,” he went away from the meeting with more questions than answers.

He knows I am not an Intercept Operator are they going to retrain me in Code? The Colonel didn't give out any information maybe that is why it's the 'Silent Warriors, were some of his thoughts.

A week later Murph received his orders and Clearance. His orders read report to the Language School at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. Thirty day leave then report to Travis Air Force Base, California for transport to Wakkanai Air Station, Hokkaido Island, Japan.

He had no idea what he was getting into but it was going to be interesting.

“Where are you going and what are you going to do?” was one of the first questions asked of Murph on his thirty day leave.

“If I tell you I'll have to kill you,” Murph answered trying to keep the everlasting silence and confidentiality oath.

He even kept his mouth shut about the Club and its possible ties to the Communist Party. The word around the Patch was that he was in big trouble because there were Government men asking questions about him.

They asked specifically about the Petrofs and the Club. Aunt Anna in Italy even wrote his Mom about men asking questions about him. He guessed they checked him out and found nothing.

Twenty five days and he was on his way by bus to California. He had no buddies and would have to make new friends. There was a big difference between the Air Force and the Army. The Army usually sent a unit whereas the Air Force traveled individually.

He arrived at Travis then a night's layover and on to San Francisco. He boarded a C-121C Constellation with a planeload of other Airmen. Their next stop was Hawaii with a short stop over. It would be nice if they had more time to enjoy the Island, he wished. They just refueled and were on their way again after taking on more airmen.

Mendacity

He had to relieve himself about an hour out of Hawaii and as he passed a seat someone grasped his arm.

“Where’s the blonde, buddy?” Stan said laughing, “Why not move up here next to me?”

Startled Murph said, “In my Duffel Bag. Sure I’d like to join you soon as I finish with the head.”

Murph got his bag and sat next to Stan, “Boy it’s good to see a familiar face. Are you just coming off leave?” he asked.

“I had a blast and did a lot of Mountain climbing,” Stan smiled.

“What Mountains, the Allegheny?” he asked thinking *this is the most information I’ve gotten from him since we met.*

“No, are you kidding the Allegheny Hills do not compare to the Rockies,” Stan said smirking.

“You go out there during your leave?” he asked trying to find out if he was from the East.

“No, I live in Denver. What makes you think I’m from the East?” Stan asked giving him a hard stare.

Murph wondered how he should answer. He had heard him use the word younuz a few times and that was an Appalachia term.

Thinking better he said; “You just acted like a guy from the Appalachian Hills.”

“Where are you from?” Stan probed back.

“I’m from the Western Pennsylvania Hills, as you call them. Born and raised in them there Hills,” he cautiously answered back.

“Did you notice the plane shaking?” Stan asked changing the subject.

“Yeah a slight tremor,” he answered.

“We are experiencing engine problems and are turning back to Hawaii,” the Pilot announced.

A possible twelve hour layover for repairs and he had another opportunity to see some of Hawaii. He considered some choices to take advantage of the situation. He looked for Stan and could not find him anywhere.

This guy is truly a ghost and he must have connected real fast, Murph wondered where he went. He went to the bar in the Terminal ordered a beer and looked around for a friendly face.

Bob Furlin

“Bartender will you give me another double of the same?” a tall Sergeant sitting two stools down called out to the bartender.

He looked half stoned Murph noted as he drank his beer.

“Give that man another beer,” the Sergeant said pointing at Murph and moving up one stool.

“Fish Strand is feeling good tonight,” he leaned towards Murph and asked, “What do they call you?”

“Murph and you look like you are well on your way to that good feeling,” Murph smiled.

“Celebrating from a year of Wakkanai wonders and oh how I miss those baths,” Fish said finishing the double shot of Bourbon.

“Bartender, fill us up again,” he finished the double in one gulp and lamented, “Where are my Wakkanai Boots?”

“You’ve been to Wakkanai, Japan,” Murph asked thinking that *this is a coincidence meeting with this guy. Maybe I should try to pick his brain about the place since he is so willing to talk,* Murph thought. *Then again he may tell something that will get him in trouble. It would be interesting to know what goes on out there and what I can expect.*

Fish turned and looked at Murph and thought, *this guy thinks Fish has drunk too much and will tell all about the operations as his face reveals it. The Russians would like to know what we Americans are up to on Wakkanai. The US Security Services is slowly learning about the Russian Communication nets and radar detection capabilities but it will be years before we fully understand. The site is building and old Fish will miss all the excitement.*

Murph started to ask a question about what was going on at Wakkanai and a voice interrupted him.

“May I have a Daiquiri?” a well-dressed Brunette asked.

She sat down next to Fish and the opportunity for Murph to ask a question was over.

He said, “See you later Fish.”

Fish didn’t respond as he had other matters on his mind. Murph went back to the Terminal as takeoff was in about an hour. They took off two hours later and he looked for Stan. He was sitting with another Airman and not interested in talking to Murph. Wake Island was the next stop and he dozed off to sleep.

Mendacity

They landed on Wake for refueling only and had to stay on the plane. *They are trying to make up for lost time*, he thought.

Stan did wave at him but said nothing. Murph wished that they could get off and see the home of the gooney bird. He heard about the birds funny landings and how remote this place was.

What is it? Thirteen hundred miles from Honolulu and it is a remote island, he guessed, *I won't see much of the place perhaps on my way back home.*

They were about halfway to Yokota Air Base found twenty miles or so northwest of downtown Tokyo. He wondered how much time he would be in Yokota and if possibly he would get to see Tokyo.

The landing was perfect at Yokota as Murph anticipated the assignment at Wakkanai. It was mid-afternoon and he wanted to take a shower as he smelled himself or was it a smell of mendacity?

They deplaned and entered the Terminal and an Airman directed them to shuttle buses.

“Pick up your duffel bags in fifteen minutes and have your orders out when you enter the bus,” the Airman announced.

It relieved him that they would have their duffle bags as his orders were in it. *I should have kept one set in my pocket*, he thought.

“They call me, Ed Wills,” a blond haired Airman held out his hand as he approached Murph standing at the luggage pick-up area.

“Bob Falcone and they call me Murph,” he answered shaking Ed’s hand.

“Where is your final destination,” Ed asked.

“Wakkanai is what my orders say,” Murph replied.

“Korea is my destination and it would have been nice if our destination were the same. There are no familiar faces around here and it seems that all my buddies are in Europe,” Ed lamented.

“I know how you are feeling about the only guy I know is that big fellow over there but he is not very friendly,” Murph complained.

“What’s his name?” Ed asked.

Bob Furlin

“Stan Peters and Wakkanai is his destination,” Murph said looking over at Stan as he picked up his Duffel Bag.

“I need to get my orders out of my bag; I forgot to keep a copy on me,” Murph admitted his mistake to Ed.

“I have a wrinkled copy and I’d better get another copy,” Ed said as he picked up his Duffel Bag.

They started for the bus with their orders in hand. Ed showed his orders first and the Sergeant looked them over.

“Airman Wills report to Squadron Headquarters first thing in the morning,” the Sergeant ordered.

“You know why Sergeant?” Ed asked as he got on the bus.

“I have no idea,” the Sergeant said.

He looked Murph’s orders over.

“Well now, the same goes for you Airman Falcone. You report to Squadron Headquarters 0700 sharp,” the Sergeant said to Murph.

“I wonder what that is all about.” Ed asked as Murph sat down next to him.

“It seems they only singled out you and me,” he said to Ed then he thought *there is a bad odor in the air and it’s not me needing a shower.*

“Whatever, we will find out tomorrow as I want to take a shower,” Murph said.

The bus arrived at the barracks and as they left the bus an Airman gave room assignments. Murph was on the second floor when he entered the room he found Stan sitting on one of the bunks.

“Welcome to Yokota Hilton and all the comforts of home. I am going to take a shower and get on some clean clothes. Chow is in about two hours. I’ve done nothing but I am tired wake me for the Sushi,” Stan said as he dozed off almost immediately.

He has a clear conscience or very tired to fall asleep that fast and he didn’t take a shower, Murph thought as he undressed to take that long anticipated shower.

He went down the hall wrapped in a towel and entered the communal shower. As he let the hot water massage his body the door to the latrine opened and he heard female voices. Two middle-aged Japanese women entered the shower fully dressed

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and started cleaning the shower walls. They paid no mind to him, just as if he were invisible.

He became a little flustered then realized where he was and their culture. He was not bashful or innocent and continued with his shower.

The two women talked to each other and he wished he knew some Japanese. *At least they are not snickering or giggling and do realize that I have a 'growers' or 'peek-a-boo' job*, he mused.

Sex was not a taboo in Murph's upbringing and the little Village was a virtual Peyton Place. There wasn't much privacy in a four-room house with no indoor bath. Murph learned about all aspects of the birds and bees listening to the big boys under the streetlight. A young lady up the street helped out quite a bit and a Schoolteacher rounded out his experience.

Trips to Steubenville, Ohio's red-light district were a common event although the Gang had just enough money to buy gas to make the trip. There was more sightseeing than action although some of the older guys did have money and joined in the action. Murph started working summers at fourteen and could join them.

The Steel Mill workers fascinated the guys as they would drive up the hill on their way home from work double-park and were in and out in five minutes. The women usually married and they earned the family enough to move up the social scale.

Murph finished his shower and left with the two women never noticing his presence. *Well so much for impressing them with my perfect physique*, he thought as he entered his room.

Stan was not in the room. *That was a short nap where does that guy go and do?* Murph wondered.

A nap seemed like a good idea and he fell down on his bunk and dozed off.

"Chow time Murph," Ed startled him kicking his bunk.

He sat up and said, "Boy, I didn't know how tired I was thanks for thinking about me."

"No sweat, let's go before the good food is all gone," Ed said with a smirk on his face.

Murph dressed and they went to the Chow Hall. Someone once asked, "How do you know where the Chow Hall is?"

Bob Furlin

The best answer Murph ever heard was, “At Chow times follow the crowd.”

So they followed the crowd and showed their orders to the Airman at the door and got in line.

“Lines, lines, and more lines; do you think that is what is waiting me in Korea?” Ed said to Murph.

“No, probably C Rations, C Rations, and more C Rations,” Murph wisely answered.

“Lucky you, I hear there are not many troopers at Wakkanai and there is good food,” Ed lamented.

“Lucky you, as there will probably be fish and more fish at Wakkanai and I hate fish. I hope they cook the fish. What do they call that uncooked stuff?” he asked.

“Sushi and they do cook it if you insist,” Ed smiled.

They reached the serving line and picked up a tin serving tray and Murph’s eyes lit up as he saw spaghetti.

“The Gods are smiling on me pasta they knew I was coming to supper,” he grinned at Ed.

“Yeah, they knew the Italian stud was in town,” Ed laughed.

“Did you know that legend says that Marco Polo brought the recipe for spaghetti back from the Far East, China I think,” Murph said as he signaled for a double serving. The server gave more with no hesitation.

“Boy, your reputation preceded you,” Ed pointed at him.

They found a table sat down and Ed asked, “Why do they want to see us in the morning?”

“The Gods only know, probably some foul-up,” he answered gulping down his favorite food.

They finished eating and decided to take in a movie. ‘The Racket’ was playing starring Robert Mitchum and he was one of Murph’s favorite actors. The film was about a good cop against a crooked political system.

“That was good,” he said after the movie as politicians were not one of his favorite people.

“It was too sociopolitical and misogynistic for me,” Ed exclaimed.

“What the does that mean?” he asked giving Ed a hard look.

Mendacity

“Sociopolitical is being cynical about society and misogynist is a hatred of women,” Ed answered thinking *now this guy lacks an education and knowledge.*

This old boy thinks I am ignorant but sociopolitical just means involving both social and political reasons. The word means nothing about being cynical but let him underestimate me. The main character was just tough with women he doesn't hate them, he was proud of himself.

“See you at 0600,” Ed said as they parted and went to their respective rooms.

“OK, sleep tight,” he answered.

He entered the room and Stan was still not there. Murph drifted off to sleep wondering, *where does that guy go?*

Chapter Four

Murph's alarm sounded at 0500 and he got up immediately. Stan never made a move and kept snoring. Murph took a shower dressed and went to Ed's room. They went to the Chow Hall for breakfast with plenty of time for the 0700 meeting. There was little conversation at breakfast as both had their minds on the upcoming meeting.

They arrived at Squadron Headquarters at 0645 and reported to the First Sergeant. He said nothing to them but to take a seat. They continued to sit silently as both were in no mood for small talk.

"Falcone, you can report in now," the First Sergeant ordered Murph exactly at 0700.

Murph entered the office and it surprised him to find a Captain sitting at the desk instead of a Lt. Colonel the Squadron Commander he was expecting.

"Sir, Airman Falcone reporting as ordered," he said saluting.

"Be at ease Falcone and sit down," the Captain said returning Murph's salute.

"I am Captain Wise and will be your new Team Leader," he smiled.

Team Leader, what team? he thought with a puzzled look on his face.

"Falcone, we have changed your orders and you will be going to Korea. What I tell you here will stay in this room and you will tell no one. Do you understand that includes your change of orders?" Captain Wise demanded.

"Yes Sir, not a word to anyone."

"All you need to know for now is that we selected you for this assignment because you can operate and repair the ECM equipment plus you speak Russian," he said.

"You do speak Russian, don't you?" Wise asked in Russian.

"Yes I do," he answered in Russian.

"Here are your new orders. When you leave here you will immediately pick up your duffel bag. Then you will go to building four in Area C and pick up your weapons and repair kit. You will then go to hanger one. Your team will assemble there

Mendacity

and you will board a C-47 for Korea. Be there before 1600 hours,” he gave further instructions and handed Murph his orders.

“Are there any questions about your instructions?” he asked again in Russian.

“No questions Sir I’ll be there before 1600 hours and what I heard here stays here,” Murph replied in Russian.

“I know this is a surprise to you and you will have many questions but in time we will answer them all. By the way you we promoted you to E-5, so see you at 1600 hours. Welcome to the Team Sergeant Falcone,” Captain Wise said holding out his hand.

“Thank you Sir,” Murph shook his hand, saluted and left the office. He was expecting to see Ed but he was nowhere in sight.

Staff Sergeant Falcone, that sounds good, Murph thought as he hustled to his room to pack. He entered the room and Stan was sitting on his bunk.

“Hi,” he said and immediately started packing his duffel bag.

“You seem to be in a big hurry,” Stan said.

“No, just moving,” he snapped.

“You were leaving for Wakkanai? They told me to get ready in the morning,” Stan probed further.

“No, just moving. See you later Stan,” he said and put out his hand.

Stan shook his hand and said, “Man you’re being very secretive.”

“That’s what we are about, no?” Murph said as he picked up his duffel bag and left the room. *It’s the wrong time to be friendly,* he thought.

Murph went directly to building four in Area C asking an Airman for directions. Building four was a Supply Center and he entered the building.

There were a couple other Airmen in the room and an Airman First-Class behind the counter.

“Sergeant Falcone to pick up some equipment,” he said to the Airman handing him his orders.

“You better get some stripes sown on to replace those,” the Airman said pointing to Murph’s arm and looked hard at the orders.

Bob Furlin

“Sergeant Falcone, we will look and find out what we’ve got for you,” the Airman said going back and taking a duffel bag off a shelf.

“What do you know someone has packed your bag,” he said taking the items out of the bag.

He handed Murph enough Staff Sergeant stripes for all his issued shirts and said, “Better sow a set on that shirt Sergeant.”

He continued unpacking the bag. A 30 caliber M1 Carbine, a Bayonet, a 45 Caliber Pistol, ammunition for both, canteen, two hand grenades, and a metal box containing repair parts for the ECM equipment.

He checked off each item and asked, “What size coat, Sergeant?”

“Size forty,” I guess he answered.

“Large,” the Airman said and got a parka then said, “Try this on.”

Murph tried it on and it fit ok.

“Shoe size?” he asked.

“Size twelve,” Murph answered and wondered if he would correct that.

“Try these on,” he handed Murph a pair of combat boots.

Murph tried them on and they didn’t fit and he noticed they were twelve and a half.

“Too large,” he smiled.

“Not with two sets of socks,” the Airman answered back smirking.

“OK, sign here and write down the weapon numbers. One more thing, your Insurance form, we don’t want Mom and Dad to miss the ten grand,” he said smiling.

Murph signed and thought *they sure thought of everything*.

“Do you have a needle and thread?” he asked taking off his shirt.

“Sure Sage,” the Airman said sarcastically.

Murph sowed on his new stripes and asked, “Is there a latrine around here as I’ve got to relieve myself.”

The Airman showed him the latrine and he took the opportunity to wash his face and brush his teeth. He came back and asked, “Can a guy get a drink around here as I could spit cotton balls.”

Mendacity

“Here on the house,” the Airman handed him a Coke.

Murph noticed that it was 1430 and he didn't know where Hanger One was and asked.

“A shuttle bus passes right out-front in ten minutes and will drop you off there, good luck Sage. By the way you can leave your duffle bag here and retrieve it when you get back. Everything you will need is in your new bag,” the Airman had a friendly grin on his face.

“*Not a wise guy after all*,” Murph thought and said, “Thanks Johns,” he'd noticed the Airman's name tag.

Murph picked up all his equipment and headed for the bus stop. *Man I've got a load*. The bus showed up and he told the driver to let him off at Hanger One.

The bus stopped at a Guard shack occupied by three Air Policemen. Murph got off and dropped his equipment at the gate.

“Your orders Sergeant,” one of the Air Policeman said.

He took out a copy of his orders and the Tech Sergeant looked them over and said, “Pride escort him to the Hanger.”

The Airman helped him with his equipment and they started for the Hanger.

Ten minutes and they walked up to a hanger with a C-47 parked outside. No one seemed to be around but as they walked up to the C-47 Captain Wise appeared in the door of the plane.

“Sergeant Falcone have you got all your equipment?” the Captain asked as he got out of the plane.

“Yes Sir, someone had everything ready,” he answered and noticed three more Airmen walking up to the plane. One was an AP and two Staff Sergeants.

“Sergeant Coy Clift and Sergeant Craft meet Sergeant Falcone,” the Captain introduced the two to Murph.

“Men put your equipment on board. Take your weapons out load them with no rounds in the chambers. Have your parkas out as we will be going over mountains,” Wise ordered as the two engines started up.

“Here comes Sergeant Strove, come on Strove get your stuff on board,” the Captain seemed eager to get going.

He introduced the four Sergeants to one another as he entered the plane and closed the door. The Plane taxied and took off bound for Korea.

“Team, assemble around me,” Captain Wise yelled over the sound of the two prop engines.

The four Sergeants moved toward the front of the plane and sat around their Team Leader.

“I am going to be upfront, no pun intended, with you and tell you what I do know about this Operation. There are many facts about the mission I do not know because they don’t tell Captains everything. The Brass has a concern the Russians are involvement in this War but we need more proof. You are to gather some of that proof.”

“Whoa!” Captain Wise stopped short as the plane went down a few feet.

The Copilot stuck his head out and yelled, “Bad weather ahead, put on your chutes and buckle up.”

They put on their parkas and chutes and buckled up as ordered. Murph thought about what the Captain said that the Russians may be in the War and he wondered what lay ahead for him and the Team.

We know or think we know the Russians are arming and training Kim Il Sung’s Army in North Korea just the same as we are training Syngman Rhee’s forces in South Korea. The Russians and Chinese are certainly supporting Sung in his bid to unite the North and South. We are just dumb enough to believe they will not intervene in the War. So off we go to prove their involvement something we probably know already.

Two hours of rough weather tossed them around and finally the copilot yelled out breaking Murph’s thoughts, “The weather has cleared you can relax.”

They took off the chutes and parkas all breathing a sigh of relief. The only one concerned was the Captain as he realized that they did not have a fighter escort and enemy aircraft could be in the area.

“Team listen-up,” Captain Wise yelled.

They assembled again eager to hear more, “Our mission is to intercept their fighter gun radar capability and their ground radar competence. A MIG-15 recently shot down an F-86 Saber over the Yalu River and we believe a Russian piloted the plane. We also want to record some ground to air and air-to-air

Mendacity

communications. We must know how well their radar nets work,” Captain Wise laid out their mission.

“Sir, are we going to do airborne surveillance?” Sergeant Clift asked.

“No, in fact we will be at Sea and K-8 Kunsan, Korea is our destination,” the Captain answered

“Isn’t Kunsan still in enemy hands?” Coy asked.

“We retook it two weeks ago but the area is still crawling with North Korean Regulars and those friendly to their cause. We are just learning to deal with the type war they are fighting not as conventional as we would like. The Regulars are fighting using Guerrilla tactics and they are all around with no clear battle lines,” Wise frowned.

“What outfit recaptured the place?” Murph asked.

“There is some dispute about that as one report says the 1st Battalion 24th Infantry and another 3rd Battalion of the 24th. Whatever it is ours again. We will be on base a few days but don’t get friendly with anyone. We will keep together before we go to Kunsan about twenty miles from the base,” Captain Wise continued and gave them a little geography lesson.

“Team a few facts about Korea. It is a mountainous peninsula with a shape that resembles the state of Florida. The Sea of Japan is on its east and the Yellow Sea on its west and there is 5,400 miles of coastline.

We are going to use some of that coastline as Kunsan is one of the few ports on the west coast. Since Korea has water on two sides it is an Isthmus and since it projects into a body of water and connects with the mainland by an Isthmus thus called a Peninsula. So you will hear it referred to as the Korean Peninsula or the Isthmus of Korea.

We passed over the Korean Strait on the south coming from Japan. China is above the Yalu and Tumen Rivers for 500 miles. Russia lies eleven miles along the lower Tumen River.”

The Copilot interrupted, “Get ready for landing and that sucking sound is Kunsan.”

The Gooney Bird made a perfect landing and they immediately got off. A two-and one half ton covered truck was waiting for them and they loaded all of their equipment.

Bob Furlin

The Airfield was brisling with activity and Murph noticed quite a few Air Force Personnel and asked, “Sir, aren’t they Fifth Air Force Personnel?”

“Yes they are and they are quickly rebuilding the hangers and old buildings. Team you wait here and I’ll see where we can hang out,” Wise said and walked off.

“I think the Captain is winging it and I wonder how much planning has gone into this mission,” Sergeant Strove complained.

“Probably get us all killed.” Sergeant Clift chimed in.

“Me I’m from Missouri, he’s going to have to show me more than he has so far,” Sergeant Craft volunteered.

Team, what team? Murph didn’t even know those guys and he didn’t know if he even trusted them. Maybe the Captain thought by calling them a team they will become one. He guessed they are on the same side so they qualify for the name team. He wondered how effective they were going to be. They were far from being a ‘dream team’.

“Team, we never introduced ourselves, my name is Bob Falcone and call me Murph. I am from a little mining town eighteen miles southwest of Pittsburgh,” Murph said trying to get the ‘Team’ more positive.

“Sam Strove here and Sam will do very well. I come from Hoosier Country, Indianapolis, Indiana.”

“The show me State, St. Louis and Coy Clift and Coy suites me well.”

“Pete ‘Little Joe’ Craft Miami Florida and they call me Little Joe.”

The Captain returned and interrupted their conversation, “I found a couple tents and we will pitch them and will have a few days to become acquainted and organize as a team. This mission recently created and well planned and we will complete it.”

He was reading my mind, Murph thought.

“I remember the last time I slept in a tent,” Murph said to Little Joe as they erect the tent as they were going to bunk together.

“When was that in Basic training?” Little Joe asked.

Mendacity

“No, as a Tenderfoot Boy Scout back in 1944 and the Troop I was in went to a Jamboree. Now I hate camping out when there is a comfortable bed nearby and we were not far from home. You know what I bought to eat?” Murph asked.

“Don’t tell me spaghetti,” Little Joe laughed.

“Partially right, Mom sent some of her spaghetti she put up in a jar it was enough to feed any Army plus two big chocolate cakes,” Murph smiled.

“Did they give you a merit badge for that?” Joe asked.

“No and the ants got into the cake and we ate none of it. The spaghetti was better than those burned hot dogs,” he answered.

“You must have been a whale of a Scout,” Joe laughed.

“They kicked me out for not building a proper birdhouse,” Murph said pounding in the last stake to tie off the tent.

“What did you build?” Joe was curious.

“I found a wooden Coke case cut it in half and put a board on top for a roof. I even left the compartments in so they could have more than one room. I did enlarge the carrying hole but that did not impress the Scout Leader. He said I could have at least painted it and he kicked me out,” Murph finished his tale as they entered the erected tent.

“Maybe you should have bribed him with some spaghetti,” Joe said crawling into the tent after him.

“I hope this outing goes better,” Murph said as they bunked down for the night.

Chapter Five

An explosion next to the tent jarred Murph out of his deep sleep and he and Little Joe scrambled out Carbinies in hand. There was gunfire all around them and grenades exploding very close.

“We are under attack,” Captain Wise yelled out.

“What gave him that clue?” Coy said from the next tent.

“Gather round me. Spread out in a circle ten feet apart shoot anything that moves and is threatening as they are all over the place. Conserve your ammunition,” Wise called out.

A flare went off and Wise was right as North Koreans were all over the place and for the next hour they fired until their limited ammunition ran out. Murph threw both of his grenades and one exploded causing no harm and the other one killed three charging soldiers.

Morning found all of them miraculously alive but scared and tired.

“Good job men keep your bayonets fixed. Coy and I will try to find some ammunition,” Wise said as they ran towards a hanger.

Twenty minutes they returned with ammunition and Wise said, “They attached us to an Air Police unit and assigned us an area to defend. We will deploy immediately and take up positions guarding a hanger.”

“Is our mission scrubbed?” Murph asked.

“No delayed a week,” Wise answered.

They spent the week without any further attacks and they prepared to enter Kunsan City. They jumped into the rear of a two and half ton truck with all their equipment.

“Hey Murph yunz guys play cards in that coal country,” Little Joe joked.

“Do alligators make good shoes?” Murph replied.

“How did you get a name like Little Joe you’re big enough to wrestle that alligator?” Coy asked Pete Craft.

“Big Joe was my Dad and my middle name is Joe so, Little Joe,” Pete smiled.

Mendacity

They banter back and forth all the way until the truck stopped and a Corporal put his head in the back of the truck and announced, “We are here, Sir.”

The Team got out and found themselves parked beside a Korean house. The house was a traditional house with a Giwa and it had a black-grooved tile for a roof. They unloaded all the equipment and put it into the square shaped house with a courtyard at the center.

Looks like this place consists of earth and wood, Murph thought.

“Gentlemen let’s find a place and sack out, c-rations will be our meal tonight. Sergeant Craft set up a two-hour watch roster; you are not to leave the house. Protect yourself if someone tries to assault the building. I’ve got to go back to the Base,” Wise said and went out to the truck.

“Murph you take the first two hours and I’ll take the second watch. Coy the third and Little Joe the fourth,” Sam Strove ordered.

“I’ve got to relieve myself has anyone seen the Latrine?” Murph asked.

“It is just off the kitchen. Watch you don’t fall in,” Little Joe laughed.

Murph found the room slid the door open and noticed a hole in the floor. No seat just a hole. *Boy those two seaters we had at home seem uptown compared with this,* he thought.

“What’s on the menu tonight?” Sam asked.

“The chief said we are having beef slices with potatoes and gravy, beans w/meatballs in tomato sauce, or meat and spaghetti,” Little Joe said opening the box of rations.

“Give me the spaghetti and bottle of wine,” Murph requested.

“Yeah, take this and stand guard,” Little Joe said and tossed Murph a couple cans.

“I bet the Captain is having steak at the Officers Club,” Coy said.

No answer as they eat and sack out except for Murph who went on guard for two hours. He did not let on to the others but the fight back at the Base disturbed him greatly. The others seemed to take it all in stride even the killings.

Bob Furlin

The old German word for War is weza and it meant confusion or mixed up and that truly fit the state of mind that Murph was in. Killing a fellow human confused him and gave him mixed feelings. Can he deprive one of life, to kill? Could he continue killing or would he hesitate? He knew that Armies are for breaking and destroying things but people are not things.

He wondered how those who were in constant battle held their sanity. They must detach themselves of what really is occurring. The old War movies made it glamorous and exciting being a War Hero. How he would fantasize about being a John Wayne and killing all the bad guys. When he threw that grenade and body parts flew everywhere it surely was not glamorous. He still wanted to throw up at the memory of that sight. Life is so precious maybe it is that he was afraid to die.

He pushed those thoughts from his mind as his two hours were up and he woke Sam. He went to sleep but it was very restless.

The sound of a vehicle pulling up outside the house woke Murph. He looked at his watch and it was 0600.

“Good morning Gentlemen, wash up and we will go over our next steps while we eat,” the Captain said and dropped a box on the floor.

“It is cold but it is eggs and sausage sandwiches. They are better than C-rations,” he said taking out one of the sandwiches.

“Our mission has not changed but we’ve changed our mode of transportation and destination. The ROK Navy will take us in one of their patrol craft. Navy may be an overstatement as they only have a few small vessels that include some patrol craft with a few minelayers and sweepers. We hope it may be a good cover for us. They will take us to a small called Island-444 located below Ongjin-up, North Korea. There we will set up and stay for two weeks. Tonight is the night,” Captain Wise gave out more information.

The only word that stuck in Murph’s mind was the word, ‘hope’. *Hope is the last thing one has to hold onto, I pray we don’t have to rely on hope and besides do I smell a little ‘honey’?* He was dubious about what he heard or more like what he didn’t hear. *Wise was holding something back there was a reason for*

Mendacity

the change. Hope the smell isn't 'honey' but we will soon see, he wondered about Wise's comments.

Dusk and the team started for the truck parked outside, "Gather round Team and listen up," Captain Wise said holding a piece of paper in his hand.

"There was something I did not tell you because it was not final at the time. These orders came with the truck and we are going to get some training before we go on the mission. The CIA has a guerrilla training base on the small island of Yong-do located about ninety miles southwest of Pusan. They have set up a modified two week course. We will receive further weapons training with hand-to-hand combat and small rubber-boat handling for night insertions. This will increase our chances for survival and ability to perform our mission. The rubber boat training is what we are after."

I knew I smelled honey and I wonder what else they will spring on us, Murph thought as he looked in the faces of the rest of the Team. There was nothing but confusion on their faces.

"Respectfully Sir, is this mission made up on the fly? How much planning has gone into this mission?" Sergeant Strove asked.

"The mission has always been clear but the weather is not going to cooperate the next few weeks. Flying is going to be minimal and that was going to extend our stay on Island 444. It will also increase their chances of discovering us and as I said this training is going to increase our chances of survival. Headquarters decided to use that time to do some training. That was if they could arrange it and they did," Wise replied but did not answer the question.

"Sir, are we going to Pusan by boat?" Murph asked.

"No, we are going back to K-8 and will fly to K-9 near Pusan," Wise turned and sat next to the truck driver.

They loaded the truck and went back to Kunsan AFB with no chatter or comments made all the way back. The truck stopped alongside a C-47 and once again they loaded all the equipment on the Plane.

"We are going to wear this stuff out before we ever get to use it," Coy complained.

Bob Furlin

The trip was uneventful and they landed at K-9 around noon the next day. No transportation was there to meet them.

“It must be a surprise to everyone,” Pete said as they unloaded the plane.

“Wait here as I find someone to take us to Yong-do,” Captain Wise said as he walked toward a hanger.

“Man I am hungry let’s chow down as we wait,” Sam suggested.

“Good idea, how about some spaghetti,” Murph said.

“Do you eat anything else?” Coy said laughing and handing Murph a C-ration.

They sat around about an hour before a truck pulled up and Captain Wise got out smiling, “Gentlemen we are all set to go. A Higgins Boat will pick us up and take us to Yong-do tomorrow morning. We will stay in the hanger overnight. Load all the equipment on the Truck. One more question who would like a cold beer?”

“You really mean just one Sir?” Coy asked excited.

“A jeep will pick us up in a half hour. Remember we have to be up early, maybe four, ~~ o’clock,” Wise said smiling.

I bet they don’t have Fort Pitt but a cold beer will suit me fine, Murph thought.

A four in the morning wake-up and all had a beer hangover. They had made a make shift bar in a tent and it was a blast. Murph didn’t remember much after a dozen beers.

He did remember asking the Captain, “What is a Higgins Boat?”

“A Higgins Boat is a Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel (LCVP), and named after its inventor, Andrew Higgins. Some say it was one of the inventions that allowed us to win WW2,” Wills answered.

They got into the truck and in about three hours stopped at a remote site in Pusan Harbor. Pulled up on the beach was an LCVP with its bow ramp lowered.

“Let’s get the equipment on board and watch your step,” the Captain said.

Mendacity

This is neat but why are we going to use a rubber raft at Tokckok? Why not take us in an LCVP? Murph thought as he helped load the equipment.

The Coxswain started the engine, raised the ramp and backed the boat into the Bay. The Boat followed the Isthmus keeping about three hundred yards off it all the way to Yung Do Island.

He pulled the ship onto a beach and lowered the ramp. Two Jeeps pulled up driven by Koreans in uniform. They loaded the equipment and took it to a tent. The tent was just one of many located on a twenty-acre site.

“Boy, there are enough tents here to make a small town. Where are all the people? This place looks deserted,” Murph said to Joe as the Team put their equipment into the large tent.

“This is a strange place with all these tents and no people,” Little Joe said as a Jeep stopped outside the tent.

A Marine Sergeant was at the wheel and he was a big guy with a huge mustache.

“Gentlemen, I am going to be your Instructor for the next three weeks. My name is Sergeant Fred. We start our first lesson in twenty minutes,” he said as he unwound from the Jeep.

He didn't even acknowledge that Wise was a Captain. I guess that is his way of letting us know who is in charge, Murph thought.

The first lesson was on dry land with a rubber raft.

“Listen up, ten men usually man this boat and as you, I hope, can count there are only five of you. So you are going to have to work harder,” Fred said sarcastically.

He picked up an oar and got into the raft and he showed them how to get in a rowing position. He knelt on the edge of the raft with one leg in it.

“This is the rowing position. Ok get an oar and get in the rowing position. Captain you'll be in the stern and sit on it with both feet in the raft as you will act as a rudder,” Fred finally acknowledged that Wise was the leader.

Murph got in and took a position on the right side of the bow. Little Joe was on the left side of the bow with Coy behind him. Sam was right behind Murph. Fred then showed them how to paddle and how Wise was to steer it.

Bob Furlin

“Let’s have some fun and launch this boat,” Fred gleefully said.

The five of them dragged it to the shore and got in their positions alongside it and launched out into the surf. The first try was a disaster as only two could get into it. Little Joe and Coy got in and the others were in the surf and soaking wet.

“Nice try now do it until you can get beyond the waves,” Fred commanded as he sat high and dry on the beach.

Three hours later with all five soaking and cold they made it out beyond the surf. They broke into a cheer and Murph wondered if the rest of the training was going to go so badly. They rowed back to shore and congratulated one another on their accomplishment.

”Pathetic, my sisters could have done better than you five. Tomorrow we get down to some hard training,” Fred broke up the party.

Murph tired and sore flopped down in his bunk wondering where all the troops are. *Coy spoke some Korean and said that he understood the small contingent of troops there were North Korean. Wise said it was a guerrilla training base but North Korean soldiers. I will probably never know or should know* and he fell asleep with a strong smell of honey.

“Hit the deck!” Fred’s order woke Murph out of a sound sleep. He looked at his watch and it was 0500.

“You got an hour to do what you do,” Fred said and walked out of the tent.

An hour and half later and they were back at boat practice. The first try was successful and they were proud of the feat.

Fred had other ideas.

“See those sacks full of sand. Load them on the boat as they represent your equipment and supplies. Let’s launch out into the deep, Gentlemen,” he said smiling.

They struggled with the loaded boat but did make a successful launch and return on the first try.

“Good go men. Repeat it ten more times,” Fred praised and then challenged.

They almost lost it one time in ten tries before noon and chow. They were so tired they could hardly eat and rest was

Mendacity

what they wanted. Fred once again had other tasks for them to perform.

“This afternoon we will launch with a loaded boat and paddle 500 yards out into the Bay and return,” Fred directed.

“We, does this Guy have a mouse in his pocket?” Coy whispered to Murph.

“I don’t think he needs anything in his pocket and did you notice the arms on that guy?” Murph whispered back.

“Listen up, launch then paddle out and I will fire a flare when I want you to return,” Fred informed them.

They were doing fine until they got 300 yards out and the wind came up and it got choppy. Coy became seasick and then Little Joe about five minutes later. That meant one side of the boat was ineffective.

“Murph swap with Little Joe,” Wise commanded.

They struggled trying to make headway and finally. “There’s the flare,” Wise called out and steered the boat back to shore.

Little Joe and Coy are not much help and I hope that no one else gets sick or we will be in big trouble, Murph thought.

It took three times as long to get back to shore. They were one sick and tired Team when they bedded down for the night with Fred’s parting words in their ears.

“You rest all-day tomorrow as we start night training the following day.”

Chapter Six

Day three of training and a day of rest and they all slept until 0800 not eating breakfast. Murph was sore and worn out and kept to himself most of the day.

“OK Gentlemen it’s time to get it on. Night training and we will repeat our day training but I hope progress faster,” Sergeant Fred said at 1700 hours as he stepped out of the Jeep on the fourth day of training. They were up early waiting for him all day.

Little Joe and Coy still looked a little under the weather but said they were up to the task. Captain Wise had other ideas so he had Murph and Little Joe swap positions.

Night training is scary and we can easily lose direction and location. Besides I can hear the waves hit the raft but can not see them coming. If a big wave heads in our direction we will never see it coming and it could tip the boat over. Hope the others don’t sense my uneasiness, Murph’s mind was running wild with, what ifs, and fears.

They practiced launching with and without a load all nightlong with no big incidents. Fred seemed pleased with the night’s workout.

“Tomorrow night we will start with a load and practice for the rest of the week on distance paddling. Sunday we will have a day of rest,” he told the Team.

“That was one rough workout and I am going to rest all-day today. I don’t know if I am over the rocking boat,” Little Joe said as he lay on his bunk Sunday morning.

“Who is up to a walk around the Island?” Sam asked.

“Captain, do you think we may walk about?” Coy asked Wise when he entered the tent after taking a shower.

“No one said we couldn’t but they may challenge you,” Captain Wise answered.

“I’ll go with you Sam,” Murph spoke up.

“Me to,” Coy joined in.

Mendacity

They walked about a hundred yards or so and a line of trucks approached loaded with Korean troops. There was a Jeep in front with Sergeant Fred driving and three big dudes riding with him.

He stopped and said, "Where do you guys think you are going?"

"We thought we would take a stroll around the Island," Sam spoke up.

"You sisters get your butts back to your tent and no more strolls. Rest because tomorrow we are going to use up all that pent-up energy," Fred said and the other three snickered as they rode away.

"Think I should have told him that Captain Wise thought it was ok," Coy said.

"He said they would challenge us and we were. I don't think Fred gives a rat's butt what Wise says or thinks," Murph commented.

"Looks like the Camp is growing," Sam said as they walked back to the tent.

Wise gave them a hard look when they got back but said nothing. They rested for the remainder of the day.

Early Monday Sergeant Fred shook them awake, "Let's get it on Ladies."

They scrambled to dress, then the latrine, chow, and into the truck for a day at Sea. They approached the raft and found twice as many sandbags stacked alongside.

"Load them all as this will insure that you can transport your equipment," Fred smiled.

That week was a grueling time of paddling for three hours a day plus four hours of getting into the rubber boat from the LCVP. Fred would not let up and kept pushing them.

"Gentlemen you are ready and can handle the boat in the worst of weather, congratulations. Rest Sunday and next week we will practice on the firing range and hand-to-hand combat," Fred informed them on Saturday afternoon.

"Today we will start making you an expert marksman with your M1 Carbine, and forty-five. I hope you know what end of the rifle is dangerous," Fred said with a smirk on his face.

Bob Furlin

Two days and he instructed them in the proper use of the two weapons and they all qualified as Marksman.

“This morning we are going to learn how to use the Captain’s weapon, the Thompson SMG,” Fred smiled.

“If he goes down use it as the SMG is a dangerous close up weapon but remember it will want to rise on you as it fires so for four hours we will practice,” Fred explained.

“This is a hand grenade and it is lethal to you if you misuse it,” Fred cautioned as they started training in the afternoon.

“Notice this one has no fuse,” Fred said showing the hole in the bottom of the grenade.

“Hold the grenade in your throwing hand with the safety lever between the first and second joint of your thumb. Is there any one here left-handed?” Fred asked.

No one spoke up so Fred continued. He held the grenade in an upright position with the pull ring away from the palm of his throwing hand. He removed the pull ring with the middle finger of his left hand.

“I’ll show how to throw the grenade properly and that is overhand. Each of you will develop you own style but you must stand sideways facing your enemy.

We will throw overhand in live practice but I’ll show you how to throw lying down and kneeling. Remember expose yourself for a minimum of three seconds to the enemy,” Fred directed and then demonstrated each position.

This guy is trying to make us into some type of Combat Soldier, Murph thought.

Live practice went well without any problems and Murph had some uneasy moments but did as well as the others.

“Hand-to-hand combat and the use of a bayonet are on the agenda for the remainder of your training; so rest tonight Gentlemen,” Fred closed out the day with no comment on how well they did or did not do during weapons training.

“Team you performed well today and let’s give our all the next couple of days,” Captain Wise encouraged the group.

“Sir, do you think we will need all this training?” Coy asked.

“Let’s hope not but it is smart when one prepares for any circumstance,” Wise answered.

Mendacity

“The bayonet will cause fear in most of your opponents but remember there are no rules in hand-to-hand combat use anything to maim or kill your opponent. A rock, a rifle butt, your entrenching tool, canteen, or anything that you can get your hands on to cause damage,” Fred instructed them.

“You will probable use the bayonet when you are out of ammo but if you have round in your weapon when the muzzle touches his body pull the trigger,” Fred said and demonstrated how to properly use the bayonet.

They paired off and then practiced, practiced, and more practice. Murph and Little Joe had a great time but got rough with each other at times with no hard feelings.

“Sergeant Falcone come up here and let us see how good you are with nothing but your hands,” Fred ordered Murph.

Why me? Murph thought as he faced off with Fred.

“Charge me,” Fred said.

I'll do a cross body block on him and go for his knees. Wrong move as Fred had him on his back with a chop at the throat.

“You're dead, soldier,” Fred said.

A few more tries with the same results and Murph came away with a well done from Fred but well defeated.

Fred demonstrated some simple throws and takedown maneuvers but nothing that would qualify them for a black belt.

“Remember Gentlemen your best defense is to stay cool don't panic, be mentally strong, control your mind, and you will control your actions,” Fred gave some pointers.

They paired off again and practiced for the next couple of days.

“That's it men. I've done my best and you are as prepared as I can make you. You have done good maybe not combat ready but you do have a better chance of survival. Good luck,” Fred commented and drove off as it was their last day of training.

“We sure impressed him,” Coy said laughing.

“Yeah a friendly guy,” Pete chimed in.

“OK men, he prepared us and we are better-off then when we came here. I also hope more assured of our abilities to defend ourselves,” Captain Wise tried to encourage the team.

Bob Furlin

“A done good from that guy, Fred, is as good as it comes in my book,” Murph chimed in.

“Yeah and we are ready,” Little Joe said.

“We probable won’t need all this anyway,” Sam said with a grin on his face.

“Get a good nights rest. We are off early tomorrow,” Wise said.

“Up and at it men as Kunsan is our next destination,” Wise woke them early the next morning.

They loaded all the equipment on the LCVP just as a Jeep pulled up with Sergeant Fred driving.

“Captain Wise I need to talk with you,” Fred called out to Wise.

Wise walked over to him and Fred handed him some papers and they moved out of the teams hearing.

The Smell of Honey is strong very strong, Murph thought.

“Now what’s going on?” Sam asked.

“More order changes I’d guess; this has been a mess since we started,” Coy complained.

Wise came back just as a truck showed up with a rubber raft and said, “Men we are going to practice further with the boat on our way back to Pusan. Sergeant Fred will ride with us so listen up to his instructions.”

“Unload the boat and sandbags onto the LCVP and we will get this show on the road,” Fred said.

They loaded the boat and noticed the modification as it had a long rope attached to it.

“What is this all about?” Little Joe asked.

“If they wanted us to know they would have told us,” Murph said.

They got on board and the LCVP started and Fred ordered it to stop about five hundred yards offshore.

“Listen up as we are going to practice getting on and off the boat and the LCVP is going to tow us,” Fred informed them.

They launched the rubber boat loaded the sandbags and got aboard with Fred joining them. The LCVP pulled them a hundred yards then stopped and they got out of the boat and unload the bags back aboard the LCVP. They repeated this over and over until they got halfway to Pusan.

Mendacity

“OK Gentlemen get aboard the boat and we will pull you the rest of the way back to Pusan,” Fred said as he stayed aboard the LCVP.

They arrived in Pusan around six in the afternoon all worn out and soaking wet. Fred got out of the LCVP and went over to them.

“Good job men and good luck,” Fred said as he got back aboard the LCVP and went back to the Island.

“I think I’ll faint did we get a good job from that Guy? We must have been excellent,” Coy said.

“Captain, what is this all about?” Sam asked.

“I really don’t know and we will learn later. The orders just said to practice the maneuvers we just performed,” Wise said.

“I am too tired to worry right now,” Little Joe said.

A C-47 was waiting for them and immediately it took off for Kunsan.

“They sure are in a hurry to get us back into action,” Sam said on the flight back.

“Are they? Seems to me its one big boondoggle,” Murph complained.

“Notice the weather has cleared and I guess sorties are beginning again,” Little Joe chimed in.

“Well ladies that is why we trained so hard,” Coy said mocking Sergeant Fred.

They landed at Kunsan and the four immediately loaded the truck and went back to the same house they were in before their training. Captain Wise stayed behind and said that he would follow later.

“I guess he is going to get our orders. Something has changed,” Murph assumed.

“Or maybe a good meal,” Sam remarked.

They settled in their old abode and waited for Wise to show up and about eleven PM they posted a guard and sacked out. Wise did not return until late the next day.

“We are on for tomorrow night and our mission and destination are the same but our mode of transportation has changed,” Wise said as he gathered his team.

“Our new mode of transportation is a Submarine as we need to get to our destination fast and the old mode will take to long.

Bob Furlin

So now you know why the last part of the training. The weather broke faster than expected and sorties started. It will take us about two days to get to our destination,” Wise continued.

“Sir, how do we get off the Sub? We didn’t train to launch from a deck of a Sub,” Murph asked.

“I will tell you what I know and that is not much,” Wise answered.

“This is a specially modified Sub for use in deploying raiders behind enemy lines. It carries an LVT (landing vehicle-tracked) amphibious landing craft. We will launch from the deck and the LVT will pull us to Island 444. We will find out more when we get aboard,” Wise concluded and got ready to sack out.

”Oh yes there is one more piece of information. We will be a part of a Raider mission and they will drop us off on the way to their mission.”

The next day they went over their two week stay on 444 and Wise gave out more information about the Island.

“You will find the Island just below the Ongjin peninsula and as you know the North Koreans claim the South attacked them on that peninsula. We will be in enemy territory and on our own for two weeks. The base nearest us is on Yonpyong Island which is the closest South Korean Island to the North. It is a staging area for raids into the North.”

Four o’clock and they loaded their equipment onto a truck and headed for the Harbor. A Launch was waiting for them and once aboard they immediately went out to the Submarine. The tension was strong as all five were quiet and did little talking.

The Launch traveled for nearly an hour and stopped. The Sea was calm and the Sub was nowhere in sight.

Chapter Seven

They waited an hour then looked at the Helmsman and he shrugged, “This is the coordinates given to me and we will just have to wait.”

“What is that breaking the surface about twenty yards to our port side?” Little Joe yelled out.

A steel-gray conning tower broke the surface of the cold waters of the Yellow Sea.

“That’s the Sub,” Sam called out.

“Strange looking and what is that huge hump on its afterdeck?” Coy asked.

“I don’t know what it is maybe some type hanger the Sub looks about a football field in length and ten yards wide so it’s no airplane,” Murph said.

The hatches opened and about a dozen Sailors exited and started lowering a net. The Launch pulled alongside the Sub and Captain Wise grasped the net and the Sailors helped him aboard.

“Hand up the equipment and supplies,” Wise called out.

The Sailors carried the equipment immediately into the Sub and the rest of the Team climbed aboard.

“Good luck and have a safe trip,” the Helmsman yelled out as he pulled away from the Sub.

They headed towards a hatch in the bow and a Lieutenant hurried them, “Shake a leg Gentlemen we need to get under way.”

Murph followed Captain Wise into the Sub and immediately a foul smell gagged him.

“What is that smell?” Sam complained as he was the last one into the Submarine.

“Good old body odor, sweat and kimchee,” a familiar voice called out. They turned to see Sergeant Fred and it surprised them.

“What is kimchee?” Little Joe whispered to Murph.

“A Korean dish made of cabbage or radishes, salted, seasoned, and stored in sealed containers to ferment,” Murph whispered back.

“Let’s go forward and see who is making that smell,” Fred said.

They made the short trip and as they entered one of the bulkheads Little Joe banged his head and caused a slight gash on the top of his head.

“Watch you step the quarters are tight and low,” Fred warned.

“Now he tells us,” Little Joe said as he held his head.

“You are lucky we have a good surgical ward on board,” Fred told them.

They entered the bow and there were about fifty Korean soldiers and the smell of stale cabbage was strong in the air.

“Gentlemen meet your travel companions for the next couple days,” Fred said with a smirk.

“Prepare to get under way,” a voice said over the intercom.

All the Koreans got into their bunks and Fred pointed out the five stacked bunks for the Team.

“It is kind of tight and the Koreans are lucky being smaller than us,” Sam noticed

“Where are all the torpedoes?” Little Joe asked.

“Good question as this boat does not have any as they removed all ten torpedo tubes. You will spend most of the next two days in that bunk and as you notice there is not much room to roam around,” Fred said as he walked over to his bunk.

“Prepare to dive,” the intercom sounded.

“Dive, dive, dive,” two minutes later the intercom called sounded again.

The boat’s bow dipped slowly down. About five minutes later water dripped from around some of the pipes in the ceiling and there was the sound of metal creaking.

“Hey this contraption is leaking,” Coy called out.

“This is normal,” Captain Wise assured them.

I wonder how he knows that. Has he been down in a sub before? Murph thought.

“This is my third trip in a Sub.” Wise said.

Dam, can the Man read my mind? Murph wondered.

“The air was stale before and now that we have submerged won’t it get worse?” Sam asked the Captain.

“Let’s hope not,” Wise answered.

Mendacity

“Sergeant Fred is this air going to get worse?” Sam called out to Fred.

“No, there is a special snorkel system to bring in fresh air from the surface. The system also allows us to run submerged on the diesel engines instead of the batteries,” Fred replied.

“How about the engines exhaust fumes and won’t they harm us?” Wise asked trying to display his knowledge of Subs.

“They expel the gases under water then it’s dispersed by some sort of gadget that doesn’t allow bubbles to be seen from the surface. We can get closer to land submerged with this system,” Fred said displaying his knowledge of the Subs capabilities.

“The way it smells in here must mean the Snorkel is not working?” Sam complained.

They spent the next two days in their bunks except for Latrine breaks with no showers and chow breaks done in shifts. The food was excellent but the smell dulled the taste buds. Everything tasted like fish to Murph.

“It is time to go Team,” Captain Wise said on the evening of the second day.

The Sub surfaced about a mile and a half from the Island. They climbed to the deck and found their rubber boat and equipment waiting for them. The plan was to tow the Team for a mile then they would row to the beach.

“Boy what service,” Little Joe quipped.

They helped lower the rubber boat with ropes and then climbed down the cargo net into the boat. The Sailors then handed down all the equipment. Then they paddled over to the wooden skimmer launched from the hanger on the Deck.

“So that was in that ugly hump,” Coy said wide eyed.

“Throw over the ropes and I’ll hook you up,” Sergeant Fred called from the skimmer.

He tied off the rope and left about a hundred feet of slack so the wake of the skimmer would not affect the towed rubber boat.

“Good luck gentlemen,” Fred said as the skimmer started slowly towards the Island.

“That guy is acting like a mother hen and he must have become fond of us,” Coy laughed.

Bob Furlin

The night air was cold and the seawater was very cold and a chill went through Murph or maybe a little fear.

Let's see now, they are going to tow us to within five hundred yards of the Island and we take it from there.

We will land close to a cave on the Island and from there we will operate for the next two weeks. I am happy we trained for this and Sergeant Fred prepared us well. Murph went over the upcoming events in his mind.

The sky was overcast but a full moon and they hoped it was enough light to take the Team to the correct landing location. In a few minutes their eyes adjusted to the light and they could see the skimmer and Fred standing there looking back at his former charges.

The skimmer's engine shut off and they came to a drifting stop. Fred motioned for them to paddle toward the skimmer as he pulled on the rope.

"You are about five hundred yards off the beach and Captain steer toward the compass directions given. You should land near the cave. We will see you here in two weeks, good luck," Fred yelled as the skimmer started and slowly pulled away.

They coiled the ropes up in the raft and started paddling towards the Island with the Captain steering. The sea was calm with little waves and Murph hoped that it stayed that way until they reached land.

One hundred yards from shore the wind picked up and they started fighting a current that was trying to drive them off course. Wise tried to steer towards the current but it seemed to Murph that they were losing ground and drifting off course.

"Pick up the pace and paddle harder," Wise shouted out but with little affect.

The Island appeared dark and lonely and they could see the surf breaking onshore. They fought the surf and finally reached the beach and struggled to get the raft beached. Totally exhausted they got the raft onshore and all slumped down on the beach.

"We are nowhere near our landing spot. Falcone come with me and the rest of you be alert and unload the boat. Pull it and the supplies further inland. We need to get off this beach we are sitting ducks," Wise commanded and stated his fears.

Mendacity

Murph and Wise started up the beach looking for the cave. The sky had cleared and a full Moon gave an eerie light to the scene. They walked about a couple hundred yards and Wise stopped.

“This should be the general location of the cave,” Wise whispered.

The beach led to a rocky cleft and they spread out walking toward it. Murph thought he saw an opening in the hill and gave a low whistle and Wise headed in his direction.

“It looks like there is some type of opening in the cleft,” Murph said pointing out its location. They walked towards it and saw a cave opening.

“The opening is small,” Murph commented.

“Yes it is but this is the location given,” Wise said.

Murph crawled into the cave turning on his flashlight and the size of the cave surprised him. He called out to Wise and he entered with his flashlight.

“It’s big enough but the opening is too small for the boat so we will have to hide it outside,” Wise noted.

They left the cave and went back down the beach. The boat was still on the shore but empty. As they reached the boat the three came running down looking tired and worn out.

“We found the cave,” Wise told them.

“Damn we just finished moving the equipment and supplies,” Sam said.

Did you hide them?” Wise asked.

“Yes we did and we covered them with some branches and leaves,” Coy said.

“Good we will move the boat first and get it out of sight,” Wise said.

It took the rest of the night to move the boat, equipment, and supplies to the cave. Completely exhausted they sacked out for two hours. The sound of explosions and gunfire woke them out of their short nap.

“I believe our Raider friends are causing trouble on the mainland that should divert attention away from us,” Wise told the Team.

“Chow down and we will get the equipment set up. One other precaution from now on we will post a guard,” the Captain ordered.

Three hours later the equipment and antennas were up and operating. Murph took the guard position outside the cave as they set up two hour shifts.

The next three days they spent monitoring the airwaves with no significant information gathered. They picked up communications from friendly aircraft but nothing from enemy fighters.

The morning of the fifth day and Murph had just gotten off guard duty and Sam was checking the airways. He motioned Murph to come over and listen to some communications he had just picked up.

“Listen to this strange chatter as it sounds like Korean but has a strong Russian accent,” he said as he handed the headsets to Murph.

“Are you recording this?” Murph asked as he put on the headphones.

“No, but I will start,” Sam said.

