

The Hill of the Ravens

By

H. A. Covington

*To those who shall come after:
From the Time of Struggle, we greet you.*

A Glossary of Northwest Acronyms and Terms

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God – Christian hymn originally written in German by Martin Luther. The national anthem of the Northwest American Republic.

ASU – Active Service Unit. The basic building block of the NVA paramilitary structure. Generally speaking, an active service unit was any team or affinity group of Northwest Volunteers engaged in armed struggle against the United States government. The largest active service units during the War of Independence were the Flying Columns (*q. v.*) that moved across the countryside in open insurrection. These could sometimes number as many as 75 or even 100 men. More usual was the urban team or crew ranging from four or five to no more than a dozen Volunteers. After a unit grew larger than seven or eight people, the logistics of movement and supply and also the risk of betrayal reached unacceptably high levels, and the cell would divide in two with each half going its separate way. Command and coordination between the units was often tenuous at best. The success and survival of an active service unit was often a matter of the

old Viking adage: “Luck often enough will save a man, if his courage hold.”

Aztlán – A semi-autonomous province of Mexico consisting of the old American states of southern and western Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, parts of Colorado, and southern California below a line roughly parallel with the Mountain Gate border post.

BATF – Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms division of the United States Treasury Department. Used by the government in Washington D. C. unlawfully to suppress many early right wing and racial nationalist groups and individuals. Unlike its more sophisticated counterpart the FBI, BATF seldom resorted to such things as bribery, fabrication, or forgery to get convictions. All brawn and no brain, BATF simply smashed their way into the homes of dissidents such as Kenyon Bellew and David Koresh and started shooting. Many of their agents later became Fatties when the FATPO (*q. v.*) superceded the old ATF organization at the beginning of the War of Independence. BATF was declared a criminal organization by Parliament and any surviving members are subject to arrest, trial, and punishment if apprehended.

The Beast – Term similar in meaning to ZOG (*q. v.*) used initially by Christian Identity people to describe the Federal government of the United States and the Zionist, liberal power structure in general. The expression later came into more widespread use among the Northwest American Republic’s non-CI population.

Brigade – In the paramilitary organization of the Northwest Volunteer Army, a loose combination of most or all of the partisan units assigned to a specific geographic area. In the larger cities of the Homeland such as Seattle or Portland or Spokane there might be as many as two or three brigades, each operating independently of the others, so that a single catastrophic betrayal or Federal assault could not wipe out the NVA in that metropolitan area. A brigade could comprise as many as two or three dozen active service units of various kinds and strengths, including technical, supply, and support teams. Some of the smaller brigades covering larger and more rural

areas only had a few units. In actual practice there was always an immense amount of confusion and overlap in membership and function between units. As is the case with any conflict, nothing about the War of Independence was ever as neatly cut and dried as the Republic's history books have portrayed.

BOSS – Bureau of State Security. The Republic's political police. The mission of BOSS may be summed up simply in the five words of its motto: "*We will never go back.*" Don Redmond pithily summarizes that mission when he says, "The revolution is forever. Our job is to make sure of that."

CI – Christian Identity. By the time of writing of this book, the predominant Christian religious movement in the Republic. The faith of Pastor Richard Butler, Robert Miles, and many others among the founding fathers of the Northwest American Republic. The essence of Christian Identity is the transfer of God's Biblical covenant from the Jewish people to the Gentile or Aryan peoples through the medium of the Christ's Passion and the Crucifixion. In most Christian Identity sects this transfer is accompanied by a very complex (sometimes downright tortuous) theological construct whereby white people are alleged to be racial descendants of the Israelites of the Bible through the alleged wanderings of the Lost Tribes through Europe, Denmark being descended from the Tribe of Dan, etc. However tenuous the historical and theological basis for Christian Identity, there can be no doubt of the spiritual strength and personal integrity which the CI faith imparts to its adherents. During the Time of Struggle and ever since, they have been the very backbone of the Northwest nation.

Centcom – During the War of Independence, Centcom was the central command authority of the American occupation forces, consisting of representatives from the executive and judicial branches of government, the FBI, Justice Department, Department of Homeland Security, etc.

Code Duello – The official protocols and procedures governing dueling within the Republic, administered by the National Honor Court. The purpose of the Code Duello is to make sure that the

ultimate sanction for personal misbehavior is available to all the Republic's citizens, but only under very clear and formally recognized conditions. Ref. the Old Man: "One of the problems under ZOG was that there was no longer any penalty attached to being an asshole. There needs to be."

Come Home – To immigrate to the Northwest American Republic. Since the NAR is the Homeland of all Indo-European peoples, a white immigrant from anywhere in the world is considered to have Come Home.

Daryl And His Other Brother Daryl – Defamatory term used by certain white migrants to the Homeland during pre-revolutionary times to denote white people born in rural areas of the Northwest. Considered rude, boorish, and highly discouraged by the Party both before and since the revolution.

DHS – Department of Homeland Security. One of the many overlapping Federal political police agencies created under Bush II as part of the suspension of the United States Constitution and the abrogation of American civil liberties which took place after the events of September 11th, 2001. The Department of Homeland Security seems to have done little during the time of the revolution beyond adding to the confusion.

DM – "Drooling Moron." Defamatory term used by certain white migrants during the pre-revolutionary times to denote white people born in rural areas of the Northwest Homeland. Always frowned upon and discouraged by the Party. Several legal cases are now before the National Honor Court to decide whether "DM" is to be considered a killing word or not.

E & E – Escape and Evasion. Associated with General Order Number Eight, a.k.a. the "Feets Don't Fail Me Now" order. When an operation went bad, or when confronted with a Federal ambush, extreme danger, or overwhelming enemy numbers, every NVA Volunteer had a personal Escape and Evasion plan, a series of refuges and safe houses etc. to which they would flee and from which they

would subsequently regroup. The underlying rationale of General Order Number Eight was the ancient one of all guerrilla forces: he who fights and runs away, lives to fight another day.

FATPO – Federal Anti-Terrorist Police Organization. A body of special auxiliary police officers recruited by the United States government to suppress the revolution in the Pacific Northwest, after the FBI and local authorities had clearly lost control and it was not deemed politically expedient to use the regular military in a significant role. FATPOs were mostly recruited from discharged members of the United States military, local police departments, and from both sides of the bars within the American empire's immense prison system. FATPOs were given a short but intensive training campaign at Fort Bragg combining counterinsurgency, commando and SWAT-team style tactics, along with heavy political indoctrination in diversity, multiculturalism, etc. Nominally subject to the Department of Homeland Security and the Justice Department, in reality the government in D. C. was far away, and a blind eye was turned. Local FATPO commanders had a blank check and more or less operated as independent warlords in their districts, above the law so long as they produced a plentiful white body count. Discipline and control from Centcom was patchy at best, accountability was nil, atrocities frequent, media reporting of those atrocities almost non-existent, and any serious military purpose or strategy quickly disappeared. The FATPOs in short order became nothing more than gangs of brutal gun thugs devoted to the bloody suppression of the NVA and any white citizen of the Northwest whom they so much as suspected might be sympathetic to the NVA. Strict policies of affirmative action and mandatory diversity were applied, so at any given time the force was only about 35% white and perhaps 25% white male. There was an unknown but significant percentage of lesbian and homosexual sadists who mainly operated in the intelligence units of FATPO as interrogators, and who earned themselves a reputation as some of the most cruel and vicious torturers in the history of human tyranny.

FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation. The American secret police. Still extant, although now less involved in Northwest affairs than their rivals of the Office of Northwest Recovery (*q. v.*) Declared

a criminal organization by Parliament after independence. Any member of the FBI or anyone assisting the FBI is liable to arrest, trial, and punishment under the law of the Republic.

Flying Column – During the War of Independence, an independent unit of partisans numbering approximately thirty to a hundred Volunteers. These guerrilla units were based in rural areas throughout the Pacific Northwest, and operated in the countryside and small towns. They were highly mobile and conducted operations against the American forces, against the means of production, and cleared their operational areas of American law enforcement, judicial, and governmental institutions to make way for Aryan courts, police, and government. Because of the activities of the Flying Columns, the United States eventually lost control of the countryside almost completely and could maintain its authority only in the cities, and there only through repressive force. There were over thirty Flying Columns during the course of the War of Independence. The most famous among them were the Olympic Flying Column (Cmdt. Thomas J. Murdock); the Port Townsend Flying Column (Cmdt. John C. Morgan); the Hayden Lake Flying Column (Cmdt. O. C. Oglevy); the Barbary Pirates (Arcata and Eureka, California district, Cmdt. Phil McDevitt); the Sawtooth Flying Column (Cmdt. Winston Wayne); the Corvallis Flying Column (Cmdt. Billy Basquine); the Montana Regulators (Cmdt. Jack Smith); and the Ellensburg Flying Column (Cmdt. David “Bloody Dave” Leach.)

Goots – Derogatory and defamatory term used by native-born white people in the Northwest for racially conscious Aryan settlers who came into the Homeland during pre-revolutionary times. Origin unknown but possibly originated with Seattle disc jockey Ray Sheckstein.

GUBU – Grotesque, Unbelievable, Bizarre, Unprecedented. Slang term used to describe most activities of the Aryan resistance movement prior to the advent of the Northwest Migration concept, and regrettably for some time after that as well. Northwest equivalent of old American military term SNAFU.

GW – Kinetic energy firearms named after the renowned Texas gunsmith and engineer Gary Wilkerson, who invented the kinetic energy plate wherein the bullet is not propelled by a gunpowder-charged cartridge, but by a kinetic energy pulse from a metal power grid in the receiving group or bolt assembly of the weapon. Wilkerson KE technology is the basis of most NDF (*q. v.*) small arms.

Hats or Hat Squad – Semi-derogatory, pre-revolutionary term used by native-born white Northwesters for Aryan settlers who answered the Old Man’s call for migration. Refers to the eventual adoption of the fedora hat as a badge or insignia for Northwest settlers, at first of the Christian Identity faith, then later on the practice spread to migrants of all faiths.

Longview Conference – The conference wherein the United States agreed to withdraw from the areas of the Northwest Homeland deemed to be “administratively untenable,” i.e. effectively under NVA control. At that point in time this consisted of the states of Idaho, Oregon, Washington, parts of western Montana, parts of northern California, and most of Wyoming.

NAR – Northwest American Republic. Established as a worldwide home for all persons of unmixed Aryan, that is to say Caucasian, non-Semitic, European descent. The Northwest American Republic presently consists of the entire states of Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming as well as hefty chunks of northern California, western Montana, Alberta, British Columbia and Alaska.

National Socialism – The racial and geopolitical world view (*Weltanschauung* in German) of the philosopher, soldier and statesman Adolf Hitler (1889-1945).

NBA – Northwest Broadcasting Authority. State body in charge of all broadcast communications and entertainment in the Northwest American Republic.

NDF – Northwest Defense Force. The combined land, sea, air and space commands of the NAR military. All white male citizens of

the Republic are required to serve in the NDF for a minimum of two years of active duty plus reserve requirements up until age 50.

NLS – National Labor Service. There is no welfare as such in the Northwest American Republic. Neither is there any unemployment. If no private sector jobs are available in a particular field or locality, the Labor Service steps in and provides employment, usually on public works of various kinds. Many Northwest citizens choose to work for the NLS voluntarily.

NVA – Northwest Volunteer Army. Formed on October 22nd in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, in response to the murder of the Singer family. Predecessor to the NDF.

OBA – Old Believers Association. The official organization of non-Christian religious groups in the Northwest American Republic, including Asatru, the proto-NS Nordic Faith Movement, and some elements of Wicca and Druidic occultism.

Old Man – Early advocate of Northwest Migration and independence. Helped found the Party (*q. v.*) and served as a convenient figurehead for the independence movement during the War of Independence, although he always considered his role in the revolution to be very much exaggerated. Served two terms as State President and was able to stabilize and consolidate the gains of the revolution, but was effectively removed from power by President Patrick Brennan and the Pragmatic Tendency in Parliament because he was thought to be a dangerously radical relic of the past. Presently President Emeritus of the Republic and living in seclusion. Suffers from dementia praecox due to his advanced age and is generally confused and incoherent. Has issues with ducks.

ONR – The United States Office of Northwest Recovery. Covert agency of the United States government devoted to the long term goal of returning the Northwest American Republic to the United States and Canada respectively. Regularly conducts assassinations, sabotage, and other subversive activities within the Northwest American Republic.

Operation Strikeout – Twelve years after the Longview Conference, the United States and Canada, in conjunction with the United Nations, launched what they believed to be a surprise attack against the Northwest Republic, intending to re-conquer the Pacific Northwest and return the Homeland to American imperial rule. Due to superior intelligence on the part of BOSS (*q. v.*) and the War Prevention Bureau (*q. v.*), the attack was not the surprise that the Pentagon thought it would be. The Americans and Canadians were decisively defeated in a campaign lasting forty-six days and large sections of northern California, Alberta, British Columbia and Alaska were added to the Republic's territory.

Party – The fighting revolutionary Party of Northwest independence founded by the Old Man, once a sufficient number of racially aware migrants had arrived in the Homeland to effect a significant socio-political demographic change sufficient to make such a Party feasible. Although the Party was comprised in the majority of people who were native-born in the Northwest, it was made possible by the influx of racially aware migrants who listened to the Old Man's call and heeded it. Based upon the principles of National Socialism as expressed in the Cotswolds Declaration of 1962 and the Ten Principles of National Socialist Thought, yet offering a broad program of tolerance and participation for all Aryan religious and political tendencies. The Party provided the political leadership for the revolution, while the NVA provided the military capability.

Rockwell, Commander George Lincoln (1918-1967) – American National Socialist leader. Founder of the American Nazi Party and the World Union of National Socialists.

Shock and Awe – A customary tactic for NVA partisans lying in wait to ambush Federal troops, police, news media, or other enemy personnel. The concealed Volunteers would suddenly explode in a precisely aimed, concentrated hail of gunfire on full automatic or other rapid fire technique, using armor piercing bullets, rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), etc. The object was to inflict as much damage as possible in the opening seconds of an encounter, disorienting and disabling enemy reaction, before a rapid withdrawal

under cover of smoke grenades or other stratagems. Also known as the Mad Minute.

Spuckies – Derogatory and defamatory term used by local white people in the Northwest to denote racially conscious white settlers who came into the Homeland during pre-revolutionary times. Origin of this term unknown.

SS – Special Service. The NAR and the Party’s élite military formation. Drawn from the top achievers of all the NDF branches, with naval, air, and space mobile wings. Highly trained and equipped with the most advanced equipment, the SS deliberately follows the traditions of its historic namesake of the Third Reich. The corps seeks to erase all differences and divisions of class, religion, and nationality, creating a true Aryan “Band of Brothers”. For this purpose, extensive political and racial education based on the principles of National Socialism is part and parcel of SS training and qualification.

Stukach – A Russian term meaning informer, dating from the time of Stalin and the hideous purges of the 1930s. How exactly this term entered the lexicon of the Northwest American Republic is not certain. When applied to the family or person of a citizen, it is considered the ultimate insult, along with the words “whigger” and “attorney.” All three are considered to be killing words, i.e. *prima facie casus belli* under the law of the Republic for a duel to the death if the parties involved cannot be reconciled by formal procedures under the Code Duello.

Take The Gap – Broadly speaking, to Come Home. To immigrate to the Northwest American Republic. In practice, to “take the gap” generally connotes an illegal entry into the Homeland from the United States, Aztlan, Canada, or sometimes by air. “Taking the gap” often involves physically running the border under Mexican or American gunfire and pursuit.

Volunteer – A male or female soldier of the Northwest Volunteer Army.

Whigger – “White nigger.” A defamatory term for whites during the pre-revolutionary time who aped the mannerisms and subculture of blacks. Considered to be a killing word in the NAR, i.e. sufficient *casus belli* for a duel to the death if no compromise can be reached between the parties involved.

Woodchuck – Originally a term with defamatory and derogatory connotations used by Aryan settlers in the Homeland to denote those who were born in the Northwest, especially rural areas. Now transmuted and claimed as a proud and honorable designation by those born in the Homeland.

WPB – The NAR’s War Prevention Bureau. A covert agency designed to prevent the necessary military, political, and psychological conditions from developing within the United States, Aztlan, or anywhere else that might lead to a serious military threat to the existence of the Northwest Republic, through the use of targeted assassination and other black ops. The WPB is also responsible for tracking down and liquidating spies and traitors to the Northwest Republic, including informers and traitors from the time of the War of the Independence. Their motto in German is *Alles wird abgerechnet*. “All accounts will be settled.”

ZOG – Zionist Occupation Government. Term originally created by the obscure National Socialist writer Eric Thomson in the 1970s. Strictly construed, ZOG means the Federal government of the United States. In actual usage it is a much more all-embracing term meaning the System, the Establishment, the generic “them” used by oppressed peoples to denote the Federal tyrant.

The Foggy Dew

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The Foggy Dew

*It was down the glen one autumn morn
From Coeur d'Alene drove I.
There armed lines of marching men
In squadrons passed me by.
No pipe did hum, no battle drum
Did sound its dread tattoo.
But a lone ship's bell on lake's dark swell
Rang out in the foggy dew.*

I.

The rebels were all dead by six-thirty in the morning.

The summer sun had just risen in the east over the distant, snow-capped mountains of Washington. Pockets of mist nestled in the low ground, and beaded droplets of moisture still clung to the blades of grass and the green leaves on the nearby forest floor. The long sloping hillside glistened with dazzling pinpoints of reflected light from the dewdrops. The echoes of the machine gun fire and the RPG explosions died away, leaving only the hanging reek of cordite and the metallic smell of hot brass from thousands of ejected cartridge casings. Black smoke rose into the still morning air from the burning vehicle hulks on the road, and when a soft breeze sprang up it carried the sizzling stench of burning rubber and charred flesh into the American firing positions. There was a long silence, and then the birds started to sing again.

The commanding officer of the ambush scanned the kill zone with his field glasses. Major Woodrow Coleman of the Federal Anti-Terrorist Police Organization was a very black man with thick lips and a bristly, dirty-looking beard of short curly whiskers. He was immensely pleased with what he saw in his binoculars. He knew now

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that he had been right not to call in air support. The sight of a single helicopter, even high up, would have caused the enemy to abandon their vehicles, break up and head for the timber, where long experience had taught the Americans it was most unwise to pursue them. This way the surprise had been total. The guerrillas in the two vans had been roasted alive when the vehicles exploded from the rocket-propelled grenades and the mines, but the ones in the open truck had managed to roll out with amazing speed and discipline. The only retreat for the rebels from the road and the spitting Federal gun muzzles had been up the rocky slope pre-laid with radio-detonated Claymore mines, and their only cover had been a few scraggly pines. Falling into squads, they had moved swiftly up the hillside with their own weapons blazing, right into the strings of anti-personnel mines that cut them down. Caught off guard even as they had been, Jerry Reb had made a fight of it. From the radio chatter in his earphone the CO knew that some of his own men were down. Even under the sheets of automatic weapons fire and the shredding shrapnel, the partisans had proven to be cool heads and crack shots. "It's those damned teflon-tipped bullets again, Major!" squawked his chief medic in his ear. "They go through kevlar like a hot knife through butter! Where the hell do they keep getting those damned teflon slugs?"

Coleman didn't answer. Right now he didn't care, such was his savage joy at the carnage, at a lifetime of burning hatred at last fulfilled and slaked, his cup of revenge against the hated white man running over. It looked like the ambush had gotten them all. He could see dozens of the rebels who were down now, not moving, littering the hillside like crimson lumps of meat, twists of dirty laundry splattered in the dirt. "Alpha and Bravo teams, move in! Approach with caution," he said into his radio mike dangling before his lips. "Stay spaced, don't lump together, stay alert! Do *not* assume all of them are dead or disabled. Make sure! Blast anything that moves up there. Check out the kill zone and terminate any remaining wounded, but from where I sit I'd say that's a wrap, boys and girls. We finally nailed these racist motherfuckers, and it's about fucking time! So let's all have ourselves a good look at what dead members of the Master Race look like, whaddya say?"

The Hill of the Ravens

Over a hundred and fifty FATPOs rose silently from their positions, heavy lumbering shapes in camouflage weighed down by kevlar and Bakelite body armor. They carried outlandish weapons bristling with odd scopes and plastic attachments, and their equipment creaked and rattled. They shambled up the hill in a waddling gait, hunched low to the ground, clanking and rattling like medieval knights, guns at the ready and nervous fingers on triggers. There was no motion on the hillside.

One by one they surrounded and prodded and stared at the bodies of the rebels. Some of the corpses were big men in denim jeans and work shirts crossed with ammo belts, their jutting beards and glassy eyes thrusting into the sky, final snarls on their dead lips. Some were ordinary looking guys with blood-soaked baseball caps bespeaking a head wound from a sniper or one of the fragmentation mines that had been hidden in the trees and rocks of the slope and blown when the rebels began their fighting retreat uphill. A few were women, their hair blown from under their caps and now soggy with their own blood. The Jerries' weapons were motley. There were some Uzis and Heckler-Koch submachineguns, and there were a good many M-16s captured from the Federal forces, as well as hunting rifles and a few Kalashnikovs possibly smuggled home from Afghanistan or Iraq or Saudi Arabia by the rebels who were veterans of the U. S. military. There were homemade grenade launchers adapted from single-barrel shotguns, and stick grenades turned out in some secret workshop in Spokane or Tacoma. The FATPOs scuttled up to each body in turn, hesitantly, almost superstitiously, still afraid, still unable to believe that this time they had won. Time and again over the past fourteen months, the NVA had killed hundreds of their comrades. On more than one occasion this very crew had reduced them to a shameful, panic-stricken rout in carefully laid and ferociously fought ambushes and night attacks on their camps and barracks. But this time they were the ones who were caught. Caught and annihilated. In a single mad minute the FATPOs had cut loose with everything they had. They had pumped over twenty thousand rounds and dozens of rockets onto the hillside, not to mention the mines they'd planted. The body of every dead rebel was shredded and mangled.

Finally the lumbering behemoths in the creaking body armor found the two corpses they wanted most to see dead. The man was

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powerfully built, with red hair and a heavy flowing moustache. His eyes and facial features had been obliterated, only the moustache rising slightly above a mess of goo. "He must have caught a 50-caliber right in the face," muttered one of the Federal troopers. The big man's slouch hat had been knocked twenty feet away where it lay on the ground. One of the police ripped open his shirt and jerked it off his bleeding body, exposing his arms. "Viking female tattoo on right bicep, Confederate flag and horseman on left forearm," radioed another of the men. "This is Murdock. We got the bastard, sir."

"*Out...fucking...STANDING!*" growled the major, lumbering up beside them, unable to wait any longer to see it all for himself close up. "And what about that skank blondie ho' of his?"

"Her too." The girl in camouflage fatigues lay on her side, her cornsilk hair trailing over her extended right arm. Her eyes were closed, and she looked almost like she was sleeping. The tip of her dead fingers just touched the grip of her AK-47. The Feds had to bend down and look closely to see where the back of her head had been blown away.

"That's Melanie Young," said one of the officers, a young white man who took off his helmet to reveal a military buzz cut. "I recognize her from her file photos." The black major laughed aloud in pure joy and viciously kicked the dead girl's body, once, twice, three times. "Is that really necessary, sir?" demanded the young white trooper.

"Got a problem with a brother dissin' white women, Mac? Maybe you want I should tap dance and shuffle a bit for the poor dead missy? You want a little session with Internal Affairs down at the Homeland Security lockup in Bremerton, Mr. McBride?" snarled the major.

"No sir," replied McBride woodenly.

"Then shut you mouf. I wanna kick this bitch in her dead racist ass, I kick the bitch. I wanna check out her titties, I'll do that too. Got it?" Coleman suited his actions to his words, leaning down and slapping her face, ripping open her camo shirt to expose and leer at her blood-dripping breasts.

"I got it, sir." McBride looked away, up over the small valley that was now lighting up as the sun rose higher in the sky. He got it, all right. The fog and the dew were burning away in the sunlight, and

so were the last of his doubts. McBride knew this was it. He'd put up with everything else. He'd put up with the torture in the interrogation centers, the mass deportations of whole communities, the bulldozing of family homes, the pass laws, the closures and checkpoints. He had put up with the suspension of habeas corpus and the secret military tribunals, the brutalization of people he considered to be fellow Americans. He'd looked the other way, pretended it was necessary to save lives, told himself that the people he helped to victimize were terrorists or terrorist sympathizers, racists and Nazis, less than human. He had told himself time and again that the racial bond between himself and the people he daily victimized and beat down did not matter, did not even exist, even as his own heart told him it was a lie, that they were of his own blood. But this was it. Coleman's kicking and violating the dead girl's shattered body was the straw that broke the camel's back. She had been young, she had been beautiful, and she had been a passionate and dangerous enemy. McBride was perfectly well aware that she would have killed him without a moment's hesitation had she ever gotten the chance, but now that he saw her dead he could not bring himself to feel hatred or triumph. She had been life, and he knew in his heart that his was the darkness. The desecration of her proud spirit and her mortal remains was more than he could bear.

McBride looked up and saw one of the bullet-shattered trees. On its denuded branches perched a large black feathered form. The bird stared down at him, and McBride seemed to sense accusation in the obsidian eyes. He recalled from one of his maps that this stretch of hillside belonged to a property called Ravenhill Ranch, where no doubt some early settler had raised dairy or beef cattle. Somewhere he had read that ravens were long-lived birds. McBride irrelevantly wondered how old the bird was, what it had seen in its time. Be that as it may, he himself had seen and done enough.

The Federals loaded up the bodies of their fallen enemies onto cargo helicopters that roared over the broken horizon on radioed command, then boarded the transport choppers. They were flown back to their temporary base camp in the empty town of Leland. By order of the United States Attorney General and the Secretary of Homeland Security, the town's several hundred residents had been deported to a relocation center in the Nevada desert several months

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before on suspicion of terrorist sympathies. That suspicion arose from the fact that no one in town seemed able or willing to inform the FATPO intelligence officers of the whereabouts of the same group of rebels they had just annihilated that morning. At midnight, while most of his fellow officers were getting uproariously drunk in the mess hall on kegs of beer and bottles of champagne flown in for the occasion, and while Major Coleman was performing an impromptu karaoke rap song about the morning's events, McBride slipped out of the camp. He was wearing civilian clothes, denim jeans, a plaid shirt and a windbreaker. He headed into the woods carrying his survival gear, his rifle, and as much ammunition as he had been able to hide away. About four hundred yards out he slid down an embankment and stealthily crossed a small stream under the starlight. It was a new moon, and the forest was cool and quiet.

Just as he clambered up the opposite bank he heard to his left the sound of a round being jacked into the chamber of an M-16 and a quiet but deadly command, "Freeze! Right there!" A flashlight quickly flared from the two-man sentry post. *Damn!* thought McBride bitterly. *I thought they were a click or two south. Well, it's what I get for teaching them to vary their position on watch. Trained them too damned well for my own good, I guess.* "Schumacher? Petoskey? Is that you?" he demanded of the men in the darkness.

"Hey, lieutenant!" said one of the sentries as they moved forward. "What are you doing out here? Checking up on us? Thought you'd be in there with the rest of 'em celebrating."

"I don't feel very celebratory tonight," he replied. "Besides, in case you missed it, things didn't go all our way today. We lost eight guys ourselves. Besides that, Jerry Reb snuck into Port Orchard this morning while we were otherwise occupied and leveled the Kitsap County Special Criminal Court with a truck bomb. We didn't get 'em all. Not by a long sight. We ain't never gonna get 'em all." McBride knew these men and he was sure he could talk his way out of the situation, but all of a sudden he no longer wanted to. He had been living with lies too long. "I'm leaving," he told them bluntly.

"Huh? Leaving for good? You mean you're going AWOL?" replied Petoskey in surprise. "Is this one of them informal resignations Homeland Security keeps sending us the nasty threatening memos about, sir?" chuckled Schumacher.

“No,” said McBride. “I’m not just cutting out like those other guys. I was going to resign, true, but that’s not enough any more. Not after this morning. I’m headed west into the Olympic. From the latest intel posts I think I have a good idea where I can find the man I want to meet. Corby Morgan. He’ll be stepping up to fill the gap now we’ve taken out Murdock.” There was dead silence from the other two men for a long pause. “I’ve had enough, boys. I’m joining the rebels. Others have done it. If I can get close enough to talk to someone without getting my ass shot to hell, and if I can convince them I’m for real and I want to make it up to these people, to this new country they want to make, then I’m throwing in with the NVA.”

“Yeah? And if Jerry Reb thinks you’re a spy he’ll put a bullet in your head,” Schumacher reminded him in a skeptical voice.

“If that’s the way it plays out, so be it. Can you honestly say I wouldn’t deserve it? You know what we’ve been doing out here for the past year,” said McBride bleakly. “You have eyes and ears. We’re worse than they ever were. It’s evil, what we’re doing to these people. America has become an evil place. I’m not going to do evil any more.” There was a longer silence. “Well?” prodded McBride. “You guys want to play this by the book, now’s the time to start shooting.” His hands and arms tensed, ready to snap up the barrel of his rifle and fire.

“I reckon we’ll be coming with you,” said Schumacher’s voice in the dark forest.

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Volunteers*

H. A. Covington

Come All You Northwest Volunteers

*Come all you Northwest volunteers, our victory is sure!
In battle or internment camp, our courage will endure!
They will never take our dignity, although they give us hell,
In Zion's concentration camps, in each dark prison cell!*

II.

Olympia in October mellows the soul with a subdued gaudiness. Usually the winter clouds have not yet set in. The pink and white cherry blossoms of spring are long gone, but orange and red and green spangle the oaks and the maple trees. The fallen leaves on the grassy verges that line the residential streets and the malls paint the city's floor in bright color, and over all lies the crystalline light of the northern lands. The neatly trimmed parks and lawns of the Northwest American Republic's capital city become fragrant with the smell of late-blooming heather furze imported from Scotland. The air is clear without a single scent of pollution, and the streets hum softly from the electric engines of the city's trolleys and occasional ground cars. The branches of the native evergreens can be heard whispering in the wind. There is not an electricity or telephone pole in sight; in the Northwest, the last of those unsightly gibbets that once disfigured every town in America for a century and a half are long gone. They were rendered obsolete by the broadcast rotational power grid that allows Northwesters to pluck their heat and light and sound out of the very air. There was no longer a live cable anywhere in the Republic, above ground or below it. Nor did the quiet whirr of electric motors

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intrude into the landscape; it was almost like the summer buzzing of bees in the background. Visitors to Olympia always come away remembering how *quiet* everything is.

At ten o'clock on an early October morning, somewhat more than forty years after the beginning of the Northwest War of Independence, Don Redmond of the Bureau of State Security took a call in his office. "Colonel Redmond?" said a brisk young male voice.

"Last time I checked," said Don. "Unless the Americans have cloned *me* now, and I'm the clone."

"Uh, I beg your...is this Colonel Redmond?" asked the voice, slightly flustered.

"This is Don Redmond, Captain Barringer. What can I do you for?"

"The State President would like to see you, sir. Immediately."

"On my way," said Redmond. He put his pocket com away, but before he got up, Don rang his immediate superior, Major General Stephen Capshaw, and told him of the summons.

"Yes, I know. His Excellency's office advised me already that they wanted a word with you," replied Capshaw in his crisp Oxonian tones. The correct form of address was actually "Mr. President," but like many veterans, Stephen Capshaw was still a part of the old world he grew up in as well as the new one his generation has created. The commanding officer of BOSS still affected the mannerisms of the old British upper class, all the way down to eschewing a uniform for rustic Lancashire tweeds and keeping a pipe rack of Dunhill briars in his office. It was not the first time that Don had carried out special troubleshooting assignments directly for President Morgan, which presented a break in the chain of command and a sticky problem in protocol, complicated by the fact that Redmond was also the State President's son-in-law. It might have proven to be an uncomfortable work relationship; Redmond was the guy in the office who had married the boss's daughter. But his combat record with the SS during Operation Strikeout and his long history of skillful political police work let him stand on his own two feet. At Redmond's insistence, the State President and his aides were always scrupulous in observing the proper procedure and keeping his CO informed as to where he was and what he was doing, with a resulting absence of interdepartmental friction.

Redmond walked down the corridor of the Bureau's offices in the Temple of Justice and stepped outside into the cool fall air. He did not have far to go. To his left rolled the wide green expanse of the Capital mall. The sward was dotted with statues of Adolf Hitler, George Lincoln Rockwell, Richard Butler and Bob Matthews, all of whom now shared the fate of countless past heroes and statesmen in becoming a perch and outhouse for flocks of pigeons. There was the War Circle ringing the Tivoli fountain, containing memorials like the gutted shell of a burned-out American tank from Operation Strikeout, the number plate from the fin of a North Korean-made missile, and a strange-looking art deco pillar made from captured American helmets. Looking to his right Don saw the State President's official residence sitting on a small hillock less than three hundred yards away. There was a sudden flare of light in the crisp blue sky. Redmond shaded his eyes and looked far to the south. There he saw the soaring match-like flame of a shuttle rocket taking off from the Centralia spaceport thirty miles away, outbound for one of the NAR's four space stations. Redmond silently breathed a prayer to the All-Father for the safe passage of the shuttle, for he knew that it carried badly needed supplies and equipment that would eventually reach his eldest son, who stood on the surface of another world inconceivably far away. Then he added a quick postscript to Yahweh as well. Redmond was a National Socialist, but he felt it never hurt to cover all the bases.

Don Redmond was a medium-sized man of middle age, smooth-shaven with dark brown hair that was going lightly salt-and-pepper. He wore a nondescript, dark pin-striped suit with cuffed trousers, wide lapels and a broad tie and overcoat in the current favored quasi-1930s cut. A broad fedora hat sat on his head at a rakish angle. Fashion in the Northwest Republic was odd. In some respects it was a matter of government policy, which demanded as total a differentiation as could be achieved between Northwesterners and the crawling chaos of the United States. There were strong historical and psychological reasons to believe that clothes did indeed make the man and the woman, and that popular dress carried a significant role in shaping and channeling thought processes. The Ministry of Culture accordingly took a strong interest in sartorial affairs. Having succeeded in turning the clock back to the 1930s, the chic designers of Seattle were now trying for the 1890s. They were reintroducing leg-

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of-mutton sleeves and long lace-up boots for women as well as bowler hats, sweeping moustaches, sideburns and high winged collars with cravats instead of ties for men. This might seem an incongruous national dress for the only country on earth with effective interplanetary travel, but there it was. The current rage for moustache and Picadilly weepers were a little much for Redmond, who had been clean-shaven all his life, so he stuck with his zoot suit and managed to do so without looking like a cop. He walked across the lawn and stopped outside, mingling with a small group of European tourists to watch the changing of the guard ceremony in front of the House of Parliament. Today it was the Special Service Scots Guards Regiment. Bagpipes wailing, the SS troops were resplendent in their black dress jackets with silver piping and crimson swastika armbands, a spectacle of swirling kilts in the Royal Stuart tartan and feathered blue Glengarry bonnets, Cairngorm brooches pinning their shoulder plaids.

The single Special Service guard in dress black at the gate house had a com on, and the news reader was talking about a school of dolphins that had been seen jumping in the south end of the Puget Sound. It appeared as if the Northwest Defense Force's naval and air patrols had succeeded in putting a stop to Korean and Japanese poaching in the north Pacific, and the friendly sea creatures seemed definitely to be on the way back from threatened extinction. "Morning, Colonel," said the officer. A large Doberman pinscher dog sat his haunches outside the guardhouse, panting and staring at Redmond.

"Good morning, Hank," said Don. "You or the box?"

"The box, sir," said the soldier. "You might fool me. The box you can't."

"I don't think I could fool you, Hank," chuckled Redmond.

"Sir, since you're in BOSS you know about the surgically altered double for Big Bill Vitale that the ONR tried to slip into the Republic two months ago," said the guard.

"Actually, I was the one who caught him," replied Redmond reminiscently.

"Yes, sir. The box, please."

"You got it," said Redmond. He put his left thumb onto the security disk. There was a faint tickle as the subatomic light beams analyzed his DNA and matched it with the security clearance

database. The little light on the box blinked green. “Authenticate,” ordered a firm and authoritative male mechanical voice.

“Redmond, Donald, 726878, BOSS,” said Redmond.

“Good morning, Colonel,” returned the robot politely. “Catch any bad guys lately?”

“A few,” replied Redmond. “We don’t have many bad guys in the Republic nowadays. We like it that way.”

“We don’t have many bad guys because of gentlemen like yourself, Colonel,” replied the machine. “Authenticated. Have a good day, sir.”

“You too, box,” replied Redmond. Like so many citizens of the Republic he had found himself falling into the habit of talking to robots, even though he knew they were not actually intelligent and had been programmed with random conversational responses based on the identity and voice-inflected mood of the person they interacted with. “Guess you won’t have to unleash Rover,” chuckled Redmond.

“It would be embarrassing if he were to tear the arm off Miss Sarah’s main man,” agreed the SS guard with a smile. The Doberman was a GELF, a genetically engineered attack dog, controlled by a microchip inserted beneath his fur at the base of his neck that tapped into the animal’s spinal column and communicated directly with his brain. The microchip had been programmed so that the dog would react in a given way to any one of eighty-four external situations, anything from Don pulling a gun on the guard, to someone trying to scale the fence, to an unauthorized person attempting to feed him. The correct commands from a handler with an authorized voice pattern could also transmit the necessary neural signals as commands that went right to Rover’s brain cortex, such as “kill!” The dog’s steroid-enhanced muscles were strong enough to smash through a locked door. He could survive for many minutes with a bullet in his heart or his brain, and his surgically implanted polymer teeth were capable of ripping a man in body armor into several pieces. Rover could also sniff out any known explosive compound at a distance of three hundred yards. A handful of these animals were a far more effective and deterrent protection against an assassination attempt against the Republic’s leader than any number of armed guards or electronic devices that might be susceptible to interdiction or sabotage. The mechanical arm blocking the walkway lifted and Redmond entered

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the grounds. Two gray squirrels were chasing one another on the trim green lawn beneath the towering Douglas firs, wrestling over an acorn. The dog ignored them.

The State President's official residence, formally known as Longview House after the treaty that had brought the Republic into being, was actually the former Washington state governor's mansion. The house stood in the shadow of the old domed state capitol building that now housed the Republic's Parliament. Longview House was the oldest structure still standing on the Capital mall. Originally built in 1908, the two-story Georgian Revival mansion of mellow red brick was erected in a hurry and never intended to last, but it was now over a century and a half old. After the signing of the Longview Accords the retreating Federals had attempted to burn the building, but had been prevented from doing so and the fire doused by one of the janitors while the janitor's fourteen year-old grandson had held half a dozen FBI agents and U. S. Marshals at bay at gunpoint. A small but graceful marble monument topped by statues of both grandfather and grandson now graced the high ceilinged vestibule. At the present the presidential home was furnished with many of the fine collection of American, British and French antiques from the late 18th and early 19th centuries which had graced the dining rooms, offices, and bedrooms of successive Washington chief executives since 1909 when the first governor moved in. The NDF had found these items hidden in a warehouse charged with explosives, wired and ready to blow. A young Volunteer had earned himself an Iron Cross by disarming them. The Volunteer was now in his late fifties. He had no statue, but he did have a bar in Post Falls, Idaho where his framed Iron Cross hung on the wall and anyone who wore the War of Independence ribbon was assured of a free drink and a meal.

Don stepped into the warm carpeted vestibule. The SS guards in full dress black uniform who stood on either side of the hallway with slung Schmeisser Mark XII submachine guns eyed him but said nothing. Another GELF dog lay on the carpet, a German shepherd who regarded Redmond with a lazy eye as possibly lunch, possibly not. The sergeant at the reception desk was a new man he had never seen before. He checked Redmond's ID and thumbprint again, and told him, "The State President is waiting for you in the library, sir. For the record, may I examine your sidearm, please?" Redmond

handed over his automatic pistol, a charged energy clip and an extra magazine of slender, deadly copper-jacketed bullets without cartridges. The man punched the serial number into his desktop computer and ran it. “Yep, that’s you.”

“New security procedure?” asked Redmond.

“The ONR might duplicate your features, Colonel,” replied the SS sergeant with a smile. “They might even arm their assassin with one of these new Gary Wilkerson Mark IV kine handguns. But they might forget to duplicate the serial number. A little extra random check General Hammond thought up.”

“Good for him,” said Redmond approvingly.

“These GWs as good a piece as they say?” asked the sergeant curiously as he handed the pistol back.

“Yup. I flip up the holographic sight on this infant, I can drive a nail at four hundred yards. BOSS likes to stay ahead of the curve, but I thought you guys in the Special Service Protective Branch would have been issued with GWs by now?” queried Redmond.

“We got a familiarization day on the range with the GW Mark III, but General Hammond, he’s a real traditionalist. Still loves that smell of cordite.”

“Hey, sarge, don’t knock it. Villainous saltpetre won this country for us twice, once against the Indians and once against ZOG.”

“Bet you could have used a few of these Wilkersons back in the old days, eh, Colonel?” asked the SS man. The sergeant had spotted the green, white and blue War of Independence ribbon on Redmond’s wide pinstriped lapel.

“Wouldn’t know, sarge. They never actually let me go strapped, which was a valid precaution. I probably would have shot myself playing with a piece. I was just a gopher, really. Never fired a shot in anger, so to speak, until the Missoula incursion. I was a senior in Sandpoint and not commissioned yet when Clinton III decided she wanted to play grab-ass with the Northmen. They threw us cadets and everybody else into the salient. All they could give us were some Valmet AK knock-offs we’d smuggled in from Finland, and three loaded magazines apiece. That and one of Doctor Cord’s first plasma projectors mounted on the back of an old Toyota pickup truck, but it was enough to bring down four of the American bombers and a couple of Cruise missiles. Without their air cover, the Americans

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never could fight their way out of a wet paper bag. We threw the bastards all the way back to Minnesota.”

“Er, sir, if you don’t mind my saying so, you look a bit young...”

Redmond laughed good-naturedly. “I *was* young. You’re new on this detail, so you haven’t seen me around, but you’ll get used to me going in and out. Sometimes business, sometimes family. I married the boss’s daughter. I usually get a steak and a few beers for this story, you know. I was twelve years old and I had a route as a paperboy in Bellevue. I didn’t know it, but one of the homes where I delivered the *Seattle Times* on my bike was a safe house used by the NVA and senior members of the Party who were on the run. I started carrying messages and doing errands for the people there. Hell, I couldn’t even tell you when I figured out who they were and what was going on, but I never let on. Then one day I was in the house and there was a new visitor. I recognized this big hillbilly-talking fellow with a beard from the television news. I walked up to him and I said ‘I know who you are. You’re Corby Morgan.’ I looked at the rest of the grownups and said, ‘I may be just a kid but I’m as white as you are. I want to be a Jerry Reb too! Now you’ve either got to kill me or swear me in.’ They swore me in. I became the second youngest member in the history of the Northwest Volunteer Army, the youngest being Commandant Morgan’s daughter Sarah, aged eleven. To tell you the truth, she was what interested me most about that house.”

“You were with Corby Morgan back in the old days?” exclaimed the SS man, highly impressed. “Port Townsend Flying Column?”

“No, not the Flying Columns. They were for the hard men, which I wasn’t. I was mostly just an errand boy for Number Two Seattle Brigade under Jock Graham. Even that was only for about the last year or so of the war. After I joined I learned that my uncle and his wife were Jerry Rebs as well. They found out what I was doing, and they hit the roof. Matt and Heather brought me Home as a child after my parents were murdered by Mexicans in North Carolina. I was six years old then. Turned out they were Party people from way before 10/22, but for *me* to be involved, hey, that was something different! Uncle Matt and John Corbett damned near got into it up

close and personal when Matt found out he'd sworn me in. They'd always bent over backwards for us kids not to be involved."

"*Holy shit!*" gasped the SS man. "I mean sorry, sir, I apologize for my language, but the name just hit me. Your uncle was Matt Redmond?"

"Yeah. My father was Steve Redmond, his younger brother. And before you ask, he was lawyer, I'm sorry to say. Our family skeleton."

The sergeant turned white. "Oh, Jesus, sir, I didn't mean no..."