Murph listened for a few minutes and said, “This is strange go get Coy as he understands Korean.”

Sam woke Coy and the Captain.

“What’s up?” Wise asked.

“Some strange Korean,” Murph said handing Coy the headsets.

Coy listened for a few minutes and said, “Sounds like someone trying to speak Korean but not having much success. The best I can understand it is two jets communicating and one has just shot down a B-29.”

Coy handed the headphones to Captain Wise.

“You are recording all of this aren’t you?” he asked taking the headsets.

“Yes Sir we are,” Sam answered.

Wise listened for a minute and then said, “Well the communications have broken off or we have lost the signal.”

Mendacity

The next day they intercepted another two hours of the same broken Korean. The seventh day and Murph was monitoring the communications.

“You are approaching a Flight of B-29s.” a Russian voice broke the airways.

Murph turned on the recorder and about five minutes later.

“Alexius are you there? How did you do?” a Russian voice asked.

“Great, Two B-29s and one Sabre,” Alexius answered.

“We have a great Victory, Igor. Let’s get out of here,” Alexius said.

“We lost Valenten as two F-86s jumped him,” Igor said.

Captain Wise came up from the back of the cave and Murph called out to him.

“Sir they have dropped all pretense of being Korean and are communicating in Russian.”

“Did you get it down?” Wise asked.

“Yes Sir I recorded everything but the first intercept,” Murph answered.

The next five days they spent recording many communications as the Russians wreaked havoc on the attacking Allies. F-86s, B-29s, F-80s, F84s, and a Australian Gloster Meteor downed by a dozen or two different Pilots and all recorded by the Team.

“Men we have much valuable information but we did not find any type radar used by the Russians but the voice communications prove their involvement in this War,” Captain Wise said the next to the last day.

Wise continued, “We will continue monitoring this morning and then shut down and clean up this afternoon. Tomorrow is our last day and we need to pack and rest.”

Murph decided to scan some other frequencies and came across a Ham Radio Band with some chatter in Russian.

“Patch two to Patch one do you read, do you read? Over,” it repeated for about five minutes and finally, “Patch two this is Patch one, I read you.”

“Great, country one and two doing well plus 6 ok also, over,” Patch two said.

Bob Furlin

They continued talking for a few minutes and signed off. Murph thought, *now that was weird Patch and Great country smells like Honey to me. Patch two's voice sounds familiar, weird very weird.*

“Let's get going Gentlemen, pack up and bury anything we do not need. Remember hold on to the tapes at all cost and you can deep six the equipment if we get into any trouble,” Captain Wise instructed.

They stacked all they were taking back with them at the entrance of the cave and waited for dusk to set in. They had been lucky so far and had not even seen or heard of any enemy patrols. Night came and they carried the rubber boat to the shore and started loading it. They just had all the equipment loaded when they heard Korean voices.

Chapter Eight

Coy who was on guard came running, "Sir an Enemy patrol of about six are coming up the beach," he said to Wise excited.

"OK guys into the boat and remember protect the tapes," Wise said as a shot sounded and he slumped into the boat.

"They shot the Captain," Sam shouted.

They started firing back and Little Joe threw a grenade just as a round went through his head.

"Little Joe, you OK?" Murph shouted but there wasn't a reply.

The grenade seemed to quiet the enemy but taking no chances they continued firing making sure they silenced the patrol.

"Sam, let's get Little Joe into the boat and get out of here before reinforcements get here," Murph said.

"He is dead," Sam whispered.

They put Little Joe in the boat and launched out into the cold dark surf. The three were having some trouble getting under way.

Sam said, "Let's dump the equipment."

They disabled each piece and threw it overboard and started rowing out to sea.

"Check the Captain," Murph told Coy.

"He is not breathing," Coy cried out.

"Let's put our backs into it as we have a long way to go and time is short," Murph said.

They struggled but finally arrived at what they thought were the coordinates but there was no sign of the skimmer.

"Our luck seems to have soured," Coy said.

"Either we are early and they are late or we are late or at the wrong location," Sam said.

"About all we can do is wait on them," Murph said.

They waited and Murph pondered the situation. *Who is the enemy? Are we fighting North Koreans, Chinese, Russians, or some of our own?* These questions flooded his mind.

He remembered a lesson his Dad taught him in the forties when he was in a card game with nine other card players. Some he knew well, some a little, and maybe one or two very little.

Bob Furlin

There were charges of cheating and a fight broke out. In the melee someone blind sighted his Pap with a beer bottle and knocked him out. He tried to find out who hit him but no one would own up and the weeks passed.

One day a friend of Murph, Joe, asked, “What’s wrong with Mussy?”

“I don’t know. What has he been up to?” Murph asked.

“He is going around and for no reason seriously beating guys up,” Joe complained.

“I don’t know but will try to find out,” Murph said.

A few days later he asked his Dad, “Pap why are you beating all those guys up even some of your buddies?”

“Boy, you remember the card game? Someone sucker punched me. No one will tell me who did it. So I beat them all up one at a time and in the process I will get the guilty one,” he answered with his pure and simple logic.

One may not agree with his logic or method but not the outcome. He got his man. The Politicians should take a lesson from Pap they are tying our hands with all the restrictions. This so called Police Action is resulting in many deaths; The Captain and Little Joe paid the supreme price. We will lose this War or one in the future with the timidity in-which we fight, he reasoned.

The sound of an engine broke his thoughts and the skimmer came into sight and they breathed a sigh of relief. A Sailor greeted them but not Sergeant Fred. He told them to throw the rope and he tied it to the skimmer. The skimmer immediately pulled away and towed the rubber boat.

“Fred said he would greet us. Do you think something has happened to him?” Sam asked.

“I hope not as we have lost enough men on this mission. I have seen enough blood to last a lifetime,” Coy said.

The skimmer pulled them for an hour and the Sub came in sight. The Crew lowered a net and Sam scrambled up first. He told the crew that they had two bodies to get aboard and a couple Sailors climbed down into the boat.

“You two get aboard and we will take care of the others,” one of the Sailors said.

Coy climbed the net and Murph tried to follow but couldn’t raise his right arm.

Mendacity

“Let’s go buddy we need to get under way,” one of the Sailors told Murph.

“I can’t raise my arm, it won’t work,” he explained.

One of the sailors took a look at his arm and said, “Man there is blood all over you as you were hit in the shoulder.”

The Sailor called for some help and two Sailors climbed down and helped him aboard. The last words Murph heard were, “get him below,” as he passed out.

Sam and Coy were led to the Captains quarters and an Army Major greeted them. They saluted and reported giving their names.

“Have a seat gentleman. My name is Major Frisk,” the Major said as he returned their salute.

He asked them to go over the past two weeks and how Captain Wise and Little Joe lost their lives.

“Are these the tapes?” he asked.

“Yes Sir we saved them all,” Sam answered.

“Can Sergeant Falcone add anything to this report?” he asked.

“I don’t think so and he recorded the same information as we did during his time monitoring the signals,” Coy answered.

“How is he doing Sir?” Sam asked.

“Nothing life threatening and you can visit him after this debriefing,” Frisk said.

“Good work and you have collected valuable information confirming our suspicions. All of you will transfer to a Destroyer this evening and then taken to Japan. We will debrief you further in Japan,” the Major told them.

“Surface, surface, surface,” shocked Murph awake and he tried to sit up.

“Where am I?” he asked confused.

“You are in the surgical ward aboard the Perch,” a Corpsman informed him.

“How bad is it?” Murph asked.

“Clean through the shoulder and nothing shattered. You will fully recover in thirty days. You lost a lot of blood,” the Corpsman explained.

Murph looked around and the ward was full of wounded Koreans. *These guys are a lot worse off than I am*, he thought.

Bob Furlin

“OK, let’s get you a shirt and parka on as you’re heading for Japan,” the Corpsman smiled.

Murph was a little woozy headed but climbed up to the deck with a Corpsman right behind him. The cold fresh air further stirred him and he regained a clear head.

Sam and Coy walked up to him and Sam asked, “You doing OK Murph?”

“Yeah I am doing better and what’s going on?” Murph asked noting that a Destroyer pulled alongside and a transfer basket seat connected them. He saw the Crew of the Sub on deck and in formation.

“They are having a burial at Sea for Little Joe, Captain Wise, Sergeant Fred, and five Koreans,” Coy said.

“Sergeant Fred is dead?” Murph asked in surprise.

“Yeah killed in the last raid as the North Koreans beat them badly,” Sam said.

The Sailors were called to attention and the three also snapped to attention. The Subs Captain gave a short eulogy and the bodies were dumped into the sea.

Buried at Sea Pete ‘Little Joe’ Craft from Miami, Florida and not even twenty one you were a good Team member and guy. Captain Wise we never knew your first name but you were a good Leader. I don’t even know where you were from or your age. Sergeant Fred you were a tough and a pure Soldier thanks for your training and inspiration, Murph reflected waiting to get into the basket seat.

He saw an Officer he did not know getting into the seat.

“Who is that?” he asked Coy.

“Major Frisk, he debriefed us and will probably talk to you,” Coy answered.

Murph was the next one to be transferred. He watched closely how Major Frisk held on and handled the transfer. *A little scary but it is no worse than some of the rides at Kennywood Park,* he tried to comfort himself.

They helped him into the seat and Coy said, “We will bring your carbine and forty five over with us and you just hold on.”

It is lucky it’s my left shoulder and I can use my right hand to hold on, Murph thought as he started his ride. It was a little scary when the ships tossed and the chair dipped almost to the water.

Mendacity

The Destroyer was higher in the water and as he got closer to it and further from the sub he got further away from the sea. He felt more comfortable as he approached the Destroyer's deck.

A Sailor helped him out of the seat and noticed his shoulder and asked a Lieutenant if they should take him to the ship's infirmary.

"Yes, take him below and have him checked out. Are there any more wounded?" the Lieutenant replied and asked Murph.

"None transferring but there are plenty on the Sub," Murph replied as they lead him away.

The trip to Japan was uneventful and in a week the three of them were back at Yokota. They checked him out at the Base infirmary and told him that everything was healing.

Murph got orders to report to Squadron Headquarters and he reported to the First Sergeant.

"Lt. Colonel Crow will see you in a minute just take a seat," the First Sergeant told him.

The minute turned into an hour and finally, "You can go in now."

Murph saluted and reported to the Colonel and Crow said, "Be at ease. How is your shoulder?"

"It is coming along just fine, Sir," Murph replied.

"Sergeant Falcone you and the Team performed very well and I would like to congratulate you on a job well done. Your medical records show that it will be about a month before you will heal properly. So we are going to give you thirty days to recover. All that we require of you is to report in once a week to First Sergeant Davis. Check with him on your way out for a schedule. Remember no talking about the mission to anyone and your wound was accidental. Do you understand and are there any questions?" the Colonel finished.

"Yes Sir I understand no talking about the mission and accidently wounded. One question Sir, am I restricted to the Base?" Murph asked.

"No, you can go anywhere in Japan a week can take you, enjoy yourself," the Colonel smiled.

"Thank you Sir," he said saluted and left the office.

Bob Furlin

“Sergeant Davis the Colonel said that you had a schedule and the day I am to see you each week,” he said approaching the sergeant’s desk.

Davis looked at him smiled and said, “How about every Tuesday at 0700 as that will give you a long week-end. By the way you haven’t received your pay for the past two months. Stop by and see Sergeant Crip and he will have your money. You will find him at the third desk down on your left. Remember to check in your rifle and forty five. Also pick up your mail from Crip.”

“Thank you Sage,” he said and stepped lively looking forward to a month of relaxation.

He got his money turned in his weapons and went back to the barracks. It was a Monday so a whole week to start the fun and games. The shoulder felt better already.

He opened five letters from his Mom and noted that she had not heard from him in a long time. He sat down and wrote a five-page letter telling them he was ok and not to worry. He mentioned nothing about Korea or his wound.

He showered, shaved, and got in a dress uniform and then went straight for the front gate. Not a whiff of Honey in this scene and he rejoiced.

He needed a drink and bars lined both sides of the narrow street. As he left the front gate he spotted one joint about a half block on the left that caught his eye. It wasn’t the bar but what he saw entering the bar that got his attention. He caught a glimpse of the most beautiful creature entering the bar dressed in a yellow kimono and carrying a yellow umbrella.

Another need crept in and he hurried to the bar. Entering he did not see any yellow kimono and he sat down at one of the tables. GI’s occupied all the bar stools.

A neatly dressed Japanese young woman entered the bar and sat at the table next to him. He noted her Western style clothes and she smiled at him.

“Buy me a drink Sergeant?” she asked as she moved to Murph’s table.

She was nice looking, slightly built about five four with a beautiful smile. It wasn’t the vision in yellow but she was there.

Mendacity

“Sure, what is your name?” he asked knowing full well that she was there to get him to buy drinks. They would water her drinks down but what the heck he felt generous.

“My name is Megumi and what can I get you?” she smiled.

“I want a cold beer no make it two because the first one will not last long. Get what you want,” he watched her as she went to the bar and ordered. He guessed that she must have just started work

She came back with two bottles of beer and a drink for herself. He finished the first bottle in three gulps.

“Man that tastes good I’ve waited a longtime for a cold one,” he said smiling at her.

“What is your name Sergeant?”

“My friends call me Murph.”

“Murph is that short for Murphy?”

“No it is just a nickname.”

“What is your real name?” she asked moving closer to him.

He hesitated wondering how much information he wanted to give her. He decided to give her his name but little else.

“Sergeant Bob Falcone. You don’t need my service number do you?” he asked with a smile reached over and grasped her hand.

“You just arrive in Japan?” she asked squeezing his hand ignoring his snide remark.

“Yes, in fact I just arrived and have some free time,” he partially lied thinking, *this girl speaks English very well and maybe it was time to find out more about her.*

“You speak English very well. Where did you learn to speak it so clearly?”

“My Father was from England and taught me plus I learned in School,” she answered looking him directly in his eyes.

“Does he still lives in Japan?”

“No, a car accident killed him and my Mother. Are you ready for another round?” she said and continued to stare into his eyes.

The two turned into a half dozen and Murph started feeling good. Megumi was fascinating with a great sense of humor and best of all they could communicate. The conversation soon turned to the next urgent need and that was companionship. Megumi was looking for someone to keep her on a continuing

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basis and a month's charge was twelve thousand six hundred yen. At three hundred sixty yen to the dollar that was thirty five dollars a month for room board and extras. He was good at math even while slightly impaired.

She let him know the price would drop to twenty five dollars in US Currency not script but US cash.

Drunk but not stupid he knew the penalty for using US dollars that is if you could get your hands on it. She didn't want script because it was risky as a change of script could come at any time and she would have worthless money. So they settled on the yen.

Chapter Nine

The Bar closed and Murph was close to closing his eyes from one to many of the foamy drinks. Megumi helped him from the Bar to the Train Station and the cold air revived him as they walked the five blocks to the station.

They entered the Station and went to the first track heading south and there was a train parked there. He noticed that it was the start of the track going south and Megumi went in and sat down with Murph close behind.

The car slowly filled with GI's and their girls and at three thirty AM the train started moving. Two stops then on the third stop Megumi elbowed Murph awake and they got off the train.

They walked out of the small Station down a narrow street lined with small houses then up a slight grade. Then they went down a hill waking on a path through an open field. They came on another street lined with houses walked a block turned right on another street and turned into the third house on the left.

Murph even though slightly impaired memorized the steps they took knowing full well that he would have to find the house on his own at another time while a little under the weather.

"Take your shoes off," Megumi reminded him as they entered the small house.

He flopped down took off his shoes and said, "Megumi where is the latrine?"

She led him across the largest room in the house pulled the sliding door and they entered the small bathroom. She pointed to a hole in the floor and stood and watched as he unzipped his pants.

I guess she has a honey pot hanging underneath the hole in the floor because I smell the honey, he thought. He also noticed the large wooden tub and small stool.

When he finished he turned to leave and she said, "You need a bath, you smell. Undress and I will get water," she filled the tub as he undressed.

"You recently received a wound," she said noticing his bandaged shoulder, "Were you wounded in Korea?"

Bob Furlin

“No just a training accident,” he lied looking her directly in the eyes and thinking. *Is she trying to pick my mind?*

She motioned for him to sit down on the stool and continued to sponge him down. When she finished with his bath she told him to get into the tub to soak.

He put one foot into the tub and yelled, “Hey that is hot and I can’t get in that hot water.”

She insisted and he slowly got both legs in the tub and it took a few minutes and he started enjoying the hot soothing water.

She undressed, bathed then stepped into the tub with him. They soaked another ten minutes and got out and dried off. They wrapped a towel around themselves and went to a small bedroom and the bed on the floor. A while later he drifted off into a sound sleep.

The sound of female voices awoke him and he sat up. He noticed his uniform and underclothes neatly folded on the floor beside the mat.

The past nights’ events rushed through his mind as he dressed. *Did I use a condom I don’t remember so I’ll have to ask Megumi?*

He entered the sitting room as Megumi entered the house and he realized that it was two in the afternoon.

“It is time for me to go to work,” Megumi said.

“Was your going to work part of our agreement?” he asked.

“Yes it was,” Megumi was short and to the point.

“Momma San expects me to work but no other men while I am with you,” she quickly added.

“This is Tuesday is it not?” he asked not knowing how long he had slept.

“Yes it is Tuesday.”

“Well I am free until next Tuesday and thought you would show me around the country. I am going to talk to Momma San and see if she will let you go for six days,” he said.

“I don’t think so, I will lose my job,” Megumi disagreed.

“If she won’t so be it but money does talk,” he laughed.

“It is time to go,” she said and she led him out of the house.

He said, “Wait a minute I have to relieve myself. I don’t remember did we use a condom last night?”

Mendacity

“Yes we did and hurry the train will leave soon.”

They hurried to the train station just in time for the crowd to push them into a car.

Arriving at the bar Murph said, “I am going to the Base pack a bag, eat and be back in about three hours. Then I’ll talk to Momma San and see what happens.”

Arriving on Base Murph realized that he was hungry and it was chow time and he headed for the mess hall. He no sooner got seated when a familiar voice rung out.

“Where have you been? We have been looking all over for you,” Coy said as he and Sam sat down at the table.

“I’ve got a girl, a month off, and am going to see Japan,” Murph grinned.

“We thought we three would go paint the town,” Sam said.

“Megumi and I are going to Tokyo and why not come with us she can be our guide,” Murph said assuming Momma San would allow her to go for a price.

They agreed and after chow each of them packed a small bag and went to the bar. Murph found Megumi and told her to get the Momma San who ran the bar.

The conversation was intense but for more money than Megumi brought in each night Momma San agreed to let her go until the following Tuesday. He also made her agree that Megumi would have her job after they returned.

“Guys meet Megumi and Megumi meet Coy and Sam. We are off to see Tokyo. Megumi you do know your way around the City?” Murph asked hoping she did.

“I’ve been to Tokyo many times,” she told them.

They spend the rest of the night at the bar and then decided to meet at the train station about noon the next day. Murph and Megumi went home and Coy and Sam found themselves a girl to stay with for the rest of the night.

The four met at noon and started for Tokyo and the ride was about thirty minutes on a very crowded train. Megumi did know her way around and she found a place the four could call home for the next few days.

The Japanese were very polite but Murph could sense the resentment some of the ex-soldiers had towards their previous

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enemy. He realized that even seven years after the close of the War that Tokyo could be a dangerous place.

They hit the nightclubs and it wasn't long before Coy and Sam found themselves a girl and they parted company. Murph and Megumi partied all-night. She was a great dancer and loved American music. He was no Fred Astaire but with a few drinks he thought he was comparable. They arrived at their room at daybreak and awoke that afternoon.

"Megumi I want to climb Mount Fuji," he said coming out of the bathroom.

"You do not have shoes for climbing or a jacket," she gave him a hard stare.

"You find a black market guy and buy us what we need," he told her.

She did exactly that and they had the necessary clothes to do a climb so they caught a train for Honsu Island and Mt Fuji.

The afternoon was clear and crisp with Fuji visible in the distance. Two hours later the beautiful symmetrical Mountain loomed 2.3 miles high and he had second thoughts.

They sat next to a Japanese couple and Megumi struck up a conversation. They were also going to make the climb and said to climb at night to be at the summit in the morning. The sun rise was spectacular plus one did not have to stay overnight.

Megumi introduced them as Isamu and Aiko. They also told her to start the climb from Fujiyosida that was on the northeast side of the mountain. It was roughly a seventeen mile hike. The average time to climb was seven to eight hours up and six to seven down.

They arrived about 5 PM and Isamu and Aiko started the climb immediately. Murph had to change his shoes and Megumi found a place to stash their bags. She also got plenty of water, noodles a couple flashlights, and spare batteries to make the trip.

They started about a half hour after the Japanese couple. He felt frisky and they caught up to Isamu and Aiko at the halfway point.

It was a dark plus it was a tiring climb. They met a few climbers coming down. There was a small hut at the midpoint and they sat down for some noodles which Megumi prepared on

Mendacity

the little stove. Isamu and Aiko started out before them once again.

“Are you sure that your wound has completely healed? This is a tiresome climb,” she asked genuinely concerned.

“I am doing fine and in fact it seems to be doing me some good,” the truth was that it is more grueling than he thought it would be and he was thankful that Megumi had picked a warm jacket.

They reached the summit just at daybreak and the view was beyond description. The glimpse of God’s creative power caused Murph to reflect on the true beauty of creation. They just stood and looked down through the clouds for about an hour.

The trip down was not as strenuous and the view most of the way gave them a lively step. They passed Isamu and Aiko about a quarter of the way down and said their good-byes.

They arrived at Fujiyosida gathered their bags and left their climbing boots and jackets to whoever would pick them up. They found a place for another day then toured Fuji’s Five Lakes found on the mountains northern side.

The train ride back home was uneventful and they arrived late Sunday afternoon. Both exhausted with no sex that night and they had a good nights rest.

Megumi decided to go to work Monday and Murph walked around the small Village that afternoon. He took the train back to the Base and spent the night on Base. Tuesday morning Murph was at Sergeant Davis desk at seven A.M.

“How was your week?” Davis asked.

“I had a great time walked up Mount Fuji,” Murph answered.

“How about your shoulder did it give you any problems?” Davis asked.

“No problems,” he said proudly.

“Good, go to the Infirmary and have it checked out and stop by Sergeant Crip. Get your mail then report here,” Davis ordered.

I messed up there telling him I was OK as they probably will cut the thirty days, he thought.

Crip had a couple letters for him from home and he put them in his pocket to read later. He reported into the Infirmary and they told him to have a seat.

Murph decided to read the letters and they contained the usual questions and local news. Pap was drinking too much and they were enjoying the new indoor bathroom but not the work that went into installing it.

She then wrote something that caught Murph's attention. Mrs. Petrof came over to have her fill out their annual Immigration papers and Mrs. P said that two of her boys were over his way. One was in Korea and one in Japan. His Mom then went on with other news and did not elaborate any further.

I didn't know there were any Petrof boys in the Military let alone over here, Murph thought, *I will have to write and find out more,* a Corpsman interrupted him.

"OK Sage we will see you now," the Airman First-Class said.

The Doctor checked his shoulder and didn't put a bandage back on it and said, "Put your shirt on and wait outside."

A half hour later the Airman brought a sealed envelope. He told Murph to report to Sergeant Davis and gave him the envelope.

Davis took the envelope into the Colonel's office and said, "Wait here as the Colonel may want to see you."

Davis came out and said, "The Colonel will see you shortly."

Shortly meant an hour and finally Davis said to go into the Colonel's office.

"Sergeant Falcone, be at ease and have a seat," Colonel Crow said returning Murph's salute.

"I see that you have healed very quickly and the Doctor has authorized your return to duty. We have an immediate need for your expertise and I am going to give you one more week of leave. You be back here Monday at 0700 and prepare to ship out then," Crow said and dismissed him.

"Falcone be back on base in two days and then I am restricting you to the base," Davis grinned overruling Crow.

I should have kept my big mouth shut, Murph thought as he walked to the Chow Hall. He ate and then sat down to write home and find out more about the Petrof boys. *Couldn't be Fish or Minnow they are still home. To be sure she is not referring to the two in Russia. Or is she,* the thought troubled him and he pushed it to the back of his mind.

Mendacity

So they are going to ship me out on Monday and the Colonel said something about needing my expertise. He didn't elaborate on which skill they needed. Maybe another trip to North Korea, he wondered as he went out the Main Gate.

Megumi was working so he stopped by the bar. *Should I tell her now or wait until the morning the morning will be best there will not be a lot of time for questions.*

He stayed and did some light drinking and noticed that Megumi was spending a lot of time with an Airman First-Class. *Good she is ready to move on and that will make my job of telling her easy,* he thought.

They left the bar at closing and went home with little chatter between them. They had sex and as usual Megumi satisfied his need. He has no idea if he even came close to meeting hers as she was a good actress.

They woke about eleven AM and one more parting act and Murph started gathering his belongings.

“Are you moving out?” Megumi asked.

“I have orders and am restricted to the Base,” he told her.

She didn't answer and proceeded to make a light lunch then got ready for work. Murph took one last look around and they left.

They made small talk back to the bar and he said, “Megumi, I have enjoyed every minute of our time and you are great. I will always remember you when I think of the Summit of Fuji. Thanks and you will ever be in my thoughts.”

She said nothing but reached up and kissed his cheek and entered the bar not looking back. Murph did not notice the tears in her eyes.

He thought *what a complete professional. Megumi, I wish you much happiness,* he turned and went to the Base.

Chapter Ten

Murph reported to Sergeant Davis and waited to see Colonel Crow. He entered the Colonel's Office and saluted.

"Be at ease, and sit down," the Colonel said reading a report and he continued to read making him wait.

Finally he finished reading and looked up at Murph and said, "This is the debriefing report from your last mission and I noticed the report did not reference you. Will you tell me why?" Crow asked him.

"Sergeants Clift and Strove told me the debriefing occurred when I was in the Infirmary. They said my debriefing would occur later but it never happened," he explained.

"Have you ever seen the report?" Crow asked.

"No I haven't Sir," he shook his head.

"It will take about a half hour to read the report so take your time read it and I will be back," Crow handed him the report and left the office.

Forty-five minutes later the Colonel returned sat behind his desk and asked, "Do you agree with what you read?"

"Yes Sir it is factual," Murph replied handing him the report marked Top secret.

"Do you have anything to add to the report, anything at all?" Crow asked.

"Well," he started and hesitated.

"I said anything Sergeant," Crow said in an authoritarian voice.

Murph related the conversation he heard on the Amateur radio Band between two Russians, "It's probably nothing Sir but it sounded fishy to me. They were using phrases that seemed to be a code," he said shrugging.

"You're probably right at it being nothing but two Russians having a friendly chat," Crow said putting the report in his safe.

"Falcone we need you to go to Wakkana Air Station as an ESM Technician but your real mission is as an undercover agent. We suspect some loose lips at that new site. The Russians desperately want to know what our capabilities and plans are for that site. No one must know that you are fluent in Russian.

Mendacity

There are many White Russians in that area and we want you to keep your ears open. Do you have any questions?" Crow asked.

"Sir you said to let no one know I speak Russian but I believe there is a Sergeant Stan Peters out at Wakkanai that may know I speak it. Sergeant Peters and I came over together and he went to Wakkanai. There is also an Airman Ed Wills who took my place at Wakkanai. He may have a question why I went in his place to Korea," he explained to the Colonel.

"Sergeant, will you step out of the office and don't leave as I still want to talk to you," Crow told him as he turned and picked up the phone.

Murph waited an hour and then the Colonel called him back into the office. The Colonel was just hanging up the phone.

He looked up and said, "Sergeant you will be going to Wakkanai in three weeks. Sergeant Peters and Airman Wills have received new assignments. During those weeks you will receive training on some new electronic equipment slated for Wakkanai. Also you'll get a crash course in being an undercover agent. We will sequester you at Misawa Air Base found four hundred miles north of Tokyo close to Misawa City in Aomori Prefecture in Tohoku. You will be on the next flight to Misawa," the Colonel dismissed him and told him that Sergeant Davis will have his orders ready in two hours.

Murph saluted then stopped by Sergeant Davis's desk and the Sergeant told him to get his belongings and be back in two hours.

They are in a hurry to get rid of me and with all the information about Misawa at least Crow could let me know its population, he chuckled as he reflected on what the Colonel told him about Misawa.

He started to go back to the barracks to get his personal articles but stopped at the Chow hall and ate before going to his room. He got back to Sergeant Davis's desk on time.

"The next flight to Misawa leaves in three hours so be at Flight Operations immediately to insure you make the flight," Sergeant Davis ordered him and gave him his written orders.

Murph arrived at Base Operations showed his orders and the Airman pointed to a C-119 parked on the tarmac in front of Operations. He went out to the plane and showed the Crew Chief his orders.

Bob Furlin

“Put your stuff onboard and find a place to sit. There are only five others on this flight,” the airman told him.

An hour later a civilian entered the plane dressed in a suit and tie. He was about five-seven slightly built and possibly thirty five years old with bland features. He sat down but not near to anyone and he was carrying a small bag.

The Pilot, Copilot, and Flight Engineer followed a few minutes later. They immediately started preflight procedures and the two crewmen boarded and shut the door. The Flying Boxcar taxied with the nearly empty plane and it was very noisy and Murph began to speak to the Civilian but could hardly hear his own thoughts.

This plane must be capable of carrying around seventy five passengers so why just us seven, Murph wondered.

The C-119 landed and he exited the plane last and an Airman took him to a Jeep parked alongside the plane.

Seated in front was the civilian who turned and said, “Sergeant Falcone my name is Creg Jones and I will give you the crash course.”

Yeah, I bet his name is Jones and probably some spook from Military Intelligence, Murph thought as he gave Jones the once-over.

There was a smell of honey in the air but the coal fumes from the Japanese stoves overwhelmed it. The smell was everywhere and it had a different smell than he knew at home. The sulfur smells from the slate dumps were more pungent than this smell. All the food tasted like fish and he didn’t like fish. They drove to a remote location and entered a small compound and stopped at one of the Quonset huts.

“Follow me Sergeant,” Mr. Jones said to him as the Jeep left.

They entered the hut outfitted with two bunks, a blackboard, two desks, and a kerosene heater.

“This is your home for the next three weeks Sergeant. I’ll be here for two of those weeks. Our training begins in the morning,” Jones said.

“Oh yes, the latrine is the hut next door and someone will deliver our chow, maybe hot I don’t know,” Jones said as he walked out the back door.

Mendacity

Murph unpacked his duffel bag into the footlocker and small metal cabinet. He then went to the Latrine and met Jones coming out.

“Cold water if you plan to take a shower,” Jones said as he passed.

The evening meal was cold rations as was breakfast. The training started precisely at seven. *They could just leave a case of rations if that is what we are going to eat and save some trips. Who is the other desk for?* he thought sitting down in one of the desks.

“Sergeant let’s talk about espionage the act or practice of spying or of using spies to get secret information about another government, or a business competitor. Some would say an informant. What do you think of being an informant?” Jones asked.

“Well Mr. Jones.”

“Call me Creg,” Jones interrupted him.

“Well Creg I equate the word informer with a snitch and to be truthful I don’t like snitches,” Murph frowned.

“OK, fair enough; I am going to list other words for espionage on the board,” Jones said and began writing.

Agent, beagle, detective, double agent, emissary, espionage agent, foreign agent, informer, inside man, intelligence, investigator, lookout, mole, narc, observer, operative, patrol, picket, plant, scout, secret agent, secret service, sleeper, sleuth, snoop, spook, spotter, spy, undercover agent, and watcher.

“Is there a word listed you do not understand?” Jones asked.

“Beagle jumps out at me,” Murph said.

“A lawyer a Legal beagle you have heard the expression,” Jones said smiling.

“Do you know that God even used spies?” Jones asked.

“He did?” he replied surprised.

“The Lord told Moses to ‘spy out the land of Canaan’ in Numbers 13:2,” Jones grinned.

“No Sir,” he said ‘search out the land’,” Murph corrected him.

“Yes some translations do and some translations use the word spy,” Jones told him.

Bob Furlin

“You are right because in verse 16 one will find the word spy,” Murph conceded.

“OK, let’s say we are going to train you to be an observer, lookout, or watcher instead of a spy,” Jones said sarcastically.

“Would you say that you have a reputation for being intelligent, skilled in communication - writing and speaking - discreet, and loyal to the United States?” Jones asked.

“I agree with loyal and discreet but don’t know about being intelligent or a good communicator,” Murph grinned.

He spent the rest of the two weeks learning what charm he did have would only get him so far. He learned how to plan, pay attention to detail, and commit them to memory. Most of the time they spent on details and committing them to memory so it became second nature to him. He learned about surveillance, how to spot if someone was watching him, cultivate unsuspecting people, and get people to do what he wanted.

One big lesson was not to talk about himself or anything about his mission or past. Blend in and be part of the crowd was one of the lessons he learned.

“Well Falcone time is up and you are as well prepared as I can make you in the time allotted. You are a far way from being a spy but remember blend in and be a part of the organization,” Jones parting words as he left the hut.

That was one strange dude he never revealed anything about himself except his name and that probably was not his name. I still think a spy is a snitch and will have to do more thinking about how to approach this assignment. Acting as an Informer still troubled him as he reflected on the past two weeks.

The door opened and interrupted Murph’s thoughts and a tall slender Master Sergeant entered.

“Hi my name is Pete Sale and I will be your trainer on the new equipment,” the Master Sergeant said.

“Bob Falcone good to meet you,” Murph said holding out his hand.

Two Airmen entered with some equipment and left without a word. Sale unpacked the two pieces and set them up in front of the blackboard. He didn’t ask for help and Murph didn’t volunteer.

Mendacity

“We will start first thing in the morning,” Sale said as he left by the back door.

I guess he is heading for the Latrine, Murph thought as he lay down on his bunk waiting for the evening meal. C-rations again and this time it had a bar of chocolate.

Sale came back and as they ate he started asking questions about him seemingly making small talk.

Murph would have none of it and would deflect all the questions changing the subject. The night became a quiet one so they turned in early.

“OK, Falcone let’s find out what you learned in School. I am going to ask you a few questions to find out what you have retained,” Sale said smiling at him.

“Fire away Sarge,” Murph said thinking, *it has ticked him off because I wouldn’t talk last night.*

“What is Radar and how does it work?” Sale’s first question.

“Radar is a method of detecting distant objects and fixing their position, velocity, or other characteristics by analysis of very high frequency radio waves reflected from their surfaces. It works on the principle of echoes,” he replied.

“A radar system is a two-way radio setup consisting of a transmitter, receiver, antenna, and oscilloscope. The transmitter sends out the short pulses of high frequency radio waves and the receiver detects the low-level echoes amplifies them and displays them on an oscilloscope,” Sale jumped in.

“Transmitting and receiving uses the same antenna. The time between the sent and received signal is the distance to the object. The radar screen or oscilloscope can display a continual picture because the process occurs in fractions of a second,” Murph recited what he had learned in school at Keesler.

“What is a Ferret?” Sale asked with a smirk on his face.

He is trying to trip me up Murph thought. He said, “A Ferret is the same as an ESM Operator except they are usually Officers and ply their trade in an Aircraft. They also will be called Radar Observer, RCM Officer, Electronic Warfare Officer, Raven, or Crow. We Electronic Surveillance Measures Technicians do our work on the ground and repair our own equipment. The officers have a grunt do that for them,” Murph answered surprising Sale.

He could tell by the scowl on Scale's face that he was not happy. He relished that he had wiped the smirk off his face.

"What are the performance characteristics that an ESM Operator looks for?" Sale asked with a defeated tone in his voice but not conceding they were technicians.

"The Frequency of the radio waves sent out is the starting point and for Radar it is in the megacycles. PRF -Pulse Repetition Frequency - is the rate the pulses are sent out. We can recognize the type of radar by the humming sound produced," Murph answered then he paused.

His mind flashed back to the last mission where they detected by sound friendly ground radar but never enemy radar.

"Haven't you left out a few Characteristics?" the pause gave Sales the opportunity to ask.

"How about Pulse Length, Beam Width, and Lobe Switching?" he turned and wrote on the blackboard.

Pulse Length is the duration of the transmitted signal measured in milliseconds or microseconds. Beam Width should be expressed in degrees. Lobe Switching determines the bearing of a target. It occurs about fifty times per second and indicates the accuracy of the system.

"Want to expound on any of these Sergeant?" Sales said looking at Murph.

"Beam Width is like a beam of light sent out by a searchlight. The radar beam is not as sharp as a beam of light and the radar beam is usually 10 or 15 degrees wide," Murph responded.

"How about Lobe switching have you anything to add?" Sales asked.

"Lobe Switching is the Radar beam looking at one side and then the other of a target. When it is at equal angles to the target is 'locked on'," he expounded.

"Well we will now learn about the latest receiver and signal analyzer," Sales said not making any comments on Murph's answers.

He turned to the new equipment and for the next four days explained how to operate and repair it. He went through the schematics and set up procedures.

Mendacity

“I am going to simulate a signal on the analyzer and you tell me what type Radar it is,” Sales said on the morning of the final day of training.

“What is this type?” he asked.

“Early warning radar because it has high-power, low frequency, low PRF, long-pulse, and wide-beam width,” Murph grinned.

Sales displayed various systems and Murph identified all but the last signal. It was one he never saw before and it stumped him.

“This is a gun laying radar something new and you should be on the alert for it,” Sales said smiling as he had finally gotten Murph on something.

Sales turned and wrote on the blackboard; A science of measuring a quantity; then transmitting the measured quantity/value to a distant station. The data transmitted by radio wave when intercepted can be recorded and/or analyzed for its usefulness.

“What is this defining Sergeant?” Sales asked.

“I believe it is a definition of Telemetry,” he answered.

“This receiver is capable of intercepting the signal and this device will record it,” Sales said unpacking a piece of equipment.

“This is the latest magnetic tape recorder and is capable of recording the telemetry in fact can capture video signals but with poor quality. Will you help me put it on the table?” Sales asked.

“We will send it to Wakkanai after you arrive there. I’ll show you how to operate it plus identify the telemetry signal,” Sales said and displayed a signal on the analyzer and showed Murph how to connect the recorder and operate it.

He was going to continue when the door to the hut opened and in walked an Army Major.

Chapter Eleven

"I'll take over the rest of the day Sergeant," the Major said to Sales.

Sales said nothing and left the hut leaving his personal items and equipment behind.

I've seen this Major someplace but don't remember where, Murph thought.

"Sergeant I am Major Frisk, we met on the Perch," the Major said as he noticed Murph's look.

"I understand that you may have some reservations about being an informer. Is that correct?" Frisk asked.

"Yes Sir I am struggling with it as it goes against my instincts," Murph answered.

"Sergeant from what I see and hear your instincts are good. We have had good reports on your ability to keep quiet about your activities not revealing anything even under close scrutiny. We have watched you under the influence of booze, sex, sleeping, and in your general interaction with others. We find that you have revealed anything of a classified nature and that is excellent," Frisk smiled.

Now wait a minute, how did they watch me under all those conditions? Who was that close to me to pick up all that information? Megumi, was she working for them? She was the only one to see all those activities, Murph thought.

"She is good very good not a hint that she was watching me. She had me fooled," he said to the Major.

"Professionals can display great skills at being cunning and not revealing their cover. This training as an ESM Professional will cover your other activities," Frisk answered never saying that Megumi was an agent but he surely implied it.

"Falcone your next assignment will center on Electronic Surveillance Measurements than being some type of an agent. It is a good first step in knowing if being an agent is for you," Frisk tried to encourage him.

"Sir, if I accept is there any turning back?" Murph asked.

Mendacity

“Sure, we don’t want an agent not satisfied because that would risk a mission,” Frisk lied.

“Welcome to the World of the Smell of Honey,” he blurted out.

“What did you say?” Frisk asked with a puzzled look on his face.

“The World of Honey a World where mendacity rules and deceivers and those deceived is the norm. We are all born into a world of deception. The beauty of Mount Fuji overwhelmed Megumi and me and the whole time it was a deception.

The mountains beauty is a disguise for a Volcano that could bring death and destruction at any moment. She was a lie deceiving me and I let my true instincts be overcome by lust. As always my senses and mind let me down deceived but my Spirit knew better and never was it deceived. Everyone comes into a world of deceit where nothing is what it seems. What we call life is death, the material world’s truth is a lie,” Murph blurted out unleashing a torrent of emotions.

“Those are great insights Sergeant. How did you decide all that?” the Major asked surprised by what he had just heard.

Murph told him about the lessons he learned early in life about the Smell of Honey. Priests, friends, teachers, neighbors, and even family all living some sort of a life of deception while presenting another face.

“Yes I have given this much thought and would like to give it a go. A snitch that’s child’ play,” Murph said finally accepting the dual role realizing that all that happened in the past was not coincidence. He thought *there is no such thing as coincidence*.

“You have given much thought to this matter and that’s great, let’s get to the mission,” Frisk said smiling.

“Your Primary job is being an ESM Technician and you must at all times perform that role if you are to keep a good cover. Do you understand?” Frisk asked.

“Yes sir I do and my primary job is being an ESM Technician,” he answered.

“Your second assignment is to keep you eyes and ears open for any breach of Security or loose talk about the goings-on at the station,” Frisk said looking at Murph who had a question on his face.

Bob Furlin

“Sir, will you define loose talk for me? A Security breach I understand,” he asked.

“Sergeant, you will have to decide what makes up loose talk and if it warrants reporting. We will trust your judgment on that matter,” Frisk wisely answered.

Good, he is helping me with the snitch problem that gives me great leeway, Murph thought.

“Third but not least is that you are going to be a contact for an agent in that area. Meaning the agent will give you information they have gathered to pass on. You have learned in your training an agents cover is most vulnerable when passing on information,” Frisk explained.

“How do I know who that person is and how to identify them?” Murph asked.

“A very good question and you will know your contact with the phrase -- The sea urchins are exceptional,” Frisk said.

“Who says that me or my contact?” Murph asked.

“Either one of you can lead with the statement. The response is - Yes, these Islands have luscious seafood. You must commit this to memory. Do not write it down,” Frisk cautioned.

“Is my contact male or female?” Murph asked.

“I can’t tell you that but you will find out when you hook-up with the agent,” Frisk grinned.

He is hiding something that amuses him, Murph thought.

“I can tell you about your unit on Wakkanai. There are only seven of including you and led by a Lieutenant Crisp. We have isolated the Detachment from all the other units,” Frisk volunteered.

“Falcone are there any further questions?” Frisk asked.

“Who do I pass on the information to and how often?” Murph frowned.

“I will be your Controller and will be in touch with you periodically,” Frisk answered.

“Wait here until you receive written orders and directions on how to get to Wakkanai. Good luck and we will be in touch,” Frisk finished.

Murph saluted him and Frisk left the hut. Murph started packing his gear and when finished he flopped down on his bunk and fell asleep.

Mendacity

He snapped out of a deep sleep and looked at his watch. It was two AM and he realized that no one had brought a meal, his orders, or a go to Hell. He wondered if they have forgotten him so he lay back in his bunk and went over the events of the past few weeks. He fell back to sleep. The sound of the hut's door opening at six AM awoke him and three Airmen entered.

"Good morning Sergeant," a Master Sergeant said and handed him an envelope.

"You will find your orders and directions enclosed. These two Airmen will escort you to Supply as you will need some better cold weather gear. You also need to sign for this money to pay your way. Please count it," the Sergeant said never saying his own name

"Hey Sage where can a guy get some chow around here," Murph asked counting and signing for the money.

"These Airmen will take you on the way to Supply," the Master Sergeant said as he left the hut.

Friendly guy Murph thought as he opened the envelope. His plane took-off in four hours for Chitose Air Base located on the Island of Hokkaido. He noticed the Airmen were Air Policemen and their name tags read Crib and Dick.

"Well guys I guess I've got everything let's get some chow," he said picking up his duffel bag.

They left the hut stopped by the Chow Hall and then to Supply. The breakfast was good to Murph as it was the first decent meal he had in weeks.

"Where you headed for Sergeant?" an Airman Second Class Supply Clerk asked.

"Wakkanai," he answered.

"I've never been there but I hear it's the coldest place on the Planet," the Clerk said smiling and got the clothing.

"Looks like I am ready for the South Pole and I've got a flight in an hour so guys take me to my plane," Murph said to the two nontalkative Air Policemen.

These guys don't say anything as they have probably received orders to ask no questions or be friendly, he laughed inwardly.

A C-47 loaded with supplies with Murph the only passenger took off for Chitose two hours later.

Bob Furlin

He found a place to sit between all the equipment and went over the events of the past few weeks. The fact Megumi was spying on him still bothered him. She was smooth with no hints of who she was. He still was not comfortable with being a snitch. They can call it what they want informer or informant but it's still a snitch.

He opened the envelope and took out the directions given to him on how to get to Wakkanai. Chitose was the first stop located in the Midwestern part of the Island of Hokkaido. He was to take a train to Sapparo about thirty miles from Chitose then he'd transfer to another train to his destination, Wakkanai. The ride from Sapparo to Wakkanai would take twelve hours and he would have a sleeper. *Well, that sounds easy enough* Murph thought.

The flight to Chitose was uneventful and he carried his duffel bag into Base Operations looking for transportation to the Train Station. It was cold *must be around zero degrees not counting the wind factor* he thought looking for help.

He spotted a Staff Sergeant and walked over to him, "Hey Sarge is there transportation to the train station?"

"No, nothing regular but if you have orders call the Motor Pool and they will send transportation," the Sergeant said pointing at a phone.

Murph picked it up and an operator asked, "Your number please."

"I'd like the Motor Pool," he said and listened as the phone rang.

"Motor Pool Sergeant Hombre."

"This is Sergeant Falcone and I need transportation to the Train Station."

"You have orders?" Hombre asked.

"I do, I am going to Wakkanai transferring at Sapparo."

"The next train leaves in about three hours and I will pick you up in about an hour. Get something hot in you because it's cold where you are going," Hombre volunteered.

"Thanks, I'll be here at Operations," he said and wondered *now where do I get a hot meal.*

He found the Sergeant and asked, "Where does one get something hot to eat around here?"

Mendacity

“The Mess Hall closed an hour ago but there is a Canteen about a block from here you can get something hot there,” the Sergeant said giving him directions.

He left his duffel bag and took his small carry satchel with him to the Canteen. He entered and sat on a stool at the small counter. He was about to order when he heard a familiar voice.

“They will leave anyone in here,” Stan Peters said.

Damn, the last person I wanted to see. I'll have to use a little deception. I can guess what he is going to ask, Murph thought.

“The last time I saw you, Korea was your destination. Where have you been and where you headed for now, buddy?” Stan asked right on cue.

“Hey Stan it is good to see you. I landed in Korea and got in a truck accident and ended in the hospital. My left shoulder still gives me some problems. I am finally on my way to Wakkanai and I thought I'd see you out there. What you doing now? They kick you off the station?” Murph said laughing and going on the offensive.

“No, someone in Korea was in an accident and I am going to replace him and am waiting on orders. I am also freezing my butt off. You should prepare for some wicked weather up there. You know Wakkanai has an average temperature of forty-three degrees but it's well down below zero now,” Stan said changing the subject.

“Good luck in Korea as I didn't have much. Keep your head down and watch out for those wicked Korean girls,” he said as he woofed down three hot-dogs, a large order of French fries and a Coke.

He also ordered five ham sandwiches and six cokes. He put them in his hand satchel for the train ride.

“See you later Falcone and I've kept the babes hot up there for you,” Stan said as he ate his hamburger.

Murph threw him a hand salute and headed for Operations. *Now that meeting was an unlucky break and that guy gets under my skin,* he brooded as he stepped up his pace.

He arrived at Operations just as a jeep stopped in front. A lanky airman got out and entered the building.

He followed and said, “Sergeant Hombre you looking for me.”

Bob Furlin

“Are you Sergeant Falcone?”

“Yea let me get my duffel bag and we can go,” he said and picked up his bags.

“Here let me help you with one of those,” Hombre volunteered and took the small handbag from Murph.

“It is just a short ride to the station and we will get there in plenty of time. Have you been in Japan long?” Hombre asked.

“Long enough to know the women are hot and the weather cold,” he said evading the question.

They make small talk all the way to the station with Hombre doing most of the talking.

“Here we are,” Hombre said and reached in the back and retrieved a large brown bag, “Here are a few sandwiches and something special to keep you warm.”

“Thanks Sage, it was nice of you to think of doing such a thing,” Murph said shaking his hand.

“You are going to need it where you are going, good luck,” Hombre waved and drove off.

Murph looked in the brown bag and besides the sandwiches there were two pints of Seagram Seven. *That was nice of that guy he was a talker.* He looked around and there were about thirty or so waiting on the train. He went over to the ticket counter and wondered if he was going to be able to communicate.

“Ticket to Wakkanai, douzo?” he said to the middle-aged Japanese man behind the counter.

The man did not respond just stared at him.

“Joushaken irasshru Wakkanai, douzo,” Murph finally got out in Japanese.

Still no response and Murph realized that this guy did not like American GIs and was going to give him some static. *He is probably still brooding over the War,* so he tried another time.

He still got only a stare and a shrug.

“May I be of some help?” a female’s voice said with a strong Russian accent.

Murph turned around and it startled him to see a Nun in full habit. She was stunning that is what he could see of her.

“Yes Sister this gentleman seems not to understand my limited Japanese. I don’t know if I used the right words,” he said smiling.

Mendacity

“You did fine, he is being hard to get along with and you could say hostile,” she said and turned to the Ticket master and said a few sentences in Japanese.

“Hai, ni soushaken irasshru Wakkanai,” the smiling ticket taker answered her.

Did I hear him say two tickets, Murph thought startled.

The Nun reached into her bag and took out some money and Murph interrupted, “Did I hear you say two tickets? Are you also going to Wakkanai?”

“Yes, I am going to help set up a mission,” she replied.

“Let me pay for the tickets,” Murph handed her a handful of Japanese yen.

“No, I could not impose on you,” she replied smiling.

“Let’s just say it is my tithes which I have not been faithful with lately or ever,” he said admitting not being a loyal contributor to the Church.

“Make sure to get two sleeper tickets from Sapporo to Wakkanai,” he told her.

She nodded, bought the tickets and they looked for a place to sit down until the train arrived. Murph watched closely to see if he could get a better view of her appearance. She was about five seven with beautiful blue eyes and a face that is just out of this world. He couldn’t tell the color of her hair because the habit hid it but he guessed it would be blond. Her accent said she was Russian.

“What may I call you?” she asked as they sat down.

“Excuse me, my name is Sergeant Bob Falcone and my friends call me Murph.”

“Now Murph is an odd nickname for Bob, Bob is short for Robert I suppose?” she asks.

“Yes and what is your name?” he asked.

“Sister Liubov Ivanova,” she said stressing the Sister part.

Liubov means love and that fits her perfectly, he was in love already. *She would have to be a Nun* he thought in disgust.

“Sergeant have you been in Japan Long?”

Sergeant, she is letting me know I am not her friend yet he mused and as he was going to answer a train whistle sounded.

“That must be our train, Sister,” he said not getting friendly either.

Bob Furlin

They fastened their parkas, picked up their bags, and went to the train. Murph noticed that she just had two small bags.

Guess they don't need many different style clothes, he assumed.

Chapter Twelve

They got on the third coach from the steam locomotive and found a couple seats.

“Not much heat in here,” he said trying to get comfortable in his seat.

“Sergeant, are you a Catholic?” she asked.

“Yes, my family is Catholic in fact I was an Altar boy for a short time,” he answered and she smiled a beautiful smile.

He wondered *how old is she? Probably older than me maybe twenty-nine*, he guessed.

“What part of Russia you from Sister?” he asked looking for some reaction.

“My birthplace is Minsk the Capitol of Belarus. My father was a Military man and they brought me up in Korea. My Father and Mother died during the Big War and I ended in a Catholic Orphanage and then a Convent,” she answered and volunteered more information than Murph thought she would,

“Where were you born Sergeant?”

“I spent my early years in a small Coal Mining Village in Western Pennsylvania,” was all he volunteered.

While trying to get comfortable in the small seat he had to move the brown paper bag given to him by Sergeant Hombre and that reminded him of its contents.

Maybe the Sister would like a sandwich, I could use one.

“Sister would you like a sandwich and a coke?” he asked reaching into the bag and in the process pulled out one of the pints of Seagram. He said nothing and hurriedly put it in his parka pocket.

“Yes I would, it is kind of you to share. Do you have enough for yourself?” she said smiling not reacting to the bottle.

“Yeah, I have some ham sandwiches and let’s see what these are,” he said unwrapping one of the sandwiches Hombre had given him.

“This looks like a tuna sandwich,” he opened another and it was a chicken salad sandwich.

“Looks like we have some choices so what is your pick?” he asked looking at her and handing her a Coke.

Bob Furlin

“A ham sandwich sounds good,” she said surprising him as he was thinking; *she will take the tuna sandwich.*

She made short work of the sandwich and he realized that she must have not eaten in a while. He also ate a ham sandwich and had a Coke but was dying for a swig of whiskey.

“Sister, do you mind if I take a little something to warm my insides?” he asked and noticed that she gave a slight grin and shook her head no. He took out the bottle and poured some into the Coke.

She finished with her sandwich and he asked, “How about another sandwich and you sure you wouldn’t like to warm your insides?” he hesitantly asked.

“Yes to both questions,” she answered surprising him.

He handed her the pint expecting her to pour some in the Coke but she took one big swig then took another. She gave the pint back and he gave her another ham sandwich. She consumed that one at a more leisurely pace.

“Sergeant does it surprise you that a Nun would take a drink of whiskey?” she asked evidently seeing the look of surprise on his face.

“No, not any Nun but you surprised me,” he candidly answered.

Murph had another sandwich and they both settled back in their seats as the train rocked them both into a semi sleep.

The noise of the other passengers caused them to wake up and they realized that they were approaching Sapporo Train Station. They gathered their belongings as the train stopped.

The wait at Sapporo was two hours and they found a place to sit and talk. Murph wanted to know more about her past but she seemed reluctant to give out more information. He tried to find out about her philosophy and how much she agreed with the Holy Sea on theology.

“I am curious Sister, raised and trained in a Far Eastern Convent are there any beliefs you have different from the mainstream Catholic teachings?” he asked.

“Is there something in particular that you are asking about?” she said possibly trying to evade the question.

Mendacity

“Well, I am a big fan of General George S. Patton and he once said. So as through a glass and darkly, the age long strife I see where I fought in many guises, many names, but always me. He was a believer in Reincarnation and being of the Catholic Faith I know they do not believe in it. What are your thoughts?” he said not expecting a positive answer.

“I am confident there truly is such an event as living again, that the living spring from the dead, and the souls of the dead are in existence. A quote from Socrates said and your own Walt Whitman said. I know I am deathless. No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before. I laugh at what you call dissolution, and I know the amplitude of time. Many great men and women believe in Reincarnation and I have come to my own conclusion,” she answered without giving her belief.

“Those conclusions are?” Murph asks not letting her off the hook.

“I think the idea of Reincarnation is most reasonable. Believe in it or not if it is true reincarnation is in my future. If it isn’t true then believing it will not make it so,” she answered but doesn’t answer.

“What do you believe?” she asked

“Let me tell you of an experience I had. A few years back an amateur psychiatrist hypnotized me and took me back before my birth. The hypnotist sent me back in time and had me write my name. I reached an age I couldn’t write but could print, and then I could do neither. He eventually took me to the age of six months and I wasn’t talking. He then took me back before my birth. He asked me where I was and I remember sitting on a big black horse on a hill in full battle armor. I was leading an Army and we charged down the hill and an arrow struck me and I fell from my horse. I kept hollering that I was going into a deep dark hole further and further. The hypnotist had a hard time getting me awake but of course I eventually woke up in a cold sweat.” Murph vividly remembered the episode and it had haunted him since.

Before she could say anything he continued, “I get the feeling that I have been in this part of the World before but further Northeast around the Aleutian Islands. I’ve always wanted to go

there plus New Zealand. This leads me to reincarnation and I do not believe in it if that makes any sense to you.”

Liubov listened intently and when he finished reached over and patted his hand and said. “Let me quote Ralph Waldo Emerson. The soul comes from without into the human body, as into a temporary abode, and it goes out of it anew it passes into other habitations, for the soul is immortal. It is the secret of the world that all things subsist and do not die, but only retire a little from sight and afterwards return again. Nothing is dead; men feign themselves dead, and endure mock funerals and there they stand looking out of the window, sound and well, in some strange new disguise,” she quoted it with much passion as if she had written it herself.

Emerson rejected the narrow, orthodox Christian concept of God and instead accepted a broader view of a Creator. He may be quoted as some sort of expert on this but he is missing the One True Way, he thought.

She was going to continue as the sound of a train whistle broke their conversation. There were about fifty or so passengers waiting and some seemed to look like Korean to Murph. The conversation did not return to philosophy but it turned to the Island of Hokkaido, which means north.

Murph said, “Sister, some of these passengers do not look like they are Japanese.”

“Yes you are right they are Korean,” she answered.

“Korean why are they here? he asked surprised.

“When you get to Wakkanai on a clear day you will get a view of the Russian Island of Sakhalin. The Japanese during the Big War forced many Koreans to the Island for labor. When the War was over the Japanese left them there to survive alone and many have escaped to Hokkaido and the area around Wakkanai,” she answered and noticed a couple in the next seat. She said something to them in Korean.

“How about another sandwich and drink,” he asked reaching for the bag of sandwiches. He had been taking a swig of whiskey all during their conversations and she declined any further drink.

“Yes I will have one and a Coke,” she said smiling, “They are very good, thank you.”

Mendacity

She continued telling him about Wakkanai and how the Sea of Japan surrounded it on the West and the Sea of Okhotsk on the East. She explained that it was the most northern city in Japan and it was so cold it would fill like the end of the earth. She described the surrounding landscape as barren and windswept. She went on to explain that Wakkanai was a port City and it processed huge catches of fish and crab. She boasted the seafood was the best in the World.

They ate two sandwiches each and made small talk and finally Liubov said, "It is late I am tired and would like to retire."

Murph found the Conductor and he explained that they were ready to go to sleep. He took them to their births and she was in the lower and he was the upper. Murph took off his boots and parka but stayed dressed as it was cold.

He tried to get a glimpse of Liubov and thought he saw a flash of blond hair as she took off that silly headgear.

She said goodnight and out of the blue said, "I forgot to tell you something. The sea urchins are exceptional."

It startled him so that he rose up and hit his head and could not think of the response but he finally composed himself.

He answered, "Yes, these Islands have luscious seafood."

"Goodnight, Bob," she gave another unexpected reply from the lower birth.

Dam, sex has blinded me once again not a hint, he wondered if she was even a Nun, so he answered, "Goodnight Lyuba."

He changed to another variation of her name meaning loving and tender. He thought he heard a gasp. He had a hard time going to sleep wondering how she would pass on information. Hope she knew because he had no idea or a clue. One thing he finally did have and that was the strong smell of honey.

The train stopped and jolted him awake and he got down from his birth looking for Lyuba. Her birth was empty and he hurriedly puts on his boots and parka and gathered his belongings. He entered the coach and a blast of cold air almost knocked him down.

He looked out on a scene of immaculate beauty a scene of frozen snow and ice. Everything was a frozen ice cube and the train looked like a giant frozen snowball and the station had a

similar appearance. *The South Pole must look like this* was the thought that entered Murph's mind.

Beauty such as this must be concealing something he pessimistically thought. He quickly realized that he needed to get his gloves on and the hood of his parka over his head. The other passengers scurried into the Station without talking as the temperature must have been thirty degrees below zero.

He went towards the Station looking for Lyuba but she was nowhere in sight. He also noticed the train tracks ended right at the end of the Station's platform. Entering the Station he wondered if there would be someone to pick him up.

He saw someone that looked like Lyuba and wanted to find finding out if it possibly could be her.

A voice called, "Airman you looking for a ride?" he turned around to see a medium built Airman walking towards him smiling.

"I sure am, are you my ride to the Base?"

"Yea, but I was looking for more than you. Did you see any other Airmen on the Train?" the Airman asked.

"No just me, are you disappointed?" Murph asked.

"Yeah, quite a few of us are looking for replacements. What outfit are you assigned to?"

"Detachment nineteen and I am Sergeant Falcone."

"Detachment nineteen and are you a part of those super hot shots housed by themselves? My name is Frank Leigh, welcome aboard," the airman smiled.

"Is it cold like this all the time?" Murph asked.

"Yes a lot of the time. Let's get going I have a two-and one half ton 6x6 parked outside. Its only three miles out there but I have to go on duty in two hours," Leigh helped him with his bags and they threw them into the canvas covered truck bed.

"I thought there would be three or four replacements coming out. There are fewer than fifty of us out there and some of us are eager to get back to civilization," Leigh complained.

The truck traveled down the deserted street and out an ice and snow covered road to the Base. Half a mile out of Town Murph reached into his pocket and brought out the last of the whiskey.

"There is a little remaining would you like a drink?" he asked Leigh.

Mendacity

“I sure would, I see you are going to fit in with the crowd out here all we got to do is drink,” Leigh said and took a big gulp, “Thanks that hit the spot.”

Murph found out when he went to take his turn the bottle had little but it did warm his insides.

“You have a wife or girlfriend at home?” Leigh asked.

“No wife or a girlfriend that I care about,” he grinned.

“Good, because every one in my hut have received a Dear John letter during our twenty-four month tour,” Leigh sighed.

They traveled the rest of the way with little conversation and finally pulled up to the Main Gate at a small Guard Shack. Murph could see a security fence seemingly surrounding the Station and two wooden gates that they entered through after showing his orders.

“I am going to take you right up to your new home,” Leigh said.

He went down a road and passed a few buildings then up a winding road to the top of a hill. He stopped at another compound surrounded by a security fence that enclosed three buildings. One was a large Quonset hut, one a small building and he found out later was the latrine, and another Quonset hut had a canvas roof. The complex located a hundred yards from the large canvas covered building he guessed housed a long-distance radar antenna.

“Here you are, home at last,” Leigh said stopping at the small gate and blew the horn.

In about ten minutes the door of the large building opened and an Airman came out and opened the gate.

“I’ve got another inmate for you Low,” Leigh said recognizing the Airman.

“They sent just one and we lost two,” Low said upset.

“Sorry Dude, we were also looking for our replacements. Only one arrived,” Leigh said as they ignored Murph.

Murph got his bags out of the back of the truck as Low turned and went to the hut.

“Close the gate behind you and lock it,” Low said as he hurried into the hut.

“Thanks for the ride,” Murph said to Leigh.

Leigh yelled, “Good luck,” as he drove off.

Bob Furlin

Low seemed like a nice fellow Murph thought sarcastically as he closed and padlocked the gate. He smelled trouble with this guy as he entered the hut.

Murph flipped his hood back and looked around. Low and another Airman were lying on their bunks and they were the only occupants. He took off his parka as it was warm inside the hut.

“Well look at this Snow they sent us a Staff Sergeant,” Low said to the Airman Second Class seemingly annoyed at Murph’s rank.

Snow got up and walked over to Murph with his hand extended and introduced himself. I am John Snow and welcome to Paradise.”

Murph shook his hand and introduced himself, “Bob Falcone and it’s a pleasure to be here.”

“Well a Sergeant with a sense of humor,” Low said sarcastically.

Murph put his parka down and walked back towards Low lying on his bunk. He sized the guy up on his way back and Low was a burley guy about Murph’s height and looked like one who used weights as he was muscular.

“I caught your last name but not your first name and I am Staff Sergeant Bob Falcone,” he said smiling and extended his hand thus letting him know who had the rank.

Low reluctantly shook Murph’s hand and muttered without getting up, “Chad Low.”

Murph noticed that he was an Airman Third-Class and he had sown a stripe over the outline of the Airman First-Class stripes. That explained his bitterness and he probably was a Shift Chief demoted.

“You can take either one of these two bunks Sage,” Snow said with a slight tremor in his voice probably thinking he just saw a fight avoided.

Murph walked back and started putting his clothes into the footlocker and metal cabinet that came with his new bunk. The footlocker contained clean sheets, blankets, and a pillow. He emptied his duffel bag and continued to unpack his carry-on and came across an envelope that he didn’t pack.

The envelope had another smaller envelope inside with a note attached. He sat on his bunk and read the note.

Mendacity

‘Make friends with the Base Chaplain and volunteer to help out with the mission. Pass the small envelope on to your contact.’

Murph did not rest easy that night thinking of Lyuba and how he was going to make friends with the Chaplain. He pushed the incident with Low out of his mind.

Twice someone awakened him once when Low and Snow changed shifts then two other Airmen came in at Midnight. About two AM someone came in and went back to the office at the rear of the hut.

The odor of trouble is very strong this night and it will be an interesting experience he thought as he finally drifted off to sleep.

Chapter Thirteen

Murph snapped wide-awake at five thirty his usual routine and went to the Latrine.

He came back having taken a shower and shaved. He was cold but feeling much better.

He was just passing the walled office at the back of the hut as the door opened. A wiry Officer with blond hair stepped out and Murph almost walked over him.

“Excuse me Sir,” Murph realized that he almost knocked over Lt. Crisp.

“Good morning Sergeant. See me in my office in two hours,” he said and walked out the back door going to the Latrine.

Two hours later he knocked on the Lieutenant’s Door, “Come in,” the Lieutenant said.

“Sergeant Falcone reporting for duty Sir,” Murph said saluting the Lieutenant.

“Glad to have you aboard,” Lt. Crisp returned his salute and turned to a safe located against the wall.

He unlocked the safe and took out a thick envelope. He looked at the jacket and said, “I’ve got to ask you some questions. “

“What is your full name?”

“Robert John Falcone”

“What are the last five digits of your Service number?”

“95111”

“What is your Mothers Maiden name?”

“Salvarolo”

Lt. Crisp opened the envelope and started reading its content. Murph wondered what it was all about. Crisp read for about fifteen minutes and finally looked at him.

He said, “These are my instructions on what your duties and liberties will be at this detachment. You can leave the Base whenever you are not performing your duties as an ESM Technician. There will be no control or interference from me. I have authorized transportation whenever you need it and at your discretion,” he stopped and took a hard look at him and handed him the Official papers allowing the freedoms.

Mendacity

Murph read the Orders and saw where Major General Black had signed them.

Crisp continued, "We have changed the primary mission of this detachment to telemetry interception and our present mission will become our secondary. It says that new equipment will arrive with civilians who will install the new antennas and equipment. It says that you received training on this new equipment, right?"

"Yes Sir, I have received training on the new equipment," he answered.

"Where you told why the mission changed to telemetry and what are we intercepting it from?" Lt. Crisp asked.

"I am not at liberty to say Sir," he answered.

"Well it says here that you do know and even know what the mission is," Crisp said irritated.

"Does it say what the mission is?" Murph asked.

"It says that we will monitor telemetry from Russian long-range missiles," Crisp replied.

Murph sat and looked at him with no reaction. This got under the Lieutenant's skin.

He asked, "Are you a Government Agent?"

This surprised Murph and he hesitated then said, "Sir, I am an ESM Technician sent here to operate and maintain the equipment."

Crisp reached into his desk and handed him a key, "This is for the padlock on the gate and all of us have one. Do you have any questions?"

"Yes Sir, is there a Base Chaplain?"

"Yes there is."

"What is his Denomination?"

"Catholic and his name is Father Paul," these questions completely puzzled Crisp and he asked, "You a devote Catholic?"

"I am a Catholic and may want to volunteer to help out at the Chapel," he answered leaving out any reference to being devout.

Crisp asked questions about the new equipment for about another hour and finally said, "Sergeant it's time for Lunch and we eat at the same chow hall. Want a ride?"

“Yes Sir, sounds good to me. I haven’t had a solid meal in some time,” Murph smiled.

Five Civilian Contractors and Major Frisk met them when they returned from the Chow Hall. Major Frisk surprised Crisp and Murph. Murph pretended not to know the Major and both of them saluted him.

Crisp said, “Major it is a surprise and a pleasure to see you.”

“I wanted to insure that all was going ok and you understood the orders. These gentlemen are here to install the equipment and I assume this Sergeant will help them,” Frisk said acknowledging Murph but not introducing the Contractors.

“Sergeant you take these people to the Operations Hut and I am sure they would like to get their job completed and get out of this freezer. I believe Airmen Peters and Rogers are on duty and ask them for help if needed,” Crisp said to Murph. He and the Major went back to Crisp’s Office.

Murph speculated the Contractors were Intelligence Agents but had no proof just a hunch. He led them to the hut and they unload the equipment and started immediately to install the new equipment. It puzzled both Airmen Peters and Rogers and they just sat at their stations. Murph walked over to them and introduced himself. They introduced themselves as Lou Peters and Jack Rogers. Murph noticed that they were both Airmen First-Class.

“What is this all about, Sergeant?” Peters asked.

Murph was going to evade the question when the hut’s door opened and in walked Major Frisk, Lieutenant Crisp, Chad Low, and John Snow.

“Listen up.” Crisp said, “Major Frisk has a few words about our new mission.”

Major Frisk turned to the five contractors and said, “Gentlemen, take a break, there is coffee next door.”

He then turned and explained the mission change to telemetry and television signal interception. He explained that Murph would train them on the new equipment once installed. Everyone would stay and help install the equipment and the Airman would be under Murph’s supervision.

He finished with, “Sergeant Falcone you come with me,” he turned and left the hut with Murph in tow.

Mendacity

Just before exiting Murph heard Crisp ask, “Are there any questions?”

“Yes Sir, where is the other replacements?” Low asked not looking at Crisp but giving Murph a long stare.

“Have a seat Sergeant and have you made contact?” Frisk asked him when they got to Crisp’s office.

“Yes Sir, I have,” he answered handing the Major the envelope he picked up under his mattress on their way back to Crisp’s Office.

“That was quick,” Frisk said as he put Liubov’s information in an attaché case, “Anything I can help you with?”

“Yes Sir, I need to worm my way into the Base Chaplain’s Office. Maybe you can pave the way for me with Father Paul. I also asked lieutenant Crisp for some help.”

“I will see what I can do. Is there anything else you would like to report on?” the Major said with a smile.

“No Sir, nothing else,” Murph answered knowing that he was asking for some snitch information.

“Well, I will be around for a couple days until the equipment is up and running. I know there will be questions in your fellow Airmen’s minds about our meeting, especially the Lieutenant. Just tell them that I grilled you on what you had learned about the new equipment,” Frisk said dismissing him.

Two days and all the pieces of equipment were up and operational and Frisk and the contractors left. No sooner had they gone when a new replacement showed up and Murph happened to be the one to check him in. Airman Second Class Andy Smith made the Detachment fully staffed.

Murph and Andy seemed like-minded and would work well together.

Andy was a tall lanky blond from North Dakota just out of training at Keesler Air Force Base. Murph introduced him to the crew and took him to Crisp’s Office. Crisp asked Murph to assemble the crew in the Operations hut.

“This is how we are going to pair off,” Crisp said, “Snow and Smith; Low and Falcone; Rogers and Peters; we will continue

with this arrangement until further replacements come in six months.”

The Lieutenant left and Low looked at Murph and said sarcastically, “We are going to make a great team,” he turned and walked out of the hut.

“What’s the matter with that guy? I wouldn’t want him mad at me,” Andy said looking at Murph.

Murph smiled and said, “We’ll get along as he just has a chip on his shoulder.”

“Are you going to knock it off?” Snow asked.

“Yeah, I am going to do it with much kindness,” Murph smiled at him and thought *I am going to have to deal with that guy harshly.*

A month passed and Murph had trained each one on the new equipment and all they were waiting on were some signals to detect. The Russian missile range was very quiet. He and Low were at a Mexican stand-off with just some verbal jabs. Murph had made no further contact with Liubov.

“Sergeant you still interested in working with the Chaplain?” Crisp asked a few days later.

“Yes I am. I have been attending Mass but have not gotten a chance to talk to the Father.”

“Father Paul could use some help as his aid went home because of a family crisis. I told Father Paul of your interest in helping him but do so only on your off duty,” Crisp told him.

He sensed Frisk’s hand in this and the next day he stopped by the Chaplain’s office at chow time. He entered the hut used as a Chapel and office area to find Father Paul cleaning around the Altar.

“Father, I am Sergeant Falcone and Lieutenant Crisp said he had talked to you about me helping out,” he said to the Priest a short chubby guy with a big Irish grin he was also a Major.

“So I can, so I can, and just in time. I’ve seen you at Mass a few times,” Father Paul continued, “I know the new Chaplain could use your help also as I am due to rotate out in a week. The new Chaplain a Methodist named Captain Crone will relieve me. Good, you are just in time to help clean up.”

Mendacity

He gave Murph a broom and walked back to his office saying, "I expect some visitors from town in a few minutes and need to prepare. Oh yes if you didn't know there is a small Catholic Church in Wakkanai with a Japanese Priest."

Now this is nice to know a new Chaplain and a Methodist at that, he thought.

Murph started sweeping the floor and in a few minutes the door of the hut opened and two Nuns entered. Immediately he recognized Liubov and was not going to say anything but she spoke right up.

"Sergeant Falcone, it is good to see you again. Sister Marlene the Sergeant and I met on our way here and he was kind to share some food with me. What are you doing here? I didn't know you were a Chaplain's assistant," Liubov said introducing him to the Sister and immediately taking control of what could have been an awkward moment.

Father Paul had come out of his Office and overheard the conversation, "Good to see you Sister Marlene and you also Sister Liubov and you seem to know this young gentlemen. He has volunteered to help out around here as I am shorthanded."

"That was kind of him perhaps he will also help out at the Mission on some of his free time," Liubov said smiling at Murph.

"Whatever I can do to help I will," he replied.

"Let us go into the office and see what we have for you and what other needs you have that we may help out with," Father Paul said to the Sisters.

They left Murph to continue in the cleanup. He finished all he knew to do and was putting the cleaning supplies away when the office door opened.

Father Paul called out, "Will you come in here a moment Sergeant?"

"Sergeant the Sisters need a truck to bring some supplies from the Train Station to their new Mission located down the road about a quarter mile. Think we could help them out?" Father Paul asked.

This surprised Murph that Liubov was that close and he didn't know it. *This will make it much easier for me to contact her* and he said, "I believe I can get a truck."

Bob Furlin

He called the Motor pool and asked for a truck but he needed authorization. He told them to have a truck ready and he would bring the authorization.

An hour later and he was back at the Chapel with the truck. Father Paul said his good-bye to the Nuns and Liubov climbed in first on the passenger's side. Murph helped Sister Marlene into the truck as the step was high and she was a short five-two.

"Sergeant we will need to stop by the Mission to pick up some help as some of the items are heavy," Sister Marlene said and showed Murph where to stop.

The Mission was a house just recently built and was nothing elaborate. He helped Sister Marlene out of the truck and she entered the house and brought three Japanese men out. They got into the back of the truck and Murph went to help Sister Marlene into the truck.

"No, I am not going it is my time to pray and Sister Liubov will go with you," Sister Marlene said and went back into the house.

That suited Murph and he hurried into the truck before someone changed their minds. *Maybe I will find out more about this operation and Liubov's role. Is she really a Nun posing as a Spy or a Spy posing as a Nun? My choice would be the latter.*

"Bob did you get to pass on the message?" the first words out of Liubov.

Bob could that be the clue that she was a Spy first; that got his attention plus his hopes aroused, "Yes I made contact and passed the information on."

"Here is another package to deliver and see if you can pass it on as soon as possible," Liubov said handing him a small package.

Their hands touched and lingered for what seemed an eternity to Murph. Talk about sparks flying this could not be a touch of a Nun at least in his mind it couldn't.

"I will have to do something about that quickly," he said looking into her blue eyes trying to suggest the thought of the touch and not the package. The look he got back was not that of a Nun.

"How good are you with your hands?" she asked.

"Doing what?" he smiled.

Mendacity

“We need someone good around the Mission in carpentry, plumbing, you know I think you would say a handy man,” she answered smiling at him.

“I am handy and can hit the nail on the head every second try. My expertise is to say quite experienced not bragging just stating a fact” he started flirting with her.

“Well we will have to see about that, won’t we Sergeant?” she said toying with him.

“Liubov what is your mission here?”

“I am here to pray for conversion of the Soviet Union to Catholicism. We pray in eight hour shifts and work in Wakkanai doing odd jobs to earn our way,” she said not answering the question she knew he had asked thus ending their interplay.

Chapter Fourteen

They had arrived at the train station and Murph thought he would try on their way back to pump her for more information. She was more of a pro than he and he probably wouldn't get any further. *It is worth trying* was his thought.

He helped load the equipment into the truck and the three Japanese young men were friendly although he could not communicate with them.

Perhaps I can lean some Japanese while I am here was a thought that crossed his mind.

"How often will you be able to help out at the Mission?" Liubov asked.

"I figure may be three times a week unless my job keeps me busy. Things have been slow lately and boredom has set in," he volunteered.

"There is some information that you need to pass along about a possible Russian Agent at the Detachment with a code name of Patch Two," Liubov said noticing his reaction and asked, "Have you heard this name before?"

"Yes, I intercepted a Ham Radio Signal and one of the names was Patch Two talking to a Patch One. I passed the information up but we thought there were nothing to it just some Ham radio people," Murph answered and asked, "How did you come by this information?"

"I work in a small restaurant as a cook and overheard a conversation between an Airman and a Korean from the Russian Island of Sakhalin. I could not see the Airman's face but overheard him say that Patch Two is OK and they reassigned him. I will contact you when things cool down. I know the Korean and he works for North Korean Intelligence."

"Then Patch Two is not at the detachment now. Did you get a view of the Airman?" he asked.

"Yes, he was a big fellow but had his hood up on his Parka and I could not see his face," Liubov said with a look of concern on her face.

"If you know the Korean does he know you?" he asked.

"I don't think so," she answered.

Mendacity

“I don’t think so is not a good answer be careful and watch yourself,” he said touching her hand with concern in his voice.

They arrived at the Mission unloaded the truck and he told Liubov that he would see her with-in a week. He returned the truck to the Motor Pool and had someone take him up to the Compound. He entered the hut just as Low was about to leave.

“Where have you been? I’ve been looking all over for you and no one has seen you all-day. I thought I’d have to cover the shift by myself tonight,” Low said in a big huff.

“You miss me big guy, I didn’t know you cared,” Murph said brushing past him and not answering his question.

Low went back to his bunk muttering to himself about smart Sergeants. Murph ignored him and stopped by Andy Smith’s bunk and took off his parka.

“How is it going Smith you and Snow getting along OK?” he asked.

“OK but he is rarely around during off duty hours. He spends all his time at the Ham Radio Shack seems he inherited it from one of the guys that suddenly shipped out,” Smith innocently gave him some interesting information.

“Yeah, I’ve heard when one gets that bug they become hooked and it turns into some fetish. I’ve never had much use for it,” he said nonchalantly.

“That was the way Ed Wills was at least that is how Snow described him. Snow said Ed spent all his time at the Radio Shack,” Smith said giving Murph information that surprised him.

”Well, don’t let that bug bite you,” Murph said going back to his bunk.

He thought, *Wills I would think it would have been Peters. Could Wills be Patch Two? If so, it would not be a surprise to me because events are never as one thinks. Liubov said to get the package passed up quickly and its shape suggested that it is a roll of film. Major Frisk said he would make contact but never said how I was to get in touch with him if needed in an emergency. Somehow I must get Frisk’s attention without blowing my own cover. Why shouldn’t I lie and use the system? They probably are testing me to see how creative I can be in an emergency. Deceit and mendacity are the world I live in so why not employ a little deceit of my own.*

“Do you know if Lieutenant Crisp is in his office?” he asked Smith.

“Yeah, he went in just before you returned and I didn’t see him leave,” Smith answered.

He knocked on the door of Crisp’s Office.

“Come on in the door is open,” Crisp called out.

“Hate to disturb you Sir but I need your assistance,” Murph said.

“Are you volunteering for something else Sergeant?” Crisp said with a smirk.

“No Sir but I need you to get in touch with Major Frisk. He told me before he left if I had an emergency and needed him to have you contact him,” he lied putting words in Frisk’s mouth.

“It’s not something I can help you with?” Crisp said frowning.

“No Sir, it is some important information that he needed and I left out about my last assignment,” he continued with the sham.

“It’s that important?” Crisp said looking hard at him.

“Very important,” he said stressing the word very.

“The Major told me he would be back in a month can’t you wait until then?” Crisp said protesting.

“I think he would be upset if we waited that long,” he said hinting that Crisp could also get in trouble.

“I will see what I can do,” Crisp conceded the argument.

“Thank you sir,” he said, saluted, and left the office.

Now to find Snow and see about the Ham Radio Shack and as he exited the office Snow entered the hut.

Now this is convenient he thought and walked over to Snow’s bunk. Low was seemingly sleeping in the next bunk.

“How is the new equipment working on your shift?” Murph asked trying to strike up a conversation.

“No problems, just no action. You guys intercept anything?” Snow responded.

“Not a beep a few radar signals but nothing out of the ordinary,” he replied still looking for an opening.

Luck was on Murph’s side as Smith walked up, “Well partner you get enough of that ham talk?” Smith asked Snow.

“I never get enough, I’ll have you infected before your tour is up,” Snow said to Smith.

Mendacity

“How about you Sage you interested in Amateur Radio?” Snow asked Murph.

The opening Murph was looking for and he said, “No it never fascinated me about all I ever here is - How are you receiving me? It would drive me bunkers. Smith don’t you let this guy warp your mind with all that gibberish. Then again you may have to go along with all the jargon or have problems with your shift partner. Ed Wills and his partner must have both been Hams.”

“Hell no,” Snow jumped in, “They argued all the time, Peters sounded something like you Sarge as he had no use for it.”

“Hey knock off all the chatter can’t you let a guy get some sleep,” Low complained from his bunk breaking up the conversation.

It is not the information Murph wanted to hear but Sam Peters by this conversation was not a Ham Operator buff. Murph got ready for his shift duty.

Major Frisk showed up in three days and summoned Murph into Crisp’s Office, “Well Falcone you got me here this better be good.”

He sounds irritated, Murph thought, *I’ll blame it on the woman and* answered, “My contact said that it was important that I get this to you as soon as possible,” handing Frisk the small round package.

“There was some other information they wanted to pass on verbally a conversation they overheard,” he continued.

He told Frisk about Patch two, Patch one, the Korean, also the big Airman who passed the information on to the Korean.

“Patch one and two sounds familiar to me. I’ve heard that referenced before but don’t remember where,” Frisk said shaking his head.

“Sir I told you about that because on my last mission I intercepted a Ham Radio signal and overheard the reference to Patch one and two. We thought at the time it was of no importance,” he reminded the Major.

“So we did and that should be a reminder that no information even seemingly of any significance can be important,” Frisk admitted.

Bob Furlin

“I did some follow up and found out that Airman Ed Wills was a big Ham Radio Operator and spent most of his off duty time at the Shack. Wills was one of the two and I told you that he knew me and that I understood Russian,” he said informing and reminding Frisk again.

“The other Airman, Peters, I believe and was he a Ham?” Frisk asked letting him know that he hadn’t forgotten the names or the incident.

“No Sir the word is he disliked the idea of being a Ham,” he smirked.

Frisk gave him a look of you passed the test and said, “Good job Falcone and I need to give you a method to contact me in an emergency. I can’t have you risking your cover looking for ways to get hold of me.”

“Yes Sir Lieutenant Crisp is suspicious of me any way. He even asked if I were an Agent,” he said.

I hope that doesn’t get Crisp in trouble because I like the guy he thought.

“The transportation access I have is also arousing suspicion. A lowly Sergeant with such access is suspicious at least and I do not fill comfortable using that authority,” he unloaded on Frisk.

“OK, let’s deal with these one at a time. First how do you contact me in case of an emergency? Call Misawa and ask for extension 678 and say - I want to confer with the Major. They will reply - The Major has gone. You reply - The connections made. Then hang up. Did you get all that?” Frisk asked.

“Yes Sir,” Murph answered and repeated the information.

“If you do not get the correct response, say nothing, hang up and call back in one hour,” Frisk instructed, “Next the transportation and you are right it could cause suspicion. Did you ever get up with Father Paul?”

“Yes and I just got back from helping out.”

“There is a Community out reach to several Missions in the area and you will be in charge of delivering supplies donated by the Base Personnel. I’ll see to it there is always enough food and clothing to deliver. It will require a truck and you will be its permanent driver. So you are going to become a Saint Sergeant,” Frisk said laughing, gratified with his idea thought up on the spur of the moment.

Mendacity

“Thank you sir,” Murph said.

“Lieutenant Crisp is a good man and loyal I’ll speak with him,” Frisk said seemingly not concerned about that matter.

“We need to find out more about the Korean see what you can dig up. One other assignment now that you will be in Town often. I will set up private training with a Satsugai douin. You’re doing well Falcone very well for someone new to this business but need more combat training,” Frisk continued.

“I don’t understand Japanese Sir and what is a Satsugai douin?” Murph asked.

“Killing agent and you must become more skillful in hand-to-hand combat,” Frisk told him.

Now what does this guy have in-store for me Murph thought after Frisk dismissed him. This is going to be interesting the truth means nothing in this world of espionage and now killing. What is Truth? Is a great question but how to kill without any feelings is another?

Three months passed and Murph fell into a rigorous routine. Major Frisk was true to his word and arranged transportation to deliver supplies to the local Missions and Churches daily. Captain Crone a Methodist Minister replaced Father Paul. The Major or someone must have had a talk with the Captain because he asked Murph no questions. Murph continued to help around the Base Chapel and delivered food, clothing, or other items needed by the local Charities.

He stopped daily at the Catholic Mission and saw Liubov. There were only two routine messages to pass along during the two months with no emergencies. He would at times take Liubov or one of the other three Sisters into town to the Catholic Church. Sometimes he would drop them off at the places they worked to support themselves and the Mission.

Liubov kept him at a distance not letting him get intimate but they were developing a great friendship. They were at ease with each other and could joke and laugh together over odd events.

The duties at the Compound were also ongoing and he kept to the shift change rotation as each shift was for a two-week period. The day shift was the most difficult as it was after five before he could start the deliveries or training.

Bob Furlin

He and Low were growing more at odds as Low was jealous of Murph's freedoms. One was the use of the truck plus his leadership role at the Detachment. There was no Russian missile activity on their Range thus the routine was boring on-the-job.

The most strenuous activity was his daily workouts with a Japanese Martial Arts Master. He thought he was going to learn how to defend himself but his training centered on how to disable an opponent or kill them.

Master Azim was a middle-aged man who stood five-five and deadly. They met in a small house in Town and the first day was almost the last for Murph. Azim turned him into a knot and threw him all over the room and after two hours he could barely walk.

Azim spoke no English and he no Japanese. There was a young Japanese boy who interpreted for them.

Azim believed in destroying your opponent fast and quick with no second move needed. Kill with no emotion or regret and Murph was fearful of this Killing Agent as Frisk called him.

He also talked the Interpreter into teaching him Japanese for a small fee. They would spend about a half hour after his beatings and he learned much Japanese during the two months. He could now talk to the Master and found out that Azim did not think much of his Marshal Arts abilities.

Shirouto samurai, Amateur Warrior, was the name given him by the Master. The training was to last six months if he survived.

Chapter Fifteen

On a Wednesday night a week into the third month he was on days and making his rounds at night. Ten P.M. and he was to pick Liubov up at the Restaurant. He had completed his training and Japanese lessons. It was around nine so he decided to go to the Restaurant early.

The Restaurant was clearing out and had about five customers left. Murph sat at a table and ordered a beer he was just about half finished when in walked Low and Snow. They noticed Murph and walked over to his table.

“Hi gents, have a seat and a beer,” Murph invited them to join him.

“You are buying?” Low asked and Murph could see he had a couple under his belt.

“Sure they are on me,” Murph said.

“Waiting on your date, Holy Man?” Low asked.

“No, just having a beer and waiting on the Sister to get off work,” he smiled.

Low leaned over and whispered, “Come on now Sarge you know you’re messing with that broad.”

“Take it easy Chad,” Snow said seeing Murph flinch.

“Is she good? I never had me a Nun and she is a looker,” Low continued taunting him.

“Come on Chad let’s go,” Snow said getting up.

“What you going to do let this Holy Roller run you off? He thinks he is better than everyone else, banging a Nun,” Low says loudly.

“Airman you need to calm it down or leave,” he said to Low knowing that it would cause the reactions it did.

“You are going to make me?” Low said getting up.

Murph said nothing got up and walked out of the Restaurant with Low close behind. He walked around back and sensed Low making a move.

Two moves and one caused a bloody nose and the other a neck-breaker, “Move and I’ll snap your neck,” he whispered into Lows ear.

Low went limp not moving.

"I've had enough of you and your attitude and from this day forth it will change, understood," Murph whispered again into his ear tightening the hold.

"Yea, I understand," Low said but not with much conviction.

Murph turned him loose expecting just what happened Low swung at him. One move and Murph dislocated his shoulder. He lay on the ground moaning in pain.

Murph knelt down beside him and whispered again, "Your attitude is going to change, is it not?"

"Yes Sir, you broke my nose and shoulder," Low cried.

"I'll do more than that next time, stand up," Murph ordered.

He grasped Low's arm and jerked the shoulder back in place causing Low to give out a yelp.

Murph turned and saw Snow standing there in a daze, "Airman you saw this man slipping and falling breaking his nose and dislocating his shoulder. I was kind enough to reset his shoulder. That is the way it went down, right?"

"Yes Sir Sage, that's what I saw," Snow agreed.

"Help him into the back of the truck and we will go out to the Base," he said to Snow as he went back into the restaurant.

Liubov was ready to go and said, "Everything Ok? The big boy seemed disturbed."

"He's Ok, I made some attitude adjustments," he said helping her into the truck.

"The Korean, have you seen him lately?" he asked her.

"Yes I have recently seen Young Kim," she answered.

"Is he suspicious? Do we need to sanction him?" he asked falling into a mind-set he had not displayed before. The aggressive martial art training was changing him.

She looked at him with anguish and disbelief in her eyes and said, "Bob don't let them change you into a killer then you are no better than your enemy."

She could have slapped his face and not caused an awakening of the subtle change in his thinking. Her words and attitude caused him to grasp what was happening to him.

It could be good but bad if he needed to react in a dangerous combat situation. Any hesitation in hand-to-hand combat would be fatal. An internal struggle would happen within him and would play out overtime.

Mendacity

“Thank you for noticing I was not aware that a change was taking place. I don’t believe in killing for killings sake but there are those that like to kill without any qualms. I will definitely have to come up with some sort of philosophy that I am comfortable with,” he said looking at her with gratitude.

He dropped Liubov off at the Mission and took Low to the Base Dispensary. They set his nose, examined his shoulder, and put the arm into a sling. There were questions on how he became injured with Snow and Low both saying that he slipped and fell.

“Good job of resetting the shoulder Sage,” the Medic complimented Murph while Low just dipped his head and Snow gave a faint grin.

The next two months they spent intercepting signals from the Russian R-1 rocket. The missile range was quite active. They seemed to be having guidance and reliability problems because the intercepted signal would abruptly halt suggesting a problem or explosion.

Liubov was also passing on messages weekly with no emergencies. Summer was coming on and the weather was moderating. Murph had another month of Martial Arts training to go and he was becoming fairly fluent in Japanese. He sat down after one session with the Master and they had a discussion on the need and right of killing.

“Shirouto Samurai you are having problems with killing an opponent?” Master Azim asked.

“Master I realize that being hesitant is dangerous when confronting an opponent. I have given much thought on killing and believe I can kill without hesitation if threatened including someone else. I cannot kill by a surprise attack or plot to kill someone -- a shikaku, assassin,” he explained to Master Azim.

“Fushoubushou Samurai is learning the ways of tetsu inai ichi hotan ken supiritto, peace within ones soul and spirit, keep on this path and you will become a Kyousei Samurai,” Master Azim said promoting Murph.

Well at least he has changed my name from Amateur Warrior to Reluctant Warrior and someday possibly a Great Warrior. With one more month of training Murph knew he was at his highest progression as far as it concerned the Master.

Bob Furlin

In July 1951 Truce Talks had begun at Kaesong; General Ridgway had replaced General MacArthur a hero to Murph. He was sorry to see the Politicians completely take over the War in Korea. Those matters could wait because on this beautiful Saturday he had other more pressing matters to attend to. He and Liubov were going to take a day to see the countryside.

He was up early and at the Mission at six-thirty A.M. sharp. Liubov was in the truck almost before it stopped and they were off for the day. They both looked forward to the time alone for several months.

They drove to a deserted part of the beach on the East Sea as Liubov did not want anyone to see her without her Habit. Murph could not wait to see what that ugly garb covered. He sat in the truck and watched with anticipation as she jumped out and took off her head covering to display her beautiful blond hair. Then she took off the robe to display a gorgeous figure enhanced by the black slacks and white knit wool sweater. If he wasn't in love before he was now seeing the vision before him.

"Oh, what a beautiful gorgeous day come on Bob let's enjoy every minute of it," she said as she threw her arms in the air and took a deep breath.

"Beautiful and gorgeous doesn't sufficiently describe what I see," he yelled as he jumped out of the truck.

She looked at him turned and ran up the beach. He caught her spun her around and pulled her close. He felt her firm subtle body against his. He so wanted her and leaned down to kiss her.

"Bob, no please I can't as much as I want to as I have my vows," she said looking at him with tears in her eyes.

Murph had his answer she was truly a Nun doing Spy work and the thought of that must have instantly displayed on his face.

"I am sorry, I should not have let you think differently but I would be lying if I didn't and wish that it were different. Please, can we just forget the World and enjoy this day and each other?" she reached up and kissed his cheek.

"Now how can I say no to a Vision in Heavenly dress," he said and grasped her hand and they strolled hand in hand up the beach.

Mendacity

They lost themselves that day in beauty of the surroundings and the thrill of each other. They talked about everything that was of no importance to the World sharing their thoughts, desires, and dreams.

Murph was crying inside knowing that he could never really have her but at the same time the love and intimacies they shared would outlast any temporary carnal satisfactions.

She had brought a lunch basket and they spread out a blanket ate and talked late into the afternoon. The Sun started to go down and their day probably their only day together truly alone was ending. The beautiful Sunset could not have been a better climax to a day he would never forget. To him the day would last a thousand days and eternity.

Was he in love, oh yes, a love that could break the World of deceit and deception. Found nowhere that afternoon was the smell of honey or that was what he thought.

The trip back to the Mission was quiet for the first fifteen minutes as they both were savoring the events of the day. The conversation slowly turned to the real World. Murph explained that he was going to be busy training new people plus a new Commander. Lieutenant Crisp, Chad Low, and John Snow were due for rotation in the next week or less.

“Is Chad Low that big burly Airman you had trouble with a while back?” Liubov asked.

“Yes why do you ask?” he looked hard at her.

“I wasn’t sure until I saw him with the Korean, Young Kim, again the other night. He was the one I saw the first time,” she explained how she saw them talking outside the Restaurant.

“This is very interesting and I need to pass it along,” he said stopping at the Mission.

He got out and went around helping her down from the truck but more so to touch her one more time even if for a brief moment.

“Bob I’ll never forget this day, never” she looked into his eyes squeezed his hand turned and ran into the Mission.

He watched as she entered the building sighed and went to the Base. He entered the Compound and noticed a couple vehicles parked outside.

What is going on now? He thought entering the Hut and John Snow greeted him.

“Man, where have you been? The Lieutenant and the Air Police have been looking all over for you. A truck struck and killed Low early this morning. They are in Crisp’s Office and said to send you in if you get back,” Snow blurted out.

He hurried back to the office, knocked on the door, “It is open,” Crisp yelled.

“Sergeant Falcone I assume you heard the news. These Airmen have a few questions to ask you,” Crisp said turning to the two Air Policemen.

“Sergeant we understand that you had a fight with Airman Low a while back. Is that right? Also where have you been all-day?” the Lieutenant asked. A Master Sergeant stood by his side.

Murph noticed that they had side arms and said, “Yes I did, Low had a few to many we said a few words and started back behind a building. He slipped and fell, broke his nose, and dislocated his shoulder. I reset his shoulder and took him to the Dispensary.”

“Did anyone see this accident?” the Sergeant asked with a smirk on his face.

“Yes, Airman Snow saw the whole incident. He should be able to confirm my story,” he said banking on Snow’s fear of what he really saw.

“Yes, that is basically what he said,” the Lieutenant confirmed Murph’s hunch.

“May I ask how the accident happened?” Murph said to Crisp.

“No one saw the accident but heard tires squeal and when they got to the scene they found Low with his neck broken,” Crisp said with questions on his face.

“You still haven’t said where you’ve been all-day Sergeant,” the Master Sergeant said not letting Murph off the hook.

“I had the day off and I took one of the Nuns at the Mission on a picnic,” he gave an answer that they were not expecting.

“You took a Nun on a picnic?” the Lieutenant jumped in.

“Yes Sir we met on our way here and have developed a friendship. I promised to take her on a picnic when the weather

Mendacity

broke and we spent the day at the beach,” Murph said boldly giving them nowhere to go with their questions.

“OK Sergeant you can go,” Crisp dismissed him.

Murph left and went to his bunk and Snow followed him and asked, “Sage you didn’t really kill him, did you?”

“Someone did and how could you think it would be me? I have someone to vouch for my complete day,” he answered letting him wonder.

Murph got ready to go on shift and he would have to hold it down by himself. There wasn’t any activity so he had plenty of time to reflect on the day and Liubov. The shift was taking forever to pass as he was eager to go pick her up and take her to work at the Restaurant.

The shift finally ended and he rushed to the Mission. She was ready and he helped her into the truck once again with a great need just to touch her.

He looked at her and said, “A truck struck that big burley Airman and killed him yesterday. They said he had a broken neck and I sense the hand of Young Kim in this killing. You be careful.”

She looked at him smiled and did not say anything. They talk about mundane events all the way to the Restaurant. He helped her out of the truck.

“You also be careful and remember not to fall into the trap of killing for killing’s sake,” she smiled squeezed his hand and went into the Restaurant.

“You have a reliable way home tonight?” he yelled and she turned and nodded yes without saying anything.

He proceeded to make his usual rounds of deliveries. He arrived back at the Compound just as three replacements were entering the Hut. Crisp was leading them into his office as Murph entered the hut. An hour later Crisp called him into the office.

“Lieutenant Luck this is Sergeant Falcone our ranking Airman. He will have to show you around as I have transportation waiting and am all packed and ready to go. Sergeant this is Airmen Hope and Jones,” Crisp said in a hurry to get on his way home.

Murph Saluted Luck and shook the two Airmen's hands, "I guess you know where your bunk is Lieutenant and I'll show you guys where the bunks are and you can pick one."

"Sergeant, it has been a pleasure to work with you and keep up the good work," Crisp said holding out his hand.

"The pleasure has been all mine Sir," Murph said shaking his hand and saluting. Crisp left the office without looking back and eager to go.

"Sergeant Falcone after you get these two gentlemen situated drop back by here so we can talk," the short chubby Second Lieutenant said to Murph.

He got Fred Hope and Jack Jones situated then returned to the office, "Sir I believe the two have found a place to bunk for now and I hope you like the hotel Hilton."

"Shut the door Sergeant and have a seat. Lieutenant Crisp left in a hurry and I did not get much chance to ask about the Operation and the morale of the troops. I am going to be honest with you and confess that this is my first Command assignment. Your cooperation is appreciated," Luck said in a moment of candor.

"Sir I will do my best to assist you in all that I can," he smiled and they discussed the operation and the base in general for two hours.

Murph answered all of his questions and was glad to see the Lieutenant willing to ask for help.

"How would you pair the men on shifts," Luck asked.

"Smith is new so put him with Peters then Rogers with Hope and Jones with me. That should give balance and opportunity for the old hands to train the new," Murph laid out his idea.

"It sounds good to me let us give it a go. Is everyone here now? If so let's get them together and go over the assignments," Luck said.

"Yes we are all here."

They left the office and gathered in the Operations Hut. Luck introduced himself and the others then he laid out the new crew assignments.

Murph got up with Jones and said, "We are on shift in two hours but take your time and come over when you settle in. Have you had any rest?"

Mendacity

“Not in two days, Sage,” Jones grinned.

“OK, sack out we will start fresh tomorrow night,” he said and covered the shift by himself.

Chapter Sixteen

The next five months were busy ones for Murph training and bringing the new Lieutenant up to assuming the leadership role. He was a nice enough guy and Major Frisk must have gotten to him as he asked no questions about Murph's extra activities.

Jones and Murph worked well together and Jones was a quick study and didn't take long to lean about all the routines.

He completed the Martial Arts training and the Master never called him more than a Reluctant Warrior. He was far from being a Brave Warrior with time plus experience possibly will bring that status.

Peters, Rogers, and Murph were all soon to rotate out and replacements were due soon as there were only weeks between their rotation dates.

Hope will make a good shift Chief and with Jones help will be able to train the replacements Murph thought.

The messages from Liubov were more frequent and some were urgent as the Russians seem to be up to something new. Murph would routinely take her to or from the restaurant depending on the shift he was on.

He only had two weeks left on his assignment and was dreading having to leave Liubov. His shift was over and he hurried to pick her up at the Mission and make his rounds. He stopped but no one came out so he entered the small Chapel. Sister Marline rushed over and asked.

“Have you seen Sister Ivanova she did not return last night?”

“Maybe she stayed over at the Church. I'll go in town and see,” he said trying not to act concerned.

He hurried out and went to the restaurant. That is where the answers would be if there is any foul play. He found the owner and asked in Japanese who picked Liubov up last night as she was missing.

The Owner explained that he was suspicious as the truck she got into was not the normal truck that usually picked her up when Murph didn't.

Mendacity

He said he did get a glimpse of one of the men that put her into the back of the truck and it looked like Young Kim.

They have gotten her and panic set in. Calm down think straight and get a message to Frisk. Looking for her alone is a possibility but that would take time besides where do I look. He thought as he left the Restaurant. *If they leave the Island I can do nothing, so I must get to Frisk.* He sped back to the base and a phone.

He pulled up behind Major Frisk at the Main Gate. *Coincidence but who believes in coincidence?* Murph blew the horn and the Major turned and recognized him. Frisk motioned for the Japanese driver to pull over.

“They have her Major,” Murph blurted out as he approached the passenger side of the Major’s truck. He explained to Frisk everything that had happened recently including Liubov and their day together.

“She is more of a pro than that to blow her cover and yours for a moment of physical satisfaction,” Frisk said.

“No Sir, we didn’t have sex as she is a Nun and would have nothing to do with that sort of behavior. I would have but she let me know of her commitments,” Murph tried to correct any misconceptions on Frisk’s part.

The Major just looked at him and said, “Falcone you have a lot to learn about women and your instincts are good in other matters but women seem to throw you.”

“You mean she is not a Nun?” Murph asked.

Frisk just looked at him turned to the Japanese Driver and said, “Kim go into town and see what you can find out. We will meet you at our normal place in about three hours.

“Come on Falcone let’s get to the Compound as I have to make some calls,” Frisk said completely ignoring Murph’s last question.

It completely confused Murph about Liubov and he asked no more questions of the Major. He knew he had gotten all the information from Frisk that he would ever give. He would have to resolve it on his own.

They entered the Compound and Frisk went straight back to Luck’s office and did not return for a half hour.

Bob Furlin

“We are all set, Lieutenant Luck understands that you may not return for your shift and will cover for you. He is onboard with our activities.”

Liubov and now Luck is anyone telling the truth around here? Luck is a cool operator acting dumb and innocent and he had a great cover.

Murph just looked at the Major and shook his head in dismay and asked, “Sir, do you think they have removed her from the Island?”

“I don’t know but let’s get going and find out,” Frisk said.

As they left the hut he took out a shoulder holster plus a Barrette with a silencer and handed them to Murph.

Murph checked the magazine and he noticed that someone had fully loaded it. He strapped on the holster under his parka. He got into the driver’s side and off they went to town and hopped they would find Liubov in time.

Frisk led him to a small shack on the wharf about three blocks from the restaurant. Parked outside was the Major’s truck and they entered the shack to find Kim the Japanese driver of Frisk’s truck plus a middle-aged Japanese. Frisk introduced him as Dai and would help if needed.

Kim started talking to Frisk in Japanese both not realizing that Murph understood the language.

“They are keeping the woman in a shack about five blocks from here. They also have a fishing boat parked outside and it looks like they are ready to leave. There are four of them with her and the Korean is in charge.”

“Then we have to move quickly,” Frisk said.

“Are we taking the shirouto?” Kim asked.

Frisk looked at Murph and said in Japanese, “We have no other choice in the matter we have to move fast. We can gisei zono shirouto.”

Murph looked back at Frisk smiled and said in English, “This Amateur is willing to sacrifice himself for the cause.

“I may have underestimated the Sergeant he is a fast learner,” Frisk said to the two and they all laughed.

“This is the plan. The Amateur and Kim will enter the back and go for Liubov. Dai and I will take the front door and handle

Mendacity

as many of the four as we can. You two may have to help but protect the Nun first,” the Major laid out his rough plan.

They got into the Major’s truck with Dai and Murph in back and started for the shack. Kim parked the truck about a half block from the shack and they trotted the rest of the way there.

There was a small light on and they could see movement in the shack.

“OK gentlemen, and move fast as surprise is our ally. I will take out the Korean. We will give you two minutes to get around back. Wait until you hear us break into the front door as that will get their attention. Remember go for Liubov first and protect her,” the Major said to Dai and Murph.

Dai and Murph arrived at the back of the shack and waited about a minute then the front door crashed in and they rushed the back door with Dai in the lead. Murph quickly surveyed the scene in front of him and saw the Major take out the Korean. He saw Liubov lying on a bunk with a young Japanese man bending over her.

Dai had his hands full handling a large Jap as they locked in hand-to-hand combat. They hung onto each other and both were down on the floor. Murph forgot all his Martial arts training pulled the Barrette and shot the young man bending over Liubov in the back of the head killing him instantly.

The young man fell on Liubov and Murph rushed over and pulled him off her noticing a knife in his hand. She had blood on her but it was from the dead man.

“Liubov, Liubov can you hear me,” Murph asked her as she seemed to be unconscious.

“They have drugged her,” Frisk said coming up behind Murph.

“Is she breathing?” he asked.

Murph bent over and noticed the rise and fall of her breasts and said, “Yes Sir she is.”

“Let’s clear out of this place and we will use their boat outside. There is a ship waiting for us in the harbor. Get those dead bodies aboard. Falcone pick up Liubov and put her aboard the boat,” the Major quickly ordered.

Bob Furlin

Murph picked her up and she gave a slight moan and opened her eyes and noticed who it was that had her in their arms. She gave a big smile and closed her eyes again.

Murph carried her to the boat and the Major was already aboard.

He said, "Hand her to me and you get the truck back to the Base. Dai you take the other truck and dispose of it."

Murph gave her to Major Frisk and she gave a slight squeeze to his hand as he let her go. Murph stood and watched as Kim started the boat and they went out into the Bay. The last he saw of Liubov was as the Major laid her down on the deck.

"Come on let's get out of here," Dai said in Japanese, "This finishes our work and I will take you to your truck."

Murph was still trying to get a last look at the departing boat knowing that it was possibly the last time.

Frisk seemed to know her more than he let on as he started using her name instead of referring to her as a Nun, he thought as they went out of sight.

Back at the Compound he got ready to leave for home as his tour was over and his replacement had arrived. He received his orders to report to Brooks AFB, San Antonio, Texas then a thirty day leave.

It will be good to get home as the letters have been few and far between with all of my moving around. The trip back to Misawa was a repeat of the trip out except he was lonely without Liubov's company on the train.

He was looking ahead to the month of rest and time to reflect on the past activities. Did he want to continue in this double role or just be an ESM Technician? The War continued and it might mean that he would return to the battle area.

He had the premonition that once again all was not as it appeared. Would he ever see Liubov again? He thought there was more to her story than he knew and he felt uneasy. There was a smell of honey about what he knew about her.

Chapter Seventeen

The plane landed at Misawa and as Murph walked towards the Operations Building. A Jeep pulled up alongside him with two Air Policemen.

“You Sergeant Falcone?” the driver asked.

“Yes I am,” he answered thinking *now what is this all* about.

“Get in and come with us,” the driver demanded as the other AP got out and put Murph’s belongings into the back of the Jeep.

He got into the backseat and thought *is this about Lowe’s accident*.

He asked, “Where are you guys taking me?”

“Sit tight we will be there in a couple minutes,” the Driver said and Murph noticed that he had been on the road before.

Sure enough they pulled up at the same compound where he’d received his training before going out to Wakkanai. They escorted him to a different hut and when he entered Colonel Crow greeted him.

“Good to see you again Sergeant as I have had nothing but good reports on you from Wakkanai. Have a seat and get comfortable,” Crow said as he returned Murph’s salute.

Crow continued, “I see the questions on your face so let us get right to the reason you are here and not on your way back to the States.”

“Yes sir, the thought had crossed my mind as my orders said a thirty day leave and then report to Brooks,” Murph reminded him.

“How long have you been in the Air Force now? My records show thirty months and you have made the most of it so far,” Crow said looking through a file.

“Yes Sir, July 1949 was my enlistment date,” he answered noticing the Top Secret stamp on the file cover.

“What are your plans after your enlistment is up?” Crow asked.

“I haven’t given much thought of staying in the military. If that is what you are asking,” he grinned.

“How about a career in Air Force Office of Special Investigation called AFOSI?” the Colonel asked.

Bob Furlin

“What is their purpose?” he asked.

“Basically they investigate and neutralize criminal, terrorist, and espionage threats,” Crow explained.

“Sounds interesting but I do have plans of improving my intellectual and material situation in the world,” he implied the Air Force would not bring those things.

“How does a GS-9 rank sound to you?” Crow asked surprising him.

“Is that equal to a Military rank of First Lieutenant?” Murph asked as the offer got his attention.

“Yes it is, the Air Force would be your cover but you would be a civilian employed by AFOSI,” the Colonel gave more information.

“Exactly how would that work?” he wanted more information.

“We will discharge you from the Air Force then will ask you to sign a six-year contract with AFOSI,” Crow smiled.

“What benefit is that to the Air Force?” Murph asked still not satisfied with the answer.

“We will have flexibility on how we use your specific abilities,” Crow gave a straightforward answer.

“When would we do all this and on what time frame?” he wondered.

“I just happen to have the paperwork in this briefcase and your new status will start as soon as you sign the papers,” Crow said pulling out the documentation.

“Let’s get it on as on the surface it sounds like a good idea,” he said a little skeptical.

The Colonel gave him the documents to read and sign. He took time to read each page although some were wordy and one needed to be a Lawyer to understand the meaning of some paragraphs. He signed where marked and the Colonel also signed.

“Welcome to AFOSI Mr. Falcone. Now as they say the rest of the story,” the Colonel smiled and continued. “No one, I mean no one must know that you are not a Technical Sergeant in the United States Air Force. You will receive orders, take orders, and behave as if you were still an Enlisted Airman. Do you understand?”

Mendacity

“A Technical Sergeant?” he asked puzzled.

“Yes, if you had refused a promotion to E-6 was in your future. So congratulations Technical Sergeant Falcone,” Crow said grinning ear to ear as if he had pulled a fast one.

“Remember the world thinks you are a sergeant in the USAF. To family, friends, parents, wife, girlfriend, lover, co-workers, or teammates you will not reveal your true identity,” Colonel Crow stressed again.

Continuing he said, “Now that we have that all cleared up we have a new assignment for you. I am going to leave and four gentlemen will show up shortly. They will explain the purpose of the mission. Do you have any questions?”