"I can hardly take offense, sarge, since I volunteered the information. I've learned down through the years that's the best way to deal with it. No need for whispers, just get it out in the open. I've come to accept it. In the old days there were hundreds of thousands of lawyers, and all those swine had to be related to somebody. The truth cannot offend, it simply is."

"Hey, Colonel, thanks for the story. I guess I owe you a steak and a beer or two," said the sergeant with relief.

"Maybe I'll take you up on it some day," said Redmond with a chuckle. "Anyway, mustn't keep the main man what counts waiting."

"No, sir, by no means. Go right in. The President is waiting for you in the library."

Don knew the mansion well since he and his family spent their holidays there, but the library was always Don Redmond's favorite room in the entire house. Any library was, for that matter. One of the things that made Don such a good investigator was a naturally inherited, insatiable curiosity and desire to gain knowledge, especially knowledge of the frailty and wickedness of human nature. The books on the mahogany shelves were assembled from private collections around the world; the works of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Count Gobineau, Dietrich Eckart, Alfred Rosenberg, Savitri Devi, Francis Parker Yockey, Nesta Webster, William Gayley Simpson, and George Lincoln Rockwell. Centuries of accumulated racial wisdom seemed to pervade the room. Many of these books had spent long years in secret hiding places to preserve them from confiscation and destruction by the Zionist authorities in a dozen countries. More than one NVA Volunteer had gotten their revolutionary start with the simple but dangerous assignment of concealing and transporting forbidden books

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and literature, one step ahead of teams of U. S. Marshalls who had hunted them with Federal court orders for the books' destruction in the hungry incinerators of ZOG. The pictures on the walls were watercolors and engravings of Palouse Falls and the Dalles area of the Columbia River gorge, part of the original furnishings of the large and high-ceilinged room. They as well had been preserved from the Federal flames by the valiant janitor and his boy.

Yet there was one more sentinel Don had to pass before he reached his destination. As he opened the door to the library, Don was confronted by a small, spry little man with a grizzled rat's-whisker moustache, gray in every sense of the word, gnarled and grim and glaring at him. The old man's hand was on the pistol at his hip. "Good morning, starshine! The earth says hello!" Redmond greeted him cheerfully. Corey Nash grunted at him, looked him up and down, and then grudgingly stood aside to let Redmond in with a jerk of his head. The President's long-time sidekick was an even more reliable security feature than the dogs. So far as Don could recollect, not only had not a single living person ever seen the old man smile, but nor had anyone had ever seen him asleep any time in the past four decades. "You still owe me twenty-two dollars and fifty cents for a month's paper delivery," said Don.

"It was only eighteen dollars and you know it! Why do you keep bringing that crap up? You still trying to cheat the man out of four dollars and fifty cents after all this time? Don't you think that's pretty low?" hissed the old man.

"It is my life's ambition. I dream at night about how I will some day get that money from our illustrious head of state, even though nobody takes American dollars here anymore. Aside from that, how are you today, Mr. Nash? As always, wee cherub, you are an ebullient breath of good cheer on this fine autumn morning."

"Don't be a cheeky bugger, you young lout!" growled the codger. Don was well within shouting distance of fifty and his head had hairs as gray as those on the mottled skull of Corey Nash, whom he had known since he was twelve. Nash had not approved of Sarah's boyfriend then and did not approve of Don now, but that was not unusual. Corey Nash was a total misanthrope who approved of no one, including the members of the Morgan family whom he had served with every fiber of his being for decades. Nor did Don hold it

against him. Nash had been born in Rhodesia, and his parents had been stupid enough to stay after it became Zimbabwe. One day young Nash had come in from the tobacco fields outside Gwelo and found his entire family murdered and partially eaten by the cannibal Leopard Men, as well as a number of their body parts removed to make muti, Bantu magic. This had understandably skewed Mr. Nash's view of the human condition.

"Me? Whose cheeks do I supposedly bugger?" asked Don.

"He told the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights the same thing the other day," called a deep voice from within the room. "I'm scairt he's going to kill that GELF dog out in the vestibule and make a winter hat out of him. Dammit, Corey, get your senile ass out of the door and let Don in! I know you've never forgiven him for dragging Miss Sarah over the threshold into unholy wedlock, but I need to talk to him."

"Senile my dangling Rhodesian chilogo! You're older than I am! Damned peckerwood fool!" back-snapped Nash. The coot shuffled out of the way with a snarl in his body, admitting Don with obvious reluctance, and slammed the door after him.

"Just out of curiosity, when was the last time Corey uttered a civil word to anybody except Sarah and my kids?" asked Redmond.

"Well, to be fair to the man, he did apologize to Hillary Clinton for making such a mess of her dress when he cut off her other ear," replied the man in the library. "How many years ago was that? Never mind." John Corbett Morgan, State President of the Northwest American Republic, rose from behind his desk and shook hands warmly with his son-in-law. He was a tall and heavy man in his early seventies, attired in a dark suit of Italian cut that seemed to hang on his still powerful body like armor. It was incongruous. Anything Morgan wore somehow seemed to look like denim working clothes. His face was seamed and scarred above a patriarchal white beard, and a white mane done up in a single ponytail hung down his back. His grip was strong, and his blue eyes were cold and clear and sharp as steel. "Morning, Don!" he boomed. "How's Sarah and all them young 'uns of ours?" Corby Morgan was an early settler who had made the Northwest migration when he was nineteen, during the Butler era. Yet even after more than half a century, his voice and his diction still retained the accent of his native Kentucky mountains, where his

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family had mined coal and made moonshine for generations. He had been a hard kid growing up in the bleak coal country, a hard man in his youth, a hard man in his middle age, and he had aged hard like an ancient oak. It was almost as if Morgan was defying history itself by continuing to speak with the voice of his ancestors who had gotten their English from the time of Shakespeare, via Jamestown. In his words one heard the voice of a people now extinct. Several years before the official language of the court system in Harlan County, Kentucky, always the last holdout in the United States on just about everything, had finally been changed to Spanglish, along with the termination of the last English language instruction in what passed for the public schools. In Morgan, the real Harlan County lived on.

“They’re all fine, sir,” Redmond assured him. In official business settings Redmond always addressed his father-in-law with formal correctness. “The family got a long com last night from Allan at Landfall Station, although twelve minute time lag made conversation a bit stilted. Fortunately the Mars orbit is really close to Earth right now. He’s looking great. He says that Martian gravity feels fantastic when he’s working or resting inside the station. He can take off all his gear and his pressure suit and he only weighs about fifty pounds, but he misses seeing trees everywhere, and he’s looking forward to coming home next year. He took a comcam with him while he went outside the dome and diddled with some electronic gear he had to adjust, so we got to see some of the Martian landscape, such as it is. It’s kind of like Wyoming.”

“Now you know I don’t like Wyoming jokes,” chuckled Morgan.

“Then why are you laughing? No, it really does look like Wyoming. All empty and red, with a blue sky above, just asking for us to come along and make it livable.”

“We’ll make Mars green with our own Douglas firs one day, Don. The science boys tell me it can be done, once we get an oxygen atmosphere and maybe diddle with the trees’ genetics a bit. The Martian rock can be powdered into soil and enough water and oxygen can be extracted to give the planet a breathable atmosphere. We can even manufacture water and carbon dioxide through the new cold fusion process. It will be cold as hell at first, until we can warm it up with superheated air from a nuclear reactor and thicken it enough to

create an atmospheric heat trap, but we can live there, like we live in Alaska in the winter. Sheol, man, we're a cold weather race, remember? Ice Man Heritage and all that lefty-liberal crap?"

"There's actually a good deal of truth in that, you know," commented Redmond. "Having to survive through the long winters of the northern lands, and the natural selection that resulted, was what initially gave us our genetic edge over the other species of humanity."

"An edge we intend to keep," said Morgan. "Mars is where we will finally show history just what white people can do on our own. We will give that dead world life, plants and animals from this one. We will breed our people up bigger and better and stronger than ever we were here, because we're starting fresh. Nobody on our back, riding free and leeching off us. No blacks, no Jews, no mud people. And by the Eternal, not one of them will ever set foot on Mars! The stars are *ours*, Don, and they will remain ours forever!"

"And if the Ministry of Culture have their way, one day we'll be walking over Mars in tricorne hats, periwigs, and shoes with silver buckles!" jibed Redmond. "And lace handkerchiefs and slim little canes with silver heads, and perhaps small and exquisitely wrought snuff boxes. Not to mention the elderly folk with their big moustaches and top hats. And the cravats."

"Why the hell not?" chuckled the president. "The Lord commanded His people to go forth and multiply. He said nothing about how we were supposed to dress. I'm proud as hell of that astronaut grandson of mine, and I know you are too. Keep this confidential, but he'll have some company up there soon. We're sending out two hundred more personnel to Landfall, both scientific and military. They left Orbital Station Three on the *Andromeda* almost two months ago, and they're on course. They'll reach Deimos in three more months, transfer themselves and their cargo to the landing craft, and once they're down they'll settle in for a long stay on the surface. Their mission is to begin the terraforming of the planet, to build the atomic smelting plants that will break down the ferrous oxide and the underground ice and start building up an atmosphere. We're shooting for breathable air on Mars within ten years, and the beginning of serious colonization in twenty. If we can hold the bastards off down here for another generation, then the survival of our race will be assured, because we will exist on two

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worlds and not just this one. The goddamned kikes will *never* be able to kill us all off! Best thing is, Allan will be able to catch one of those landing craft back to Deimos and from there to Earth. He'll be home in time for Christmas after next. Let's you and me make a date to go up to the mountains with a couple of shotguns about December 22nd next year and bag him a wild turkey for Christmas dinner."

"We can do that now that Game and Wildlife has stocked them throughout the Republic," agreed Don. "Along with the wild boar, the eagles and condors, and the genetically recovered passenger pigeons and Tasmanian thylacines. Look, John Corbett, I know it's a classified matter having nothing to do with the Bureau of State Security, but what's all this scuttlebutt I keep hearing about *mammoths*?"

"In about five or six years, yup," answered Morgan with pride. "Gotta have something for our growing wolf and mountain lion population to eat."

"Not to mention our new population of Siberian tigers. Isn't it odd that ZOG accuses us of extermination?" said Redmond with a wry smile. "We've brought how many species back from the brink of extinction, now? In some cases like the thylacine, quite literally back from the grave, cloning their DNA?"

"Yeah, well, I just wish we'd had some of them turkeys up in the Olympic mountains back in the old days of the Port Townsend Column. In them days half the rabbits and squirrels and deer we shot weren't fit to eat because of all the toxic waste that ZOG dumped into the air and the water."

"That's great news about the expanding Mars colony, sir, although hell's bells, we still haven't settled our own Homeland fully yet! I still find it hard to believe that a small and relatively poor country of forty million people like us can afford a space program."

"When those forty million are all productive, creative, and hard working people who each and every one contributes something to society rather than leeches off the state or lives off usury, then it's amazing what a country can afford," said Morgan. "When that country doesn't have to pay for massive drug addiction, Third World diseases, rampant crime, billions in foreign aid to puppet governments around the world, and maintaining armies of occupation over sullen Third World conquered nations, then there's money for little extras

like a space program. When that country doesn't have gargantuan multi-national corporations gorging themselves on the national treasury, then it's astounding what a chunk of change becomes available for other things. Forty million people all working in synch in a land of peace and freedom from materialism can perform miracles they never dreamed of in the last century when big business ruled, son. When you don't have to maintain millions of people in prisons and forced labor camps, when you have stability and unity in a racially homogenous society, when you've got real free enterprise as opposed to monopoly finance capitalism, when the government is only as big as it needs to be to maintain the state, and above all when you have no goddamned *lawyers* to suck everything dry, you'd be damned amazed what a small country like ours can accomplish. You want to know the greatest testament to the success of the revolution? Let me ask you something. How many BOSS agents are there all told, and where are they?"

"Mmm, about a hundred, I think," said Redmond. "All of them are based across the street there, except when they're out on assignment."

"Exactly!" crowed Morgan. "That's what, one single government agency and one political policeman for every four hundred thousand people in the Republic? Counting all their various agencies, FBI and ONR and Department of Homeland Security, Internal CIA, and the state and local security organs, the ratio of political police to population in the United States is one in 217, working out of over three thousand heavily fortified facilities, offices, prisons and bases. The BOSS allocation is .0012 percent of our national budget. The Civil Guard is two percent of the budget for normal criminal policing, and we have no prisons beyond county jails and holding facilities at Guard and military barracks. No slave labor camps here like in the States. Someone shows his butt in the Republic, we either kill 'em, flog 'em, erase 'em, or fine 'em, and then we turn 'em loose. The total budget for all police and prison agencies in the United States is 18% of their gross national product. What does that tell you about how our way works versus theirs? Oh, before I forget, on completely different topic, I got something for you. The Irish ambassador smuggled them in by diplomatic pouch."

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Morgan pulled out a wooden box and flipped it open, and there, by heaven, they lay!

“Hot damn, *rolled Havanas!*” gasped Don.

“Now, far be it from me to bad-mouth our own hydroponic tobacco industry, especially in view of all that lovely excise tax money it earns for the Republic. Saves us from needing an income tax. But the fact is that rank does have its occasional privileges. Take a handful before you go.” Both men lit cigars and sat down on the sofa. The door opened and Corey Nash shuffled in bearing a tray with a large metal percolator pot of hot coffee and two large mugs. “Now, Corey, did I ask for coffee?” asked Morgan.

“No, but you got it anyway,” the old man snarled.

“Real coffee, Mr. Nash?” asked Don with a smile.

“Acorn and chicory was good enough for everybody in this country for twenty years, and it’s bloody good enough for you now!” snapped Nash. He set the tray down on the table in front of the sofa and shambled out, muttering to himself. Don poured them both a cup of the traditional Northwest hot tipple, black and foul-smelling and the very nectar of the gods to those who had lived through the swingeing economic sanctions of the early days. Acorn coffee had become a proud national symbol for the Northwesters, and to this day it still outsold the real bean in the private shops and state co-op stores.

“You wanted to see me about something, sir?” he finally got around to asking.

“Yes. I’ve got a hot one for you, Don,” said President Morgan. “A hot one and a weird one. Something’s come up, something really odd. A blast from the past, you might say. But before we get into that I’d like to hear anything you can add about that Andrews case you just wrapped up. That worries me, Don. I’ve read the official reports, of course, and I understand that the affair is *sub judice* now, but you were the lead investigator and you can fill in some gaps for me. Were these fruitcakes really planning on assassinating a leading Christian Identity Member of Parliament, or was it all just beer talk?”

“It had reached the serious planning stage, all right,” said Redmond. “I think they would have tried it. Maybe succeeded, and then there’d be holy hell to pay, if you’ll pardon the expression. We were tipped off when a girl from the Labor Service who was waitressing at the restaurant in the OBA club in Seattle overheard

some things she didn't like and she contacted BOSS. Significantly, our witness is a Wiccan practitioner herself, but she has sense enough to know that murdering Bible boys is a non-starter in a country where eighty percent of the population are Christians of one sort or another. Not all Old Believers are as wiggled out as the suspects in this case are."

"You must have been elsewhere when we signed the Republic's concordat with the Vatican," said Morgan sourly. "I had 'em dancing around Parliament in their bear skins and horned helmets waving their damned hammers like loons. Them and the Paisley Presbyterians screaming about the Whore of Babylon. Along with the shoutin' Baptists, the Pentecostals, and those nuts who think the Pope is a space alien from Alpha Centauri."

Redmond shook his head in bemusement. "We slapped full electronic surveillance on their dumb asses and we have video and audio from their meetings in Andrews' garage, on the monorail and in the beach house up in Anacortes. It will convince a jury of twelve male citizens upright and true that they were serious about killing Pastor Briggs. Plus female citizens as well, if Mrs. Parker demands women on her jury, which of course she has the legal right to do. Andrews and the three other men will most likely be flogged and have their citizenship suspended for a number of years, which may sound rough for nothing but talk, but you know how vital it is that we keep a tight grip on the religious situation in this country. I believe the events can be presented in such a way that the Parkers will be shown as the instigators, and that their case needs to be referred to a security court. Since Briggs wasn't actually killed they'll escape the gallows, in which case I hope the judge will order them both to be erased."

"How compromised is the Old Believers' Association?" asked Morgan keenly.

"The OBA is fine. They have repudiated the conspirators, loud and clear and unambiguously. This wasn't an OBA thing. It was just these six people who went batty," Redmond assured him. "Todd Andrews and the other three, and the married couple, the Parkers. I have some questions in my mind about the true nature of the Parkers' involvement."

"ONR agent provocateurs?" asked Morgan.

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“There is no concrete evidence that the U. S. Office of Northwest Recovery was involved, but we know it’s one of their long term strategic goals to set off a full scale religious war in the Republic. Hell, they have enough help from the idiots on both sides here who for no reason related to sanity seem to want the same thing. The ONR also has a habit of inserting male-female teams, married or otherwise, since that maintains long-term loyalty by reducing the natural urge of both sexes to go looking for nookie elsewhere and maybe getting personally involved with the enemy. Our War Prevention Department does the same thing with the agents we sent into the States and Aztlan. BOSS confiscated the Parkers’ homecoms and portacoms and the technical analysts in our lab found several traces of what appear to be encrypted elements of computer code, which the Parkers deleted before they were arrested.”

“From outside the Republic?” asked the president keenly.

“Can’t tell. Whatever these fragments were, they were top of the line encrypted and we haven’t been able to decode them yet. We’re working on it. As to the Parkers themselves, they’re completely clean as far as we can determine. We hacked a number of databases both in Aztlan and the United States, and what we came up with appeared to match their stated backgrounds as far as birth dates, social security numbers, employment, etc. If they were set up with false identities then it was done by pros, but I’ve always admitted the ONR does good work. The Parkers took the gap six years ago, the usual dramatic running of the border, so forth and so on. Perhaps a bit too dramatic.”

“Did they enter from the U. S. or Aztlan?”

“Aztlan,” replied Redmond. “They said on their Homecoming applications that they were from Santa Clara, California.”

“If they were coming from California, why didn’t they use the open border crossing at Mountain Gate?” asked Morgan.

“Parker claimed that because of his technical skills he would not have been able to get an exit visa, which for all I know may be the truth. Despite all the *limpezia de sangre* crap, the Mexican government is realistic enough to know they need skilled white labor to keep even the semblance of society functioning down there. The Parkers also had about forty thousand dollars in savings they wanted to bring with them which the Mexicans would never have allowed

them to take out of Nuevo Mondo Hispanica. Plus the fact that even so much as asking to enter the Republic for a visit can bring heavy retaliation down there, as you know. It all looked straight up and credible. We get thousands of cases like that every year, as the last white people in the Southwest and Texas try to make a break for it. Glenn Parker was employed as an electronics circuit mapper in one of the space communication facilities. Parker is a class B-2 citizen due to his technical qualifications. The wife was a C-cat. No kids, which kind of adds to my suspicion a bit. A man with a B job and a wife with a Charlie homemaker's check that would have gotten significantly better with each child? No financial reason for them to have no family. If they couldn't have children for medical reasons, why didn't they adopt? The Lebensborn Heritage Recovery teams are snatching hundreds of white babies every year now from the States and Canada, running them across the border like the old rumrunners and drug cartels used to smuggle in hooch and dope. The creches are full, and our own people are so into having kids that Lebensborn actually has trouble finding adoptive parents now. Not like it was sixty years ago under the American régime, when a healthy white infant could fetch a hundred grand on the adoption market and the government was in the business of kidnapping Aryan children for sale to PC yuppies and faggots. We have an embarrassment of riches, you might say."

"Yeah, I know," agreed Morgan. "That's why Parliament passed the law granting a one-grade citizenship bump and increasing the homemaker's benefits for anyone adopting a Lebensborn kid now. By the way...?"

"Sarah and I are already A-1s, so we don't need a promotion, but we've already applied," Redmond told him. "We should have some more little feet pattering around in a couple of months. Sarah's incredible! Five of our own, two of them not yet grown, and already she's ready for the second wave. Says she can't wait around for grandchildren. Eva's so crazy to have some babies to play with she's actually set aside some time from her acting lessons for child-rearing classes at the high-school, and John is making a crib out in our garage with my tools."

"And speaking of grandchildren, what's the story on Cindy EI?" asked Morgan.

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“The Mark Conway situation is looking good for when he gets out of the army,” replied Don. “I think we’ll get a formal proposal soon. When Allan gets home Sarah and I are going to propose for Sinéad O’Neill, General Michael O’Neill’s oldest daughter. At Allan’s request, of course. I don’t believe in marriage-shopping my kids off without consulting them first. Allan and Sinéad met when she was in junior high school and he got roped in to do some lectures on astronaut training. He’s twelve years older than she is, which our social engineering people tell us is about the right compatibility range, and that strikes me as about right as well. I know, there’s only a year between Sarah and me, but those were different times. They’ve already worked it out between them. Sinéad is waiting for him. General O’Neill knows and he has given us to understand he won’t entertain any other proposals, presuming Allan gets home within a reasonable time. The girl should be in the first year toward her biochemistry degree and on her way to B-1 citizenship by then, and she has already applied for Party membership. Between the two of them, given Allan’s Class A citizenship and her education, they will both be eligible for early Life Grants, so that’s their house taken care of.”

“I’ve met Sinéad at some military dos, when she was there with her Dad. I was impressed. I heard she and Allan were courting and I’m glad it worked out. Right, as much as I hate to do so, back to the Andrews case,” said Morgan with a sigh.

“To all outward appearances the Parkers are just a couple of kooky pagans with a bug up their ass about Christianity, all the usual blather about Jesus being a dead Jew on a stick, and they seem to have an ability to talk weaker-minded people into doing things they shouldn’t.”

“Agent provocs usually have that ability,” remarked Morgan dryly. “God knows we learned that the hard way about a thousand times back in the old days. Any chance at all any space programs might have been compromised by Glenn Parker? I’ve got a grandboy sitting up there on that red hunk of rock we call Mars, and I will be exceedingly wroth if this bastard has done anything that might keep him from coming home.”

“You and me both, sir. Believe me, I looked into that possibility, very closely. I don’t think so. Parker’s security clearance

wasn't that high, and the technology he worked with is nothing new to the Americans or the Chinese. We're looking into that as well, of course. Even though we don't have any actual proof of espionage, sabotage, or unlawful contact with the common enemy, I've already put in my recommendation for a security court, at least for the Parkers. No publicity, jury drawn from Alpha citizens only."

"Mmmm, afraid I have to overrule you there, Don," said Morgan with a frown. "Sorry. I wish there didn't have to be a trial. We sure as hell could do without this kind of public washing of the Republic's dirty laundry. But this is one we have to bring out in the open. It's not just because secret tribunals are a ZOG thing. We use them too, because sometimes we have to. We're still at war, despite over a generation of trying to reach some kind of permanent agreement with these people. But if the Christians think we're covering something like this up they'll nail my hide to a barn door next election. Nor can we exclude Bravos and Charlies from the jury, as would be the case with a security court. Most Christian Identity citizens are of those degrees and it ain't politically expedient to keep it to Alphas only. Alphas are mostly National Socialists and thus considered to be pagans by Christian fundamentalists. I'm already getting pelted during question time by the CI faction in Parliament, not to mention the Opposition, who are gearing up for a real field day with it. Plus the Pentecostal crew is likely to use this as an excuse to renew their demand that their new immigrants to the Republic come in as Bravos, without doing military service."

"Thus doubling their voting strength at a single stroke. How could they possibly use this case to make a totally unrelated political demand?" asked Don.

"They'll find a way, believe me," chuckled Morgan. "Which I can't grant them, because then the OBA probably *would* try to stage a coup. They are painfully conscious that Christians are a majority in this country, and if I automatically hand a militant Christian sect the two votes apiece that come with B citizenship, they'd have a legitimate grievance. The Republic is walking a religious tightrope of the kind that no white society has experienced since seventeenth century Europe, Don, and balance has to be maintained. You earn your citizenship and you earn your votes through service to the state and service to society, not as a bribe for political peace. We ever start

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handing out citizenship and votes as patronage, it will be the beginning of a potentially fatal corruption in our system. Hit war just that happened in the United States and I cain't let it happen here. This Andrews case has to be handled by the numbers, with everything on the table. There mustn't be the slightest hint of a cover-up. Otherwise the CIs and the Pentecostals will be all over my ass like ugly on an ape, in Parliament and out, all in the name of Yahweh and the great jumping Jesus, of course."

"The problem with having a Parliament based on the old Rhodesian model is that forty percent of it is allocated for the Opposition," Don reminded him dryly. "Now, if we had a unitary National Socialist state..."

"Damn, don't *you* start!" snapped Morgan in exasperation. "I get enough of *that* from the NS benches! At least the Nazis don't have this damned religion bug up their ass! Sometimes I think they're the most balanced and rational of the lot."

"I have often wondered how the Führer would have viewed a situation where National Socialism is considered to be a force for moderation?" chuckled Don in delight.

"I think he's looking down on us from Valhalla and laughing his Austrian ass off. What the hell was ever wrong with good old-fashioned hoot-and-holler religion?" grumbled the State President. "You work your butt off all week, you get drunk and raise a little hell on Saturday night, then the wife drags you to church on Sunday morning with a hangover and you sing and jump for Jesus, then you go have a big lunch and go fishing in the afternoon. That's how life is supposed to be, goddamit! What the hell was wrong with that? Who needs all this rapture shit anyway? Ain't a damned thing in the Bible about it. Iffen that good Old Time Religion was good enough for Stonewall Jackson it ought to be good enough for us!" Redmond smiled inwardly. He knew that John Corbett Morgan was one of the most acute, ruthless and eclectic statesmen of his age or any other, with a mind like a steel trap, a man who was entirely capable of holding his own in any scientific, economic or political discussion with any other world leader. And yet his occasional lapses into Kentucky hillbilly were not affectations. They were the true soul of the man himself. For the Northwest Republic, or any other nation on earth, to be led by a bona fide man of the people was an event rare in

history. To be *well* led by such a man was a gift of God. Or the gods. “I ever tell you how we ended up with *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* as our national anthem?”

He had, but it was one the stories from the Time of Struggle that Don never tired of hearing. Morgan plunged into it without asking further. “After weeks of incredibly tense negotiations at Longview, when we damned near had to go for our guns and shoot our way out a dozen times, we finally browbeat and arm-twisted those bastards into giving us our own country. Then at the *last goddamned minute*, when we were all set to walk out and tell the world that the white race would live, that it had all been worth something...guess what? The damned tub-thumping...I’m sorry, certain of our brave and loyal comrades of the Biblical persuasion threatened to break the whole deal, walk out and start all the fighting and bombing and burning again, over the earth-shaking issue of what the hell *song* we would play when we ran up the first official Tricolor! They wanted Onward Christian Soldiers, then the Nazis demanded the Horst Wessel Lied, and the Odinists wanted Wagner. Thank God for that angel in human form, Cathy Frost! While we all argued and made fools of ourselves in front of the President of the United States, the commissioners from the U. N., the International Red Cross delegation and all the enemy generals who wanted to keep on fighting and killing us, she managed to convince us to play *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*. It was Christian enough for the tub-thumpers, and German enough for the Nazis, and she just plain shamed the Odinists into shutting the hell up when she pulled up her blouse and showed...what was done to her. The holy rollers liked it since it was written by Martin Luther so they could score one off the Whore of Babylon in Rome. The fate of our race hanging in the balance and there they all were, blathering about Whores of Babylon! Cathy said it had some kind of personal meaning for her. Well, now it has meaning for everyone. Thank God one of our people had the Mormon Tabernacle Choir version on CD for the speaker system and we went ahead and did it before everybody changed their mind, or we probably would have ended up with another five years of war!”

“You want a trial on Andrews, you got a trial,” conceded Redmond with a shrug. “You’re the boss of BOSS, sir. Hell, maybe once the Parkers get their brains lasered squeaky clean and go through

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reconstruction they'll become devout holy rollers and spend their Sundays handling snakes and jumping for Jesus. Now what's this other assignment you have for me?"

"It's a ghost story," said the president with a straight face.

"I beg your pardon, sir?" asked Redmond politely. "I thought you usually told us those at Halloween over the roasting hot dogs and marshmallows?"

"Actually, those are just old Manley Wade Wellman stories I ad lib," Morgan confessed. "But this is a real one. A ghost from our past has come back to haunt us."

"Does this ghost have a name?" asked Redmond.

"She does," replied Morgan. "Trudy Greiner."

"*What?*" roared Don, stunned, leaping to his feet in amazement, his cigar ash falling onto the carpet unnoticed.

"I said Trudy Greiner." Morgan opened his desk drawer and handed Redmond a piece of paper encased in clear glassine plastic that he took from a folder. "This is a letter that my office received yesterday, supposedly from the Los Angeles metroplex, although there's no way to tell where it actually originated."

"There's no mail service between the Republic and Aztlan," pointed out Redmond, holding the encased letter up to the light. "From what I gather, there's precious little mail service *in* Aztlan. God, this is crap paper! The eco-freaks down there must have recycled it six or eight times. It's about to fall apart! Well, at least she's still speaking English and not Spanglish. Proper Mexican Spanish, now that I can speak and read and write from my language training at Sandpoint, but I still haven't quite mastered that shit half-language the Americans speak now, for all the stuff I have to read in it that comes across my desk. It's even worse than Puerto Rican."

"I know there's no mail service from Aztlan," responded Morgan. "This letter was carried by one of the private courier companies who specialize in smuggling mail into and out of the NAR. The Mexicans generally overlook it. They treat it as a kind of necessary evil and they have sense enough to know they can't completely suppress all contact. As to the paper, she was probably lucky even to get that if she's really living in L. A., with all the constant shortage of the basics down there." Redmond read the paper out loud.

*To the Honorable John Corbett Morgan
State President, Northwest American Republic
Longview House
Olympia, Washington*

Mr. President:

You may be surprised to hear from me after all this time the Republic has spent trying to hunt me down and kill me. I am writing to tell you that you can stop looking.

I'm tired of living among strangers. I'm tired of running and hiding all my life for a crime I did not commit. I am going to put an end to it. It is my intention to exercise the right that belongs to every other Aryan man and woman the world over. I am Coming Home. I have gotten an exit visa from the Aztlan government, never mind how. On October 22nd of this year, the anniversary of the Coeur d'Alene uprising, I will walk into the Republic at the old Interstate Five border crossing at Mountain Gate, California. If you want to shoot me down on sight or hang me from the first tree on the white side of the border, then go ahead. I don't care any more. You'll be murdering an innocent woman, but I would rather die in the country I gave my youth and my heart to bring into being than live in this mud-colored horror down here for one more day.

If you don't kill me outright, then I demand a public trial or court martial on the charges against me. I did not betray the Olympic Flying Column. I would have given up my own life for Tom Murdock, for Melanie Young, and for any one of my beloved comrades without a moment's hesitation. Even though forty years of hell have passed, I still mourn them all every day. I can no longer live with this lie, this terrible accusation. It is wrong. I don't deserve this. I can't stand it any more. I swear to you by my immortal

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soul that I am innocent. As a soldier of the Northwest Volunteer Army (I was never officially discharged) I demand the right to live and to die by the laws of my beloved country, and to clear my name should God in His infinite mercy grant me that deliverance. If not, then let His will be done.

*Yours truly,
Volunteer Gertrude Greiner*

P. S. I am attaching something below that I have always been willing to give for the Homeland, even during all the years you were hunting for me.

Below the PS was a brown thumbprint in blood.

“Holy Christ!” muttered Don, stunned.

“And here I thought you were a National Socialist?” asked Morgan with a grim smile.

“I am. That means I can swear by Christ and the Aesir both with a clear conscience,” said Redmond. “Trudy Greiner, the last of the revolutionary traitors, is coming out of hiding after more than thirty years? She must have lost her mind!”

“That would seem to be about the only way we might manage to catch her,” replied Morgan dryly. “No other target has been so successful in escaping our hunters. We hadn’t even caught a lingering scent of her for years. It was as if she’d dropped off the face of the planet. BOSS and WPB had about come to the conclusion she was dead and buried secretly somewhere under a false name.”

“How do you know it’s not a hoax?” asked Redmond. “I assume the bloody thumbprint was for identification purposes, but both DNA and fingerprints can be faked. The Office of Northwest Recovery and our own War Prevention people do it all the time. Or it might be the woman who wrote it is one of their damned genetically engineered doubles, like that clone of Bill Vitale they tried to slip past us.”

“I know. Granted, it’s possible that this is some kind of stroke from the ONR. But the Bureau’s forensics lab gave the document a

good going over, and the fact is that both thumbprint and DNA actually *do* match,” replied Morgan.

“Are they sure?” asked Don.

“Positive. The Greiner woman was fingerprinted and DNA-typed by the FBI in Oregon after she was arrested for felony hatecrime over forty years ago, when she was a teeny-bopper. As you may recall, when ZOG officially pulled out of Portland some of the local red-white-and-blue yay-hoos decided Longview didn’t mean them. We had to go in heavy and fight our way into the city street by street for three days before we cleaned them out. You remember the Battle of the Bridges?”

“A historic moment,” recalled Don with a smile “The first artillery barrage fired from Nazi cannons and the first rumble of Nazi tanks since 1945.”

“You got it. *Damn*, boy, that was a sweet sound to mah ears! Remember it all like it was yesterday! Anyhow, an SS Action Group, ironically enough led by a certain young lieutenant named Bill Vitale, captured the Portland FBI headquarters before they could destroy their files and hard drives, so we have Trudy Greiner’s DNA on record. My gut feeling is that the letter is legit. I can well imagine that she might eventually get so tired of looking over her shoulder for the hunters that she just wants it to be over.”

“I’ve heard of her, of course,” mused Don. “Hell, so has every man, woman, and school child in the Republic. My kids grew up singing nasty nursery rhymes about Trudy Greiner, some of which made me wash out their mouths with soap when I overheard them. They use Trudy’s face on targets at junior high school riflery ranges. The ultimate *stukach*, the traitor bitch who sent Tom Murdock and Melanie Young and fifty others of the proudest and bravest partisan unit in the NVA to their deaths in the ambush at Ravenhill Ranch, for cold hard cash. Our own Wicked Witch of the Northwest. What was her particular hatecrime back in the old days in Portland, just out of curiosity?” asked Redmond.

“Hatecrime most foul,” Morgan told him. “It was determined by the Zionist authorities that one Gertrude Greiner, aged seventeen, was responsible for inserting a politically incorrect joke into her high school annual. Something poking fun at female sexual perverts. Two double entendres punning the words ‘Beaverton’ and ‘liquor trade.’

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Inflicting mental anguish, insensitivity to alternative lifestyles, creating a negative and unsupportive environment, all that happy horse shit. You're too young to remember, Don, but in those days a white person couldn't sneeze without offending some little pissant minority and going to jail. You have no idea what it was like to have to weigh and measure every word, to be constantly looking over your shoulder and whisper, never knowing when some monkoid or some pale-skinned wretch would turn you in to the thought police for the slightest casual remark. The men and women of our race lived in a perpetual state of fear and anxiety, and anyone with a white skin who dared to stand up against the régime was punished with maniacal intensity. Especially if they used wit or humor. ZOG's politically protected minorities could never stand being mocked, you know. Mockery undermined them more than anything else, they knew it, and they reacted to the slightest hint of disrespect with the ferocity of a wounded beast. Trudy's little joke about lesbians made the whole high school annual prohibited hate literature under the Dees Act, so it had to be recalled and the offending humor removed. Trudy was convicted by a Human Rights tribunal and served eighteen months. Her family was fined and forced to pay for the cost of reprinting the annual, minus political incorrectness. Trudy joined an NVA cell while she was in women's prison."

"Trudy?" put in Redmond curiously. "You knew her personally, sir?"

"I did," said Morgan. "Please let me proceed, Colonel."

Redmond sensed a raw nerve. "Certainly, sir. But if you might refresh my memory, Mr. President? When did she get hooked up with Tom Murdock and the Olympic Flying Column?"

"I spent this morning reviewing her file, just to make sure my memory hasn't gone soft on me after all these years," said Morgan. "Trudy Greiner was still in the slammer on 10/22, but she got out a few months later, legally restricted to Portland on parole. The uprising had been suppressed, but the guerrilla war in the countryside and the cities was heating up by then. In view of the political nature of her offense Trudy had to do some really fast talking to get sprung. She told the parole board all about how she'd learned to renounce hate and turned her life around, how she'd undergone this wonderful spiritual awakening since she'd been inside, claimed she'd had a passionate

lesbian relationship with a wonderful Hispanic inmate...*no*, don't make that face, dammit, Don! We *had* to do those things in those days! Or at least say them! I took the Diversity Oath on four separate occasions myself, just so I could get a job running a forklift or stacking pallets in a warehouse alongside Filipinos and Somalis, because it was the only way I could feed my family, including that little lady you're married to. Remind me to tell you one day about the time during the guerrilla days when I caught up with this one particularly nasty-ass Puerto Rican foreman..."

"Er, you have, sir," Redmond reminded him. "On more than one occasion. Including our last Christmas dinner. Kind of put me off cranberry sauce for a while."

"So I did," agreed Morgan with a big rumbling laugh from deep inside his massive chest. "Well, it is one of my favorite stories. But you need to understand, hit war necessary to survive and fight on, and we all did things we weren't too proud of later. I didn't believe it about Trudy then, and I don't believe it now. She said what she had to say to get out of that hellhole so she could join in the struggle. They may or may not have believed it, but they saw that she was burning the pinch of incense and making all the right noises, and so they let her go."

"I am aware of the historical context in which the revolution took place, sir. I wasn't criticizing," said Redmond neutrally.

"We all had to burn the occasional pinch of incense on the altars of Zion's false gods in order to survive," sighed Morgan. "But it still rankles. A lot of us old timers still ain't completely easy in our consciences about some of the choices we had to make in those days. Cindy El and Eva don't even know what a lesbian is, do they?" asked Morgan in wonder. "Ain't that a kicker? We grew up with all that filth being thrown in our faces every day, day after day and month after month and year after year until it became part of our whole lives and thought, and nowadays I bet my granddaughters don't even know."

"No, sir," said Redmond in genuine gratitude. "So far as I am aware, they don't know what a lesbian is. That was what we were fighting for, remember? So that little girls can grow up to womanhood without ever hearing the word lesbian, among many other things. You and the men of your generation saw to it that my children grew up not

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just safe, but clean. Like I said, Mr. President, I am aware of the historical context.”

“*We* saw to it, Don. You should remember some of it, too. You were there. You earned that green, white, and blue ribbon on your lapel, young ‘un. I should know. I pinned it on you.”

“I remember some, but it was long ago. As for this medal, well, when I was twelve I wouldn’t have known a political idea if it walked up and kicked me in the ass. I knew I didn’t like the punk Mexican and Chinese kids who robbed my paper route money, and I remembered enough from back in Carolina to avoid anyone with a black skin, but that was about the sum of it. I was there largely for Sarah, sir,” concluded Redmond frankly.

“I know, son, and I’ve always loved you for it. But hit war always better to do the right thing for the wrong reason, or well, maybe a different right reason in your case, than to do the wrong thing for any reason. Anyway, as I was saying before you got me off on an old man’s blather, because of her Dees Act conviction Trudy Greiner had to register with the FBI as a subversive and wear a tracking bracelet on her ankle, which she promptly cut off. She was too well known in Portland, so she went on the run. She made it to Seattle and made contact with the NVA. There she was assigned to a quartermaster team in Bremerton. That put her on the west side of the Sound and gave her familiarity with what would become the Olympic Flying Column’s operational area. She helped set up safe houses and apartments, she made false ID, she maintained arms caches, she handled money through various covert Party bank accounts, and she helped to run an underground printing press and distribute Party propaganda leaflets which would have gotten her life without parole. She was brave, she was a good soldier, she kept her cool and thought fast on her feet, and her teammates admired and respected her. Every assignment she was given went seamlessly and was never compromised. As far as anyone could see at the time, the FBI and the FATPOs never got a line on her. Trudy had the ideal undercover operative’s ability to become invisible in a crowd. Maybe that period of her life was where she acquired the skills she later used to evade our hunter squads. If she was always a rat for the Feds then she must have been really deep cover. My guess is that if she went bad, it must have happened later on.”

“If she went bad?” asked Don, intrigued.

“I’m getting there, son,” admonished Morgan. “After a year, in view of her proven expertise she was assigned to the Olympic Flying Column’s support crew. That meant she lived in town but she helped to obtain and transport weapons, ammunition, medical and other supplies and so on to the Column. It was complex and dangerous work. She had to do a lot of driving around the woods and the mountains of the Olympic peninsula in the dark, hauling a car or pickup truck full of contraband, going miles along rural highways and fire roads with no lights to avoid aerial surveillance. She had to talk her way past roadblocks using fake ID and travel permits with thirty thousand dollars, ten boxes of ammo and twenty pounds of C-4 hidden in her car, hoping to God our science nerds had packed them right to hide them from the sniffer dogs and Fattie sensor devices. A lot of our people in her job died at those checkpoints. But she was damned good at it. She carried out dozens of successful rendezvous without a hitch and transmitted vital supplies, weaponry, and money to Tom Murdock and his crew. Murdock trusted her absolutely. I know that because he told me so.”

“You were in regular contact with the Column, sir?” asked Redmond.

“Yes. Broadly speaking, Tom’s outfit worked the southern part of the Olympic down to Tacoma and us Port Townsend boys had our stomping grounds in the north, although there was a lot of overlap. Corey Nash was our liaison, carrying occasional messages we could no way risk on the phone, and we were even able to pull off some joint operations, like the attack on the aircraft carrier *John F. Kennedy* that led to the Americans pulling the U. S. Navy out of the Puget Sound and shutting down the Bremerton naval base. Plus Murdock and I met several times at various safe houses and other secure locations when it was necessary to take care of business and exchange intelligence.”

“It also meant that Trudy Greiner was one of the few people who could communicate with the Column at need, and who would have some knowledge of where at least a few of them would be at any given time,” Redmond pointed out. “She was also one of the few Volunteers who operated on her own and was out of sight of the

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others for extended periods of time, during which she might have made contact with the enemy.”

“That point didn’t escape us back then, son. Hit war one of the reasons she was suspected after Ravenhill Ranch.”

“Now, if memory serves, on that day the Olympic Flying Column were on their way to attack the Kitsap County Courthouse in Port Orchard?” asked Redmond, searching his memory.

“Yes,” Morgan confirmed. “The one that used to be on Division Street. The Special Criminal Court was sitting there that day. You know, the one ZOG tried to set up when the secret military tribunals became too much of a political embarrassment. The idea being to try and slap a purty civilian legal fig leaf on what was by then pretty much a military dictatorship in the United States. It was some kind of executive session or whatever that day, so none of our own prisoners were scheduled to be in the building. That made it a good time to hit the place and see if we could barbecue a few of the big pigs in the black robes, not to mention as many lawyers as we could send to hell.”

“Four surviving members of the Column actually did take out the courthouse out that morning,” recalled Redmond.

“Yes. Volunteers Frank Palmieri, Dragutin Saltovic, Edward McCanless and Brittany McCanless. The last members of the Column accomplished their mission even in the face of the disaster that overtook their unit at Ravenhill, which has added to the legend of that day, and deservedly so. The original plan was to use a mortar truck, iron pipes stacked on a flatbed trailer, each tube loaded with a charge and a home-made shell. An old Provisional IRA tactic we’d been wanting to try for a long time. A special hydraulic lift elevated the pipes into firing position, the driver set his timer, got out and ran like hell, and the mortars detonated. They destroyed the truck when they went off, but they also launched their shells into the air, that is if the damned things worked right. They weren’t very accurate, and you had to make really sure you positioned the vehicle correctly and got your elevation down pat. If your unit’s science nerd had miscalculated the ballistics or the strength of the barrel charges you’d get mortar bombs dropping all over everywhere in the neighborhood except the target. If everything went according to plan, some Federal position hiding behind razor wire, sandbags and concrete walls suddenly had about a

ton of high explosive dropping down from the sky on top of ‘em. The trick was to position the truck just right and work out the elevation just right to make sure you didn’t miss and blow up Joe’s barber shop and the diner down the block.”

“I remember the truck mortars, sir,” said Redmond.