“My family was expecting me home in a few weeks and I need to tell them of the delay. Do you know how long this assignment will last?” he asked.

“Six months at a minimum and a year max. Write a letter and I’ll see that your family receives it,” Crow said and turned to leave.

Murph saluted him and Crow smiled saluted and said, “Good luck, Sergeant.”

A half hour later the door of the hut opened and in walked four men dressed in civilian clothes. The spokesman for the group spoke in Russian and introduced himself as Hal but no last name. He then introduced Creg and Sam with no last names. Finally he introduced the fourth gentlemen in the room as Ivan Lykov.

Continuing in Russian Hal looked at Murph and said, “Gentlemen this is Boris Lykov cousin to Ivan,”

Murph taken completely by surprise thought. *Well we are still true to form deceit and mendacity that smells of honey it is a great way to start off my career.*

“Gentlemen the next two weeks we will speak only in Russian no English. I want Boris to eat, think, and sleep in Russian so it will be second nature to him. Do you have any questions Boris?” Hal asked Murph.

He started starts to answer in English caught himself and said in Russian, “You said I was a cousin to Ivan but we have no likeness to each other. How far removed are we? Are we first,

second, or third Cousins,” he asked the middle-aged Hal who resembled an overweight College Professor wearing bifocals.

“You are first Cousins and you will learn the family history in the next two weeks,” Hal said not answering Murph’s question of likeness as if it were of no importance.

Hal then went on to explain the mission and its purpose, “The mission is twofold and first we must contact our person in Vladivostok. We have lost contact with that individual and must know of their fate. We also suspect our man has vital information to pass on. The Russians uncovered his identity and we lost contact.

Second we have a firm belief that a top Russian Agent with the codename Patch One is in the area. We believe that he has a contact within our Security Services. We want to try to identify Patch One and his contact Patch Two.”

So this is what this is all about Murph thought. Patch One and Patch Two is what he heard on the mission in Korea. The Patch is a nickname they called the small Village he came from and he wondered if the intercept is why he was going on the mission.

“You will travel by Submarine in the Sea of Japan to a point off the Port City of Vladivostok,” Hal went on to explain mainly for Murph some facts about Vladivostok.

“Vladivostok, called the “Lord of the East or controlling the East is the home base of the Russian Pacific Fleet and found fewer than 100 km east of the Chinese border. It is just across the Sea of Japan from the main Japanese island of Honshu and is the largest Russian City in the Far East.

You will disembark from the Sub and row a rubber boat to a point outside the city where one of our people will meet you. We will give you the passwords later,” he finished and looked at the two and asked. “Any questions so far?”

“Does anyone know what Patch One looks like?” Boris alias Murph asked.

“No but we know he is in the area,” Hal answered.

“How long do you expect this mission to last?” Ivan asked.

“Six months to a year,” Hal answered.

Mendacity

At least the answer is consistent. Murph thought and wondered what Greg's and Sam's role was in this matter. They hadn't spoken since coming into the hut.

"Your contact will take you to a rooming house just two blocks from the former Most Holy Mother of God Catholic Church. Construction on the cathedral stopped when the Communists took over Vladivostok in 1922.

We believe Patch One is working from that location. A shipping company run by a Chinese Merchant will employ you. He will cover for you and his name is Lei Laa. He also owns a fleet of boats and you will work on one as dockhands with another distant cousin of yours.

Ok how about a Latrine break," Hal said and immediately left the hut.

"Where are you from in the States?" Sam asked Murph in English.

Murph did not answer and thought how dumb do you think I am. He also had his answer of the role Sam and Creg were to play. Their role was to try to trip Boris and Ivan into a mistake. Murph just looked at him just as a newborn calf looked at gate and said nothing.

The two kept talking in English until Hal returned but got no response from Boris or Ivan. Hal immediately started back into providing information with just a slight glance at the two speaking in English.

"Now about your last name of Lykov and you both need to be on the same page about your family background.

You are part of the Lykov family that goes back to 1625 BC. Lykov was one of four that were cousins to the Mikhail Tsar and were the Blizhnyaya Duma. They were a class of higher Russian nobility that until the time of Peter I headed the civil and military administration of the country and took part in an early Duma.

The Duma is a Russian national parliament during Czarist times," Hal stopped and handed them a manuscript that went into great detail about their family.

"Study this until it becomes second nature to you because your lives will depend on how well you understand this relationship," Hal turned and motioned for Sam and Creg to follow him and they left the room.

Bob Furlin

The next week Boris and Ivan studied and talked about their family ties. The family owned land until 1917 when the Tsar stepped down. A middleclass Duma replaced the Blizhnyaya Duma with their Grandfather's power taken from him. Their Fathers joined the Army with both killed in the battle of Stalingrad. Boris and Ivan lived on separate communal farms as both families scattered. They met again in 1949 and decided to go to Vladivostok and make a new life as there were many opportunities in the rapidly expanding area.

The rest of the two weeks Hal, Sam and Creg grilled them. They went over all angles of their story trying to trip up the two Cousins.

“You are as ready as we can make you and remember if caught they will question and possibly torture you. Continue discussing these facts and living as if you were truly Cousins,” Hal finished and the three left as suddenly as they appeared.

Hal entered the hut early the next day without Sam and Creg, “Gentlemen you are on go and all we need to do is tie up some loose ends.”

Ivan and Boris just looked at him as if not understanding and Ivan said, “We do not understand English and you will need to speak to us in Russian.”

Hal smiled and repeated it in Russian and adding, “The password with your contact will be ‘the clouds are dark’ and the reply is ‘I guess the snow will fall soon’.”

Hal further told them that they are to talk to no one in English on leaving the hut. They also must keep their communications with others at a minimum on the complete trip to Vladivostok. He gave them all the necessary official Russian papers.

Chapter Eighteen

That night a truck pulled up and Boris and Ivan got into the back of the canvas covered truck. They spoke to no one and no one spoke to them.

They boarded a C-47 and flew to another base got on another canvas covered truck that took them to a small launch. It went immediately out into the Sea of Japan.

Boris had no idea what base they took him or at what Port they boarded the launch. It was a dark cloudy night and daybreak found them about a mile out in a choppy sea.

The only luggage each had was a small suitcase and travel bag with toilet articles all Russian made.

The launch stopped and in the distance Boris could see a familiar outline of a Submarine approaching.

Boris whispered to Ivan, "I've seen that Sub before and it is the Perch. There are few with that odd hump on its deck."

The two launch crewmen said nothing as the Sub pulled alongside and lowered a net. There were only two Sailors on deck and they helped Ivan and Boris aboard and took their luggage below deck.

Taken to the Infirmary they assigned them a bunk that had a curtain closing them off from the view of the other passengers and crew.

"This doesn't look like what I imagined the inside of a Sub to be like," Ivan said looking at Boris with a puzzled look on his face.

Boris explained how there were only two of these modified Subs used for Raiding parties. He remembered his last days aboard the Perch and his buddies who lost their lives. He quickly realized that he needed to keep his mind on the present mission and think and act the part of Boris.

Ivan helped break his thoughts by asking, "You know a lot about this sub and its operation. Have you been on it before?"

"Let's just say that I forgot it and left it in the past," he answered part of the question not wanting to talk about the Perch.

Bob Furlin

Just about then the curtain parted and in walked Hal and sat down on one of the bunks. Ivan and Boris looked at each other with the same thought. *How did he get here so fast?*

Hal smiled and said, "I've been with you this whole trip watching your behavior and insuring no gaffes occurred. I was below deck in the cabin on the launch and riding up-front on the trucks." He saw their questioning looks at each other and he continued, "You have passed the test and the mission will continue. Boris you came close on your chatter about the Perch so remember any slip up and you have blown the mission.

Now, the reason I am here. We have lost complete contact with our man in Vladivostok and do not know if the KGB has him or he has gone into hiding. You are going to have to act more quickly than we expected as we thought you could settle into your job a few months before trying to find our man. But he has vital information that we need or need to know if the KGB is on to us. He is going under the name of Aleksei (to defend) Alenta and his codename is Purple. 'Purple is cool' will be your contact phrase. The response is 'But dull'. Acting quickly may endanger both of you but we must have that information."

Hal went on to explain there was a bar a block or so from the rooming house and that is where they could possibly find out some information.

The hope was that Vladivostok was growing so fast that the KGB overwhelmed by the influx of new people would not be able to zero in on them.

The Russians were building their fleet at a fast pace and many new construction needed workers and businesses flourished. The hope was the confusion would hide them.

"Getting you out is going to be a bit tricky. The boat you work on can make the trip to Japan and that is your best hope of getting you and possibly our man plus the information out. You will have to use all the ingenuity you possess to pull this off," Hal finished stood up shook their hands and said as he left, "Good luck Comrades."

A few minutes later the Perch got under way with Vladivostok being its destination. They went over the information Hal presented to them and both did not seem to be very confident that they could pull it off.

Mendacity

Four days later the Perch surfaced about a mile north of Vladivostok and five hundred yards off the Coast. It was around nine P.M. and clouds covered the Moon and the visibility was poor. Again no one on the Sub spoke to them just helped them unload the two man rubber boat.

The Sub quickly submerged when they had rowed about a hundred yards from it. The Sea was choppy and they struggled to keep the boat moving toward the coordinates given. Boris was not much of a Navigator but Ivan knew what he was doing and steered the boat. Two A.M. and they made the beach and sank the boat then walked toward the location given them.

They had beached about a mile north of the City limits and found the small building where they were to meet their contact. The broken down building was vacant and they cautiously entered and waited in silence.

Four hours and they heard a sound of a truck approaching and a 1943 GAZ-63 truck stopped outside the shack.

"I will handle this and if they suspect us eliminate them," Ivan said not knowing how many there were in the truck.

The driver got out of the truck and raised the hood and checked underneath as if there was something wrong with it. No one else seemed to be in the truck but Boris could not see in the covered bed.

Ivan stepped out of the shack and approached the driver and said, "You having trouble with the truck Comrade?"

The young Driver turned and said, "Yes, it wants to stall out and it is a bad time to break down as the weather is turning and the clouds are dark."

"Yes, they are," Ivan replied, "I guess the snow will fall soon."

The young Driver smiled shook Ivan's hand and said, "I am Dima Sozont. Are you alone?"

Boris stepped out of the shack and immediately checked the back of the truck, "No one back here," he called to Ivan.

"I am Ivan Lykov and that is my Cousin Boris Lykov. It is late we need to get on the road," Boris waved at Dima and got into the rear of the truck.

Ivan got into the passenger's side of the truck and Dima closed the hood and started the truck.

Bob Furlin

Dima, means 'strong fighter' Ivan thought and hoped that Dima lived up to his name. He thought Dima was probably twenty-five years old, six feet, with a wiry build.

“Are there any checkpoints coming into town?” he asked.

Yes and we need to get our Comrade in the cab with us,” Dima said as he pulled over. Ivan got out and told Boris to get in the front seat with them.

“What’s up?” Boris asked.

“There is a checkpoint about a mile ahead. Do you have your papers handy? They will try to say they are not in order so be alert,” Dima smiled.

“Our papers are in order,” Boris said hoping that they will pass the smell test.

They approached the checkpoint and stopped four vehicles back from the guards. They noticed the guards were doing a very thorough check as they searched each occupant plus their belongings.

Dima pulled the truck up to the checkpoint and the guards motioned for them to get out of the truck.

“Your papers Comrade,” one of the guards said to Boris.

He gave his papers to the guard and a civilian stepped out of the guard shack and asked to see the papers. He studied them and said, “Your papers are out of order. Where are you going and what brings you to Vladivostok?”

Boris remembered that they would try to rattle him. Not to volunteer any information and just answer their questions.

“I have employment with the Lei Laa Shipping Company and am on my way to a rooming house. I start work tomorrow,” he calmly answered not reacting to the papers out of order statement.

“Do you have proof of employment?” the civilian glared at Boris.

He reached into his jacket and handed him a letter from Lei Laa confirming his employment. The Civilian, probably KGB, took his time reading the letter and now and then looked up at him with a questioning look on his face.

A Guard meanwhile had gone through their bags and reported that he had found nothing out of order. The KGB Agent stepped

Mendacity

away and motioned to the other Agents that were interrogating Ivan and Dima.

They huddled talking in whispers while looking at Boris. He walked back and handed Boris his papers and said, "Your papers seem to be in order."

"Thank you Comrade," he said and got into the truck.

Dima drove off and they all breathe a sigh of relief. Twenty minutes later they pulled up in front of a weather-beaten warehouse converted into a rooming house.

"I will be here at six A.M. tomorrow to pick you up for work," Dima said as he let them out and drove off.

Entering the house KPG agents stopped them at the front desk and once again had their papers thoroughly checked with no problems.

They assigned them bunks in a big open room with roughly two hundred other men. The Military Barracks were a dream compared to these living conditions. The build-up of the Navy in Vladivostok was fast and furious needing all types of labor and skills plus housing. They made the best of a bad situation and adapted to the intolerable conditions.

The next three months they spent working on the small harbor boat ferrying supplies to the naval installations. They met Lei Laa the Chinese Owner the very first day on-the-job and he introduced them to the Boat Captain.

Lei Laa made a bad impression on Boris and he would not trust him in a tight situation. He had an essence about him that raised all sorts of warning signals and he began to trust his instincts.

The Boat Captain was a short burley Russian that was a nonsense individual that expected a hard day's labor. Boris, Ivan, and Dima were his deckhands plus two others that kept the boat running. Boris did not like or trust the Captain or either one of the two regular crew members.

The three of them stuck together and became good Comrades. There was one problem and that was they were no closer to finding the missing agent or identifying Patch One than they were the first day in the city.

One Friday evening the opportunity presented itself that could possibly change the situation. The three had become regular patrons of a small club with a dance hall, small band, and kitchen about three blocks down from their living quarters.

A Turk named Adil with his Pakistani wife, Afrin, managed the nightspot. Adil meant just and fair and Afrin meant praise or lucky. Boris immediately struck up a friendship with them. They both spoke some Russian and well enough to make the club prosper. They were both in their mid-forties and the club was growing with the influx of workers.

The opportunity came one Friday about eleven P.M. as Adil was trying to break up a fight between two drunken Russians. One got behind Adil and went for a knife. Boris stepped in and managed to take the knife away from the drunken man. The two of them threw the drunks out of the Club.

“Thank you Arkadas, excuse me Comrade,” Adil said in Turkish and corrected himself in Russian.

“You were in trouble and it was my pleasure to help you out,” Boris replied.

“Come, have a drink on me and I will introduce you to my wife,” Adil invited him to sit at the bar as Afrin was filling in for one of the bartenders.

She smiled and thanked him for helping her husband and said to Adil, “We are growing so fast and need help with our customers maybe your new friend can help us out?”

She turned to Boris and asked, “Are you interested in working for us? Do you have any experience in this line of business?”

She is more in charge than Adil, Boris thought, and this would be an ideal place to gather information. He had always heard that bartenders were the most informed people in the Community. This may be their best way to find out where they are holding the missing agent or he is just hiding.

“Yes I am interested but have limited experience in the business but I am a quick learner. I do know how to drink,” he said honestly thinking *the truth was better than trying to bluff his way through.*

Mendacity

“When can you start work?” Adil asked not hesitating about his lack of experience. His custom was that he owed Boris for saving his life.

They decided that he would start work in one week giving the Boat Captain time to find a replacement.

He would also help out in keeping order in the Club acting as a bouncer.

“No, I don’t like the idea. We need to keep together,” Ivan said on hearing the arrangement he had worked out.

“We are getting nowhere with the situation as it is and we need to make a break through. Three months and not one lead and this is an ideal job for gathering information,” he argued his case.

They continued to discuss the pros and cons the rest of the evening and after a few drinks decided that it may work. It never satisfied Ivan but he reluctantly agreed.

The Boat Captain could have cared less if he left as they never did hit it off. He said that he could leave that very day as there were all kinds of help available. He worked Monday and was happy to leave that job.

Now they had two fronts to gather information and Ivan and Dima would continue working on the boat and he at the club. Dima was never entirely told what they were trying to carry out but his role satisfied him.

“You can start tonight,” Adil said when he brought the news of his availability to start work. They agreed that his hours would start at four P.M. and last until closing.

The Communist regime tried its best to reduce alcohol consumption after the revolution but Russians like to drink. But they did accomplish the complete destruction of the beer brewing industry. The local Party zealots tried to intimidate the Club operators but money talked and bribes flourished. They banned the sale of Vodka after eight P.M. but Adil had connections. Boris was soon to find out who the connection was and the thin line that Adil walked.

Bob Furlin

A week passed and Boris was still keeping a low profile not asking many questions just being friendly and an attentive bartender when called on. Adil employed two regular bartenders, five waitresses, and six Chinese cooks. One of the bartenders was a thirty year old Hungarian and the other a forty-two year old Pol.

Boris made sure he made friends with all the employees while learning all he could about each of them.

The eight P.M. hour had just passed on a Friday night when Boris looked up from serving a drink and saw two customers enter the bar who caused him to do a double-take.

Chapter Nineteen

The scene Boris saw before him could not be real it had to be a vision beautiful and intimidating. They walked slowly towards a table. The man with a swagger and the woman was floating on air.

Boris had talked many times with an older and a shorter version of the Russian Lieutenant Colonel. The Colonel was in complete control of his surroundings.

Swagger did not portray his behavior it was more of a pompous gait and smugness. There was no mistaking that this was the son of the man and woman who first taught Murph Russian on their back porch in the little Village in Western Pennsylvania.

He was a Petrof all right Boris would bet the farm on that fact. What astonished him was the blond vision seated next to the Colonel.

The last time Murph saw her Major Frisk was laying her down in the back of a boat as they vanished out into the Sea of Japan. It had to be Liubov no other woman was able to match the beauty etched in Murph's eyes.

Her presence was confusing Murph as he had to remind himself of where and who he was. *Boris control yourself*, he thought, *events are never as they appear*.

George Petrof no sooner sat down when Adil was at his table as white as a ghost. Boris could literally see his knees shaking as he pampered the Colonel.

Afrin approached Boris and said, "Be alert the head of the KBG in Vladivostok is the one talking to Adil. He is a dangerous man and ruthless in his dealings with foreigners."

"Who is the woman that came in with him?" Boris asked.

"Lur (Lively) is his most recent mistress," Afrin answered.

"Do you know how long she has been his mistress?" Boris asked because the more he saw of her the more he believed that she was Liubov.

"No more than three weeks. She was working in one of the Clubs as a waitress. Do you know this woman?" Afrin asked.

“She is someone I would like to meet,” he said not answering her question.

Adil came to the bar and said in Turkish to Afrin, “Belgili albay cekti sevmek icmek ilgili votka.”

“So the Colonel would like a bottle of Vodka and two glasses,” Boris said in Russian as he understood some of what they said. He was trying to learn Turkish as Urdu is the official language of Pakistan.

“You are quick to understand languages, Comrade.” Afrin said in Urdu.

“Maybe, but I am having trouble with Urdu and I think you asked if I understood the language,” he answered and Afrin corrected him and the learning continued.

“Hurry, hurry the Colonel is waiting,” Adil said to Afrin.

“Let me get it,” he said to Afrin.

He walked over to the table and put the bottle on the table and a glass in front of the Colonel and Lur. He made sure that she got a good look at him.

He asked, “May I get the Colonel something else?”

“Yes, tell Adil I want some food in an hour,” Petrof said not looking at him and waved him away from the table with a gesture.

Liubov or Lur was either the best actress in the world or she had not recognized him with his beard. She didn’t blink, seem startled, or show any sign of recognizing him.

He went back to the bar and watched as the Colonel continued to show his complete control of those around him especially Lur.

Andrew the Hungarian was the bartender that insured the Colonel lacked nothing in the way of refreshments or food.

The Colonel went to the rest room and Andrew followed a few seconds later and asked Boris to take his place.

They stayed for about five minutes and he decided to check on them as he had noticed the looks the two gave each other. Boris told Stanley the Polish bartender to look after the bar as he had to relieve himself.

Boris entered the rest room just in time to hear the Colonel say in Hungarian as they were leaving.

Mendacity

“I do not trust that new man you keep an eye on him. Report to me any strange activities.”

Boris acted as if he did not understand what they said and said in Russian, “Excuse me Comrades.”

He had opened the door and almost hit them as he entered the rest room.

The Colonel glared at him and Andrew said in Hungarian, “Watch what you are doing you clumsy simpleton.”

“Thank you, Comrade,” he answered and they both laughed and walked off.

Simpleton let them continue to think that and perhaps they will reveal something important.

Ivan and Dima were sitting at the bar when he returned and he sat down next to them and said, “Comrades, you have had a hard days work. Have a drink on me.”

He tilted his head towards the Colonel’s table and whispered, “The Colonel is the head of the KGB and is the one we are looking for.”

“Are you sure?” Ivan asked.

“Yes he is George Petrof or Patch One. We must be careful he is suspicious of me and Andrew the bartender is one of his Agents. Watch what you say in front of him as I don’t know how many more are in this place,” he said noticing that Andrew was edging down the bar trying to overhear their conversation.

“How is the Boat Captain treating you two? He and I did not get along well,” he said loud enough for Andrew to hear.

“You are lucky, Comrade as he is a hard taskmaster you now have a cushy job. Watch this job doesn’t make you lazier than you already are,” Dima said to him with a big grin on his face.

The three continued to throw barbs at one another and eventually Andrew heard enough of their foolishness and wandered back down the bar.

Boris noticed that Adil was in an intense conversation with the Colonel and it looked like an argument from where he was sitting.

He nudged Ivan and said, “I wonder what that is all about? I am going to drift over that way and see if I can find out what is going on.”

Bob Furlin

Luck would have it and an argument broke out two tables from the Colonel. He hurried over just in time to step between two drunken Russian Sailors. They were arguing over a Chinese girl that they brought in with them.

“Cool off Comrades and have a drink on me. The lady looks like she can accommodate both of you,” he said in trying to calm the situation.

The offer of a few free drinks satisfied their anger. He walked by the Colonel’s table just in time to hear him say to Adil.

“She will start work here tomorrow and she is a maestro on the Balalaika plus all her other qualities,” he reached over and pulled Lur over to him and groped her breasts. “My sweet you go and purr for me as I am in a romantic mood.”

Lur obediently got up and strutted towards the band. She still gave no hint of recognizing Murph. The fact that she has not noticed him baffled him. Perhaps it was not Liubov as it seems impossible she could have linked so fast with the Colonel. It was not that long ago that he saw her semiconscious on the boat. Major Frisk must be a miracle worker.

But there was no way the woman that was walking to the troupe wasn’t Liubov the likeness was remarkable. He continued to watch as she talked to one of the troupe picked up a Balalaika and captivated the audience.

Three months passed and Lur continued to charm the Patrons every night. Boris tried many times to strike up a conversation with her but she continued to rebuff him. He decided that she was not Liubov.

Lur could possibly be a twin but will he ever find out if that was true. The Colonel showed up twice a week to party and freeload on Adil.

He became discouraged as they were no closer to finding the missing agent’s location. The break through came when Boris overheard one of the waitresses talking to Stanley the Polish bartender. She said that she missed her friend Aleksei and she feared that something bad had happened to him.

Dima’s assignment was to make friends with the waitress and find out anything he could. A week passed and he came back with information from her.

Mendacity

The last time she saw Aleksei was about four months ago. She saw him leave the club she worked for at the time with Lur and she never saw him again. He was a regular patron of that club. The ball was now in Boris's court and he had to find out from Lur whatever she knew.

Boris knew that it would be hard to get near Lur as Andrew kept a close eye on her for the Colonel. He decided the best approach was for her to come to him and not him trying to cozy up to her. His first task was to convince Andrew that he had no interest in her.

"She is the best and beautiful and the Colonel is one lucky man. Man she probably is good in bed" he heard Andrew say to Stanley.

"I don't think so because her tits are too small, she has bony legs, and her butt is too wide for me," Boris said to them as he walked up to the bar.

Andrew turned to him with a scowl on his face and said, "You must like men if you think that Comrade."

"Now that is my idea of a woman," he said pointing to a buxom blonde waitress, "My type any day over that skinny legged bleached blonde. No offense to the Colonel but a man of his rank could do better and besides he probably has her stretched. Of course that is only what I think. Besides I would like for the Colonel to know that I thought she was beautiful and the best," he said ignoring Andrew's snide remark and letting Andrew know the Colonel would not like his comments about Lur.

"He would not like your comments either, Comrade" Andrew snapped back.

"Well she is not my type and I am no threat to him on that score," he said and walked off.

Boris spent the next week flirting with Lia the buxom waitress especially when Lur was around and watching. He paid no attention to her and only spoke when necessary.

"My beauty that Comrade thinks that you have small tits and a wide butt," the Colonel said to Lur as Boris passed by their table and she grasped his arm.

Bob Furlin

Lur looked up at Boris with an angry look in her eyes, “Maybe Aleksei could use some company,” she blurted out in displeasure and frustration.

“I am embarrassed that someone relayed my unfortunate comments to you Colonel as I have only admiration for the Lady and meant no disrespect. I am sorry if I offended the Lady,” he apologized to the gloating Colonel and Lur for his statements.

He did not give a hint that he recognized the name of Aleksei.

“They have Ivan,” they were the first words out of him when he met Ivan later that night but, “The question is where.”

“I would assume at KGB Headquarters,” Ivan guessed.

“We need to confirm that and come up with a plan,” he said wanting to get it over with as soon as possible.

The plan was simple just break into KGB Headquarters housed in the former Catholic Cathedral and bring out the Agent. It was a simple plan but complicated and risky to achieve. The situation became simpler when Dima gained information from a former occupant of the Cathedral.

When the Russian hierarchy started to persecute Catholics in Vladivostok many of the members hid out in the huge cellar of the Cathedral. There was a secret tunnel that led into the cellar and many had escaped through it during the early years. Dima had gotten a rough drawing of the cellar and the hidden entrance.

“How reliable is the information and the person that you got it from?” Boris asked Dima.

“He was a young man in his late teens and his memory is clear. He was a devout Catholic and an altar boy at the time. He holds the KGB in great contempt and hatred,” Dima seemed confident of his information;

Ivan and Boris trusted in his instincts but wanted further confirmation of the whereabouts of Aleksei. That meant that Lur was the logical one to provide the information.

That plan was also simple just ask her. That task fell to Boris and that meant blowing his cover. They would have to deal with her afterwards and then there was Andrew. He never left her out of his sights and was a problem. They had to take Andrew out of the picture.

Ivan was to arrange for a boat to take them to Japan and one that was sea worthy. That was going to be a big task. Dima had

Mendacity

experience operating and navigating a boat in the open sea so he would have to escape with them. His cover was in jeopardy so he decided to take Lur with them.

They planned to give themselves one week to make all the arrangements and go on a Tuesday evening around nine in the evening. If their luck held they would be far at sea by daybreak.

Tuesday came and all was on go and he made the first move around seven that night. Lur had just finished her first song as the Colonel was never in the club on a Tuesday.

Boris walked over to her and said, "Lur, Adil would like to see you in his office."

An outside door was next to Adil's office and as they passed it he walking behind her put his right arm over her chin. With his left hand pushed her head toward his right elbow while bringing his elbows together. He used the sleeper hold taught to him in Japan and she was out in ten seconds. He picked her up and carried her to the truck.

He had just finished putting her in the rear of a truck when Andrew opened the door of the club and saw him behind the truck.

"What are you doing there, Comrade? What have you put into the truck?" Andrew asked walking towards Boris.

He decided immediately not to treat Andrew the same way as he needed killed and quickly. He surprised Andrew with a quick kick to his solar plexus.

Andrew lunged forward and with the palm of his hand Boris broke Andrew's nose stunning him. He then snapped the sunned bartender's neck. It happened so quickly that Andrew made no sound. He put him into the truck and covered him with a tarp.

Ivan walked up as he was getting out of the truck and asked, "Is everything going as planned?"

"Yes, Andrew is dead and she is asleep. Where is Dima? It is getting late," he exclaimed.

"He will be here, don't worry," Ivan said and Dima showed up in five minutes.

"OK let's get the blasted show on the road," Boris said curtly still shaken over his killing of Andrew.

He got into the back of the truck with Lur put tape over her mouth and awakened her. Lur snapped awake with a wild scared look in her eyes.

“Listen closely and don’t make any trouble and we will not hurt you. I need to know exactly where they are keeping Aleksei in the basement of Headquarters,” he said gambling that they kept him there plus giving the impression that he knew more than he did.

She just shook her head no.

“You cooperate with me or we will tell the Colonel that you are a double agent and you deliberately let Aleksei’s name out. I don’t think he will be as kind to you as we will. We will take you with us if you cooperate and we will treat you well,” he threatened Lur and she responded by shaking her head yes.

“I am going to take the tape off your mouth don’t yell or make a loud sound. I need to know exactly where they are keeping Aleksei in the cellar,” he told her and took the tape off.

She followed his instructions and told him what cell Aleksei was in.

“How many guards are there on duty in the Basement? When do they change shifts?” he smiled at her.

“Normally there are two guards on duty and they change over at Midnight,” she answered in a shaken voice.

“Don’t lie to me. I understand there are four guards on duty at any one time,” he said spreading a little honey to elicit maybe a truer answer.

“No Comrade, only two and they change at Midnight,” she answered with a scared look in her eyes.

“I hope for your sake that you are not lying to me,” he made one last try and she stuck to her story.

He put tape back on her mouth and tied her hands and legs. Dima drove the truck to a vacant building about two hundred yards in back of KBG Headquarters. He parked the truck in a small broken down shack trying to hide it from any passerby.

“Dima you stay here with Lur and if we don’t get out make your escape and take her with you. Remember that we think the Colonel is Patch One,” Ivan told Dima if he and Boris failed in their attempt.

Mendacity

Boris and Ivan found the opening in the basement of the vacant building and the small tunnel leading to KBG Headquarters. It took about fifteen minutes to crawl to headquarters. They came on a small opening hidden behind an old coal bin in the basement. They could see there were four guards and not two and then realized that it was near midnight.

The guards were talking in low tones and they could not make out what they said but two eventually climbed the stairs out of the basement.

“She was telling the truth. You take out the one on the left and I’ll get the other,” he whispered to Ivan.

They both had pistols with silencers and Ivan said, “Shoot on the count of three,” they killed the two guards without either guard uttering a sound.

“Watch the stairs and I’ll find Aleksei,” Boris whispered.

He got a ring of keys off the belt of one of the guards and quietly found the cell Lur said they were holding Aleksei.

“Purple is cool,” he whispered through the small opening in the door.”

“But dull,” came the quick response from inside the cell.

He quickly opened the cell door and Aleksei grasped his hand tightly and said, “I am Aleksei Alenta and who are you?”

“My name is Boris and Ivan is watching the stairs let’s get out of here before they discover us. Help me pull the guards in your cell,” he said and they put the two into the cell and locked the door.

“Ivan let’s go,” he said to Ivan and the three scrambled into the tunnel.

The trip back was faster than coming and they did not speak a word until they exited the tunnel.

“I’ve parked the truck over there,” Ivan said shaking Aleksei’s hand.

Dima pulled back the canvas opening on the truck and jumped out and asked, “Is everything ok?”

“Dima meet Aleksei and get us out of here and quickly,” Boris said to Dima as the three got into the back of the truck.

“Who is that?” Aleksei said pointing to Lur.

“Lur who is going to cooperate with us as she is a friend of the Colonels so keep an eye on her,” Boris told Aleksei.

Aleksei asked how they were going to get out of the City. The concern he had was he could not deliver the information he knew. He proceeded to tell both Ivan and Boris in English all the information he had. This was to up the odds of the information getting back if something happened to him.

The Russians were developing a Ground-to-Air missile at the Baikonur Cosmodrome and were in the early phases of development. He went on to explain that they had discovered U.S. plans for developing a high-flying spy jet and were going to counter that threat.

He also said the KBG had not found out what he had but he was close to breaking. Their methods were getting more brutal and he was sure he would have broken down if not rescued.

He relayed some technical information and a host of other information about the Russian missile program. He finished as the truck came to a sudden stop.

The flap pulled back and Dima said, "We are here let's go."

Boris untied Lur's feet and hands but left the tape over her mouth.

"Don't take the tape off or make a sound," he cautioned her.

They hurried down to the boat with Dima leading the way. Boris kept Lur close to him and she made no effort to break away. They got onboard with Dima taking the helm. Boris stood Lur on the port side and he and Ivan untied the boat.

It was very foggy and visibility was poor but the boat's noisy engine alerted a nearby patrol. A searchlight lit up the scene and someone shouted to stop. Dima ignored the command and gunned the engine.

Boris was just getting down from untying the front of the boat when shots rang out. Hit in the right shoulder he saw Ivan shot in the gut and fall into the aft part of the boat. The last he saw was Lur being shot and falling overboard. Another bullet grazed his head and he went into darkness.

Chapter Twenty

The sound of the waves against the hull of a boat plus its rocking woke him. He had blurred vision and the first thing he recognized was an IV stand with tubes running down into his arm.

His vision cleared and he realized that he was in a hospital bed with a curtain surrounding his bed. He tried to get-up but his head started swimming so he called out as loud as he could in Russian.

“Is any one there?” no response so he tried again.

The curtain parted and a small brunette in a Nurses uniform entered and said in English, “Well Sergeant you have finally come back to us.”

“Where am I?” he responded in Russian.

“Excuse me but I don’t understand Russian. Do you speak English?” she asked.

He just looked at her and his mind started whirling with questions. *Should I speak in English or continue as Boris.* He decided to say nothing and stared at her.

She frowned, turned, exited, and pulled the curtains back to shield the bed. A few minutes later the curtains parted and in walked Hal.

“Welcome back Sergeant Falcone you are looking much better than when you got here,” he said in English.

No response from Boris and he just laid there and stared at Hal.

“OK Sergeant the mission is over and you are back in friendly territory,” Hal said irritated.

“Where am I?” Boris asked again.

Hal pulled the curtain back and gave Murph a view of the hospital ward and he saw the nurses and corpsmen taking care of the wounded.

“Purple is cool,” Boris said.

“But dull,” Hal answered.

“How long have I been out?” Murph asked finally satisfied that he was in friendly hands.

Bob Furlin

“Two and a half weeks,” Hal answered and continued, “You lost a lot of blood before Dima and Aleksei contacted the Perch and they rescued you. Your shoulder wound is almost identical with the one you received in Korea. You were lucky with the head wound it must have been a ricochet. You will be fine in a few months. I need to ask you some questions before I answer any more to insure the information Aleksei told us was the same he told you.”

“OK, that is if I can remember my head is whirling and I’ll tell you what I remember,” Murph answered.

“Tell me what you remember from the time you opened Aleksei’s cell until you blacked out,” Hal said.

Murph told the story as he remembered it. He gave all the information that Aleksei had told him.

He finished with a question, “How about Ivan and Lur? Did they survive?”

“Ivan and Boris died before they reached the Perch. They left Lur in the harbor where she fell in and we do not know if the Russians rescued her,” Hal answered.

“I am or Boris is dead?” Murph said shocked.

“Yes we had a burial at sea for Ivan and Boris the Russians have conveniently found that out by now,” Hal continued, “We also wrote letters to your parents telling them that you are ok. The forged letters are in your name and you should read them to know what we told them. Once in Hawaii you need to write that you will be home for thirty days.

We promoted you to G-11 but you will remain a Technical Sergeant. Your cover will remain the same and we want you to find out all you can from Colonel Petrof’s parents while on leave. Especially about that second son and is he Patch Two? A training accident caused your wound once again. You are one clumsy fellow. That should wrap this mission up and do you have further questions?”

“Yes how about Adil and Afrin are they going to be ok?” Murph asked concerned.

“We don’t know their fate. They were not working for us so the Colonel will have nothing to go on about ties to the U.S,” Hal honestly answered.

Mendacity

“I will see you in a couple of months and by the way that was a good job,” he left with Murph pondering all revealed to him.

I don't know how successful I was loosing all those people and he wondered about the fate of Lur.

Forty five days later and Murph was on his way from San Francisco to Pittsburgh by bus. The stay in the Hospital was uneventful and he was about 95% recovered from his wounds. He arrived at the bus terminal and took a local bus to within five miles of the Patch. It was around four in the afternoon on a chilly February day and he decided to walk home.

He hadn't been home in more than two years and he was looking forward to seeing his family. He picked up his duffel bag and stepped lively down the familiar two lane road as traffic was very light.

He reflected on the news headlines about President Eisenhower announcing detonation of the 1st H-bomb in October 1952. *The World is playing a dangerous game of one-upmanship and I hope we will never use these devices again. Who would have ever thought that this Coal Miner's son would play a role in the Espionage game? Could my contribution end some of the madness?*

A car pulled alongside breaking his thoughts and the driver said, “Hey Soldier you want a ride?”

Murph bent down and looked into the window of the 1950 blue and cream Desoto and the smiling face of Paul Petrof.

Paul the youngest of the Petrof boys was the same age as Murph and had no air of deceitfulness about him. He was a very open and fun loving individual. Murph always found him to be honest, trustworthy, and a good pal.

Being neighbors they grew up together and shared many adventures together in the hills surrounding the Patch. His nickname was Straight for straight-shooter one honest and reliable dude.

Murph got into the car and Straight said, “Murph put your bag in the backseat and it is good to see you. Did you end the War?”

“I had very little to do in the War but the trip was an adventure. How is your family?” he asked.

“We are all doing fine?” Straight smiled.

“Everyone, how about your older brothers in Russia I hope both of them are ok?” he asked going on a fishing expedition.

“They are doing fine. Why do you ask?” Straight asked with a puzzled look on his face.

“Perhaps I misunderstood my Mom’s letter or she misunderstood your Mom. She wrote that your Mom told her they had an accident that killed them,” he said looking at him for some reaction.

“Your Mom must have miss-understood her because they are just fine and prospering. They are both living just outside Moscow,” Straight replied and Murph sensed no deceit in his answer.

“You mind pulling into my Sister’s place maybe she is home. I haven’t seen her new home since they moved into it,” he said changing the subject. His Sister lived about a mile from their parents.

“Sure no problem but it looks like no one is home,” Straight said pulling up the steep driveway.

Murph got out and climbed the steps then rung the doorbell. No reply so he got back into the car.

“Maybe she is up at Mom’s and Dad’s. Bill is probably working. Thanks for stopping.”

He did most of the talking during the one mile ride on the narrow two lane winding and hilly road. Murph made comments about the two blind underpasses of the Walbash and Montour railroads.

One could not see approaching traffic and had to blow their horn and it was amazing how few accidents occurred with no one ever being critically injured. It felt good to be home and Murph was drinking in the familiar sights.

They passed trough the second underpass under the Montour Railroad tracks and up a steep hill. The only beer joint in town was on the right at the top of the hill.

“Want a beer?” he asked wanting to repay him for the ride plus he was thinking maybe his Pap was in the joint.

There was only one car parked outside but that meant nothing as Pap didn’t drive and usually walked down. There were very few cars in the small Village.

Mendacity

“Sure, I am in no hurry,” Straight answered.

They entered the joint and sitting at the small bar was his Dad, nicknamed Muzzy.

Murph signaled the Bartender/Owner Frank to keep quiet. He walked quietly up behind his Dad and said in Italian, “Come stai? Prende qualcosa da bere vecchio l’uomo?” translated – “How are you doing? Would you like a drink old man?”

“Offro io! - It’s my round!” Muzzy answered not turning around or recognizing the voice since he didn’t know Murph spoke any Italian.

“Grazi pago io. -Thanks, I am paying,” he laughed.

Muzzy turned around and almost fell off the bar stool as he recognized his Son. He put a bear hug on him and said, “Il poliziotto, lei ha visto la Mamma ancora? - Bobby have you seen Mamma yet? - “Chi l’ha insegnata Italian? - Who taught you Italian?”

“No I have not seen Mamma yet as I asked Straight if I could buy him a drink. He picked me up down the road,” he replied in English trying to avoid the Italian question.

“Drinks for every one, including you Frank,” he said shaking Frank’s hand.

“You are looking good and the Military must be treating you well. I don’t remember you being so big,” Frank said looking surprised.

There were only two other older men in the bar and Murph went over and shook their hands and gave them a glass of draught beer. He knew them but never had really spoken to them before as one was Italian and the other Slavic. Neither of them spoke English and his Pap spoke Italian and broken English and better than most of the older men.

They had a couple more draught beers and Straight said, “I’ve got to get home, I’ve got a hot date tonight. You want a ride up?”

“You go home Bobby, I’ll be up later,” Muzzy said.

Home was only a quarter mile from the joint and Straight pulled into his driveway around seven in the evening and it was dark.

Murph thanked him and crossed the street to his home. There was a light on in the kitchen and he could smell bread baking as

he stepped onto the small back porch. He knocked on the screen door and a surprised Mamma opened the door not expecting him home for a few days.

“Bobby, you need a haircut,” her usual comment when he or his brother came home.

He bent down and she hugged his neck and kissed him on the cheek. She stood just short of five feet but had the energy of a giant.

“You have lost weight and you look so thin. Haven’t they been feeding you?” she said relishing the thought of fattening him up.

”You hungry sit down and I’ll make some fried bread sandwiches. The bread and rolls will be in the oven for a while,” she asked not waiting for an answer.

She got out the makings of a meal that only she could whip up. The evening went in a blur as the family gathered and they talked into the night.

It surprised him to see the new indoor bathroom they had installed since he left. They were moving into the twentieth century.

He awoke about eight thirty in the morning once again in his own bed with a view of the Petrof’s house and the street corner. The corner in-which he grew up and the gang met every day. The place where they played their games, talked for hours, and plotted many adventures plus some notable fights.

It was a surprising nice morning for February and the Petrof’s were out and sitting on their back porch. Murph was eager to get out and talk to them.

He hurried and got out his sweat suit and running shoes and went downstairs.

His Mom greeted him, “Good morning, sit down and I’ll get breakfast for you.”

He gave her a big hug and said, “Mom, I am going for a morning run and will be back in two hours. You can have breakfast or lunch for me then. Mom are you sure Mrs. Petrof said her two boys died or killed?”

“That is what she told me,” she answered.

Murph hurried out the back door hearing, “But you are so skinny you need to eat.”

Mendacity

He went down the sidewalk reached the street and pretended to notice the Petrofs for the first time. He jogged over and said in Russian.

”Mr. and Mrs. Petrof it is so good to see you both looking so well.”

”Bobby you have grown up and taller than before,” Mrs. Petrof said and he just grunted.

If that isn't an older Patch One I'll eat my hat Murph thought.

”Are you both enjoying the morning?” he asked trying to break the standoff feelings they were emitting, “I am sorry to hear about the death of your two boys. I am sure the Russian people are as proud of them as you are of them.”

”Russia great Country and the People honor my boy's service to Mother Russia. They are great fighters and will fight on,” Mr. Petrof echoed his favorite saying and does refer to them as if they were alive.

She said nothing just looked at her husband.

This in Murph's mind confirmed what Straight told him.

”We be have good weather today,” he said in English mimicking their usual greeting to him plus changing the subject.

They chatted for another ten minutes but he never referred to their Sons, “I have to get my morning exercise I will see you both later and we can talk.”

”Bobby you speak our language like a true Russian you have been practicing,” she said looking at him.

He didn't reply smiled and started his two-mile run. The chat never occurred as the month passed by in a blur and he spent the time with family and friends' visiting, eating, eating, and eating plus some more eating.

He put on twenty pounds in that month and that was after his daily runs. He was at two hundred forty-nine pounds and in good physical shape as all his running was in the hills.

Two days before his leave was up he received a phone call and they had changed his orders. He was to report to Fort Myers, Virginia on March 6 for billeting.

Monday morning March 8 at 0700 hours he was to be in Corridor E, Room 789 of the Pentagon.

Chapter Twenty One

He booked a flight on the fifth leaving Allegheny County Airport to Dulles. His brother in-law took him to the Airport. His Mom and Dad had to go plus his sister and her four-year-old boy. They went early as Pap had to watch the planes land and take off from the observation deck.

“You make sure you write and let us know that you are doing ok. Make sure you eat,” the parting words of his Mom as he boarded the plane.

Monday morning and Murph climbed the steps to the Pentagon per the written orders that waited for him at Myers. The orders were vague only specifying the place and time to report to the Pentagon. He checked in with the Guard at the front door and showed him his orders. The Guard gave him a temporary badge and showed him how to find Corridor E, Room 789. He never realized how huge and confusing the place was but after a few wrong turns found the room.

He hesitated at the closed door wondering if he should just go in. No one said he could not enter so he opened the door and cautiously entered the room.

“Welcome Sergeant Falcone, I see you found your way around this place,” Hal said to a surprised Murph.

Hal was the only one in the room.

“Yes Sir after a few missteps,” he said shaking Hal’s hand.

“Hope you had a good leave, rested and fully recovered. Sit down as we just have two hours before the others show up. We wanted you here early to brief you separately from the others. Have you had breakfast?” Hal asked.

“Yes I ate at Myers,” he said smiling remembering his Mom.

“There are drinks and some food over there if you want something,” Hal said.

Murph got up and got a cup of coffee wondering what this was all about.

“We have assembled a team of five to go to Peshawar, Pakistan to pave the way for a scouting team to find a site for a new listening post. The Russians are feverishly working on their

Mendacity

Space program and ground to air intercept missiles. I am not going to brief you on the details of the mission as you will get that with the others. Remember no one knows that you are not military as your records are just as if you never left the Service.

Someone leaked important information to the Russians about our abilities and you need to keep a close eye on each of your team members. They all have checked out but we need to be sure that one of them is not as they seem to be. Did you find out any more about Patch Two?" Hal asked.

"Yes, they are not dead and the youngest son told me they were still alive and the old man slipped up and referred to them as if they were still alive. I believe the son but could find nothing else out. Do you think one of the team is Patch One?" Murph asked.

"We don't know but you know the saying -- It is better safe than sorry. I want you to read over these background checks on the four. You need to see if they are consistent with what they say and do during the mission," Hal said handing him four folders.

The first folder Murph opened was a surprise to him as the dossier was on Frisk a CIA agent posing as a Lt. Colonel in the USAF. The big blow that made him sick to his stomach was not that Frisk was CIA but that his wife was Liubov Ivanova. The information devastated him and he had to lay the folder down.

So that was the vows she referred to that day on the beach, he thought.

"Is there something wrong?" Hal asked noticing his reaction.

"No not really. Does Frisk know about me?" he asked lying about not being upset.

"Yes he does but not about this meeting. Don't tell anyone about this meeting and that includes Frisk," Hal answered emphatically.

Murph picked up the folder and continued to read all the information on Frisk.

"You notice we have highlighted the facts you should remember about each individual. Their age, birthplace, family information, nicknames, etc," Hal broke in interrupting Murph's reading.

Murph finished with Frisk and picked up another folder with the name Sergeant Jack Strand. *Now where did I hear that name before?* He thought and he read the file and came across the nickname of Fish.

Fish Strand, that's him the tall Sergeant I met at a bar in Hawaii loaded and talking about just getting back from Wakkanaï. He'll make this an interesting trip as he seemed to be quite a character at least that is the impression I had during the short contact with him.

“Speed it up Falcone the others will be here shortly. I have to be gone and with those folders,” Hal said getting impatient with him.

The next folder was a surprise and a potential problem for Murph. Sergeant Stan Peters was one of the Team and Murph paid close attention to all the highlighted parts of the document.

The last folder was on a Captain Delbert Tiler a graduate of West Point and an Electrical Engineer. This guy had a pedigree and connections in high government circles. Father and Grandfather both former Generals and an Uncle on his Mothers side a Senator.

Well, at least we will have some class on this mission, he mused.

“I have to get out of here and we will keep in touch with you and the password is -- The ox is slow. The reply -- The earth is patient,” Hal hurriedly gathered the folders and exited the room.

Five minutes later the door opened and in walked Lt. Colonel Frisk now a full Colonel accompanied by a First Lieutenant. Murph snapped to attention.

“At ease Sergeant Falcone it is good to see you,” Fisk returned Murph’s salute.

Then another two officers came into the room and Frisk introduced them as Colonel Lake and Lieutenant Frey. They proceed to set the room up for a briefing.

Two minutes later in walked a Captain with Peters and Strand. The two Sergeants did a double-take when they recognized Murph sitting at the conference table. They said nothing just sat down.

“Welcome gentlemen my name is Colonel Lake and that is Lieutenant Frey and we will brief you on your mission. First

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introduce yourselves then find out something about each other as you will be together for some time.”

Lake pointed to Colonel Frisk and said, “You first Colonel.”

Frisk started the introductions telling some facts of his life then the rest followed suit with Murph being the last spewing honey. He noticed that all the testimonies followed the information found in the folders. No one made a mistake and said anything that would raise ones’ suspicions. They were clean or were expert at distorting the facts as well as Murph.

“Peshawar, Pakistan is your destination gentlemen,” Colonel Lake announced. He stopped looked around for some reaction.

“What do we have in Peshawar?” Captain Tiler asked.

“Not a thing and that is why you are going,” Lake said.

“We need a listening station in that part of the World and you are going in to pave the way for a scouting team. Your findings should enable us to direct the bigger team to possible locations for a site. We are in a hurry and we hope you can shorten the time the larger team will need to find a suitable site. Your Team will also try to flush out any enemy spies in the area. Time is of importance,” Lake continued, “Can anyone locate Peshawar?”

“It's location is southeast and just below the Khyber Pass that connects Peshawar and Kabul, Afghanistan,” Tiler piped up once again and displayed his knowledge of that area.

“That is right and is an ideal location to receive telemetry signals from the Southern Russian missile development sites. We need you to help find the best place to position a site. It is urgent we find out their ability to shoot down a high-flying object plus information on their space program and long-range missile development. You will fly to Peshawar in civilian clothes and stay in a local hotel. The Pakistan Government has given permission to our setting up a base. They do not know its purpose and you must not reveal what your mission is in Peshawar.”

Lake finished his information about the mission and pointed to Lt. Frey and said, “Lt. Frey will show slides of the area and fill you in on weather condition, customs, and information about Pakistan. First let’s take a break and get something to eat.”

Murph went to the Latrine to relieve himself and as he was standing at the urinal someone touched his back.

“How is it hanging big boy? You were in a big hurry the last time I saw you and heading for Wakkanaï. How did it go out there?” Stan Peters asked standing at the adjourning urinal.

“It was long, cold, and boring as you well know. How was Korea? Murph asked.

“They didn’t shoot or run over me. The women were great and interesting. What do you think of this new assignment?” Stan replied and asked Murph looking him in the eyes.

“It will be something new for sure as I have never been in that part of the World before, have you?” Murph asked staring right back at him picking up on the shot and run over comment.

“No, but we are going now,” Stan said as they left the latrine.

They went back into the room and the group was eating lunch.

“Eat up fellows the Government has outdone itself,” Fish said eating a ham sandwich.

“I am going to continue and you can keep on eating as there is still much material to cover,” Lt. Frey said.

He went on for two hours and finally asked, “Does any one here speak Urdu?”

Frisk and Tiler raised their hands.

“Sergeant Falcone I thought I understood that you spoke the language also. You say you don’t speak the language,” Colonel Lake piped up.

All eyes turned in his direction, “A little Sir but not fluent and I cannot carry on a conversation. I know just enough to understand a little. I didn’t think I knew enough to say I spoke it,” he answered with no apologies.

“AAP SE MIL KAR KHU-SHI HUI,” Colonel Lake said to him in Urdu.

“It is nice to meet you also,” Murph answered in English.

“GHU-SAL KHA-NA KA-HAN HAI,” Lake continued.

“The bathroom is down the hall” he replied.

“YEH KIT-NE KI HAI?” Lake asked.

“It cost five Rupees,” he translated.

“Sergeant, you will get bye,” Lake decided.

“SHOO-KRI-YA,” Murph thanked him.

“We are about to wrap this up after these two small details.” Lake smiled and continued, “When you get to Peshawar I said

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you would be in civilian dress. That means when you arrive and to comply with their dress codes. You will wear a shalwar qami. It will comply with their strictly enforced codes and to avoid offense. The dress is long, loose, non-revealing garment worn by both men and women.”

Lake stopped and looked at the group for a reaction seeing only a few frowns he continued, “How many of you are expert riders?”

Frey and Frisk raised their hand and the others looked at one another, “You two can help train the others as we are sending you to Quantico, Virginia to become horse soldiers. Gentleman I wish you good luck and success,” Lake dismissed them.

“Men stick around and I will go over our travel plans and meeting place. I will be right back,” Colonel Frisk took charge and left the room with Lake and Frey.

“Horse Soldiers now that is a twist,” Fish said to the group.

“It is going to be a first for me as I have never been on a horse. Do we ride side saddle with those skirts on?” Stan said sarcastically.

“It will be a first for me also and maybe they will give us split skirts,” Fish laughed.

“I’ve never been on a horse before either and maybe we can ride bareback or is that butt-back,” Murph piped in trying a little humor.

The door opened and Colonel Frisk walked in and said, “We are on our way to Quantico and will meet at 0700 tomorrow at the Motor Pool at Ft. Meyers. We will stay at Quantico for three weeks and then leave for Pakistan. We need a cover so our orders read that we are on extended exercises at Quantico. See you in the morning.”

Frisk’s attitude told Murph that he is not telling all there is to tell about the mission but what is new about that fact. The smell of honey was thick in the room.

Chapter Twenty Two

Murph tried to settle in the airline seat but his backside was still sore from the three weeks of horse riding at Quantico. He was happy the flight from Dulles Airport to New York was short as the brief layover would give him time to walk off some of the soreness. He and horses didn't mix well and the training was tedious to him. He went over in his mind those days of learning how to be a horse soldier.

They had the training broken down into sessions beginning with mounting the horse. On the first session he found out to first check if the girth is tight on the horse.

The instructor used him to teach the results of leaving the girth loose. He stepped into the stirrup on the right side instead of its left side and tumbled onto the ground with the saddle hanging off the horse.

"Good going Lone Ranger, Tonto would be proud of you," Fish sounded off as the others had a big laugh at Murph's expense.

He leaned to mount from the 'nearside' the horses left side and double check the girth. They called the wrong side to mount the 'offside'. He got the knack of it after a few tries after refusing a mounting block. He didn't want them to consider him a wimp.

Dismounting was even more disastrous for him as he did not raise his right leg high enough and kicked the horse on its rump. The horse bolted and he went sprawling once again plus it dragged him a short distance. He didn't take both feet out of the stirrups and his left foot hung up. The instructor saved him from serious injury by being alert and stopping the horse.

"Ride him Cowboy don't let him throw you like that," Stan had to get his jab in.

Murph had a hard time with every new learning session from the rider's position, walking the horse, trotting, galloping, turning, circling, through slowing down and halting.

Murph's first instinct to stop the horse was to say, "Halt," which of course did not work and the instructor cracked up at his ignorance.

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“Man you know nothing about horses,” the instructor said and Murph agreed with him. A Cowboy he was not.

Even with all his mistakes after three weeks of continuous training he became an expert but a reluctant rider. To make matters worse they had to do this while dressed in the shalwar qamiz.

He sensed that Frisk was keeping something back from them. This was just one of the items and he would reveal more as time progressed.

The lay over at New York was brief and they were on their way to London for a change of planes to Paris. Frisk used the four hour lay over in London to reveal that their cover was as Oilmen working for the Shell Oil Company. They were going to Pakistan to hunt for possible oil reserves.

The stay in Paris was short and a change of planes for Turkey. In France they changed into their shalwar qamiz and arrived in Ankara, Turkey tired and worn out. The weeks of training in their shalwar qamiz was very valuable as they were fairly comfortable wearing a gown. They made all the jokes at Quantico and they had gotten over their uneasiness being in such an outfit.

They had a two-day layover in Ankara and Frisk used that time to drop another shoe on them, “Become aquatinted with Turkey because after we finish in Pakistan we are coming back here to perform the same mission.”

“Then this is an extended tour?” Stan asked.

“You could say that and possibly a little more than a year,” Frisk smiled.

“Think that guy has any other surprises?” Fish asked Murph.

“He is full of them and it wouldn’t surprise me to find out he was Santa Clause and keeps giving,” Murph answered sarcastically.

It must have been coincidence that he had learned both Urdu and Turkish while he was in Vladivostok. Of course that is if one believes in coincidences, he thought.

They boarded a Pakistan Douglas C-47 called the ‘City of Peshawar’ and headed for Peshawar. They landed in the ‘City of Flowers’ Airfield and went into the City. An old wall enclosed it

and they entered through one of its sixteen gates in two horse driven carriages. Down a narrow street lined with tall houses and overhanging balconies with the smell of fruit, roasted meat, and tobacco smoke. The air resounded with horse's hoofs, hammers pounding, and the shuffle of slow moving people.

There was an air of excitement as if one was back in the days of Genghis Kahn or the old frontier. They stopped at a three-story off-beam house that was their hotel. It had a big beautiful wooden carved door and the building had many ornate wooden balconies.

A handsome young man surprised them not dressed in a shalwar qamiz but wearing baggy trousers and a long loose fitting shirt.

Murph had noticed that most of the men were wearing the same type outfit. Someone had given the wrong information on how to dress in this city.

The young man greeted each of them with a broad smile and a firm handshake. He took them to their respective rooms. Once in their rooms Frisk called them all together in his room.

"We look like fish out of water. Tiler you get each of us three sets of trousers and shirts plus local boots. Everyone watch what you eat. Fruit will be ok be cautious of the water and ask for PA-NEE which means purified water. We need to get to our supplies that should be waiting for us at a nearby warehouse. We will wait for our new garb and guide before venturing out into the City."

A knock at the door and Frisk answered and greeted a middle-aged Pakistani who introduced himself as Abdul Karim their guide. He was stoutly build about five seven and wearing the baggy pants and loose shirt.

He also had on a bandoleer and a pistol strapped to his side and he gave each one of them a firm handshake.

"Abdul will you take Tiler to get some suitable clothing for each of us," Frisk said in Urdu.

"Would you want me to get ammunition and a pistol for each of the men," Abdul asked.

"Yes, that is a good idea," Frisk said not knowing if their arms got through Customs.

"Rifles also?" Abdul asked.

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“Yes, rifles also,” Frisk answered smiling.

Tiler got their sizes then he and Abdul went shopping as the others took a needed nap. Dead tired Murph fell off into a deep sleep immediately.

“OK sister it is time to wake up!” Stan shook Murph’s bed and roused him from a very interesting dream.

Murph opened his eyes and saw Stan dressed in a loose fitting shirt and baggy pants. He had the bandoleer around his shoulder and a pistol on his side. He was one proud rooster.

“Man you are the cock of the walk,” Murph said taunting him.

“You got part of it right so take those girlie clothes off and into these,” Stan said throwing his new outfit on the bed.

“Hurry up, we are off in a half hour,” Stan continued and swaggered from the room.

Murph quickly got into the new outfit and admired himself in the mirror. He thought, *Now don't I look like a Pakistani warrior.* He hurried down to Frisk’s room. The crew was there and ready to go.

“Soon as Abdul arrives we will go to the warehouse and see what equipment has arrived,” Frisk said and new outfit fit him to the t.

They loaded onto two two-wheeled horse pulled Tongas and there was also a third Tonga loaded with their equipment. Off they went like a bunch of Pakistani raiders. The drivers had no problem with the narrow streets and knew how to navigate in such conditions.

Murph thought they were going to crash at any time but they arrived safely at the warehouse. It was an old run down building and looked abandoned plus it was in the worst part of the city.

Amazingly the equipment was there but the firearms were missing. Everyone turned and looked at Abdul.

He just shrugged and said, “Our Custom people tried to watch them.”

“More like the custom is to take any weapon not guarded,” Tiler said with a look of frustration on his face.

“Nothing we can do about it now so let’s put the equipment on the cart,” Frisk said taking no chance of loosing it knowing that someone had stolen the guns and ammunition.

“Will we take the equipment back to the hotel?” Fish asked.

“No Abdul has a place a few miles outside one of the gates leading to the Khyber Pass and we will check out the equipment there. He also has horses and mules ready for our trip to the Pass. The people consider him a wealthy landowner and landlord,” Frisk answered.

They arrived at Abdul’s farm set on a hillside and it was a large rambling stone house surrounded by a stone wall about five feet high. They pulled into the court of the compound and unload the cart and put the equipment into one of the buildings. Murph could see the horses and donkeys that they would use to search out the landscape.

“Gentlemen gather round,” Frisk called out after they had unloaded the equipment, “Looks like there is a delay for about four days. Abdul said that his son’s wedding ceremonies begin tonight. He has asked us to stay here and celebrate with him. The wedding lasts three days and we will stay tonight and leave in the morning. We will leave one man to guard the equipment on eight hour shifts.

Strand you take the first shift starting now, Falcone the second at midnight, and Peters at eight in the morning. You will rotate and a cart will pick up the replacements at the hotel. Strand a cart will pick you up at 1400 hours tomorrow to replace Peters.”

“I am going to miss all the fun,” Fish complained.

“No, the celebration will last well into the morning,” Frisk smiled, “The first part of the wedding called the Mehndi begins the first night at the grooms place with music, dancing, and the painting of the groom’s hand.

The next day at the bride’s home with the same events except the women paints the bride’s hands.”

Murph found the painting of the hands very artful and touching but he especially liked the singing and dancing.

There was one girl dressed in a yellow dress with a green stripe that caught his eye. What he could see of her she was one beautiful woman. He caught her eye and she responded with a look of interest. She sang, danced, and it was obvious she was flirting with him.

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He was so caught up in the event that Frisk had to remind him that it was a quarter to midnight and his time for guard duty. He reluctantly left the party with a last parting look or more like a stare at the girl. She returned the look and gave him a big smile.

Fish wasted no time getting to the party and Murph sat and thought or wished it might have been an interesting meeting.

One o'clock and he heard a sound outside the building and he pulled his pistol.

"Who is there?" he asked.

No response.

"Who is there?" he asks in Urdu and *thought now this is dumb as if an intruder would answer.*

"Roshanara," a female voice said.

Who is Roshanara? he thought and then a bolt of light hit him *it couldn't be that girl or could it?* He opened the door pistol in hand and there she stood with a big smile.

"Come on in Roshanara and what a beautiful name to go with a beautiful woman," he said as she entered the room.

"I thought that you would like something to eat and drink. You speak our language beautifully," she said putting down some fruit and wine.

"Thank you and you are truly beautiful," he responded with only one thought on his mind.

They stood awkwardly looking at each other for a short time that seemed like an eternity before he reached for her and she practically leapt into his arms.

An hour of lovemaking left them both totally exhausted. She finally jumped up and said, "I must be getting back before they miss me."

She dressed and went as quickly as she had come. He stunned slapped his face to ensure that he was not dreaming. Sleeping on duty could be dangerous but that was a dream all right and he was wide-awake.

The rest of the night passed by slowly and finally Stan showed up to relieve him.

"Man you sure missed all the fun the party got hot after you left," Stan said rubbing it in.

"Oh yeah it was a hot one that's for sure," he smiled at Stan and left eating an apple.

Murph exited the building and had to relieve himself so he went to the back of the place where no one could see him. He had just finished and heard a noise behind him and there stood three Pakistani men with mean intentions on their faces.

The big burly fellow in the middle said, "Infidel you have violated my woman."

"I am sorry but I do not know your woman," he responded thinking *oh boy Roshanara couldn't be his woman or could she. I may be in trouble!*

"I saw the look you gave her last night and you could not take your eyes off her. She is my betrothed," the big fellow said.

"I did not know she belonged to you," he answered and thought *I hope he doesn't know the rest of the story. If a look troubles him God knows what he would do if he knew of their hour together.*

"I am going to teach you some manners," the big boy said lunging for him.

Murph backed into the side of the building evading his initial rush. *If he gets his arms around me he will surely break some ribs or worse.* The thought rushed through his mind.

The other two spread out blocking any escape and Murph thought *perhaps I can reason with him* and said, "I am sorry if I offended you, I apologize and ask your forgiveness."

"The infidel is afraid and a coward," Big Boy said to his companions and they all laughed.

"You will not insult any other Pakistani women after I am through with you," he made another move at Murph.

Murph ducked and kned him in the stomach that knocked the wind out of him. The big guy fell to his knees and the other two made their moves.

The guy on Murph's left was easier to reach so he kicked him in the chin and down he went and out. He whirled and gave the other one a right hook broke his nose and knocked him out. *Glass jaw maybe nose* he thought.

The big Boy now recovered and this time had a knife in his right hand. Murph's training took over and instinctively he leg whipped the big Boy. As he fell Murph dislocated his right shoulder with the next move. He groaned on the ground in pain and one more kick to the chin and he was out.

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Murph picked up the knife and threw it over-the-hill. Not once did he think of using his pistol.

“Falcone what has kept you we are ready to leave,” Frisk said as he walked up to the group.

Murph wondered if he should tell the Colonel about what just happened and decided he better before events got out of control and the mission threatened.

“Sir may I speak to you for a moment in private,” he asked.

“Sure what’s up? Frisk asked.

Murph took him aside and told him of what had just occurred leaving out the one hour with Roshanara.

“Dam Falcone, where are they?” Frisk asked.

“They are out behind the equipment building, probably a broken jaw, nose, and dislocated shoulder.” he shrugged.

“Dam let me find Abdul and I’ll see if I can’t clear the event up. Wait here,” Frisk said and went towards the house.

“What’s up?” Tiler asked Murph.

“I had a little fight and the Colonel is going to see if he can clear the situation,” he answered.

Fifteen minutes and Frisk came out of the house followed by Abdul and two men. The three went to the building and Frisk towards the group.

“Abdul says that he will take care of the problem. Falcone stay away from here for a few days and Tiler will take your watch,” Frisk and Tiler got in one cart; Fish and Murph the other and they started to town.

Murph could see Frisk talking to Tiler in the other cart. It looked like Frisk had a big grin on his face. Tiler turned and gave him a hard look.

Chapter Twenty Three

The Khyber Pass was an intriguing place and one could fill history oozing from every rock, hill, and shrub. Murph sat on his horse drinking in the scene before him.

It was ten days since the six of them had left Abdul's farm and had checked out every possible location between the farm and the Pass.

There were many barriers in the way to get a good line of sight reception of signals from Southern Russia. Consensus was the Pass was not right but if they were so close to the Pass why shouldn't they take a look at it.

No one mentioned the fight Murph had at the wedding although Abdul did refer to Murph as a gladiator. The three were nowhere in sight nor was Roshanara. Stan and Fish were frantic trying to find out the details but he kept quiet.

Frisk decided to go northeast from the Pass and swung around to the East of Peshawar and then return to the City. They had a month's supply of food and water as it would take time to finish the trip. The Countryside was beautiful but they found no suitable site that they could recommend.

They returned to the city tired and ready for a few days of relaxation.

Murph saw no sign of the three or Roshanara when they got to Abdul's farm. He became a little wary of Abdul not completely trusting him. There wasn't any particular reason just a gut feeling.

"Men you have a week to rest or do whatever before we start out again but one detail all of you keep out of trouble. Be back at the hotel each night no shaking up," Frisk said looking at Murph.

"Who is going to guard the equipment this time Colonel?" Fish asked and he got dirty stares from San and Murph.

"I have arranged for guards to watch the building and have padlocked the door. Abdul has insured the safety of the equipment," Frisk answered.

Mendacity

Murph rested two days and on the third decided to see some of the City. Possibly a little female companionship another Roshanara would be nice but he probably had gotten her into trouble. Women have a hard time in the male dominated society. Murph hoped that nothing bad happened to her. He did not seek out any of the group for his sight seeing tour. The Team had not bonded at all during their time together as there was an air of distrust and jealousy. Each one had huge egos and that included Murph.

What the hay he thought I like my company best anyway.

Wandering the streets for an hour Murph saw a restaurant and as he was about to cross the street he noticed a familiar figure. It looked like Abdul in fact it was Abdul. Murph was going to catch his attention when Captain Tiler approached Abdul. They talked a few minutes and entered the restaurant.

Murph waited an hour and Tiler left and a few minutes later Abdul followed him. Murph wondered what that was all about. It may just be a social visit or something more sinister? Murph decided to follow Abdul who walked a few blocks and entered a hotel. Abdul stayed around two hours before he left it.

Then another shocker as Murph was going to follow Abdul. Stan left the hotel with a stunning looking blonde on his arm.

It is enough already he thought this is getting confusing and more intriguing by the minute. Was this just some clandestine love affair or a secret plot? He remembered Frisk's orders to be back at the Hotel before dark so he decided to find his way home.

The next day he saw Stan in the hallway on his way out and made an offhand comment, "Got a hot date again? That was quite a number you had yesterday."

Stan stopped dead still turned and said in anger, "What are you doing tailing me?"

"No, just out for a walk and happened to pass by this hotel and there you were leaving with that hot number. She got any friends?" he said and grinned at him.

"Find your own hotshot as I've got mine," Stan said and hurried out of the hotel.

"We will go south this time gentlemen and I hope with better results," Frisk said as they prepared to leave for the farm.

Abdul was waiting for them and the horses and pack animals were ready to go. They left immediately upon arriving at the farm.

This trip Murph noticed one big difference as the landscape continually became more barren. They started taking readings and the results were more favorable than any place they were before and very encouraging. They settled on a spot not far from Peshawar and set up camp.

Immediately they started extensive signal searches and the results pleased them.

“Tiler you and Falcone do some scouting west of here. Peters and Abdul will go east. Strand and I will stay here and continue searching the airways. Be back in three days,” Frisk ordered.

Murph and Tiler took one pack animal with enough food and water for three days and went out. They rode most of the day and settled down for the night in a small ravine. They took off the horse’s saddles and unloaded the pack animal then hobbled them so they would not wonder off. They made a small fire and started warming some water for a cup of coffee.

“Captain what do you think of this location?” Murph asked.

“I think this is a place we can recommend for some further investigation it seems ideal,” Tiler had just gotten the words out of his mouth when a shot rang out from the hill to their right.

The bullet struck a canteen lying next to Murph and he immediately rolled over behind his saddle for cover. Then a second shot rung out and he heard Tiler grunt then no further sound.

“Tiler you OK?” he asked as he grabbed his rifle trying to find the direction of the shots. Tiler did not answer.

Another shot rung out and Murph saw the muzzle flash and he fired back immediately and someone yelled out as if hit. Out of the dusk two horses charged the camp with their riders firing at the gallop. Murph used his pistol and luckily hit one of the riders and he fell from the galloping horse.

The other horse charged past and the rider yelled in Urdu, “I am going to kill you Infidel.”

He recognized the voice and rider as the big guy he had offended at the ranch. He thought, *I must have really ticked the guy off or maybe he found out more about me and Roshanara.*

Mendacity

The horse wheeled and charged once again and the big boy fired his pistol but his rage was causing errant shots.

I hate to do this Murph thought and shot the horse. The big guy tumbled over the head of the horse.

Murph jumped up and rushed over to put a bullet in him and saw the guy's neck twisted and he was not moving.

Broken neck he thought and then he remembered Tiler. He hadn't made a sound since the first shots.

He found Tiler and the bullet had killed him instantly and he thought *how unlucky can a guy get. Now, what do I do and how about the other attackers they haven't fired again.*

He got his rifle, reloaded his pistol and checked out the other two attackers. They were both dead and they were the same two that had helped the big guy at the ranch.

He checked the horse as it had gotten up and was just slightly grazed the shot caused it to stumble. He rounded up the other horses and hobbled them and then bedded down for the night as there was nothing he could do at the time. He brought all the bodies close to the camp and covered them the best he could.

He was up at daybreak saddled the horses and tied the bodies across the saddles. He could not catch the wounded horse. He strung the other horses together and went back towards the main camp.

As he approached the camp Fish spotted him. Murph could see his reaction and his contacting Frisk. Fish and the Colonel saddled their horses and galloped towards him.

"What the Hell happened? Is that Tiler?" Frisk asked as they rode up to him.

He explained what happened and they went to the camp.

"Dam Murph you really did tick that guy off," Fish echoed Murph's thought.

"We need to head back to town but have to wait for Peters and Abdul," Frisk said.

They did a better job of wrapping the bodies and then they bedded down for the night. Dawn broke and once again Fish spotted horses approaching from the East.

"Here comes, Stan and Abdul," he said and picked up his binoculars.

"Hell not again," Fish said excited.

Bob Furlin

Frisk grabbed the binoculars and said, “Looks like Peters is leading a horse with a body strapped across it.”

He didn’t wait to put a saddle on his horse and rode bareback towards the approaching horses. Murph and Fish waited at the camp and looked at each other without saying anything.

“What happened out there Stan?” Murph asked after Stan go into the camp.

“Abdul’s horse stumbled and he fell and broke his neck. It happened suddenly and he didn’t make a sound,” Stan explained about the accident.

“What are we going to do now Sir?” Murph asked Frisk.

“I am going to go ahead into town and notify the Authorities. You three follow with the bodies,” Frisk said saddling his horse and mumbling to himself. *Now this is going to be hard to explain five bodies and we are guests in the Country. I need to get to our Embassy.*

He said, “Smash the communications equipment and bury it deep. Keep the cover equipment that we supposedly used for oil exploration,” he mounted and headed for the city.

“Should we bury the equipment here?” Fish asked.

“No, let’s smash it and carry it over into that ravine and bury it there,” Murph said.

They smashed all the equipment the best they could using boulders and their rifle butts. Fish and Murph carried it over to the ravine and dug a big hole. They put the equipment in then some stones and made two layers of the same smoothing the sand at the top. Stan stayed with the bodies.

They started for the city and four jeeps met them with the Colonel riding in one of them with a Pakistani Major. The vehicles stopped.

“Men these are Military authorities and want to see the place where the action went down. Falcone you get in the jeep with the Major. Peters and I will get in the next Jeep with the Captain. I’ll have to interpret for Peters Falcone you can handle the language tell them just as it went down and do not lie. Strand you escort the bodies back to the City and we will meet you there,” Frisk ordered getting in the second jeep.

Mendacity

Murph lead the Major to the scene of the fight and explained exactly what went down. The Soldiers searched the area and found the cartridges and weapons left at the scene. They also corralled the wounded horse that Murph could not catch. The Major seemed satisfied.

“Your story agrees with the evidence we found. Is there any explanation for why this happened,” the Major asked.

Murph told him of his fight with the three at the farm leaving out the hour with Roshanara.

“He was a very jealous man and did take offense at my looking at his woman. I had no idea that I was offending him as she was a beautiful woman.”

His explanation satisfied the Major and they started for the City.

“You are here in this Country looking for oil?” the Major asked over the noise of the jeep’s engine.

“Yes we are,” Murph called out.

“Have you found anything big?” the Major asked looking at Murph.

“We have determined that you have limited oil potential but vast amounts of gas reserves,” he answered remembering the CIA report he read on Pakistan.

The Major probably already knew but was testing me he thought.

Back in the City, they left him off at the hotel and told him not to leave until told. They took his firearms from him at the scene of the fight.

The others had already come back to the Hotel and Frisk called them to his room.

“How did it go? No lies?” Frisk asked.

“The Major seemed satisfied and I told the truth as best as I could remember but events happened suddenly,” Murph answered and Frisk just looked at him.

Two days passed and they took Frisk to Military headquarters and he returned in about four hours.

“OK, Gentlemen they cleared us to leave the Country before news gets out about the killings. We will leave at 1400 hours so pack and keep dressed as you are and we will change in Ankara.”

“Sir, is our mission in Turkey still on?” Stan asked.

Bob Furlin

“Yes, a replacement for Tiler will join us in Ankara. Let us get out of here before they change their minds,” Frisk said and they went to the Airport.

Murph was never so glad to be in the air even if it was in a PIA airplane referred to as ‘Prayers in the Air’. He still regretted not finding out what happened to Roshanara and hoped for the best.

There was a smell in his nostrils and it was not of the city of flowers but the smell of honey. *The killings reek of honey and there has to be more to this story*, Murph sighed and drifted off to sleep.

Chapter Twenty Four

Murph physically and mentally exhausted immediately fell asleep and he slept all the way to Turkey.

“Man, are you dead? You have been snoring all the way into Turkey and we are about to land,” Fish said.

They deplaned and an Air Force Captain escorted them to a Van then he accompanied them to a local Hotel. They immediately changed into their uniforms and assembled in Frisk’s room.

“We will leave for Adana in two days as soon as the new man arrives. I will brief you on Adana then and meanwhile rest and do not leave the hotel.”

“Is there a bar in this place?” Fish asked.

“Yeah, but we do not have any Lira in fact we have no money,” Stan explained.

“Give me time and I will arrange something so get some rest,” Frisk ordered.

Murph went back to his room and tried to sleep. A knock at his door and a page handed him a note. He opened and read it.

‘Go to room and knock twice.’

He looked out the door and saw no one in the hall but he did see a stairway. He climbed one floor found Room 302 and knocked twice.

The door cracked open and a male voice said, “The ox is slow.”

He hesitated temporarily forgetting the password then he remembered and said, “The earth is patient.”

Hal opened the door and said, “Come on in and welcome to Turkey.”

He walked in and saw no one else in the room and said, “I didn’t expect to see you here.”

“You know what they say about horse manure. Sit down have a beer and tell me about Pakistan. You caused a stir,” Hal said.

Bob Furlin

He went over the events including the hour spent with Roshanara and concluded with, "We did find a good location for a site but did not expose any foreign agents."

"You are wrong there you not only exposed them but killed five of them. That was a marvelous achievement and how did you arrange that feat?" Hal asked excited about the job done.

"All five were agents?" he asks astonished.

"Yes, they found documents on each of them with codes and contacts. No question about it that was a major bust," Hal said slapping him on the back.

"I understand your confidence in me but there is something too neat about the whole event," he disagreed.

"Don't be modest my boy as you have done an excellent job," Hal said rebuking him and gave him a beer.

Murph thought that he should not protest so much but it did not make sense in his mind. He took a long drink of the cold beer and it had a great taste.

"Is this a local beer?" he asked.

"Yes it is as they make good beer around here. Some think it is too strong," Hal smiled.

"Is Frisk getting the same information as I am and will he share it with the team?" he asked.

"I do not know as I am not his handler or in the same group as he. I would advise you to say nothing even if he first shares the information. I don't want him to know that I have talked to you. Remember trust no one as we did not know that Tiler was a double agent," Hal advised him.

Who does one trust in this business? I wonder about Hal, Frisk, Fish, Sam, and the new man. Any one of them could be a double Agent. Sam was suspicious going into the same hotel as Abdul, Murph thought.

"Now your new assignment to Adana but I'll let Frisk tell you about the mission of the team. There is a special assignment we want you to perform on a very top secret project.

First a little history of Adana about three years ago the Air Force needed an emergency landing site so we entered into an agreement with them to build an airstrip for that use.

We have just now signed a joint use agreement with the Turks and we want to conduct meteorological balloon tests. Very

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few people know of this project as it is a forerunner for a super top secret project involving a very high-flying aircraft. Your assignment is to keep your eyes and ears open for any talk about such a project.

Don't ask any questions of me. I am telling all you need to know just keep your ears to the ground for any suspicious activities.

The problem is I do not know if Frisk has the same information. I would think so but don't let on to him that you know anything," Hal cautioned and asked. "Any questions?"

"Does Frisk know of my status, my cover, or that I am a Civilian?" Murph asked.

"Sorry, I do not know as that group is a shady bunch and I do not know what they are up to," Hal admitted.

"We go back a few years and he knew that I was semi working as an Agent but still Military. He was not in the loop when I went with you at least I don't think so," he explained to Hal but more to get his thinking straight.

"We don't know if Frisk knows but assume he does. As I said, he is part of a shady group and one has a hard time finding out how they operate. You better get back to your room before someone starts looking for you. We will keep the same password," Hal excused him.

As he walked back to his room Murph was in deep thought.

Talk about deceit and deception and lies and lying where one group does not even talk to one another. Documents marked 'For Army eyes only' or 'Air Force eyes only' and one would think we work for a different government. Then again maybe some do. Someday those walls between Government Agencies will result in a disaster.

He arrived at his room without meeting any one. On entering it surprised him to see a bowl of fruit and two bottles of beer.

This must be Frisk's doing he mused. The beer is warm but the fruit is fresh.

He sat down and started eating an apple and there was a knock at the door just as he finished eating.

Murph opened the door and Fish said, "The Colonel is having a meeting in ten minutes in his room."

Bob Furlin

“I have some money for all of you and all of it is in Lira. There are four million Lira to the dollar and changing daily. This will get you a few drinks and nothing more. But enjoy and remember no leaving the Hotel,” Frisk ordered once again.

They went to the bar had a couple drinks and were soon broke so they returned to their rooms. The next morning the new replacement First Lieutenant Louis Mann arrived. Frisk introduced him and told them that they will leave at 1300 hours.

He gave them the same history about the base that Hal had relayed to Murph. The only new information was the two hundred fifty mile distance from Ankara to the airstrip. The airstrip was about 7.5 miles east of Adana. Adana was southeast of Ankara about 100 miles north of the Mediterranean Sea.

He told the Team that they were to conduct preliminary test and find a suitable spot to set up a future listening site. He said nothing about the balloons or airplane.

The 250 mile trip to the Airstrip was uneventful Lt. Mann had had little to say and the others made small talk. The weather was turning hot as it was late spring and it was sunny and humid during the trip. They arrived at the airstrip around 1700 hours too late to start setting up a tent.

“We will wait in the morning to start erecting the tents and there is a small Army Engineering outfit here that will help us with the equipment and antenna tent. Make out the best you can for the night. Remember do not get familiar with the other Troopers they will try to find out what we are about,” Frisk said and walked off to a small compound of tents.

Murph noticed the plane with the Meteorological Team had arrived and Frisk went to their tents. They broke out the rations ate, sat around, and chatted well into the evening. A few of the men already at the strip came by and tried to find out what their mission was but had no luck. Each of them heeded Frisk’s warning. They found a place to sack out and Murph put a blanket down in the back of the truck with the others. When he dozed off Frisk still had not returned.

They were up at sunrise and soon busy erecting a tent that would be their home as long as they stayed. Frisk finally

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returned with a team of Army Engineers and they started to erect the antenna and equipment tent next to their tent.

They finished in two days and they moved into their new home and started to set up the antennas and equipment in the larger tent. The Engineers were busy installing a twelve foot fence with barbwire at the top going both ways. No one was to get in or out once in the Compound.

The fourth day they started operations and intercepting signals from friendly and Russian radar. Frisk told them the team would be on full alert when the balloons were flying and he never revealed the purpose of the balloon flights.

“Something fishy about those flights,” Stan said to Fish, “Of course no pun intended.”

“Why watch weather balloons? Do they think the Russians will shoot them down?” Fish asked and did not know how close to the answer he was.

A week of monotonous recording followed and on the tenth day Frisk called Murph aside.

“Falcone I need you to go into Adana and pick up a Courier message at the U.S. Embassy. I understand that you speak Turkish?”

“Yes I do a little.”

“You have a knack for picking up languages,” Frisk stated the obvious.

“It comes easy to me and it must be a gift,” Murph smiled.

“Take the truck and dress in proper casual Civilian clothes dungarees and a loose shirt with a collar is suitable. Do not draw attention to yourself. If the message is not ready you stay the night at a hotel. Wear a shoulder holster under the shirt and make sure you have all your papers. Here is authorization to pick up the message,” Frisk directed as Murph left to change.

“Off to the races? You and the Colonel have a love relationship?” Stan asked sarcastically noticing that he was dressing to leave and strapping on a holster.

“Maybe he just appreciates my cute butt,” he snapped and went to the truck.

Arriving in Adana he asked a taxi driver where the US Embassy was and had no trouble finding the place. The only

problem was there wasn't a message waiting for Frisk. He asked the Marine Guard if there was a hotel nearby. The guard directed him to a hotel across the street from the Syrian Embassy.

His room was on the second floor and the balcony overlooked the street and the Syrian Embassy. He decided to go out for a walk and possibly get something to eat. He ambled down the street a short way and entered a Turkish restaurant with a bar. He thought a beer would be better so he sat at the bar while looking the place over.

"May I help you?" a very familiar female voice said in Russian.

Murph startled turned and there she was not a blonde but a dark haired Liubov. He was so surprised that he could not answer and she gave that silly laugh of hers.

"Someone cut out your tongue?" she asked teasing him.

"No but someone has just blown my mind. What are you doing here? What happened to the Habit?" he asked knowing full well she would not give him a straight answer.

"Do you speak Turkish?" she asked.

"Yes I do," he answered in Turkish.

"Then it is better that we speak it as you can see I am a Turkish barmaid," she said not answering all the questions.

"I'll have a beer?"

"What?"

"You asked if you could help me."

She smiled and got him a Turkish beer and said, "Where are you staying and for how long?"

"Probably one night at the hotel across from the Syrian Embassy Room 204," he grinned.

"I will see you at eight," she said and went to another Customer.

There was a knock at his door eight o'clock sharp and he quickly opened the door. She was in his arms before he got the door closed and locked.

They were at each other as if the world would end. Clothes came off and he carried her to the bed. Two hours later the activities had completely exhausted them.

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“Tell me what you are doing here?” she asked curled up in his arms.

“I am at the airstrip down the road.”

“No silly in Adana.”

“I am here to pick up a message.”

“At the Syrian Embassy,” she asked startled.

“No silly the American Embassy,” he said mocking her.

“Are you that important now?” she glared at him.

“No but Colonel Frisk is and it is for him,” he said looking for some reaction from her.

She didn’t even flinch as she was a consummate professional.

“You remember the Major that rescued you at Wakkanai,” he glared at her.

“I thought you rescued me,” she answered playing with him and not with words only.

An hour later he asked, “You didn’t answer the question.”

“What question?” she laughed.

He gave her a hard but playful look and she said, “Of course I know him he is my husband.”

She looked for some reaction and although it surprised him. He thought *two can play this game*.

“Does he know you are in Adana?” he asked not letting on that she startled him. He did not think she would tell him about her and Frisk.

“Of course he does,” she leaned on her arm looking at him.

“Then why didn’t he come?” he kissed her.

“You will have to ask him that question,” she said getting out of bed.

“Did you know it is possible for a woman to love two men at the same time?” she asked him as she got dressed.

“Now that is something I never thought about to any great extent,” he said softly.

“Well it is and I am,” she said went over and gave him a kiss.

“Why are you leaving so soon?” he asked.

“I will be in touch with you big boy,” she left the room with a big smile.

Chapter Twenty Five

Murph was up at the crack of dawn ate some fruit for breakfast and sat on the balcony watching the early traffic on the narrow street.

Around seven a black limousine pulled up at the Embassy and a man and woman came out of the front of the building. They both looked very familiar to him as they came out from under the short canopy over the front door. The sun broke through and shined directly on them. The man looked up as he said something to the woman.

Murph almost fell off the balcony when he recognized Petrof, Patch One, and Lur.

My God the whole gang is in town he thought.

His first reaction was to return to the Embassy but he thought *I must warn Liubov that her sister is in town.*

He watched them as they drove away and he gathered what articles he had with him then hurried to the truck parked in a small parking lot behind the hotel.

I need to see if Frisk's message is ready and then find Liubov he decided.

A large sealed envelope was ready at the front desk of the American Embassy. He showed all the necessary papers signed for the envelope then hurried back to the truck.

He drove to the Restaurant and it was open but she was not on duty.

“She comes in at five,” a waiter told him.

He asked if he could get her address from him and the man willingly provided it for a slight fee. He asked for directions and a fee provided them also.

After he made a few wrong turns he found the small hotel where she was staying but she was not in.

“She left about an hour ago,” the front desk clerk told him.

He decided to go back to her hotel and leave a note at the front desk. He insured its delivery by leaving a small fee once again. He was quickly running out of those fees.

Liubov,

Mendacity

There is danger I saw your Sister, Lur, coming out of the Syrian Embassy with a Colonel Petrof. He is one mean customer be alert. I will explain later how I know it is your sister.

Watch yourself. Love, Bob

He drove back to the restaurant parked and waited until five o'clock then six but she did not show so he hurried back to her hotel. Same story there as she had not come back to her room. The best he could do was go back to the airstrip and decided on the way to tell Frisk everything.

I'll tell him all I know but leave out the lovemaking at my hotel room. I think that is wise because he won't understand 'loving two men' any more than I do.

He found Frisk in the equipment tent and called out to him, "Sir, I have the envelope and I need to talk to you."

"It is about time you returned I thought I'd have to send the Army for you. What's on your mind Falcone and what took you so long?" Frisk said walking over to him and taking the envelope.

"Sir, will you step outside?" Murph asked not waiting for an answer and left the tent.

Frisk followed him and Murph could see that he was irritated

"I tried to notify Liubov as she may be in trouble again," he said looking hard at Frisk.

"Liubov, you saw Liubov the Nun from Wakkanai in Adana?" Frisk acted surprised.

Murph told the complete story minus a few hours and finished with, "Colonel Petrof is a mean dude and Lur would definitely identify her sister."

Frisk said nothing turned and went to his tent. A minute later he hurried towards the truck strapping on a shoulder holster. He still had the envelope in hand as he entered the truck. He sped down the road for Adana.

Murph went to his tent and sat on the end of his bunk as Stan walked in.

"Why is the Colonel in such a hurry and where is he going?" he asked.

"Beats me, I gave him an envelope and without opening it he took off like a jackrabbit," Murph said without looking at Stan.

“Dam people are so secretive around here,” Stan said and left the tent.

A few minutes later Lieutenant Mann came in and said, “Did the Colonel leave any orders or say where he was going?”

“No Sir, not a word. He took the envelope I gave him and drove down the road towards Adana. He was in a big hurry,” he said and lay down on his bunk.

“Remember Sergeant you are on duty in an hour,” the Lieutenant said taking charge.

Three days and not a word about Frisk and Murph thought that something was wrong probably caused by Petrof. He was just getting off his watch when Mann called everyone into the equipment tent.

“There has been a gunfight in Adana and the Colonel was shot and flown out of the Country. I will assume command here and we will complete our mission,” Lieutenant Mann told the Team.

“Is there any word on how he got injured and how severely?” Fish asked.

“No, that is all the information they gave me,” Mann said and left the tent.

Murph changed into dungarees and strapped on a holster under his shirt. He found some of the Army Engineers and asked if anyone was going to Adana.

“Sure we are leaving in five minutes jump in the back. Do you have a pass to go into town?” a Sergeant asked.

“Yes I do.” Murph answered as he still had the open-ended pass Frisk had signed.

Frisk must have planned on sending me a few more times into town he thought.

“How long are you going to be in Adana?” Murph asked the Sergeant.

“Just enough time to get some supplies probably three hours. Are you coming back with us?” the Sergeant asked.

“Yes, I am planning on it as I just need to get something I left in town the other day,” he said to the Sergeant.

Mendacity

They arrived in Adana and he asked them to drop him off at Liubov's hotel.

"Where can I meet you?" he asked.

"In front of the American Embassy. Do you know its location?" the Sergeant said.

"Yeah, I'll see you there," he hustled into the hotel.

The same clerk was on duty that he had given the note for Liubov.

"Did the lady ever return?" he asked the fidgety clerk.

Murph gave him the fee knowing he would not get anything out of the fellow until he paid.

"Yes she came back once and left this letter for you."

"Did you give her my note?"

"Yes I did."

Murph stepped outside and opened the note.

My Love,

I am OK and am going to leave with Larry as his wounds are very severe.

I received your note and realized that I was in trouble as there was no love between my sister and me. Larry arrived shortly after I received your note. He was trying to get me out of the Country when Petrof's people jumped us. They wounded Larry very severely in the gunfight. I got him to the American Embassy and they are taking us out of the Country.

It is possible to Love two men but he needs me very badly. Please take care and find someone who loves you as much as I do.

You have all my love for everlasting and eternity.

Liubov

P.S. Please remember me always as I will you.

Larry, so that was the Colonel's first name for some reason I missed that while going over his file back in DC. Well big Guy you lost her twice to maybe the better man for her. He thought

Bob Furlin

and folded the note and put it into his pocket and went to the Embassy with a very heavy heart.

They continued operations until November of 1954 and then received orders to move on as they completed the initial balloon tests. Murph passed the months in a virtual stupor as if sleepwalking. He never went back into town and worked double shifts to keep his mind occupied.

They arrived back at the same Hotel in Ankara and each had orders going separate places. Lieutenant Mann left Adana a few days before them without saying a parting word.

Mann was one strange individual but I guess we all are sort of kooky he thought.

Murph's orders read to report to Keesler AFB, Mississippi but he just knew that would not come true. Everyone was leaving before Murph and they had good-bye drinks down at the Hotel bar.

"Here is to Colonel Frisk hope he is doing well wherever he lands," Stan toasted the Colonel.

"Here is to Captain Tiler may he rest in peace," Fish said.

"Here is to those we love," Murph's toast was to Liubov.

"You two really did have something going; didn't you?" Stan said to Murph referring to the Colonel.

"Yes, Love is a wonderful and powerful force and I will miss it greatly," Murph said referring to Liubov.

A knock at his door rudely wakened him about nine the next morning. He crawled out of bed opened the door and in walked Hal.

"Did you have it rough last night?" he asked.

"What time is it?" Murph yawned.

"Here take this and wake up or maybe sober up," Hal said handing him a cup of hot coffee.

Murph sipped on his coffee and started to ask a question and Hal interrupted.

"I know what is on your mind and they are both ok. There was a gun battle with Petrof receiving wounds and Frisk getting severely wounded. The gunfight killed Lur. Frisk and his wife

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are in a safe place and it will be a long time before he gets well. We do not know how severely Petrof's wounds were. That is all I know about that event."

"Got a cigarette?" Murph said acting as if that was going to be his question.

"No, I don't smoke and neither do you," Hal said not realizing that Murph was toying with him.

It dawned on Hal that he was teasing and he asked, "Tell me all about the mission."

Murph told all that happened except for the time he spent with Liubov as that was private and no one's business.

"The top Brass is happy with the mission in most aspects except for Frisk. The Russians are definitely active and we will be setting a listening Post down there in the coming months. Pleased with your performance we think you need some R&R. So you are going to Havana, Cuba for four weeks of rest and relaxation. Your next assignment will be in the Aleutian Islands and you will find out more at a later date. We want your mind cleared and fresh for the new assignment," Hal patted his back and prepared to leave.

"Where in the Aleutians?" he asked not expecting an answer.

"Oh, we will be in touch don't worry; enjoy yourself and improve on your Spanish," Hal said possibly hinting at something and left the room.

Hal gave him a folder with cash, orders, reservations, and travel tickets.

"Well hot dog! I don't smell a lie in that news." Murph yelled out and fell back onto his bed.

Chapter Twenty Six

The view in Havana was fantastic the waves and the women took Murph's mind off the unhappy events of the past months.

The sun was turning him dark brown. He sprawled on the beach holding a cool drink with an umbrella in it. The sound of the waves lapping at the beach mesmerized him.

He thought of the Aleutian Islands his next assignment and he always felt an attraction for those Islands as if he once lived there. He drifted to the place of sleep and being awake the place where one can remember the past.

Appearing out of the fog were four three-man kayaks and the first two had three men in them and the last two had only two.

The ragged beach of the Island required a skilled navigator to land safely. They would have preferred landing on a gravel covered beach to protect their skin-covered watercraft.

They all wore highly decorated hunting outfits that honored the sea mammal spirits. The first to step ashore was Tatoosh, the Chief. He had on an open-crowned long-visored hat made of wood and semi-conical that signified his rank.

He wore a hunting gut-skin bird dress kamleika ornamented with yarn and hair embroidery. The parka was full-length and required the skins of over 40 tuft puffins. It was reversible plus it was waterproof. Since it was cold he had the feathered side on the inside and during warm weather or special occasions he would reverse it.

Tatoosh was also a great hunter symbolized by a hat filled with the whiskers of many sea lions. He carried in his right hand a sea otter dart and the left hand held a throwing board.

He was five foot five slightly taller than the others with a muscular brown face and small but powerful hands. There was a string of jade beads around his neck showing that he was a man of wealth. In fact he was a high noble and a Unangan chief.

"Tattoos make sure you wear your best high water boots and socks," Tatina his wife said to him as he prepared for the trip.

She was centuries before her time. Wives normally didn't give orders directly to their husbands let alone a Chief. The

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practice was for the wife to tell it to a third-party so the husband could hear.

Tatoosh smiled as he took his first step onshore remembering Tatina's words. She was so beautiful and he loved her so much that she was his only wife that also broke with customs. Chiefs usually had three or four wives.

His boots were very good high water boots made from sea-lion flippers and hair from seals and it extended up beyond his knees utilizing the seal's esophagus. Most lined their boots with dried grass but since he was a Chief he had grass socks. Usually they did not wear their boots to preserve them from wear but not this time.

Standing there he displayed confidence and a high-level of efficiency. His head was slightly larger than one would expect for one of his height. He had a long trunk with short legs and his movements were very rapid and sure.

"Tanana, hurry the men as it is getting late," Tatoosh ordered the second man ashore.

Tanana the second hunter that came ashore dressed similarly but he did not have as many whiskers on his hat or jade around his neck. He wore a parka made of otter skin. He was a Shaman, 'the one who knows' and he believed he could change his state of consciousness.

He thought he at his own will contact and or travel to another reality. There he would be able to gain power and knowledge and use it to help either himself or others. In his case it mainly benefited him.

He was also a threat to the chief wanting to be both Chief and Shaman.

The decorations on the right side of his hat showed that he used his left hand. The protruding decorations would interfere with his spear throwing hand if they were on the left side of the hat.

The next four men wore parkas made of otter skin without hoods and short visor hats with few whiskers showing that they were young and inexperienced hunters.

The last four wore bird skin parkas without hoods and hats with elongated visors and open tops that showed they were

helpers and one was a slave. Supplies took the place of the third man in their craft.

The inexperienced hunters pulled the kayaks ashore and secured them while the last four unloaded the supplies.

Tatoosh and Tanana were in a heated discussion about the camp's location.

"We will climb the cliff that is in front of us and set up camp at the top. We have better protection there," Tatoosh was insisting.

"No, we must move down further as I see danger at this location," Tanana said stressing his powers of a Shaman being able to see into the future.

Rank and power had its way and they climbed the cliff in front of them and set up camp at the top. Tatoosh led the way followed by a disgruntled Tanana. The two hunters and the helpers made four trips carrying the supplies.

"We will make camp here where we can see or hear any approaching enemies," Tatoosh scouted the area and found what he considered the safest place to set up camp.

The Chief and Shaman had a separate fire than the others with the fire being built and kept going by the helpers.

"The Konug are a sly and clever people and will attack without warning. I do not understand their language and we cannot trust them," Tanana echoed the problem of the time.

The problem was the tribes understanding one another's dialect. The different dialects caused the problem of living together in peace.

I don't know if I miss-trust the Konug more or the threat from within 'the people', Tatoosh thought of the threat posed by Tanana.

"The people think highly of their Chief and reverence him," Tanana said with a devious look on his face.

"It is getting late and we must get some sleep the hunt will be tiresome tomorrow," Tatoosh said because they were not hunting for food but jade.

Tatoosh had little faith in Tanana and his sorcery but trusted in Agugus, their Creator, for his spiritual knowledge and guidance.

Mendacity

He did not trust this Shaman as Tanana wanted the jade to gain more power and prestige.

Tatoosh was suspicious of him and would watch him closely for any trickery.

They bedded down for the night with Tatoosh thinking of his wife and children snug and warm in the Barabaras. Home and snuggled close to her firm body was where he wanted to be.

The home that he built was the largest being 36 feet long, sixty feet wide and ten feet deep. The average house was 18 feet long, 36 feet wide and 6 ft deep. Built underground it was warm and comfortable made especially so by his wife.

Tatina was stirringly beautiful with her long jet-black hair that she usually wore in a bun. How stunning she looked with her incomparably smooth complexion. It reflected a roseate brown that contrasted subtly with her luxurious fur garments made from the sea otters he had killed.

They would lie on a beautifully woven mat that she made and was of exceptional quality. She was one of the great craftsmen of her day and she wove the mat and baskets using only her elongated and sharpened thumbnail as a tool.

“Tatoosh, you will be careful while on the jade hunt be wary of the Shaman. He uses his powers to profit himself and he wants to be Chief,” she cautioned him reclining in his arms after their love session.

“Don’t worry I will be careful and when I get back I will go on a true hunt and bring you some beautiful otters for a new dress,” Tatoosh comforted her and would much rather be on an animal hunt.

Bear Chief fell asleep plotting how he was going to gain the added power and prestige as he wanted to become Chief. Tanana had received his spiritual name in a dream on such a night as this and he believed could change himself into a polar bear and kill Tatoosh.

They were up early and before eating they faced the east to greet the day and ‘swallow the light.’ Sacred to them was the ‘east’ and ‘above’.

The Shaman believed he was where he should be looking for guidance. With the wealth found here he would have the power he craved.

Bob Furlin

Tatoosh faced the east and communed with Agugus for guidance and truth.

They spent the next four days hunting and digging for jade and they found both type nephrite and jadeite. The pale green and white gem both used in the making exquisite gemstones or carvings.

They broke off early on the fourth day to get ready for leaving in the morning. The Chief kept a watchful eye on the pile of gems.

Eating and taking in the scenery he became lost in the beauty of the scenery as the past four days had been beautiful. This was rare for that part of the World.

Sensing something behind him he turned to his left and did not see the Shaman. He was behind him on his right with his spear in his left hand. He plunged it into his Chief's back. Betrayal and pretense struck once again. Tatoosh slumped to the ground mortally wounded.

The spear had just entered Tatoosh when the earth started to tremble and then shake. They knew immediately that an earthquake was occurring.

Tanana gave orders to pick up the jade and get to the kayaks. The nine of them made it down the cliff. They hurriedly loaded and pushed off into the Sea.

"Look at the sea," one of the hunters screamed.

They all looked and saw a hundred foot Tsunami headed their way. It was on them in an instant and washed over them. Their kayaks, the jewels and everything in its path consumed.

It washed away Tanana's deception plus the familiar smell of honey as the huge wave took away the smell at least for a time.

Tatoosh saw the huge tidal wave hit them and the Island. The cold water overwhelmed him and as he fell into darkness with his last thought being about his beautiful Tatina. Oh how he loved her so.

Cold ice water hit Murph's chest and startled him from his dream state to hear a heavenly voice say in Spanish.

"Excuse me."

He opened his eyes and the visions he saw caused him to say.

Mendacity

“Tatina?”

“Excuse me I backed into you and spilled your drink, do I know you?” the beautiful smooth brown skinned vision with long jet-black hair rolled to the back of her head asked him.

“No but I knew someone as beautiful as you in the distant past,” he smiled.

“How did you know my name?” the five foot-six inch beauty with a perfect figure asked.

She stood in a two-piece bathing suit that highlighted her flawless body.

“I am clairvoyant and a beautiful lady with gorgeous, black hair and brown eyes could only be called Tatina. Besides you owe me a drink,” he answered with a big smile and changed the subject.

“Is the gentleman causing you trouble honey?” a big brown skinned muscularity built dude wearing sunglasses asked as he rushed up from the beach.

“No, I backed into him and spilled his drink. It is sweet that you noticed,” Tatina said giving the white knight a kiss on his cheek.

“I would introduce him but I do not know his name,” she said talking around Murph.

“My name is Bob Falcone and I am happy to meet you,” Murph said standing up and speaking to her while ignoring the protective arrogant mate.

“My name is Mat Lark and she is my fiancée,” Mark said stepping in front of Tatina and looked hard at Murph.

“Good you are not her husband. It is nice to meet you,” Murph said holding out his hand.

“Let’s get out of here,” Mat said leading Tatina away ignoring the extended hand.

“You still owe me a drink,” Murph called out as they walked off.

She turned and gave him a big beautiful smile. She stood and watched him run into the surf as her protector tried to lead her away.

He swam back and forth for two hours in complete joy thinking of events leading to the encounter. Exhausted he went to the hotel.

Bob Furlin

Finished with a shower he lay down on the bed and dozed of with the picture of Tatina in his mind. *Who said that soul mates don't exist, he thought as he drifted off to sleep?*

Chapter Twenty Seven

Times were changing in Cuba as there was an air of unrest with Fidel Castro just sentenced to fifteen years in prison. The rise of Communism ninety miles from U.S. soil was becoming possible. The people did not like Batista and the U.S. was on the wrong side.

No sense worrying about something I can't change he thought on his way to a nightclub that he heard was a hotspot. The club was packed out and in full swing and he finally wormed his way to the bar.

"What do you want," the barmaid asked.

"I want a Havana Cocktail please," he ordered his favorite Rum drink.

He just had ordered his third drink when a female said, "That one is on me Robert. It is Robert is it not?"

Murph recognized the voice immediately and said slowly turning on his stool, "Yes it is and how could I forget your name?"

"Are you alone?" she asked.

"Yes, are you?" he wished.

"Yes but not since I met you," she gave that beautiful smile, "I have a table would you join me?" she asked walking away.

He followed close behind her and she sat down at a table in a secluded corner of the room. It was about as private as one could get in such a crowded place.

"How did you happen to luck up and get this table?" Murph asked as he sat down.

"Luck had no part in it but some connections did. My friend is a hostess and reserved this for me," she said again flashing that beautiful smile at him.

"Expecting your friend?" he wondered.

"No I expected to see you," she answered cocking her head to one side.

"Are you clairvoyant?"

"No as everyone staying at the Hotel usually ends here sometime during the night."

“I am flattered that you waited for me. Would you like to dance?” he asked as the band changed from Latin music to the classic Stardust.

They started the dance at a proper distance but as their movements blended they went body to body. The attraction they had for each other excited them.

“You are an American and you are not Spanish but Italian?” she whispered in English.

“Yes I am and you look like you have some American Indian blood in you,” he answered in Spanish.

She pulled back and looked up into his face and said, “You are full of surprises. An Italian that speaks perfect Spanish and can see Indian blood.”

“I would also say a Southern belle from one of the Carolinas and I only know your first name,” he grinned.

“Tatina Davis with a Cherokee Mother and Scotch-Irish Father from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, amazing,” she said as the music stopped and they went back to the table.

“Tell me more what do you do in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. I would say some sort of teacher,” he guessed.

“Well you are partly right,” she laughed and continued, “I am a sculptress and do teach sculpture on the side.”

“A sculptress and a good one at that I bet,” he knew that was a fact.

“Enough about me, you are very self-confident and perhaps a little self-centered,” she said and quickly added, “But in a good way. You are confident in who you are.”

“Perhaps but I have a theory about life and know what I believe in,” he said smiling at her and astonished how comfortable he felt talking to her.

“And what is that?”

“Do you really want to know?”

“I wouldn’t have asked if I didn’t want to know,” she said in a rebuking tone.

“First I love God, second, I love my family, and third I love my country. I used to believe to love myself and let me explain that,” he said seeing the look on her face.

“Jesus said, ‘To love your neighbor as yourself. I figured how can you love someone else if you don’t love yourself? Am I

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going to hate myself and love you? That's what I once thought until I learned there was no-good thing in me. I must hate what I am and Love what He is then I can love you," he stopped looked at her and said, "You know you are the first person I have told that to. It is as if I have known you forever. I know I am a work in progress,"

"What are you some philosopher? A preacher?" she asked giving him a queer look.

"No, I am in the Military," the first lie he would tell her proving what was still in him. He would keep his cover under all circumstances. But then again one could say he was technically in the Air Force.

"I noticed the old wounds on your shoulders and was you wounded in Korea? What are you doing in Havana?" she tried to change the subject.

"Yes to the first question and boring a beautiful woman with all my philosophies," he said sort of apologetically.

"No, you are fascinating, tell me what you think of women and their needs," she said giggling.

"I do not know much about women but I do know men and we are easy. There are basically five things most men want."

"And what are those?" she giggled again maybe getting a little tipsy.

"First sex, second food, third sex and the fourth," she interrupted him and said, "Food and the fifth sex."

"You are a fast learner."

"I notice you said most men. Does that mean you also?"

"In fact no I am quite easy; I have only two wants." He says starting to fill the effects of the Rum. "My first is lovemaking and my second food."

"Lovemaking isn't the same as sex," she said teasing.

"Oh no, lovemaking is a process and sex is an act. There is no lovemaking in sex but sex is just a part of the process of lovemaking. Lovemaking never ends it goes on for the ages a long, long, long process," he finished and emptied one to many Havana Cocktails.

"Lovemaking is like preparing an exquisite Dinner. You like to cook?" he asked with a devilish grin on his face.

Not giving her an opportunity to answer he continued, You have to have the right mix of spices, the right preparation, the right oven temperature, the patience, the taste, the smell, the fill, and the love of the art of cooking to have the food perfect for eating. Lovemaking is the same it is a labor of love. Done correctly the act will be perfect and exquisite.”

“Come on Lover let’s dance,” she said sarcastically as the band played a Rumba.

“I don’t know how to Rumba,” he confessed thinking *I really wowed her with my lovemaking analogy.*

“Something you don’t know, good I will teach you,” she took his hand and went to the dance floor.

It was late and the floor was not as full as early in the evening. Then again it was two thirty in the morning.

Teach him she did and it took time but he got the knack of it plus the Tango, Cha-Cha, and Mambo. They danced until exhausted.

“You are a quick learner and was that part of your lovemaking preparation,” she smirked.

“No, it was yours I hope,” he said smiling and thinking *she was listening.*

“Let’s go.” they said in unison and went outside directly from the dance floor.

“A walk on the beach and watch the sunrise would be nice,” she suggested.

“I just love to face the East and commune with God,” he said without a thought given about what he had said. It had become a part of his fabric.

“My, you are full of surprises. My Grandfather taught me to worship ‘The Great Spirit’ as we face the Sun Une‘lanu hi, the apportioner,” she gave him a Cherokee Indian lesson.

They walked in the surf stopped and watched the Sun break the horizon. Standing so close to each other roused their passions and they embraced in a long passionate kiss. Falling into the surf they rolled over entwined in each other and oblivious to the World around them.

“Why are you stopping?” she asked as he broke loose and stood to his feet with the waves lapping at his legs.

Mendacity

“I have no protection and we are not ready as the booze may be the catalyst. I want it to be the process,” he answered helping her to her feet.

They continued to stand in the Surf holding each other consumed by the beauty of the scene and they ‘swallowed the light’ surrounding them.

Still overwhelmed by beauty they started back to the hotel holding hands and being very quiet enjoying the moment.

They were a hundred yards from the hotel when they heard.

“Tatina is that you? Are you OK?” Mat Lark said rushing headlong towards them.

“Where have you been? I looked for you all over town. Has he harmed you?” Mat says as he roughly gripped her arm.

She reacted with, “That hurts.”

He slung her away from him and she stumbled and fell to the ground. He then turned his attention to Murph.

“No need to get violent as no harm has come to her,” Murph said reaching for Tatina to help her up.

“Are you ok?” he asked.

“Keep your filthy hands-off of her,” Mat said in a rage and took a wild swing at Murph.

Murph nimbly avoided the punch and responded with, “Take it easy big fellow as we did nothing wrong.”

Wrong thing to say and Matt lunged again and Murph stepped out of the way.

“I am going to break you in half,” Mat yelled as Tatina shouted out.

“Mat cut it out as you are going to hurt him.”

Mat lunged again, Murph fell right into him and put him in his favorite nonlethal hold. The taller and heavier enraged fiancée was out in a matter of seconds.

“You have killed him,” Tatina cried with a look of horror on her face.

“No, no he is just sleeping and will only have a slight headache,” Murph said arousing him.

“What happened?” Matt asked.

“You lost you footing and your head hit the ground and you were out momentarily,” Murph tried to ease his embarrassment.

Bob Furlin

“Tatina and I will take you to your room and you will probably have a slight headache,” he said sensing all the fight was gone out of him.