“Yeah, despite what happened at Ravenhill we didn’t give up, and we eventually got pretty good at making those little poppers. Got so we could rig up vans with false roofs that came off when the mortar barrels were unlimbered, white phosphorus shells, all kinds of tweaks and interesting features. If Murdock had succeeded in his mission, it would have been the first truck mortar attack. As things were, the four surviving Volunteers didn’t have time to mess with raising the barrels from the planned firing position, where they would have been without covering fire from the rest of the Column. They had to improvise, so they simply rammed the truck into the courthouse lobby and blew it. I remember we were able to get a van into Fort Lewis one night and level the officer’s mess from half a mile away,” recalled Morgan with a reminiscent chuckle.

“Mmm, if memory serves, the truck was driven into Port Orchard separately from the bulk of the column,” pointed out Redmond. “That’s how the four survivors were able to complete the mission. Why was that, Mr. President?”

“Commandant Murdock ordered it done that way.”

“Why?” asked Don.

“No idea. So far as we have been able to determine, he didn’t explain to anyone at the time why he did so. We know he handpicked the four Volunteers who drove the truck, two in the cab and two in a scout car. Palmieri, Saltovic, and the McCanlesses are all still alive, as well as four more men who weren’t with the main body of the Column when it was ambushed. They may be able to answer that,” said Morgan.

“I remember from an old Northwest Broadcasting Authority documentary show, I think it was called ‘Incident At Ravenhill’, that the Feds originally claimed the FATPO ambush that destroyed the column was a triumph for their spy satellite system,” said Redmond. “Infra-red heat and motion detectors, an evil racist white mouse couldn’t move on the ground without their knowing about it, so forth and so on.”

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“They tried to claim that, yeah, but it was crap,” growled the old warrior. “I’m old enough to remember before the rebellion. Some of the nervous Nellie nay-sayers in our own ranks claimed that white guerrilla warfare in North America was impossible because of orbital surveillance and other things in ZOG’s little bag of pyrotechnic tricks. Well, the Nervous Nellies were wrong. There was, in fact, a clear and applicable historical precedent, our weaklings just didn’t want to face up to it. From 1969 onward, the Provisional IRA fought a sustained guerrilla campaign in Northern Ireland, largely in an urban setting, against the wealth, manpower and technology of Great Britain. Yeah, I know they were Marxist scum, but the fact remained that the Provos showed it could be done, if we just had the guts and the dedication. Ordinary men were *not* powerless in the face of the New World Order. The bigger and more complex ZOG was, the more vulnerable they were to a few brave men with weapons in their hands and the courage to use them.”

“My God, in 2001 the United States was almost brought to a standstill by four crashing aircraft hijacked with box cutters!” commented Don. “How could anyone claim it was impossible to bring down the Beast? Nineteen young Arabs damned near did it on their own!”

“When white men in the Northwest finally screwed our courage to the sticking point, we largely followed the Provos’ example. Hell, we even stole their rebel songs!” added Morgan with a smile. “You’ll recall that I commanded my own column out in the boonies of the Olympic for almost three years, and I can tell you that the Feds’ much-vaunted super-duper spy satellites and their drone aircraft were never all that accurate. Kind of like the Zeppelins during World War One. A technological advance that was supposed to be decisive, but it fizzled in practice. It was all in the interpretation, and the people they had analyzing all that satellite data were more often than not affirmative action bozos and bitches who didn’t have a clue what the hell they were looking at. I’ve often said, we didn’t win the war against ZOG, their own diversity lost it for them. So many of their people were incompetents who were where they were and doing the jobs they were doing because of the color of their skin, or because they had tits on ‘em. Hell, as long ago as the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions, Bush II’s idiots used to order in massive bombing raids on

wedding parties and school buses because they had no idea who was who. Why do you think the Afghans finally rebelled *en masse* against the American occupation and the American puppet government in Kabul? ZOG couldn't even find their real enemies on barren mountainsides or in wide open deserts, never mind mountains covered with trees. The fact was that during the war, as far as our open country active service units were concerned, the Feds never learned to distinguish between our people and ordinary travelers, hunters, logging crews, park rangers, firefighters, local residents, sheep and cattle, wild animals, their own military convoys, whatever. The Eye in the Sky was a danger, to be sure, like a hundred others we faced, but we eventually learned to evade it the same way the Iraqis and the Serbs and every other smaller power ZOG attacked learned to evade it. Simple camouflage. Hide in plain sight. Blend in with crowds. Dummy vehicles and Quaker guns, you name it. It was just one more problem we had to deal with, and we dealt with it. Faking out the satellites eventually became second nature and we got on with the business of killing ZOG. Actually, it was a lot more dangerous for a Volunteer to be assigned to an active service unit in one of the cities, where you might be ratted out by some pale-skinned traitor who wanted the OHS reward money. Other than that one incident at Ravenhill Ranch, they never succeeded in completely destroying any other Flying Column. The Olympic Flying Column was betrayed by an informer, Don."

"With all due respect, sir, how do we know that?" asked Redmond.

"Well, for one thing, we have the testimony of a FATPO defector who came over to us right after Ravenhill," said Morgan. "Arthur McBride, his name is. Brought two more FATPOs in from the cold with him. They're both dead, but McBride is still alive. Rose to Command Sergeant Major in the army after the war, then went into the Labor Service. He's retired now, a widower. Married a female Volunteer, Brooke Arnold. Little chubby blonde girl with the heart of a lion, who as far as I am concerned was up to Melanie Young standards, but that's just my personal opinion. Brooke never had any songs written about her, Melanie did. Guess that's the way it plays out in history sometimes. McBride lives up in Bremerton. He was there when that nigger major took the call from the rat, or from someone

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who was in contact with the rat. Took the call on his *personal cell phone*, not an official or a military phone or computer. That's important. The Ravenhill ambush was not something that came down from the FBI or the Office of Homeland Security. It was something set up between that monkoid Coleman and a *stukach* he was working himself. McBride was questioned very seriously at the time, you better believe it. I grilled him myself, but he swore he didn't know who the informant was. It rang true at the time and I still think McBride was telling the truth, that he honestly didn't know who the traitor was, but I ain't anywhere near perfect and for all I know, maybe I missed something. McBride might be a good starting point for your investigation, Don."

"Noted, sir. But this McBride guy aside, what about all those FBI and FATPO records we captured during the final assault on the cities, sir? What did they say about Ravenhill Ranch?"

"Damned little," growled Morgan. "Which is odd. That in itself tells me something. Hit war one of their greatest victories against us, yet there was almost nothing in their own records about it. They kept that incident well under wraps, even from their own people. There was something heavy moving in the shade there."

Don spoke bluntly. "Mr. President, let me be absolutely clear on precisely what my orders are from you in this matter. In view of the possible return of Trudy Greiner, you want me to investigate and ascertain the true facts regarding what happened to the Olympic Flying Column almost forty years ago? An incident that occurred before the majority of the population of this country was even born? And you want me to do this in a matter of just a few days, before Gertrude Greiner rocks up at the I-5 crossing and embarrasses the hell out of the Republic with her demand for a public trial? A public trial at which, after an entire generation of hate propaganda and accusation, we might not after all be able to produce any real evidence that might satisfy the world that she's guilty?"

"That would be accurate, Colonel, yes," returned President Morgan.

"Why?" demanded Redmond bluntly. "Don't get me wrong, John. You know I'm fascinated with that part of our history and I'd love nothing better than an excuse to jaw-jack with old NVA vets about the past and get paid for it. But this cuts a wee bit too close to

the bone for me to enjoy it as part of my hobby. Is there any particular reason you are asking me to undo three decades of anti-Trudy Greiner propaganda at this point in our national life? Why not just grab her when she walks across the border, take her off somewhere, shoot her in the head and grind her up into fertilizer like we did with all the scum during the Cleanup? Like we still do on occasion when circumstances seem to demand it?"

"Moral dimension, son," sighed Morgan. "That accursed moral dimension that the Old Man taught us to exalt above all things, damn his decrepit hyper-ethical ass! Shit, why couldn't he have been a cynical opportunist like all the rest of his Movement generation? You know the Old Man's rap. What makes us different from them and all that happy horse shit. There are... certain inconvenient facts."

"I beg your pardon, sir?" asked Redmond. "Certain inconvenient facts? What facts might those be?"

"Like the fact that I don't think she did it," replied Morgan softly, looking out the window down at the slim blue line of the South Sound, gleaming through the firs. "Because, God damn her, Trudy Greiner may in fact be innocent. If she had any real respect at all for what we have achieved, she'd stay the hell away and stay the hell guilty. But it doesn't look like we're going to have that luxury, son."

Redmond was silent for a few moments. "She may be innocent?" he said, his voice filled with quiet horror. "*She may be innocent?* And you have done *nothing* about that in all the time you have been our head of state?"

"That would be correct," replied Morgan.

"Mr. President, coming from you, that is a statement so breath-taking that I will not at this stage comment upon it," said Redmond evenly, recovering himself. "What I am hearing here is that we might have lied to our own countrymen for almost forty years. You have just denied and negated a primary nation-building legend from the crucial first generation of this country's existence, but we'll leave that for the time being. So we're practicing a little historical revisionism here today? May I ask *why* you don't think she did it?"

"She was a good soldier, Don," said Morgan, not looking at him.

"You said that before, sir," pointed out Redmond.

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“I have always thought that,” continued Morgan, ignoring him. “She was a good soldier. There was steel in her soul, Don, the right stuff, the real stuff, the true stuff. After a time you got to recognize it, and if I ever was deceived, hit war the only time with her. But I think she was a brave and noble woman who somehow ended up being terribly victimized, and I will go to my grave believing that.”

Redmond understood he was getting involved in something extremely deep. “How well did you know her, Mr. President?” he asked. Morgan looked at him. “Sarah’s mother has been dead for years, sir. I repeat that I know the context of the revolution and I have no intention of making moralizing judgments. I will also give you my word that anything you tell me will be kept in strictest confidentiality, meaning I won’t tell Sarah without your permission. But if you want me to look into this letter and re-examine the Ravenhill Ranch incident, then I need to know everything.”

“I never slept with her, if that’s what you’re getting at,” said the president with a smile. “I was still married at the time I met Trudy, although the war had separated me from my wife for a long time. I was...very fond of Trudy. I had some dealings with her in the year before she was assigned to the Olympic Flying Column, and I met her on several occasions afterward. I admired her very much, and if you want to get Biblical about it, yeah, I suppose I committed adultery with her in my heart. A beautiful, fiery young woman who was just as dedicated as I was to the cause of securing the existence of our people and a future for white children...yeah, I was tempted. Damned tempted. Circumstances never played out to where I got the chance to do anything one way or the other about those thoughts, for which I will always thank God. I doubt Trude would have gone for it anyway. She viewed me as a comrade and nothing more, and I was always taught that a gentleman can take no for an answer. Besides, after a while it became pretty obvious that she only had eyes for Tom Murdock, and he was a better man than me. Yes he was, Don, and I was never jealous of him, for that or for any other reason. If he had lived, then Tom Murdock would be living in this house today and not me, and we’d all be the better off for it.”

“Did Murdock have eyes for her?” asked Don.

“My understanding is they were involved for a time, and then Murdock broke it off to go with Melanie Young,” said Morgan.

“Which gives Trudy Greiner a far more urgent and human motive for betrayal than mere money, hell having no fury like a woman scorned,” said Redmond. “That aspect of it doesn’t seem to have made it into our history books.”

“For obvious political reasons. As far as the official record goes, the Olympic Flying Column is a tale of pure and fearless heroism and noble sacrifice for our people, and I have to say that’s not all that damned far from the truth. The Olympic boys and girls were our finest and bravest partisans, Don. They never shirked danger and went for the soft targets like some, and they never went kill-crazy like Oglevy’s crew and others did. They fought their war with a courage and a gallantry that would have done credit to the Confederate Army. Tom Murdock and Melanie Young are our anointed revolutionary icons of manly courage and honor and female beauty and virtue, while Trudy Greiner is an icon of evil, which is what we needed and what we still need. Icons, mystique, a theology in black and white that will make sure a thousand years from now there are still people who look like us in the world. The War of Independence is the greatest saga of the Folk since our very creation of America itself. It must not be allowed to become a cheap soap opera.”

“Be that as it may, I’d say that the romantic angle, as we’ll call it, makes it even more likely that she’s guilty,” said Redmond.

“If Trudy had lost it and plugged Murdock or Melanie in some kind of jealous rage, yeah, I could see that happening, but I just can’t see her betraying the whole column and the very cause of independence and white survival itself!” cried Morgan in pain. “I’m not saying she’s not guilty, Don, I’m just saying I don’t *think* she is, and I admit I have no evidence to back up that conviction. The accusation against Trudy tore my guts out, son, but from the available evidence I had to accept that she had betrayed us, betrayed her country, and betrayed her race. Yet all these years I have secretly hoped to get a letter like the one you hold there. That’s why I’d like you to take this on yourself, Don. It means a lot, not just to history and the Republic, but to me. If she is coming back, then she’s not the beautiful and purposeful young woman I once knew, I know that.

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She'll be old and gray and someone completely different from the girl I always see in my mind. But there will be a connection between that old lady and the young warrior maiden I knew. If she does come back, and if she can't prove her innocence, then I'm the one who will have to sign the paper that sends her to her death. I'll sign that paper if I have to, Don, but I have to know whether or not she's guilty before I do."

Don shrugged and drew on his cigar. "Okay, let's assume for the moment that I didn't grow to manhood on the Trudy Greiner legend, that I haven't seen any of the TV shows or the movies about the Olympic Flying Column wherein she is portrayed as the daughter of Satan. Let me do the old detective trick here, since technically I'm supposed to be one. In any crime, the guilty party has to have three things: motive, means, and opportunity. Trudy Greiner qualifies on motive because motive itself breaks down into three kinds: passion, profit, and protection, and all three might well apply to her. There was her rejection by Tom Murdock. There was the million dollars she was allegedly paid for her act of treachery. And there was the motive of protection, if she was a Federal spy and possibly someone had found her out. If that was the case, that might be why the whole column had to die. Murdock or whoever suspected her as a traitor might have told someone else and so any potential witnesses had to be eliminated. Now what about means and opportunity? Refresh my memory some more, Mr. President. Exactly what was the evidence against Gertrude Greiner? What led NVA intelligence to believe that she betrayed the column?"

"Cutting through thirty years' encrustation of hearsay, urban legend, and crap, hit war two things only," said Morgan morosely. "The first being that Greiner was one of nine people who had means and opportunity, who could conceivably have tipped off the FATPOs about the unit's movements. Only nine people survived, all of whom were somewhere else."

"Agreed," said Don. "I think we can take it as a working proposition that like most people the informer was not suicidal, and so somehow arranged to be on detached duty rather than ride into the deadly ambush he or she had just set up."

"As you said earlier, Trude operated on her own in urban areas organizing supplies and logistics for the column, and so she had the

opportunity to make contact with the Federal authorities or somehow directly with Monkey Meat Coleman. A much better opportunity than any of the others, although some like Volunteers Cord, Palmieri, and Saltovic did do supply runs and other missions on their own.”

“Wasn’t it standard operating procedure to always send Volunteers on any mission in pairs?” recalled Redmond.

“It wasn’t always practical to follow that rule, and also after a while the Feds picked up on it and started concentrating random traffic stops, searches, and harassment on pairs of white people they observed in public,” Morgan explained. “So yes, some of the other eight are known to have done occasional single tasks or trips into town for the column, and it is entirely likely that all of them did at one time or another. But more significantly, after the massacre at Ravenhill Ranch the first eight Volunteers *stayed at their posts*. Some of them have since held eminent and responsible positions in the Republic’s government, in the Party, and in society. Trudy Greiner went AWOL. She disappeared off the face of the earth. She broke contact with the NVA the morning of the ambush, and that letter you’re holding in your hand is the first solid lead we have had on her whereabouts in almost forty years. If she wasn’t guilty, Don, then why did she run?”

“She may tell us when she gets here,” suggested Don.

“That’s what I’m afraid of. The second thing was that on the morning of July 31st, the day before Ravenhill, a one million dollar deposit was made into a covert Party bank account at the Westlake branch of the Bank of America in Seattle. One of Trudy Greiner’s covert accounts. It was a wire transfer from a corporation in Hamilton, Bermuda, which corporation appeared and then disappeared forever, having performed that one single financial transaction. This deposit was made day *before* the column was slaughtered by the FATPOs, Don.”

“Premeditation,” said Don, sending a curl of cigar smoke into the air. “Someone was setting it up. Someone knew what was coming.”

“Yes. That million bucks did not come from any known Party or NVA source. Jesus, I don’t think the Party ever had a million dollars in the bank until some years after independence, never mind during the revolution itself. The day *after* the ambush, August the

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second, a young woman matching Trudy Greiner's description, who had ID in that name and knew Trudy Greiner's password and account details and who passed an electronic fingerprint scan, came into the bank and withdrew that entire amount in the form of a certified cashier's check. The check was made out to Gertrude Greiner. After the war we were able to obtain an affidavit to that effect from the vice president of the bank who issued the draft along with the computer printouts for the transaction."

"Do we know for certain that Trudy Greiner was the woman who withdrew the money?" asked Don Redmond.

"There were bank security camera videos, but they have long since disappeared. No, Colonel, we do not know for absolute certain that it was Trudy Greiner who took that money and fled. Even in those days fingerprinting could be forged; the Israeli Mossad made a practice of it. Nor were we ever able to trace the certified check. We have no idea on earth where it was ever cashed or deposited. By the time the Republic's intelligence services were in any position to do any such thing the paper trail had become far too old and cold."

"Cold as ice then, yeah. It's goddamned Antarctic now, and the evidence has been eaten by penguins. You still want me to try and find out the truth at this late date? You need a historian, not a cop!"

"That part of our history is still too close for comfort and there are still things in some of those closed dossiers down in the basement of the Temple of Justice that could come back to bite us," Morgan told him. "This incident prominent among them. You have to understand, Don, that if Trudy Greiner is innocent, then the potential for an ungodly scandal is very much present. Besides Trudy herself there are eight survivors of the Olympic Flying Column. Seven men and one woman. If one of those eight is a traitor who has lived among us all this time, then it will shake the very foundations of this nation to the core."

"Who are those survivors, sir?" asked Don.

"Two of them are now senior military officers, and that worries the hell out of me. Admiral David Leach is the Kriegsmarine Chief of Staff. He has been rightly called the father of the Northwest Republic's navy, today the fourth most powerful in the world after China, the European Union, and Russia. Another of the survivors is a very senior civil servant, Frank Palmieri, who is currently Minister of

Transport for the NAR. He might equally well be called the father of our public transportation system, acknowledged even by our bitterest enemies to be the best in the world. Another veteran of the Olympic Flying Column is one of the Republic's most brilliant scientists, Dr. Joseph Cord. A genius in his own field of applied particle beam technology and quantum physics, and the inventor of the atomic fusion engine who bears a large part of the credit for making our space program possible. Not to mention his invention of the plasma anti-aircraft weapons systems that broke American air power, and which have made the very existence of this country as a free and independent nation possible, as well as the existence of a hundred other small sovereign states throughout the world. Cord is a difficult man to like and work with, like many geniuses...hell, the man is an arrogant ass. I have to meet him on occasion in my official capacity and every time I do I feel like I've just finished eight hours of moving furniture. But Joseph Cord put an end to the American Empire when his plasma ray weapons delivered to humanity a way to bring those terrible bombers and missiles down out of the sky, no matter how high up they tried to hide while they dropped their cowardly bombs. ZOG had to come down out of the sky and face their victims man to man on the ground, and they've been on the retreat ever since. Yet another survivor of Murdock's command is the concert pianist and composer Dragutin Saltovic, a virtuoso of international renown and a national hero in his native Serbia. He's so damned good that his is the only classical music except Wagner I could ever listen to; the man saved me from a lifetime of George Jones. The remaining three survivors have spent the past thirty-odd years since the revolution in private life. Former Volunteer Lars Frierson is a high school teacher in The Dalles, Oregon. Former Volunteers Edward and Brittany McCanless are Old Believers who run a book and sundries shop in Centralia. One thing you need to know about the McCanlesses is that for a brief period, before they joined the Party in pre-revolutionary times, they were associated with the William Pierce cult."

"A lot of people were, sir," said Redmond. "If the Christian Identity people were our brawn in those days, then the ex-Piercies were a hell of a lot of our brain."

"I know it," admitted Morgan. "Some of our greatest heroes and our most brilliant citizens were once associated with the Pierce

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group. I am not suggesting that this would necessarily be any grounds for suspicion, but you should be aware of the fact. The Piercies always rejected the concept of separatism, and back in those days it wasn't the complete irrelevance that it is now."

"You left one out," Redmond reminded him. "The second senior military officer."

"Yes, so I did," admitted Morgan. "The final survivor of the Olympic Flying Column. Special Service Major General William Vitale."

"Big Bill," said Redmond angrily. "So that's why I'm here! That's why you sent for me personally. You want me to find out if Big Bill Vitale, of all the men on earth, is a traitor! A man you have invited into your own home, a man who is a part of our own family as much as if he was born among us! With all due respect, sir, *damn you!*"

"I don't blame you for being upset, Don, but perhaps you understand now why I want this handled in the family, so to speak?"

"You cannot possibly think any such thing!" snapped Don.

"No, as a matter of fact I don't. Do you believe that letter is legitimate?" asked Morgan, pointing to the glassined document lying on his desk.

"I have no way of knowing whether it is legitimate or not," responded Redmond.

"Nor do I. But we can't ignore it, especially if she really does walk across that border crossing on the twenty-second of October. We can't just wait here for Trudy Greiner to drop whatever bomb she intends to drop on Independence Day. We must have some idea of what the hell we are up against, and we have to know beforehand so we can figure out how the hell to deal with this!"

"Yes, sir, I can see that. There is something else. Sir, you also realize that if I dig too deeply into Ravenhill and it turns out that our official version of those events, shall we say, becomes inoperative, then it may also involved undermining or revising the whole Melanie Young legend?" demanded Redmond. "The Melanie Young cult is one of the bases of our whole social culture, especially for a whole generation of young women who have grown up wanting to live up to Melanie's legacy while simultaneously cursing Trudy Greiner as the ultimate in female evil. The Madonna and the devil bitch. Suppose the

Madonna isn't really the Madonna and the bitch turns out to be an innocent woman whom we have all spent a lifetime unjustly defiling? Are you sure we want to start down that path, sir? We don't know where it might lead. You were right about icons and legends. If one icon turns out to be plaster and not gold, and if one legend turns out to be a lie, others might be just as false. This business may be turn out to be a loose thread and if we pull on it the whole fabric of our society might unravel! If Trudy Greiner comes back with some missing piece of evidence or some way to prove that she really didn't betray the Column, we got major problems, boss man. Because if she didn't, then who the hell did?"

"I haven't slept since I read that letter," said Morgan quietly. "Don, *we have to know!* As bad as it might be if she can prove she's innocent, what if she can't? If Trudy Greiner can't prove what she says there, then I am going to have to put a rope around her neck! I've killed men and women in the performance of my duty before, Don, and so have you. I'll do it again and most likely so will you. But never, so far as I know, has it been undeserved. I *must* be sure! I owe that to the Republic, to history. I owe it to her and to those fifty-two brothers and sisters who died on that hillside. And yes, I owe it to myself!"

III.

At about five o'clock that evening Don Redmond arrived back at his home on a rolling rural road just south of Tumwater. It was a cheery old house set in a copse of Douglas fir, cherry trees and fragrant cedar, sporting blue with white trim on the modern weatherproofed siding Don had installed when the old oak clapboard had finally gotten too moldy to keep on with. He slid his electric ground car silently into the garage along side his wife's methane truck and Allan's alcohol-burning motorcycle, which Don kept tuned and clean awaiting for his son to come home and space to ride it again. Not a single petroleum engine existed anywhere in the Republic any more, in any military or civilian vehicle. Every visitor to the Northwest came away with one memory above all, the clear blue of the skies and the fresh sweetness of the air. The structure was a big one for a typically large Northwest family, originally built in the 1920s as a farmhouse. Don and Sarah had bought the place free and clear with one of the Republic's first Life Grants for newly married couples. In the Republic there had never been the mortgages with their crushing interest of the kind that had drained the financial lifeblood from generations of American homeowners; the traditional

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household with the breadwinning husband and father as the head of the family and the wife and mother as the heart had once more become reality in the Northwest. Over the years Don had added rooms and refurbished the old barn in the back as a play house and rec room in which his kids had spent a large amount of their childhood.

Don got out of the car and closed the garage door. He turned and saw a large dark shape approaching. "Hello, Baskerville," he said. Baskerville woofed once in greeting. He was one of the larger specimens of the GELF K9s, the genetically engineered attack and security dogs. Don preferred the black Labrador breed over the German shepherd and Doberman models. Super-intelligent for a dog, his internal microchip set to respond to voice commands only from the Redmond family or from John Morgan, Baskerville was a guardian for the family more efficient and deadly than any electronic or alarm system. He could sense any intruder and respond with proactive ferocity. He helped make it possible for them to live a normal life.

The United States Office of Northwest Recovery had tried to murder Don Redmond on three occasions in the past ten years. Don killed two of the Federal assassins in the field. Sarah had killed a third when the American got into the house in Don's absence, shooting him between the eyes as he attempted to lift the sleeping toddler John from his crib, possibly to use as a hostage or human shield as he waited for Don to come home. It was after this incident that Baskerville had been given to the Redmond family as a puppy. Acting on the personal orders of John Corbett Morgan, the Republic's War Prevention Bureau had retaliated and successfully returned the favor in two cases, killing the ONR case officers who had put out the contract on Don. The third was an ONR Assistant Director named Dov Horowitz, the man who had sent the gunman into Don's home. Horowitz lived in Washington D.C. He always traveled in armored vehicles, and he never spent the night in the same place twice. The WPB periodically assured Don that Mr. Horowitz was still very prominently featured on their Hit Parade, and that he had hopes of good news in the fullness of time. Don wasn't worried. The mills of the hunters sometimes ground slowly, but they ground exceeding fine. The motto over the entrance to the WPB's fortified and top-security

compound in Lacey read in German: *Alles wird abgerechnet*. “All accounts will be settled.”

The enemy ONR seemed to have gotten the message, and things had been quiet for some years now. Morgan himself made it a public point of honor never to seek personal vengeance for attacks against himself, but trying to murder a member of his family was very high on the “not recommended” list. Other than the one apparently extemporaneous incident, the Americans had never attempted to harm any of Don’s family, possibly because they understood that the consequences of such an attack would ignite a blood feud with the numerous Morgans and Redmonds, the negative consequences of which would far outweigh any possible benefits to the United States. But that incident had put Don at the top of the list to receive the latest generation GELF puppy, and Baskerville was now part of the family. “Any problems?” asked Redmond. Baskerville woofed twice for no.

Don went inside the house. In the large and friendly kitchen he met his wife Sarah, a tall and graceful woman with dark brown hair that was just beginning to go gray. She was wearing an ankle-length dress, this one of brown wool, embroidered with Celtic designs having to do with her role as a Wiccan priestess. She was fixing supper for the clan; Don could smell and hear a pork roast sizzling in the old-fashioned electric oven he had built for her. Sarah refused to consider a cooking robot or even a microwave, which she said interfered with the harmonious vibrations of the home. “Hi, Snoopy,” he said, kissing her on the cheek. He had started calling her that to tease her when he was a twelve year-old paperboy and Sarah was an eleven year-old in jeans, with braces on her teeth and two pigtailed on either side of her head that Don pretended reminded him of the long floppy ears of a cartoon character. They had spent long hours together on the back porch of the house in Bellevue while her father and his men had planned and implemented countless guerrilla attacks and acts of sabotage inside.

Don’s elder daughter Cynthia Ellen Redmond was helping her mother in the kitchen. “Hi, Dad,” she said. The eldest Redmond daughter very greatly resembled Sarah in her younger years, the same slim strong build and handsome features, but without the young Sarah’s passion and wildness. Cindy was still wearing her green Labor Service coveralls. She had spent the day supervising a crew of

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younger people who were doing their mandatory year of manual work after graduating from high school. Today they had been raking leaves and doing landscaping in Priest Point Park. Next week they might be collecting the city's garbage or repairing an elderly couple's home. A few weeks before Cindy and her crew had been in Yakima picking apples, and in the spring they would be out in the woods doing forestry work, planting seedlings and stocking fisheries.

The Labor Service was the Republic's response to the age-old excuse of capitalism as to why massive Third World immigration was needed. "Who does the dirty work?" moaned the old capitalists of the United States. "White and even black Americans won't get their hands dirty or work up a sweat. *We must* have all these brown coolies, or who will do the heavy sweaty stooping stuff?" In the Republic, everybody's children did. That meant *everybody*. Absolute equality of national service was the bedrock on which the system rested. Labor Service deferments for young people were even harder to get than military deferments for young men. *Everybody's* kids worked with their hands for a year. Even if they were blind and in a wheelchair, a job was found for them counting widgets by touch or something of the kind. A field foreman's stripes gleamed on the left sleeve of Cindy's overall, indicating that she had voluntarily extended her time in the NLS beyond the legal one year requirement. She was now twenty years old, a quiet and competent young woman. By graduating from high school and passing her History and Moral Philosophy course she had already earned her C citizenship certificate and the single vote that came with it. Like many girls, Cindy had opted to go for her second level of citizenship through national service rather than through college or through marriage right out of high school. On completion their year of Labor Service, boys went right into the military for another two years, and they left the army with a two-vote B category citizenship.

Don's youngest daughter Eva was doing her homework on the dining room table, a History and Moral Philosophy assignment on the life of Commander Rockwell. Eva was fifteen and starting to kick at the traces a bit. She wanted to achieve her own citizenship through the coveted "cultural asset" status, as an actress. If she passed the H & MP course and also the talent evaluation by the Ministry of Culture, she would get a C-1 certificate as opposed to her sister's present C-2.

Eva was entering high school on the Arts and Humanities track and she was doing well. She really did seem to have the true dramatic fire, and she had already appeared in two adolescent bit part roles on local television, which made both her parents proud enough to explode. Opportunities for actors were more numerous than one might think in the Republic, given that one of the primary national missions was preserving Western art and drama in the purest form. There were not only the Ministries of Culture and Broadcasting and the Northwest Film Board, but a number of prestigious private theater and movie companies. The Lord Chamberlain's Men in Seattle and Portland's Globe Theater Group were deemed to be among the most eminent and skillful Shakespearean and Restoration repertory companies in existence, attracting talent from all over the rapidly diminishing English-speaking-world. Eva intended to try and get her own Labor Service assignment as a stagehand and set builder for the NBA or one of the private companies. Nor were other canons of the European tradition neglected. Eva's drama class was producing Edmond Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* in the original French for Thanksgiving Theater Day, with Eva playing the female lead as Roxane. Only in the Northwest Republic could the classical works of Western drama now be performed from their original texts, without later interpolations of multiculturalism and political correctness. In the spring they were planning for a field trip to make a video movie of *Wuthering Heights*, to be filmed in eastern Oregon as a viable substitute for the Yorkshire moors. Eva was determined to snag the role of Cathy, although she had told her father that if the family adopted a Lebensborn child before then she would stay home and help her mother with the infant.

Public schooling in the Northwest was superior to anything in any American university, and many European ones. The Culture and Education Ministries were convinced by the catastrophic American precedent of the last century that the devil made work for idle hands, and that it was in the interest both of society and of the child to keep him out of trouble by making sure that from kindergarten onward, until the boys went into the army and the girls went to college or marriage, school was a full-time job. The Party took an iron-hard line against various degenerate entertainments and pastimes of the kind that had wasted whole generations of white youth before the

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revolution. Instead of skateboards, Northwest kids got Shakespeare. They had computer games in abundance, but instead of mindless destruction of bizarre alien life forms all such games required the exercise of young minds to outwit the programming through swift analysis, thought, and reaction. Instead of the holographic virtual reality games and pornography that rotted the minds of American children of all races, Northwest boys and girls got virtual time travel that let them see and hear and smell everything from the hiss of the clothyard shafts at Agincourt to a day in the life of a pioneer family heading west in a Conestoga wagon, circa 1850. High school graduates were required among other attainments to speak, read and write fluently in four languages: English, Latin, and two others not their native tongue. The Latin requirement was not only for the increased knowledge it gave the child of modern languages descended from the tongue of ancient Rome, but also because the declensions and syntax imposed an orderly mental discipline on the child's mind. Latin has no equivalent of "Like, whatever, dude." Most Northwest high school students chose Spanish for one of their languages, for the very practical reason that it was the primary tongue of their national enemy and it would prove of use. Eva had impressed the hell out of her parents by choosing French and Italian. When she had made her choices known, Don had asked his daughter why. "French in honor of the one nation who dared to oppose the American empire back in the old days," the girl had replied. "Italian because I always hear Aunt Tori and Big Bill speaking it, and it's beautiful. I want to talk with Tori in Italian."

Cindy El was prim and attractive, and she promised to grow into a handsome and matronly woman, but Eva had the makings of a true beauty. The girl was blond and willowy, her hair a shining and living sheaf of gold, and her walk was that of a princess who would grow to become a queen. When Eva entered a room every male eyeball from eight to eighty clicked, and it worried Don. For Cindy there had only been one, Mark Conway, one of nature's gentlemen, and neither of them had ever given her parents a moment of worry. With Eva, chasing every teenaged boy in Olympia away from the house had already become almost a full-time job for him and Sarah both. The kids were even willing to brave Baskerville for a moment or two in Evie's company. Middle son Matt, aged nineteen, was

stationed in Twin Falls doing his army service and trying to live down the reputation of his famous namesake. He was going to major in political science and criminal justice when he got out of the army and he had already told his father he wanted to follow him into BOSS after the required minimum three years in the Civil Guard as a police officer. Somehow it just seemed right that there should always be a cop named Matt Redmond in the service of his people. Third son John was now aged eight and worshiped his spaceman brother Allan. John's room was full of photos, prints and crayon drawings of Allan, the Martian landscape and the spaceship *Vanguard* that took Allan to Mars. "Cindy El's getting married!" John breathlessly informed to his father as he mounted the stairs to his bedroom.

"Well, one would hope," agreed Don genially. "I'd like to get her off my hands sometime this century."

"She's getting married to *Mark Conway!*" yelled John excitedly.

"Yeah, well, I'd admire if you let Cindy and your mother tell me all about it, young 'un," said Don. Every now and then a little bit of the South still slipped into Don's speech, relics from his uncle and later association with John Morgan. Don hung up his coat and his gun in the bedroom closet and took off his tie, then put on the smoking jacket the girls had given him on his last birthday. On his way back downstairs Don poked his head into the sitting room of his aunt, the Contessa Stoppaglia. "Hey, Aunt Tori. How was your day?"

"Fine," said the old lady. She was a tall and elegant woman in her seventies, always flawlessly dressed. Tonight she sat by the log fire in her hearth wearing a tweed suit. On her lapel was a green, white and blue ribbon of the War of Independence identical to Don's. "The kids did watercolors and made all kinds of lovely technicolor messes on their papers and on themselves, and we all enjoyed ourselves immensely." Spry despite her age, Tori was a volunteer kindergarten teacher in Tumwater, where she managed a class of twenty little hellions with just the right combination of love, skill, and firmness. Her class called her Granny, but worshipped her as a god.

"You coming to the reunion tonight?" asked Don.

"Oh, I don't know," said Tori. "These shindigs are pretty depressing, really. They're all much the same, just like any gathering of old folks. A bunch of aging men and a few old biddies like me

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getting quietly or not so quietly spiffled and learning who's passed on, who's having prostate surgery and showing off the latest pictures of the grandchildren. Along with belting out a few of those magnificent bloody songs we stole from the Irish. Then the memories start to crowd in, first the good ones, and then a lot of them not so good, and by the end of the evening we're all maudlin drunk remembering the ones who ought to be there but who never made it. I don't know if I'm up to it tonight, Don. In any event, I was always a rather reluctant revolutionary."

Don looked over to a large framed portrait on Tori's mantelpiece, over the crackling wood fire. It showed a young woman with long honey-colored hair standing beside a darkly handsome man like a young Frank Sinatra with a long scar on his cheek. In the background was a wide lawn fronting a tall white marble villa in Tuscany. The youthful Tori Redmond held a wedding bouquet, and her face burned like a proud and radiant brand over the distance of more half a century. "Still miss him?" asked Don.

"Every day," she replied softly. "I think his love made me a Sicilian myself, you know. I still speak the dialect like a native, or so Bill assures me. He ought to know. He grew up in Castellamare del Golfo. When the monsters took Tony from me, I decided I would devote the rest of my life to making them pay. I always wondered if they understood that? The terrible rage of the widow whose beloved man has been taken away forever? The power of the vendetta? Their own stupidity in unleashing it on themselves?"

"Tori, more than any of us, you earned that ribbon," said Don quietly. "I really think you should come with us tonight."

"I miss Mom and Matt as well, but you and Bill and those great kids of yours make up for it," continued Tori, as if she had not heard him. "I remember the old world I grew up in, Don, and I will always thank you and those people at that get-together tonight for making this new one for me and the children. But somehow, tonight I don't feel like going back there, not even for an evening. We sing about it like we were all Irish, but the fact is that it was a very bad time, a time of horror and wretchedness and evil. At my age I think I've earned the right to be a bit selective about which parts of the past my mind wanders back to. Can you make my excuses for me? Tell them my lumbago's acting up or something."

“Sure, Tori,” said Don with a laugh. He strolled back downstairs into the kitchen and poured himself a bourbon and soda from a bottle of Old Log Cabin, product of the state distillery in Hayden Lake. Cindy El had gone upstairs to change out of her coveralls. “Your Dad called me over to Longview House today,” he told her. “Another special job.”

“What did he want?” asked Sarah.

“Wanted to talk about the Andrews case first, like I figured he might. Then he surprised me. He told me a ghost story,” replied Matt.

“Eh? He usually saves those for the annual Halloween bonfire,” said Sarah.

“This time it’s a real one. A ghost from revolutionary times is about to rise from the dead, although she may return there very quickly.”

“What are you talking about?” asked Sarah. Most men in BOSS made it a point never to bring their work home with them. But since the first day they had met, there had never been a single secret between Don and Sarah except for one, by a kind of unspoken consent, which was her mother’s death during the revolution. Even that wasn’t really a secret. It was simply something that they never spoke of. In any case Sarah was an Alpha One citizen and a Party member with a full security clearance. Don sat down at the kitchen table and ran down his morning’s conversation with the president.

“Oh, that poor woman!” exclaimed Sarah when he had finished, shaking her head in horror. “Just think of it, Don! Even if she is a traitor, imagine what it must have been like to carry that guilt all these years, never able to live among your own people but forced to exist in that human cesspool down there. And if she’s innocent...”

“If she’s innocent then someone has been thumbing their nose at justice for almost a lifetime,” replied Don grimly. “Some of those survivors are in key positions in the Republic now. If that’s the case, then I wonder what the hell they’ve been up to since then?”

“Don,” said Sarah in a worried voice. “What about Bill Vitale?”

“I know, Snoops. Bill was one of the eight people who survived from the Olympic Flying Column. And before you ask, I don’t believe for one instant that Bill Vitale ever committed anything even remotely resembling a dishonorable act.”

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“Nor do I,” said Sarah.

“But do you see now why we have to find out, one way or the other? If Trudy Greiner really is innocent of treason, or if she is guilty and for whatever reason she’s decided to go out with one last attempt to throw sand in our faces, if she can create any kind of doubt at all, then Bill and the others will live the rest of their lives under a shadow.”

“Are you going to say anything about this to Aunt Tori?” demanded Sarah.

“Holy Moses, no! If she thought I was investigating Big Bill she’d stick a stiletto in my ear!” laughed Don.

“How are you going to go at it?” asked Sarah.

“I’ve already started. I spent this afternoon digging around in the records at work, the ones we captured from the Feds when they pulled out. They’re not complete, though. A lot of the relevant material was destroyed before ZOG skedaddled, especially stuff relating to their informants. It took us years to dig some of them out of their holes. I’ll start with the FATPO defector, McBride, and then I’ll have to talk to the eight survivors of the Olympic Flying Column, of course. But I’m blessed if I can see what I could possibly turn up after all these years. Actual information is so sparse that even if they’re all straight with me, it’s likely that all they will be able to come up with will be ancient memories and half-memories. Criminy, Snoops, we’re talking about a trail that went cold when I was ten years old! We may have to wait for Trudy Greiner to rock up and finally tell us her side of the story, and then we hope to God she doesn’t have some piece of evidence or proof that shatters one of the greatest legends of the War of Independence. Even though we’ve raised a whole new generation and we’re working on our second, the Republic is still under siege. We’re the only nation on earth whose very right to exist is not accepted by most of the world. We don’t need and can’t stand a scandal like this! Who knows where it would lead?” He sighed. “Never mind, enough about work for the evening. Now what’s this about Cindy getting married to Mark Conway? I mean, it’s not unexpected. It’s always been on the cards since they were in elementary school, but have we finally gotten a formal proposal?” She smiled.

“Yep. We received a registered letter from Pastor Marlon Carlisle today,” said Sarah, handing him the envelope.

“I’m flattered the Conways elected to use the most prominent Christian Identity minister in the country as the matchmaker.” Don read the letter out loud. “On behalf of the Conway family and their son Mark Isaiah blah blah...a true and honorable affection having grown between Mark and your daughter Cynthia Ellen blah blah blah...sure looks like a proposal to me,” asked Don, glancing over the text. “And they’re not asking for a dowry. Always a sign of a love match. Okay, Snoops, now that it’s finally coming down to brass tacks, how do you feel about the prospect of Mark as a member of the family?”

“I think he’s a fine young man and a very good catch for our daughter. I always have.”

“I agree, one hundred per cent. Does Cindy El think he’s a good catch?”

“Oh, yes. You said it yourself, she’s been chasing Mark for years.”

“But...?” prodded Don, sensing a small hesitation.

Sarah frowned slightly and chose her words carefully. “Cindy El wants the marriage, but the religion aspect worries me a little bit. Cindy has never been all that spiritual in the old ways, not like Eva who does all her alignments every day. Cindy’s the stolid and down-to-earth one among our kids, she always was, and she lives very much in this world. We’ve talked about it and she assures me she won’t have any problem attending church with Mark or allowing their children to be raised as Christians.”

“Yeah, well, at least the Conways are CI and not holy-rolling Pentecostals who want to burn you at the stake for that voodoo that you do so well. I know that ZOG persecutes them, but I swear that sometimes I think that’s one group of immigrants the Republic could do without. It’s really ironic. In the United States the Pentecostals are accused of being racists and fascists because they preach against interracial marriage and homosexuality to their congregations, but when they come here they cause nothing but trouble. They get in everybody’s face by demanding Bravo citizenship without having served in the military. At least once a year I have to bust some group of tub-thumpers for sneaking into race and politics disguised as

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religion, especially since they can't seem to shake this stupid obscene idea about Jews being God's Chosen People. They're as hare-brained as Todd Andrews and his so-called Heroic Vitalist Center."

"How odd of God to choose the Jews," quipped Sarah.

"Not news, not odd, the Jews chose God," replied Don with a smile.

"We've news for the Jews: they're going to lose!" giggled Sarah, completing the third line. "To think that one used to carry ten years in Federal prison!"

"Yeah, I know. Sometimes I think we overthrew the United States government simply for the right to tell jokes. But the Conways aren't bigots like the Pentecostals. Your father came to accept your own adoption of the Craft," pointed out Don. "Nor do I mind having Christians in the family as long as they're sane and decent people. Why shouldn't it work in reverse?"

"Dad is an old fashioned hoot-'n-holler Baptist, not Christian Identity," said Sarah. "Insofar as he has any religion at all, which isn't very far. The Aryan race is his real religion, always has been. He thinks my Craft is just a silly little girl phase I never grew out of. It doesn't offend him because he doesn't take it seriously. Yes, I know, the Conways are good folks and they think the world of Cindy, but I'm concerned about how the rest of the CI community here will treat her when they learn she was brought up in the Old Ways. It seems to be getting worse every year, this pointless, stupid bickering over religion. Why can't we just lay it aside? Like we don't have problems enough with those American maniacs constantly scheming to reconquer us and enslave us again?"