“Who in the World are you?” Tatina asked him as she gripped Mat’s arm.

They lead the woozy Mat back to his hotel room with no conversation. He answered her question when they reached her room.

“Would you believe a very good cook? Remember me and I will be in touch,” he said smiled at her and went to his room.

Opening the door to his room Murph prepared to take a shower. He had just taken off his shirt when someone knocked at his door. *Tatina* he thought and opened the door and there stood Hal.

“You are early,” Murph sensed that he was bringing bad news.

“I do have news that you will not appreciate,” Hal said confirming his premonition.

“Give it to me.”

“They moved the mission date forward and they’ve cut your R&R short. Pack as we have a flight out of here in two hours,” Hal said with no apology or asking if he wanted to go.

“I do have time for a shower,” he said not asking permission.

Two hours and they were on a flight out of Havana with a destination of Alaska. Hal was not very talkative or free with information of why they moved the mission up.

Murph’s thoughts were on Tatina and his last words to her. ‘Remember me’ was sort of a fatalistic comment. He wished he could have had more time getting to know her. He was certain that they would meet again when or where only fate would settle that fact.

Chapter Twenty Eight

Fort Kreeley, Alaska was the last place on earth that Murph expected to find himself. The base housed an Arctic Training Facility and he wondered if it was something in his future.

Hal did not tell him what was going on except to say he would find out at a meeting shortly.

Murph had little bed rest with most of his sleep on flights during the trip. Kreeley was a place of large temperature changes from +92 degree F to -63 degrees and it was now in the -63 degree's season.

They took him directly to Supply and gave him cold weather clothes. He then checked into the NCO Barracks.

He had just settled in his room when a knock came at his door.

Hal entered and said, "No rest for the weary Falcone we are off to a briefing in fifteen minutes."

"You are a Civilian on this mission and no one here knows anything different so don't be saluting and using Sir so much. You will not shave or get a haircut until you're back from this mission," Hal did volunteer on their way to the meeting.

"You think I can take a shower? So what happened to the mission to the Aleutians?" he asked.

Hal did not acknowledge the questions and they walked to a small building.

The meeting consisted of a Full Air Force Colonel, an Army Major, Hal and Murph in Civilian clothes.

"I am Colonel Ringer. Major Snipes and I will brief you on the mission. Recently the Russians shot one of our Ferret Planes down and that is five in the past year.

We have not had much success penetrating their defenses especially as it concerns a Russian Airfield found outside a remote City of Uelen in Eastern Russia. They have stationed one hundred Tupolev Tu-4 'Bull' bombers a copy of the B180 there. What we don't know is if they carry Atomic bombs. These planes can reach Seattle, Washington and as far inland as Wichita, Kansas.

Their early warning radar systems are not efficient but effective enough to detect our reconnaissance missions and shoot some down. They have detected the flights early enough to shut down their own communications and we have not been effective in getting information.

We believe someone tipped them off about our knowledge of their Air Defense Radar. That brings us here and the purpose of this session. You are going into Uelen to listen in on their Communications and discover if they have A-bombs aboard their Bombers.

First you will receive Arctic training here on its conditions and then travel to Russia with a former resident of Uelen. The mission will last for a year at minimum. Major Snipes will brief you on the Uelen area.”

Major Snipes got behind the overhead slide projector and continued the briefing showing slides of the area.

“Uelen is a village found just below the Arctic Circle in the Russian Far East. It is near the point where the Bering Sea meets the Chukchi Sea and is at the easternmost point on the Asian continent. Uelen has a population of 500 to 800 and their primary occupation is hunting walrus and relying on Central Government subsidies. Dog yards line the muddy streets along with old weather-beaten apartment buildings.

You will leave from Wales, Alaska by dog sled and cross the fifty-six miles of the frozen Bering Sea to a point just south of Uelen. You will receive Arctic training here and the Instructors will decide your departure date. They will say when you can make the dangerous journey,” the Major finished.

He and the Colonel left the room without any further comment.

“They did not give me an opportunity to ask questions,” Murph said to Hal.

“That is my job and the fewer who know of the details of the mission the better. Let me fill you in then you can ask your questions,” Hal smiled.

“Fair enough fire away.”

“Your travel Companion will be your new wife, Amber Blight. Born and raised in Uelen she received her education in Canada. She now lives in Wales with her husband. She has a

Mendacity

Russian father and a Chukchi mother. The Chukcki are indigenous to that area. Of course she speaks the Chukcki language perfectly and is an excellent dog handler and driver. She recently married one of our agents, Donald Blight. You are now Donald Blight and will assume his identity. No one in Uelen has met him or knows what he looks like. His cover is as a local Merchant and this is their first visit to Uelen since their marriage. He recruited her and she was thoroughly vanted and is reliable. We will keep him confined to a Compound back in Anchorage. He will not be able to communicate or seen by anyone. He does not know that you are going in his place,” Hal looked at Murph with a big grin on his face.

He continued, “It is a big myth that it is a Chukchi custom to lend their wives to visitors or fellow travelers. Donald will not take kindly to you making a move on his new wife. Here is a dossier on Donald study it and then destroy it. Now what are your questions?”

“What equipment will we be taking with us?” Murph asked.

“You will take one prototype receiver with broad frequency coverage plus antennas to cover the different bands. This equipment weighs about one hundred fifty pounds and will take up the weight limit for one sled leaving the other for supplies,” Hal answered.

“How long do they figure it will take us to cross over?” he wondered.

“I am no expert at this but I am told that a team can average about fifteen miles a day. It is sixty miles across so it will take about four days,” Hal answered reciting information from a manual.

“How much food and water do we need?”

“Two pounds a day a person so you do the math.”

“Sounds like sixteen pounds for the both of us so the second sled will be light.”

“Not so fast; there is food for the dogs and essential spare sled equipment which will just about make the max limit. So it will be no cakewalk for the both of you. You are lucky to have an experienced person guiding you,” Hal smiled and continued, “You probably have many more questions but we need to go.”

A month passed and the dog sled training was intensive. Murph become enough of an expert that the Instructors said he was ready and could make the seven day trip.

Can I make the trip alone if required? Do we have enough supplies? There were still problems and questions in his mind.

The final day and Hal showed up on time.

“It is time to meet your partner and spend a few days getting acquainted with her,” he said as they traveled to Wales in an Alaskan Bush plane.

“I thought you said four days to make the trip across. The Instructors said we would be lucky if we can do it in seven days,” he took a hard look at Hal.

“I said I was no expert and that was an ideal time. Anyway you are not going to cross by sled as you will cross by plane,” Hal said smiling.

“We are flying across. Am I supposed to learn to fly a plane and in this Country. Someone is out of their mind,” he said getting frustrated by the constant lies and deception.

“The Pilot of this plane is Frank Lutz. He is one of the best Bush Pilots in Alaska. He is going to take you, your partner, and a team of dogs into Russia,” Hal said looking at him for some reaction.

“That is great, how are we going to prevent detection? How about their Radar isn't it working?” he grunted.

“We have discovered a gap in their coverage and Frank is going to fly low and under their coverage. We hope to have time to make it during a down time for maintenance. We think we have determined their maintenance schedule. If lucky one of the three will work out,” Hal said with a shrug.

If lucky, Murph thought, well I hope we are lucky and good.

“Any more surprises?” he asked with no response from Hal.

So he asked, “How are we getting back?”

“Same way you got in as Frank will pick you up when you notify us that you are ready to leave,” Hal grinned at him.

“How do we contact you?” he asked and thought. *This is like pulling teeth.*

“There is a Ham Radio site in Uelen and you will use that equipment. Your call name is ‘Skylark’ and ours is ‘Splash four’. The code words for the date to pick you up will be a

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number. Example; six hundred thirty will mean June 30. Our confirmation will be with rough time and confirming date; example 630 ok. Six hundred twenty nine means June 29 and fourteen hundred means two PM.

There were no more surprises for the moment but one showed up a short time later.

They landed on the snow a few miles outside Wales. Another plane was waiting there with the pilot and one passenger.

The striking beauty of Murph's new partner was definitely a surprise. The first feature that stood out was the crest of black hair that fell across her shoulders. Her eyes were a brownish yellow the color of amber and when you looked into them it was like looking into the Sun. They had a searching and curious look about them. She stood about five foot five and had smooth reddish-brown or copper-toned skin. She had a finely chiseled face and her mixed Russian blood took some of the Eskimo roundness from her face.

"Amber Blight, I would like you to meet your husband Donald Blight," Hal said as they approached the other plane and laughed.

"I am glad to see that I have a discerning eye for beauty," Murph smiled.

She held out her hand and said smiling, "And I seem to have been given insight and good judgment in choosing a husband."

The two Pilots swap planes and Hal said, "I will leave you now and you are on your own and good hunting."

He shook both of their hands and boarded the other plane waving.

"OK, folks we need to be going," Frank called out.

Murph followed Amber into the plane and loud growls greeted him from the six caged dogs. The plane loaded with equipment including a sled barely left room for the two of them.

The plane took off for Russia and they made the trip without any incidents. The weather was nice and they flew low and avoided any detection by Russian Radar.

This has gone too smoothly just as if they knew we were coming, he thought.

Bob Furlin

Frank bellowed out, “We are here we will land in about five minutes. Get the equipment and dogs out quickly as I don’t want to stay here longer than I have too.”

The landing on the snow was smooth. Amber and Murph got out and they had it unloaded in fifteen minutes.

“See you later and good luck,” Frank yelled out as he prepared to take off.

They landed about ten miles South of Uelen and Amber said, “I will hitch the dogs as you load the equipment.”

It took about thirty minutes to get under way as the dogs would not settle down.

“We will need to run the dogs a few extra miles to give the impression that they have had a long trip. If asked, we lost two dogs on our way over,” Amber said.

Chapter Twenty Nine

They ran the dogs for about an hour longer than necessary and then approach Uelen. Amber stopped the sled.

“We will go to my brother’s place and he will take us to our home.

“What is your brother’s name?” he asked.

“John.”

“What is his last name?”

“Snow.”

They attracted little attention as they entered Uelen as if the people expected them or it was nothing out of the ordinary to have someone new in town. They pulled up to the small house that Amber’s brother lived-in and he came out to meet them.

It surprised Murph that her brother was taller than most of the primitive people. His hair was lighter not blonde but a light brown and he credited it to the fact their father was a Russian.

“Amber you look well and I am happy to meet you Donald welcome into the family,” John said in Russian and holding out his hand to Murph.

“I am pleased to join your family and hope I can bring honor to it,” Murph said in Russian surprising John.

“Come in and meet my family then I will take you to your place,” John said giving a big grin as if pleased.

The family consisted of his wife, two boys and a girl. They chatted for about an hour and then left for their new home.

The house was small with four rooms and it was five doors down the street from John’s place. They took care of the dogs as Amber convinced John that they could handle them plus unload their personal items from the sled. They stashed the monitoring equipment in the small attic.

“I am tired and will sleep in the bedroom and you can make a bed on the floor in the living room,” Amber said grinning.

“We have never had a harsh word and you are throwing your new husband out of the bedroom. I am a lucky fellow,” he said laughing as he spread out his sleeping bag.

Bob Furlin

On the first day of operating the equipment Murph confirmed the Airfield had one hundred bombers. He could not detect if they had nuclear weapons.

Amber contacted the Ham Operator in Uelen. She told him that her husband was an operator and would like to stop by once and a while to use the equipment to contact his business partners.

They stopped by the radio Shack and Murph talked an hour or so twice a week. He would make small talk about his business with KL7787 who was the contact Hal had set up for him to chat with.

His call sign was KL7797 and they also sent Morse code at times. Murph was certain the Russians listened in so he made the conversations mundane and boring. Amber entertained the Local Ham operator more like flirted with him.

Five months passed and no breakthroughs and they settled into a routine.

One Friday around nine in the morning and Murph was in the Attic. He did not hear a half-track stop outside the house.

“Donald, quick shut down the equipment there is a Russian Officer coming to the door,” Amber rattled the attic door and to get his attention.

Quickly shutting down and covering the equipment he rushed to the front door just as the Russian Major knocked on the door.

“I am Major Fusik and are you Donald Blight?” he asked while two armed guards stood behind him.

“Yes, I am. May I help you?” he wondered, *what are they up to?*

“Dress and come with us,” the major said as the three entered the house.

Murph looked at Amber and the Major said, “Not her just you.”

Murph quickly got his parka and boots and he did not complain or try to resist so they wouldn’t have an excuse to search the house.

He gave Amber a hug and said, “Don’t worry I will be ok. They just want to talk to me,” that was what he wished.

Mendacity

The four of them went to the truck and drove off as Amber waved from the door. There was no conversation all the way out to the base and immediately they took him to a building with a sign that read 'Squadron Headquarters'.

They led him to a room and the Major and Guards did not stay. The Major told him to sit down as he left.

Twenty minutes passed then a Full Colonel entered the room and Murph stood up.

"Welcome Comrade Bligh I am Colonel Gzen. Sit down and have a drink of Vodka," the Colonel said pulled out a bottle and poured two drinks.

Comrade, now what is this all about? Murph thought and took a drink and said, "Pleased to meet you Colonel Gzen and here is to your health."

"Do you have any new information on the American spy missions?" Gzen asked and Murph tried to hide his bewilderment.

Murph quickly realized that Donald was more than a CIA Agent but sounded like a KBG Agent or a double spy. Mendacity followed him wherever he went. Realizing if he didn't react quickly it would blow his cover. There must be a code word that identified him and he did not know what it was.

"Yes, they have been trying to get someone into the area and find the number of Bulls you have in the area. You have been effective in making their spy flights ineffective and shooting some down," he quickly answered, grinned, and finished the Vodka.

That pleased the Colonel and he smiled and poured each of them another glass of Vodka.

Murph continued inventing, "They have trained and sent two men over the Bearing Sea and I understand an accident killed them. So now they are training a new team to penetrate the area."

"Do you know where or when?" Gzen asked excited.

"No, but as soon as we can get back off our honeymoon I will try to find out. I need a new code word as they possibly know the old one. Let's have another drink," he gambled and hoped he won.

Bob Furlin

Maybe I shouldn't have asked for a new code word he thought. Gzen finished his drink which seemed an eternity to Murph and finally he answered.

"Of course of course Comrade a new password," Gzen said and poured another glass full for each of them very pleased in what he was hearing.

"Adversity is a good Teacher. Reply -- 'No pains, no gains'," Gzen gave the new passwords.

The dice came up seven and I am very lucky Murph thought.

He rewarded the Colonel for the new code by passing on more bogus information, "Not being able to find out what ordnance are on the bombers they are going to assume that nuclear devices are aboard. They will just track the planes and not challenge them as you enter U.S. airspace."

"They have assumed right and we now can obliterate them," Gzen blurted out stood and said, "Here's to Mother Russia."

"Any fish is good if it is on the hook," Murph stood and quoted a Russian Proverb that one should make the best of every opportunity that came their way.

Gzen looked at him and Murph quickly added, "You have them hooked well Colonel."

"Good hunting Comrade," Gzen said and he left the room.

The two Guards entered and motioned Murph to follow them. They went back to the truck and returned him to his house.

"You ok? What did they want?" Amber asked him at the door.

"They may be on to us and we need to arrange to leave here as soon as possible.

We need to get to the Radio," Murph did not answer her but did give the impression that they were in grave danger.

Is she also a double agent or she deceived? he thought.

Early next day they were up and Murph contacted Alaska. He sent the message to pick them up the next day using the code worked out by Hal.

They continued chatting for over an hour when the confirmation came through. Pick up time is Noon the next day. More mundane communications for another half hour and he signed off.

Mendacity

“We will stop by again on Tuesday and thank you for letting us use your equipment again,” he told the Ham Operator misleading him as they were actually leaving on Sunday.

They stopped by John’s place to chat and in the process told him that they were going sight seeing tomorrow and would be back late. They left not saying any good-bye’s and hurried home and packed their gear.

They were up early loaded the sled and went to the same place they landed. They got there two hours early and waited. Finally at twelve-thirty they heard a plane and to their glee it was the same one that brought them.

It stopped Frank jumped out, “Let’s get the dogs crated and loaded before they detect us.”

A couple of the dogs balked at the cages but Amber knew how to handle them.

“She is a woman of many talents,” Murph quipped as he loaded the equipment and sled.

The chemistry between the two of them never did jell. They were not the other’s type was his thoughts and his mind was never far from Tatina. He was eager to get back stateside especially South Carolina.

Hal was going to have to give him some time off or he would take the time. Besides they had completed the mission in less than a year.

They flew directly to Anchorage and landed at Elmendorph AFB. The flight got a little bumpy as they hit some rough weather over the Bearing Sea but Frank was a good Pilot. They taxied to a secluded hanger and Hal was there to meet them.

“Where is Donald?” the first words out of Amber as Hal walked over to them.

”In due time as we need to debrief you first please go with Mr. Kim. He will talk to you and then we will take you to Donald,” Hal told Amber and she turned to go with Mr. Kim.

“Good luck and thanks for the dog lessons. Remember that a wolf will not eat a wolf,” Murph called to her referring to an Old Russian proverb. ‘People in the same occupation should live in friendship and have a peaceful relationship.’

Amber turned and called out, "You remember that an empty barrel makes the greatest sound," telling him that a stupid person talks more often and louder than a wise person.

"You two sure hit it off so I guess Donald has nothing to worry about," Hal said to Murph as they entered the Van.

"He has more to worry about than you or he thinks. You probably have the most difficult task," he said to Hal as he broke the news about Donald being a double agent.

"Driver, pull over at the next building as I have to make a phone call," Hal jumped out and rushed into the building.

"Well he will be under constant control and does she know about him?" Hal asked as he got back into the car.

"No I don't think so but she sure does love him and I don't envy the person who has to deal with those two," he answered.

I wonder what their future holds. I will never know, he guessed.

Murph completed his debriefing and Hal said, "Another fine job Falcone and you are becoming a pro slow but surely. We need to find you another assignment before..."

"Hold it a minute," he broke in, "I am tired, worn out, and need about a six-month break. I am a Civilian and they can't Court-martial me for desertion so I am headed for South Carolina."

"South Carolina? Where and what is in South Carolina?" Hal asked startled by the firmness of Murph's statement.

"Myrtle Beach and one beautiful lady and I am serious about going," he said with a big grin.

"I will take you to a Hotel in Anchorage rest a couple days and I will see what I can arrange," Hal shrugged and shook his head.

"You will make arrangements," he persisted.

Two days later and Hal knocked on his hotel room's door.

"The Brass agrees you need a break and they say four months with pay and no more."

"The time starts when I arrive at Myrtle Beach with two weeks at home besides the four months," he bargained.

"Your Air Force Orders will state Myrtle Beach AFB as an Instructor with a bogus outfit. You need not report and have a good time," Hal shook his hand.

Mendacity

“The extra two weeks?” he asked.

“Yes, with the extra two weeks. I have arranged transportation and we deposited money in your Bank,” Hal left the room before he could make any extra demands.

The one-way ticket was with TWA and he is on his way to South Carolina. He called home and told them that he would be home in a month for a couple weeks.

Now to find Tatina and hope she still remembers me he thought eager to see her.

Chapter Thirty

The plane touched down at Columbia, South Carolina and he was eager to get to Myrtle Beach. First he needed transportation and he asked the taxi driver to take him to the nearest Pontiac Dealership.

He knew exactly what he wanted and there it was in the showroom window a brand new Star Chief Convertible red and white. No haggling on his part and he expected to be in Myrtle Beach in less than two hours.

The top was down and the wind was in his hair and the World was at his feet. The one hundred and fifty mile drive was very relaxing and Murph was carefree. He was in love and he just knew that Tatina was at the end of the drive.

He stopped in a little place called Conway about fifteen miles from Myrtle Beach to gas up and get something to eat.

It was mid-afternoon when he parked outside a small local restaurant entered and sat down at one of the tables by the window. The place was small but looked clean with maybe four customers.

The waitress finally came out from behind the bar and asked what he wanted.

“How about two hamburgers with a large order of fries and a coke,” he said not looking at the menu.

“Are you new around here Mister?” the cute twenty-year-old blonde asked.

“Yes, I just got into town,” he said smiling.

“Is that your car?” she asked looking out the window.

“Yes it is.”

“It is brand-new?”

“In fact it has fewer than one hundred and fifty miles on it.”

“You don’t sound Southern to me. Are you stationed at the Base?”

“No, just taking a vacation and Myrtle Beach sounded like the right place.”

A 1950 Ford pickup drove up with five rough looking dudes in their twenties. They stopped and admired the car and entered the restaurant.

Mendacity

“Hey Girt who owns that new Pontiac?” the tallest one with a beard asked the waitress.

“That gentlemen sitting right over there,” she said with a giggle like she new something funny.

The five turned and walked over to Murph’s table.

“It’s pretty but is she fast?” the smallest one of the five asked.

“I don’t know it’s not broken in yet and I haven’t found out what she can do,” he said sensing trouble brewing.

“Maybe you can give us the key and we will find out for you,” the beaded one demanded.

“I can but I’m not,” he smiled.

“You’re not, we may have something to say about that and you fly-boys come in here and think you own the place,” a big chubby blond haired twenty-year-old in coveralls said with a mean look.

“He’s not in the Air Force,” Girt yelled out as the other customers left the place seemingly in a hurry.

“Well, what are you doing here?” a pimply faced kid in worn blue jeans asked.

“Well, I was hoping to eat a couple hamburgers and drink a Coke.”

“Are you getting smart with us boy?” the beaded one spoke up again.

“Hey Boys, I don’t want you to mess my place up so take him outside to make trouble,” the Cook yelled.

“You want to give us the keys or do we have to take them?” the small muscular one said.

“Men, I don’t want any trouble I just want something to eat,” he said getting a little irritated.

“Now listen to that he just wants something to eat,” the beaded boy reached over and grasped his shoulder.

Pimple face drew a knife and the other three stood back.

“Whip his butt, Kirk, and take the keys,” one of them laughed.

Kirk had a broken arm before he could answer and pimple boy had his wrist broken with the knife in Murph’s hand. The other three ran for the door.

“Here give this back to him when he heals,” he said handing the knife to an open mouthed Girt.

Bob Furlin

“You want your burgers Mister?” the Cook asked.

“That’s what I came in here for. They need some medical attention,” he said then paid for the food and drove off eating one of the burgers.

Welcome to Myrtle Beach he thought as he took a sip of Coke.

Crossing the Intracoastal Waterway Bridge just outside the Town of Myrtle Beach he pulled off to the side of the road at a sign that read ‘Skating Ring’.

He had picked up a brochure in Greenville about Myrtle Beach and looked for a place to stay. He came across an interesting place.

Ocean Forest Hotel billed as the South’s Statue of Liberty and on thirteen acres of beachfront. It had gardens, pools, and stables they were enough for him as he had found the place to stay. It should not be hard to find and it wasn’t.

He pulled up at the magnificent Hotel that was thirty feet more or less above the beach. It had a ten foot Wedding Cake Tower flanked by two five story wings. He found a parking place and entered the marbled floored lobby covered in Oriental rugs.

“Do you have a reservation Sir?” the Desk Clerk asked.

“No, but I sure would like a room for a month,” he said looking at the beautiful marble stairways.

Now this is Class, he thought.

The room on the fourth floor was facing the beach he noticed as the Bellboy showed him the room.

“Does everything meet your approval Sir,” the Bellboy said with a look of ‘my tip now’.

“As they say at Home, this will do just fine. By the way is there a dress code for the Dining Room?” he asked giving him a generous tip.

“No sir, your dress is acceptable.”

Enough of this fooling around as it is now time to find Tatina Davis, he thought

He found the local telephone directory and to his amazement found her address. Her place is no more than ten minutes from the hotel and he hurried took a shower and put on his pants over a swimsuit.

Mendacity

He drove past her place located just north of the center of town located right on the beach. He looked for some sign of life in the place and seeing none he turned around. He stopped in front of an A-Frame beach house a few doors down from her place.

There was a 1954 Ford station wagon parked underneath her house. He walked over to her house and went around to the front that faced the ocean. There she stood in the screened porch and she was intently sculpturing a bird. It looked like an Eagle in flight.

He quietly climbed the steps and looked through the screen door watching her fluid movements.

She completely lost in her work was in a two-piece bathing suit and an apron covered with clay. She had a spot of clay on her left cheek and was a beautiful sight to behold.

He waited until she paused to admire her work of art and he said, "Remember me?"

She quickly turned and her hand covered her open mouth leaving some clay on her chin.

"My God it is you!" she hurried over and unlocked the screen door.

He entered and she jumped into his arms with her arms around his neck and covered him with clay. The kiss was the moment he had been waiting for and hoping against hope that she would remember him.

"I looked all over for you. You just vanished but I did remember your last words. 'Would you believe a darn good Cook and remember me I will be in touch.' That was my hope and is it really you?" she said starting to cry.

"It's me and the pot has been boiling for a longtime and I feared that you would not remember me," he smiled looking down into her now muddy face as the tears had caused the clay to run.

They stood there holding each other for what seemed an eternity.

"Look at me I am a mess and have gotten you covered in clay. Come in and wash up and tell me all about where you have been," she finally said.

He followed her into the bathroom holding her hand.

Bob Furlin

“When did you get here and where are you staying?” she asked as they both washed off in the bathroom.

“I’ve got clay all over your shirt take it off and I will get you another one,” she said not letting him answer and realizing that a man’s shirt should not be so convenient.

He followed her into one of the three bedrooms. She got a colored tee shirt out of a dresser drawer.

“This should fit you as you have lost some weight and are so pale. Where have you been in prison or the Arctic?”

Realizing that she has been doing all the talking she said, “Look at me I have not given you one moment to answer all my questions. Come in sit down and tell me of what you’ve been up to. Want a beer?”

“Yes a beer would be good and what I have been doing is looking at one beautiful vision,” he said sitting down on the lounge and watching her every movement.

She came over gave him the beer and snuggled down next to him, “Now tell me.”

“I just got in and am staying at the Ocean Forest Hotel. I have not been in Prison but you were close on the last one. I have been in Alaska once lost and now am found with one lovely creature,” he said kissing her.

He wanted to ask about the tee shirt but thought better of it. *I hope there is a logical answer* he thought.

“I am going to ask you once again. Who exactly are you and what do you do for a living? Are you a gangster or some sort of spy?” she said giving a giggle and a big kiss then quipped, “Some would say that all Italians are gangsters or mobsters?”

“Yeah just like all beautiful Indian women are subservient,” he laughed.

“Really, who are you?” she asked seriously.

“I am a Sergeant in the Security Service of United States Air Force now on leave,” he told her his cover story.

“What is the Security Service?” she wondered.

“You are right I am a Spy but an Electronic Spy called an Electronic Counter Measures Technician. Now that I have told you that I am going to have to kill you. But I would rather make love to you,” he said pulling her close and giving her a long series of passionate kisses.

Mendacity

An hour later she said, "I am hungry as I have not eaten today. Let's get something to eat and then visit the Bowery for a beer. We need to put some weight on you."

"I am starving can't you tell?" they spruced up and went to the car.

"Isn't that a beauty?" she said seeing the Pontiac.

As they approach to get in a County Sheriff's car pulled up and stopped.

"Hi Tatina, that your car?" the Deputy asked as he looked at Murph.

"No Fred, it's my friend's car. Why?" she asked.

"And who are you?" Fred asked him.

"Bob Falcone, Sergeant Bob Falcone," he looked into the Deputy's eyes.

"Well Sergeant Falcone will you follow me to the Sheriff's Office?" Fred ordered.

"Fred, what is this all about?" Tatina asked.

"We will let the Sheriff explain. Just follow me Sergeant," the Deputy said and watched as they got into the Pontiac.

Murph opened the door for Tatina and walked around to the driver's side.

"Bob what is this all about? Are you in some sort of trouble?" she asked with a quiver in her voice.

"Oh I had a little altercation over in Conway. It was nothing big and nothing to worry about," he grinned at her as they followed the Patrol Car.

He explained what happened as they drove to the Office leaving out the part of the broken hand and dislocated shoulder.

"They were just being friendly and having some fun," he said as they stopped.

"I am going in with you as I know the Sheriff. Living here year-round they look out after me as this place gets sort of deserted in the off-season," she insisted.

They are nice guys," she said as they entered the building.

"Sheriff Land I have the Conway problem out here you want to talk to him?" Fred asked the Sheriff who was sitting in his Office.

"Bring him in Fred. Tatina what are you doing here?" the Sheriff asked as she followed Murph into the Office.

“He is my friend. Luke is he in some sort of trouble?” she asked with a worried look.

“What is your name fellow?” Luke asked.

“Sergeant Falcone is what he told me,” Fred said from the doorway.

“Ok Fred I’ll take over from here and check with Pete he received a call from the Bowery some drunk probably staggered into the Street,” Luke said turning to Murph.

“Sergeant Falcone and are you stationed at the Base?” Luke asked.

“No Sir, I’m on leave and visiting a friend,” he answered smiling at Tatina.

“You have any papers or orders to prove that,” Luke demanded.

“Yes I do,” he said and took out a copy of his orders from his pocket.

He had not read the orders since Hal gave them to him but he had thought to get a copy out of the glove compartment on their way to Luke’s Office.

“Mm let me see it says here. Master Sergeant Robert J. Falcone stationed at Langley AFB, Virginia. Master Sergeant, kind of young for that rank you must be older than you look,” the Sheriff said handing Murph the orders.

Master Sergeant, Hal didn’t mention my promotion and stationed at Largely AFB. I thought it was Myrtle Beach. Surprise, surprise I had better read my orders from now on he thought.

Not waiting for a replay Luke said, “You roughed those fellows up over in Conway. You want to tell your side of the story?”

Murph related the incident down playing his actions ending with, “They were just out having some fun and wanted to see if they could ride in a new car. All I wanted was something to eat and drink.”

“You gave a dislocated shoulder and broken wrist in a matter of seconds. That is what the Owner said and it all happened very quickly. You been in the War and seen some action?”

Not waiting for an answer he continued, “You a Judo Expert or one of those Oriental Martial Arts fellows? I was in Japan

Mendacity

after WW two and saw some of those fellows in action. They are very impressive and can kill you a thousand different ways. Even learned some Japanese, I was in Military Police. You speak Japanese?”

“I picked up a little enough to get by in a tight spot,” Murph smiled thinking this guy is good and acts Country but is good at his job.

“Tatina, tell your Mother I said hello. We are looking forward to seeing her again. Is she doing ok after your Father’s accident?” Luke asked Tatina seemingly very familiar with her family.

“Yes she is fine and she moved back to the Reservation and is staying with my Grandparents. I am trying to get her down again for a visit but she doesn’t like to travel,” she said looking at Murph.

“Sergeant your story checks out. I must warn you. That is a rough bunch in Conway. They don’t take kindly to having some of their own roughed up. They will try to get even and they can be mean. Have a good vacation,” Luke said as they left the office.

Chapter Thirty One

“Interesting guy has a lot of knowledge? Your Father hurt in the accident?” he asked looking at Tatina on their way to the car.

“About seven months ago Dad died in a car accident. He owned a trucking company in Charlotte and got in a wreck and killed on his way home from work. Mom took it hard and has gone back to her roots. My oldest brother is now in charge of the Company. We miss Dad something awful bad as he was a wonderful white man,” she said with a little laugh and a tear in her eye.

“I am so sorry; I’d like to meet your family,” he said kissing her on the cheek.

“You will like them. I believe they will like you also. You look kind of Indian that is if you get some sun. That hooked nose makes you look native or do all Italians have hooked noses? I am still hungry and you didn’t mention the broken body parts. Are you a Martial arts expert?” she stared at him thinking. *He is not telling me everything he is hiding a lot.*

“You know what they say about an expert. They are nothing but a drip under pressure,” he answered avoiding the questions.

“You are so evasive and I am going to get some food and beer into you and loosen you up. Tough guy!” she said punching him in the arm.

They finished their seafood dinners at Tatina’s favorite seafood restaurant and she asked, “Would you like a beer, some good music, and a fun time?”

“Of course you know of such a place and are you going to take me there,” he teased.

“Yes I am and they call it the Bowery others call it ‘Wild Country’. The band will play any song you can think of or at least try but it will cost you a dollar a song or a beer. There is this guy who can jug-a-lug a glass of beer in one gulp and does it all-night. The beers are cold and good but watch out and don’t let someone push you out the door into the street with a beer in your hand. That is a favorite game played as there is no alcohol allowed on the beach or on the street. The Cops are waiting and a

Mendacity

big fine goes plus an hour or two in the clinker. You game?" she said all that in almost one breathe.

"Sure, I didn't think you were coming up for air. Are you the jug-a-luger?" he said as they walk to the Bowery.

The place was just filling up when they entered a wide open doorway with no doors. The band was playing and the audience was singing and drinking.

They were no sooner seated when a waiter was at the table and said, "Tatina haven't seen you in some time. Who is your friend? Do you think he can stump the band?"

"Well can you stump the band? The man wants to know?" she asked Murph giggling.

"OK, here is a dollar and have them play 'The Government Fleet Blues' by Eddy James 'Son' House," he grinned.

"Where did you pick that dude up?" the Waiter said to Tatina.

Ten minutes later the guitarist struck up a powerful rendition of the 1920 Blues classic recorded in 1930.

"They are good all right," he exclaimed downing the last half of his beer.

"You are full of surprises. You like the Blues?" she asked looking into his eyes.

"One of my favorite music style and I don't have a musical bone in my body," he confessed.

"I thought all Italians were musical," she said as the Waiter came back.

"The Band was wondering if you had another stumper or two for them to play."

"How about 'You Can't Get Stuff No More' by Blind "Willie McTell or "Talkin to Your Mama'," he smiled.

That didn't stump them either and after about five beers Tatina asked, "Do you Shag?"

"I sure do one of my favorite indoor sports," he thought she was talking about the English slang word.

"OK, let's go to the Pavilion across the street and do some Shagging," she laughed.

"OK, let's go," Murph jumped up expecting some loving.

The sound of music greeted them as they crossed the street and he asked, "We going to do it to dance music."

"How else do you do it?" she stopped and looked at him.

Bob Furlin

“If you don’t know I am not going to teach you,” he grinned.

They entered the building full of couples dancing what looked like a Swing.

“Are we going to dance?” he grunted.

“No we are going to Shag and I thought you knew how,” she just looked at him.

“I thought I did also,” he said bursting out laughing.

“What’s so funny,” she stopped and glared at him.

“Shag meant something else to me,” he whispered in her ear what he thought she meant.

“Boy you are something else. So you don’t know how to dance the Shag?”

“No but I can Swing.”

“Close enough so I’ll teach you.”

Teach him she did and it did not take long for him to catch on and they danced for an hour and a half.

“Let’s take a breather and walk on the Beach,” he suggested and she led him out of the building.

In the following weeks they fell into a routine as she worked on her sculpture during the day as he swam, ran on the beach, and sunbathed. He was turning quite dark and bronzed a regular beach boy.

At night they partied and some nights just stayed home. They spent time on the week-end horseback riding at the Hotel. They ate in the blush dining room and did some fancy dancing at the Hotel’s ballroom. He was in hog heaven but time was flying by.

He was on his usual early evening run on the beach in front of Tatina’s place when the boys from Conway struck. They were not the same five but older, bigger, and intent on doing some bodily harm.

Three had baseball bats and two had chains. They drove their pickup truck across the beach towards him. They had waited parked between two of the cabins located about two cabins down from her place. They jumped out surrounded him in a semi-circle with the Ocean at his back.

“Boy, we are going to teach you some Southern hospitality Conway style,” the obvious leader of the group said.

Mendacity

He stood about six one, two hundred eighty pounds and around fifty years old. In his hand was one of the bats and as he talked he kept beating his left hand with the bat.

Murph surveyed the situation and decided that he was in some trouble. His only advantage was the Ocean at his back so they could not surround him. He took a couple steps back insuring that they would have to move in the surf if one tried to get to his back.

The others were all around forty and younger than the spokesman. He noticed that one was hanging back as they approached so he would be the least to fear. Then there was the one to the right of big boy and he also had a bat. Murph could see by the look in his eye that he would attack first as he looked very anxious.

He will be my best bet to get my hands on one of those bats. I can then use the skills with a stick that Master Azim had taught me, he thought.

Tatina was busy on the screen porch with her back to the scene playing out down on the beach. She stepped back to admire her work as she had finished the Eagle.

“Good, if I must say so myself,” she said aloud.

Now where is Bob, she thought, *he should be back by now. I would like him to grade the finished product.*

She turned just as the anxious one lunged at Murph.

“Oh my God, they are going to kill him,” she screamed and rushed to the phone.

She called the Sheriff’s Office and Luke answered, “Luke, this is Tatina and they have Bob pinned down at the beach below my place and they are going to kill him. Hurry please.”

“How many are there?” Luke asked.

“Five with bats and chains, please hurry,” she cried.

“You stay put and we will be right there,” Luke hung up.

She rushed back to the porch and was going to go down to the fight but remembered Luke’s caution and watched the scene play out.

Tatina’s scream distracted the overeager attacker just enough and enabled Murph to grasp the bat. He then broke open the eager boy’s skull and he sprawled out in the surf. It evened out real fast with his new weapon.

Bob Furlin

Big Boy's bat went flying into the Ocean and he went face down into the surf out just like a burned-out light bulb. Leaderless with three to one odds the sound of the Police siren rescued them.

Two Sheriff's cars stopped. Luke got out of one and Fred and Pete jumped out of the other with guns drawn.

"Everyone drop your weapons now and get onto the ground face down," Luke called out.

The three dropped the chains and went face down into the sand. That left Murph standing with bat in hand.

"You too Sergeant drop the bat and face down," Luke ordered.

Murph dropped the bat and fell face down in the surf just as Tatina ran up.

"Luke I saw the whole event they were going to kill him and he was just defending himself."

"Sergeant you get up before you drown yourself. You caused some serious damage here. Pete you call for an Ambulance. Fred, get those two out of the water before they do drown," Luke ordered.

"Bob did they hurt you?" Tatina ask hugging him.

"It looks like he did all the hurting around here," Luke grinned.

The Deputies cuffed the three and took them to the Police Car.

"You sure you're not hurt?" she asked him again.

"No just scared as Hell," he said trying to get some sympathy from her.

Him scared I doubt it and there is more to that guy than meets the eye Luke thought.

"Luke, are we free to go?" she asked.

"Sure you can go but Sergeant don't leave town," the Sheriff said and drove off just as the Ambulance arrived.

The night was a night of sympathy and she responded to his projection of vulnerability that brought out all her loving protective instincts. They pressed no charges and the two recovered in a couple months.

Mendacity

Thirty days passed quickly and Murph had promised the folks that he would come home.

“Baby how would you like to meet my folks?” he asked her as they lay on the beach in front of the Cottage.

“My time is up at the Ocean Forest and I promised I’d visit them the end of this month.”

“I would love to meet them but I have about two more weeks of classes and then I am free to roam,” she said looking hard into his eyes as if asking a question.

“Of course they wouldn’t let us stay together in the same bed and there are only two bedrooms in that small house. That problem needs corrected before we go and I only know one solution,” he said grasping her hand.

“Now what could that solution possibly be?” she said snuggling close to him.

“With you leading me out of the possibility of sinning by becoming my Wife,” he said looking in her face to see her reaction.

“When did you come to that conclusion?” she asked as a small tear fell down her cheek.

“When I found out that those T-shirts were for your students to use while playing in the clay and not that debonair Mat Lark,” he said with a laugh.

He quickly continued, “Really when I opened my eyes in Havana and saw you standing there in all your radiant beauty I fell in love. That moment I knew that we were husband and wife before and would be again for the ages.”

Reaching into the small change pocket on his swimsuit he brought out a diamond engagement ring and said, “Before I formally pop the question. I must answer that consistent question you ask. Who Am I?” he paused kissed her and continued.

“I am not a Master Sergeant in the USAF but a Government Agent working for one of our Intelligence Agencies.”

He then continued to tell her generally about what he did without going into any great detail about a mission.

“I truly cannot tell you more about what I do and probably have said too much but I do not want to live a lie with you. So, will you marry me?”

Bob Furlin

She held out her ring finger and whispered, “Yes I will marry you.”

They kissed and she said, “By the way I am not a spy and am madly in love with you. I went crazy with fear when I had lost you and you disappeared in Cuba. You won’t disappear again on me before letting me know. I don’t think I could stand it.”

Next day they got a marriage license and three days later a local Justice of the Peace married them. The Sheriff and his deputies were their witnesses.

“Congratulations Sergeant, you better treat her right as she is a precious jewel and you do not want the local Sheriff’s Department after you,” Luke said then shook his hand and gave Tatina a big kiss.

They had a quiet dinner went back to her place and made love all-night. He called home and broke the news. She called her Mother and told her.

They made plans to spend two weeks in Pennsylvania and two weeks in Cherokee, North Carolina.

Murph excited, energized, renewed, and best of all free from the Smell of Honey or at least for the present.

Chapter Thirty Two

Taking his new wife home excited him. He just knew that they would fall in love with her just as he had.

He thought *Mom always wished I would marry a nice Italian girl but what will she think of an Indian Scotch-Irish lassie. One thing that would impress the whole family is that she spoke Italian well.*

She learned to speak the language when she attended the International School of Sculpture in Umbria, Italy. She would win his Pap over because all men just loved her at first sight because she was all women.

He would definitely say, “E une belle donne.” She is one beautiful woman.

It took them three days to make the trip to Pennsylvania because those evil Motel rooms got in the way. He told her all about the family that he was a Coal Miners Son and of Italian immigrants and he also told her that she had not married into money.

“Your family is not part of the Mafia are they?” she innocently asked.

“Yes we are and if you don’t behave yourself I’ll have you ‘whacked’,” he said shaking his head no and teasing her.

They arrived around four in the afternoon just as Pap was getting home from work. They pulled up as he got out of Woody’s car and he turned to see that Murph had pulled up behind them.

“Mary, come out Bobby is home,” he dropped his lunch pail.

He gave him one big bear hug not caring that he was getting his little boy Bobby covered in coal dust.

“Pap, I want you to meet my wife Tatina and Tatina my Pap.”

She did not hesitate but went right up to him ignoring the coal dust. She gave him one big hug and a kiss on the cheek.

“Bobby, you need a haircut,” his Mom’s usual greeting. She reached up and hugged him not wanting to let go.

“Mary, guarda che suo fi glio ha portato la casca. E une belle donne.” Look what your son brought home. Pap said.

“Watch what you say Pap, she speaks perfect Italian,” Murph laughed.

“Louie, look at you, you are getting her all dirty,” his Mom said.

Immediate respect came into her eyes as she heard the ‘perfect Italian’ and she gave Tatina a tentative hug and kiss. She thought, *she has stolen my little Boy away from me.*

“Come in off the road and clean up as he made a mess of both of you. You both must be hungry,” she hurried into the house.

“I like them and hope they do me, Bobby,” Tatina whispered to him as they follow them into the house.

“You have won Pap and Mom is jealous as you’ve taken her little Boy away from her.”

“Where is your dad going?” she asked as he went for the cellar steps to take his bath.

“She has his bath ready for him and coffee with wine plus a good scrub down,” he smiled.

“How precious she helps him take a bath?”

“As long as I can remember it has been that way. Italian men are king in their home didn’t you learn that in Italy?” he teased.

They entered the kitchen and Mom had the table spread already and the smell of fresh bread was still in the air and there was enough food to feed twenty people.

“Bobby, drinks are in the refrigerator you both mangiare as you must be hungry. Bobby you need some meat on those bones,” she said as she went down the cellar steps.

“Watch out she likes to cook. She will get you big and fat plus spoil that cute little butt of yours,” he said getting them a beer out of the fridge.

“Fort Pitt beer; you will love it,” he bragged.

They were about halfway through eating when a car pulled up outside and his sister, her husband and three boys come into the house.

“Now the fun plus the noise starts. You are in the Falcone family circus,” he said hugging and kissing everyone.

“Quiet down a minute and this is Tatina my beautiful new wife,” more hugs and kisses. Tatina was having a blast.

“Bobby, she is beautiful,” his Sister, De, whispered into his ear, “How is Mom warming up to her?”

Mendacity

“She brightened up when she learned she spoke Italian.”

“She’s not Italian is she?”

“No she’s a mixture of Scotch-Irish and Cherokee Indian. It makes for a beautiful combination,” he whispered back looking at Tatina with pride in his eyes.

“Brother, you are smitten,” De said as she saw the look on his face.

Another car pulled up and in came his brother, with his wife, son, and daughter.

“Baby, you are in for a wild time now this place will become a madhouse.”

He introduced her and more hugs and kisses.

“Hi little brother, you caught yourself a looker,” his brother said as Mom and Pap come up from the cellar.

“I didn’t know you would be home,” he said to his brother.

“Haven’t they told you there is a big wedding Sunday? Aunt Sophia’s oldest son is marrying Uncle Felix’s daughter. Both sides of the family will be there and there is going to be a big reception. Mom has been cooking and baking for a week. Of course we have to go and you can see both sides of the family at one time.”

His brother explained to Tatina that Mom’s Sister’s daughter was marrying Pap’s Brother’s son.

“You my girl are in for one big party and I have an opportunity to show off my new bride. Something you should know I am the first in the family not to marry in the Catholic Church. I broke with the Church and worst of all registered as a Republican. So my beauty you married the black sheep of the family,” he shrugged.

“The dance starts in an hour we have to get ready to go,” Mom said.

“What dance? Is this a pre-wedding event?” Tatina said softly to him.

“It beats me,” he answered puzzled.

He turned to his sister and asked, “What dance?”

“Franki Yankovitch is at the SNPJ tonight and the whole town will be there. You like to Polka?” she asked Tatina.

“Yes I do,” Tatina said with a laugh.

“They are full of surprises,” she whispered in his ear.

Bob Furlin

“There is little time for rest around here as they are on the go all the time. We need to change into something more fitting. Help me get our luggage,” he said and they went out to the car with five kids following them.

The SNPJ Club was about a quarter mile from the house and the crowd was building as they arrived. He told her that the Club was one of two places to drink in the Village.

“Yankovitch is a big deal and people from all around the area will show up and the place will overflow,” he explained.

He met all his old buddies and he got to show Tatina off to the whole crowd. Dance they did but mostly with others as he had to dance with his Mom, Sis, sister in-law and neighbors.

He finally caught up with Tatina two hours into the dance as the Polka band finally took a break. The break over the band played a slow dance and the floor was almost empty waiting for more Waltzes and Polkas.

“How about having a slow dance with me pretty lady? Are you tired?” he asked her.

“Exhausted but not for my Bobby,” she laughed.

“I don’t like that name,” he said hugging her close as they danced very slowly around the large but three-quarters empty dance hall.

The band went into a swing number and she asked, “Are you game?”

The dance floor emptied further and she taught him some new moves to the enjoyment of those watching. He maneuvered to the front of the stage and yelled out to the band.

“You know any beach music?”

The Band immediately played ‘I’m Man Enough’ and they started to Shag. Some of the young kids watched and started right in with the steps as the band moved on to ‘Return to Sender’.

As the Band struck up ‘I’m in a Beach Music Mood’ Murph said, “How about us going downstairs and see Pap?”

The hurried over to the stairs and as they opened the door to the bar area loud shouting greeted them.

Mendacity

“They are playing Morra as I’ve seen them play it in Italy?” Tatina said as they walk up to the players of which Pap was the lead noisemaker.

The object of the game was to say a number from zero to ten and throw out a finger when added to your opponents’ finger trying to match the number said. Both players say a number and put out a finger or more. Similar to scissors, paper, and rock one played as a child.

Pap won and said, “Tatina, come let’s have a drink.”

“How about me Pap did you forget me? Are you flirting with my Wife?” he complained smiling.

“Roll me for the drinks,” Pap said ignoring his comment.

No contest the old man won in the shortest possible time and as they walked towards the bar and his brother yelled out, “Pap we’re on.”

Pap grabbed Tatina’s arm and took her to the Euchre card table and said, “You will bring me luck stand here and distract these guys.”

Brother and his friend Joe against Pap and his partner Shorty.

“Hey Frank, give me six drafts,” Murph said going to the bar.

“Well my old football blocking mate,” someone said and a huge hand landed on his shoulder.

He turned and there stood a six-foot seven mountain of a man whom he vaguely recognized as a former football teammate. Freddie was a freshman when he graduated from High School and Murph had made his life miserable in practice.

“You still think you can drive me in circles on that two man blocking machine? I owe you a good old whipping,” Freddie said.

“Freddie, take your dispute outside,” Frank the Bartender said picking up an ax handle from behind the bar.

“Think we can let by goners be by goners and forget the old times,” Murph asked then turned left the club making no fuss or attracting attention.

Five minutes later he walked back to the bar and said, “Frank, Freddie’s beers are on me for the rest of the night. Send one out to him.”

He took the six mugs of beer and went over to the card table.

“Where have you been?” Tatina asked.

Bob Furlin

“I was talking to an old friend,” he said and continued, “Let’s go upstairs and dance some more as the night is young.”

“Good luck Pap,” Tatina said in Italian.

The danced until one AM when the band finally stopped. The trip plus dancing exhausted them.

He was going to go down and tell the card players that everyone upstairs were leaving. His brother-in-law met them as they gathered to leave.

He took a hard look at Murph and said, “What did you do to Freddie? Frank said you two went outside and he came in later looking like a freight train had run over him.”

“We played some football and he lost,” he said looking at Tatina as she shook her head.

The kids are all asleep in the car and will stay the night with De. Mom, Murph’s sister-in-law; Tatina and Murph went home in the Pontiac. Brother and Pap would come home much later as the card game went on all-night.

Tatina snuggled up close and said, “Trouble just follows my little Bobby.”

“A-ya gv-ge-yu-i ne-hi,” he said in Iroquian.

“And I love you,” she answered in English before she realized that he had spoken in the Cherokee language.

“When did you learn to speak the Language?” she asked in Iroquian.

“I think you said where did I learn to speak the language? I don’t very well but am learning. I contacted a guy at the language school I attended and he turned me on to a Cherokee on vacation at Myrtle. He taught me while you were sculpting. You are going to have to improve my skills before we visit your family.”

“What am I going to do with you?” she whispered in his ear as they stopped outside the house.

“I’ll show you,” he said and gave her a kiss.

Chapter Thirty Three

They awoke around nine and the smell of coffee and spices filled the air. The table was ready and they had to have eggs, toast, and bacon.

“She does plan to fatten us and when does she sleep?” Tatina said finishing her second helping.

“Mom, we are going for a morning run and we will be back in an hour or so,” he said as they left the kitchen.

He saw the Petrof’s and they both were in their familiar place on their back stoop.

“Bobby, you home for good now and have a woman?” Mrs. Petrof said in Russian.

“Mr. and Mrs. Petrof meet my new wife, Tatina,” he said in Russian.

“She is beautiful, Bobby,” Mrs. P said.

“Thank you and how is your family?” he asked hoping for some further information about Patch One and Two.

“Everyone is all right and well,” Mrs. P said and Mr. P gave her a very hard look. That look could have killed.

“We are still grieving over the loss of our Boys,” Mr. P said quickly.

“Yes, I am sorry and know that you miss them and they were so far-away.”

“Yes, they are great Patriots,” Mr. P said not realizing the tense he used. Mrs. P never spoke again.

“See you later,” Murph said as they walked off. *They are lying*, he thought.

“What was that all about? He scared her wordless,” Tatina said as they break into a slow jog. She saw the look Mr. P gave his wife.

She stopped and looked hard at him in amazement and asked, “How many languages do you speak?”

“I’ve never stopped and counted as it comes easy to me but there is one that I really need to master. Teach me how to speak perfect Iroquian,” he said in Iroquian.

They jogged and spoke in Iroquian during the two hour run. The rest of the day they spent down at De’s new home just sitting

Bob Furlin

around and talking. Pap stopped at the Beer Joint and they picked him up on the way back.

“He likes his beer, doesn’t he?” Tatina said.

“Yes it washes the Coal dust down. That is the excuse he uses,” he said understanding his Dad’s reason. Coal mining was a dirty and dangerous job.

Everyone was up early for the big wedding. They packed the cars with the food Mom cooked and went to Hahntown.

Tatina and Murph went shopping Saturday and bought a gift, “I hope they like our gift. Thinking of gifts as I have three pieces sent here for your family and hope they arrive in good condition. Plus I hope they like my work.”

“Sweetheart, they will love them and someday they will have a famous piece of art by a Beautiful Indian maiden,” he said with sure confidence in his prediction.

They arrived at the reception hall around ten in the morning and the wedding was at one. The family plus Tatina persuaded Murph to wear his dress uniform over his objections.

“You look so sexy in that uniform and it is the first time I saw you wear one,” Tatina tried to pick up his low spirit.

Wearing this Uniform is just another deception he thought. Hal had someone send all his medals of which he did not know what half of them meant. They were all in the proper order or so the accompanying note said. The Purple Heart with two clusters was the only one he knew and he hoped no one asked what all of them were.

Sophia’s husband ran the local Italian Club and they lived next door to the hall where the reception would take place. Some of the Falcone kinfolk and the Salvarolo bunch started arriving at least those who unloaded food.

The rest were gathering at the Church and in total there would be about seventy-five family at the wedding.

Aunt Sophia rushed out to greet Mom and noticed him, “My God Bobby, is that you?” she said giving him a big kiss as he heard a giggle from his little squaw.

Who whispered, “Bobby.”

“Aunt Sophia, I’d like you to meet my wife, Tatina.”

Mendacity

“Mary, your son didn’t marry an Italian girl,” Sophia said in Italian not knowing that he and Tatina understood.

“It is an honor to meet you and be a part of the family,” Tatina said in perfect Italian astonishing Sophia.

“No, she is Cherokee Indian and Scotch-Irish and makes me very proud to have her as my wife,” he also said in Italian.

“She is a beautiful woman and you should be proud,” Sophia said getting over her second shock and hugging Tatina.

The wedding went off without a hitch and Murph introduced Tatina to his Mom’s Parents and his Pap’s older sister, Angela, who acted as the head of the Family in the place of his dead Parents.

Murph never met his Pap’s Mom and Dad as they died in Italy before his birth. Tatina’s fluent understanding of Italian impressed all of them.

His Grand Pap just winked at Murph and he saw the twinkle in his eye. Tatina’s beauty caught the attention of four of his cousins and he took note of that fact. He never was close to any of them as they were considerably older than he.

Aunt Angela and her four beautiful daughters instantly took to Tatina and they acted as old friends. Murph always loved to go to their farm and just be around those girls as their beauty captivated him.

Murph noticed that one of his cousins Vino was taking up much of Tatina’s dance time. He stepped outside in time to hear the end of the conversation between the four. Vino was saying in Italian.

“That squirt can’t satisfy her and that Squaw needs a real man.”

Murph walked up into his face gripped him by his groin and said, “Vino, you won’t have any left to get near her I’ll stuff these where the sun can’t get at them, Capire?”

Cousin Tony stepped forward to help and Murph had him by the throat with his free hand and said, “You two idioti keep away from my wife.”

Murph let them both go and said to the four, “One at a time or all four together want to get a piece of this little squirt.”

No takers so he turned and went back into the hall. The rest of the reception went off with no further incidents and he had Tatina to himself. The four so called Mafia sulked at the bar.

The rest of their stay they had daily runs and self-defense training for Tatina with Cherokee language sessions for him.

Mrs. Petrof had very little to say as the old Man seemed to have read the riot act to her but their statements convinced him the boys were alive. They left for North Carolina with many kisses and tears plus a reminder to write once in a while.

“What did my little Bobcat do to his Cousins that they would not dance with me?” Tatina asked him as they started the trip.

“Your Little Bobcat turned them into four little pussycats. What is this, Little Bobcat,” he grinned at her.

“Their Little Bobby is my Little Bobcat,” she said giggling.

“Well, I have several questions about your people the ‘Principal People’ or Anniyaya.”

“We also like to call ourselves ‘People of different speech’ It originated from the Greek word Cherokee.”

“What do the ‘Principal People’ believe?”

“We believe the world began when the fruits of the earth ripen at the time of the new moon of autumn. The moon plays an important part of our belief system especially the new moon. The sun is our main object of worship and we pray to the sun for bountiful crops and for our people to be healthy.

Fire is another important element of our worship system. The sun and moon chose to take care of all mankind and appointed the task of intervening for mankind to the sun. The smoke of the fire is the messenger that takes the request of the people to the sun.”

“Do the Cherokee believe in a Heaven and Hell?” he asked with a half smile.

“Yes, the good go to a place that is cheerful and where there is always light. The bad go to a place of trouble. It is a place where they will suffer severe physical pain as a means of punishment,” she frowned.

“Sounds like Heaven and Hell to me,” he surmised and asked, “How about an almighty God?”

“Yes, we believe in seven heavens and the Supreme Being lives in the first heaven.”

Mendacity

They discussed all aspects of the Cherokee culture, history, rituals, festivals, and any other subject he could think of.

The closer to the Reservation they got the more peace Murph seemed to have in his heart. One night of rest with lovemaking and they entered the Cherokee Reservation.

They drove Highway 19 into the reservation and before reaching Cherokee turned off onto a dirt road that dead-ended. Tatina's Brother, John, camped there waiting for them. She had called and told him roughly the time of their arrival and he camped out two days waiting for them. He had three horses and four pack mules to take supplies into his Mother and Grandparents.

"Hello my Little Fire Queen you are a day late," John said to Tatina.

"John I want you to meet my Little Bobcat and Bob meet John my big Warrior brother."

"Hi, sorry we are late it was my fault as Little Bobcat had to put out a fire," Murph said. John laughed, and Little Fire Queen punched Murph.

He and John instantly hit it off and seemed like old friends. John was not big around five eight, slender and Murph surmised that he must look like his Father.

Tatina probably looked more like her Mother and confirmed it when they arrived at the Lodge. They rode the whole day into the mountains and came to a creek and Lodge that was still under construction.

"John, are you building a Tourist attraction here?" Tatina asked when they first saw the place.

"Yes, some news for you Little Sister. I am selling the business and moving the family as we are going back to our roots. The Lodge will eventually hold fifty people and I hope we can make a go of it. As you know Dad left Mom and all of us well off. We only have to be wise in the use of the money," John told of his plans.

"I know this makes Mom happy and my Big Brother Warrior will protect all of us," Tatina said grinning at Murph.

They stopped in front of the Lodge and Tatina's Mother came out on the front porch to greet them. Murph saw where Tatina gained her beauty and grace.

Tatina jumped off her horse and ran up on the porch and gave her Mom a big hug and kiss.

“Mom, meet my Little Bobcat,” she said in Cherokee.

“I am happy to meet you and I believe your name is Robert,” her Mother put out her hand.

“I am also happy to meet you and you can call me Little Bobcat if you wish,” Murph answered in halting Cherokee much to the amazement of John and Tatina’s Mom.

“I will and you can call me Nancy or Mom if you wish. We welcome you into our Tribe. You speak our language well,” Nancy smiled at him.

“I prefer Mom. I had a great and beautiful teacher. Thank you for honoring me and raising such a beautiful Little Fire Queen,” he said looking at Tatina.

“We are very proud of her? Now come in clean up and we will eat,” Nancy said.

“Mom, where is Grand Maw and Grand Paw?” Tatina asked.

“They had to go back to Cherokee as there is a Tribal meeting that they had to attend.”

“I so wanted them to meet my new Warrior Husband,” Tatina said with a frown, “Next time we will make sure that they are here when we come.”

Murph was feeling more relaxed with every passing moment the atmosphere charged with peace and serenity. The next morning Tatina awakened him just before sunrise.

“Wake up and we will join Mom in greeting the new day.”

“You mean the old one passed already?” Murph said reaching for her but she avoided him.

“We will have time for that later and hurry we do not want to disappoint her. This is duyuktv, the right way,” she said leaving the room.

He caught her on the porch just as everyone was starting for the Creek.

“OK Queen-e you tell me what’s going on,” he looked at her.

“The Cherokee start each day by gathering in the water facing east and praying in seven directions. We give thanks for the new day and are sort of reborn by washing away any bad feelings toward others or our Creator. Come on let’s hurry,” she was eager to share in the ageless ritual of her People.

Mendacity

The days flew by and it was time to leave, “Let’s stay another week,” he asked Tatina.

“I have to get back I’ve got students coming and I promise you we will spend many days here and renew ourselves,” she said giving him a big hug.

They left the way they came except that it changed, and refreshed him. They couldn’t wait for the time they would return to his Little Fire Queen’s people. If there was any smell of Honey in the air he was totally unaware of it.

Chapter Thirty Four

Murph still had time to go on his extended vacation when they reached Myrtle Beach. He expected that Hal would be after him for another assignment probably before the time was up. Tatina began her classes and they were still honeymooning at every free hour.

“Got a minute Sergeant?” a familiar voice stopped him as he was entering his car to pick up lunch for Tatina’s Class.

The voice came from a black Ford Sedan parked behind his Pontiac.

“I’ve still got time, go away,” he said to Hal.

He faked anger as he had noticed the car and its occupant before Hal spoke. He stopped at the door of the car but did not enter but finally reluctantly entered the Ford.

“Good to see you kept in good condition Falcone and married life must agree with you,” Hal said grinning.

“Have you been spying on me? I thought I saw someone watching me work out on the beach the last few days,” he looked hard at Hal.

“We need you for an assignment in Berlin as Krucheff is getting bolder and we expect him to invade Hungary,” Hal said ignoring his question.

“And I am supposed to stop him?” Murph said jokingly, “Besides I am not interested in leaving my wife for any extended period at this time.”

“Are you serious?” Hal frowned.

“I’ll resign if pushed,” he answered in a tone that was serious.

“You truly are a Reluctant Spy,” Hal said and tried repeatedly to convince him to take the assignment.

“Listen find me something here Stateside a few years and then I’ll consider something if the Petrof Boys are still in the hunt,” he laid out his terms.

“Well, you were perfect for the job but I will see what I can do,” Hal finally said as he could see that he was not budging.

“Listen, I’ve got to pick up lunch and I’ll wait for your call,” he said as he exited the Ford.

Mendacity

When he returned with the lunches Tatina asked, “Who were you talking to in that black Ford? Don’t tell me you are leaving.”

“I am not leaving my Dear for the world. I’ll tell you later,” he said with a devilish grin.

Three weeks later he received a phone call from Hal, “How about you staying right there at Myrtle Beach teaching language classes, mainly Russian. You will teach four days a week. Some sessions will be on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday.”

“Is that on base?”

“Yes, three month class sessions. The schedule is one week off and then another session. Military and nonmilitary will attend all in Civilian dress including you. No rank or real names used and you will need a codename. Do you have one in mind?” Hal asked.

“How about using Bob Cat?” he suggested.

“OK by me, Mr. Cat is what we call you. First session in three weeks instructions should arrive tomorrow with lesson plans. By the way how long do you expect this job to last?” Hal asked.

“I was thinking three years,” he suggested.

“We will talk in three years if not before,” Hal agreed and hung up.

“Looks like you are not going to miss me now as you are going to have me under your feet for at least three years,” he told Tatina after hanging up with Hal. He explained the deal to her.

She was ecstatic and said, “I am thrilled to have you under my feet but there is something that I did miss.”

“What did you miss?” he said innocently.

She stood with her hands on her hips and a big beautiful smile on her face. It took a few seconds before he realized what she had just told him.

“When, how long did you know and why didn’t you let me know,” he said giving her a big hug and kiss.

“The Doctor just confirmed it this afternoon and you will be a proud Papa to a Little Princes or Little Warrior in August,” she gave him a big smile.

“Baby, you have made my day!” he swung her off her feet.

Bob Furlin

The next nine months were a time of anticipation and on three occasions both Clans got together. They met once in the Mountains and twice in Myrtle Beach. His Pap was like a little kid when he went to the mountains and met Tatina's family especially her Grandparents. The times at Myrtle were special as Tatina was more radiant than ever as the time drew near for her to deliver.

"It's a seven-pound two ounce girl," the Dr. said at two on a hot August afternoon.

"Have you seen her yet? She is so beautiful." May we call her Katrina?" she asked him.

"I am so proud of you and Katrina is gorgeous just like her Mother," he said with a tear in his eye and a look of awe on his face.

Murph was teaching an unusually small class one year later when a student opened the door of the classroom and said.

"They did it; the Russians launched the first satellite. They are calling it Sputnik."

He turned on the radio and listened to the news and he felt discomfited and confounded.

"Gentlemen the Russians have orbited a 'fellow traveler to Earth', the Zemlyi translated Sputnik. Krucheff said 'We will bury you!'" he used the news to teach some Russian.

One month later the door opened, "They did it again and they launched Sputnik II but this time with a dog on board called Laika."

"Laika translated Barker, men they are barking at us plus biting us in the backside," he said in total disgust to the class.

One month later and there was another announcement.

"We launched the Vanguard and it went four feet into the air and went Kaput. Some are calling it Kaputnick," it totally disgusted him.

One month later it opened once again, "Von Braun did it the Explorer 1 made it into orbit," the class broke out in a cheer.

Murph realized that before long Hal would be giving him a call and pre-warned Tatina.

"Will you miss me if your daddy goes off for a little while?" he asked his sweetheart Katrina.

Mendacity

“Talking about missing something, guess what?” she said looking for some negative reaction from him.

“I think Mamma is trying to tell us sweetheart that we are going to have a baby brother,” he said rushing over and almost sweeping Tatina off her feet.

“Congratulations Mr. Falcone as you have a nine-pound healthy son,” the Doctor announced and Murph was on cloud nine.

“You outdid yourself Baby and can I suggest a name?” he asked her.

“Ok, let me have it,” she answered half covering her ears knowing his tendency of being unconventional in some matters.

“How about John Davis Falcone in honor of your Father?” he grinned at her.

She said nothing but started crying and called him over to the bed.

They hugged, kissed, and she said, “Thank you.”

Nine months after they brought John Davis home the phone rang and it was Hal.

“Time is up and we have an assignment for you so be at Langley in two days and expect to be gone for at least eighteen months. Something big is up with your two boys involved.”

Tatina took the news like she was an old pro at the game and he left assuring her that all would be ok.

“Please be careful and I love you with all my heart,” she said as he left for Langley AFB, Virginia.

There was no big meeting, briefing, or presentation just Hal and Murph.

The assignment was Shemya, Alaska in the Aleutian Islands and the news sent shivers down Murph’s back as he remembered the flashback he had in Cuba.

I hope this time I hope I will survive the Islands that is part of the new forty-ninth State in the Union was his thought.

“Shemya is the far Western tip of the Chain and is about forty miles east of Attu the last Island. It is around fifteen hundred miles from Anchorage and we have several posts there. You are

going to need to know the mission of each detachment on the Island,” Hal said waiting for some reaction from him.

Getting none he continued, “It is a little two-mile by four-mile Island and ideally situated to monitor their long-range missiles. The Satellite launch flight path is nearly right over the Island.

There are four sites that will concern you. The first one is the Bubble your assignment. The long-range radar site, the code and voice site, then the very Top Secret experimental site that will try to disrupt their satellite launch,” he stopped again waiting for some reaction.

“You said something on the phone about my two boys. Patch One and Two, I assume?” he asked.

“Yes, we think they are in the area in fact one of them may be on the Island already,” Hal answered and continued, “You will be going out to the Island with four others, Jack Strand, Ed Wills, Joe Craft, and Stan Peters.

The five of you will have your skills upgraded on the latest equipment and then be on Shemya by April first. I believe you know all four of them do you not?”

“Oh yes I know them all especially Jack ‘Fish’ Strand and Stan Peters,” he answered.

I wonder why the five of them? The smell of honey is in the air and it hasn't been that strong in a longtime.

Hal looked at him seemingly hesitant to continue with what was on his mind, *Can I trust him?* He decided that he would trust in his instincts of Murph’s trustworthiness.

He continued, “The Russians have infiltrated the ranks at all levels both in the Intelligence and Military communities. The past decade emboldened the Russians as they now have Cuba, Eastern Europe, parts of South America and Africa, Indo-China and China under their influence. They are beating us in Space and probably will put a man up there before us. They are cocky and sure of themselves but we are not helpless,” he stopped and let Murph mull over what he had just said.

“Yeah, but one thing they don’t have going for them is ‘Truth, Justice, and the American Way’,” Murph said laughing remembering listening to Superman on the Radio.

Mendacity

“One weapon we have going for us now is a very high-flying Spy Plane that they have not been able to get at,” Hal said.

So that is what the tests we performed in Turkey were about tracking those so called high-flying weather balloons, Murph wondered and remembered the Radio receptions in Korea from Patch Two about a high-flyer. *If they knew something before it came into existence what do they know now?*

He said nothing about his thoughts and asked, “What’s next? There has to be other agents on the Island besides me and will we contact one another?”

“Yes there are others. Contact is possible if needed because everyone is working alone and independent of one another,” Hal smiled and said to a puzzled Murph.

“Doesn’t make sense to me but you guys are the so called pros,” he shrugged.

“I will be in touch and now you are off to Keesler and your new Team,” Hal finished.

Murph got ready to travel to Mississippi. He called Tatina and told her that Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi was his next home for a few weeks.

“Where you been hiding?” Stan Peters greeted him as he checked into the NCO Billets at Keesler.

“Just like old home week all my old friends gathered around me. The others check in yet?” he said shaking Stan’s hand.

“The gang is all here so let’s get the others and go for a drink,” Stan said knocking on the door next to Murph’s room.

“Hey Fish, Falcone is finally here let’s get a drink and shoot the bull.”

The five went to a local bar and spent the night drinking and talking about old times. Then the conversation turned to ‘The Rock’ and they shared the stories they had heard about ‘The Black Pearl of the Aleutians’.

“I heard the weather was so bad on that rock that it changes by the minute. You get rain almost every day, gale force winds constantly, huge waves from the Bearing Sea and Pacific Ocean. It is a Surfer’s and Sunbather’s Paradise,” Fish said laughing.

“Earthquakes constantly and tidal waves that truly is scary since the Island is at sea level. Two miles wide four miles long

where do you go to hide perhaps climb a tree if there were trees,” Ed said with a frown.

“I hear the accommodations are excellent and you get a rat in every bed. Does anyone know what a Williwaws happens to be?” Joe asked.

“Fish mentioned the gale force winds that come up suddenly and I hear reach speeds more than 100 miles an hour. My guess Williwaws is the name of those winds,” Murph spoke up.

“The Winters are great the snow is heavy and deep and those Williwaws can’t even blow the stuff around. By the way I hear those winds can last a week at a time,” Jack added his two bits of good news.

“OK guys you are depressing me so let’s toast to a year or more of fun and excitement on the Pearl, the Rock or whatever you want to call that God forsaken place. It’s a fine place my lads with a lass behind every tree and a Paradise of Ice and Snow. A haven for those who have no one,” a now drunken Stan said giving a toast. They all went to their rooms in about the same condition.

Training over and the five of them awoke in a secure Compound on Elmendorph Air Base, Anchorage, Alaska. They were waiting for final clearance and transportation out to the Rock and had very little to do during the days that were getting longer at least the daylight hours.

The base had an Air show featuring the Blue Angels and they decided to walk the five miles to the Airstrip. They left the Compound and its twelve foot fence with barbed wire going in both directions.

They were in relative high spirits and walked towards the Airstrip telling jokes and swapping tales plus commenting on the beauty of the Mountains on the far side of the Airfield.

They topped the crest of a hill overlooking the Airstrip in time to see a black aircraft taking off from a secondary runway.

“Man look at the wingspan on that bird,” Joe blurted out.

It did not need much runway and it was up and out of sight in a couple of minutes.

Mendacity

“That’s a U-2 a very High-Flying Spy Bird. I saw one in Turkey. It~,” Fish said and before he could continue Stan stopped him.

“I think you said enough we are not to talk about that to anyone so remember our instructions,” Stan snapped.

“Hell these guys are all cleared for Top Secret so what is the problem?” Fish shot back.

“The problem is that no one and that means no one is to have loose lips. Didn’t you receive those orders?” Stan upset faced Fish.

“OK, we heard nothing so let’s watch the show,” Murph stepped in and calmed things down a note.

They watched the show but there was tension all the while and during the walk back to the Compound. Murph sat down on his bunk to read Tatina’s daily letter and one from his Mom. He was homesick for her and the kids.

The top of the hour so he decided to turn on the radio and the news headline was.

“A US U-2 Plane is shot down over Sverdlovsk in the U.S.S.R. while conducting weather research and it may have strayed off course. The Pilot reported having difficulty with his oxygen equipment.”

Weather research and strayed off course it must be a cover story by the CIA. Yeah we have been flying those so called weather missions since 1956 and the Russians are going to have a field day with this. Fish and Stan were very timely with their discussion, he thought as he started to read the letters.

The kids missed him and Tatina had received a commissioned to do a statue for a park in Chicago. Her first big project her reputation was growing.

He read his Mom’s letter and the news was that she found Mrs. Petrof dead last week. It seemed she fell and hit her head.

Hit her head more like an ax handle from the old man I would bet anything on that. She was talking too much and Mr. P was not a happy camper when I last saw him he mused.

Stan and Fish said very little about the U-2 incident and the Government kept denying that it was a Spy plane. The day they boarded the C-124 dubbed ‘Old Shakey’ for Shemya when the news broke.

Krucheff announced that they captured the Pilot of the U-2 shot down and he confessed that he was on a spy mission.

“Boy that is interesting either of you two guys know anything about this U-2 story?” Joe asked Fish and Stan with a big grin on his face.

No one said a word just glared at him as the plane taxied to take off. The five of them were the only passengers the rest were supplies for the Island.

“Hey, we are just like General Patton during WW 2 flying into France with all the cargo. Great cover for all of us the Russians may think we are sacks of potatoes,” Ed said laughing.

“More like a can of sardines,” Murph fired back.

“You guys think this bird can land on the 10,000 foot runway build for B-29s. They actually used it for B-24s during the big war?” Joe said to no one in particular more like a statement.

“Do you think the Air Force Pilots can handle the tricky weather? We would have been better-off going out with Reeve Aleutian Airlines those pilots are the best in the World,” Ed spoke up again.

“Will you two weak sisters keep quiet and let a guy get some rest,” a grumpy Stan lashed out.

Thirty minutes later the plane banked left and the Crew Chief called out.

“The weather has turned terrible over Shemya and we are heading back to Elmendorph.”

“Great, just great we will spend eternity trying to get out to that Paradise,” Fish said waking up from his short nap.

Three days later and a little touchy wanting to start and complete their tour and word came that they would go the next day early.

They encountered high winds all the way out and about three quarters of the way the Crew Chief announced.

“The weather has improved and the possibility of a landing has improved. We should be there in about three hours.”

They were all getting excited as they approached the Island when again a sharp bank.

“Maybe they are aligning with the runway,” Joe speculated.

“Fog has suddenly engulfed the Island and we are heading back,” the Crew Chief announced again.

Mendacity

“Hell, we are going to starve eating these stale sandwiches and drinking warm water,” Ed gripped.

“I hear that these sandwiches are better than any meal you will get on the Rock,” Fish piped up.

The return trip was torture and the five were in a very sour mood.

“So close but so far, I bet Reeve would have landed. Those guys are fearless,” Joe said.

Three more days of sitting around and the fourth morning they were in the air again.

“If we don’t make it this time I quit and am going AWOL,” Joe said half in jest.

“More like Leavenworth,” Stan piped up.

“You want to hear a great story of how efficient our Air Traffic controllers are on Shemya?” Fish asked and not waiting for an answer he continued.

“A buddy of mine tells this story.

Reeves Flight four turn right so I can identify.

Roger Shemya.

Turn back to heading 290. You are two miles from the end of the runway on path on target. Do not reply from this point on. Slow your rate of descent. On target and on course. You are slightly below the path. Back on target and on course. You are approaching the end of the runway. You are over the runway. You should see the runway lights.”

Runway hell,” one of the Pilots interrupted the Controller.

“All we see is water. No runway in sight--in fact no Island in sight. We are out in the Pacific somewhere. This is Reeve four, we are out of here and returning to Adak,” Fish waited for some laughter but got none so he just shrugged and said, “Well I thought it was funny.”

“Fasten your seat belts Gentlemen we are going to land,” the Crew Chief called out.

A chorus of Amen’s greeted the announcement and they prepared to land.

The plane made a sudden bank to the right and the Pilot cut back the engines. The nose went down and the wheels slammed into the runway. A strap broke holding one of the crates and it slammed into the side of the airplane. Up and then down again

the wheels hitting harder than the time before. The brakes started squealing the Pilot reversed the engines and the plane caromed down the runway.

Time seemed to stand still and finally no movement they had landed.

Boy, It's a Long Way to Tipperary an old song went through Murph's mind.

The clam shell loading doors finally opened and they walked down the ramp into the fog and wind driven rain.

"Nice landing; I am going to have to change my shorts," Ed said laughing.

They could not see a thing and someone appeared in front of them and yelled.

"Follow me," he led them into the Operations building.

"Welcome to The Pearl of the Aleutians and I am Sergeant Pete Grant and will be your tour guide." the tall slender Staff Sergeant shook all their hands and seemed very friendly, "By the way I answer to Pete."

"It is nice to meet you Pete and we came a long way to be in your company. I figured we traveled around seven thousand five hundred miles with a beautiful landing to be in this Paradise. It has been a long trip," Stan said and the others shook their heads agreeing.

Chapter Thirty Five

“You guys must have had a tough trip and that was a rough landing. We couldn’t see but we sure heard the squealing tires. You stopped just short of going into the Sea,” Pete commented while waving his arms.

“Tell us about it,” Stan said sarcastically.

Pete turned to leave, “Let’s go to the hut.”

“How are we going to find our way in all this fog?” Murph asked.

”Easy, you just hold onto the handrail and follow me,” Pete smiled.

The walk from the landing strip was wet, dark, and windy but made a lot easier by the rail lined squeaky wooden walkway. They caught on fast to the art of leaning into the wind so it would not push them backwards.

It would take a little longer in catching on how to handle the wind at their backs.

“Here we are,” Pete yelled over his shoulder.

They entered a worn out World War II Quonset hut one of hundreds on the island that were in various stages of decay.

“This place is on its last legs,” Fish complained.

“Lucky you, we will be moving into the new compound in a couple months. We will be getting out of this rat trap. Hold on a minute I have something to cheer you up,” Pete said and went over to his bunk and pulled out a full bottle of Seagram Seven.

“Hallelujah, a man after my own heart,” Joe yelled as he got the first swig.

“Hold on, save some for the rest of us,” Fish complained as he grasped the bottle and took a bigger swig.

When it got to Murph there was just one medium size gulp left in the bottle and he sad, “We owe Pete a bottle.”

“Got any more?” Ed asked.

“No but you need to take it easy as you have to see the Major in the morning and he will brief you. You will need a clear head,” Pete cautioned them.

“Are you going to be our nursemaid until we adjust to this wonderful place?” Stan asked.

“Perhaps me plus a few others but I believe you are old hands and will adjust quickly,” Pete answered seeing their ranks.

Reluctantly they got ready to hit the sack and someone had sheets and blankets on their bunks.

“This Hut sure stinks like dead rats,” Ed complained.

Murph had a hard time falling asleep as his mind was on Tatina and the kids. He wished that she was next to him now and the thought of a year separation did not make falling asleep easier. He also thought the place smelled but not of dead rats as the Honey smell was everywhere.

Their bunks vibrating, shaking, and moving across the floor awakened them.

“What is going on?” Fish yelled as he jumped onto a floor that was moving and stumbled into Murph’s bunk.

“What’s happening? Feels like an earthquake,” Ed said as the floor stopped moving.

“What the hell are you guys doing? Go back to sleep,” someone yelled out from their bunk.

“In time they will become normal. The tremors happen at least once a night and a few times during the day. Get some sleep,” another unknown voice said.

“I hate earthquakes. I don’t like the Earth moving under my feet with nowhere to run,” Joe said.

“I remember reading about the one that hit Adak in 1957 a magnitude 8.8 earthquake that caused very severe damage.

Then there was a damaging Tsunami that produced a wall of water 40 feet high that smashed the coastline of Scotch Cap on Unimak Island. Sand Bay, near Adak, reported 26 foot high waves.

On Adak, the earthquake destroyed two bridges, damaged some houses, and left gaping cracks in the road. Some cracks were reportedly 15 feet wide.

At Sand Bay the Tsunami washed away several buildings and damaged oil lines. This earthquake started a series of aftershocks that extended more than 700 miles along the southern edge of the Aleutians,” Stan told the group.

“I wonder how we will get off this place if there is another big one. They probably have a couple of boats or planes to evacuate us. Don’t you think?” Joe asked.

Mendacity

“Now how are they going to have time to evacuate us or protect anyone on this two by four-mile Island? Hope you can hold your breath a longtime,” Fish said laughing.

It is déjà vu all over again as Yogi Berra would say, Murph thought of the flashback he had in Cuba about the Island as he drifted off to sleep.

Up early and hungry Fish got upset with Pete for taking so long to get ready. Pete did not have much interest in eating.

He gripped, “Pete, we are starving.

Where is the mess hall?” Stan asked.

Pete laughed, “Do you like peanut butter?”

“No, I hate it,” Stan said.

“I love Peanut Butter,” Joe spoke up.

“Well that’s good and you’d better develop a taste for it fast,” Pete grinned.

“Why is that?” Fish asked.

“You’ll find out,” Pete said going out the door with the five of them following in a hurry to eat.

They walked or the wind pushed them to the mess hall as the wind was blowing in their backs. A foul smell filed the air as they approached the hall.

“Pete, what is that awful smell?” Fish asked almost gagging.

“That stink is enough to gag a maggot,” Stan yelled out.

“Let’s go in and I’ll explain,” Pete said as he opened the door.

They got in line and went through the chow line as Civilian servers dished out the food. The meal consisted of scrambled eggs, something that looked like grits, and a piece of toast. They asked for a little extra and got a blank stare.

“You are right on brother. Northwest Orient Airlines runs the hall. In 1954 for some unknown reason except to a Bureaucrat’s way of thinking they deactivated the station and later turned it over to the Civil Aeronautics Authority. Then they leased it to the Airline and later the Air Force contracted them to run the place. Go figure,” Pete lamented.

“How can someone mess up breakfast? This stuff is lousy. Pete you said I would have to develop a taste for peanut butter,” Stan reminded Pete.

Pete pointed to an Airman sitting a couple of tables down from them.

“That guy is passing around a testimonial and getting signatures. He say’s he is going to send it to Skippy Peanut Butter Company stating the group had survived on their butter for twelve months. He has a couple hundred signatures. You can have all the peanut butter you want if you can get the bread. So if you are going to survive learn to like peanut butter.”

Murph noticed that no one was talking about the operation just making small talk and ignoring the smell.

“Pete these clowns don’t mind the smell and you said you would explain,” he asked.

“Some bright guy fumigated under the floor but wasn’t smart enough to figure out how to get the dead rats out. The smell has lessened some and you will adapt to it. Besides the new Compound has a Mess Hall run by Air Force Personnel,” Pete explained.

“We need to hurry to Headquarters as Major Britt will not tolerate someone reporting late. You guys did notice that this is a joint Army Air Force venture and Britt is Army. I don’t believe he thinks much of us fly boys.”

The five of them entered the Major’s Office saluted and reported for duty.

“Be at ease and sit down gentlemen,” he gave a halfhearted salute and sat behind his desk looking like he would like to be somewhere else.

“First of all welcome. We are shorthanded and need you. I understand you had some trouble getting out here?” the Major said.

“Yes Sir, we did,” Murph replied.

Britt stirred in his chair and continued, “There are two important rules you are to remember. If you don’t need to know then do not try to find out.

Talk about your job only while on-the-job and not off duty. You do not even talk to those you work with at the site. It is important that we keep the need to know where intended. Of course you have been through this many times but it is my duty to remind you again.”

He took a drink of water and looked down at their records, “I see here that all of you have outstanding records and Sergeant Falcone you are the ranking man.”

Mendacity

He continued covering a multitude of subjects taking about an hour. Shifting for the fiftieth time he said, "This is a joint operation. Do you have a problem with me being in charge?"

Not waiting for a reply he slid forward in his chair with a grin on his face, "You know we started you guys in the late forties. They borrowed a handful of us from the Army Security Agency and set up the U.S. Air Force Security Services (USAFSS). Since then you earphone clad signal operators, linguists, and analysts have been keeping a watchful eye on the Soviet Empire around the world. Excuse me a minute gentlemen," Britt said abruptly and left the office.

"That guy is one loaded dude and I bet a dollar to a doughnut that he is not drinking water," Stan said aloud what all of them were thinking.

"His pitcher is empty and I bet he comes back with another one full of some clear liquid," Fish no sooner got the words out of his mouth when the Major entered with another pitcher and glass full of water.

"OK, where did I leave off"? Oh yes, your assignments. Four shift chiefs are leaving and rotating out so Peters you are in charge of Team 1, Strand Team 2, Wills Team 3, and Craft Team 4.

Five men including the leader comprise a team when the range is down you will rotate in eight hour shifts. When the Russians go on alert we live at the station until they launch or stand down.

Falcone they have finally authorized me a Site Chief and since you are the ranking man you are my right hand man.

You four can go I believe the men you are replacing are outside. They are leaving in two days but with all your experience that is enough time to get you trained. Falcone, stick around we need to talk," he finished with a big gulp of water.

The four got up saluted and Stan gave Murph a half hearted grin as he left the office.

The Major sat and looked at Murph and finally said, "You know I didn't request a fifth man or a Site Chief but I do have these sealed orders for you."

He reached in his desk and pulled out a fairly large sealed brown envelope marked Top Secret.

Bob Furlin

“Are you here on some secret mission Sergeant and are you really a Sergeant? I’ll give you time to read through that and will be back later,” Britt didn’t wait for an answer finished the glass of whatever and left the office.

Murph opened the envelope and started to read the enclosed information.

There is an immediate internal and external threat to all units operating on the Island. There is credible information that leads us to conclude that Foreign Agents are on the Island and will lead Commando strikes to disrupt our Operations. We authorize you to neutralize those threats by whatever means necessary.

Neutralize pretty word why don’t they say just what they mean. Kill them if necessary, he thought.

We authorize you to coordinate Security with all units on the Island. The code word for contact with other friendly agents is ‘Crab followed by ‘Land’.

Reveal your Identity only to those who respond to the password ‘or at your desecration’. No one on the Island knows of your status or of your cover as Site Chief and Coordinator for Major Britt. This will entitle you access to all operations on the Island. The enemy’s main target is Detachment three composed of ten Scientists that are trying to disrupt the launch of any Satellite by using a light beam. The password for this Operation is ‘Junior More’. The enclosed pass will allow your entry into all necessary sites.

He found the badge in a separate enclosed envelope.

Study the enclosed map of the Island and then burn all material in this envelope and have Major

Mendacity

Britt witness that destruction. Do not reveal the information to him.

He just had finished memorizing the material and maps as Major Britt entered the Office.

“You need more time Sergeant?”

“No Sir. Would you witness the destruction of this material?” he asked and Britt reached for the envelope.

“Do you have a match or lighter, Sir?” Murph asked not giving him the envelope.

Britt glared at him but reached in his desk and gave him a box of matches. He saw a metal wastepaper basket and asked “May I burn the material in that basket.”

Britt said nothing and handed him the basket. He proceeded to burn the envelope with its contents. The smoke filled the Office and that gave Britt another excuse to sip on the glass probably to clear his throat.

“There is another piece of business I have to carry out. They directed me to give you this,” Britt said opening the safe and giving him a revolver with a shoulder holster plus a couple boxes of ammunition.

“Do I need to sign for this?” he asked.

“You don’t. Someone doesn’t want the weapon traced. When you’re finished with it throw the weapon into the Ocean but get rid of it,” Britt said shrugging his shoulders as if to say whatever.

“I don’t know who is working for whom but to the outside public you are working for me. So act accordingly,” Britt continued to finish his water.

Man, he has a hollow leg he should be falling down by now and he can handle his liquor he thought and said.

“Yes Sir, I understand and will respect your rank.”

“Well, that should wrap this conversation up for now. Sergeant Grant is waiting outside to show you around,” Britt said dismissing him.

Chapter Thirty Six

“What did you think of the Major?” Pete asked Murph as they left the building.

“He sure likes his water” he said grinning.

“Yeah water more like 100 percent Vodka. Give him credit he can handle his booze though,” Pete said leading the way to a bus stop.

A bus pulled up in front of HQ and they fought the wind and got on the half loaded bus.

“Hi there Boozer,” Pete said as he stepped up into the shuttle bus.

Murph thought he was talking to the Driver as he followed. It surprised him that it wasn't the driver Pete was talking to but a dog.

“Don't worry as he is our friendly Wonder Dog and a great morale booster. He is the privileged dog and gets to ride the shuttle. I will let you guess why we call him Boozer,” Pete said and made small talk as they head for the site.

Murph wasn't listening but his thoughts were on what he had read in the Major's Office, *sounds like I have my work cut out for me especially identifying the good guys and the enemy. I don't know if they are expecting me to eliminate every suspicious person. If they are they have another thought coming. I will have to make immediate contact with those Detachment Three people.* Pete interrupted his thoughts.

“Did you know that blue and Russian fox plus many birds occupy this island? If you could see you would notice all the naked women hiding behind the trees. If you ever go sightseeing that is if you find a clear enough day to walk around the Island watch out for live ammo.

Towards the end of WW 2 they dumped a load of ammo over the cliff at the southeast end of the Island and set it on fire. They did not do a good job of eliminating the stuff,” Pete rambled on and shuttle finally stopped and he got up, petted Boozer and stepped out into the fog.

Murph followed close behind after stopping and petting Boozer. Silently they walked into the fog with Pete in front and

Mendacity

Murph trying to keep him in sight. Murph sensed they were passing a low building on their left as he noticed some lights. Pete made no comment and kept walking then suddenly looming in front of them was a large round structure for lack of a better word, a Bubble.

“Here we are,” Pete said as he went around to a door and pushed a button.

They waited silently until the door opened and there stood an Airman First-Class with a carbine in his hand.

“What is the password?” he demanded.

“Go to Hell,” Pete responded sarcastically.

“That guy can never remember the password,” the Airman laughed as he closed and locked the door behind them.

Pete took off his Parka and hung it up on a rack in the hallway. Murph did the same and the Airman noticed Murph’s rank.

“Man first-class replacements this night and something big must be coming,” the Airman commented.

“Airman Mike Leigh this is your new Site Chief, Sergeant Falcone.”

“Did you say Site Chief? With all due respect what in the world is that?” Leigh asked.

“He is the Major’s new right hand man but he will explain because I know little else,” Pete said looking at Murph.

“The Major needs all the help he can get. You drink a lot Sergeant?” Mike broke in before Murph could speak.

“Let’s just say I am going to keep out-of-the-way I am sure you know what you are doing. My role will change as time passes,” he answered ignoring the drinking question.

Pete signed the log and turned to Murph.

“You too Sergeant, we must obey the rules.”

“Just call me Murph, I prefer that to Sergeant,” he said to them as he signed the sheet knowing that word will get around fast.

Mike unlocked the other door and the three entered the ground floor of the structure. Expecting to see some familiar equipment all he saw were blankets hanging down from the ceiling making a makeshift or a blanket hallway.

“Having Visitors?” Pete asked.

“We have some people from Maintenance coming to check the thermostats that are not working properly,” Mike barely finished when a bell rung.

“That must be them now,” Mike said as he went to the door.

At least they are not hiding the equipment from me, Murph thought.

Mike let the maintenance people in and one of the Soldiers said.

“We are getting the blanket treatment again? You guys are sure protective, do you think we are Russians?”

Mike didn’t reply and said, “Follow me as the thermostat is out again. Think you guys can fix it this time or do we need some real maintenance people?”

Murph watched as Mike led them down the ‘hall’ to the thermostat his carbine at the ready. The wise cracking guy tried to see around one of the blankets and Murph noticed the equipment had either sheets or blankets thrown over them.

“Eyes straight ahead fellows,” Mike ordered.

Mike followed them as a blanket hallway led to each destination. It took them about a half hour and they signed out and left the building.

Mike and Pete started taking down the blankets and uncovered the equipment as Murph looked around.

“Does any of this equipment look familiar, Murph?” Mike asked testing his newfound freedom.

“It sure does,” he answered and noticed Pete giving Mike an evil eye.

“This equipment may be familiar but wait till you see some of the stuff upstairs, you may see something new.” Pete said.

“Where are the others?” Pete asked Mike.

“Sergeant Jennings is showing the new Shift Chief around and J and LG are upstairs,” Mike answered.

“That’s not code as Airman J. Vitter and H. G Dole have initials for first names,” Pete said to him still hesitant in calling him Murph.

They were just finishing putting all the blankets and sheets away when a siren sounded.

“Mission up,” Mike said getting excited.

Mendacity

“Sergeant Falcone you’re trained on entrance procedures so get the keys from Mike and go out there as the crew will be arriving very soon. Mike and I have to get upstairs and help get the equipment ready,” Pete said taking charge and giving orders to his new Site Chief.

“Remember to check each ID even the Majors,” Pete said going upstairs.

“Ok,” Murph answered and remembered how Mike didn’t check theirs when they entered.

The bell rung about a half hour later and he thought, *check ID, keep everyone in the outer hall and the door to the lower floor locked. Make sure all sign in before I let anyone into the inner door.*

He started for the door and thought, *rifle get yourself a rifle.* He got a rifle and opened the outer door.

“About time what have you been doing?” the Major snapped.

A slight grin showed on the Major’s face as he recognized Murph. He showed his ID and walked to the sign in sheet.

They had not all signed in yet when the Major said, “Open the door Sergeant and someone take over from Sergeant Falcone.”

“Yes sir, as soon everyone signs in,” Murph said.

Fish and Stan turned and give him the thumbs up sign. Ed and Joe were standing in the hallway with about fifteen other troopers.

When they had all logged in he opened the inner door then let the impatient Major and crew into the lower level.

“I’ll take over Sergeant,” a young Airman Second Class said.

He gave the young man the keys and rifle. He followed the rest into the room and caught up with the Major.

They climbed the two section spiral metal stairway to the second floor and entered a large open room filled with equipment, receivers and tape recorders.

They have gotten a lot more sophisticated since I was last in one of the sites. Murph thought as he watched a mix of Army and Airman manning their stations.

Twenty minutes later and everyone quieted down as the Major spoke, “There is a lot of activity on the range and it looks like we will be here for a while so relax. For those of you who

haven't met him this is Sergeant Falcone who is filling the newly created position of Site Chief. He will be my right hand man. He answers to me, me alone and will act on my behalf. He has many years of experience so relax he knows what he and you are doing. Do you have anything to say Sergeant?"

"I'll be around to meet all of you and for starters I like to answer to Murph and not Sergeant. We are going to have plenty of time together to get to know one another."

Four hours later after numerous introductions and exchanges someone called out.

"Chow time," one of the two Airmen yelled. Both of them had food boxes in their arms.

They repeated it every six hours for the next two days. During that time Pete showed him around the Bubble.

"One of the important facts you need to know is the routine if Base power goes down. We have two diesel generators out back and you will have about fifteen minutes to get out there crank one of them and switch over from Base power.

First make sure you turn all the equipment off so you won't overload the generator. One of them is temperamental and hard to start," Pete said as they entered the generator room.

"This first one works fine so I will go through the procedure. Remember you have fifteen minutes to switch over if we lose Base power."

"Why don't we have an automatic switch over type? Can't they afford one?" Murph asked.

"They have one next door," Pete answered, "Who knows why we don't. You go through the procedure."

He had some trouble cranking the generator but did grasp the procedure to Pete's satisfaction. He didn't tell Pete but he'd been through all the same information before. He wanted to see if anything had changed.

Back inside, Pete continued with the training on the various procedures.

"Let's go back upstairs," Pete said.

Back upstairs the first thing that Pete pointed out was a phone next to the Major.

Mendacity

“That is the coded combination phone that leads right to the Pentagon. In fact the old man can get to the President if he needs to.” Pete said with pride.

“Let’s go up into the Bubble itself. You may not have to go up there but you should know how to do it properly if the situation arises.”

He went through the procedure of how to open the air lock. The lock’s purpose was not to let air out of the Bubble and cause it to deflate.

They entered the air lock and as they entered the Bubble the sound of blowers greeted them and the sight of many antennas. They spent about ten minutes looking around.

“You probably have seen all this before. Let’s go back down,” Pete finally said.

“Well Falcone did the Sergeant give you a proper Cook’s tour?” Fish asked ignoring his request on what to call him.

About two AM on the third day the Major announced, “The Range has gone down probably just an exercise.”

“This place is starting to smell like the chow Hall,” Fish said to Murph as they went down the stairs.

“I guess that is what three days without a shower will produce,” he answered.

“Wait until we go for two weeks,” someone behind them said and laughed.

“Man, I can use a drink and a shower and notice I said drink first,” Ed said as they board the shuttle Bus.

“I could use a good dose of Tatina about now but a shower first and then a drink for me,” he said to Stan.

“Tatina is a beautiful name. You have a woman?” Stan asked.

“Yes I am married and have two great kids. I can’t wait for this tour to be over and start living again,” he said smiling.

Chapter Thirty Seven

Murph went by the hut and took a shower then went to the NCO Club. He met Joe, Ed, and Pete but Stan and Fish had disappeared.

Ed said he saw Stan and Fish going in a direction away from the Club.

“Their loss,” Joe said and ordered rounds for all.

Murph drank mainly beer taking only a couple shots of Jack Daniel’s. He could handle his booze but needed a clear head.

“Well Gentlemen drink to me because in two days I am off this place. My time is up and I am paroled,” Pete said buying rounds.

“Here’s to Pete and his good fortune,” Ed stood and gave him a toast.

“Hail to the Chief and more good fortune for all of you and Major Britt is going with me,” Pete stood and saluted.

“I don’t see any replacement for Britt so does that mean you are in charge Murph?” Ed asked.

“Its news to me if I am but there is a replacement on the way,” he said surprised that Britt didn’t say anything.

“Guys you are privileged,” Pete said starting to fill the effects of one to many.

“Why is that?” Murph asked.

“We have the right to know what everyone here on the Island is doing and don’t have to waste time trying to find out,” Ed said proudly.

“Yeah we know all the reasons but how about that one outfit?” Joe complained.

Pete frowned and said, “That has bugged me since I got out here that is one operation you better not try to find out about. When I first got here I asked one question and immediately the Major chewed me out good. Those guys are super spooks.”

That is another reminder why I need to keep a clear head. I want to go over to that outfit tomorrow and snoop around. Murph ratcheted back on his consumption of the hard stuff and sipped on a beer the rest of the night.

Mendacity

Up early he noticed that Stan and Fish were in their bunks and he could not remember them coming in that night. They were not there when he sacked out and they must have come in awful quiet as he heard nothing.

I must see if I can find out where they go but first Detachment Three.

Arriving at the gate to the twelve foot high fence that surrounded the Detachment he had his special badge out and rang the bell.

“The Badge is ok but what else do you have for me, Junior?” the Guard who came out of the building asked sarcastically.

“More, if you need it,” he answered.

The Guard shrugged and opened the gate, “Is there something in particular or someone in particular you are after Sergeant?”

“Yes, the Officer in charge will do,” he answered thinking *how stupid it was of me not to be prepared to know why I am here.*

They entered a small entranceway or holding area and the Guard said, “Wait here and I will get someone.”

A few minutes later a tall gray haired individual wearing white coveralls entered.

“I am Mr. White. May I help you?”

“Yes I am looking for a Crab?” Murph said.

He said using the first part of the code for a friendly Agent hoping he picked the right time and person.

White stared at him and finally said seemingly relieved, “This is the ‘land’ for it. Follow me.”

They entered a large room filled with equipment and the sound of many generators. Murph looked around and noticed that part of the roof was retractable.

He introduced himself and explained what he was told of this operation plus the threats that were possible both internal and external.

“You know you are the first one the password has worked with. I believed I was the Lone Ranger on this place. I tried all combinations of it with no response until now and you initiated it,” White said relieved.

“This is an intriguing place,” Murph said speaking of the Island.

White thought he meant this particular site and replied, “Laser technology is new just invented by bell Labs in 1958. This is the first big unit built and in operation. We believe we can create enough energy and project a narrow beam of light at one of their missiles. If lucky we may be able to disable it or at least veer it off course. Odds are we are way ahead of the time for that but the Russians don’t know that and perhaps we don’t either.”

“Well I can see why they may be worried. Have you had any suspicious characters around here someone you are worried about?” he asked.

“Hell yes, nearly everyone on this Island wants to know what we are up to. You probably heard the speculation. Are you suspicious of anyone?” White responded excited.

“I believe they are here and who and when they will strike is something we don’t know. We need to be on alert for any signs or slipups,” he cautioned.

“Want to look around?” White asked getting up and leaving the room not waiting for an answer.

He followed intrigued by all the gadgets some right out of a Jules Vern book. The noise was very loud even with all the Generators outside the room.

“Do you happen to have a map handy of the exact location of this building?” he had to ask loudly as a bell went off in his head.

“Sure do right over here,” White yelled back.

Murph studied the map and he remembered a series of tunnels or caves on the Island and if his memory is right one is in this location. He motioned to White that he was ready to leave.

“You see something?” White asked.

“If my hunch is right there is a tunnel that starts at the Cliff and stops right around here,” he explained.

“A tunnel and who would build a tunnel way out here?” White asked.

“No one knows maybe WW2 or long before but they are there. Thanks for all the information and we will keep in touch. By the way White suits you,” he said as he left the compound.

Mendacity

Murph was almost at HQ when the alert siren sounded and he saw Stan and Fish running towards him from the other direction and they met at the shuttle stop. Bodies appeared from all around and the Bus was full.

It was a short-lived affair probably a false alarm and they shut down about four PM.

Murph thought *this is a good time to follow Stan and Fish and see where they spend their time.* They all went back to their bunks and about an hour later Murph saw Stan kick Fish's bunk. They went out of the hut.

Murph was ready and quickly followed and as he left the hut the weather changed and there was a sudden thick fog. He stepped up his pace in the general direction he saw them walking and could only see an outline of one person ahead of him. *They must have split up* he thought so he followed the one he could see. He had a hard time seeing in the fog.

That guy must have one of those lasers for eyes he thought as he stumbled.

The outline of the huge antennas of the newly operational AN/FPS-17 long-range radar nicknamed Big Alice appeared through the fog. The outline of the individual went right for the antennas.

Murph remembered the tunnel leading to Detachment Three began somewhere around that location. The silhouette disappeared and he stumbled in the last direction he saw the outline.

Luck had it and he walked right to the shaft opening that descended into a tunnel. A makeshift rope ladder dropped into the shaft and he scrambled down it. He stopped partway down and took out a flashlight. He gambled that whoever climbed down before him had moved on and would not see the light.

He shined the light down and saw the bottom about ten feet below so he continued down the ladder. Reaching the bottom he took out his revolver and heard sounds down the tunnel ahead of him.

He cautiously continued towards the sound and eventually saw a light ahead and turned off his light. The tunnel was low and he had to hunch over so he would not hit his head on the ceiling as it was built for someone five-two not six-one.

There was a slight turn to the right as he approached the light and he lay down on the wet floor and peered around the bend. Someone with his back to him was busy connecting wires to something that looked like a timing device and a huge stash of explosives.

Murph kneeled and ordered, "Hands up, behind your head and slowly turn around."

The individual startled stopped but did not immediately comply.

He repeated his command, "I said hands up, behind your head and slowly turn around now before I blow your head off."

The individual slowly turned and he had to do a double-take and said, "Major Britt are you drunk and got lost?"

"Falcone or should I say Murph and you are more clever than I thought," Britt said seemingly not concerned that he had the drop on him.

"So you are the rat that has betrayed his Country," he snapped.

"Oh no, I am working for my Country," Britt laughed.

"It's over now and you my drunken Major are under arrest. Careful with those hands," he cautioned as Britt made as if he was going to take his hands from behind his head.

Britt laughed louder that time and said, "That is water I drink and I fooled everyone. By the way that gun of yours doesn't work. I removed the firing pin before giving it to you."

Britt reached for his shoulder holster and Murph looked at his pistol then carefully aimed at the middle of Britt's chest and pulled the trigger just as Britt's gun cleared its holster. The bullet slammed the Major against the wall of the cave and he fell with a surprised look on his face.

He slowly walked over to the fallen Traitor and kicked the gun away as Britt had dropped it when he fell.

"Sorry Sir but there was another rat that needed killing. It kept pestering me while I slept. He got away as the gun did not fire. I repaired the gun and this rat is not getting away."

"We will burry you and Russia will triumph in the end. Long live the Motherland. Finish me if you have the guts," Britt said and spit at him.

Mendacity

“If that’s what you want and we won this round,” he smiled as he pulled the trigger one more time.

“You were good Major but not lucky and we will overcome and defeat you in the end,” he said to the dead Major.

He decided that he had to either leave the body there or dispose of it someplace else. He remembered the map and the layout of the tunnel.

The cave opening is over the Bearing Sea so I’ll drag the body there and throw it in the Sea, he thought.

It took him a while as he also had to carry some of the explosives and a timing device to the opening. He tied them to the dead body and threw it into the Sea.

He then brought the rest of the explosives and threw it into the water. He climbed the rope ladder then cut it loose and it fell back into the tunnel. He hid the opening with some rocks and went back to his hut.

It was some kind of luck. I was following Stan and Fish then latch on to Britt by mistake. I’d rather be lucky than good. One thing for certain the Major wasn’t Patch Two. How many spies are there on the Island? Patch Two is probably nowhere near the Island, he thought.

Chapter Thirty Eight

Fish rudely awakened him the next morning when he kicked his bunk.

“Wake up Britt’s replacement wants to see you. What have you been doing? You have slept the morning away and you look like you have been crawling in the dirt. You find a babe on the Island to tire you out?” he asked.

Murph took a shower and hurried over to HQ and a young Captain who looked like he just stepped out of Boot Camp greeted him.

“Sergeant Falcone, I am Captain Black Major Britt’s replacement.”

The Captain had three Air Policemen with him and led him into the Office.

“Sergeant would you know where we can find Major Britt?” the AP Second Lieutenant in charge asked.

“Is he missing?” Murph asked innocently.

“Yes he is and he did not show up for his flight to the mainland. Nor did he brief me,” Black interrupted.

“Maybe he was drunk and wandered off into the Sea? You know he was a heavy drinker,” Murph said tongue in cheek.

“We don’t know and we thought you had some idea,” the Lieutenant said.

“No, the last time I saw him he was sinking in his favorite substance,” he grinned.

“Was he dead drunk?” Black asked.

“You could say that,” he smiled.

They gathered Britt’s belongings and left the office.

“Falcone you are going to have to bring me up to speed now that Britt is gone,” Black took charge.

“Yes Sir, and by the way I like to call me Murph the Major always had a problem with that,” he asked.

“Well Murph it is. Let’s get down to some serious training,” Black said.

That delighted him and he knew he was going to like this new Boss.

Mendacity

The alert siren sounded and he said, “Well Captain your training will have to be on-the-job as they have called us to action.”

Murph not only liked the Captain but he found out quickly that his youthful looks did not hinder his ability to grasp the job. His previous experience with this sort of mission was clear immediately. Four hours at the Bubble and Murph considered him ready to take over control of the Operation.

“Captain you have everything in control here everything is quiet now and I need to take Airman Light and try to solve a mystery. Since they put their first satellite up in 57 we have gotten reports of a mysterious secondary beep. It is also coming from this third satellite. The guys next door have not been able to lock onto it and I want to give it a go and find it.”

“OK with me Murph and good luck,” Black agreed.

They walked the few yards towards the road and stopped at the one floor building and pushed a red button. A guard opened the door.

“Hi, I am Sergeant Falcone and this is Airman Light. I need to talk to the Shift Chief.”

“Come in and sign the log,” the Airman said as he picked up the phone and asked for Lieutenant Tibet.

“Sir, there is a Master Sergeant Falcone out here and he says he needs to talk to you.”

“Yes Sir, Yes Sir. He has a Pass and more,” he said seemingly in reply to some curt orders and had realized the Pass Murph presented was more than the usual type.

The guard opened the other door and said, “Lieutenant Tibet wants you to wait for him at the door.”

They entered a big open room filled with about seventy five stations and each manned with an operator wearing a headset.

That is one job I couldn't do as it would drive me up the wall. I'd probably break down and throw my headset across the room, Murph thought.

A slim Lieutenant approached and did not introduce himself and snapped, “What are you doing here?”

“It's not what I am doing her but why we are here,” he snapped back grinning.

“Then why are you here?” the Lieutenant said red in the face.

Bob Furlin

Murph told him the reason they were there and it seemed to make the young lad just that more surly.

“Follow me,” he curtly said to Murph and Light.

He led the way to the back of the room and pointed to a position with a headset.

“There it is let’s see what you can do as the others had no success,” he turned and walked off.

“He is not very friendly is he Murph?” Light said.

“I guess it ticks him off because they can’t identify the signal.”

“Yeah let’s see what we can do,” Light said and Murph motioned for him to take the headset much to the Airman’s delight.

Four hours and still no success and Murph spotted a Sergeant he knew and said to Light, “Keep at it you will find it and I am going to wander around a while.”

He motioned to the Staff Sergeant who sundered over and said, “Hi Murph, what brings you to this crazy place?”

“Hi Bill, thought we would give a go at that mysterious signal. How about showing me around? That is if the Lieutenant doesn’t mind,” he said with a smile.

“That ninety-day wonder thinks he is the cats meow and he gives us hell,” Sergeant Bill Wink frowned.

Bill took him around and they hadn’t gotten far when someone yelled out.

“I know you, hey guys this is the Russian instructor I had at Myrtle the one I told you about. Not only Russian but you should see his Martial Arts skills so don’t mess with him. How are you doing Mr. Cat.? What in the world are you doing out here. Remember me? I am Fred Almond class of 57,” a wild-eyed Staff Sergeant jumped up from his post and grabbed Murph’s hand.

“Sure do Fred and the World is a small place. You been practicing those moves we learned? Haven’t hurt anyone have you?” he vaguely remembered the man.

But he did recognize someone on the brink of a breakdown. The constant monitoring of the Russian Interception and Range nets would drive a person a little off center.

“How about letting me listen for you a while and you go take a break,” he said sitting down at Almond’s position.

Mendacity

Bill took Fred by the arm and said, "Let's go back and get a cup of coffee. We need to take it easy for a while."

The chatter in Russian was intermittent and Murph recognized the vectoring of Russian fighters to a possible enemy target.

Those guys on the Ferret flights are constantly at risk of the Russians shooting them down he thought and marveled at the outstanding job guys like Fred did keeping them out of harms way.

Two hours later and Bill and Fred returned.

"Thanks Murph, I about lost it there but all is ok now. You are one heck of an Instructor. You also keep a good log."

"Anytime Fred, take it easy and watch out for that left leg kick," he patted Fred on his back.

"Tough, boring, and I don't know how those Morse code guys handle that tedious job," he said to Bill on their way back to see how Light was progressing.

"They do loose it once in a while but overall they are true Silent Warriors," Bill said proudly.

"Any luck?" Murph asked Light.

"I don't know I think I hear something way down at the low-end of the Band but I don't seem to be able to lock onto it," Light answered.

"Let me listen," he said and took Light's place at the station.

He searched for about an hour and finally said to Light.

"You have better ears than me so what do you think about this signal?" he gave the Young Airman the opportunity to score a big hit.

"That is it I know that is the signal. Should I record it?" Light asked excited.

"Most definitely record it before it gets away from you. Good job Airman," he praised the smiling airman.

"Bill, I need a can to put this tape in and tell the Lieutenant that we were successful. Please thank him for his hospitality," he said sarcastically.