"It seems to be the peculiar curse of our race," sighed Don.

"I know it was during the early days of the Movement," recalled Sarah. "Commander Rockwell and the Old Man tore their hair out trying to get what few people we had to see sense on the issue and not fight over it."

"It was bad," agreed Don. "It's hard to believe that even at the height of ZOG's power, there were racially aware white people who hated other white people so badly that they would rather ZOG continued to rule than the people they hated have any part in the solution. That period of history was never entirely sane, and in some respects we were just as nutty. Even before ZOG, religion was our

curse. We spent many centuries merrily butchering one another by the millions over the Great Jumping Jesus, yea or nay or how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. No matter how imminent the existential threat from the *üntermenschen*, there is always a white man somewhere that we hate worse. It's like we need a white opponent to fight against, as if it fills some deep psychological need. It's almost as if a non-white enemy just doesn't fill the bill in some weird corner of our soul. I always thought that Commander Rockwell had the best way of dealing with it, which is just *not* deal with it. The Constitution of the Republic gives every man and woman the right to freedom of religion, freedom to practice their faith and to raise their children in that faith, with the critical proviso that they do not attempt to disguise political activity or ideology wrapped in a religious cloak. That's a lesson we learned the hard way back in the twentieth century, when the established Christian churches then were almost totally corrupted with Zionism and sexual perversion. In the States they still are. We rightly guard ourselves against that particular Trojan horse, but beyond that we should all worship God or the gods in our own way and just shut the hell up about it. Sorry, I know I'm rambling, but the whole situation just plain ticks me off."

"Listening to one's husband ramble comes with a wife's job description," she said with a quick kiss.

"Look, Tim and Stephanie Conway are both B-category citizens. They've got a prosperous contracting business building immigrant housing for new settlers, good quality homes and apartments. We've known them for years, and I've never seen a sign of bigotry against any other white person or group out of them. They know you're Wicca and I'm NS and if it's ever bothered them, I've never detected it. And I'm a detective, remember? Mark's a fine and steady boy. He's coming out of the army in January and going to work for his dad part time, and the rest of that time he's going to work on a civil engineering degree from Oregon State. That would mean that he and Cindy would have to move down to Portland, but hey, it happens. They grow up, Snoops. It's the right point in both their lives for him and Cindy both to start a family, and I've got no problem with it if Cindy doesn't." Don grinned at his wife. "You just don't want to give Cindy the Little Talk," he said with a chuckle.

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“I already did, last year,” Sarah reminded him. “Just in case she and Mark...well, never mind, we both know that wouldn’t have happened, Mark is almost like a medieval knight with his lady when he’s with Cindy, but still I figured it was better to be safe than sorry. Thank the gods that we now live in a society where it was mine to do. I remember my sex education classes starting in second grade, before the revolution. Some of them were so filthy I still can’t believe anyone could teach such things to children.”

“I was home-schooled by my aunt and uncle for that very reason. This is now. What did you think of it then?” asked Don curiously.

“I was seven years old, and you have to remember most of what we were taught wasn’t normal sex. I thought it was all very silly and gross, and it convinced me that grownups were mostly insane. Why on earth would they want to do nasty stuff like that, otherwise? One day I went home and told Dad about what we were doing in class. The day after that Dad came to school and beat the faggot sex education teacher to a bloody pulp. That was his first arrest for hatecrime. He broke out of King County jail and from then on it was...well, you know what it was like. But I never went back to that school.”

Cindy came back into the kitchen wearing a skirt and sweater and without asking piled steaming potatoes au gratin into a large bowl for the dinner table. “Hi, princess,” said Don to his daughter. “Look, honey, got a moment? Can you step into the study? I’d like to talk to you. I reckon you know what about.”

“Sure, Dad,” said the girl. “Been upstairs talking with Aunt Tori?”

“Yes. She wants me to tell the reunion tonight that her lumbago’s acting up, which is horse hockey. She’ll outlive us all.” They went into Don’s den and sat down on the sofa together. “No bull now, Cindy. Mark Conway has formally asked our family for permission to marry you. I want to know how you feel about it.”

“Actually, I was the one who asked him to marry me,” said Cindy with a smile. “Once when we were eight years old. Then again, seriously, a year ago, before he went into the army. I haven’t changed my mind.”

“That’s all I need to hear, princess. I’ll send my formal acceptance to Pastor Carlisle tomorrow. I’ll also call Mark at his unit up on the Yukon border and I’ll tell him the good news myself.” He leaned over and kissed her. “May the both of you know nothing but joy and fulfillment, all of your lives. Now, in view of your coming change of situation, I want you to be honest with me about everything. How can I help?” Don expected a calm and serious assessment of the young couple’s financial and material needs prior to their each receiving their Life Grants from the state. Those needs he was fully prepared to fulfill with all the resources at his command, including his father-in-law’s as well, for he knew he could speak for John Corbett on this. After all, this was Cindy, the practical and unsentimental one. It was her way.

Cindy El rarely surprised him, but this time she managed it. “Dad, what was the old country like?”

“Huh?” asked Don in surprise. “Cindy, why on earth would you ask me that now?”

“I was just thinking about Mark and me today,” she told him. “I was wondering what our children will be like, what kind of world they will grow up in, wondering if my sons will have to fight another war to keep our country alive. Then I started wondering what it would have been like if you had stayed behind, what kind of life they would have had. Or even if they would be at all, or I would have been born at all. That, and you and Mom going to the reunion tonight reminded me how much we owe you. But I just got curious. All around me every day I meet and speak with new people, new settlers, and they all know where they came from. I guess like all us woodchucks who were born here I sometimes feel there’s something missing. I hear people speaking in German and Russian and Afrikaans, or in English with accents from England and Ireland and New Zealand and Massachusetts. It’s like they have something I don’t, in a way. So I wonder. What was our own land like, the land we lived in before we Came Home?”

“Honey, I was only six years old when we left North Carolina. I have lived all my life since then here in the Homeland. Never wanted to be anywhere else.”

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“But surely you must remember something?” pressed Cindy. “I hear a little of it in your voice sometimes, a passing reference to this or that.”

“That’s mostly from growing up around Uncle Matt and from your grandfather,” pointed out Don. “I picked up some of their speech patterns second hand. I’m not really a Carolinian.”

“I know. I wish I had known Uncle Matt.”

“So do I, princess. Matt and Heather both. You missed something there.”

“It’s almost like North Carolina is a ghost that follows us everywhere. Someone once called us a haunted people. Haunted by our past, haunted by the many lands we came from. I want to know our family ghosts, Dad, so I can tell my own children about them someday. Our own land, the land long ago...what was it like? Can you tell me anything?”

“Well, yeah, I remember a little. I dream about it sometimes,” said Redmond slowly. “Just hazy images mostly, the kind a person of my age retains from their early childhood. Not much, and what there is doesn’t hang together very coherently. There are some bad memories, like gangs of ugly black children with big bubble lips and nappy frizzy heads chasing me and beating me with sticks, throwing rocks at me if I came out of my yard, that kind of thing. But there are good memories as well. Sometimes I dream about the summer, the muggy burning heat of a kind that we never get here, or at least we never get here on the South Sound. I dream about air conditioners rumbling in windows, dripping water from the condensation. I remember green and leafy trees, kind of the same as we have here, but different as well. The trees were smaller than here but with bigger leaves, and the Carolina pines are different from our firs and cedars. I know that because I’ve seen photos, but I remember it too. At least, I think I do. Taller, straighter, and in my mind I see pine cones and brown pine needles like a carpet on the ground everywhere. Soft dirt, softer than here, darker. And sometimes sand. I remember going to a place once that my parents called Cliffs of the Neuse, which is a river in Carolina. I remember there were big tall pine trees growing up there out of hard white sand. I remember looking down on the water and it was kind of muddy greenish brown, not like the blue of the Sound here. I remember going to places with old cannons, Fort Fisher

and Bentonville. They were Civil War battlefields where Southern soldiers fought against the United States, very long ago in the first time when our people revolted against the Americans. Later ZOG had all those sites plowed under and all the relics were destroyed, and it became against the law even to speak of that time or to honor any of our ancestors who fought for the Confederacy. Display of any Confederate flag or insignia still carries ten years' Federal prison time now, if I recall correctly.

“But mostly I remember autumn in Carolina. The trees blazing with gold and red and brown, the air clear and chill. I remember a Halloween or two, Jack o’Lanterns on porches and beautiful golden leaves on the ground. You want to know what I most recall about the old country, honey? I remember the Halloweens. My brother and my sister and I used to go trick or treating. My Uncle Matt took us all, with his gun worn outside on his hip. He was a North Carolina state cop then, and he was one of the few white men who were still allowed to carry a weapon after the Schumer Act. He went with us so none of the black kids messed with us or stole our candy. Yeah, I’d have to say it was Halloween I remember best. There was just something different in the air than here, maybe because we were closer to the real Old Country, the Europe that our ancestors came from in those tiny wooden ships. My Christmases? Those are all here, Cindy El and thanks to Matt and Heather they were all good ones. I guess that’s the best way I can explain it. Halloween means the old country to me, but Christmas means the Homeland. I hope that makes some kind of sense to you.”

“And your father and your mother? My grandparents?” asked Cindy.

“I actually can’t remember that much about them, which I suppose is something I ought to feel badly about, but in my mind they are always kind of overshadowed by images of Matt and Heather. I wasn’t with them when they were killed, thank God,” said Don. “It happened in the state capital, Raleigh, what they called a carjacking in those days. A Mexican gang specialized in stealing late model cars and shipping them to South America. Rather than take the time to break in and maybe damage the merchandise they simply waited for a nice car driven by white people to pull up to a stoplight or park, then dragged them out, killed them, and drove off with the car. It happened

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all the time in those days. I remember my Uncle Matt and my Aunt Heather coming to our house and asking us, my brother and sister and me, if we'd like to go on a long trip. I didn't know it, but they were actually taking us away for good, one step ahead of the Child Protective Services. This was before *It Takes A Village*, but the government was already using the law to kidnap white children and give them to liberals and...well, to other kinds of people. The courts had declared Matt and Heather to be unfit guardians because of Matt's so-called history of anti-government activities, which involved his job as a state police officer. He had this funny idea that the law applied to Federals as well, and back in the old days he rained on a number of Washington's parades, so I understand. Plus there was that business with Bill Vitale. They never forgave him for that, especially Hillary. The Old Man wrote a book about it, which you may have read. Anyway, we kids were put on a train to Seattle with Aunt Heather. We couldn't fly because we had to travel under false names. I do remember that long, long trip. I remember changing trains in this big huge station in Chicago where I ate a messy hot dog while sitting on a hard bench and slopped chili all over my shirt and pants, while about a hundred radios all around seemed to be shrieking out Mexican salsa music. I remember seeing the Rockies coming up ahead in the train's observation car, capped with snow, and my first sight of blue lakes in Montana. Heather took us to her uncle, Oscar Lindstrom, and he hid us in his cabin out near Yelm for a year or so until Matt and Heather were able to Come Home themselves."

"Will we ever be able to go back?" asked Cindy softly.

"Why? Do you want to go back?" asked Don in surprise. "I mean, it's not a bad thing if you do. A lot of people here believe they will go back some day, to the lands of their birth. Everywhere from Germany to Milwaukee to South Africa. I think all of us want to go back, at least a little."

"Mmm, not for good, I don't think. I was born here. My home is the Northwest and it always will be. But it just makes me mad that the Americans won't give us entry visas, won't even let us go back to visit. Like we're contaminated or something."

"To them, we *are* contaminated," said her father. "We are contaminated with two things they fear more than anything. Courage and racial pride. They spent seventy years stamping courage and pride

out of our people, and yet despite it all here we are in the Northwest, springing back up again like weeds.”

“I’d just like to see Carolina someday,” she said wistfully.

“Someday, yes, I think we’ll be able to go back,” said Don. “Not in my lifetime, but maybe in yours. I’d say pretty certainly that your children will be able to go back someday if they want. Honey, you know that the Homeland was never intended to be a prison for us. It’s a lifeboat, a place of refuge. One day the men and women of our race will grow strong and brave again, and more importantly, we will grow *many*. There will be enough of us so that we can kick down the walls they’ve built around us and take it all back, the America and the Canada that our forefathers made. Speaking of those children you mentioned...Cindy, before God, are you *sure* you want Mark Conway to be their father? Honey, I won’t pressure you or try to force you. When all is said and done, this is your decision.”

“Yes, Dad. I’ve known Mark was the one since I was a child, Dad, and Mark knew the same about me. Just like you knew Mom was the one, and she told me she knew you. I just had it a lot easier than you did. You two had to meet and recognize one another in a bad time of fear and violence and sickness. I didn’t have to go through that. You and Mom and Papa John and Aunt Tori made a world where it was possible for Mark and me to come together without fear or guilt or confusion, where young white people aren’t driven half insane by what’s happening around them. I know enough history to understand that.”

“Don’t ever forget it, Cindy El. Because if you do, you and your children will be forced to repeat it. Now let’s get in to supper before the smell of that crackling pork drives me nuts.”

After dinner, while his wife was dressing for the reunion, Don went into the library and pulled out his comphone. He called his old friend Charlie Randall. When Randall’s mug appeared on the screen it turned out to be a kindly, grandfatherly face, weatherbeaten with a shock of gray hair. It was definitely not the face one would expect of one of the Republic’s foremost intelligence operatives and assassins, with a record of happy homicide going back to the War of Independence.

“G’day, mate!” said Randall, his speech purest Brisbane. “Long time no jabber. Been meaning to give you a bell and offer my

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congrats on catching the bloody Bill Vitale clone and busting those nutters who wanted to waste Pastor Briggs.”

“Hey, cobber,” said Don. “Thanks, but it’s all in a day’s work. It could be worse. I could be mowing lawns for the Labor Service. Look, Charlie, something’s come up. I need to have a word with you regarding a new case I’m working on. It’s nothing of immediate urgency or any imminent threat to state security, just some background on the old days. You going to be at the Association shindig tonight?”

“Be there with bells on,” agreed Randall. “Wouldn’t want to miss a chance to dance with that lovely wife of yours.”

“Long as I get a dance with Linda. Let’s try to make some time for a jaw-jack, then.”

* * *

At a little past eight o’clock, Don and Sarah arrived at the downtown Olympia Hilton for the annual social of the Old NVA Association. The Redmonds always made it a point to show up for the annual reunions. They were a renowned couple since between them both, they were the youngest veterans who were entitled to wear the War of Independence ribbon. As they walked in, almost as if by arrangement, the loudspeakers struck up Sir William Walton’s *Crown Imperial March*. The walls were festooned with Tricolor flags and long green, white and blue ribbons. Over the great banquet room, crowded with people and Labor Service waiters, heavy with the smell of good food and tobacco smoke, hung a heavy silk banner of blue, lettered in white. It was the one that the Western Washington chapter of the Old NVA Association hung out at every one of their social and political functions. On the banner was emblazoned the immortal passage from William Shakespeare’s *Henry the Fifth*:

*This day is call’d the feast of Crispian.
He that outlives this day and comes safe home
Will stand a-tip-toe when this day is named
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day and see old age,
Will yearly on this day feast his neighbours,*

The Hill of the Ravens

*And say, Tomorrow is St. Crispian.
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say, These wounds I had on Crispin's day.
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day, Then shall our names.
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remember'd;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother. Be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition.
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day!*

There was a scattering of applause as the Redmonds entered the room and were recognized. “Hey, Don!” came the chorus of greetings from a dozen people at the bar. “Hey Sarah! Lookin’ good, Sarah! How’s the Carolina Kid?”

“Getting old, boys,” replied Don merrily. “Almost as old as some of you relics! This time next year we’ll all have creaking joints!”

“Hey, you young whippersnapper, I might remind you that this particular old relic done out-shot your ass by thirty points on the police range last August!” yelled the retired head of the Republic’s steel production corporation, who was also the head of the NAR’s state rifle team. Without asking he thrust a huge stone tankard of Bavarian pattern into Don’s hand, brimming with frothing ale from the Red Hook brewery. Lemuel Harris had been born in Alabama. He had come to the Northwest as a fugitive from American justice for the

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crime of defending his life on a dark night in Mobile against a crazed drug addict. His sentence had been seven years state time for the killing itself and thirty years Federal without parole for the racist crime of being a man with a white skin who raised his hand against a man with a black skin. Harris broke out of a prison bus and walked three thousand miles, mostly at night, until he reached the Homeland, eating out of dumpsters and killing four police officers along the way who tried to apprehend him. Some years before the business correspondent of the *Times* of London had interviewed him and asked him about that trek. Harris replied, "I killed when I had to, but I never stole a single dime or so much as a mouthful of food from anyone along the way."

"Might another of us superannuated old relics impose on your lovely lady for the first dance after dinner?" asked another elderly gentleman, with a courtly bow towards Sarah. The left sleeve of his flawless black evening dress suit was empty, pinned back against his side. By old custom for these functions he had left his perfectly functioning prosthetic limb at home this evening, for tonight the wounds of the past were acknowledged and displayed for the world to see. Zack McAllister's arm had been blown off during the Kennewick Flying Column's attack on the fortified FATPO barracks in Yakima, when he had picked up a grenade and tried to throw it back at the Federals. It exploded in his hand. A nineteen year-old student paramedic had amputated and cauterized the bleeding stump, without anesthetic, in the back of a van while the FATPO patrols swarmed outside. A single outcry would have given away their position. The wounded man had never uttered a sound. The paramedic was now the mayor of Coos Bay, Oregon and was no doubt attending his own NVA reunion this evening.

"You're going to have to fight Charlie Randall for her, Zack. You realize, of course, that this is what you get for being the youngest woman in the room," chuckled Don to Sarah. "As well as the most beautiful." He leaned over and kissed his wife quickly and affectionately. Someone overheard him.

"Hey, now, Sarah's a looker, that I'll grant you, but she's got some competition! Reckon I can still kick up my heels a bit with some of these young studs!" cackled Cassie Kowalski, a lean and weatherbeaten old crone in a chic blue velvet brocade evening gown.

Her once red hair was now dyed blue, a cigarette dangled from her lips, and her liver-spotted knuckles as they curled around the tumbler of straight whiskey were swollen with arthritis. It was hard to believe that in the time of struggle she had been a statuesque hooker so stunning that her code name had been “Lorelei”, and that her beauty had lured over a dozen Federal bureaucrats, politicians, and senior media executives to their deaths. She once took out a United States Senator herself, with an icepick through his left ear.

Over three hundred elderly men thronged the room, along with a few matronly and gray-haired women and a small army of younger relatives. Across the banquet hall Don saw a dignified old couple in evening dress, Ed and Brittany McCanless, two survivors of the Olympic Flying Column that he would have to interview. He raised his stein to them in greeting. Before he could go over and speak to them he was intercepted. “Hi, Don, Sarah! Have you met my eldest grandson Jeff?” said an old woman whom Don vaguely knew but whose name for the moment escaped him. She glowed with the pride of a long lifetime as she introduced a bashful young giant in full SS dress black, the SWASTIKA armband gleaming crimson white and black on his left bicep. “He just graduated from Sandpoint in June and he’s already gotten his first lieutenant’s bars!” the old woman crowed. “Jeff, this is Colonel Donald Redmond from BOSS. *Redmond*, got it? As in Matt Redmond?”

“It’s an honor to meet you, *sir!*” shouted the young soldier, bracing to stiff attention, in an obvious agony of social discomfort at meeting the most legendary name in the Republic after the Old Man himself.

“Hey, at ease tonight, troop!” laughed Redmond, slapping him on the shoulder. “These gigs are completely informal and eclectic, I promise you. Now go get drunk like we all came here for. That’s an order, troop!”

“Yes *sir!* I will get drunk, *sir!* Thank you *sir!*” shouted the young SS man.

“And make sure your grandmother gets drunk as well,” Redmond admonished him. “I want her completely pistus newtus before the night is over.”

“Yes *sir!*”

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Here was a retired dentist who had printed over fifty million dollars in counterfeit U. S. currency and four million in postage stamps on an underground printing press in his basement. There was a senior official of the Northwest Reserve Bank who had once huddled in the bottom of a porta-potty for eight hours, and then given a United States Marine Corps general a .44-caliber enema. He was talking to an assistant Minister of Finance and also to Cindy's ultimate boss, the head of the Republic's Labor Service. The assistant Minister of Finance had begun his fiscal career when he led an NVA team that kidnapped the daughter of Seattle's chief rabbi and successfully collected a two million dollar ransom, afterwards returning her unharmed and unviolated, as he had given his word would be done if the ransom was paid. He had shot one of his own men in the kneecap who had attempted to kill the Jewish girl anyway after the ransom was paid. The Volunteer whom the assistant Minister had shot had become an SS officer who later died a hero at Chilliwack while earning his third Iron Cross. They had never been reconciled, and that was the assistant Minister's deepest regret in life, a failure that haunted him through sleepless nights. Cindy's boss, the Minister of Labor, had been brought into an FBI interrogation center with three bullets in his body, and with his wounds yet bleeding he had still managed to strangle his first interrogator with his bare hands. Over there in another corner was a Luftwaffe general who presently commanded a space shuttle. In the battle of Portland he had been a pilot who made over fifty low-level bombing runs dropping homemade explosives onto the Federal positions from whatever small aircraft he could get to fly, in several cases microlights of canvas and aluminum tubing, and in another a ancient Boeing 737 he and his crew converted to a bomber. Each time he had returned to his airstrip, his plane shredded with bullets. He had once landed a stolen helicopter in the main yard at the Florence Federal Prison in Colorado to extract five NVA prisoners.

At the far end of the hall sat an elderly automobile mechanic, eating from a plate of fried chicken and potato salad and guzzling from a tall tumbler. Kenneth McGrath had long ago blocked out the memory of the horror, the years in prison, the beatings and electric shock to his genitals. All he knew was that this was an occasion once a year when he got free food and top-notch hootch. Ken had never

been a Party member and he was never into all that political shit. He never understood why these people had given him an Iron Cross for that one particular incident. Old Kenny wore it on these nights because he figured it was kind of expected of him, in exchange for the food and the booze, but privately he thought it was a bit silly. He wasn't even German. Some white people were in trouble with some niggers and he had helped them. Seemed like the thing to do at the time. So what? The whole episode was exaggerated. Everybody knew that niggers were never anywhere near as tough as they were cracked up to be, and they'd run like scalded dogs from any white man who stood up them. Even niggers with badges. Whoop-de-doo. And the shooting bit was highly exaggerated as well. His dad had made better shots hunting buck and moose lots of times. Wasn't like he'd done anything special. Hey, if these people wanted to give him free food and liquor every year because of some stupid shit that happened when he was twenty-three years old, who was he to argue? Politics weren't important to Ken McGrath. Alcohol-burning V-8 engines and methane turbine generators were important. Start up a good engine and you saw God's plan for the universe.

At one table sat a fifth-generation Washington farmer who every year grew acres of wheat and sorghum over the graves of six FBI agents he and his team had killed in a night ambush and buried on his ancestral land. At another sat a man who made cuckoo clocks in his garage, their cunning and accurate mechanisms based on the bomb timing devices he had made in his youth. There was a woman with sixteen grandchildren knocking back Singapore Slings, who had been a young police despatcher in Seattle and kept the NVA apprised of every move the cops made. Beside her was her husband, whose lumpy fingers were missing their fingernails. The nails had been torn out and the cuticles soldered in an FBI torture chamber when he refused to inform on his wife. Down the bar was little old Eddie Cartrett, a nonentity who now held the official position of town drunk in Shelton, Washington. Oddly enough, Eddie was almost the only one drinking ginger ale. On this one night of all nights, he stayed sober and served as designated driver for a busload of his former comrades in arms. It was a tradition within his unit, one he honored as an almost religious obligation. He had also stayed sober, admittedly with some effort, on the long ago night when he drove a rental truck

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full of explosives up to the front gate of the Federal Detention Facility in Auburn and detonated it. Eddie made it away, although just barely. Over two hundred NVA prisoners had also made it out of the concentration camp, and the sudden return infusion of so many hardened guerrillas had given the embattled NVA a new lease on life.

The evening's big attraction was a display along one of the walls of the banquet room, a series of big blown-up U. S. government posters from the revolution, of the kind that had once adorned every wall and hoarding in the Northwest states. "*WANTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FOR ACTS OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM!*" shrieked the posters. *Rewards Up To One Million Dollars For The Apprehension Of These Individuals!*" Below the heavy black type on each placard were rows of sixteen or twenty photographs of NVA men and women, mostly old mug shots, but a few fuzzy FBI surveillance photos as well. Little groups of guests were gathered before the posters, chuckling and pointing out old friends and comrades to their companions, in some cases pointing out their own mug shots. "You looked like Frankenstein with that shaven head!" one elderly woman chided her husband merrily.

"I was a monster, all right," returned the man quietly. "You wouldn't have wanted to know me in those days, Liz. Trust me. You wouldn't have."

"There you go, that's Jerry Wallace!" said another old man, pointing to a picture. "He always used to call himself the original Jerry Reb. Died last year, brain tumor. That's Willis McCoy. He's retired and living down in Astoria now. He said he'd try to make it tonight if he could get his daughter to drive him up here. Hope they come. Willis is a boring old fart, but that daughter of his is still mighty easy on the eyeballs for a gal of fifty. That's Lee Donner. He was killed in the street fighting when we moved into Tacoma, during the assault on the Federal building. I was there."

"That's Brigadier Jimmy Wilson," said another codger, lean and unshaven, the first drunk of the evening, his suit hanging on him like a scarecrow's rags. "Hot damn, I remember Jimmy! I was in his brigade for a while before me and Charlie Randall shot that TV fag from Channel Five. Jimmy sent us on that one personal. The fag had been talking some real shit on the air but not no more after me and Charlie looked him up. Charlie had a forty-five Peacemaker and that

bugger boy's fucking head busted open like a watermelon! Candyass fudge-packer son of a bitch! Charlie stuck it right in his mouth and said 'Suck on this, faggot!' then pop goes the weasel! Charlie and me had to go on the run and the Party sent me over to Number Two Boise on an E & E. Thass escape and evasion."

"Yeah, like none of us remember what E & E was, Kev?" muttered another surly old man who was listening, his accent still of the Mississippi delta after all these years.

"Jimmy won the first Iron Cross the Republic ever issued," old Kev rambled on, oblivious. "Brought down two Apaches outside Wenatchee, with nothing but a bolt-action rifle. It was a post-humorous award. Fattie murdered him in prison the very day before we took it over. He used to fart a lot. Kept eating them damned refried burritos. I useta ask him, 'Jimmy, what kind of white man eats Messican food?' and he just useta say 'Messican shit, I just like burritos, so does that make me some kind of goddamned race traitor?' They kilt him in prison. The very day before we came in. Fattie motherfucker bastards. I found Jimmy in his cell in the Pullman camp, where they'd left him after they ran away. They shot him about twenny times, shot him in the balls, a couple in the gut so they could watch him die slow, fuck Longview, Longview said they wasn't supposed to murder our people no more, but they did it anyway...goddamned fucking American motherfucking American bastards. We should've kept on fighting! Kept on until we conquered Washington DC and Jew York and killed them all! We should have tuck all our country back, tuck all Amurrica back, it was all of it ours, our people made Amurrica, we shoulda took it all back when we had the chance..." The old man began to weep. A young man with him, possibly a grandson, led him away.

Like all nations, the Republic had developed its own ruling élite, for such is the nature of human society. But on this one night all were comrades once again, for every man and more than a few of the elderly and middle-aged women wore the green, white and blue ribbon on their lapel. That experience gentled their conditions indeed. All of them had been there on St. Crispin's Day. On many St. Crispin's days during the War of Independence, when the impossible had suddenly become not only possible, but inevitable. The time when white men and women rose up in arms against the Beast, the

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Federal government of the United States, fought it, and defeated it. These were the aging, fading ghosts of that incredible time, the ones who had done what no one had ever believed could be done. The time to which Don Redmond was now compelled by duty to return.

Don stopped before one of the wanted posters. "Look, there's John Corbett!" he said, pointing out the old police mug shot of Sarah's father to her, possibly even the one taken after he had been arrested for pulverizing her second grade sex education teacher. In the photo Morgan's mighty beard was black as the Harlan County coal instead of its present patriarchal white. The powerful burning blue eyes sizzled out of the photo, searing the soul of the viewer. Then as now, one could imagine him as a Biblical prophet on a hilltop calling down divine retribution on a sinful nation, which in a sense he had indeed done. "That was back in his Million Dollar Man days." Morgan had been the second NVA commander to reach the coveted million-dollar reward status. Commandant Tom Murdock had been the first.

"I remember him like that," said Sarah softly, gripping her husband's arm.

"So do I," whispered back Don. "That was how I first saw him."

"Yes," said Sarah. "I can see him like that in my mind's eye, like it was yesterday. That is how he will always be in my heart, in my mind. Never an old man, but John Corbett By God Morgan! Even as a child I could see that his very name struck terror into all of the people around me, at least the others, those who were not of the Party. And so it should have done. Tall and overwhelming, unbelievably strong and powerful, the muscles of his chest and his arms nearly splitting his t-shirt. That was Dad. The Green Man of the Wood, the God personified, just as my mother was the Goddess. There was hate and love in him that awed me, little girl though I was, because I sensed that it was something magical, something primal. Love for me and my mother, and terrible hate against those who would hurt us. When I was little I was always so afraid for my father when he was out in the mountains, knowing that the whole world was trying to destroy him, to take him from me. But somehow I always felt he was there with me, watching over me. I feel it still. Now he watches over us all."

There was another face on one of the posters, a thickset red-haired man with a flat face and cold green eyes like ice. Everyone saw the mug shot on the poster. No one commented on it, but it gave Don pause. “Hmmm,” said Don, casting a careful eye over the gathering.

“What?” asked Sarah.

“I don’t see any Hayden Lake Flying Column men here,” said Don. “There are at least five I know of, here in town and in Tacoma, who have just as much right to be here as the rest of us. Then there’s Admiral David Leach. He’s not here either. I wonder if Oglevy’s people are having their own reunion? As usual?”

“They’re probably in a trailer park wherever the local meth lab is,” said Sarah dryly. “I know it’s legal now for the few who still feel the need, but I hear that little subculture of the Republic’s population still likes the traditional home brew.”

“Now, now, Snoops, racial unity and all that,” chided Don.

“I’m sorry, Don, but those guys scared me back then and they scare me even today,” admitted Sarah. “I know more than most that the Aryan race is capable of the most extreme violence of all the many human species, however we seemed to lose the knack for a few generations back. But when it gets real and up close I still freeze. I’m always afraid that Eva will bring home some boy whose father or grandfather rode with Oglevy. She’d be attracted to that kind. The strength and power, the rage and violence that so fascinates women.”

“Oglevy mostly recruited from the native Northwesters. That was one of the reasons he was so valuable to the revolution. We called them woodchucks. Back in the South they used to be called buckra men,” said Don soberly. “The lean, mean poor whites who rode the slave patrols at night and kept racial order. Nowadays those who were born here call themselves woodchucks with pride, Cindy did tonight, but it used to be a derogatory and contemptuous term, I’m sorry to say. Oglevy redeemed that term. He was born in this land and he brought to his side those who were born here, and that was why he was so useful to us and so terrifying to ZOG. They scared ZOG then, and their descendants scare ZOG even today,” said Don soberly. “I wish we didn’t still need men like that, Snoops. Maybe one day we won’t. But until the world changes and accepts the right of our people and our nation to be here on this earth, there will always be work for

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the guys and the gals with the tattoos who come out of those trailer parks.”

“These who are with us here tonight are the best from that time,” said Sarah.

“Oh, jeez, Snoops, I don’t want to mess it up for them!” whispered Don dismally to Sarah. “Suppose I find out that the Olympic Flying Column legend isn’t true?”

“Don, do you remember one of the Old Man’s axioms that they teach our kids in school?” replied Sarah. “The one about truth being an absolute value? That what is true must always, in the long run, be good? And what is not true can never in the end be good?”

“I remember,” said Don. “Snoops, one day many years from now, you and I will come to one of these gigs and we will be the only ones here. We were the youngest. That means that we may well be the last to depart. The last to enter the Hall of Valhalla. How will we bear it?”

“We will bear it because that is the Destiny that the gods have given us,” said his wife. “Don, tomorrow you will do your duty to this country and this people, as you have done all your life. Tonight, don’t worry about it.” Don felt a tap on his shoulder.

“G’day, mate!” said Charlie Randall, grinning and shaking Don’s hand. Randall was a tall and weatherbeaten looking man of sixty-something. Even on a cool Northwest autumn night he still affected an Australian safari suit.

“Hey there, Charlie. Snoops, I need to natter with Charlie a bit,” said Don. “Can I trust you with this horde of ancient satyrs? Just dancing? I’m not going to come back out here and catch you *in flagrante delicto*, now? You know the Republic’s law gives me the right to plug you both if I do?”

“Hey, you won’t have to,” laughed Sarah. “If I even offered and flashed them a bit of this alabaster bosom they’d drop dead of a heart attack!”

“I’ll make a note of that, Sarah, in case we ever needs to whack one of these geezers for reasons of state,” replied Charlie with a grin. “Quiet, clean, and untraceable.”

After some preliminary socializing Randall and Don Redmond got together in a closed-off private room next to the main reception area. Outside increasingly drunken old vets of the NVA were

whooping it up. The band called themselves The Domestic Terrorists, and they specialized in Northwest rebel songs, the ones based on old bluegrass and Appalachian ballads and also on Irish songs from the Provo period and earlier. There were six musicians with various combos of banjo, guitar, fiddle, slap bass, bass mandola and tin whistle. Their audience's enthusiasm was fueled by copious quantities of Red Hook, Henry Weinhard ale, and the Olympic Club's famous microbrew, along with generous shots of Old Log Cabin bourbon. The air was blue with tobacco both smuggled and domestic product of the hydroponic gardens of the state monopoly. "So what can I help you with, Don?" asked Randall.

"Just want to pick your brains on some ancient history, Charlie," Don told him.

"How ancient? Want me to tell you the old abo legends about Ayers Rock?"

"No, a little bit more recent. You were a hunter for a long time, weren't you?"

"Almost ten years after the revolution, before they kicked me arse upstairs to this bloody desk job." Redmond's question was rhetorical. He knew that Randall had successfully carried out assignments as far afield as the United Kingdom and his native Down Under. Randall was chief operations officer for the War Prevention Bureau and the man largely responsible for ensuring that hostile elements within the United States and United Nations power structure never succeeded in building up the necessary critical mass in military capability, political will, or propaganda frenzy to launch a bona fide war of extermination against the Northwest Republic. The main tool for accomplishing this objective of state was the use of carefully targeted, surgical assassinations. Intelligence agents, psychological profilers, and political scientists identified those relatively minor personalities within the United States who might not make trouble now, but were likely to develop the capacity to be dangerous to the Republic in five or ten years. The hunters removed those people on the sound principle that baby rattlesnakes tend to grow into large and venomous rattlesnakes. Politicians, community leaders, media people, Hollywood entertainment gurus, religious leaders, government officials in minor posts, writers and intelligentsia, the entire necessary propaganda and logistic infrastructure for launching a serious assault

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against the existence of the Northwest Republic was constantly being cut off at the knees. The result was that despite repeated efforts on the part of the world establishment to work their way up to a serious attempt on the Republic's life, it all somehow never seemed to gel. The WPB also had a special unit responsible for tracking down and punishing informers and traitors from the old days. That unit had shrunk over the years as virtually all such targets had been liquidated, but there were still a few accounts remaining to be settled. It was national policy to hunt them down with the same zeal with which ZOG had pursued veterans of the Third Reich well into their nineties. It was a vitally important message to send to the rest of the world: betray the white race or conspire to harm the Northwest American Republic and you spend the rest of your life looking over your shoulder, a life that was very likely to be short. "Strewth, best time o' me life, that was," reminisced Randall. "Over fifty kills with me own hands and I was in on hundreds more, one way or another. Everything from NVA traitors and informers to up and coming young blokes in suits we figured was going the wrong places. We drink to absent friends tonight. Well, there are some of our so-called friends from them days that bloody well deserve to be absent, and I made sure of it. Why, what's up?"

"I'm interested in one of our absent comrades in arms in particular," said Don. "Ever chase Trudy Greiner?"

"That she-devil traitor who sold out Tom Murdock and the Olympic Flying Column for a million bucks? For a while, yeah." Randall scowled. "She spent a long time at the top of our hit parade, believe you me, but she turned out to be the one who got away, damn her eyes! What about her?"

"I've caught a really odd one, Charlie, one that goes back to the Olympic Flying Column days, if you can believe that," Redmond told him. "I'll fill you in, but first, you were on the team that did in Monkey Meat Coleman, right?"

"I was. Former FATPO Major Coleman was the only blackfella who ever rated a special hunt of his own. We brought the whole carcass back and stuffed it. 'E's down in storage in our basement up in Lacey. One of these days we'll figure out some special propaganda event and trot 'im out on display. Wot about 'im? I don't mind talkin' about that one to you, Don, never was one for all

this inter-departmental territorial crap, just so long as you bear in mind it's still under the Official Secrets Act and keep all shtum."

"Corby Morgan himself laid this job on me, so it's all good. Charlie, before you killed him, did Coleman ever give you *any* idea what went down with the Olympic Flying Column? Who the informer might have been?"

"We *know* who the informer was," said Randall in surprise. "Trudy bloody Greiner! But in point of fact, yes, we were instructed to 'ave a quiet word of prayer with Monkey Meat on that subject before we sent 'im on 'is way. Just to dot the i's and cross the t's."

"And?" prompted Redmond.

Randall looked embarrassed. "Never got the chance. Work accident."

"Beg pardon?"

"We caught up with Monkey Meat in Detroit. 'E was a so-called promoter after he got out of Fattie, ran a couple of nigger boxers and rappers, that kind o' crap. What 'e really was, was a dope dealer and pimp who moved drugs and girls through a couple of night clubs. Do you want the whole thing play by play?"

"No, I'm only interested in the Ravenhill business," said Don.

"Good, makes a long story a lot shorter. Coleman knew we were after 'im and 'e took precautions. We had to set a honey trap for 'im, used one of our female hunters to lure 'im away from 'is entourage. It's somebody you may know. She's married now with kids and I don't see any need to remind 'er of that part of 'er life unless it's necessary."

"It's not necessary," said Don, shaking his head.

Randall continued. "Well, we got Monkey Meat into the trunk of 'is own pimpmobile Cadillac all nice and trussed up, gagged with a towel, and we drove 'im off to a nice quiet spot for our little Come To Jesus session. We got where we was going, popped open the trunk, and the monkoid's already dead. 'E knew right well what was coming and 'e was so terrified 'e puked, but 'e couldn't because of the gag, and 'e ended up choking to death on 'is own vomit. We were definitely going to ask 'im about Trudy Greiner. We hoped against hope that 'e might have some idea where she was and 'e'd try and trade that information for 'is own worthless life, but it never 'ad a chance to play out."

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“In your professional opinion why, exactly, were we never able to catch up with that little lady?” asked Redmond over the babble of the crowded barroom next door. “You guys are damned good, and that’s a fact. You’re right, she is our official One That Got Away, and I’m curious as to why. In view of what she did, surely you pulled out all the stops?”

“Too bloody well right we did,” replied Randall with a scowl and a muttered curse. “That bitch is slippery as a bloody eel. It became a kind of point of honor with us that one day we’d catch up with Trude, but we never did. Back when I was first with the Bureau I once spent two months in the living ‘ell of a Houston summer trying to find ‘er, just before that worse bitch Chelsea finally handed the city over to Aztlan. I finally thought I had ‘er, and we moved in for the kill, but something tipped ‘er off. We missed ‘er by about thirty bloody minutes. Signs of hurried packing and ‘er bloody supper was still warm on the table. God alone knows what spooked ‘er. I still get angry thinking about that. For years she managed to evade us. Then about ten years ago we were told to stop looking.”

“*What?*” asked Redmond in astonishment. “Who the hell ordered you to stop looking?”

“I made it a point to find out,” said Randall evenly. “It was the Old Man himself.”

“You’re joking!” gasped Redmond.

“Does me ruggedly ‘andsome Antipodean countenance betray the slightest sign of jocularly, my son? No, we were pulled off the Trudy hunt by the then State President Patrick Brennan. I was able to learn that this was done at the personal request of the Old Man.”

“Did he ever give any reason?” asked Redmond. “Brennan, I mean?”

“Not that I was ever able to get out of him, and believe me, I asked. Unfortunately, he’s dead now and he can’t speak, and I was never offered the opportunity to speak with the Old Man. He was pretty much sequestered even a decade ago, officially to protect his privacy during his golden years and all that wallaby poop, but unofficially to keep him from doing anything in public that might prove embarrassing. From what I gather, he’s pretty much senile now. The Party used to trot him out on formal occasions like a kind of stuffed dummy, but not for a long time now. I think they’re worried

he's so far gone he'll drop his trousers and wave his John Thomas at the audience. Even if you could get to him and ask him, he may not even remember what he did or why the hell he did it."

"I'm not surprised. The old codger is a hundred and what now?" asked Redmond.

"He was born in 1953. You do the math," said Randall.

"1953!" whispered Don in awe. "Holy Jesus! Is such a thing possible? Look, I know we have the best health service in the world and that we have made medical discoveries that have put us decades ahead of everyone else. Hell, cancer cures in our hospitals are one of our main foreign currency earners. When little Brandon or Jennifer has leukemia, all of a sudden us evil Nazis ain't quite so evil. But still it seems astounding to me that someone could live that long. Ye gods, think of what memories that man must have!"

"Most of those memories are probably a curse to him now. The world he knew is gone forever, for better or for ill. That isn't something that should happen to anyone. No man should live too long past his time. I don't envy him. You always were obsessed with the past," said Randall with a laugh. "You should have been a history teacher, not a cop."

"Those who refuse to learn from the past are doomed to repeat it," replied Redmond.

"Yeah, so they tell me. Anyway, if you by chance to get an opportunity to talk to the Old Man, for Christ's sake or Odin's, please ask him why he gave that order! I really would love to know," said Randall.

Behind them arose shouts from the elderly audience, demanding, insistent. "*Rebel song! Rebel song!*" the old codgers yelled.

"Are yez all drunk enough?" yelled the bandleader into the mike in the ballroom outside. There was a chorus in the affirmative. "Then I guess it's time for a rebel song!" The cheers resounded as the banjos and guitars struck up an old favorite.

*"It was on a January eve, as the sun was going down,
When a truckload full of Volunteers approached a Northwest town.
The stars were bright, and the cold of night, it chilled them to the
bone.*

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And their leader was a Texas man: Jack Smith from San Antone!”

“Let me ask you something, Charlie,” said Redmond. “That time in Houston when you thought you had Trudy Greiner? Where was she living? What kind of a place?”

“Ratty little bungalow in Baytown, it was,” replied Randall. “She was working as a cashier in a Mega-Mart. We found ‘er by hacking into the Federal ID card database and doing a holographic comparison on ‘er facial features. She’d dyed ‘er hair and had some kind of plastic surgery, but we still made a twelve-point match on a Rosa Lee Johnson in Houston and took it from there. Why?”

“I guess she wasn’t able to hold onto the million dollars she was paid for her ratting out the Olympic Flying Column, then.”

“Hey, when you gotta keep on moving from place to place one step ahead of the Hunters, a million bucks can disappear pretty quick,” said Randall.

“Maybe,” replied Don. “Or maybe she never had the money to begin with. Seems kind of odd, is all. I’m trained to look for odd things. How could a woman with a million bucks in her poke end up working as a cashier in a Mega-Mart? I sense a certain incongruity there.”

“Maybe she gambled it all away in some Indian casino. Look, Don, why the questions? Do you know something?” asked Randall keenly. “Has BOSS finally got a line on the Greiner woman that I haven’t heard about?”

“In a way, yeah. I’ve been handed a pretty weird assignment, Charlie. How’s your own Official Secrets Act these days?”

“Got it off by heart,” said Randall.

“Trudy Greiner’s coming out of hiding. Or so she tells us. Going to walk right across the border into our arms. On October 22nd, to add insult to injury. She says she’s innocent.”

Randall whistled. “You don’t say?”