Bill smiled as he found a can and said, "It's going to tick the Lieutenant off."

"Better him than me. Will I see you later for a few cool ones?" Murph asked.

Bob Furlin

They turned and went back to the Bubble with the tape in Light's hand. They climbed the stairs and walked over to Captain Black and Light handed him the box.

"Sir here is a few hours of that signal."

A pleased but perplexed look came on Black's face and the he turned and looked at Murph.

"It is a recording of a mysterious signal we haven't been able to record. Light did an outstanding job. It will please Colonel James and Major Lot can take it back when he leaves the Island," he said bringing Black up to date.

Black picked up the phone connecting the Pentagon and in about a minute he said; "Give me Colonel James."

Another minute went by and he said, "Colonel this is Captain Black we have a tape of the mysterious signal. We will send it back with Major Lot. Yes sir, thank you sir. He will be leaving as soon as there is a break, yes Sir but Sir you know the weather out here. Yes sir. No sir, no sign of Major Britt he has disappeared just vanished."

Two weeks later and the Russians scored again and a rejected crew went back to the club for some drinks. The next day Murph was listening to a station out of Washington State and the Russians had proudly announced the successful Launch of Luna 3 trans-lunar satellite. It would orbit the moon with plans to photograph 70% of its far side.

They are going to get to the Moon before us and that puts me in a bad frame of mind so I will complained some more. That darn Big Alice and its continuous whooshing and humming. It gets into the radio in fact everything around here. Go to the movie, play the radio, even the record player and it can get on one's nerves he gave into some discouraging thoughts.

"Murph someone at the Bubble wants to speak to you on the phone," Fish said.

He picked up the phone and it was Stan, "The sync line to big Alice is down and we can't do anything around here. We checked our end and it is ok someone needs to go over there and check their end out."

"I will be right up. You and I will go over and take a peak."

Mendacity

He commandeered a truck and went to the Bubble picked Stan up and they went to the huge antennas. Murph remembered his last visit to that area and he hoped they never find Britt's body.

The operation was very impressive and the skinny Lieutenant showed them around the facility. The big klystron tubes, huge oil filled transformers, and large waveguides were impressive. The Skinny Lieutenant could walk through the guides. The massive water cooled dummy loads could fry a guy if handled improperly during maintenance.

Stan saw an Airman he knew and stopped to talk to him and the Lieutenant continued showing Murph around the place.

A few minutes later a sound like a 22 rifle shot went off.

"I should punch your lights out," they heard Stan yell.

He confronted the Airman who had touched his ear as static electricity flashed and went off like a 22 rifle. It was a common practice around the place with new visitors but it did not impress Stan.

They checked the connections and line to the Bubble but could not find anything wrong with the line, connections, or equipment.

"The problem has to be on your end," the Lieutenant told them.

"How is your ear? Who checked our end out?" he asked on their way back to the Bubble.

"The ear event was not funny and someone told me they had checked line out," Stan complained and gave a vague response to the second question.

"Well who is that someone?" Murph asked.

"You know I don't remember who told me that all was ok on our end. I didn't check it out myself, maybe I should have," Stan said defensively.

"Stan, I'll take Airman Hoss and check out the connection" he said when they arrived at the Bubble.

They went into the antenna area above the second floor through the air lock.

"This is my first time up here," Hoss said as they climbed the ladder.

Bob Furlin

“Why do we use a bubble?” Hoss asked.

“Geodesic Domes have been around for many centuries and we continue to use the concept because it encloses the most volume with the least surface. Its small surface area can intercept damaging winds and there is less area to loose heat. Some people call it an ‘air house’ made of neoprene and ideal for use in these high winds,” he gave the young Airman a history lesson of sorts.

They entered and went directly to the end of the cable that came from Big Alice. Ten minutes and Murph spotted a partial cut in the line behind a piece of equipment and out of normal sight.

“Here’s the problem and how about you repairing it as I look for further damage,” he yelled to Hoss over the sound of the blower motors.

He crawled further back tracing the cable and found a similar cut about six feet from the other.

“Here is another one so repair it and I’ll keep checking.”

He continued to check but found no other problems and Hoss repaired both cuts. They reentered the second floor.

“You must have found the problem as everything is working now,” Stan said.

“There were two cuts in the cable and it looks deliberate to me,” Hoss told the whole crew before Murph could warn him not to say anything.

“I guess we should keep a log of all those who enter that area but we don’t. Think we should start a log?” Stan asked.

Murph said nothing just shook his head no and went downstairs.

“Why not have logs?” Stan asked following him.

“If it was deliberate they wouldn’t sign any log telling the world they were up there. Keep your ears open and let me know if you hear anything,” he told Stan and left the area.

The routine became boring with a string of false alarms and they spend a lot of time on station but there was little action. The Russians were doing much practice but no launches. Murph was no closer to finding out who cut the line and he spent his time writing home. He just could not wait to get the tour over with.

Mendacity

Christmas came and he spent the night at the movie theater and saw 'On the Beach' with Gregory Peck and Ava Gardner. Good movie but a bit depressing about the end of the World and that is where he found himself.

Chapter Thirty Nine

The big day and they got out of the rat trap and into the new Compound. The thick concrete building looked like a prison but could house everyone on the Island in two man rooms. It contained the administrative offices, laundry, BX, a blessed new rat free non-stinking chow hall, and a Dispensary.

It was a happy day but in some ways a sad day as it took away some of the problems they complained about.

There was also a new mail room and they would miss the old wooden Williwaw Office with instructions on how to mail a letter.

‘Wait for the wind to pick up and drop it through the slot in the door.’

Best of all who would ever think one would welcome Air force cooks as Northwest Orient was out.

Events were looking up and then the snowstorm. Murph had not seen so much snow since the big one in Western Pennsylvania in 1949. It snowed the whole Village in for two weeks.

I wonder where Stan and Fish spend their time. I can't remember them ever being at the club because they disappear after every shift. They like to joke and carry on but I never trust anyone who won't drink with friends. Rumors are that someone has been talking on the shortwave to a Russian outpost in Siberia. The thoughts troubled him.

The intensity continued to build the next couple months as the Russians continued to get their range ready for something big. The months went by with alert after alert and drink after drink.

The wind was up one night and it almost blew him over when he stepped outside. Joe was not feeling well and Andy Lee a new Sergeant was in charge. Murph felt concerned so he went out to the station. It was a slow night and they were fooling around listening to some ship to shore traffic when suddenly the power went off.

Mendacity

He jumped to his feet as the battery operated emergency lights come on and he yelled to Andy.

“Let’s go through the shut down procedure we have fifteen minutes.”

“We will go upstairs and turn all the equipment off,” Andy said using a flashlight as he and the rest of the Crew climbed the stairway.

Plenty of time Murph thought as he turned the equipment off and went out to the generators.

Remembering something he turned around and called upstairs, “Andy, I am going out to start the generator. Everything turned off up there?”

“Yeah but you better hurry time is passing and that wind is high,” Andy cautioned.

“Plenty of time, there is plenty of time.” Murph answered back.

The light from the flashlight was weak but it gave him enough light for him to find his way.

The emergency light will be on out there he thought.

He stepped into the room and went right to the first and easiest generator to start.

“Oh no,” he said aloud.

Someone had partially dismantled the generator. He didn’t remember any notes in the log about trouble with the generators. He went over to the temperamental generator and glanced at his watch about eight minutes have gone by with seven left then a disaster.

He primed the engine and went quickly through the start up procedure that he had committed to memory. He tried once and it turned over but did not start. He tried the second time and still no luck.

He glanced at his watch and eleven minutes had gone by. He felt the first signs of panic. He tried once more with no luck.

Perhaps a swift kick will do the job he mused. *This is no time for jokes* he realized the seriousness of the situation.

“Murph we are losing the Bubble and it is buckling,” Andy yelled out as he entered the room.

“It is going to start,” he said not to Andy but to bolster his own faith.

He took a deep breath and tried again and it tried to run. Time seemed to stop and then it backfired and started.

Andy yelled, "We just have two minutes left before it comes down."

He pushed Andy out-of-the-way and threw the switch that disconnected from Base power. He quickly threw the generator switch connecting it to the Bubble.

"Fourteen minutes damn that was close," Andy said in relief.

"Let's get back to the Bubble and see if it is still there," Murph said and swiftly went back inside. They had no sooner gotten back to the Bubble and the bell rang.

"That will be the Captain. I'll let him in," Andy said.

"You like to have lost the Bubble!" Captain Black yelled out as he climbed the stairs. It was starting to collapse when I came up and you scared the crap out of me. Why did it take so long?"

"Sir someone disabled the good generator and there was no note in the log about it," Murph explained.

"All this intense traffic going on and we almost lost this operation," Captain Black said and continued, "Do you think someone needs to get up into the air lock and see if there was any damage to the skin?"

"Yes sir, I am going that way," Murph said and went to the air lock.

The blowers were all working and he couldn't see any damage but he took a few more minutes to look around. He went back downstairs.

"Everything looked fine with no damage but close, darn close," he said to Black.

They were trying hard to disable the site and were getting very brazen and he did have his suspicions on who was causing all the havoc.

No beer tonight he thought as he fell into his bunk worn out and tired. He went over in his mind the past two events first the cut cable and then the generator. Stan plainly lied about who told him the line was ok and the logs should show who last checked the Generators.

He got up early and went out to the Bubble to check the logs. The last person who checked the Generator was Jack Strand, Fish.

Mendacity

The next problem is to find out about the cable. Stan won't tell about the cut line. It is possible that someone overheard the conversation. That is a long shot but a possibility. He thought as he went back to the new billets and a talk with Stan's Crew.

He found Airman Furns, "Sorry Murph I didn't hear anything about that."

Airman Wipes and Sticks said the same so there was only one chance left and that's Sergeant Ken Zenith.

"I saw him go to the Bar," Sticks told him.

"Hi Ken, what are you drinking?" he asked Ken sitting down next to him at the Bar.

"Hi Murph, I am a Schlitz draft man," Ken answered with a big grin on his ruddy face.

"Bartender, give us two of what he is drinking." he said.

"Do you remember the other day when you guys had trouble with the sync line from Big Alice?" Murph asked taking a big gulp of the cold beer.

"Yeah sure I was just coming on duty with the crew and I heard Fish tell Stan that he had checked the line and it was ok," Ken provided the information he was looking for.

"Then the line went down on Fish's shift?"

"Yes, from my understanding towards the end of their shift. Is there something wrong?" Ken asked.

"Just curious, Stan didn't seem to remember who told him," he shrugged.

"Well it was Fish and I'd bet my good name on it," Ken replied.

Murph bought another round and they made small talk. Finishing that glass he said.

"Thanks for the information Ken and will you keep our conversation confidential. If anyone asks, anyone, if you overheard a conversation between Stan and Fish about the line. You heard nothing. If you do tell I'll twist your pointy head off," he smiled and cautioned Ken.

"Bartender, give this good Sergeant another Schlitz," he patted Ken on the back and went to his room.

"Hi Murph I am your new bunk mate," Fish said to him as he entered the room.

"Where is Earl my old partner?" he asked.

“We swapped bunks and he is about ten doors down,” Fish answered.

“What is this all about? Did he dislike my company? Or are you trying to get close to me?” he wondered aloud.

“Haven’t you heard about the new policy?” Fish asked.

“No, what have they cooked up now?” he inquired.

“We are to swap places every month for Security reasons,” Fish explained.

They continued making small talk then Murph got up and went to the latrine while reflecting on what Fish just said.

It seems they are trying to find out who talks in their sleep there are spooks everywhere and one can’t trust a soul around here. I don’t have to search far for my suspect as he’ll be sleeping in the next bunk to me but what to do about it.

Two nights later the opportunity presented itself when an unusually hard tremor startled him awake. *Boy that was a hard one* he thought getting out of his bunk and moving it back into its normal place. *This one moved me quite a distance this time* he thought climbing back into the sack and then he heard a moan.

Jumping back out of his bunk he said. “Fish you ok?”

Another moan came from Fish. *The tremor must have hurt him* he thought as he rushed to turn on the overhead light.

“Fish what is wrong?” he asked as he saw Fish lying in a fetal position.

“You hurt?” he asked again.

“My stomach, it hurts terribly” Fish moaned, “Murph I need help.”

Fish moaned again then threw up all over his bunk. Murph rushed out the door and down to the phone at the end of the hall.

The Operator half asleep answered the call, “What’s going on?”

“Give me the Dispensary and hurry,” Murph said.

“Dispensary, there is no one down there. Not this time of night,” the Operator snapped.

“Where is the Doctor?” Murph asked.

“Doctor, he left the Island this morning. Lucky bum,” the Operator said.

“Well, who is in charge of the Dispensary?” he asked getting angry.

Mendacity

“We only have one medic left, Airman Golf,” the Operator replied.

“Man there is a very sick Airman up here in Room 202 you find Golf and get him up here immediately,” he impatiently said.

“What Room was that again and who are you?” the Operator asked.

“Room 202 and this is Sergeant Falcone and you get the Medic now,” he snapped and hung up.

That is one stoned Operator he thought as he hurried back to his room. Just as he entered the room Fish turned over and threw up all over the floor. He went into the same fetal position and moaned.

“Someone help me,” Fish pleaded, “I hurt terribly.”

“Hold on Fish the Medic will be right here,” he said.

He tried to find a washcloth or rag, something, anything. He found one of his old tea shirts and ripped it in half.

“Fish, I am going to get a wet cloth, hold on I will be right back.” Murph rushed out the door and ran into Joe.

“What is all the commotion and noise? You woke us up,” Joe asked as he bunked in the next room.

“Fish is awful sick and I called for the Medic and was going to get a wet rag to wipe his face. He is sweating heavily and vomit is all over the place. Stay with him and I will be right back,” he said and rushed to the latrine.

“What is the matter buddy?” he could hear Joe asked as he left.

“So the Medic not here yet and how is he doing?” he asked as he came back into the room.

“No sign of a Medic and he looks terrible and he threw up again,” Joe said.

“Go call again Joe while I wipe him down,” he said as he turned to Fish, “Here Fish let me wipe your face.”

“Sarge I think I am going to die the pain is unbearable,” Fish cried out.

“The nerd on the phone said he just contacted the Medic and he will be right up,” Joe said as he entered the room.

Fifteen minutes passed and a young Airman entered the room.

“What’s going on here?” he asked in a shaky voice.

“This guy is having problems complaining of hurting in his stomach,” Murph spoke up.

The Medic examined Fish and it didn’t take him long to say, “This guy is having an appendix attack. We are going to need a stretcher.”

By this time a crowd had gathered. Someone said, “Where is the stretcher?”

“It’s in the Dispensary,” the Medic answered.

Two guys rushed off to get the stretcher while Fish continued complaining. The Medic did what he could but he was new at his job.

Murph and Joe carried Fish to the Dispensary.

“Captain Right would have to go today. I am going to need help with this. Man I can’t operate on him,” the Medic stated in a panic.

“Let’s call for help from Adak,” Joe suggested.

“Maybe we should first get the Officer of the Day,” Murph replied.

They got the O.D. and he called the Base Commander and he called Adak asking for an Air evacuation. There were no planes on the Island and the weather was bad.

Airman Gulf got to talk to a Doctor on Adak and he told him how to treat Fish. They decide there is no way he could operate.

It took two days before a bird could get in from Adak and they got Fish into the Operating Room just before his appendix burst and he died on the Operating table.

Murph had his problem resolved with the death of Fish and on the same flight that took Fish out the new Base Doctor arrived.

A Pediatrician, a Baby Doctor, *he is going to get a lot of practice on the Rock* Murph mused.

He finally got the stink out of his room and a new roommate, Sergeant Alexander.

“We need a replacement for Strand do you have any ideas?” Black asked Murph.

“I’ll take his place and train Sergeant Zenith as he is a good man,” he rewarded Ken.

Mendacity

The next couple of months were brutal as the Russians practiced continually. Alert after alert all hours of the day and night only to have no action. They had been at it so strong maybe the Russians also needed a few days rest. Their ships downrange needed to refuel sometime.

Technically they seem behind us but they do a lot by brute force and by keeping it simple. Safety is not their main concern that is for sure. Their Fighters prove that fact with maneuverability preferred over armament and the safety of the Pilot. The individual means little as it is the Society that counts. Group thought and synergy but without freedom of choice. Give me freedom first and then the synergy of the group. With those thoughts on his mind he dropped by the Chow Hall to get something to eat before he went on shift. He saw Stan and sat with him.

“The weather is nice for a change,” he said to Stan who did not answer.

He is acting strange tonight and not only tonight but since Fish’s departure. He jokes and plays around but something is bothering him. He looks like a big old bear waiting to pounce, Stan’s behavior troubled Murph.

“Yeah Murph the weather is nice with more visibility than I have ever seen since I have been out here,” Stan finally responded.

“Where have you been hiding lately Stan find yourself a girlfriend out here?” he asked.

“Yeah out behind the big oak tree?” Stan joked.

“Got one for me? Perhaps you can find one at the Ham Radio Shack? We might give the new doctor some business,” he quipped.

“No but you should come with me some night as you never know?” Stan said not seemingly amused by Murph’s attempt at humor.

“Why would I want to do that?” he asked.

“An Amateur radio buff that is what I am. Good way to spend time and not get into trouble,” Stan finally smiled.

“Never saw much in that pastime,” Murph answered and thought *I finally know where he spends his time.*

Bob Furlin

“Great fun and all the people you can talk to around the world,” Stan stopped in midsentence with a look on his face that said *I’ve said too much*.

“You got duty tonight?” Stan said changing the subject, “You better hurry or you will miss the shuttle.”

“See you later Stan,” he said as he got up and rushed to catch the shuttle.

I don’t trust that guy he thought as he climbed aboard the bus. *There is an odor of Honey about him even from the first day I met him plus he looks familiar.*

“Hi there Boozer and you’re out late?” he petted the dog and found a seat.

He saw Joe waved and made small talk with the Airman next to him.

“I can’t believe the clear night and I will have to get out later and look around,” he said to Ken as they took over from second shift.

About four o’clock Murph turned to Ken and said, “Think I will take that look around.”

“Watch out for the Russians,” Ken said jokingly.

“Yeah, the big bad bear,” he laughed as he left and picked up binoculars on his way out.

Ninety eight percent of the time these glasses are useless with all the fog he thought.

He stopped and looked up at the impressive Bubble and thought back to the night he almost lost it. *Sabotage* he thought as he stepped around the Bubble.

Someone who has access to all areas on the Island is the one causing these problems. Maybe there is more than one ‘Russian Bear’ around here and two are gone but how many more are there?

Chapter Forty

He slipped and grabbed the net and banged into the side of the ship and almost fell into the cold water of the Bearing Sea. If it were not for his massive upper body strength the heavy load of explosives would have drug him into the water or caused him to fall into the rubber raft.

One of his Comrades called out above the wind, "Petrof are you ok?"

"Yeah, yeah," Colonel Petrof answered dropping into the raft with four Comrades.

"Stevon, speak English at all times as I told you. Hurry we have to complete our mission before morning and the ships start shooting and they start to lower their boats. Stanaslof has distracted them by sabotaging the generator and they think we are after what they call the Bubble. We think the Americans have recently caused two of our missions to fail and we have their U2 pilot. They will not retaliate if we destroy this new weapon of theirs," Petrof said as he began to paddle the raft.

"Do we know how to locate this site?" Stevon asked.

"Stanaslof has given us the exact location of the site it is about five hundred yards from that Big Radar," Petrof told them who were paddling hard.

How many of their planes have we shot down trying to penetrate our security net maybe five, six, or more. These Americans are weak about all they think of is sports. Russia is a great country the best country and my Country. Petrof thought about his Father back in the little coal village in Pennsylvania.

Paddling hard he and the others reached the cliff in about an hour.

"We are lucky as the weather is going to be in our favor even the wind is down and it is going to a rare morning," Petrof said to the Crew.

They pulled the raft onto the rock lined beach and hid it in the rocks. Each of them had their weapons ready for action. Petrof has an experimental Hessi E, Saiga and the other three had SKS 45 carbines, and Stevon had a Dragunov SVD sniper rifle.

Bob Furlin

They unloaded the explosives and climbed the cliff, “Damn,” Stevon said as he reached the top, “We are right in front of that Bubble. Get down as someone is coming around from the front and he is lifting something.”

“Stevon, take him out,” Petrof whispered.

Stevon raised his rifle and fired.

Movement in his binoculars caught Murph’s attention, *Can it be! Is that a fleet of ships on the horizon? What are they up to now? Is this an invasion? We have been at each other these many years and will it end here on this desolate cold Island. The Russians have our number shooting down the U-2 and beating us in Space plus controlling Cuba.*

Patch Two is here on the Island and I have chased him these many years. I must stop him one-way or another before he sabotages the site, he thought.

The loud sound of waves beating against the cliff was a sound he heard in the past and alerted him to trouble.

A shot sounded and brought him back from the flashback of the past sixteen years. He tried to make out if they are friendly ships.

Is it possible the Russians will risk World War III trying to disable this lone site? “Damn!” That is a Russian fleet and they are lowering landing craft and heading for the beach. He thought and rushed to the outer door and rung the bell.

“Hurry Ken,” he said and rang it again and held it.

The door opened and Ken said, “What’s the hurry?”

“Remember you said watch out for the Russians. Well, they are here a whole fleet of ships. They sent landing craft our way,” he blurted out.

“You are kidding me?” Ken said turning quite ashen.

“No I am not kidding you. Break out the weapons and I will call the Officer of the Day,” he ordered.

He rushed over to the phone and impatiently waited for an answer.

What is keeping that guy?

“Yeah what’s going on?” A familiar voice said.

“This is Sergeant Falcone out at the Bubble get me the OD,” he snapped.

Mendacity

“Not you again Sarge you have another emergency?” the Operator quipped back.

“Airman, get me the OD and get him now, now,” he yelled into the phone.

“OK Sarge, I was only kidding,” the Operator defended himself.

“Airman I said to get the OD immediately,” he was getting impatient.

Where is the Officer of the Day? What is that Operator doing? It seemed like an eternity to him and finally a voice said, “This is Captain Stone.”

“Sir, this is Sergeant Falcone and I just spotted a fleet of Russian ships on the horizon and it looks like landing craft are heading for the Bubble.”

“Sergeant Falcone you’re not drunk are you?” the Captain asked.

“No Sir, I tell you there are ships and shots fired,” he said.

“If this is a joke you will get Leavenworth for sure,” Stone threatened.

Then another shot, “Did you hear that sir?”

“We are going on full alert,” Stone said as the base siren sounded.

“Sergeant, break out all the arms and set up a defense,” Stone ordered and then thought aloud, “I’ve got to call Adak for Air Support and get hold of the Base Commander,” the Captain hung up.

“Here are all the weapons,” Ken said pointing to the equipment he gathered.

“Is that all?” he asked looking at the pitiful meager supply of weapons.

“That is all I can find,” Ken shrugged.

“Ken, there are only thirteen carbines and three grease guns,” he said.

He was surprised at so few weapons and realized that he hadn’t done a good job of pushing for a better defense.

“Is this all the ammo? There are only two clips of ammo for each carbine and one for each grease gun. This is not enough to stop a Boy Scout troop,” he said trying to make light of the situation.

Bob Furlin

“Murph are you scared?” Ken asked.

He saw the events upset Ken and tried to calm him.

“Scared hell yes I am scared and that is good as it gets our adrenaline up. They are lying if anyone tells you something like this never scared them.”

I am so ticked off that I did not plan for such an emergency. The guys were telling me the same situation existed when they shot the U-2 down. They knew then they didn't have crap to defend themselves and it is not like the Top Brass didn't know. I should have pressed the issue more but we can make the most of what we have, he thought.

The other crew members started to gather and one asked, “What are we going to do?”

“We are going to defend ourselves until support comes from Adak,” Murph told the Crew.

The bell rung at the entrance door and Ken went to the outer door and opened it. Captain Black and about twelve of the crew were with him.

“Gather around men. Murph you have a plan?” Captain Black asked.

They all stopped talking and looked at Murph.

“Men you heard the shots as you came up but they do not seem to be firing in our direction. That does not mean they are not going to try to take us out. Our job is to protect the immediate area around the Bubble.”

“Yes, we will take positions up and down the beach,” Captain Black piped in.

“Sir we have limited firepower and we have little ammo. Is the mainland going to send help?” Ken asked.

“Yes there is some support coming. We told Adak and they have scrambled some Navy Jet Fighters but it will take a while. We have to do the best we can with what we have,” Murph answered.

“Murph what is our plan of defense?” Black asked.

“Captain you and I will take a grease gun and will position ourselves right in front of the Bubble. Will you take the other grease gun and pick someone and station yourself right in front of the door. Spread the others on the ledge about fifteen feet apart,” he ordered.

Mendacity

“OK, men let’s get at it. Ken you stay with me. You others get your rifles and a clip of ammo. Follow me,” Wills ordered.

“Murph do you have the binoculars?” Black asked as he picked up his weapon and a clip of ammo.

“Yes Sir one for you and one for me,” he replied and gave him one.

“Well let’s go and if we see if they can overrun us then I am coming back here. Sergeant Wills and I will destroy the documents,” Black said as he turned and went out the door and Murph followed.

He is finally getting into his position Murph thought and laughed. *Unless those Jets get here in time they will overrun us.*

The Captain raised his binoculars looked for a minute.

“Murph I think there are at least five ships out there. The fog is starting to come in and I hope the Air Support gets here soon. The landing craft are about two hundred yards from shore. Looks like about eight now that does not seem like enough to be making an assault. I am going inside to check on the status of the jets.”

In a few minutes Murph heard a noise coming from his left, “Murph don’t shoot it is Ed

“What’s going on?” Murph asked.

“I met Black at the door and he said to come out here with you,” Ed explained.

“Yeah he went inside to see if he could find out any information on the Jets,” Murph replied as he lowered the grease gun, “I guess he is coming back.”

“Murph have you seen Stan tonight? We couldn’t find him anywhere and he hasn’t showed up here to my knowledge.” Ed asked.

“No I haven’t seen him either but I did see him much earlier in the Chow Hall before I came on duty,” he replied.

“Ed you stay here I need to check on something. I’ll send someone or Black back to be with you,” he said having a hunch he knew where Stan was and what he was up to.

Back in the Bubble he found Black.

“Sir did you use a truck to get here?”

“Yes we did I didn’t want to wait on a Shuttle,” Black looked puzzled.

Bob Furlin

“I need to borrow it for a little while and I told Ed that I would send someone to be with him,” he told the Captain.

“OK, I am going back as the Jets are on their way. You need any help?” Black said not asking any questions.

“Good and I can handle this problem by myself,” he said heading for the truck.

He went directly to Detachment Three believing that it was the main target and not the Bubble. He asked to speak to White and in a few minutes he appeared.

“What’s all the noise about? We seem to be in the dark about what is going on,” White asked.

“I thought you boys were the Super Spooks and knew everything but I guess I am wrong in this case,” Murph said explaining what was going on.

“Should we evacuate, destroy this place, or prepare to defend it? We are not soldiers but Civilian Scientist,” White said frowning.

“I would shut down and evacuate. The Russians are not going to have time to examine the place their mission is to destroy it. So don’t help them by destroying it yourself and you answered the question about defending,” he advised him what they should do.

“Sounds like a good plan to me,” White said and asked, “Need any help?”

“No, get your people out of harms way,” he said going back to the truck.

He checked his pistol and grease gun and quickly started for the cliff.

Just as Stevon began to fire Petrof hit the barrel of the gun and caused him to miss.

“Why did you do that? You caused me to miss,” Stevon said looking at Petrof.

“He has not noticed us as I thought he had,” Petrof answered, “Let’s not tip them off that we are here. “Come on let’s get to our business and destroy that site,” Petrof said and went down the beach.

Mendacity

When they arrived at Detachment three the five dropped to the ground as they heard someone approaching in the darkness.

Petrof took out his knife and whispered, "Keep down I will handle this."

He was getting ready to strike the Intruder when a voice stopped him.

"Comrades, it is me Stanaslof Petrof. I have been waiting for you," Sergeant Stan Peter whispered.

George Petrof broke into a big grin lowered his knife and hugged his brother, "Stanaslof it is good to see you."

"George is that you? I had no idea that you were on this mission," Stan said smiling broadly.

"Yes it has been a longtime. We can talk later it is getting late and we must finish our mission. I will introduce you to the others later," George said.

"I have scouted out the best places to set the charges. Follow me," Stanaslof said.

The five followed closely behind him carrying the plastic explosives. They carefully set the timers on the explosives to give them enough time to reach their rubber raft.

"That is the last one so let's get back to the raft. Stanaslof it is good to see you and these are my Comrades," George said and started to introduce the other four.

"No, I am going with you," Stan interrupted, "They have discovered my true identity and I need to go with you."

"Brother it is our pleasure to have you come with us and the General will be glad to see you," George said as he turned back to the beach.

Stan followed in the rear and then whispered, "Go ahead I will be right with you as we may not have set the timers long enough."

"I will go with you." George said.

"I can handle it Big Brother have the Boat ready for me," Stan said turning back to the explosives.

Murph dropped to the ground seeing someone move about thirty yards in front of him. They were in front of a pile of rocks and seemingly staking them.

He crept within ten yards and the man got up turned and hurried towards the cliff not looking back. Murph hurried to the rock pile stopped and said.

“Rocks hell it is explosives and enough to blow this end of the island off.”

He cut the wires from the timers and thought, *a WW2 vintage device effective but crude*. He hurried towards the cliff and saw the intruder about twenty yards ahead approaching the overhang.

“Stan Peters.” he yelled out.

“Are you going to shoot me Murph?” Stan stopped turned and yelled back.

“If you step toward the overhang I will but come towards me and we will find out who is the better man,” he taunted.

“I think I know that already,” Stan answered slowly showing his empty hands as Murph walked towards him.

He got a few feet from Stan and said, “You armed? If so throw it away.”

Stan reached in his shoulder holster and threw the gun into the tundra not saying anything.

“Well Patch Two you made a good try at betraying your Country,” he said.

“My Country is Mother Russia and my loyalty is not to the weak people of America. We will defeat you and take over and install Communism,” Stan bragged.

Murph dropped both of his weapons and the fight was on. Stan was good a little bigger and maybe stronger than Murph but not as well trained in the Martial Arts.

They battled about ten minutes with neither being able to land a lethal blow or move. They were slowly approaching the overhang and the Bearing Sea. They said nothing but reserved their strength for the fight that could have only one outcome.

Murph had his back to the Sea and Stan gave a big smile as to say so long and made a mad lunge. Murph broke his neck then flipped him over the cliff and into the sea.

The five Raiders quickly found their way back to the beach and the rubber raft.

“Is there any sight of Stanaslof?” Petrof asked in Russian.

Mendacity

“No Sir,” Stevon replied as they heard a loud splash just to the left of their raft.

“Was that a body? Row towards it,” Petrof said and helped with the rowing.

“It is a body, Sir,” Stevon said and helped a Comrade pull the body in the boat face up.

“It is my brother Stanaslof he must have slipped and fell into the Sea,” George said.

He was in the front of the raft with a signal light and he contacted a landing craft. The timer ignited the plastic explosive as they approach the landing craft.

“Right on time,” George said, “Hurry men.”

They rowed harder and finally reached one of the landing craft. The sound of Jet engines filled the air.

“The American Air Force has arrived so quickly get on board,” One of the Craft’s Crew said reaching over to give a hand.

The first wave of Jets dove down as they turned towards their Mother ship. They boarded the Ship and a Lieutenant quickly escorted them to the Captain’s quarters. Entering the room General Strencof greeted them.

“Sir, we have completed the mission and have destroyed the site,” George said as he saluted.

“Well done Colonel Petrof,” Strencof praised him.

“I have bad news Sir my Brother Major Stanaslof Petrof is dead as he accidentally fell from the cliff,” George told the General with a frown on his face.

“Was he one of our agents at the site?” the General asked.

“Yes Sir, he was going to return with us as they discovered his cover,” George explained.

“He has been providing us with valuable information over these many years and we will highly decorate him.

Colonel, you and your men have done an outstanding job and we can now proceed with our next phase of exploration. Each of you will get thirty days of rest and then we have some exciting missions for you. We are beating the Americans in every phase and they seem scared of us. Cuba will be ours soon and then Vietnam, yes Comrades we have a great and powerful nation.

Bob Furlin

The Americans will not complain if we destroy their site as we have embarrassed them enough lately,” the General laughed and continued, “Comrades the Mother Country salutes you.”

Chapter Forty One

Black raised his binoculars to see if he could determine how far the landing crafts were from the shore.

That's a rugged shore maybe they are not good navigators
Black thought.

Then he noticed something unusual about the craft.

"Sergeant Wills did you notice all the antennas sticking out of those boats?"

"Yes I have and did you see that a boat stopped. It looks like it is recovering something from the Sea," an excited Ed said.

"Yes I did perhaps someone fell overboard seems like I saw them pull a body or two aboard," the Captain replied.

"They are going back to the big Ship in the middle of the fleet," Ed observed.

The sound of Jet engines filled the air.

"The Navy is here," Ed said gleefully as they heard cheers coming from up and down the beach.

The first flight of Jets make a pass at the landing craft without firing a shot and they did not receive any fire from the ships. The second and third sortie did the same with no return fire.

The landing craft turned around and return to the main ships without firing a shot or coming closer than seventy-five yards from the shore.

"Captain what is going on? It looks like those ships are getting under way," Ed said excited.

"Let me take a look," Black said reaching for the binoculars.

"By God they are moving off. What in Gods name is going on?" Black questioned.

They hear a sound coming from behind them and turned with their weapons ready.

"Who goes there?" Ed asked.

"It's me and take it easy with those weapons," Murph said walking up.

"It looks like they were just a whaling fleet," Black said looking at him.

"A whaling fleet and what were those landing craft with all the antennas? Murph asked.

Bob Furlin

“Sergeant Wills go round up the troops and get them into the Bubble. I will explain what I know,” Black ordered.

“Ed you go down the beach and I will go up the beach,” Murph suggested.

Back inside the Bubble Colonel Wood of Base Security met them and called Murph to one side.

He turned to him and asked, “Sergeant Falcone you said you heard a shot before you saw the fleet, and did you hear any explosions?”

“Yes sir I heard a shot coming from one of the ships at least that is where I thought it came from. I also heard a loud explosion,” he answered.

“There are reports of Russian Raiders and did you see any Raiders?” Wood asked.

“No Sir, I saw no Raiders,” he answered skirting the truth.

Wood continued to ask a dozen more question finally satisfied he left the Bubble.

The crew gathered on the first floor of the Bubble.

“Sergeant Wills is everyone here?” Captain Black asked.

“Yes sir all that was here before we went out on alert. Sergeant Peters never showed up when we went on alert.” Ed said.

“Does any one know where Sergeant Peters is?” Black asked.

No one answered so Black shrugged and was going to continue when the phone rung, “Someone answer the phone.”

“Yes Sir,” Joe said and walked over to the phone and said, “This is Sergeant Craft may I help you?”

“Sir, yes Sir the Captain is here,” Joe turned and said, “It’s the Base Commander. Captain he wants to speak to you.”

“This is Captain Black,” Black listened for about ten minutes and then said, “Thank you Sir for the information and the update.”

Black hung up and turned to the Crew.

“If you didn’t know it those ships were a Russian whaling fleet and the Base Commander just confirmed it. Those shots were at whales. You may or may not hear about this incident on the radio. I know some of you saw antennas all over those smaller craft but that information will stay in this room. Some of you also say you heard an explosion on the Island and that

Mendacity

information will stay in this room. One more thing, as for Sergeant Peters we sent him back to the mainland because of an emergency at home. You will not talk about this classified information. Do you understand gentlemen?" the Captain told and ordered.

"Yes Sir," they all answered in unison.

"Murph the Russians are getting awful brave lately," Ed said.

"They seem to be feeling their oats since shooting down the U-2 and their latest successes in space," he smiled.

"About Sergeant Peters," Ed started to say and Murph interrupted him.

"The Captain said they classified this incident and we will say nothing more. That includes Sergeant Peters," he said curtly.

The Captain interrupted and said, "There is one more thing I want to tell you about. There is a great need for Helicopter pilots. If any one wants to volunteer there is an automatic promotion to Warrant Officer for whoever successfully completes flight training. See the First Sergeant if you wish to volunteer."

A murmur went through the room and someone asked, "Sir what is this all about; is there trouble?"

"I do not know much about it but there is the situation in Cuba and possibly trouble in Southeast Asia. That is about all I can say," Captain Black said.

The smell of honey is sure strong. Helicopter training now that sounds interesting may be more trouble is coming to this world he thought.

"Gentlemen we have had a busy day and the range will probably get very active. So I suggest we get some rest," Captain Black said as he got ready to leave the Bubble.

The ride back to the Compound was quiet and all thoughts were on the events that occurred in the past day and hours. Murph's thoughts were on Stan and the explosion. He had hurried back after disposing of Stan and gathered the explosives. He detonated some of it close to the cliff then threw the rest of the explosives into the sea. He wished he had seen who those Raiders were.

“Let’s get a drink. I am worn out,” Ed said interrupting Murph’s thoughts.

“Ok but not too many for me,” he said.

The thought of just a few drinks ended with having one to many. They hit the sack in quite a state of stupor and he fell into a deep sleep.

The sound of the alert siren woke Murph from a restless sleep. *The Russians didn’t waste any time* he thought as he rushed for the shuttle bus.

On the way out Ed, Ken, and Joe looked at him as if he knew something and were afraid to ask.

As they arrived at the Bubble they could hear activity about fifty feet from the Bubble. *The weather is back too normal, can’t see your hand before your face and all is well with the World* Murph thought sarcastically.

They all rushed into the Bubble signed in went upstairs and headed for their stations. There is one station empty and they all turned and looked at Murph.

“Ken you take Sergeant Peter’s station?”

“Yes Sir I am ready,” Ken said excited.

They stayed on alert for a week before the range went down and a tired crew went back for some sleep. Five hours later the alert sounded again and they scrambled back to the site.

This went on for three more weeks, sometime its four days and then five. At the end of the fourth week they were all mentally and physically exhausted.

“Man I am getting stoned tonight,” Joe said on their way back at the end of the fourth week.

“I don’t know Joe they are active and we are going to need a clear head. For once I am going to pass and rest,” Murph cautioned and he went right to his bunk.

Murph’s alarm sounded about the time the alert siren went off and he thought *boy that was a good nights rest*. On the way out, Murph noticed Joe with his head in his hands.

“Got problems?” he said and laughed.

Joe said nothing but gave him a dirty look.

They entered the Bubble and Black said, “Murph the sync line to Big Alice is not working?”

Mendacity

“Joe come with me and let us see what is wrong as you look like you need some fresh air,” he grinned.

They went into the air lock and proceed to check the line to Big Alice. Opening the panel they checked the connections and noticed that someone put a wire into a connector without crimping it.

Stan had to have tampered with the connection a second time and he almost struck from the grave. An intermittent connection can be hard to find and we were lucky he thought as he fixed the connection.

“Joe, go see if it is working now,” he said.

In a few minutes Joe came back smiling, “The equipment is working now.”

The Captain’s phone rung and he answered, "OK," was all he said and hung up.

“Men it looks like a firm go everything seems in place for a successful launch. Be alert and do not miss a signal.”

He turned to the red phone and in a few minutes said, “Give me Colonel James.”

He paused and waited then said, “Colonel James this is Captain Black and it looks like they are ready to go.”

He paused and listened, “Yes sir, the President!” Black hung up.

All eyes had been on him and they quickly turned back to their instruments.

“Gentlemen, when we know for sure they are successful I will inform the President personally. So do not foul this up,” Black ordered and picked up the local phone.

“Lee this is Black will you be ready to shut down on my order? We will not have you down long just during the critical phase as we need a clean signal,” Black said taking charge.

“They are going to shut down Big Alice this is big and the President is eager to know. Now is not the time for a foul up of any sorts Murph.”

“Signal up!” Someone yelled out and each operator started their search more intensively.

Captain Black picked up the local phone and said, “Lee, shut her down.”

Five minutes later and Black picked up the phone, "Bring it back up and thanks Lee."

For the next fifteen minutes they stayed busy and then it was all over.

"Sir I have the tape of the Video signal," Ed said.

"Bring it downstairs," Black said as he went down the stairs.

The weary and emotional spent crew followed Ed down and stood in front of the latest technology on the market. It was one of the first Video tape recorders (VTR) in the World. They installed it eight months ago. It was a massive piece of equipment and took up about a quarter of the floor on the first floor.

"Who designed this monstrosity?" Joe asked.

"A Team from the Ampex Corporation under the leadership of Charles P. Ginsburg in 1951," Major Lasser answered.

"Who is that Major and is he in charge now?" Airman Addison a recent replacement asked.

"They modified the VTR to run the Russian system and Major Lasser designed the interface to perform that feat. He is the only person who knows how the interface works and can repair it," Ed told his new Crew member.

Ed gave the tape to Lasser and he started the machine and the only picture they saw was noise then an image.

"It is a dog again," someone yells out in relief.

The picture cleared further and the features of a man were distinct. The room went deathly quiet then someone broke down in tears as most sat in stunned disbelief.

"Damn them," someone cried out.

The Major adjusted the equipment a couple more times and said to anyone listening.

"It is positively a man."

Black went upstairs and the crew went quiet and they heard his voice as he called the President.

"Colonel this is Captain Black may I speak to the President? Yes sir it is positive."

A short pause and he said, "Mr. President this is Captain Black on the Island of Shemya and I want to tell you the Russians have positively put a man in space."

Mendacity

Another pause, "Yes sir no mistake and I will send the information back immediately."

There was another pause, "Yes Sir thank you Sir."

The Captain came slowly down the stairs seemingly in a daze as the past weeks had taken toil and he seemed drained.

"Gentleman I am going to get a drink and remember you keep what you know in this facility," Captain Black turned to leave the Bubble with most of the Crew in close pursuit.

"I hate to tell you Ed but your Crew is on duty," Murph told the dejected Crew left to clean up after the long session.

The next few days were a blur for Murph and the whole crew. When he awoke on the third day he had a hangover that only another beer could cure. He met Ed on his way down to the Club for a sober up beer.

Passing an open door they heard a broadcast from the mainland.

"Three days ago the Russians successfully launched a man in Space. Yuri A. Gargarin became the first man in space circling the Earth once. The President has held a news conference and confirmed the information."

Murph and Ed looked at each other and continued to the Club. They had little to say as each was deep in thought.

We are in a funk as our Mercury program has not gotten a man near space. A couple of Chimps got close but no cigar. Well, let's see what the Russians have for us next. They may think they have the upper hand but that harmful severe system will fall one of these days. He thought he wouldn't drink that day although his sprit needed uplifted.

That uplift came late the next day as he took his departed friend's advice and went to the Ham Radio Shack. He had talked a couple of times to the Sergeant who was using the equipment.

"Hi Dick, I wonder if you can do me a favor?"

"Sure Murph anything I can I will try. What can I do for you?" Dick asked.

"Well, I thought may be you could raise someone in Myrtle beach, South Carolina. Perhaps luck will be on my side and I can get a chance to talk to my wife."

Bob Furlin

“It’s a long shot but hey I am good and will give it a go,” Dick said turning to the radio. The next three hours he tried to raise someone at Myrtle with no luck.

“It doesn’t look like the conditions are right to get someone down there or no one in the area may be up and talking. Let me try another half hour and may be we can get hold of Tatina for you,” Dick said a little disappointed that he could not make contact.

Twenty minutes later he contacted someone at Myrtle and they go through all the Ham jargon of identifying each other’s call signs with signal strengths. Luck was on Murph’s side that night as Dick had hooked up with Deputy Sheriff Fred.

“You want to talk to him,” Dick asked.

“I sure do. Fred this is Bob Falcone, over,” he said and waited for a reply.

“Bob Falcone? Over.”

“Yes Tatina’s husband and I wonder if by some miracle you could get her so I can talk with her, over.”

“I’ll send Pete but I don’t know how long we can hold this reception, over.”

“If we lose contact tell her that I love her and the kids. I will try this same time tomorrow night if we lose contact, over.”

“Roger, I understand. How are you doing? Over.”

“I am just fine and miss her terribly, over.”

No reply as the signal faded. He handed the mike to Dick but no luck he could not reconnect.

“Sorry Murph but I will be here tomorrow night and we will give it a go again. Maybe you can also talk with Katrina and John Davis,” Dick shrugged.

“Man don’t be sorry as you did a great job at least she will get my message,” he said slapping Dick on this back, “I owe you.”

Chapter Forty Two

Back at the compound and there was more good news. He received two letters from Tatina and one from Mom. He opened Tatina's letter first and smelled the perfume. She and the kids were great and he read them through three times. Each reading of the letters lifted his spirit.

The letter from Mom had some interesting news as Mr. Petrof was dead and his house burned down and she wrote.

A week and a half ago dad found Mr. Petrof dead. We had not seen him in a couple of days and Dad went over to check on him. He found him in the outhouse and Dad finally got the door open. He found Mr. Petrof hanging on the door. He had fallen forward and impaled his forehead on a large nail that was in the door. Dad was upset and he said the stench was unbearable.

Then a week ago the house burned down and we thought that our house and the whole Patch was going up in flames. The authorities said that some kids started the fire.

All of his children came home except for the two boys in Russia. No one knew where they are. You remember Stan don't you? You were about six when he left home. George left long before your birth.

Well, that is interesting there is definitely a smell of honey about their deaths and the house burning down. Was George Petrof the one leading that Raid? He wondered.

“Colonel Petrof you have failed miserably in your try to disable the site on the Island. Our man still on the Island says the site is fully operational and the explosion was far from its location. Do you have an explanation for that and how someone killed your brother before his fell into the Sea?” an irate General Strencof said pounding his fist on the desk.

Bob Furlin

“Sir, we set the explosives close enough to the site to obliterate it and everything around it. Someone moved the explosives and whoever moved it killed my Brother,” George said in an attempt to explain.

“Colonel, have you seen this man before?” Strencof said handing George a photo.

“He looks familiar now where have I seen this man before the face the eyes where have I seen him?” George said starting to pace around the room.

“Boris Lykov, that man is Boris Lykov. Vladivostok he was in Vladivostok I talked to him. He is an American Agent,” George said very excited.

“Yes, one Bob Falcone and do you know that name?” Strencof asked.

“There was a family living next door to me when I lived-in America. Their name was Falcone my Mother wrote me about the youngest son Robert or Bob and how she taught him Russian. I never met him but that is the man that killed my Brother,” George said with an angry hate filled look on his face.

“Your people talked too much and we had to eliminate them for the good of all,” Strencof said referring to Mr. and Mrs. Petrof.

“Yes eliminated for the good of the People,” George echoed.

“Colonel we are giving you another chance and we will assign you to operations in Cuba. We have great plans and big surprises for the Americans in Cuba,” Strencof told George of his new assignment.

“Good, may be I will run into this man again and avenge my Brother,” George said smiling.

At the same time the next day Murph was at the Radio Shack and Dick started calling. One hour later he made contact and Murph was on with Tatina. He was in second Heaven for the next forty-five minutes. The signal faded but Murph was able to tell her that it would not be long and he would be home.

Three months passed, Murph, and Ed were going to the Gym when a loud explosion occurred.

Mendacity

“What is that another raid?” Ed wondered.

Joe came running up and said, “Some dumb Airman had scrounged some ammo and stored it in his locker. One of the phosphorus shells went off. They warned all of us about the live ammo but there will always be one idiot.”

“We probably will do more damage to ourselves than the Russians can ever do,” Ed said to him.

“Well we got some good news at last. We launched Mercury Freedom 7 into suborbital flight carrying Alan Sheppard one month after Vostok 1.” Murph replied trying to counter Ed’s negative attitude.

Yeah, Whoopee,” Ed yelled.

“Well Murph we got word that Ed and I will be going back this month. You heard anything?” Joe asked as the three of them worked out in the gym.

“Great for you guys; I have not heard anything yet,” he shrugged.

“Our replacements are due in here any day now,” Joe said grinning.

“Let’s put on the gloves and go a few rounds,” Joe said challenging Murph.

“Sure, I’d like to put a few knots on you head,” he replied.

They had just put on the gloves when the siren sounded.

“Oh no, hope this is a short one. I’ll shoot myself if it keeps me past my rotating date,” Joe angrily said as they hurried to the Shuttle.

They were about halfway to the Bubble when the bus started shaking violently and Boozer started barking.

“Man, I hope this is not the big one,” Joe yelled from the rear of the bus. The shaking lasted for only ten or twelve seconds but it seemed like an eternity.

“Joe the bus almost turned over,” Murph said.

“You’d think those tremors would not bother us after a while and one of these days it won’t quit. I sure hope I am nowhere around when the big one hits,” Joe said visibly shaken.

They entered the Bubble and Ken greeted them, “The shaking damaged some of the equipment.”

“How extensive is it?” Murph asked as they entered the lower part of the bubble.

“Well, the biggest problem will probably be with the VTR. It has taken an especially bad hit. I know how to turn that thing on but it won’t come on,” Ken said.

“Let me get at it. The rest of you go upstairs and get the equipment going. Their range is going up and we need to be ready,” Black ordered.

“Murph let’s see if we can get this working,” Black said turning to the VTR.

“I know how to run this contraption but know nothing about repairing it. We do not even have any spare parts for it. To my knowledge, this is one of two pieces in existence. This is the brainchild of Major Lasser and he is in Langley, Virginia,” Black said as he tried to get the equipment to turn on.

“I am having no luck, we are going to have to get Lasser out here ASAP,” Black said as he went to the phone upstairs.

The last piece was up and operational in about five hours all except the VTR. More bad news arrived by phone the quake destroyed Detachment Three.

“Well what the Russians could not do Mother Nature did in about ten seconds,” Murph said to no one in particular.

The range came up and stayed for about twelve hours then went back down. This repeated for a week. Black had gotten through to Major Lasser but he was not able to get in during the week. It didn’t thrill him having to come out but it was his baby. He was the only one who knew how that piece of equipment worked.

Major Lasser arrived about four days later with a load of parts. He would allow only himself and Captain Black to work on the equipment. He designed it, he built it, and by damn he was going to fix it. He did in four days of working around the clock.

As luck would have it that was the day the Russians launched Vostok 2 with Gherman Titov. It circled the globe for twenty-five hours and eighteen minutes. Captain Black was on the phone with the President again and everyone was gloomy and the drinks flowed.

Mendacity

Ed, Joe, and Major Lasser all left the Island shortly after the Vostok 2 mission.

Murph, Ed, and Joe had a last drink for the road.

“Murph see you in Helicopter school,” Ed said as they boarded and the other two waved with huge grins on their faces.

“Murph, I’ve got to ask so what happened to Stan?” Joe looked at him.

“You know no talking about him but he decided a longtime ago to play a game he could not win. Just say he lost and we are better-off for it.

You two are some of the best and the World will not understand the work you do until told. Let’s salute all those who serve and are heroes,” Murph answered the best he could.

“Helicopter School that will be the day as Hal will pester me to continue in this game,” he said to Boozer who met him as he rode to the Bubble.

“Murph we need you here a little longer to train the new people and tie up loose ends,” Black said.

Murph had time to reflect for the next two months as there was no action of any sort. He trained the new guys but did not become friendly.

He spent time by himself wandering around taking in the sights and sounds of the Island.

There was one semi-clear day when he got to go back to the spot where he sensed that Chief Tatoosh had renewed himself virtually drinking in the beauty of the place.

Beauty, some would say a Hell hole of a place. How can you find beauty in this place at the end of the World? He continued to walk and remembered the past and the adventures he had experienced plus those he loved and lost.

He stopped as if shot through the head as a thought went through his mind. There is another Russian Agent on this Island and I know who it is. How to flush him out is another story.

An idea came into his head and he went to Black’s Office and it was empty. He hoped Black would not come in but if he did he would have to deal with it then. He got out some classified papers from the safe that had the signature of General Glass the head of USAFSS.

Bob Furlin

Murph typed up a Top Secret Memo with the time, date, and place where he would receive a briefing on a new project they were implementing on the Island. The new project was to replace Detachment Three. He copied the signature of the General and placed the letter in a folder marked Top Secret.

That evening he went out to the Bubble to put his plan into action. It was a long shot but it just might work. The culprit he suspected was on the shuttle sitting across from him. He intentionally left the folder on the seat as he exited the shuttle hoping the memo would find its way into the right hands.

He set the meeting one week from the date from when he left the folder. It was to be held at four PM at an abandoned building located at the previous site of Detachment Three.

The day arrived and he got there around two and set up the so called meeting place. He lit a lantern and put a blanket over the window in the room where the meeting was supposedly taking place. He stuffed three uniforms to look like meeting participants.

He went back outside a distance to admire his work. It passed the test and just maybe the culprit would be too nervous or occupied to notice the flaws.

He then sat down and waited thinking the bait may draw the rat early.

Three thirty and he heard some movement at the other side of the building. *Good the intruder is on the wrong side of the building and can't see the fake set up* he thought.

He crept up to the building and stood at the corner as he continued to hear noise on the other side. He stepped around the corner and two fox stalking a rat surprised him.

He sensed danger from behind and ducted just in time as someone struck him on his left shoulder with a blunt instrument. The blow stunned him for a moment but he kept doing a series of rolls on his right shoulder out of harms way.

He got to his feet and confronted his attacker Sergeant Chase, "Dick my helpful Ham Radio Operator. I said I owed you one buddy. Put down the club and we will see that they hang you properly."

Mendacity

“You killed my good friend Stanaslof and now I will return the favor,” Dick said in Russian with a smirk.

“As you cooked the porridge so must you eat it,” Murph answered with an Old Russian saying that meant. ‘Everyone must take the outcome of his own actions’.

Dick lunged with the club but Murph wrenched it from his unskilled hands. He used it to snap Dick’s neck and it was over in less than a New York minute.

“Let’s see if we can’t deposit you in the same place as your friends,” he said and threw the body into the Bering Sea.

“You were just too friendly and I don’t trust someone that spends all his time using the word ‘over’ all the time. Plus how did you know my wife and kids names? I never told you. So mark another one up for our side.” he said into the air and went the Compound.

Two days later the First Sergeant told him to report to the Base Commander’s Office and as he entered none other than his old pal Hal greeted him.

“How did I know you would be around somewhere or sometime? No, no, no, I want to rest a few years,” he said answering the question before Hal asked.

“Take it easy old friend as I am just here to debrief you nothing else,” Hal said knowing he did not believe him as he did have an assignment in Cuba tailored made for Murph.

I’ll give him time Hal wisely thought.

“OK, now tell me the real story about what went on out here. One question on my mind is how did you arrange for Strand to have an appendicitis attack?” Hal asked with a slight grin.

“I had nothing to do with it really Mother Nature just took care of the problem,” he said laughing and then went over the events of the past year.

“Well good buddy you deserve a rest so go home to that beautiful wife of yours and those kids. You can enjoy the fruits of your labor and we will meet again,” Hal said as he left the office.

“Don’t hold your breath as this was a long hard struggle,” Murph said laughing.

Bob Furlin

What do you know; Murph is going back in style with Reeves Airlines, he thought happy with going home.

Trying to take a last look at the Island he could see nothing for the fog. He formed a picture in his mind of the beauty of 'The Pearl of the Pacific.'

He thought there were many questions answered when I first started this tour while others remain a mystery. Those that serve in this "Cold War" receive no honors or recognized for their heroics but they continue to serve and will help overcome the Soviet Empire. Our Country and System of Government are the best and those that protect it in whatever small way will benefit from the freedom it gives to them and their families.

The future is uncertain and the race continues. There will always be the challenge to recognize, overcome, and defeat the lies, deceit, plus the treachery in the World.

George Petrof is still out there and may be we will meet again. I wonder what Patch On is now up to but I will tackle that problem when it arises.

I am so anxious to see Tatina and the kids as I love them so.

I am excited about the future but the Honey Dipper World of Mendacity is alive and well.