“I just did say. Or rather she says. We got a letter from her with a bloody thumbprint to authenticate it. She says she’s Coming Home and she wants a trial. A public trial to clear her name. She denies that she betrayed the Olympic Flying Column. If she’s right we are going to have to re-write a lot of our history textbooks, and those

new editions will be heavily stained with the egg dripping from our faces.”

“She claims she’s innocent?” demanded Randall, indignant and dumbfounded. “The bloody cheek of ‘er! That’s impossible! We know she did a flit with a million dollary-dooos the day after Ravenhill. So what is she going to say about that? Tell us her Aunt Millie died and she inherited all that lolly and decided to take a vacation right the morning after her entire unit is slaughtered? You can’t...do *you* think she’s innocent?”

“I am investigating the possibility that she may be just that,” said Redmond. “I’m also supposed to be dotting the i’s and crossing the t’s, in a manner of speaking, but I’m already finding some oddities. As to the facts of the matter, I always start with an open mind. Who knows? She may yet get her trial, courtesy of the information I dig up. I may yet prove that she’s guilty as sin. But the can of worms has been opened, Charlie, and when one does that the worms crawl out and things get kind of squishy.”

From the ballroom the words of the rebel song came loud and clear, the audience singing along lustily:

*“In the dark they moved along the street, up to the jailhouse door,
They scorned the danger they would face, what fate might lay in store.
They were fighting for their people’s right to make themselves a
Home,
And the foremost of that gallant band was Smith from San Antone!”*

“You know, John Corbett told me once that he knew Jack Smith,” remarked Redmond.

“Yeah?” asked Randall, interested. “Never met him meself. I never got out Montana way back in them days.”

“Yeah,” continued Redmond. “John C. said that for all his faults, Jack Smith was the best man with a gun he ever knew. He told me Smith had two outstanding features. The man was as brave as a lion and he thought maybe ten minutes ahead, on a good day. He played it all by ear, and he had the devil’s own luck for a long time. Smith was a boozier. Gunpowder and alcohol don’t mix, but for a long time his luck held. During the first couple of years Jack Smith was personally responsible for just about all the Federal body count in

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Montana. He had a very simple philosophy in life: kill the enemies of the white race. He got by on sheer raw guts, shot it out with a team of six FBI agents in Kalispell and killed every one of them. The Party made the not uncommon mistake of confusing personal courage with leadership, and so they made him a Commandant. Wrong move, but in those days brave white men were in short supply. Then his luck ran out. That particular operation they're singing about in there wasn't betrayed, at least not in the dramatic sense. Smith simply didn't have enough sense or discipline to tell his kids not to go into combat drunk or to put their guns away and not fire into passing houses as they went into town. Some palefaced *stukach* called the cops on them when he saw four or five vehicles of armed men rolling by hollering rebel yells and shooting out mailboxes."

"Well, at least it's a great song," pointed out Randall.

"Yeah, he gave us that," agreed Redmond. "And was it worth it, I wonder? Two dead white men and a dozen more in prison for a great song?"

"You know damned well it was," replied Randall. "That great song and a hundred more like it helped to make this country, Don. There are times when a man must give his life for a song. Quite literally. The Irish learned that over many centuries and we were able to learn it faster than that, thanks to the Old Man. It was his idea to cannibalize and re-write all those old Irish rebel songs. Now they are a part of our heritage."

*"But their daring plan had been betrayed. The FATPOs lay in wait,
And a hundred guns poured down that street a hail of death and hate!
And when the shots had died away, two men lay as cold as stone.
There was one kid from Wisconsin, and one from San Antone!"*

"You used to be pretty good with a gun yourself during the revolt," said Don.

"Yep, that was when I got my start at hunting. Acquired a taste for it," chuckled the old assassin. "Nothing like a dead Jew lying on the floor with 'is brains oozing out to give you that solid feeling that you're accomplishing something in life. Makes it all seem worthwhile, know wot I mean?"

"Didn't they call you the Prince of Wands?" asked Redmond.

“That was my media nickname, yeah, but I encouraged it,” Randall told him. “You know about the Tarot cards?”

“My wife is a witch,” Redmond reminded him. “She does a reading for me once a week. The whole family, in fact. Cindy El on Monday, Allan on Tuesday, Matt on Wednesday, Eva on Thursday, John on Friday, and me on Saturdays. She does her own on Sundays but she never says anything about what she sees.”

“Uh...right. Anyway, I would drop a Prince of Wands card on every dead body I manufactured. The media had a special case of the ass for me back then, since I specialized in taking out reporters and TV people who seemed to be unaware of the pressing need for balance in their reporting of the conflict.”

“The Old Man declared reporters and media personnel to be enemy combatants and therefore legitimate military targets,” said Don.

“Yeah. That was one of the smartest things we ever did. The Old Man knew that media people were essentially even more cowardly and attached to their wretched little lives than most middle Americans. Once they understood that they would be held personally responsible for the content of their reportage, then all of a sudden they got a hell of a lot more restrained. They would either see the Party’s point of view, or else they’d see me, and they bloody well didn’t want to see me. Our team used to specialize in hunting down talking heads from the Sunday morning cable shows who made a career of bad-mouthing the NVA and white people in general. That was interesting work. Took us all over the empire, New York and L. A. and Atlanta. After a few of those talking heads ended up with their genitalia stuffed in their mouths and a Prince of Wands on their schnozz, all of a sudden the Sunday morning cable discourse assumed a much more reasonable tone. We really threw a monkey wrench into the Zionist propaganda machine. Their media flacks were all too scared to do their job of spreading hatred and lies. I think it could honestly be said that Longview was made possible because we stopped those swine from keeping the pot stirred to fever heat. That allowed the peace movement to grow in the States and eventually gave Bush the Fourth enough slack so he could sign the Treaty. Anything else, Don?”

“No,” said Don, “I guess I better get back in there and rescue Sarah from that horde of geriatric Lotharios before she gets pissed off

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at one of them and turns him into a toad.” From the main ballroom came the rousing final chorus:

*“The Lone Star State has lost a son of courage and of pride,
For he fell beneath Montana’s sky, brave Forman by his side!
They have gone to join that gallant band who held the Alamo,
Undying fame surrounds his name! Jack Smith from San Antone!”*

IV.

The Redmonds got home from the reunion at well past midnight. Baskerville was waiting for them outside and escorted them in, then without a woof turned and went back outside to resume his vigil. "I'm going to stay down and have a last smoke on one of your Dad's fine cigars, if you don't mind," Don told his wife. "I want to cogitate on this Greiner thing a bit."

"Sure, hon," she said. "Just don't take too long."

"Just don't be asleep when I get up there, okay?" he returned with a smile.

"If I am, wake me up," she commanded.

"Will do. And don't be clothed."

"Well, if I am, you'll just have to do something about it, won't you?" She entwined her arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Is that a date?" whispered Don.

"I'd say it's a sure thing," she laughed, low and guttural.

Don went into his darkened library and sat down on the sofa in front of the low embers of the fire. He threw on another log, poked it desultorily, and stared moodily into the crackling sparks. He was by no means happy about opening this particular can of long-sealed

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revolutionary worms, and he wondered again whether John Morgan really meant for him to get at the truth, or find some way to bury it forever. Would he do so if it turned out that the price might be an innocent woman's life? Don had the lifelong National Socialist's iron sense of duty and dedication to the good of the Folk over all, but he had also perforce spent his life living in the real world. More than most, Don knew that sometimes one couldn't make an omelette without breaking eggs. But if Trudy Greiner was in fact innocent of treason, she had already suffered through more than thirty years of living hell. The Republic was almost unique in the world's comity of nations for its complete lack of hypocrisy. It preached a stern and uncompromising truth and justice, and it practiced those things as well in a manner unknown since the early days of republican Rome. Adolf Hitler had always held *civitas* to be a paramount virtue, and although the Republic was by no means a National Socialist state, however Don and his comrades might wish it so, its moral and civic code was pure NS. NAR politics and policy were remarkable for their almost total lack of the kind of gray areas that abounded in other governments. Cicero had said that existence of many laws was the sign of a corrupt society. The Republic's entire criminal code was contained in a single slim volume of two hundred and twenty pages, in fourteen-point type to boot, clear and easy to read in every sense. A lot of citizens thought even that was too long. Some of the more extreme Christian sectaries wanted nothing more than the Ten Commandments.

Mostly it was just the obvious stuff. No deliberate and premeditated murder with the exception of the extremely formalized *code duello* which governed legalized dueling as the ultimate sanction to preserve civility within society. (Dueling was legal in the Republic, but only between consenting male adults and only after a mandatory seven day waiting period for both parties to sober up and calm down, and only with advance notice to the Civil Guard and under the supervision of the National Honor Court. The whole thing was so ritualized that only one or two dueling fatalities occurred every year.) No robbing liquor stores. When one is in a position of fiduciary trust, one keeps one's hand out of the till. Heroin, cocaine, LSD, and some particularly lethal American and Asian designer drugs were proscribed and the penalty of erasure was prescribed for possession of

them, and death for selling them. Everything else was legal; the social stigma against addiction combined with the social safety net of guaranteed employment and a place in society for everyone kept drug and liquor problems peripheral. Don't set fire to things. About a quarter of the Republic's legal code was common sense trivia: sanitation regulations to make sure people didn't dump toxic waste on the street or into public waterways, buried or cremated the dead instead of keeping them in the master bedroom like Miss Emily, and traffic law necessary to keep everyone driving on the right and make sure motorists stopped at red lights, required in order to make sure Seattle and Portland didn't turn into Cairo. Driver's licenses had been abolished because they constituted a form of national identification which was antithetical to liberty and privacy, but if you got drunk and killed or injured someone else on the highway, you were held to account the same as if you used a gun. The Republic's social contract was based on individual responsibility and common sense social duty.

One of the more truly revolutionary of those laws prohibited anyone from accepting any remuneration for the practice of law or legal counsel. Those who came before the courts could nominate one or more people to speak in their defense, and there were citizens of the Republic who, like Cicero, had gained fame with courtroom oratory that would have enthralled the Forum. The defendants just couldn't pay such advocates anything. The NAR had taken Shakespeare's advice to heart and killed all the lawyers. As a result, the law was held in more respect and society enjoyed a vibrant and vigorous health unknown anywhere else in world. Another law prohibited the acceptance of any pay or items of value for the practice of any religious or sacerdotal office. The removal of the attorney from society made sure that the law served as a shield and not a sword, and most certainly not a trough at which parasites in expensive suits slurped away their lives at the expense of others. The removal of the priest with his tax exemption from the pecking order had in turn removed the problem of organized religion from the social and economic equation, and reduced religion to the purely theological level, which helped in maintaining the delicate social balance between peoples of conflicting faiths. Priests and ministers who were required to work for a living and pay taxes like everyone else found remarkably little time for political agitation. Churches that were

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required to pay property taxes found very little money left over for funding dubious social and political causes that had nothing to do with God.

More than anywhere else in many centuries, in the Northwest American Republic the law and morality were almost completely synonymous, since neither entailed a cash register. Never before had Don been given a single order by his superiors that he found morally objectionable or even dubious. But now, for the first time in his career, Don was confronted with the possibility that he might have to commit a moral wrong, a sin as the Christians would say, in order to best serve his people and his country. For if Trudy Greiner's claim of innocence was true, then an immense amount of history would have to be re-written, and Don was not at all sure that would be considered politically expedient, true or not. BOSS did not only deal with state security. When necessary, it dealt with political inexpediency. Such was the reality of statecraft since time immemorial. *What if she really is innocent?* wondered Don in agony. *Whatever then?*

There was a soft knock on the door. "Dad?" asked Eva. She was in her nightdress, bathrobe and slippers. "You drunk?"

"No," chuckled Don. "Although I'd take it kindly if you and Cindy would do breakfast tomorrow and let your Mom sleep in, OK? She might have a bit of a bad head."

"You got it. Dad, can I talk to you about something? Something serious?"

"Ah, one of our little private chats? Any time, Evie. You know that. Park it there, squirt." She sat down beside him on the sofa. "Now tell me, what's on your mind?"

"Is Cindy El going to marry Mark Conway?" Eva asked.

"Yes. Okay, I think I see what's coming." He leaned forward and spoke to her gently. "Eva, arranged marriages have become a widespread custom in the Republic, an urgently necessary custom that has grown up because of our acute need to rebuild and reconstitute the Aryan family as the basic building block of society, and because there simply *must be more of us!* ZOG almost destroyed a three thousand year-old civilization by destroying the people who created it, and we have to grab back control of our destiny from them immediately, before the next generation. Marriage today is recognized as a civic duty for all our citizens, a vitally urgent matter of state. It is no longer

a private matter, and hindsight tells us that it never should have been. The whole history of our race and our culture tells us that marriage is the natural state of men and women, and that when large numbers of people, especially women of child-bearing age, remain unmarried and babies aren't being born, then that is a sign that something is gravely wrong. More than that, marriage is the union of two families, and that is something that concerns the entire community. Our ancestors recognized that fact, for millennia. Yes, I know that can be a pretty cold-blooded thing sometimes, if it is not done with compassion and humanity. But after some years we are recovering the ancient social skills necessary to make it work, and it doesn't have to be a bad thing, Evie. Mark and Cindy are two shining examples of how the system can work. But as for you...honey, it's a custom, not a law. When you get your citizenship certificate and you are a grown woman in the eyes of the world, then it is your absolute legal right to make your own choice. And I will never, ever criticize or try to pressure you. Nor will your mother, although I think she's already trying to line up..."

"I go to Coven and I know who she's trying to line up," interrupted Eva with a small shy smile. "Let's just say he's a definite maybe, okay? But that's not what I want to talk to you about. Dad, I want to ask you something, although I know it's something you don't want to talk about," she went on tentatively.

"Er...honey, if it's what I think it is, it's your mother's job to give you the Little Talk," said Don, suddenly nonplussed.

"No, it's not *that*," said Eva with a giggle. "I know what men and women do with one other in bed, Dad."

"Do you indeed? And how do you know?"

"I just know, OK? And not from personal experience, so please don't go pistol-whipping any of the boys at school, will you? But that's not it."

"Then what?"

"Dad...what happened during the Cleanup?"

Redmond sat in surprised silence for a moment. "Lord, honey, what brought this on all of a sudden?" he asked.

"I was talking to...well, to a friend at school today. She says there's a mass grave under the dump in Tumwater from the

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revolution, with hundreds of bodies of dead black people and Mexicans and Chinamen in it.”

“Your friend is full of sheep dip! No, honey, I can tell you right off, that’s wrong,” said Redmond immediately.

“How would you know?” demanded his daughter. “Is it because you know where the mass graves really are?”

“Because that wasn’t...well, because I happen to know something about it from being involved in political policing.”

“Look, Dad, I’m old enough to know the truth. If you don’t want to talk about it, just say so. But if you do I want straight answers. If you’re not going to be honest, there’s no point in our taking this any further,” said Eva softly. She got up and walked to the door. “Good night, Dad.”

“All right,” replied Redmond, somehow understanding that this was not something that could be evaded. All of a sudden he knew that his daughter’s future quite possibly hung on this discussion. “In point of fact, yes, there are still some bodies buried out in the woods in various remote places around the Republic, but they were put there during the War of Independence and they’re combat casualties. Ours and theirs, when the NVA had to inter the dead and then move out, fast. After the revolution we weren’t able to find them all and give them decent burial, although every effort was made. Sometimes the guys just plain didn’t remember. Every now and then we still find some of those dead, and when we do they are exhumed and buried with all reverence and respect, where possible with either a Tricolor or an American flag on the grave, if the identities can be determined. The Federal war cemeteries are the only places in the Republic where the American flag is allowed to be flown, as you may be aware. But there are no mass graves of the kind you’re talking about from the Cleanup. Not under the dump in Tumwater or anywhere else. The remains weren’t disposed of in that manner.”

“How were they disposed of?” cried Evie, frightened and upset.

“That I will *not* discuss with you,” said Redmond.

“Why not?” she demanded.

“Because it’s not important. Because those wretched people aren’t important. Because what was done was done so that we who kept faith with our blood and with common decency would never

again even have to acknowledge that they ever existed. Evie, you asked me a question. In a way I suppose it's a question that all of us who lived through that time always dread hearing from our children, but you're right, you're old enough. You say you know how babies are born, so you have a right to know how your country was born. I'll do my best to give you an answer. But I can't give you a simple answer, because there isn't one. When nations come into being, especially when they come into being through revolution and turmoil, very little is ever cut and dried and there are always a dozen versions of every story. I'll do my best to tell you about the Cleanup, but you must come back here, sit down, and let me do it in my own way. It's going to take me a while, so bear with me." Evie walked back to the fireplace and sat down at the end of the sofa. "I said I can't give you a simple answer, but I can give you a short one. Do you want that or the long version?"

"I want both," said his daughter.

"All right. The short answer is this. There are times when certain things simply have to be done. You don't try to justify them, because they can't be justified. You simply do these things, and you never talk about it afterwards. We did what we had to do. That's it."

"Okay, now for the long answer. You have to talk about it, Dad," said Evie. "You have given me this great life and this great family and this great home, and don't think I'll ever forget it. You've also been my best friend, ever since I was little. If you're worried about losing my love or my respect, don't be. That's never going to happen. But you have to tell me how my world came to be. All of it."

"Jesus, you sure you're only fifteen, girl?" asked Don in bemusement. He sighed and lit one of President Morgan's Havana cigars. "Right from the start, let's get some things clear. Your grandfather was involved in the Cleanup, very much so, because it was his duty. To a lesser extent, so was your Aunt Tori, and so was old Mr. Nash, your grandfather's butler."

"Corey Crotchety?" laughed Evie, unbelieving. "He's just a grumpy old man! He wouldn't hurt a fly!"

"That shows how little you know," her father told her gently. "Mr. Nash was your grandfather's...well, never mind. Let's just say that back in those days he did a good deal of what was called wet work."

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“Mr. *Nash*?” exclaimed Evie incredulously, with a light little laugh. “He used to play dollies with me when I was little!”

“Yes. Mr. Nash. I would appreciate it if you would accept what I tell you tonight, at least for the time being, and that you not ask any of them about that part of their lives. At least not now. Nash would simply refuse to talk about it, but John C. and Tori would feel compelled to try and explain, and it would be very painful for them. Later, when you’re older, if you feel you have to...”

“Okay,” agreed Eva. “I won’t say anything to Papa John or Aunt Tori, and I still don’t believe you about poor old Mr. Nash. But Tori told me once that she killed a man when she was nineteen. An FBI agent.”

“Yes. She was defending the life of Bill Vitale, who was only an infant at the time. But that’s another story. You want to know about the Cleanup. Both of them made damned sure that your mother and I were not involved in any way, and that was absolutely the right thing to do. It was a terrible time, and John Corbett kept us both away from it. In any case we were both too young, younger than you are now, despite the fact that we were Volunteers during the War of Independence. There had been work for kids of our age during the revolution. There was none for us during the Cleanup. That was for men only, a certain kind of man. Men like Tiny Knowlton and Liver-Eating Thomson, men like that maniac O. C. Oglevy, men like Bloody Dave Leach, who as it happens I will be meeting very soon in connection with a case I am working on. That year I started with the first class of the NDF Military Academy in Sandpoint, and your mother had to take over the Morgan household when John Corbett finally came out of the mountains and was able to set one up. We were both of us otherwise occupied during that period of this country’s history, may thanks be unto God. I was on my way to becoming a man, and your mother was on her way to becoming a woman.”

“I didn’t ask you what you did, I asked you what happened?” insisted Eva. “I know that you and Mom and Papa John and Aunt Tori and Uncle Matt and Aunt Heather were all heroes who fought for our race and our freedom, and I respect you for that. But why won’t anyone talk about the Cleanup? We get all these TV shows and books and magazine articles and stories about the early days of the Party,

and the Old Man, and all that heroic stuff that happened during the revolution. We know all about our space program and the Mars and Luna colonies, and how great our industry is and how we are beating the economic sanctions the Americans put on us, but no one ever talks about that time right at the beginning of the Republic. For years I have been hearing all this whispering about disappearances, torture, killings and mass graves and white women who went with muds being hung in public, about the streets in Seattle and Portland and Spokane running red with blood, real nightmare stuff. Dad, you've never lied to me, but I have always known there were things you wouldn't tell me, things nobody would tell me. Please, what happened? What was it like?"

"Can I have a minute to chew on that, honey?" asked Redmond. He took a minute, a long minute while he puffed on his cigar and the smoke rose in lazy wreaths about his head. "Okay, Evie, I'll do my best. I know you have been taught some things about the past in school, but I'm sure they don't really seem real to you. In a way, that's good. There's been a complete transformation of our world since the revolution, and it's all been infinitely for the better. The most wonderful thing about the War of Independence is you and your brothers and your sister, because if that revolution had not taken place, you wouldn't exist. Do you know how it all started? I mean the actual shooting bit? This holiday we're all going to be celebrating in a couple of weeks, do you recall how it originated?"

"10/22? The Coeur d'Alene uprising? No, Dad, I've not got the slightest idea. I've only written about two dozen essays and term papers on it since I've been in school, like every other school kid in the Republic!" said Eva in some exasperation.

"Then tell me what started it all," directed her father.

"At dawn on the morning of October 22nd, United States Marshalls and the Federal Child Protective Services Bureau, otherwise known as It Takes A Village, conducted a raid on the home of Gustav and Margareta Singer on a quiet residential street in Coeur d'Alene," recited Evie from memory out of her textbooks. "They were coming to seize the three Singer children, Swanhilde Singer who was ten, Eric Singer who was two, and Isolde Singer, the baby. It Takes A Village used to come and steal poor white families' kids because they were religious or they had pride in their own race, and

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sell the kids to rich people called yuppies who were supporters of the government and Politically Correct. The money was called the adoption bond, and sometimes they could get hundreds of thousands of dollars for white children, because in those days there were so few white babies being born. The Federals had adoptive parents selected for the Singer kids, who had already put down a cash deposit. A rich stockbroker in New York, some government bureaucrats in Washington, and Swanhilde was earmarked for two women in California. Why would they give a ten year-old girl to two women, Dad? You'd think they could get married and have children of their own?"

"Never mind," said her father grimly. "Go on, honey."

"The Singers were Old Believers and somebody had called It Takes A Village and accused the Singers of using their children in black magic rituals and teaching them to be racists by giving them Germanic names and reading them stories about the old gods of Asgard and Valhalla. So the Feds sent their goons to take the children away. Well, this time the yellow hog-jawed doo-doo birds got a surprise!"

"I gather now you're telling it your grandpa's way," said Don with a smile. Evie giggled.

"I like his way better than the schoolbooks' version," she said merrily.

"Normally I don't like to hear that kind of language out of my baby girls, but in this case it's appropriate. Go on."

"Gus Singer up early because he was doing overtime at his job, he looked out his window and saw them outside and realized what was happening, and he was able to get to his hidden guns in time. He killed one of the SWAT team when they broke down his front door, and they ran away, but then they surrounded his house and were about to start firing tear gas into the place, never mind that the kids were in there. Then all of a sudden the windows opened in all the houses up and down the street, and all the neighbors who had hidden away their own guns after the Schumer Act stuck the barrels out and opened fire on the Feds. Seems that Gus Singer was quite a well regarded man in the neighborhood because he had saved some old people a few months before when he ran into their burning home and pulled them to safety. The neighbor people who survived later said

they weren't Party members, nobody ordered them to do it, but all of a sudden that was just it. They'd had enough."

"Yes, and that was the miracle of 10/22," said Don softly, staring into the fire, after all these years still awed by a feeling of divine presence in that day. "Finally, finally, after all those years of crawling on our bellies and thumping our tails between our legs like whipped dogs, white men finally *had enough!* Then it got on the news, and while the bullets were still flying the local Party people in Coeur d'Alene got their own guns out of hiding and took over the government offices and television stations downtown. They overran the police headquarters and got more guns, and the Old Man was flown in from Spokane in a stolen police helicopter. He lined up every white man with a weapon, had them raise their right hand and put their hands on the Bible or Mein Kampf as their consciences dictated, and told them they were now the Northwest Volunteer Army. The Party and the NVA proclaimed the Republic, and all of a sudden it was a revolution. The first Republic lasted sixteen days before the uprising was crushed," Don reminded her, "You remember seeing the last Tricolor that flew in Coeur d'Alene in the Hall of Heroes when you were little, Evie? The one that was all shot up? I think that's our country's most sacred relic. That, and the gold cross that was around Melanie Young's neck when she died. But after that came the guerrilla war, year after bloody year of it, and finally we drove ZOG out and forced them to the table at the Longview peace conference."

"And after Longview came the Cleanup," said Evie pointedly. "Sorry, Dad, you're not getting off the hook."

"I'm not trying to, honey. Do you get the point I'm trying to make? What finally pushed white men over the edge, Evie? It wasn't the affirmative action that made it impossible for us to get jobs or get our kids into college. It wasn't the humiliating Diversity Oath that rubbed our noses in the mud every time we took a new job or tried to get a mortgage or needed something from the government. It was when they started coming for our children. I think there is a kind of biological instinct among all living things that demands they protect their young, and which simply will not be denied. Men are intelligent and therefore it is possible for the forces of evil to manipulate mens' minds, suppress and distort that instinct for a while, but never permanently. Somehow, something just tripped in the minds of those

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people on that street in Coeur d'Alene that morning. Something a whole people had been awaiting for almost a century. They saw those Federal murderers in their arrogant big Bakelite helmets and their body armor and knew that they were coming for children, for their children, for all children. Without one single word of political indoctrination, all of a sudden those ordinary neighbor people *got it*. In one flash of cosmic consciousness they understood what people like the Old Man had been trying to tell them for decades. They knew what they had to do, and they did it. They took up weapons into their hands and they fought to the death against the Federal government of the United States of America, the fount and wellspring of all that was evil in their time. That's the real story of the Cleanup, Evie. We knew what we had to do in order to secure the existence of our people and a future for white children, and we finally did it.

“What you have to understand is that at the beginning of this century our people, our Folk, the white-skinned race that we call Aryan, was on the verge of extinction. Had nothing been done, by this time your mother and I would be among the youngest white people still left alive on this continent, if we were still alive at all, which is doubtful. Just as white people in the United States are now an aging, shrinking minority, many of whom risk their lives every year running the border from the U. S. and from Aztlan in a desperate attempt to reach the Republic. I know that to you these are just words. You can't imagine what it was like. Thank God for that! That's what we were fighting for, so that our children would never know just how real and terrible it all was. I can only remember a little of it myself, for which I am grateful. But the danger was real, it was imminent, and it was overwhelming. The powers that ruled the world then and still rule most of it today had condemned the white race to death.

“Then, in this one incredible starburst of wonder and glory, the revolution happened. You know that I am a National Socialist myself, but that doesn't mean that I do not believe in God. I do, and I will always be convinced that the Party, the revolution, and the War of Independence that made that revolution a reality were the result of divine, cosmic intervention. God finally raised His hand to save his most beloved children from death. He didn't do it with a thunderclap or a Biblical flood. He didn't do it with Jeeeeee-zus coming down and touching his toe on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem and rapturing

the faithful and sending 144,000 righteous Jews running into a chasm. Somehow God lifted the clouds from our minds and enabled a few of us, men like George Lincoln Rockwell, Richard Butler, Bob Matthews, Robert Miles, the Old Man and your own grandfather, to shake the Zionist poison from their minds and recover their courage and fight back. It is said that the Old Man has spent his entire life wondering why we did not fight. I have spent mine wondering why we did. It's always fascinated me.

“Eva, you know that video they play every night at midnight when the television broadcasting day signs off? That scene at the end of the Longview peace conference, when Cathy Frost walks out of the town hall with a Tricolor under her arm? In dead silence, surrounded by media and dignitaries and bureaucrats and the President of the United States? No speeches, no word of warning, just all of a sudden they all came out and walked up to the flagpole outside the hotel. She steps forward, this woman whom everyone watching knows has lost her husband and her children to the Zionist murderers. This proud and quiet woman who was so hideously tortured and degraded in prison. She calmly hauls down the American flag, hands it to the American President, and then runs up the Tricolor, and the loudspeaker system suddenly bursts forth with *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*? No other words were necessary. All of a sudden every white man and woman watching, reporters, soldiers, diplomats, no matter which side they are on, bursts out cheering and crying, jumping and shouting and laughing and pounding one another on the back? In that moment all the world knew that from that day on, there was a new nation on the face of the earth. The world also knew that from now until the end of time, somewhere on the planet there would be men and women with white skins and fair hair like yours and beautiful green eyes like your mother's. You may have noticed that whenever I'm home, I always go to bed before the nightly sign-off, no matter what's on? It's because I cannot bear to look at that tape even today, without weeping.”

“I cry when I see it, too,” admitted Eva softly. “Sometimes.”

“I'm glad, Evie, because that tells me you understand a little of what it means every time you look up and see that green, white and blue flying in the sky. Okay, I know I'm beating around the bush here, so I'll tell you what I can about the Cleanup. That day at

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Longview was a wonderful, great historical moment, but like all such moments, it passed and the Party had to get down to the hard business of making a state and governing. It was months before the details of the treaty could be worked out, and more before the last Federal troops and police were pulled out, and they were bad months. There were constant clashes even after the signing of the treaty. The NVA had just become the Northwest Defense Force, and we moved out of the forests and the mountains into the towns and cities. Sometimes the Feds and the local ruling élite, the lefty liberals and the Chamber of Commerce business types who had grown fat and wealthy under American rule, didn't feel like giving up power to the Party. They tried to resist and we had to administer a very sharp lesson so that everyone would know that things had changed. Those were very edgy times. I actually saw more street fighting in Seattle after the treaty was signed than I had done before, during the rebellion. But one day, appropriately on October 22nd, five years after Gus Singer and his family died in their burning home, the last Federal soldier withdrew and the Homeland was ours. And then, we had some cleaning up to do."

"Was that when you killed all the Jews and the people with dark skins?" asked Eva.

"Actually, no," said Don with a smile. "I know that's a common rumor, but I do remember enough to tell you that's not true. We actually didn't catch many Jews. They almost all ran away during the revolution, as soon as they saw they wouldn't be able to contain it. The few who were dumb enough to stay and try to play macho man didn't make it, but there weren't many of them. They all spoke enough Hebrew to understand *Mene, mene, tekel upharsin*. The various non-white minorities who lived in the Northwest under American rule were also more or less driven out of the Homeland during the revolution itself. After all, many of them had fled their own countries to get away from men with guns and they were no more willing to stand and fight here than they were in Roachistan or wherever. The most effective way we found to persuade the muds to go elsewhere was not to kill them, but to apply economic pressure. Oh, sure, there were a lot of instances where NVA people attacked and killed non-whites, usually in retaliation for their attacks against white people. But we never made a practice of killing them for its

own sake. There were simply too many of them. We could have slaughtered muds until we rotted, and we would have accomplished nothing. They weren't the problem. The Federal government of the United States was the problem, and beyond them the super-wealthy men who owned America.

“Even though he was in prison, the Old Man had the brilliant idea of cutting off the mud people's cash flow from the taxpayer and from the wealthy men and corporations who brought them here in the first place. He was able to get the order out from his isolator cell, and we followed it. Employers who hired Mexicans or Chinese or Somalis came in to work one morning and found their establishments burned to the ground. We did the same to hundreds of the little corner shop and convenient stores and motels owned by Koreans and Indians and whatnot. We didn't have to kill anyone. The rich men got the message very quickly and much more effectively. If we'd killed their mud labor they would simply have brought in more, but burn down their buildings and their equipment? Their means of production? That hit the rich men where it hurt. They became sudden converts to the many benefits of hiring white labor, and all of a sudden the pastures for Third Worlders got very much greener elsewhere than the Pacific Northwest. After Jerry Reb burned or blew up all the welfare offices, destroyed the records, and publicly flogged, tarred and feathered some state and Federal bureaucrats, the welfare system broke down and there was a massive flight of blacks and browns and yellows out of the Homeland. After the first year of the war the United States government never got a penny in taxes out of the Pacific Northwest. That's how colonial wars are won, Eva. How we won. The generals never surrender. The accountants do. The Pacific Northwest became a luxury that the Americans couldn't afford. I helped torch the IRS office in Olympia myself. Your grandfather let me strike the match,” chuckled Don reminiscently. “But yes, when the muds declined to take the hint and leave our land, they were killed. It was race war, honey, and your uniform was the color of your skin. I make no apology for that. We were doing what we had to do to ensure the continued existence of our own people. By the time the Cleanup came, the non-whites and the Jews were almost all gone, some dead, but most of them fled back to the States.

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“But there were a lot of problematic white people who were still around. You have to bear in mind that there were some people in the Homeland who had a vested interest in the old order, who had done well and made piles of money under the Americans. There were also those who either could not or would not adapt to living in a country based on racial foundations, or any moral foundations. Like the non-whites, most of them had sense enough to understand what would happen to them without the Federal authority to protect them, and they ran. A minority of them didn’t. The stupid ones, the arrogant ones, the ones filled with hubris who thought they were John Wayne waving the Amurrican flag and who simply could not comprehend the type of total transformation that had taken place within the souls of an entire race of people. So they stayed and they gave trouble. They got one warning, because we knew that in some cases they genuinely, honest to God *could not understand* that things had changed. We weren’t punishing them, we were simply explaining the new reality to them in a way most calculated to make sure they got it. Usually that one warning came in the form of a very brutal public beating.”

“The Biff Boys!” said Evie.

“Yes, that’s one of my favorite TV shows as well,” chuckled Redmond. “They were also called Thumper Squads. The boys didn’t just beat people up, though. Their purpose was to accomplish a specific psychological and political goal, not just beat people for the hell of it. When it was appropriate, they also did funny stuff like grabbing Christian preachers who talked sh...who, uh, preached against the Party from the pulpit, stripping them naked and chasing them down the street with flowers sticking out of their butts.” Evie giggled. “That was actually a lot more effective than killing the idiots, you know. Kill them and you make martyrs out of them. But it’s kind of hard to take someone seriously when you’ve seen them doing a River Dance on a leash, butt nekkid with a flower sticking out of their ass. There were all kinds of merry little japes like that, not fatal or even painful, just humiliating and ridiculous. Then there was my absolute favorite of all time. There was the Kitty Call.”

“Oh, come on, now, Dad! Did that really happen?” laughed Evie.

“Oh, yes,” said Redmond with a reminiscent smile. “Yes, it really happened. Some nutty professor type on our side invented it.

I'd suspect Dr. Joseph Cord, if he didn't have a reputation for being completely humorless. The Thumpers would grab some liberal jackass or some red-white-and-blue John Wayne wannabe, take him down to the Civil Guard barracks and give him a forced scrub bath with this chemical substance that took a long time to get out of his skin, something that made him smell like the most powerful catnip imaginable. For weeks after that, everywhere he went, the poor SOB would be followed by dozens of mrowling, half-drunk cats who would be all over him, purring and rolling and jumping on him and trying to eat him. It's kind of hard to make a bold anti-fascist stand against evil racism and incite people against the Party in the name of Mom, God, and apple pie when you're covered with lunatic cats, and afterwards people can never quite get all those kitties out of their mind. You know Jay Simpson, the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament? Every now and then if he starts getting too loudmouthed at Question Time, the Party MPs start meowing at him. It breaks up the whole crowd and totally blunts anything Simpson is trying to say. I really wish they'd bring that one back to deal with subversives. Who needs the hangman's noose or the whip or the cerebral decorticator when you can neutralize a traitor with a following of furballs?"

"You really don't want to talk about it, do you, Dad?" asked Eva softly. "Look, I guess I shouldn't have asked."

"No, I don't want to talk about it, but I have to. It's a legitimate question, honey," said her father soberly. "Okay, I'll drag myself kicking and screaming back to the point. A lot of disloyal people couldn't be dealt with through beatings or cats, because they really were potentially dangerous to the revolution, or more often because there was also a matter of moral justice involved. For three generations America did terrible things to our people, and that was very bad. But certain people, certain white people, actually benefitted from those things, benefitted in money and power and position in the community, and that was far worse. The tyrant's crimes were done with the active assistance of many of our own blood, out of willful ignorance or greed or perversion of thought. There are times when the willful, deliberate *refusal to understand* constitutes a crime and must be punished. There was a cosmic, karmic debt to be paid. Depravity and crapulence must have consequences, or else the world ends. Those who had harmed the Party in any way, those who had openly

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sided with the United States and given aid and comfort to the tyrant, and those who had defiled their bodies and contaminated their souls through carnal lust with non-whites or with...well, in other ways...they were killed, Eva.”

He looked at her. “Yes, honey, they were killed, and their remains were disposed of in such a manner that no trace of their very existence would ever be found. They were returned to the earth, in every sense of the word. Where possible, all documentary evidence that such people had ever existed was destroyed. Their birth certificates, their public records, even private things like photographs and other traces, were removed from existence. They had helped oppress and murder and defile their own, and for that we made them take their medicine. Every last bitter drop. We killed them for the sake of all those who had gone before and suffered, for the sake of all those like you who were to come. We killed them because *it was the right thing to do*. Those people were a cancer in our body, Eva, and we burned them out with fire and sword. Our race was diseased, and we had to sweat blood in order to get well again. This country is a small encampment in a world of darkness, Evie. We have a few small campfires that give us a little circle of light, where we can find warmth and shelter, but beyond that little pool of light there are monsters who wait in the darkness to devour us all. One of them came into this house many years ago and tried to hurt Johnny, as you remember. Your brave and noble mother took care of the son of a bitch. Those wicked and stupid people let the monsters in and fed them. To this day there are men like Charlie Randall who stand between us and the monsters. May God bless and guide them in their duty, and may God bless and forgive those of us who did what we had to do to get those few little fires lit and give our terribly endangered race this perilous little island of safety. As small and as uncertain as it is, it is more than we had when I was born. That’s all I can tell you, honey.” He spread his hands.

“You stand between us and the horror as well, Dad,” said Eva. “You’re BOSS.”

“I try, hon.”

“Thanks, Dad.”

“Well, like I said, you had a right...”

“No,” she said. “I don’t mean for answering my questions. I mean thanks for being who you are and what you are. For standing between me and Cindy El and John and the horror beyond the campfire.”

“You’re welcome, honey,” said Redmond with a smile.

His daughter rose, kissed him and went upstairs to bed. Don puffed on his cigar for a while. “You heard?” he asked over his shoulder to a large armchair in the corner.

“I heard,” said Tori Stoppaglia.

“I was waiting for you to jump in,” said Don.

“No need,” replied Tori. “You did a great job, Don.”

He was silent for a while. “I really don’t remember all that much, you know. How bad was it?” he asked her.

“Worse than anything you can possibly imagine,” replied Tori. “Worse than anything that had gone before. Our hearts turned to stone in those days. It was the only way we could do what had to be done. Don, thank you for not making me tell her. I couldn’t bear it, although every day my mind and my heart tell me that we could do no other than what we did. I couldn’t lie to her, and then for the rest of her life she would think of...that time...whenever she thought of me. Thanks for sparing me that, Don. It’s best for Evie as well. She has no need whatsoever to carry that burden. It is not hers. It is mine and John Corbett’s, and the others’ as well. That’s one of the reasons I skipped the reunion tonight. My own time is coming soon, Don, and the weight of it is making me afraid. I didn’t want to remember.”

“God knows your heart,” said Don. “He knows what happened, better than you do. God also knows what would have happened had any of you flinched or fled from your duty. You need not fear Him.”

“We did what we did so that she and all of her generation wouldn’t have to.”

“If our fathers, or our grandfathers had done their racial duty then you would not have been forced to do it. If you hadn’t done it at long last, then nothing would be left of a three thousand year-old civilization. Someday the sun will rise and we won’t need the campfire any more. Because of what you did in the darkness, Eva and her children will be able to live in the light. Thanks, Tori.”

“You’re welcome,” said the old woman.

V.

In the thin gray autumn dawn of the next morning, Don silently arose, dressed, slid his electric ground car quietly out of the garage, and went in to work early, leaving his sleeping wife to enjoy a late breakfast courtesy of her daughters. Don grabbed a breakfast tray at the basement canteen and spent the next several hours at his desk going over the old BOSS files he pulled out of the archives on the hunt for Trudy Greiner. Some were in old-fashioned manila file folders, some on ancient computer 3.5 diskettes, and others had been transcribed to modern plasma tubes. These records were handy because they contained what surprisingly little documentation had been recovered from the Federal intelligence services regarding the Ravenhill Ranch ambush. Sarah had told Don that in a past life he was once a medieval monk in charge of a scriptorium, and certainly he had an innate love of anything to do with books and paper documents. Computers and coms and readographs seemed crass to him. These files also included contemporary news media reports of the ambush, including glassined newspaper clippings and video clips of the news reportage from such old-time media groups as CNN and Fox News. Don watched the CNN aerial footage of the Ravenhill

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ambush on his screen for a couple of minutes and then abruptly switched it off and moved on. The office was filling up with his brother officers coming in to work, and he did not want them to see him weep. There was a sworn statement from the vice president of the Bank of America branch in Westlake, one J. P. Van Der Merwe, regarding the cutting and issuing of certified cashier's check number #8446728876 to one Gertrude Greiner. Redmond made a note to see if Van Der Merwe could be located even at this late date. The million dollars promised to be the fly in any ointment. Most importantly, the BOSS files contained updated bios and addresses on the survivors of the Ravenhill disaster.

At 1000 hours Don met with General Stephen Capshaw, his David Niven-ish superior. On Capshaw's left cheek was a long scar that complemented his aristocratic appearance; it might have been a saber scar from some collegiate duel in a nineteenth-century German university. In fact it had been inflicted on Capshaw at age twenty with a razor blade embedded in a toothbrush, by a Jamaican inmate in Britain's infamous Parkhurst prison on the Isle of Wight, where Capshaw had been doing a stretch under the equally infamous Race Relations Act for British National Party activity. "John Corbett wants me to do something for him," Redmond told him.

"So I gathered, Colonel. Can you tell me about this one?" inquired Capshaw politely.

"I don't see why not, sir," said Don. "John C. didn't say not to, and one way or the other, in a few weeks everyone is going to know about it. The Northwest American Republic is in for a bit of high drama, it seems. Trudy Greiner is coming back. Says she's innocent."

"Trudy Greiner?" said Capshaw, frowning and puffing on his Dunhill pipe. "Ah, yes, the Olympic Flying Column incident. Nasty business, that."

"Nastier than that, we don't get 'em." Don went over his latest assignment from the State President point by point.

"Yes, I see," said Capshaw with a frown when Redmond had finished. "Bit of a balls-up, eh what? A skeleton from the Republic's early days about to come dancing out of the closet. Rum show all around. I don't envy you this one, Redmond. Dancing skeletons can be a damned nuisance. They call their own tune and sometimes they

refuse to stay buried. This one could blow up in our faces, if you'll pardon my mixed metaphors."

"Do skeletons explode?" asked Don.

"Sometimes they can, yes," replied Capshaw grimly, pipe smoke curling over his head. "If the Greiner woman is truly innocent, then it may force some re-writing of this country's history in a way we can ill afford. Plus there is the problem of just who the bloody hell *did* grass on Murdock and his crew if she didn't, and what they may have been up to in the intervening time. Doesn't paint the Bureau of State Security in a very flattering light, does it? Lying down on the job for more than thirty years? Very bad cess indeed. See here, Redmond, do you think this is sufficiently sensitive to merit a delay in breaking in your new partner? In view of the social, political and military eminence of some of the people you will have to speak with, you might want a more senior man, rather than a detective sergeant. I can pull Captain Brady or Major Engelhardt off their present assignments," offered Capshaw.

Don shook his head. "Sir, Brady is tracking a very dangerous mole who has betrayed some of our sanction-busting overseas suppliers to the Americans. Several key men in those companies within the United States have disappeared, presumed arrested and/or executed by the Office of Northwest Recovery. We need to plug that leak fast before others get the idea we can't protect our friends and certain very necessary sources of supply dry up. Engelhardt is on loan to the War Prevention Bureau and he's hunting in New York. No idea who he's hunting and I don't need to know, but they wouldn't have sent him if he wasn't needed, and so he's unavailable. I don't see why I shouldn't take a sergeant. I've worked with Hennie Nel on several prior task forces and we mesh well, as I recall. He follows orders and seems to grasp the essentials of a case quickly. He has a very good record with the Civil Guard, not just as a street cop, but he also spent a couple of years as a detective with the CID working regular criminal cases before he applied for BOSS. Despite the possible implications I don't think I'm going to run into any seriously sticky situations after all these years. If I do, he's the Washington state bare-knuckles champion and he's got two line-of-duty kills of his credit. Frankly, I am not certain I am going to be able to find anything at all. We may

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just have to sit back and listen to what Trudy has to say when she shows up. If she shows up. Don't worry, Nel will do me fine."

"Rather a moody chap, wouldn't you say?" suggested Capshaw. "Of course, most of these Jaapies are."

"In view of the fact that their nation is on the verge of extinction and there are now more Afrikaners here in the Homeland than there are remaining in South Africa, I can understand why he's moody on occasion. The Aryan race is about to lose her youngest child beyond recovery. It's a horrific tragedy which I frankly don't think the Republic is doing enough to prevent."

"Quite, quite," said Capshaw. "My understanding is that we're allegedly just waiting for the right time to intervene in South Africa and restore white rule there. We have been waiting for several decades and now there's virtually nothing left to restore. Pragmatic Tendency and all that rot. Right, Nel it is. Off you go, then."

Don made a call on his pocket com and when he returned to his own office he found his new partner Sergeant Hendrik Nel waiting for him. Nel was a square-built, burly Afrikaner with a blond buzz cut who looked completely at home in the sharp creases of the broadcloth zoot suit he wore, although he didn't seem to have a hat. His face was battered from the several thousand blows he had received during bare-knuckles boxing bouts, his nose bent and both ears well cauliflowered, but in the Republic such a physiognomy was considered to be one of the most honorable and manly of any, the badge of the NAR's second national sport, the first being riflery. Redmond had familiarized himself with Nel's personnel file and was aware that the sergeant was legally supporting four illegitimate children in addition to his four legitimate ones, which his prize purses in addition to the Republic's child allowances enabled him to do. Northwest women notoriously found a true Aryan warrior irresistible. "Morning, sarge," Redmond greeted him.

"Good morning, Colonel," replied Nel in his stilted accent, almost Cockney-like to anyone not familiar with the dialect of Africa's white tribe.

"Sergeant, looks like our first job in harness together's going to be a pretty odd one," said Redmond without preamble. "You will be assisting me on a special assignment which has been given to me personally by the State President, John Corbett Morgan. You've heard

of cold cases? This one is right out of the deep freeze. It goes back to the time of the revolution here in the Northwest, during the War of Independence. You may have heard of Tom Murdock and the Olympic Flying Column?”

“*Ja,*” replied Nel. “They were a white commando unit who were massacred by Fatties at a *plek* called Ravenhill Ranch.” Nel furrowed his brow. “Before my time, *ek se*, but I saw something about it on the telly once. They were sold out to the ZOG for money by some damned woman. What about them?”

“The damned woman is coming back,” said Redmond sourly. “We got a letter from Trudy Greiner saying she’s walking through the Mountain Gate border crossing on October 22nd. She says she’s innocent and she is demanding that we prove otherwise in public before we string her up. Great Independence Day present, eh?”

“*Cies!* So what does the State President want us to do about it?” asked Nel. “Track her down in Aztlan and kill her? *Lekker*, I’m your ‘own, but I seem to recall the WPB has been trying to do just that for more than thirty years. How are we supposed to succeed in less than three weeks?”

“No, we are going to go over that whole episode in our history as if it were a fresh criminal case. Look at the evidence, talk to the witnesses, your whole basic copper drill. Trudy Greiner is demanding that the Republic put her on trial and prove she committed racial treason. Our job is to find out whether or not we *can* prove it.” Quickly and concisely Redmond ran down the details and the nature of their assignment. “Eight Volunteers from the Olympic Flying Column survived the ambush at Ravenhill Ranch, because they weren’t there when it went down. We’d better hope that one of those veterans has some new angle we can work on, some new bit of information. Otherwise we may get caught with our pants down if it turns out that Trudy Greiner has been sitting on some kind of bombshell for the past thirty-odd years.”

“So do we know where all eight of the survivors are now?” asked Nel practically.

“Yes. In some cases they have made quite a splash since the war. Big Bill Vitale is probably the most well known of them. He is on duty down on the Idaho border, and it may take us some time to track him down. We’ll see him last, but the others shouldn’t be to

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hard to find. Admiral David Leach we will be able to see at the Bremerton Navy Yard, where he is in charge of a major construction project. I'll call him on the way up there and see if we can get an appointment. Frank Palmieri is very much a technocrat," continued Redmond. "No mean politician, either. He has managed to survive as Minister of Transportation under no less than four governments. The Old Man appointed him originally and he has managed to cling to the job in spite of the fact that almost all of the OM's appointees were kicked out during the purges of the last decade when Pragmatic Tendency took over the Party. They were considered too NS, most of them, mustn't be sectarian, too many open Nazis in government make the bourgeoisie and the prim little Christians nervous, all that crap. But Palmieri has managed to make himself virtually indispensable. We can kill two birds with one stone down in Centralia, since Dr. Joseph Cord lives on base at the Space Center and the McCanlesses run a bookstore downtown. Lars Frierson is now a high school teacher in The Dalles, Oregon. Dragutin Saltovic may be a little harder to track down, but he is in Seattle now. I seem to have heard that he is leaving for a concert tour in Europe next month."

"When do we start?" asked Nel.

"Right now. Let's go." said Redmond.

"Go where?" asked the Afrikaner. "Which of the eight survivors of the Olympic Flying Column do we interview first?"

"The ninth," said Redmond.

"Eh?" exclaimed Nel in surprise. "Er, sir, the ninth survivor was Trudy Greiner herself."

"Not really," demurred Redmond. "We always say there were only eight survivors of that ambush, nine if we count Trude, but that's not true. There were at least a hundred and fifty survivors over and above that."

"The Federals!" exclaimed Nel.

"Exactly," said Don. "Including the man who defected right afterwards to our side along with two of his men, and who afterwards proved himself to be a loyal Volunteer and a good citizen of the Republic. I'll get us an aircar from the motor pool, and then we're heading up to Bremerton. The very first person we interview this morning is the one who might be in the best position to give us

information on the identity of the informer. The man who was on the other side. Former Federal Anti-Terrorist Officer Arthur McBride.”

* * *

Redmond dropped into the northbound traffic lane at 300 feet over Olympia, and they grounded on Seventh Street in Bremerton twenty minutes later. From there they drove to the address Don programmed into the pilotbot, the one in the files for Arthur McBride.

McBride himself proved to be a tall and strong-looking old man, who still had something of the erect bearing one found in the more formally trained veterans from a time of general military sloppiness. Being products of their historical time and place, the deadliest of the NVA’s surviving gunmen from the War of Independence usually looked like white-haired old winos or doddering computer nerds from an age long gone. Some of them could still be seen lolling around in public places like seventy year-old teenagers with long out of date baseball caps stuck onto their heads backwards, still playing ancient Nintendo games on handsets, the vets only detectable by their ribbons and the pistol butts visible over their waistbands. McBride’s own head was smooth and silky white, and he wore a neatly trimmed salt and pepper moustache. He welcomed the two BOSS agents into his home, a bungalow on a quiet side street, without comment or question. He was dressed in simple canvas trousers and a woolen pullover sweater. Apparently the current 1930s look was not for him. “Let me get you both a beer,” he said, coming out of his kitchen with three brown bottles. “I make my own, like a lot of people in the Republic, and my red ale has won a couple of ribbons over there across the water in Seattle.” McBride produced three glasses from a sideboard, popped the bottle caps and poured out.

“You’re retired from the Labor Service, I believe, sir?” asked Redmond. “Thank you,” he said as he accepted the brew.

“Ta, mate,” said Hennie Nel as he accepted the glass, which he hefted in salute. “*Skiet ‘n Engelsmann!*”

“Yes, Colonel, I’m retired from the Labor Service. After Longview I did twenty years in the NDF, left as a Command Sergeant Major. I never applied for officer training because of my background. It wasn’t that I was worried about rejection, it’s just that I would

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never have been comfortable with white soldiers calling me ‘sir’ after what I had been. Call it a penance if you like. After that I ended up in the Labor Service,” he told Redmond as he poured out a glass for himself. “A lot of retired NCOs do. Almost as fulfilling as the military in many respects. I got a lot of satisfaction over the years, whipping platoons of young men and women into functional workers willing and able to pull their weight in building a new country. I think I can honestly say that none of my boys or girls ever went to the bad in any way.”

“That’s the impression I get. I only just remembered the fact, but my son Allan served in one of your intakes,” said Don. “He always spoke well of you.”

“The kid who later became an astronaut?” exclaimed McBride with a fond smile. “Yeah, I remember Allan. He was a fine young man. You’re his father? You must be very proud of him. I understand from the newscoms that he’s on Mars now.”

“Yes, we are very proud of him. We hope he’ll be home by next year some time.”

“I hope so as well. Now, what can I do for you, Colonel?” asked McBride, sitting down in an armchair.

“Sir, I know this may be something of a sensitive subject, but I am on a job right now that involves digging up a lot of old bones. I need to ask you some questions about the time before you joined the NVA.”

“You mean the time when I was a member of the Federal Anti-Terrorist Police Organization,” replied McBride quietly. “This isn’t the first time I’ve had state security around to try and check up on something left over from the old days. Even had a few writers and journalists and a historian from the Party’s Museum of the Revolution in Ballard come by. You don’t need to dance around the subject, Colonel. I don’t shout the skeleton in my closet from the rooftops, true, but neither have I ever denied it to anyone with any legitimate reason to ask.”

“I know that, Sergeant Major,” Redmond told him. “But something has come up, and you may be in a unique position to help us. My assignment has to do with the ambush that destroyed the Olympic Flying Column.”

“I rather thought it might,” said McBride, pursing his lips. “I always wondered if and when the authorities in the Republic would ever get around to exhuming that particular business. I always felt that the full truth never came out. Go ahead and ask what you want, but before you proceed, I may be able to tell you something that no one has known before.”

“And that is?” asked Redmond.

“Mmm...tell you what, let’s save that for last, shall we? I am curious to know what’s brought about a revival of the Ravenhill thing this late in the day. If you’ll go ahead and ask me your questions and I can put it in context, my information may mean more.”

Redmond ran it down in his mind and made a quick decision to play it the old man’s way. “Very well. We have received a communication purporting to be from Trudy Greiner,” he told McBride. “If it’s authentic, she says that she is coming back to the Republic on October 22nd. She claims that she is innocent and she is demanding a public trial on the allegations against her. You can see why your recollections of that time may prove of some importance.”

McBride whistled softly. “Yes, I can. Boy, wouldn’t that put the cat among the pigeons? I know that the Olympic Flying Column was set up by an informer, all right, because I was there when my monkoid commanding officer got the call, but I have no idea on earth who it was. I told all I knew back then, to Corby Morgan himself, and it was all God’s own gospel truth. I figured it had better be, seeing as how if he thought I was lying about the smallest thing Morgan would have had me shot. I’ll be glad to go over it again with you, though.”

“Very well, sir,” said Redmond. “First I’d like to get some personal background. In my initial briefing President Morgan told me about the night you and those other two men came into the camp to defect.”

“Yes, Lance Corporal Schumacher and Sergeant Petoskey. They’re both dead now, I’m afraid. Shoe went with Davy Leach in Force 101, and he was killed during the Cleanup by a Laotian drug gang who objected to being put out of business. Pete was killed in an aircar crash in Spokane eight years ago. I have never regretted that decision, Colonel. It was the most terrible and devastating one I ever made, but it had to be. It came from what the mystics call the dark night of the soul. In that moment I left behind everything that I had

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ever been, but in the same moment I found what I had always been looking for. This country has given me something more precious than any so-called freedom to make money hand over fist and to swill consumer goods like a hog at a trough until I burst. There are some things in life more important than the freedom to go to hell in whatever way one chooses. Things like honor, duty, pride and integrity. The Northwest Republic has given me the ability to get up in the morning and look myself in the mirror, and that was something I never had under the old order. Something no white man had back in those days.”

“Curiosity question,” said Redmond. “Do your neighbors and former co-workers know about your former affiliation?”

“Yes, I think they do,” replied McBride. “I am damned if I can explain how, since I never discussed it, but I guess the word simply got out into the community by osmosis or something. They all seem to know, and yet I have to say that in all the years I have lived here, not one individual in this entire community has ever caused any trouble or thrown my past in my face.”

“You’re not the only Fed who came in from the cold, you know,” said Redmond. “There were thousands of defectors, people like you who could no longer stomach what the government was doing to the white people of the Northwest.”

“Yes, I know. But I was unusual, being a FATPO. We were supposed to be the *élite*, you know, the mighty fighters against racism and fascism who swept all before us in the name of diversity, and so *trés chic*. *Élite*, my ass! *Mother of God!* I never encountered such a collection of criminal, half-insane misfits, perverts and thugs of all races in my life! It’s as if the United States government deliberately went out of their way to recruit the very worst white trash, black trash, brown trash and yellow trash they could find. The women were worse than the men. I could never bring myself to touch one of those leprous psycho sluts, which probably was how I started to get a dubious reputation among the org. Any white male who refused to partake in drugs and sexual degeneracy was suspect. We had to be *eminems*, or to use a less polite designation, we had to be *whiggers*. You know that term, Colonel?”

“White niggers,” said Redmond. “Yes, sir. I know it. It is legally considered to be a killing word today in the Republic. You

don't call a man a whigger unless you're willing to back it up, all the way. The only time in my life when I ever took one of my sons out back of our house and beat him bloody with my belt, was when I heard him call another boy a whigger, however carelessly and unknowingly he did so. He had to learn. Then I explained to him what it meant. To his great credit, my son voluntarily went to the other boy's home and apologized, and without my telling him to do so."

"You got it. Blacker than the blacks, if we wanted to fit in. Monkey Meat Woodrow Coleman was the worst animal of all. I think he would have practiced cannibalism if he could have gotten away with it, and maybe towards the end there he could have done. On the night I heard the WPB had finally tracked him down in Detroit, I popped the cork on a bottle of champagne. I really, really hope that some of the information I gave helped those hunters, as old as it was."

"It didn't exactly happen like that," said Redmond, remembering his chat with Randall the night before. "But don't worry, Coleman had enough time to savor the moment."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"So why did you join FATPO in the first place, *meneer*?" asked Nel.

"Well, if you've read your history books you know the American economy tanked under Bush Two and things never really recovered. From then on it was permanent depression. When I came out of high school in Peoria it was almost unlivable. I couldn't make the affirmative action quotas for college, so I went into the Marines at age seventeen. By the time I was twenty I had I fought counterinsurgency in the occupied lands of the Oil Raj, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Saudi and Egypt, but things reached the point where ZOG couldn't even pay its mercenaries and I was laid off. I came out of the Corps at a time when civilian jobs for white males were almost non-existent," McBride told them. "My mom was very sick with lymphatic cancer and I had to have some kind of medical insurance that would cover her. FATPO was one of the few jobs going back in those days that still offered any benefits at all, never mind medical coverage for family. For what the hell good it did me. Mother died shortly afterwards. I hadn't been with FATPO for three months before I was ashamed to be seen in that uniform. God in heaven, to this day I wonder how some of the people here can forget, never mind forgive!"

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Let me tell you something that happened to me,” McBride went on. “A year or so ago, I was in the park here in Bremerton, along with two of my grandchildren. I saw a man about my own age, who was also there with his own two grandchildren. Our kids were playing together on the swings and the monkey bars and obviously having a great time of it all, so we nodded to one another. On his lapel he wore the green, white and blue ribbon from the War of Independence, but so do many men of our age. I noticed he had a crushed and broken nose, obviously from way back. This guy bothered me for some reason. He looked familiar, but for a long time I couldn’t place him, and I got the impression he felt the same way about me. I saw him looking at me kind of funny. Then through one of those weird coincidences in life, we recognized one another, almost simultaneously. I remembered where I’d seen him before, and I could tell by the expression on his face that he remembered where he’d met me. It was almost forty years ago, in an interrogation room at the Bremerton FATPO barracks. I was the one who had given him his broken nose, this horrible defacing scar he’d had to live with for the rest of his life. I did it when I smashed him in the face with a rifle butt during one of Major Woodrow Coleman’s famous interrogations. There I was, confronted with my sin in the living flesh. What the hell could I do?”

“What *did* you do?” asked Hennie Nel.

“I did the only thing that was morally possible,” said McBride in a dead voice. “I walked up to that man, whose name I still don’t know, and I simply said, ‘I was wrong. We were all wrong. I did wrong, to you and to others. All I can say to you is that as God is my witness, I am truly sorry for the pain I have brought into your life.’”

“And what did he say?” asked Nel, fascinated.

“You know what the man replied? He shook his head and said, ‘I’m not sorry. When you bastards arrested me I was innocent in every sense of the word. Being spirited away to a secret location and tortured by the United States was something that happened to foreigners, to dark-skinned Muslims, not good old white boys with their baseball caps on backwards like me. To this day I don’t know who ratted me out, who accused me of being involved, whether it was done for malice or money or whether it was a simple mistake. But whoever called you and told you I was a Jerry Reb had it wrong. I

wasn't. Until that morning you came for me, I never had a political or a racial thought in my head. I had nothing to do with the rebellion, I thought I hated racism, I thought I loved diversity, the gorgeous mosaic and all that happy horse shit. I thought I was a good American. You showed me that I didn't want to be an American any more. I wanted to be a man instead, a white man. When that nigger major finally decided that his underlings had blundered, he dismissed me with contempt as just some little pissant white boy not worth bothering with. Then you let me go. You threw me out the door, broken and bleeding. I crawled away, and after the wounds in my body were healed I knew I had to heal the wounds in my spirit. So I joined the Northwest Volunteer Army and I fought for the rest of the war on the side of my people and our new nation. You destroyed my innocence, you destroyed the extended childhood we used to have back in those days. But in exchange, you gave me more important things. You made me grow up. You gave me something I never had, dignity and pride, pride in myself and pride in my race. For that, sir, I will be forever grateful to you.”

“Then what happened?” asked Sergeant Nel, fascinated.

“We had nothing more to say to one another, so I walked away,” said McBride.

“Getting back to the Ravenhill incident, you may recall that at one stage, the Federals claimed that they had located the Column through satellite surveillance. What makes you so certain they didn't? What makes you certain that the Olympic Flying Column was betrayed by an informer?” asked Don. “You said you were there?”

“I was there when a phone call came,” said McBride. “Our Rapid Reaction company was put on standby at about six that evening. Nothing specific, we just hung out in the hangars by the chopper pads in our full kit, all our weapons and with live ammo issued, ready to roll at a moment's notice. We twiddled our thumbs, smoked our dope, and waited. There was no briefing beforehand like there was normally when we were going after a specific target, a search and destroy or a sweep to arrest all white males between ages fifteen and fifty in a given town for deportation to Nevada...hell, you know the kind of things we used to do, I'm sure. When we were out for a specific purpose that had come down through the normal channels, there was a set procedure and that wasn't followed. I was

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scheduled to take over as Officer of the Day at midnight that night, so at twelve I went to the Charge of Quarters room to relieve Captain Hernandez. I found Major Coleman there, and he was sober, which was unusual for him at that time of night. He kept pacing around, looking at his watch, going outside for a smoke and then coming back in, nervous as a cat on a hot tin roof. It was pretty obvious that Coleman was waiting for something.”

“Did you ask the kaffir what he was waiting for?” queried Nel.

“No,” answered McBride, shaking his head. “Major Coleman had a history with uppity white boys like me in his command. Asking questions was considered to be insubordination, and from that it was one step to an accusation of racism or hatecrime and finding yourself on the wrong side of the wire in one of the camps. We all learned very quickly just to keep our mouths shut, do what we were told and cash our paychecks. About two o’clock in the morning, I’m sitting behind the CQ desk and Coleman is pacing the floor when all of a sudden his cell phone rings. His *personal* phone. Not the CQ phone, not the direct-line secure fax from Centcom DHS, nothing on any of our computers. No official communication from our own people, which is the way the information would have arrived if we had picked it up from satellite surveillance or through regular military intelligence. I always had the impression that this was something Coleman was working personally, possibly without even the knowledge of Centcom. Anyway, Coleman goes into his office and talks for a couple of minutes, really low. I couldn’t understand anything that was said. Then he comes out and tells me to call the pad and tell them to fire up the choppers. When we get to the hangar Coleman calls the officers and senior NCOs around, pulls out a map he or somebody had hand-sketches on a sheet of paper from a yellow legal pad, and he described to us how we would set the ambush, with particular attention to the placement of the Claymore anti-personnel mines up along the hill. I’ll tell you something, Colonel...this was not a spontaneous thing. Someone had scouted that terrain at Ravenhill Ranch beforehand, and I am damned if I think it was Coleman. Monkey Meat simply wasn’t that intelligent. Someone wanted that whole unit wiped out and was going to make damned sure it happened. Someone who knew what the hell he was doing as a

guerrilla and counterinsurgency officer, and believe me, that wasn't Major Woodrow Coleman."

"One of your own people?" asked Redmond. "Then why would he let Coleman take the credit for a coup like bringing down Tom Murdock and Melanie Young?"

"I have no idea on earth, sir," replied McBride. "Coleman told us it should go down about dawn, and so we would have the rising sun at our backs. We were to be on the lookout for a ten year-old OD green Dodge pickup. That was the NVA forward scout vehicle, the one that always preceded any major troop movement of Volunteers by motorized transport."

"Did Coleman give you any idea that he knew who would be in the forward scout?" asked Redmond. He had a deeply personal reason for asking.

"You mean was the informer in that vehicle? I couldn't say. If Coleman knew who was in it he didn't tell us," replied McBride, shaking his head. "He just said we were to let that vehicle pass, which was a pretty standard thing if we wanted to catch the main body of the enemy...I mean the NVA, pardon me. The whole point of having a forward scout was to detect or to trip any ambushes. We wanted to make sure we didn't give ourselves away. When we got back to base I learned that the two men in the scout truck had heard the shooting, got out of their vehicle, flanked us, and inflicted a couple of casualties on us before they skedaddled."

"That is correct," agreed Redmond, remembering the only time he had spoken about Ravenhill with Bill Vitale after the fifth tankard one summer night some years before, out on the deck behind his house. Vitale had been one of the men in the scout truck. Vitale had broken down wept in drunken agony when he spoke of his dead friends and comrades, something that by common consent neither of them had ever mentioned again. "Go on, please."

"After the green Dodge pickup passed, we were to slide a mine out into the road using a Bangalore torpedo and wait for a main convoy of three vehicles, two vans, one blue and one white, and one Kenworth truck with slatted sides containing a large number of personnel. Whichever vehicle was in the lead, we were to blow it and stop the convoy, then give the occupants everything we had. Complete free fire zone, no quarter, no surrender to be accepted."

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“So the informer wasn’t with the main convoy?” conjectured Nel.

“Either that or the informer was there and for some reason Coleman wanted to make sure he or she never made it,” said McBride.

“Why the hell would even a kaffir do that?” asked Nel.

“Most likely he didn’t want to share the reward. Tom Murdock had a one million dollar price on his head,” McBride reminded him. “The others had bounties on them as well, starting with two hundred grand for Melanie Young. You have to remember that FATPO worked under the Department of Homeland Security, and that the rules that applied to normal Federal agents or police officers didn’t apply to us. We operated on what was euphemistically referred to as a performance bonus system. It was a fancy name used to conceal the fact that we were more or less bounty hunters and mercenaries. When we were able to kill or capture the more well-known NVA people the unit involved shared the DHS reward, with the CO getting the lion’s share, of course. Coleman was quite capable of having his own informant whacked simply so he wouldn’t have to split the score. And maybe collect the reward for the informant as well.”

“I hope to hell that’s not what happened, because if so then we may never know the truth,” said Redmond grimly. “You said you had something special to tell me. What was that?”

“Yeah. I have no idea at all whether or not it means anything, but it’s the one thing I ever held back from that day at Ravenhill. That’s why I’m glad you boys came by this morning. It’s time I got this off my chest. Hang on a minute,” the old man told them. “I need to go upstairs and get something. You boys help yourselves to another beer out of the fridge; I may have to rummage around a bit.” When McBride returned after a few minutes, he had a small manila envelope in his hand, and he dumped an object from the envelope into his palm. “You know that Coleman stole the gold crucifix from Melanie Young’s dead body,” McBride said. “He later sold it to a Jewish tabloid television show host who gave him some really obscene price for it.”

“Yes, I know,” said Redmond. “The Republic traded two American spies facing execution back to the Washington government

in order to get that crucifix back, but only once the blood on the cross was DNA tested and matched against Melanie's FBI records to make sure the bastards weren't scamming us. Our own True Cross."

"None more true," said Nel.

"None indeed," agreed Redmond. "That small gold cross and chain is now in a sealed case on display in the Hall of Heroes."

McBride spoke. "I didn't know then how much the new nation would come to value that little gold cross, but I saw that revolting primate wrench it off that dead girl's neck, and I decided I didn't want Murdock's body to be similarly defiled. When we got back to base camp in Bremerton, I was the officer in charge of stripping Tom Murdock's remains down in the morgue, bagging his clothes and personal effects, photographing his corpse, fingerprinting and taking DNA samples, e-documenting everything, so forth and so on. I believe Coleman gave me the job as a little bit of added humiliation. I took something from Murdock's body. It was on a leather thong around his neck that had been severed by a bullet, but instead of falling onto the ground it was actually stuck to the back of Murdock's shirt in his own blood, which is why Coleman didn't grab this as well. Here it is."

Redmond took the small object of simple pewter into his hand. "It's Mjolnir! A Thor's Hammer!" he whispered in excited awe.

"You mean Tom Murdock was an Old Believer?" demanded Nel.

"Yes," replied McBride. "I didn't know what it meant then, I thought it was just some kind of biker jewelry or something, but I knew that it was something special for him. I felt absolutely foul about what we had done, and so I decided to keep this one thing out of the hands of his enemies. It wasn't a souvenir, it was...it was my way of apologizing to him, of keeping back something of his from his killers. Can you understand?"

"Why the hell did you never say anything about this before?" demanded Redmond.

"Well, to begin with, at the time it didn't seem like a good idea to admit to my new comrades in the Northwest Volunteer Army that I had robbed the dead body of one of our greatest fallen heroes," said McBride. "Being a defector I was on thin enough ice as things were. Later on, it just didn't seem relevant. I'm still not certain that it

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has any relevance to what happened to the Column. Like everybody else, I bought the Trudy Greiner story. I figured she sold her own people out for the shekels. Who knows? Maybe she did after all. God knows, it happened often enough back then. Maybe this hammer means nothing at all. I knew from overhearing Coleman's conversation on the phone that night that there was an informer. Ever since then everyone said that Greiner did it for money, and I have seen the problems that this religious divide among our people has produced in the Republic's society. Why should I add to those problems by revealing that the great warrior and commander Tom Murdock was really a follower of the Aesir and was getting it on out of wedlock with a woman whom Christians regard as our own Saint Joan of Arc? I owed Corby Morgan a big one, because when we came to him and told him we wanted to defect he believed us, and he didn't put a bullet in our heads and bury us out in the woods."

"How widespread was the knowledge that Tom Murdock was an Old Believer?" asked Redmond urgently.

"You got me, Colonel. You'll recall that I was on the other side when Murdock was commanding the Column. I got some of the intelligence briefings, and I do recall that even then the FBI and Homeland Security were trying to exploit religious divisions within the racially conscious community in the Northwest, but I don't recall any specific mention of Murdock's religious affiliation. If the Feds knew, it never trickled down to my level. As to what I have picked up since then, well, I've heard a couple of remarks down through the years that would indicate to me that Murdock's religious views were known in the NVA. How widespread that knowledge was, I have no idea at all."

"One last thing, Mr. McBride. I notice that you don't wear the War of Independence ribbon yourself?" asked Redmond.

"Of course not!" replied McBride, in a puzzled voice. "Why would I? On 10/22 I wear the Missoula Salient medal and the Operation Strikeout campaign decoration with the Chilliwack bar because I earned them as a soldier in the NDF, wearing the uniform of the Republic. But nothing from the NVA time, and I never go to reunions or Old Fighters' functions. How could I? I fought against the Republic and was responsible for the death and torture of Volunteers. I've done what I could to make up for that, but for me to wear the

ribbon would be an insult to the memory of those who died because of me. An insult to the living survivors as well, like that man I told you about in the park in Bremerton, whom I mutilated for life when I obeyed the orders of a monkey. Suppose I were to meet him at a reunion? What should I do then? Buy him a beer and toast the old days? I don't deserve that decoration in the same sense that men like you do. Please give me credit for some sense of dignity and propriety, Colonel!"

"According to your service records, you were there with the NDF Second Army when we went into Portland to implement the provisions of the Longview Treaty?" asked Redmond.

"Yes, I was. So what? So were thousands of others."

"The Battle of the Bridges?" pressed Don.

"I believe that's what it is called nowadays, yes," admitted McBride carelessly. "I don't recall it as a battle, just an especially nasty day in the life."

"In the official military history of the NVA/NDF the Battle of the Portland Bridges is considered to be one of the most important engagements in the War of Independence. The enemy sought to deny the Second Army entry into Portland and we had to bop our way in. By NDF regulations, anyone who participated in that fight in any capacity is entitled to wear the green, white and blue ribbon," said Redmond. "It was the first time since 1945 that white soldiers faced down the ZOG bastards on equal terms, in the open, face to face, man to man, gun to gun, artillery to artillery, tank to tank and whupped their kosher asses up one side and down the other. Tell me, are you not the same Volunteer Arthur McBride who ran forward onto the northbound Interstate 205 bridge over the Columbia River out of Portland, and disarmed the explosive charges that the U. S. Army Rangers had planted there?" asked Don. "Along with Volunteer Brooke Arnold? Under heavy fire from the enemy?"

"Yeah. So?" responded McBride with a shrug. "That was a long time ago, just one incident in a thousand. Most of the Ranger fire was directed against the southbound lanes where the charges were disarmed by Volunteers Steve Carter, Eric Muegge, and Rick Nesti, all of whom won very well-deserved Iron Crosses. All Brooke and I caught over in the northbound lanes were a couple of potshots."

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“She caught a rather bad one, if I correctly recall from your service file. Did you not drag Volunteer Arnold to safety after she was hit, and then return to complete your mission, in the process shooting and killing with a pistol two Rangers who attempted to prevent you?”

“Yes. Why do you ask?” asked McBride curiously. “I haven’t thought about that incident for years. What does it have to do with...?”

“Last night my wife and I attended the Old Fighters’ Reunion in Olympia,” said Redmond sternly. “We didn’t see you, and that’s unfortunate, because you had every right to be there, and every year our numbers grow fewer. It’s your decision, but I hope we’ll see you there next year. You may consider that a personal invitation. We have a very good medical service in the Republic. We especially pride ourselves on our geriatric care. That means you have some years left to you. During that time, Sergeant-Major McBride, I would appreciate it if you would wear your War of Independence ribbon openly upon your person. You earned it, and you need to let those young people coming up in our nation know that. You have set a very good example thus far. Set a better one. Wear your ribbon. And wear your Iron Cross. The one you won by your heroism on that Portland bridge. I read Volunteer Arnold’s report this morning before coming to see you, by way of background information.”

“Then you didn’t read it right,” said McBride quietly. “I earned nothing. It was all her. What you didn’t read was that chubby little blonde girl had more courage in her little finger than I ever had in my whole body, on the best day of my life. After Ravenhill I ended up with Commandant Archie McLean down in Oregon. From the moment I saw Brooke lying in an ambush outside Medford, big floppy hat on her head and her golden hair in a braid down behind, an AK-47 in her hands and longing to give any nigger or Mexican who crossed her path a heavy dose of Shock and Awe, my past was dead. She was my life from that point on. I low-crawled up to her in that ambush position, my rifle in my arms, and I looked into those icy blue eyes and I said, ‘I’m Art McBride. Are you married or with anybody?’ She said no. Then I said ‘Tell me what I have to do for you to be my wife.’ She said ‘Kill as many of them as you can, never rat no matter what they do to you, and never lie to me.’ I said ‘You got it. Can we consider ourselves engaged?’ She looked at me and said

‘Yeah. Now get back to your position. Fattie’s coming.’ I started to crawl back and then I looked over my shoulder and asked her ‘What’s your name?’ ‘Brooke,’ she said. Then it all started anew for me. I wasn’t fighting for any of you any more, I wasn’t fighting to redeem myself or my past. I was fighting for her. Fighting to be worthy of her. I would have done anything, anything at all, to be worthy of her. You wouldn’t understand.”

“You’d be surprised,” replied Redmond. “With me it was an eleven year-old girl with braces and pigtails. I was twelve years old myself, and I would have gone up against Godzilla with nothing but a rusty steak knife in my hand for one of her smiles. Her Godzilla was the United States government, and from the moment I first saw her...”

“Yeah. It was like that. If it hadn’t been for Brooke I would have run like a bunny off that bridge,” said McBride, nodding with a small smile.

“What happened to Comrade Arnold after the war?” asked Nel curiously.

“Through some incomprehensible grace of God that I never deserved, she kept her word and I married her. And for that I *damned* sure earned an Iron Cross! God, Brooke was a world class bitch! I loved her, she loved me, we both knew it, and we spent our lives rending one another’s entrails with unutterable joy. I fought a long and bitter war so that I could spend the next thirty years wrestling an alligator, gentlemen, and I would not trade you one single moment of it, for any consideration.”

“Children?” asked Redmond.

“Six, five living. Our eldest son Jason opted to do his national service in the Kriegsmarine, and he went down on the *Corvallis* during the Chinese attack off Juneau. The other five are alive and well, thank God, and they load me up with all the rug rats I can handle every weekend.”

“Your wife died two year ago, I believe?” asked Redmond quietly.

“Yes. She was out in the garden weeding a flower bed and she moved wrong, pulled on something too hard, and a weak spot in her aorta from that American bullet that none of the doctors ever detected tore and flooded her heart with blood. I found her, too late. She died

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in my arms. I'm marking time now, until death reunites us. She was the last combat casualty from the revolution, you might say. Will there be anything else, gentlemen?" asked Arthur McBride.

"No, sir. You have been of great assistance."

"So now we yet another motive for the betrayal of the Olympic Flying Column besides mere money and treason or unrequited love," said Nel, shaking his head in bemusement as they got back into their unmarked aircar. "Religious bigotry. *Lekker!*"

"Yes, so it would seem" agreed Redmond, his voice grim and a scowl on his lips. "We also have a potential disaster worse than any other conceivable on our hands. Betrayal for money or by a Federal spy we could handle. That happened all the time. It is sordid but historically acceptable. The romance angle with Murdock, Melanie and Trudy adds a Gothic but interesting and politically harmless possibility. But if it turns out that the Flying Column was betrayed because some tub-thumping Christian couldn't handle the fact that the Party's greatest hero was an Odinist, then it could finally ignite a full-scale battle between the umpteen factions here in the Republic, all of whom demand that their own beliefs be formally recognized as our official state religion. That is the one thing that could lose us everything that we have gained since the revolution. Jesus Christ on a raft, now I hope that it *was* Trudy and that she did sell us out for money, or else because she got dumped by Tom Murdock!"

The Boys of the Old Brigade

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The Boys of the Old Brigade

*“Oh father, why are you so sad on this October morn?
When Aryan men stand proud and glad in the land that we call
Home?”*

*“Son, I’m just remembering that far-off fateful day,
When I was just a kid like you, and joined the NVA!
Where are those men who stood with me when history was made?
In memory I always see the Boys of the Old Brigade!”*

VI.

“So now what? We go on a historical fishing expedition?” said Hennie Nel as their aircar landed on outskirts of the great sprawling naval complex on the west side of the Puget Sound that was the Kriegsmarine’s Bremerton Naval Station.

“Yes, although I’m not exactly sure what fish we ought to be baiting our hook for,” replied Redmond thoughtfully. “God, this has the makings of an unholy mess! Let’s discover the truth first if we can, Sarge, then once we have it we can sit back and figure out just what the hell to do with it. Our next step is to interview the eight known survivors of the Olympic Flying Column. This is going to be a sensitive process, Nel. Our goal has to be to find out *why* each one of them survived. In other words, why the hell were all eight of these people somewhere else so didn’t ride into the ambush at Ravenhill Ranch with the rest of the Column?”

“My first question would be why the two men in the green bakkie that was being used as the Column’s scout car survived,” ruminated Nel. “I don’t entirely buy McBride’s explanation that they were let go on Federal SOP. If Fattie was out for the reward, why not

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the reward for two more of us terrorists? And how did they know that Murdock himself or Melanie Young weren't in the scout vehicle?"

Redmond winced. "As it happens, Sarge, I know a little bit about that aspect," he said quietly. "Bill Vitale was one of the men in the scout vehicle. He is an old friend of our family, and he talked about that with me. He and Volunteer Lars Frierson heard the shooting that came from behind them, and they realized that they had been let slide and the main force had been ambushed. They turned their vehicle around, went back a ways, de-bussed and approached on foot. They ran into a FATPO outpost and killed two of them, they realized from the sound that there were hundreds of Federals between them and the Column and that they could never make it through alive and rejoin Murdock. They then followed General Order Number Eight and performed E & E to their respective hideouts."

"General Order Number Eight?" asked Nel.

Redmond smiled. "Otherwise known as the Swamp Fox Order, as in he who fights and runs away lives to fight another day. Unofficially known as Feets Don't Fail Me Now! Even more unofficially known as the Don't Be A Dead Hero, You Dumb-Ass! directive. The Old Man knew that the life of every Volunteer was worth more than a hundred dead Feds, and the purpose of that General Order was to make sure that our most precious resource was not sacrificed needlessly. Some American and Jewish propagandists called us cowards then and still do because of that order."

"That's crap, sir," said Nel with a scowl. "The objective of the soldier is to win wars, not conveniently hurl themselves to destruction on an enemy's sword. And cowards don't revolt in arms against a tyrant to begin with."

"I know. I like old George Patton's version," responded Redmond with a chuckle. "No one ever won a war by dying for his country. You win it by making the other bastard die for his country. Oh, I don't deny we had a few who really showed yellow and used that order as an excuse for genuine cowardice. We always spotted that, and they didn't last. But I know a lot of vets who followed that order in the spirit it was meant to be followed, and who never forgave themselves for it. Bill Vitale is one of them."

"What technique should we use in interviewing these survivors, sir?" asked Nel, tactfully changing the subject.

“Nothing fancy,” replied Redmond. “A little deceptive candor might go a long way for us here. It will be hard for us to make up any plausible explanation as to why we are exhuming old bones, especially old bones as hallowed as those of the Olympic Flying Column. I think the best approach would be to simply tell these people the truth, that we’ve received a communication we believe to be from Trudy Greiner and that she is Coming Home. Be interesting to see how they react to the news. And also, we need to see if we can find out just how each of them got into the NVA in the first place, how they became racial nationalists or National Socialists or whatever their particular world view is. Back in the old days, when you joined the Party you had to sit down and compose a minimum 10,000 word essay on just that subject, giving as much detail as possible. The reasoning behind that requirement was that no one could tell a lie that long and complicated without saying something that would trip him up.”

“Which one of the eight survivors of the Column do we speak with first, Colonel?” asked Nel, looking over the files on Redmond’s desk. “You mentioned Admiral David Leach, I know, but why him?”

“I think we should start with the one who poses the most potential danger to the safety of the Republic if it turns out he’s a long dormant traitor,” said Redmond.

“Wouldn’t that be Doctor Cord?” queried Nel. “He is after all the *de facto* head of the Republic’s space program.”

“Mmmm, maybe. Although if Cord is a long term ZOG spy intent on sabotaging our space program, he doesn’t seem to be doing a very good job of it. We are the only nation on earth who even *has* a real space program, thanks to him. No one else is even on the moon permanently, never mind Mars. My vote for that sinister distinction of most potentially dangerous if disloyal would be Leach of the Kriegsmarine. Also known as Bloody Dave from his guerrilla days with the NVA.”

“That name rings a bell, and not just for being an admiral,” said Nel thoughtfully.

“It should,” said Redmond grimly. “David Leach is the hero of the *Spokane* incident in Wellington, New Zealand. He faced down an entire country with one battle cruiser and got our sailor boys back out of the local hoosegow. That might have been a little before your time,

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when you were still in South Africa. Leach damned near started a war, with the United Nations jumping up and down and going booga booga booga all over the place, but Leach got his men back, and he demonstrated for all the world to see that you don't fuck with the Northwest Republic. That was my last year in the Special Service before I transferred to BOSS. Thanks to Leach's nautical brinkmanship I spent a wonderful two weeks in the snow out on the Montana border, looking down the barrels of our .88s at eight thousand Chinese regulars and a good thirty thousand more-or-less American troops across the line, wondering when they'd get the order to attack."

"How many were you, sir?"

"One division, about 4500 men, so we had them outnumbered," replied Redmond. "Turned out that once again Doc Cord's plasma beam weapons saved the day. The Americans couldn't bomb our positions without losing eighty percent of their aircraft and their pilots in the first wave, and when push came to shove they didn't dare meet us face to face. Since Vietnam, they've never dared to meet anyone face to face, man to man, on the ground. Without their air cover we would have butchered them, and they knew it. You might say the *Spokane* affair was the Northwest Republic's true entrance onto the international stage. The reason I consider Admiral Leach the most politically sensitive of the survivors is that Bill Vitale is a field commander, but Leach sits on the General Staff and he's privy to the Republic's most top secret defense intelligence. He is also in charge of creating a new series of warships for the Kriegsmarine, one that will give our country a global reach, some kind of super battleship or carrier. If we can get these things afloat it may eventually mean one day we can start recovering countries like South Africa and Rhodesia and Australia for our people. If one of the Olympic Flying Column survivors is bent, then David Leach is in the position to do the most damage."

"How did the Admiral acquire the name of Bloody Dave?" asked Nel.

"After Ravenhill Leach went a bit nuts, or maybe he was nuts all along and Ravenhill just sparked it off. Leach disobeyed orders and unilaterally selected his own next assignment. He went east on his own to join that maniac O. C. Oglevy's crew in Idaho," recounted

Redmond. “Nothing succeeds like success, and so the Party overlooked his insubordination. Later on Leach was a commandant himself, during the last year of the war, leader of the Ellensburg Flying Column. I think they gave it to him as part of a quiet effort to break up Oglevy’s gang prior to independence and make sure we didn’t have any Ernst Röhm kind of incidents. The commandants of each mobile partisan unit operated with complete tactical freedom and independence of action. Leach was one of our best, and I have to say probably our cruelest after Oglevy himself. To be fair, we were fighting the cruelest of foes, an enemy who was trying to destroy our entire race. Leach returned the favor, with interest. He literally ran the Americans out of his sector by brute force. Toward the end, FATPO and even the U. S. Marines refused direct orders to go into the Ellensburg district, they were so afraid of Bloody Davey Leach. He also ran out or slaughtered every single individual of any race who couldn’t show blood in the face.”

“Blood in the face? So Leach is Christian Identity?” asked Nel.

“No, he’s a National Socialist,” replied Redmond with pride and satisfaction. “It’s hard to believe now, when our whole structure of society is based on the Third Reich and when army officers and SS applicants have to pass courses in National Socialist ideology, but there was a long and disgraceful period after Commander Rockwell’s murder when the American National Socialist movement descended into pure slapstick comedy. The Old Man was NS himself, as I am sure you know, and he tried to do what he could to restore some sense of honor, dignity, and purpose to National Socialism in this country, but he once described it as trying to paint the Sistine Chapel with a troop of monkeys let loose in the building. To give him his due, Leach and those NS comrades like him went far towards restoring our ferocious, don’t-fuck-with-the-Führer’s-boys reputation. The world learned to fear us again, as it should. Leach never took prisoners and he dealt with the local loyalists in what was then called a proactive manner. Proactive as hell. Chain saws and propane torches, mostly. All those red white and blue Masonic dishrags disappeared from the front porches, and that neck of the woods around Ellensburg got real disloyal, real quick, I can assure you.” Don paused, almost as if

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hesitant to add something. “Leach was also in charge of Force 101 during the Cleanup.”

“Force 101?” asked Nel.

“They were responsible for enforcing the Offences Against The Race Act,” said Redmond. “Specifically Article Nine. Odd I should be speaking with Leach today. My daughter was asking me about that just last night.”

“The hangmen,” said Nel bluntly.

“Yes. They were the troops who executed over seventy thousand people in the course of a single year, mostly white people who were proven to a moral certainty to have been sexually involved with blacks or other non-whites.”

“Moral certainty?” asked Nel. “Not legal certainty?”

“What law? There was no time, there were no courts, and hell was loose on earth,” sighed Matt. “That’s why even today we still have people petitioning the Party for investigations, trying to clear grandma or some other relative who danced Danny Deever from a lamp post when Force 101 came through town. Yeah, there were some mistakes made, and the Party has paid some pretty hefty compensation settlements and a lot of scholarships to descendants. But mostly, we got it right. Whether they were with us or not, the whole community in the Northwest secretly loathed race-mixing. All white people do, deep down. Few were denounced without cause. There was a time when you couldn’t go outside in any middling sized town in the Northwest without seeing a corpse or two dangling from the nearest tree or lamp-post. Some white men swinging alongside their Asian or Filipino whores, but mostly it was white women and their...beasts of pleasure. Sorry, the very thought of that particular crime makes me want to vomit. That law is still in force, you know, as well it should be from now until such time as the Imperium truly arrives. It all comes out eventually. Some of those wretched women stayed on after Longview, God knows why. Did they think people would just forget? Someone always remembers and eventually someone always tells. Just last week a fifty-nine year-old grandmother was hanged in Pullman. Her own son found some old photos in the family attic his mom had been stupid enough to keep, photos of her canoodling with her Chinese boyfriend from high

school. The man was NS and he denounced his mother. He did absolutely right, and I thank God that I am not he.”

Nel nodded. “That was long before my time, but I understand why such things had to be. There has to be a racial line that no one crosses, not ever. Because when you cross it then everyone loses everything. Maybe if we had been a little more strict on the old Immorality Act under apartheid, I’d still be in Germiston now. Poofers swung as well?”

“No,” said Redmond. They pulled up to the gate of the naval base, identified themselves to the sentry, and were directed to an office building about a quarter mile down on the left. “Homosexuality was considered to be so shameful, as indeed it is, that society should not even acknowledge it in death,” continued Redmond. “It wasn’t done in public. The few faggots and dykes that were too stupid to flee when they saw what was coming...they simply became no more, and where possible every documentary and tangible trace of their very existence was erased. You know, sergeant, that even today there are no actual laws on the books in the Republic against that perversion? It is classified as a form of mental illness, which it is.”

“It is blasphemy,” replied Nel with a frown. “Such creatures should be stoned as the Bible says. It is the man or the woman saying ‘I know better than God who made me how my body should be used. I can overrule God if I want to.’”

“Yes, from the Biblical viewpoint it is certainly blasphemous, but faggots really are crazy as hell,” said Redmond, shaking his head. “You’ve had full medicals before, in the army and when you joined the force, right? You’ve had a prostate examination?”

“Don’t remind me,” said Nel with a scowl.

“Yeah, I know. Having things jammed up your ass *hurts*, but a homosexual actually *enjoys* that kind of filthy pain and degradation. That’s mental illness in my book. On the very rare occasions when we come across it in the Republic, the people involved are quickly certified as insane and confined in a mental institution, where they are either cured through intensive therapy or if that does not prove possible, then their minds are laser-erased and they start over. Believe me, when that happens, in one sense they’re just as dead as if they had been stoned.”

“But stoning would be so much more fun!” protested Nel.

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“I think you and Bloody Dave will get along fine,” chuckled Redmond. He parked the car. “We’re here. Let’s go.”

* * *

The two security cops met with Bloody Davey Leach in the technical wing at the bustling Bremerton Naval Yard. From the window of his office Don looked out and saw a row of long, lean atomic-powered U-boats in the slips, while another of the gray shapes was cutting through the blue waters of the Sound, heading out on patrol. Admiral Leach was a brawny scowling man in his sixties, with a grizzled sailor’s beard of reddish-white. One could easily imagine Leach standing behind the wheel of a clipper ship braving a nor’easter or rounding the Horn, and maybe ordering the odd keelhauling. The chest of his blue Kriegsmarine uniform gleamed with a dozen decorations.

He was in his office poring over the plans for the Floating Fortress N. R. S. *Bismarck*. “The plasma weapons are the big thing,” he explained, rolling up the blueprints. “Since the First World War, no navy on earth has ever really been able to find a counter to the submersible, or a viable defense against air attack other than surrounding the vessel with a screen of other aircraft. Surface ships have been reduced either to carriers, missile launching platforms, or transports. We’re working on an integrated, computerized particle-beam interception system that will knock out any torpedo or missile fired from below and bring down anything in the air, up to and including satellites and space stations. In a few years, gentlemen, the Kriegsmarine will sail the oceans of the world as the only seaborne military force since 1914 with a reasonable expectation of immunity from underwater attack or aerial assault. The other world powers will eventually develop similar systems. Who knows? Combined with a plasma particle-beam air defense weapons system, we could be seeing the rebirth of the battleship as an effective weapon of war. That also means that we can effectively move division-sized troop contingents overseas without having to rely on costly and vulnerable air transport. The old twentieth century idea was that air power alone would do it all. The Americans had a string of squalid little victories against greatly undermatched opponents toward the end of the century

through mass bombing, and that seemed to confirm the theory. Well, since the invention of the particle beam, air power is broken and sea power is coming back into its own.” Leach gestured towards a sofa against one wall; the two BOSS men sat down while he leaned against one of the draftsmen’s tables. “Now, what did you want to talk to me about? Found a spy here?” The old man grinned. “You won’t have to work him over. Just threaten to leave him in a room alone with me for five minutes, and he’ll tell you anything you want to know. I ain’t done a man in nice and slow in a long time.”

“I’d like to talk about the Olympic Flying Column,” said Don bluntly. “I’d like to talk about Ravenhill Ranch. I’d like to talk about why you weren’t there when Murdock and the rest of them got it.”

“Why wasn’t I with the Column?” snarled Leach. “I’ll tell you why! I wasn’t there because Tom Murdock put me on baby-sitting duty with Holy Joe Cord at the aid station. The same man who invented these plasma weapons that have made our survival as a nation possible, so I’m glad I didn’t strangle him with my own two hands, as often as I was tempted to do so! Commandant Murdock ordered me to secure the temporary medic position in Poulsbo to take care of any wounded we might have after the attack in Port Orchard. Trudy Greiner was supposed to be there as well, driving one of our vans. She was to act as a nurse if necessary and also to provide onward transportation for any of the wounded. She never showed up, and later we found out why.”

“You believe Trudy Greiner didn’t arrive at the aid station because she was the informer who betrayed the Column?” asked Redmond.

“You don’t know your history very well, do you, son?” snapped Leach. “Where the hell have you been for the past thirty years? Yes, that’s why the bitch didn’t show up. She had a million bucks burning a hole in her pocket and she had other things to do. You know where I was when my brothers and sisters and comrades died, Colonel? I was listening to Holy Joe babble on about the saving grace of Jesus fucking Christ while we laid out scalpels, latex surgical gloves and IVs, and cat gut to sew people up and morphine syringes to stop them from screaming while we tried to save their lives in the back storeroom of a goddamned Burger Boy! We had a little portable TV, we had it on CNN, and in the cheery light of first morning we

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heard that they were all dead! We packed up our gear, I got into my car and Cord got into his, and we ran like hell! We were so upset we didn't even take any of those cute little packets of ketchup they used to give out at those joints! Now why the hell are you asking me this after all these years? I don't think this Jaapie kid was even born then!"

"Some rather serious questions have arisen regarding the events of that time, Admiral," said Redmond evenly.

"What questions?" demanded Leach.

"Admiral, I have been ordered by the State President to find out exactly what happened at Ravenhill Ranch and why," said Redmond. "I am sorry to take up your time, but I intend to do just that. To find out what happened."

"If you do, will you do me a favor and tell me?" said Leach, suddenly seeming to shrink, turning his head away. "I always...that business about Trudy Greiner...it just never seemed right to me, Redmond."

"Not right in what way, sir?"

"I just never could understand how she could do...what they said she did. Dammit all, I just never figured her for a rat!" he cried out, a lifetime of agony and frustration in his voice. "I'd give anything if..."

"If what, sir?" asked Redmond.

"If I could die knowing she didn't betray us," sighed Leach. "I was...somewhat in love with her. I have always had this idea in my mind that the whole story never came out there. It was something I wanted to believe, you understand. It just...didn't seem right to me."

"Then maybe it's time it was made right," suggested Redmond. "You may even get to ask her about it yourself."

"*What?*" demanded Leach, astounded.

"She's Coming Home," said Redmond. "On October 22nd. Independence Day. Trudy Greiner is going to walk across the border crossing at Mountain Gate, or so she tells us."

"Well I'll be...what exactly do you want to know?" asked Leach keenly.

"We'd like to get some background first," said Redmond. "We'd like to know how you got involved in white racial nationalist activity in the first place, how you ended up in the NVA. Just take it from the top."

“Grew up in Pensacola, and from the time I was a boy I always wanted to go to sea,” recounted Leach. “My father was a retired full commander in the United States Navy. For him the only three real things, the only absolutes in the whole universe were God, my mother, and the Navy, not necessarily in that order. He had me clawing canvas and tying sheepshanks and double hitches on our boat when I was five. I joined at seventeen and after basic at the Great Lakes Training Center I was assigned to the missile frigate *Higby* in the Persian Gulf. Every now and then we used to pop off a Cruise or two at Tehran or Riyadh whoever we were told to hit by whichever Bush or Clinton or other empty suit was in Oval Office at the time. We didn’t care. We were the living spearheads of the Great American Petroleum Empire and proud of it. We kept hoping for orders to nuke Mecca and really rattle the ragheads’ cage. Ironic, isn’t it? I might have ended up as one of the Republic’s worst enemies if the bastards had just had the sense enough to leave me the hell alone. Afterward I spent the rest of my life endeavoring to demonstrate to the government of the United States that they’d fucked with the wrong man. Think I’ve made my point?”

“I think they’re beginning to get a glimmer, Admiral,” replied Redmond with a smile. “How, exactly, did they fuck with you? That’s not just an official question, it’s personal with me as well. Every man of your generation has his story. I am always fascinated to hear those stories. What happened?”

“Yeah, you’re right,” agreed Leach. “Every man of my generation has his story, some incident that turned him from an American back into a white man. Okay, since you don’t mind spending government time spinning yarns, neither do I. This story is mine.

“Like I said, we were on patrol the Persian Gulf. Then we got a re-fitting and R & R order, the kind all sailors love. Off patrol we went and into some exotic port. The exotic port in question for the *Higby* was a place called Eilat, a resort town on the Red Sea, in what was then the state of Israel before the original owners took back that particular piece of real estate, may Allah bless and keep them for their immortal courage that shamed us all. I was just turned nineteen years old, young and strong, full of piss and vinegar, and with several months pay burning a hole in my pocket. Me and some buddies of

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mine were on shore leave and we were cruising the beach looking to pick up some of those long, lean Jew girls with the tanned legs and the arrogant Levantine faces who lounged there like coiled snakes. We'd all heard what great fucks they were and how willing they were to do their duty for international concord with us American allies. I used to get a chuckle out of that when I was ramrodding Force 101. The one time in my life I myself ever tried to race-mix, Destiny slapped me down, slapped me down hard! One of life's ironies.

"We heard a noise," recalled Leach, his eyes starting to wander back into the past. "We came across some Israeli police who were underneath a pier beating a little Arab kid, maybe twelve years old. I never did learn why, but they were really working this little guy over, three of the bastards. Big burly men with black curly hair and hook noses and blue-shaven chins and bulging muscles. Beating the boy, beating him and beating him, in the head and the face and the ribs with nightsticks, with fists and boots, kicking him in the balls while he rolled on the sand screaming. I didn't speak a word of Arabic, but somehow I understood that the boy was screaming curses at them, not begging for mercy. It was the look in the kid's eyes. That impressed me, more than anything. It was the first time I ever saw anyone stand up to the Jews. I saw a young boy shouting defiance in the face of death, and it moved me to my very soul. Non-white or not, I've always had a hell of a lot of time for Palestinians since then. Yeah, they're brown, but by the living Allah who made them, they are a brave and noble breed! Somehow I knew what I wanted then. I wanted to see that same look in the face of a young white boy. I wanted to see a young man of my own race display that kind of courage.

"My buddies tried to pull me away, told me not to interfere, it was the Jews' country and none of our business. Sorry, man, but when three thugs are beating a child to death, no matter where I am and no matter what his race, that's my business. I was a pretty hefty dude in my younger days and I waded into them. Racked 'em, jacked 'em, and knocked their kosher asses into eclipse. That's when I learned that whenever they're faced with any real opposition and they don't have overwhelming odds on their sides, Jews are cowards. The much-vaunted Israelis weren't anywhere near as tough as they were cracked up to be, not when they came up against a single man who wasn't

afraid of them. There were three of them, big mean men, and if they'd had any real spirit at all they would have kicked my ass bad, but I kicked theirs. I got a nightstick away from one of them and I laid all three of those filthy kikes out on the sand, streaming blood from their goddamned hose noses and bawling like babies. The Palestinian kid ran off. No idea whatever became of him.

“Well, when I got back to the ship that night all hell broke loose. Needless to say, I was immediately ratted out by one of my own so-called buddies. Back in those days white men used to inform on one another to ZOG so quick it would make your head spin. No racial pride at all, no sense of honor or integrity or self-esteem. The Marines were waiting for me, they placed me under arrest, and from then on my life was one long nightmare. I had one stroke of luck, in that once my captain had heard my side of the story and the Israelis' side, he refused to hand me over to them and he even refused an order from the Pentagon to do so. That was before the Diversity Law went into effect. A couple of years later there were no more white male captains, just white male execs to actually sail the vessel, and I wouldn't have stood a chance. Captain Barlow was a real sailor, though, and he stood up for me as far as he could. He kept me from being lynched. If I'd been turned over to Israel I wouldn't be standing here today. But Barlow had no choice. He threw me in the brig and I was court-martialed for hatecrime and 'manifestation of bigotry' as it was called in the Uniform Code of Military Justice back then. In my case it was more serious than usual, because the bigotry I allegedly manifested was anti-Semitism, and that was always worse than any other, except maybe saying nigger.

“I was dishonorably discharged from the U. S. Navy, to my father's bewilderment and disgrace, and I did a year in the brig in Portsmouth. After I got out my father disowned me. He never cared what the circumstances were. All he could see was that big glaring DD. The United States Navy was always right. Period, end of story. I tried to get a merchant seaman's card, hell, I would have sailed on a Liberian tramp steamer if I could just have gone back to sea, but it was no soap. I couldn't get a berth on a garbage scow on the Hudson River with that DD and anti-Semite on my record. Couldn't get any job at all except flipping burgers or pushing broom. So I figured if I

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was gonna do the time, I might as well do the crime. I decided to become a frigging anti-Semite.

“I went to the library and I started reading about the Jews. There were computers in the public library in Pensacola, and in those days there were still a few web sites available that told the truth, operating on servers out of Singapore and such. I was able to read Henry Ford’s *The International Jew* online. I was also able to find a site that had Commander Rockwell’s *White Power* on it. If the library had caught me printing it I would have been arrested for hatecrime, so I sent it chapter by chapter to a printer at a private mailbox service run by Chinese. They either couldn’t read it or else didn’t they give a damn so long as my money was good. I stopped by after work and paid out most of my salary from the day labor agency for those precious printed pages. I read that book over and over and over again, and I became a National Socialist. To this day I collect copies of *White Power*. At home I’ve got over a hundred editions in twelve languages. From that day to this I have never wavered in my knowledge that Hitler was right and that just about every evil on earth today stems from our rejection of the man from Germany and his message to all of us. All of a sudden I understood why the world was the way it was. And then one day, by accident, I came across a web site that had some of the Old Man’s stuff on Northwest Migration. It made sense to me, this idea that all of us who knew about the Jews should band together to grab at least a little piece of the pie back from them. I worked the day labor agencies in Pensacola and St. Pete for a year or so until I saved up a few bucks, and then I took the bus to Seattle. I took any job I could on the water, on the piers, and I eventually made a contact who hooked me up with the NVA.”

“Where you acquired the nickname of Bloody Dave,” remarked Redmond.

“Yeah, I was the guy my commandant of the moment called on when there was some really nasty wet work to be done,” growled Leach. “I was mad, Redmond. I admit it. Mad in the British sense, raving insane. Mad and mean at what had been done to me by the United States. I lived on rage and hatred. I grew up on stories of John Paul Jones and Perry and Farragut, Midway and the Coral Sea. I wanted nothing more in the world than to sail the seas wearing the same uniform my father wore, and then they did that to me, all

because I wouldn't stand by and see a child beaten to death by cowards. It's really weird they charged me with hatecrime. Because it was that year in the brig that gave me hate, Redmond, a hate that it took me years to get under control. Sometimes it gets to me even now."

"Like when you were in command of the *Spokane* and you shelled Wellington, New Zealand to get seven of your men back?" asked Redmond dryly.

"They laid hands on my boys," said Leach quietly. "I, of all people, know what it means to be in that situation. Barlow could only go so far for me, but when a man is under my command I go all the way for him. Nobody lays hands on my boys. Not ever." The he grinned. "Well, nobody except me, anyways."

"After Ravenhill you went east, I believe?" asked Don. "In fact, I am told you went east contrary to orders from the Party. They told you to report to Commandant McLean in Medford, yet your records indicate that you spent the rest of the war with the Hayden Lake Flying Column until you were given your command at Ellensburg."

"You mean did I ride with O. C. Oglevy?" laughed Leach. "Damned straight I did! I mean rode with him, literally! We used to move around on chopped Harleys and armored assault vehicles like Mad Max the Road Warrior, like Genghis fucking Khan! Vikings on wheels. Closest thing I could find to sailing on land. We had an armored eighteen-wheeler we called Big Mama, with everything on board up to twenty-mil cannons! None of that escape and evasion shit for O. C., no sir! We didn't escape and evade ZOG, ZOG tried to escape and evade *us*. We went after everything we could find wearing a United States uniform. We *hit*, and we *hit*, and we *hit!*" said Leach, punching his fist into his palm for emphasis. "And when we got the bastards down we kicked them and kicked them and kicked them! Then we poured gasoline on them and set them on fire watched them burn and roll and scream. They sent helicopter gunships after us, and we opened up with Big Mama and we shredded them into confetti, metal and flesh and blood drifting down on us like snow. We brought others down with laser-sighted .50-cals firing armor-piercing bullets we made ourselves. They sent tanks, and we dug holes and buried nitrate fertilizer bombs and blew those tanks fifty feet into the air!

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They sent the Rangers, and we charged them like madmen and got in close and whipped them down into jelly. I remember a guy named Tiny Knowlton. Dumb as a bag of hammers, but six feet ten and all muscle. Tiny didn't even carry a rifle. He had a red all-metal fire axe he found at one of the forest ranger stations out in the woods. He decorated it with leather grips and wrote weird stuff on it, kissed it and slept with it. He named that axe, you know."

"Yes, sir," said Redmond. "As a matter of fact, I do know. He named it What Goes Around Comes Around. Something to do with his time in Soledad prison, I don't recall exactly, if even we ever knew. What Goes Around Comes Around now hangs in the Hall of Heroes in Olympia, alongside Comrade Walter Knowlton's two Iron Crosses."

"And so it should. Funny, you know. I could never get used to referring to him as Walter. Tiny was so strong he could bust open a Bakelite helmet with a single blow like it was a watermelon. The best times were when we dealt with the loyalists, those pieces of shit who dared to put an American flag on their porch or open their filthy yaps against us. Some fucking red white and blue asshole out in some little town in Idaho ran his mouth about evil racism and we heard about it, O. C. and the boys would roll in with *Born to Be Wild* blaring on our speakers, and believe me, we never had any trouble out of those places again. Because in most cases they don't even exist. We burned them to the ground and if we could find salt, we sowed it into the ground as a kind of ritual so nothing ever would grow there again. You were on about my moniker of Bloody Dave? That was where I got it, and I earned it."

"Yes, sir, so I've heard. Getting back to Ravenhill, you were at the meeting which took place at the Hoodsport safe house the night before the planned attack on the Special Criminal Court in Port Orchard?"

"That's right, although not all of it," Leach told them. "Me and a number of the other guys. Pretty much the whole Column was there, out in the woods behind the house and watching the road coming and going, weapons ready. I remember hearing Murdock mention he wasn't too comfortable having all our people in one spot like that, but it was necessary."

"Why necessary? Did he say?" asked Redmond.

“Not in my hearing. It wasn’t usual, though. The Column usually moved in on a target in at least two groups, more often three. Murdock would command one section and Melanie Young or one of the sergeants would command the others.”

“But when the *witcommando* was ambushed at Ravenhill, it was almost all of you except for a few who were detached for separate duties,” pointed out Nel. “For example, we know that only four Volunteers were sent to collect and bring in the lorry with the homemade mortar tubes on it. That seems an odd level of exposure for so important a weapon. Do you have any idea why that might have been, *meneer?*”

“Not a clue,” said Leach in a sour voice, shaking his head. “I wasn’t an officer of any kind at that time, just a grunt Volunteer. I did what I was told. I was called into the conference in the living room of the safe house by Commandant Murdock to get my assignment, oh, it must have been about one in the morning. I didn’t say much, nothing to say, really. Cord and Trudy Greiner were already there, and we had a few words about aid station procedure. Nothing unusual. The two of them gave Commandant Murdock a rundown of the available medical supplies we had on hand, what vehicles they said they’d be using, so forth and so on. Greiner told Cord and the Commandant she’d be at the aid station at seven sharp. She said she’d let herself into the storeroom. Apparently at some point before I came in, she had been given a set of keys to the Burger Boy. The manager was one of us, like I said.”

“Meet you there? She wasn’t going to accompany Volunteer Cord and you to the station?” asked Redmond keenly.

“That’s what I just said, isn’t it?” growled Leach.

“Any idea where she was going, why she separated from the rest of the Column?”

“None,” Leach replied. “I always assumed that she wangled some assignment from Murdock to give her an excuse to cut out on us and get away and then rat us out, but whatever it was, nothing was said in my presence. Like I told you, I was just an AB in those days. They told me to stick with Cord and make sure he and Greiner were able to do what they could for any wounded that showed up without any interruption. If Fattie came down on us I did the shooting while they did the packing up and running, if they could. Hey, they were

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both more valuable ratings in the crew than I was, and I understood that I was more expendable. It didn't bother me. I got my orders, then I left to rack in for a few hours in a bedroll out back in the woods, before me and Joe Cord moved out in separate vehicles for Poulsbo on our part of the mission. He followed me. That was the last time I saw the Greiner woman, when I left that house at one thirty or so in the morning."

"We have been reliably informed that the FATPO commander Coleman got the call from the informant at a little after two A. M.," said Redmond thoughtfully, drumming his fingers on his knee. "You didn't see Trudy Greiner leave?"

"No, I did not," said Leach.

"You said Trudy Greiner was supposed to be driving one of the NVA vans as a makeshift ambulance. Was she given the van then?"

"Mmmm...well, like I said, I didn't see her go but I did see her arrive, in a car. Seems to me it was a Toyota or some Japanese car. Why?" asked Leach.

"No real reason," sighed Redmond. "I'm just trawling through the waters of the past, Admiral, trying to see what comes up in my net. For example, I would like to learn whether or not it was common knowledge that Tom Murdock was an Odinist, a follower of the Old Gods of Norse mythology as many of our fellow citizens in the Republic are. Did you know this? And if so, did this create any friction?"

"News to me," said Leach, to all appearances genuinely surprised. "Not that I ever gave a damn. I always thought this whole religion thing was a canard, a distraction. That's what always bugged me about people like Joe Cord, and what bugs me about people like that even today. Religion isn't important. Race is important. Not to knock our Christian comrades, and I know that the Christian Identity people are some of our best citizens, not to mention our best soldiers. Always were. God knows I've commanded enough of them. But I've always had this little bugbear in the back of my mind about Christianity. There's Jesus and then there's *Jeeee-zus*. I've always had this suspicion that if and when the chips come down, Christians will choose *Jeeee-zus* over their race. You remember what the Old Man said about it."

“Yes, I remember,” said Redmond. “Although actually it was Commander Rockwell who said it originally. Christianity has one great weakness, and that is that it is a community of faith rather than of blood, and a Christian may be tempted to choose a monkoid who believes in *Jeeee-zus* over a white man who doesn’t. Which defect the Christian Identity faith answers quite neatly, in my opinion.”

“Does any of this sound to you like she didn’t do it?” demanded Leach.

“Admiral, I’m not sure that at this remove in time it’s going to be possible to determine just *what* the hell happened,” sighed Redmond. “There is something else I need to ask you about. Statistically, something like twenty per cent of the Volunteers of the NVA were female, and every NVA unit or cell had its relationships, ranging from Christian marriages to outright gang-bang promiscuity, and everything in between. It has been suggested to us that Trudy Greiner was involved with Tom Murdock before he and Melanie Young, er, became an item, so to speak.”

“Yeah, she was,” agreed Leach. “It wasn’t something anybody ever got up and announced over the campfire, but you usually had a pretty good idea which female comrades were giving it to whom. You’re wearing the ribbon, you ought to know.”

“I was a bit young to pick up on such things,” said Redmond.

“Yeah, Murdock broke it off with Trudy when he and Mel started getting it on. You’re not the first to suggest that might have been part of Trude’s motive in doing what she did.”

“Was there ever any open bad blood or emotional tension between the three of them, any obvious lover’s triangle type aggro?” asked Redmond.

“Mmmm...not that I recall. Not that I saw or heard,” replied Leach judiciously, absently scratching his bearded chin. “But I repeat, Colonel, at that time I was just a lowly gunner’s mate. I wasn’t too often in a position to see or hear things like that. Sorry, that’s all I can tell you.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Redmond. He rose to go and Nel stood up with him. “You have been very helpful.”

“Why do all the older people in the Republic swear like that?” asked Nel with a scowl as they left the building.

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“Most of them don’t even notice they’re doing it. They grew up around niggers and a lot of niggerism rubbed off on them. Fifty years ago, that was the American dialect. You’ll get eighty year-old NVA vets who call one another dude and dawg and ask whuzzup? The older people who grew up in the United States are a lot raunchier about sex as well. We’re probably the only nation on earth where grandmothers shock and scandalize their granddaughters at the dinner table. I think that’s one of the reasons the Ministry of Culture is trying to get everybody back into Victorian days dress-wise. Hopefully the old mores will revive along with Picadilly weepers and high lace necklines.”

“Sounds like this Oglevy was a bit of a nutter,” remarked Nel.

“Yes, but he was *our* nutter,” agreed Redmond. “As much as I despise Oglevy and that part of our past, I have to admit that we owe the son of a bitch a lot. You know that right after Longview, before Oglevy was killed, a dissident faction of the Feds refused to release the Old Man from Florence Federal prison in Colorado? John Corbett and Pat Brennan got on the horn to the Colorado military governor. They told him they were sending a plane down, and it had damned well better come back to Olympia with the Old Man on board, because if it didn’t the next guy they sent down to collect him would be O. C. Oglevy. They handed the Old Man over when our people pulled up to the prison gate.”

“Who’s next on our list?” asked Nel.

“One of the good things about working for BOSS is you get to meet all kinds of interesting people. Ever roused a Cabinet minister before, Hennie? Frank Palmieri. Let’s grab a bite of lunch and back down to Oly, to the Ministry of Transport.”

* * *

Redmond and Nel were expected at the Ministry offices on Fifth Street, and they were shown up to the sanctum sanctorum of the department on the third floor. Transportation Minister Frank Palmieri was a stocky, jocosely man in a simple shirt and cravat, with a fringe of white hair around his balding head, muscular white-hairy arms and a generous paunch. He looked like an avuncular grandfather. He shook

their hands warmly. “Always glad to cooperate with BOSS,” said the technocrat. “Have a seat, gentlemen.”

“It is an honor to meet you. Minister. Your accomplishments for the Republic are well known,” said Redmond.

“Not just mine, Colonel. They are the accomplishments of an entire nation that refuses to be beaten down!” said Palmieri proudly and sincerely. “For over a generation the Americans and the whole damned outside world besides have tried to strangle us. A year after the Longview treaty Chelsea Clinton boasted that in another year all us evil old racists would be eating tree bark and walking or riding in ox wagons, they’d clamp the sanctions down so tight. Instead we have perfected the alcohol engine, the electric engine, and for heavy work the methane engine. Haven’t imported a drop of oil into the Northwest American Republic for a decade now! No need to. We run our whole economy on pig shit. In spite of every economic sanction the Americans and the rest of the world have imposed on us, we now have the greatest public transportation system in the world. Every town in the Republic over 40,000 people has a light rail system of some description for five pence a ride, and in every major city there are subways, tramcars and crosstown copter shuttle. Our highways are solid and capacious while traffic jams are a thing of the past. If you don’t feel like flying over it in an aircar, you can drive down Old I-5 in an electric vehicle at ninety miles an hour with your car on cruise control and autopilot, sit back and conduct a conversation with a passenger in the car in the next lane beside you, without raising your voice. We get delegations of engineers and urban planners every year who come to study the Seattle and Portland and Boise subways.”

“Of course, it helps when white people can ride public transportation without being robbed, raped, and murdered by mud-colored criminals,” pointed out Redmond.

“Yes. That was always the biggest problem with public transportation in the States, back in the old days. The Americans solved that problem after the revolution by forcibly relocating most of their rural white population into the metroplexes, outlawing almost all private automobiles and forcing people onto overcrowded petroleum-burning trains and buses like cattle. I always considered that a feather in our cap, that we were able to get white people to give up their cars on most occasions and ride on buses and trains and planes and copters

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and packet boats, voluntarily and enthusiastically. The Americans had to use force. The environmental damage done by concentrated petroleum exhaust fumes was known as early as the 1950s, yet white people clung to their pollution-spewing automobiles because they were terrified to set foot on a bus. That, and the idiots destroyed their own railroad system at the behest of the big oil conglomerates who wanted all those monstrous diesel-burning semis on the roads. Our own railroads carry over ninety percent of the freight in the Republic. No more of those 18-wheel behemoths that have destroyed every highway in the United States. Northwest Air Service has hundreds of flights every day and we haven't had a fatality in twenty-one years now. You name me two places, a beginning and an end, anywhere from a single apartment in Seattle to the most remote mountain reaches of Wyoming. Give me a few minutes on my com, and I will quote you a fare that within twelve hours max will put you within a hundred feet of that destination. Okay, maybe a few hundred feet where Wyoming is concerned."

"Is that a Wyoming joke, Mr. Secretary?" asked Redmond tiredly.

"Hardly," said Palmieri with a grin. "Seeing as how I'm from Wyoming myself. I grew up as the only Italian kid in that godforsaken place called Laramie."

"I'm sorry, sir, and no, that wasn't a Wyoming joke. Wyoming is one of the most beautiful parts of our Homeland, and I would like to point out that I and family take our vacation there regularly..."

Palmieri laughed. "So some of your best friends are from Wyoming? Look, Colonel, don't sweat it. Every country on earth has its own little internal minorities they make jokes about, Kerry men among the Irish, Georgians among the Russians, whatever. That's jake with us. That big sky we live under back home more than makes up for any unkindness from our fellow white folks. We know we got something they ain't got, and it's worth a few jokes. If my job didn't keep me here I'd be back in Jackson Hole tomorrow. Now what can I do for you?"

"Sir, Sergeant Nel and I are conducting a rather strange investigation, and I am going to have to go about this in a rather roundabout way. Please bear with me; this may take some time."

“Sure,” said Palmieri, puzzled.

“This has to do with things that occurred many years ago. Before we get into that, I’d like to get some personal background, please, Minister,” said Redmond. “Background on yourself. How you got involved with the revolution? This isn’t just official. I have to admit that this is a hobby of mine, learning how the men and women of your generation actually made the decision to live for something other than their own personal lusts and desires.”

“Jesus, where can I start?” asked Palmieri, puzzled yet willing.

“Why not start at the beginning?” asked Redmond.

“All the way back to the beginning? All right. My Dad was born in New York. He left high school when his own dad, my grandfather, dropped dead of a heart attack while laying carpet in some rich Jew’s condo. My pop was a working man all his life, the ultimate blue-collar patriarch. Big man with short black hair and a beer belly, but over that belly were equally bulging chest and arm muscles. He had no engineering degree, but when it came to building roads and bridges, Sal Palmieri told the engineers how it was done. He came out to Wyoming with a highway contractor on a summer job that was supposed to last three months. He thought it was the total pits.

“Then he met a girl named Gina Yates. My mom. All of a sudden Wyoming was the only place on earth he ever wanted to be. Dad settled down in Laramie. He was a Federal employee, ironically enough, although that didn’t save us from It Takes A Village when the time came. Mom was a born-again fundamentalist, and Dad converted to her church and got baptized before she’d marry him. Officially, anyway. He told me once when I was a kid that he didn’t believe a damned word of it, and despite that he’d never regretted a day his life with my mother. Dad just kind of went along with church and Jesus and all, but Mom was a dyed in the wool believer. I don’t mean one of the crabby tub-thumping types. My mother was one of the kind of born-againers who honestly believed that God is love and Jesus wanted everyone to be joyful. We had a big family. I was the second of eight. I didn’t realize it then, but that already marked us as suspicious in the eyes of the authorities. White couples weren’t supposed to have a lot of white babies, they were supposed to adopt orphaned gooks from Korea or whatever. Large families of white kids

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indicated that someone wasn't getting with the program. Fundamentalists are supposed to be big on the spare the rod and spoil the child thing, but it wasn't like that. Neither Mom nor Dad ever raised a hand against any of us. They didn't have to. None of us would have so much as thought about crossing Dad. Believe me, that didn't happen. If one of us kids was in a bad mood and giving Mom problems, the rest of us would pile on the offender and straighten him or her out toot sweet. I had a great childhood, for a while there."

"What happened?" asked Redmond.

"Hatecrime happened," recalled Palmieri grimly. "What else, in those days? I was ten years old when Federal Child Protective Services came for me and for my brothers and sisters. You know that they created a whole Federal agency, complete with SWAT teams, whose purpose was to take white children out of what they termed unsuitable homes. They called it the It Takes A Village program after a book that vile bitch Hillary Clinton wrote."

"Yes, I know. Oddly enough, I was reviewing that bit of our history with my daughter just the other evening," said Redmond. "I almost was taken myself when I was six. My uncle and aunt had to more or less smuggle me Home to the Northwest."

"Yeah, well, make sure your girl learns that chapter in her history book real good," said Palmieri bitterly. "My family was one of their first victims. It was just like the 10/22 situation with the Singers, but Laramie wasn't Coeur d'Alene. Our neighbors just stood by cowering and watched while it happened. So much for the cowboy heritage. One of those neighbors was a typical village busybody woman. She turned my mother in for the reward. She called the Federal Child Protective Services and reported my Mom for teaching us hate and giving us homophobic literature to read. I made damned sure the hunters tracked the old bag down later. They finally found her in an old folks' home in Cincinnati eighteen years ago and cut her throat. They sent me a photo. I went back to Laramie for the first time since it happened, and I buried that photo between the headstones of my mother and father. I go back every year since then, but never before that. I couldn't go to my parents' grave empty-handed. You're not Italian so you wouldn't understand that."

"My aunt is Tori Stoppaglia, and I am a long time personal friend of Major General William Vitale, so yes, Minister, I would

understand that. What was the homophobic literature your mother allegedly gave you?" asked Redmond.

"Mom was teaching us in our little Sunday school from a King James Bible," said Palmieri. "I didn't know then, but I've made it a point to learn some history, and there were some Federal court rulings to the effect that the King James version contained homophobia, the book of Leviticus and all. You know how they were in those days, all the ways those bastards in Washington took away the freedom of white people in general and Christians in particular. They created situations where you could *exist*, but you couldn't *function*. The true Scripture wasn't legally banned, oh, no, can't do that under the First Amendment. But if you used a King James instead of what they called the 'inclusive' version of the Scripture, you could be sued in civil court, which was immune from what little was left of constitutional safeguards. Or you could be hauled up in front of a Human Rights Tribunal and you could lose your children to the state based on an administrative decree that bypassed the courts and legal system."

"Yes, the abuse of civil law was one of their favorite and most destructive weapons," agreed Don. "That's one reason why we don't have any civil law or lawyers in the Republic, just community arbitrators drawn from citizens over the age of fifty who arbitrate disputes on the basis of common sense."

Palmieri nodded wearily. "A bit too late for my brothers and sisters and me. Of course, what it really was in practice was a gigantic child kidnapping ring, snatching children from white working class families or religious homes and giving them to families of rich liberal élitists who couldn't or wouldn't have children of their own, or even worse, what they called gay couples back in those days. Always white kids, of course. Somehow they never seemed to get around to applying all these wonderful child protection laws to Mexicans or blacks. One night, thirty armed men crept up on our home in the small hours of the morning. They shot our dogs with silenced rifles, and then kicked in the door of our house. My father didn't even know what was happening. He thought we were being attacked by criminals, which we were, of course, but trouble was that the criminals had badges. My father grabbed a pistol from the nightstand and the soldiers of the United States shot him dead.

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“I used to dream of monsters when I was a kid, and that night I really did wake up and find a monster beside my bed, a big thing in body armor and a gas mask. It pulled me out of bed and down into hell. They dragged my mother out into the yard, screaming in her nightdress, in twenty-degree weather. They handcuffed her and threw her into a police car. I only saw her once again, at the formal hearing three months later, but they kept her in a kind of glass booth so she couldn't communicate with us and teach us any more hate. The fact that they taught me a hate on that night that has never died probably escapes them to this day. The judge banged his gavel and they took me away, and they took all my brothers and sisters away to different places. After years of searching I have been able to find my sister Graziella and my brother James and bring them Home. The other five vanished forever. God knows where they are now, or even if they are alive. I remember my mother's face staring at me through the plexiglass while they were dragging me away from the hearing, and then someone turned out the light in her booth and I never saw her again. A few days later my court-appointed lawyer came and told me that Mom committed suicide the day after that piece of shit in the black robe took away her legal custody. Then he stood up and closed his briefcase and walked out of the room and I never saw him again. Poor Mom. She loved everyone and in return those bastards burned her soul alive.

“I had it rough, but in a smooth kind of way, if you get my meaning. The Federal court system placed me, or I should say they sold me for the so-called adoption bond to a pair of fruits in Seattle who paid two hundred grand for me. So at least I got a free ride Home. If I'd been sent to Florida or Chicago it might have turned out different, like it did with most of my brothers and sisters. It was a big luxury condo on Capitol Hill where they took me one day. Most kids would have rebelled outright, but I think maybe my Sicilian peasant heritage came in handy. Somehow I understood that there was a time when one had to bow down to superior authority, smile in their faces, keep quiet, and wait. They have a saying in the old country, you know, about how vengeance is the only dish that tastes best when eaten cold. I knew without doubt that someday I would have my revenge against the evil people and the evil government that murdered my parents. Bruce and Neville were good enough to me the first

couple of years, and so I kept my mouth shut and went with the flow, yes sir, no sir, three bags full sir. Frankie Has Two Daddies, you get the idea. They bought me bikes and baseball gloves and computer games, and tried to be my pal and all that stuff, even talked with me some about the Bible like Mom used to. No King James, though. They definitely used the inclusive version.”

“Let me guess,” said Redmond. “The story of David and Jonathan?”

“Oh, yeah, they were real big on that particular chapter and verse,” returned Palmieri with a contemptuous sneer. “Then one night the inevitable happened. I think the two of them drew straws to decide which of them got to break me in, so to speak. Daddy Nev drew the short straw in every sense of the term, for which I imagine Daddy Bruce was thankful afterwards. Daddy Nev came into my bedroom and tried it on. I was thirteen by then, big for my age, and I knew more about what was what than they realized I knew. Along with the baseball mitt they’d given me a Louisville slugger. Bad move on their part. I knocked the fudge-packing motherfucker flat with the first blow and then while he was lying in a daze I locked the bedroom door. Then I went to work with the bat. Took my time, nice and slow, aiming every blow so I could hear the faggot scream and feel things break, feel them crunch and rupture through the wood of the bat. All the time I knew how horrified Mom would have been, she who’d loved everybody in Jesus’s name and always taught meekness and forgiveness. Part of me felt bad about it, because of Mom, but that night it was my Dad’s Italian blood that came out in me. I think my forebears in the South Bronx were watching too and cheering me on. Christ, it felt good to finally hit back, to finally *hurt* back after all those years of helplessness! Neville was screaming, Bruce was pounding on the door screaming, finally I broke the bat and then climbed out the window and beat feet. I learned later it took Nev four days in the hospital to die. I lived rough on the streets of Seattle for about three months, then the cops picked me up in a sweep. I was tried as an adult of course, and they sent me to Walla Walla, life for the killing and no parole because of the hate thing. Guess who my first cellmate was?” asked Palmieri with a grin.

“A Northwest settler?” asked Redmond.

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“Yeah. Not just any settler either, either, as great a bunch of guys as they all were. It was Winston Wayne!”

“Ah! CO of the Coeur d’Alene Brigade, then Commandant of the Sawtooth Flying Column. So you were one of the Walla Walla Forty-Three?” asked Redmond in admiration.

“Yup. The future Brigadier and me and forty-one other bad-ass white men busted out of the strongest prison west of the Mississippi and we went into the mountains. Most of us hid out in the Coeur d’Alene area. On the morning of October 22nd, I could actually hear the shooting from Gus Singer’s place from the safe house I was in. Wayne told us to stay put while he stuck a .45 in his belt and went out to see what the hell was going on. An hour or so later Wayne comes in grinning from ear to ear, tosses me a Heckler and Koch submachine gun, and says ‘Courtesy of the Idaho State Police, young Francesco! The cop I got it off won’t be needing it any more. Gentlemen, lock and load! Let’s go make ourselves a Homeland!’ From then on, as they say, it’s all in the history books. Look, Redmond, let’s cut the crap. You’re a senior BOSS officer and Corby Morgan’s son in-law. You didn’t come here just to jaw-jack about the old days. What’s going on and how can I help?”

“Actually, sir, I really did come to jaw-jack about the old days,” said Redmond. “One episode from the old days in particular. It is a fact, is it not, that you are one of the eight Volunteers who survived the last ambush that wiped out the Olympic Flying Column?”

“Only because I wasn’t there,” said Palmieri dismally. “*I wasn’t there!*” The older man was silent for a moment. “Jesus, Redmond, why the hell did you have to bring that up? That was the worst thing that ever happened to me in my life, in a way even worse than what happened to my family. Those guys and gals were my family. It was like losing Mom and Dad all over again. What could there possibly be for you to investigate after all this time? That evil bitch Trudy Greiner sold us all out for a million bucks. Redmond, before God I have never raised my hand to a woman in my life! That was one of Dad’s ironclad rules for his boys and I have always obeyed him. Not even during the war. I never even shot at a female cop or soldier, at least not on purpose. I’d aim away at the last second, if I saw it was a woman. A lot of us would, even with those wretched

American bitches. But that's one woman I've dreamed of killing all my life. I wish I had her and that million bucks out at Union Station. I'd fire up a locomotive and throw her into the methane furnace alive and kicking, and the money after her!"

"Minister, please understand this. Something has come up, and I need to know about that time. I don't mean any insult or insinuation, but I have to ask these questions. I need to know where everyone was when the ambush at Ravenhill ranch went down, and I need to know *why* they were there. Now, I understand that the original idea was to launch a truckborne mortar attack on the ZOG Special Criminal Court in Port Orchard, with a view towards disabling the facility and killing as many lawyers and other enemy effectives as possible?"

"Yeah, that was the plan."

"You did not go with the main column, but you drove the flatbed truck with the mortars?" asked Redmond.

"Yes. Me and Volunteer Saltovic. You may have heard of Drago, he's a well known concert pianist now."

"Yes, Minister, I know. May I ask why you were assigned to that particular detail?"

"I had helped Joe Cord, Drago, and Sergeant Ron Nolan build and load the home-made mortars, and I knew how to operate the hydraulic elevation press as well as Drago and Ron did."

"Who actually drove?" asked Redmond.

"Drago Saltovic was driving. I was on the passenger side in the cab. We left the lumberyard in Hoodspout at five thirty or thereabouts. The McCanlesses were driving our scout car, a beat-up old Oldsmobile that looked like it was on its last legs, but Ed had souped that thing up to where it could outrun anything Fattie had short of a helicopter."

"Only four people with the mortar truck?" asked Redmond keenly. "Wouldn't it have been more usual for Murdock to divide the Column into two groups, one his and one commanded by Melanie Young to escort the mortar truck?"

"Mmmm, yeah," agreed Palmieri, "Usually we'd move in on an operational area in two or three smaller columns, but I think in this case the thinking went that too many vehicles together might draw attention to the mortars. We wanted to look like we were just delivering some PVC pipe to a construction site, and it might look

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odd if we had a small convoy of other vehicles with us. The idea was that if we were intercepted, Drago would hit a two-minute timer that would detonate the mortars on the back of the truck and obliterate anything within 300 yards when she blew. Then while that was ticking we'd pile into the back seat of the Olds and Ed would burn rubber out of there. Ed was a demon driver and I figured we would have had a better than even chance of getting clear. If we didn't, there were enough weapons and ammo in the car so that we would have taken plenty of those Federal pigs with us."

"How were you planning on getting to the target area in Port Orchard?" asked Redmond.

"We had decided on a kind of roundabout way down into PO," Palmieri explained. "Highway 101 South down to Shelton would have been the obvious way for us to start out, but then 101 was always full of FATPO and army checkpoints and patrols."

"That's because it was always full of NVA as well," chuckled Redmond reminiscently. "The Federals used to call Highway 101 Ambush Alley."

"Yeah, and we figured we'd better avoid Ambush Alley," replied Palmieri with a nod. "So instead we eased northward along some county roads and firebreak roads, then across 101 real quick just south of Lillivaup where we slid the truck and the Olds onto an old de-commissioned ferryboat that some of our people had come up with from somewhere. There was a crew of three men on that thing, never knew their names, never saw them before or since, but it took them maybe ten minutes by the light of dawn to slip us across that little finger of Hood Canal there and get us up onto land again."

"So there may be other surviving NVA Volunteers who knew about the mission and participated in it?" asked Nel excitedly. "These three men..."

"It won't fly, Hennie," said Redmond, shaking his head. "You think one of the ferryboat guys might have ratted out? But it wasn't the mortar truck that was ambushed. It was the main column."

"Ach, *cies, ja*, Colonel, you're right," agreed Nel in disappointment.

"Go on, please, Minister," urged Redmond. "Once the four of you and the mortar truck got across Hood Canal, what then?"

“From there we moved slowly down the cat roads towards Bremerton,” Palmieri continued. “Finally we came out onto Highway 3 going right into Port Orchard. That was about seven thirty in the morning. The attack was scheduled for nine sharp, right when all the bastard lawyers would be coming in so we could take out as many suits as possible. We were making good time and we didn’t want to get to ground zero too soon and call attention to ourselves. We pulled over into a small diner just outside Port Orchard, so did the McCanlesses, we got out, locked our vehicles, bought a paper from the vending machine, walked into the greasy spoon, sat down and had breakfast just like we were normal citizens.”

“Christ, how could you eat anything?” asked Nel in wonder.

“Michael Collins’ first rule for life on the run,” said Palmieri with a smile. “Never *act* like you’re on the run.” Palmieri’s face sagged in sudden terrible memory. “The waitress had just brought breakfast to our booth when the television over the counter started blaring the news about the column being wiped out at a place called Ravenhill Ranch, just north of Shelton. We saw news helicopter shots of the burning vehicles. The copters got down real low and used telephoto lenses, and we could see the Fatties turning over the bodies of our brothers and sisters, kicking them, spitting on them, niggers and Mexicans unzipping their flies and pissing on the faces we knew. We were in shock. There was a...a man at the counter, I won’t ever call him a white man, in working clothes with a big red, white and blue flag on his baseball cap. He started showing his butt. He was laughing and yelling and cackling about how great it was those racist bastards finally got theirs, and how none of them really came from Washington anyway because everybody knew the Old Man brought all the horrible racists into the Northwest from around the world, they gave the Northwest a bad name and Northwest people were really loyal Americans...oh, Jesus...I wasn’t even thinking. Before I knew it I had my gun out and in my lap below the table, clicking the safety off. I think we all did. Then Brit McCanless, who in those days was the most incredibly fine chunk of long-haired, long-legged, witchy womanhood you ever saw, leaned over and took me by the wrist. Her hand was tiny but it was like my wrist was clamped in a vice grip. I couldn’t move it. ‘Not now!’ she whispered. ‘We have a mission to complete. Not now, my brother!’

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“So we sat there in that booth, our faces calm and blank, and we choked down our omelettes and hash browns and toast and took our time finishing our coffee, and none of us vomited in our sheer grief and rage. I think that was the hardest thing I ever had to do during the war. I don’t often have nightmares about that time of my life, gentlemen, but when I do, it’s never about Walla Walla prison or combat. It’s about that morning in that diner, and I am stuck there in a kind of time warp, stuck there forever, forcing horrible food down my throat with my chest and my brain on fire, exerting every nerve in my soul not to scream and weep and kill, kill, kill. We finally finished, we got up, Brit paid our check at the cash register just like we were ordinary tourists passing through, we passed the asshole in the American flag baseball cap with a little smile and a nod, and we went outside into the summer morning. The jackass with the American flag cap had another big one on the rear window of his SUV. All four of us memorized the license number as he left. Then we went over by the truck. ‘Do we have a secondary target?’ asked Brittany. That’s all she said. Nothing else, and it was the absolutely right thing to say, because it reminded us that we were soldiers and we had a job to do, and that the time for grief would come later. May the Earth Mother bless Brittany McCanless forever for that.

“Ed says ‘The phone company offices. We take that out we can make sure about 200,000 phone subscribers lose service for a bit and don’t get their bills this month.’ Drago says, ‘We should try for a police station, the big one in Bremerton.’ But I wasn’t having any. ‘No,’ I told them. ‘You saw what they did. You heard them cackling in triumph on TV, you heard that motherfucker wearing the Masonic dishrag on his head. We have to make sure they die today as well, as many of them as possible. We can still take out the courthouse. Dead lawyers! We will give the Commandant and Melanie and all the rest of them the best tribute of all! Dead lawyers!’ I guess you can see I still hadn’t quite gotten over the court system killing my parents and stealing my family and giving me to those faggots.”

“You didn’t think of implementing General Order Number Eight?” asked Redmond. “Escape and evasion?”

“The thought of running away never occurred to us,” said Palmieri, shaking his head. “Anyway, because we would have no covering fire, we agreed to use the timing detonator and turn that

eighteen-wheeler from a mortar transport into a mere common or garden variety truck bomb. Drago set the timer down to thirty seconds, we drove into Port Orchard and we took out the courthouse. Killed a dozen lawyers, two judges, and the blast managed to jam a long shard of glass right up a U. S. Attorney's promissory estoppel." Palmieri chuckled at the memory.

"There were four of you when you against at least forty cops, FATPOS and U. S. Marshalls," Redmond reminded him. "Yet you completed your mission anyway, at extreme risk to your own lives. Four Iron Crosses and a victory that took the edge off the massacre of the Olympic Flying Column that morning, recovered the NVA's morale, and gave us another legend to tell our children."

"I never thought of it that way. It was just something that had to be done. I was usually scared when we went into action, but not that morning," said Palmieri. "That morning it wouldn't have mattered if there had been four hundred of them. Or four thousand."

Don decided to throw a grenade. "Did you know Tom Murdock was an Odinist?"

"Yeah, sure," said Palmieri. "We all knew."

"How did the others feel about that?" asked Redmond. "Joseph Cord, for example?"

"Most of us didn't give a flying fornication. Joe...well, everybody called him Holy Joe, and sometimes he got kind of hard to take. He almost got his ass whupped over the campfire on more than one occasion, but Murdock ran a tight ship. Cord is an asshole, but he has this lifelong ability to make himself absolutely indispensable to the Aryan cause. After a while, out there in the hills, we all got used to one another's eccentricities. War has a way of doing that to men."

"How about Melanie Young, who is known to have been a devout Christian fundamentalist?" pressed Redmond.

"Oh, she *darned* sure didn't mind," chuckled Palmieri. "I don't think she would have minded if Tom Murdock had been a Persian fire-worshipper. He loved her and she loved him. We knew that every time we saw them together."

"Minister, there is something else I need to ask you about," said Redmond. "We have heard several stories to the effect that Commandant Murdock and Volunteer Greiner were personally

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involved, so to speak, before Murdock began his well known and historic affair with Melanie Young. Can you shed any light on that?”

“Yeah, it was pretty common knowledge within the Column,” agreed Palmieri. “Murdock broke it off with Trudy within a week after Mel arrived from Montana. Hell, we were all lining up the minute Mel walked into camp, but Tom jumped right to the head of the line.”

“Rank hath its privileges?” asked Nel.

“Mmmm, maybe some of that. We all damned near worshipped him and it just seemed right he should have her. There was never a shred of jealousy of any kind. It’s kind of hard for me to explain, but that’s just how it was. We considered ourselves lucky to have her with us. Melanie had been doing underground work in Helena and Billings. Basically spying. At the beginning of the war she was employed by the Montana State Police as a confidential clerical worker. She was a very fundamentalist Christian, as you said, and she was able to get in really deep and close by spinning them the tale about how Jesus loves the little children, red and yellow black and white, they are precious in His sight, all that inclusive version crap. I suppose I shouldn’t mock, since my own Mom really felt that way. But by convincing them that she was a Judæo-Christian instead of a real Christian, Mel was able to deliver just about every piece of information Montana had on any of our people or operations to the NVA. She was the one who kept Jack Smith of the Regulators living as long as he did, from what I hear. Then she transferred to the FATPO as a psychological profiler of all us horrible racists. She knew psychology, all right. She was that good at pulling the wool over their eyes.”

“I remember,” agreed Redmond with a nod.

“And I have seen every movie ever made about her,” said Nel.

Redmond nodded. “Yeah, everybody knows her story. After a long run Melanie felt she was finally suspected, and she E & E’d one jump ahead of them. When she left she copied every FATPO file she could find for us, dumped a computer virus of her own invention into the Feds’ network that wiped out their servers, and left a handbag with eight pounds of ticking C-4 plastic explosive under her desk.”

“She was a *hell* of a woman!” sighed Palmieri in sad recollection.

“So she has gone down into history, Minister,” said Redmond. “Did Trudy Greiner resent being replaced in Tom Murdock’s bedroll by that hell of a woman?”

“Trudy was human. I guess she must have,” said Palmieri, ruminating. “She never showed it, at least nowhere in my presence. So far as I am aware she never took up with anyone else for the rest of the time she was with the Olympic Flying Column, although I know she had some of the guys standing in line and taking numbers for the next vacancy, so to speak. Of course, times being what they were, we were always pretty frank and open about that kind of thing. Life was too short to stand on ceremony.”

“And who were these guys who were standing in the Trudy line to take up where Commandant Murdock left off?” asked Redmond.

“Me, for one,” laughed Palmieri. “I got shot down quick. One friendly yet definite pass on my part met with an equally friendly yet definite refusal.”

“Which you accepted?” asked Nel.

“Oh, yeah. You better believe it, junior. In the first place, a gentleman can always take no for an answer. In the second place, at the best of times that kind of personal activity was purely recreational and very much on the side for all of us. We had more urgent items on the agenda, like securing the existence of our people and a future for White children. Our eyes were on the prize. We were fighting a war and we needed every hand. You didn’t want to lose your head over some chick or get her pissed off at you when the next dark night out on Ambush Alley your life might depend on her. Finally, pressing unwanted attentions on a female Volunteer was never recommended. They were quite capable of shooting very important parts off a man,” finished Palmieri with a grin.

“Did anyone else have any better success with her?” asked Redmond. “I’m not just fishing for old gossip, Minister. This may well be relevant.”

“Mmm, that was a damned long time ago, but...” Palmieri hesitated for a bit. “I don’t think so. I think Bill Vitale gave her a shot, with the same result as me, and I seem to remember maybe Dave Leach as well. I’ll tell you who some of us had our money on in the

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Trudy Stakes, though...our current State President, the Right Honorable John Corbett Morgan.”

“Oh?” asked Redmond, keeping his voice casual. “Why did you think John Corbett was in the running? Did you ever see them together?”

“Mmmm, well, nothing quite so definite. Sometimes members of the Column would meet Trudy on various supply and recon assignments, at safe houses and on fire roads, in motel rooms, warehouses, wherever we had to go to do whatever we had to do. Depended on how hot we were, whether or not we were cool enough to move in among the population without our faces being on every post office wall. Sometimes this involved spending several days with Trude while we were doing whatever it was we were there to do. After a while some of us noticed that she would get regular visits from that weird character Morgan used as his gofer even back then.”

“You mean Corey Nash?” asked Redmond, surprised.

“Yeah,” agreed Palmieri. “That was him. Nash was nutty as a fruitcake, I always thought, but Morgan trusted him and we all knew that he spoke with his master’s voice, so to speak. Anyway, word got out that Trudy and Nash would disappear for a couple of hours at a time, and somehow I just can’t see Trudy Greiner having an affair with Nash, of all people. Hell, I can’t see Nash having an affair, period. To this day I run into him sometimes at Longview House on official occasions or when I have to meet with the President, and I still think he’s *non compos*. God knows why Morgan keeps him around. Anyway, we assumed that during these little absences Volunteer Greiner was meeting Morgan, either for business or pleasure.” Redmond stood up, turning over this new information in his mind.

“I have a question, *Meneer* Minister. Did you ever track down the American who laughed at our dead heroes on the telly?” asked Nel with a scowl.

“Oh, yeah,” said Palmieri, stone-faced. “Made a point of it. Little Rambos, we used to call ‘em. We had his license number and so we got his home address from a contact at the DMV. A week later, laughing boy got a little visit along about sundown. Me, Drago, Bill Vitale, and Bloody Dave Leach. We told Dave what happened and

made sure to bring him along. He would never have forgiven us if we hadn't."

"Not the McCanlesses or Volunteers Cord or Frierson?" asked Redmond.

"No," said Palmieri, shaking his head. "Frierson had already been ordered south to Number Five Brigade in Eugene, Cord was an egghead and a weirded-out religious nut who was never suitable for wet work, and the McCanlesses...well, they were too good for it. By that I mean they were really, really good folks who fought for the noblest of motives and out of the purest of ideals, and we could see that in them. Not that they were soft. Far from it. When we hit that courthouse in Port Orchard I'll never forget the two of them, her with an AK and him with a Ruger Mini-14, cutting the bastards down like a combine cuts down corn while Drago and me smashed that truck through the lobby and set the timer. But for something like this, we decided we didn't want it on their conscience. So we borrowed their Oldsmobile but kind of forgot to ask them along, if you get my drift. We found laughing boy at home," the Transportation Minister went on with grim satisfaction. "We conked him in his garage with a lead pipe while he was polishing his goddamned gas-guzzling SUV. We threw him and his red, white and blue American flag baseball cap into the trunk of the Olds and then we drove him to the diner. There we lined the cooks and waitresses and customers up against one wall at gunpoint. Then we dragged in laughing boy and tied him to a chair. He wasn't laughing at us then, I can tell you. He was blubbering and begging for mercy. I guess watching all those John Wayne movies and Rambo flicks didn't do him any good at all in the courage department. But then, very few of those red, white and blue buffoons were ever anywhere near John Waynes or Rambos when it came down to it.

"Dave Leach took charge. He explained to the people in the diner who we were, why we were there, and why laughing boy was there. How he had giggled and cackled and cheered and talked John Wayne shit while Northwest Volunteers had died for their race and their nation. All the while Drago was in the kitchen deep-frying the asshole's American flag hat in amongst the fish sticks and the chicken nuggets. He brought it over on the end of a broomstick, dripping with scalding hot oil, and Dave ordered the son of a bitch tied in the chair

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to eat it. The son of a bitch started bawling and pleading instead, so Dave took the other end of the broom, I propped the bastard's mouth open with a spoon, and Dave jammed the sizzling hat down his throat, all the way into his stomach. That guy made some really incredible noises, indescribable. The people watching all this were petrified. I could tell by the smell that at least one of them shit in his or her pants. Dave walked back into the kitchen and came out with a pot of bubbling grease from the deep fryer. 'Don't worry, I got a new hat for you,' he tells the guy, and he upends the hot oil all over him and jams the pot down on his head. Leach lets laughing boy shimmy and shake and sing for another minute or so, then he pulls out his nine and puts a slug in his red, white and blue heart. Then he turns to our little audience and says to them, 'Folks, the moral to this story is...*you never know who's listening!* Remember that, the next time any of you are tempted to open your filthy red, white and blue mouths and talk loud about men and women whose shoes you aren't fit to shine. And if any one of you says anything to ZOG's dogs about us, you *will* see us again, and we'll be glad to treat you to dinner, just like we did this asshole.' Then we left."

So did the two BOSS men.

"Well, that's a twist. You think the Greiner woman was having an affair with the State President?" asked Nel curiously as they got back into their car outside the Ministry building.

"I have to admit it's a hell of a lot more likely than her having an affair with Corey Nash," admitted Don sourly. "If Palmieri's memory is correct about Trudy going off somewhere with Nash for hours at a time, she *had* to be meeting Morgan, or at least doing something NVA-related for him."

"Or personally related?" queried Nel.

"He told me not," said Redmond. Nel looked away, too diplomatic to suggest that the President of the Republic might be lying, which Don appreciated.

"You don't think that by any chance Nash could be the traitor?" asked Nel after a while.

Redmond shrugged his shoulders helplessly. "We don't even know if Nash was around when the Port Orchard operation was underway. And what in God's name would be his *motive*? He didn't get any million dollars, and as strange a person as he is, I can tell you

that his loyalty to the revolution is the only thing he's ever had in his life. You don't know Nash. I do, for many years, and not only has he not ever so much as looked at a woman to my knowledge, but he wouldn't even take a piss without John Corbett's knowledge and permission. He's kind of like the old family retainers they used to have back in Victorian England. Totally dedicated to John C. Always was. Believe me, whatever Nash was doing with Trudy Greiner, he was doing it at the behest of Corby Morgan."

"So?" asked Nel. "That was his duty."

"So why didn't Morgan tell me about it?" demanded Don angrily.

"You said Morgan did admit that he knew the Greiner woman, and that Nash sometimes acted as liaison," protested Nel.

"Yeah, yeah, he did...in a very vague and offhand way. Almost as if he knew I'd dig it up and he knew he had to at least mention it or it would really look funny. But I don't like the way this is beginning to shape up. Let's move on. Next up on our list is former Volunteer Lars Frierson." In a few minutes Redmond had dropped down into an air lane four hundred feet above old Interstate Five and put the aircar on autopilot. "I'll go back to manual for the interchange at Portland. I actually prefer a ground car for going up the Columbia River. Less traffic on the ground nowadays, but we need to save time."

"Why him next?" asked Nel.

"The survivors were in three places. Two at the aid station, four with the mortar truck, and two in the scout car just ahead of the column. We've talked to people who were in the first two categories. Now I want to speak to someone who was in the green pickup." *It also puts off the necessity for me to grill Bill Vitale, he thought sadly. And the necessity for me to question the President of the Northwest American Republic.*

VII.

*In towns and farms, the call to arms was heard by one and all,
From every land they came to stand, and answer freedom's call!
'Twas long ago we faced the foe, the Old Brigade and me!
And by my side they fought and died, that white men might be free!
Where are the men who stood with me when history was made?
How longingly I want to see the Boys of the Old Brigade!*

The two BOSS men landed at the local airport, since The Dalles had no municipal air lanes on its power grid, and from there they drove by street into the picturesque hillside town. Gordon Kahl High School stood in imposing red brick on a spacious campus, perched commandingly over the broad expanse of the Columbia River and the Tom Watson dam and hydroelectric plant. A long flight of wide wooden steps led down to the riverside. Where Redmond glanced over he could see some docks, some small boats, some prefabricated buildings and a Kriegsmarine pennant. A number of young men were doing some kind of boat drill down along one wooden quay; Redmond recalled that Gordon Kahl High prided itself

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in their corps of naval cadets. The two cops left their car in the parking lot and wandered into the school looking for Lars Frierson.

In the hall just outside the principal's office, Don glanced over the bulletin board and saw a large pink pastel flyer posted from the school's guidance counselor. "SENIOR GIRLS—Is The Marriage Track Right For You?" it read. "Under the new Family Enhancement Act passed by Parliament in January, you can now earn C-1 citizenship on marriage and a promotion to two-vote B category on the birth of your first child! Representatives from the Ministry of Labor's Home Employment Department will be at GKHS on November 1st to conduct seminars on the new range of Homemakers' Benefits and Child Allowances and also on Continuing Education for Homemakers. On November 2nd and 3rd Oregon Introductions, Inc. will be on campus in the band room from 10 AM to 4 PM taking applications. Oregon Introductions, Inc. has over three thousand bachelors on file in Oregon and Washington, gentlemen who want to meet YOU! All age ranges, all religious affiliations, and all citizenship categories, including over FIFTY ALPHA CLASS CITIZENS and Party members! All carefully screened and psychologically profiled..." etc., etc.

The two security agents found the principal in his office and identified themselves. Mr. Rogers was a small, neat-looking man in his thirties. His hair was parted down the middle, and he was dressed in one of the "new-old-fashioned" suits out of Seattle that looked about circa 1910, with a high wing collar, narrow cravat, and broad lapels, on which he wore the Operation Strikeout campaign ribbon. Redmond noted with amusement that the archaic fashions the government promoted actually seemed to be catching on more among young people here than up in Olympia. Some of the girl students wore long pleated skirts with wide leg-of-mutton sleeves and some of the boys were sporting straw boaters, bow ties and Oxford wingtips. "Fascinating," he said with a chuckle, peering through the glass office at the students passing by outside in the hall. "By God, those warlocks in the MoC are actually doing it! They've created a time machine! They're turning back the clock clothing-wise!"

"Considering that the big fashion statement among kids their age in American classrooms is now full nudity, and they've just won

Supreme Court backing for it, I'd say the Ministry of Culture is doing a slap-up job," replied Rogers wryly.

"To be honest, I think the girls at least look a lot prettier in those long dresses with the braids than in bobby sox or that drab 1930s look," put in Nel. "I think bobbed hair on women looks crappy."

"You're not here for Ted Spears, are you?" asked Rogers with some alarm. "We only discovered it yesterday. Ted came forward and confessed and I intend to punish him severely, suspension and detention for the rest of the semester, plus expulsion from the football team. Surely nobody called BOSS about a simple practical joke, however tasteless?"

"No, we're not here after Ted, whoever he is. Why, what did he do?" asked Nel.

"He and two other boys, whom to give him due credit he honorably declines to name but whose identities I know quite well, got drunk and played a very stupid practical joke," said Rogers in exasperation. "There's a large formal photograph of President Morgan in the main foyer, which you may have seen as you came in. That's new. We had to replace the old one. Ted and the others brought beer into the locker room and consumed it after football practice. Rather a lot of it. They subsequently went into the art room, got scissors and cut up a watercolor done by one of our more talented Christian students. Then they went into the foyer, took down the photo of the State President and mutilated it most shockingly. They cut out his head and replaced it with the head of Satan from the student's painting. The girl is very upset. It's true Ted's family are Old Believers, but the other two are Christians. I am sure there was no religious message or incitement intended," Rogers hurried to assure them. "It was just a drunken prank."

"How long before anyone noticed?" asked Redmond, trying to suppress a grin.

"Three days," admitted Rogers shamefacedly.

"If you don't mind a suggestion, read those guys the riot act and make them apologize to the girl whose property they destroyed, then give them extra work or detention or whatever, but don't gut your football team and don't worry about any religious or political issues," said Redmond. "It's not that big a deal, and no one wants to

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make it one. Teenaged kids kick up the traces sometimes. This isn't the United States any more, thank God, and we don't lock up children for political incorrectness. Take my word for it, Corby Morgan is big enough not to take offense at some drunk kid taking the mock, and it isn't the first time he's been compared to the Devil. And you might remind those young men what happened to kids their age forty years ago who dared to make jokes at the expense of politically protected minorities." He thought of seventeen year-old Trudy Greiner thrown into living hell by the Americans for daring to make fun of a sacred perversion. *After what they did to her, how could she take any amount of money from them?* Redmond wondered, not for the first time. *It just doesn't make sense. It doesn't jibe with everything we know of her character.* "We want to speak to one of your teachers, Lars Frierson. He's not in any trouble, we just need some background from him. A case has come up that involves some rather shady goings-on during the War of Independence, and he remembers some of the people and events in question."

"Lars is our History and Moral Philosophy teacher," Rogers told them. "To be frank, he's the best I have ever seen. Who better than an Olympic Flying Column veteran to instruct our children in the foundations of our state and our society? We're very proud to have him. His sixth period class is just starting, I believe. That's our prize senior group, every one of them on track for eventual Alpha citizenship, or else I'm very much mistaken."

"Presuming they pass Mr. Frierson's course and he checks them off as having the basic understanding of moral principles necessary to assume the duties of citizenship in the Republic," Nel reminded him.

"Yes, that's true. I'm sure he wouldn't mind if you sat in."

They entered Frierson's classroom on the second floor quietly, the principal with them. Frierson looked up from his blackboard, caught the principal's thumbs-up, nodded to the two newcomers, then without a second glance went on with his class. He was a lean and hard old man, hatchet-faced, and a curved white moustache that was not quite a handlebar framed his upper lip. Unlike all the rest of his students who were dressed in neat linen shirts and blouses and all wearing ties, including the girls, Frierson wore a dark blue turtleneck sweater and a tweedy jacket with leather patches on the elbows.

“1970 meets 1910,” whispered Redmond to Nel. “This twentieth century fashion revival business can get weird.”

“Would you rather have them all naked, like in the United States?” whispered Nel back. “How silly can those people get, I wonder? Even after all that has happened in the last century, is there no limit to how insane they can become or how low they can sink?”

“None whatsoever,” replied Redmond. “Oh, excellent! This must be some of the NS part of the course!” On the board Lars Frierson had written: TEN PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL SOCIALIST THOUGHT. Frierson touched a button and the Ten Principles appeared on a large screen above the blackboard:

- I. **BE HONEST.** A National Socialist faces a fact whether he likes it or not. Dishonesty is the mark of the enemy. National Socialism above all represents living truth in its purest form.
- II. **BELIEVE IN GOD AND YOURSELF.** The God of Destiny subjects only His strongest mortals to enormous tasks which would crush lesser men. God wills only the best to fulfill the highest task of life: to perfect mankind. Give yourself utterly unto Destiny, and God will shield you in your fight. God helps only those who help themselves. We will lose only if we lay down our arms due to our weakness and cowardice. There is only one true disgrace: submission to the enemies of our race.
- III. **BE FAITHFUL TO YOUR RACE.** No one must be allowed to spoil what Nature created down through aeons of racial evolution. Your highest purpose in life is to carry on that evolution toward a stronger, better, more beautiful mankind. The purity and strengthening of the Aryan race is the basic requirement of every future higher evolution.
- IV. **FIGHT FOR YOUR RACE.** Fight for the holy ideals of National Socialism, the heart of your great race. Only in this struggle can you prove your true worth as a man or a woman. Only thus can you fulfill your potential for courage, dedication, and ennobling self-

sacrifice. Life's struggle for survival brought Man upwards from the apelike beings of the distant past to the height of Aryan culture and achievement. The Party's struggle will produce the revolutionary elite who will lead the National Socialist ideal to victory.

- V. **YOU ARE A SUPERIOR INDIVIDUAL.** You will be outnumbered in this struggle, because the best are always a minority. History-making decisions have never been the work of formless masses, but always victories by active and dedicated minorities. You are both the servant and the spokesperson for your race. Make sure you set an example worthy to be followed in your person and your life.
- VI. **LOVE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.** You owe your existence to your racial family; let your love of them be your overriding passion in life. Do not fear the Undermen, the racially inferior, and do not persecute them. You are their superior, but you are not their owner. When the time comes to fight them, do not lose your senses through counterproductive hatred. Detach yourself, clear your mind, and destroy them completely, methodically, clinically, as if in a surgical operation. Nothing is more pointless than wasting time hating mud people; it detracts from the positive love of your own.
- VII. **IMPROVE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.** All Aryan men and women are your brothers and sisters, although not all are equally intelligent or courageous. It is up to you to inform them, to encourage them, and to instill their hearts with courage. Some of your kinsfolk have been misled and made ugly by the Judaic evil which is corrupting our racial soul. You must not hate them on that account, but rather strive to bring them back to their racial family.

- VIII. REJECT THE DECADENCE.** Decadence is anything which detracts either physically or spiritually from the health and the upward development of our Aryan race. You must hold your racial and spiritual purity above your very life, and not associate with anything which is decadent or which gives your life the appearance of decadence. Every aspect of life must be judged in relation to the survival and improvement of your race; anything hindering these attainments must be ruthlessly rooted out and destroyed.
- IX. THE BEST MUST RULE.** All great achievements on earth are the product of great leadership, political or scientific or artistic. The racial community can gain strength only by applying the Leadership Principle and placing in front the men and women who have demonstrated superior ability, dedication, and tenacity in the racial struggle. Democracy is a sickness that leads inevitably to chaos, corruption, and the collapse of society. From democracy steps forth the cruelest of tyrants.
- X. NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE.** Where there is a will, there is a way. Everything falls before the man of indomitable will. Suffering and sacrifice are necessary. We are hardening ourselves for the most decisive struggle in all of human history. Victory will fall only to the most truthful, the most fanatical, the strongest, the bravest, and the best. Be that.

“Right let’s see if any of you read your homework assignments,” Frierson said to his class, turning around. “Who wrote the Ten Principles? Mister Walker?”

“Uh, no one knows for sure, sir,” said one of the teenaged boys. “They have been attributed to Commander Rockwell, but they’re not really in his writing style. Some say the Old Man wrote them but he always denied it, said he just found them in his mail one day back in the 1990s sometime. They’ve also been attributed to David Myatt, Colin Jordan, and some others, but no one has ever been able to prove authorship one way or the other.”

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“True,” rapped Frierson. “Aside from the Cotswolds Declaration of 1962, the Ten Principles are considered to be the best short exposition of the National Socialist world view yet formulated. What we are concerned with in this course is not their history, but whether or not you *understand* these principles, as well as the others that have been taught to you in this classroom and elsewhere, all throughout your lives. Not necessarily *agree* with them, but understand them sufficiently to be able to take on the duties of responsible citizenship.”

“What’s not to understand?” asked another boy. “These things seem pretty straightforward to me.”

“Yes, Mr. Malone, they are straightforward enough,” agreed Frierson. “But the truth and the power of these principles lies not in their straightforwardness, but in their depth. There is more to them than meets the eye, although it is sometimes difficult for your generation to understand why that is. You young ladies and gentlemen have had the unparalleled good fortune to grow up in a sane, stable, and racially homogenous society. You can read in books and hear from old codgers like me what life was like before the revolution, when this country was part of the American empire. You can read and you can hear our stories, but you cannot *know*. You cannot imagine what it is like to live, or rather to try to exist, in a world consisting in its entirety of lies. A world of unspeakably vile sexual perversions which by law I am not even allowed to describe to you, even had I any desire to do so, which I do not. A kleptocracy, quite literally rule by criminals, some of whom were so bad and so blatant they were even indicted under the Americans’ own laws. A world based on no foundation other than sheer greed, wallowing in the most gross and despicable material gluttony. A wasteland of spiritual emptiness, moral corruption and cultural pollution. An entire society that was based on a bizarre and grotesque moral inversion: the utterly ridiculous and thoroughly evil idea that all humanoid creatures are in some manner equal.”

“Sir, I’ve never gotten that,” asked one of the girls curiously. “How could anyone even *pretend* to believe something that silly? It’s like claiming the sun rises in the west, something that just obviously isn’t true. All men and women are *not* equal. Some are smarter, some are faster, some are stronger, some are more spiritual, some have

more sense of humor, some can wiggle their ears...and when you look at the history of civilization, you see the same thing in the races of mankind and what they created, or didn't create. Europe conquered Africa, not the other way around. Was that supposed to be accidental? I just can't see how the American ruling élite, even as stupid and corrupt as they were, could ever deny the clear truth about race."

"They denied it because it was in their economic and political interest to do so, Miss Corelli," said Frierson. "The answer lies in the essential Judaic world view which rules most of the world today, but which up until forty years ago ruled all of it: *materialism*. Or secular humanism if you want to get fancy about it. If you are of the Christian faith, as many of you are, you would define it as the ancient struggle as to who shall rule the human soul and determine the destiny of humanity: man himself, or God. If you are a National Socialist, you would hold that Man is a part of Nature, while the American way teaches that he exists apart from it and above it and therefore is immune to Nature's laws. Materialism, ladies and gentleman. The world view of man as an economic animal rather than as a spiritual being with a soul. We went over this a couple of weeks ago, but I know the application here can be a bit obscure. Let us refresh our memories a bit. What are the two great philosophical and geopolitical manifestations of Judaic materialism? Mr. Korisov?"

"Capitalism and communism!" said a young Russian boy, his English good but accented.

"That is correct. And what is the dialectic basis of both these materialistic philosophies?" continued Frierson, striding up and down the aisles holding his yardstick like a sergeant major's baton. "Miss Strydom?"

"Both communism and capitalism are based on the presumption that man is not a spiritual being, but an economic unit of production and consumption," recited the Afrikaner girl from memory.

"Precisely. They teach that every individual man and woman has, in the final analysis, only an economic existence. It therefore follows that there can be no right and wrong, only the economically profitable and the economically unsound. To both monopoly capitalism and Marxist socialism in all its variegations, man as an individual is anathema. He is a component in a great machine to be

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fueled and worked until worn out and then thrown away and replaced, preferably replaced with a cheaper and more durable unit with a brown skin. The only significant difference between these two philosophies is which clique gets the profit of mankind's labor, the privately owned multinational corporations, or the corporate and bureaucratic state? The 'friends of the captain' or the 'friends of the crew' as Commander Rockwell put it. Towards the end of the last century, there were virtually no meaningful differences between allegedly communist and capitalist societies anywhere in the world except in levels of efficiency. Granted, in most capitalist societies ordinary people did enjoy a somewhat higher standard of living, although in the present era even that has leveled out as the United States and most of Europe have become part of the Third World racially, economically, and culturally. But getting back to the question of how the American ruling élite could propagate an idea so clearly wrong-headed and pernicious as racial equality, remember that in the context of the times it was *in their interest to do so*. Leaving aside the spiritual element for a moment, what was the economic rationale behind the American imperial establishment importing millions of Third World immigrants into North America during the last half of the twentieth century? Mr. Spears, we haven't heard from your diabolical wit today." There was a ripple of laughter throughout the classroom. "No doubt you can give us some fiendishly clever answer to that question."

"Cheap labor, sir," replied a blond young man stiffly, apparently unappreciative of the reference to his drunken prank with the Devil's head cut-out. "The same reason they used feminism to pour millions of women into the workforce beginning in the 1960s. To create a vast pool of cheap labor for capitalism that would keep wages down and be much more easily manipulated than the traditional white male blue-collar working class. There were also social engineering and cultural objectives as part of the larger Judæo-liberal agenda, involving the planned phasing out of the traditional family unit based on Christian values, and its replacement by sexually perverse and non-white substitutes that would be more brittle, less cohesive, and have less resistance to exploitation. The ultimate objective was to create a uniformly materialistic world based on the accumulation of the most massive profits possible, through the

amalgamation of all the races of mankind into one brown-skinned, raceless, cultureless mass that would have no religious or cultural heritage at all and would respond to whatever the Judæo-liberal ruling élite programmed into them.”

“Correct, Mr. Spears,” said Frierson. “I am grateful that you have found the time to fit reading your homework assignment into your recent career of drunken japery. Now, having read it in the textbook, do you know what it *means*?”

“I think I do, sir,” said young Spears. “It means ZOG wanted to turn the whole world into an ant farm. They still do.”

“Not entirely an original thought, but succinct and correct,” agreed Spears. “You definitely grasp the concept. ZOG’s master plan, a plan built up through almost two centuries of social and political consensus among the ruling classes of the Western world, was and is to create a whole Brave New World, as it was called.”

“New World Order!” called out one of the kids.

“Yes, it was also sometimes called the New World Order,” conceded Frierson. “We’ll get into this in somewhat more depth when we cover the Illuminati and Nesta Webster’s work. It is a vision on the part of the Anglo-Zionist ruling class that has very seldom been explicitly articulated, except sometimes almost by accident. Every now and then, the bastards let the mask slip. If any of you should ever get a chance to see an old movie entitled *Soylent Green*, I heartily recommend it. It is a largely forgotten and highly underrated classic that is sometimes shown on late night television these days. Made around 1973, I think. If you ever want to get a glimpse of what the revolution saved you and your descendants from, catch this flick. *Soylent Green* portrays the nightmare world that the unholy alliance of Zionism, capitalism, and liberalism sought to create. It was to be a world where a small little group of fantastically wealthy people live in unimaginable luxury. They would rule over a polluted and decayed planet consisting of billions of brown wage slaves, almost insect-like in their mindless conformity, existing in the very conditions of squalor and poverty which exist today in most places outside the Republic. Worker ants who would never revolt, because they didn’t know anything better. Conditions in the United States haven’t quite reached the soylent green level, but they’re getting there. The mud-colored helots of America have no religion except things like the

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Ronald McDonald cult. They have no language except the primitive Spanglish patois which is now the lingua franca of the States and most of the remaining whites are now illiterate. They have no concept of history other than politically correct horse manure that ZOG spoonfeeds them about warrior bimbos wearing armored bikinis and ridiculous lies about all the great men and women of history all being colored, Jewish, Marxist, feminist, sexually perverted, or some combination of all the above. That is what the greatest tyranny the earth has ever seen spent almost a century preparing for. Laying the groundwork, slicing away the rights and the freedoms of white Americans and Canadians thin slice by slice. All leading toward the day when the world would become one huge global plantation while Massah Hymie and the international bankers sat on the verandas of the corporate mansions, with mint juleps and designer cocaine cocktails in their hands. They have almost succeeded, everywhere else on earth but here.”

“But how could the white people of that time just sit there and take it?” demanded one of the girls passionately. “Couldn’t they see what was coming? The Old Man and others like Commander Rockwell and Pastor Miles warned them. Why didn’t they *do* something?”

“Ah. There it is. The Great Question,” said Frierson softly. “Miss Hansen, for the past century, both before and after the revolution, some of the greatest minds of our civilization have devoted whole lifetimes and lengthy scholarly works to the investigation and analysis of that very question. *Why did the white man do nothing* while everything he created, everything he held dear, the entire world that he had mastered was systematically undermined, broken and destroyed by the Jew and those who served the Jew? I have no doubt we will still be studying the problem a hundred years from now. I have no simple answer for you. No one knows. But we’d damned well better find out what went wrong in our minds and our souls, so that we can make sure it never, ever happens again. As to the second part of your question...well, the fact is that we *did* do something, Miss Hansen,” said Frierson somberly, touching the War of Independence ribbon on his lapel. “Almost too little, almost too late. Too late indeed to save all of America, but enough to build ourselves an ark to weather the great flood of mud. To the everlasting

glory of God and the redemption of our racial honor, at the eleventh hour, the fifty-ninth minute, and the very last second, madam...we *did* do something.” There was a short silence. “Do you know that there was one Volunteer who was only twelve years old when he was sworn into the NVA?” continued Frierson with a smile.

“Oh, come on, sir!” one of the boys couldn’t resist interjecting. “Twelve years old?”

“Yes, Mr. Jardine. Twelve. The former Volunteer I refer to came into this room a few minutes ago and is sitting in the back along with that other gentleman. May I introduce Colonel Donald Redmond of the Bureau of State Security, and the gentleman with the somewhat weatherbeaten countenance who is...?”

“Sergeant Nel,” spoke up Hennie.

“Ah, yes, Sergeant Hendrik Nel, who recently defeated the former NDF bare-knucks middleweight champion Ross Manlis after a thrilling forty-seven rounds. Winning me three hundred and fifty credits from the sports pool down at the Ten Bells, I might add. Any chance I could persuade you to give some of our school’s boxing team some pointers, Sergeant?”

The youthful heads of the whole class turned to look at Don and Hennie sitting quietly in the back. Don’s lips pursed in a smile. *Trying to throw me off balance, is he?* Don chuckled to himself. “Don’t worry, we haven’t come for young Mister Spears,” Don called out. There was a chorus of laughter in the class. “And actually, if we’re being completely accurate here, there was another Volunteer who was eleven when she took the oath.”

“We start teaching them to shoot at ten nowadays, in the public schools,” Frierson said, speaking more to Don than to the class. “Although I am glad to say most families start their children younger than that, at home.”

“My eight year-old has a permission slip from his mother and I to attend shooting class with the fifth graders. He loves playing Little Willie with his .22,” said Redmond. “You know, the kids’ game on the elementary school ranges where Little Willie hides behind his lawyer and you have to pop him when he peeps out from behind the armored briefcase?” The bell rang and cut short the possibility that Don would be dragged up to the podium by the teacher and asked to give an impromptu lecture on his experiences during the revolt, for

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which he was grateful. The students rose and gathered their books, gazing at Don and Hennie curiously as they left. Frierson came forward and shook Don's hand. "Sorry, Colonel Redmond, Sergeant Nel, I couldn't forbear the temptation to let my students know we had a couple of celebrities in our midst. I recall seeing you at several of the Old Fighters' functions, and you may recall that Bill Vitale introduced us once. I got your message saying you wanted to talk to me, but I wasn't sure when I should expect you. Do you want to come down to the teacher's lounge?"

"Do you have another class, Colonel Frierson?" asked Redmond.

"No, school's out and I'm through for the day," said Frierson. "And Colonel is my reserve rank. At Gordon Kahl High I'm Mr. Frierson."

"Then we can just have a seat here." They did so, and Frierson accepted the gift of one of the rolled Havanas. Nel declined, being a non-smoker. Don lit his own cigar and said, "This won't take too long. Mr. Frierson, something has come up which properly seems to belong to the past, but which may have a very important effect on this country's future. I need to speak with you about the events surrounding the ambush and destruction of the Olympic Flying Column at Ravenhill Ranch."

Frierson's brow furrowed and his face grew grim. "I think you know I'll give you any help I can, Colonel, but what the *hell* could that horrible...what could Ravenhill possibly have to do with the price of eggs today? My God, it's been almost forty years! There are kids in this school whose parents weren't even born then!"

"The State President has received a letter from Trudy Greiner," Redmond informed him.

"From...Trudy...Greiner." Frierson stared and was silent for a long moment. "And has this letter been authenticated?" he demanded intensely.

"As best we can do so, yes. It may be a forgery of some kind, some ONR trick we haven't figured out yet, but we are proceeding on the assumption that the letter is authentic. In that letter Trudy Greiner asserts her innocence of the charge of treason which has been traditionally leveled against her. She denies that she was responsible for the destruction of the Olympic Flying Column and she says she

wants a public trial or court martial. She furthermore states that she is going to celebrate Independence Day this year by walking across the border at Mountain Gate into the Republic, whereupon we will all hear the rusty screech of a gigantic can of worms opening.”

“Trudy Greiner claims that she is innocent?” asked Frierson, stunned. “Christ, how could she? I thought that BOSS had pretty much nailed her as the recipient of that million dollars?”

“There are some odd things coming to light about that,” said Redmond. “I need to learn everything I possibly can about what happened at Ravenhill that day. I am also interested in learning whatever you can tell me about a meeting which was held the night before the ambush at a house in Hoodspout that the NVA used as an assembly point. Whatever treachery led to the destruction of the column, it almost certainly had its origins at some point during that meeting.”

“I was there for most of the meeting,” recalled Frierson, his eyes dimming as he let his mind wander back into the past. “I was a fairly senior Volunteer.”

“And how did you get involved with the racial resistance originally, sir?” asked Nel. “How did you end up joining the NVA? We’re asking everybody that, by way of background.”

“Oh?”

“Yes sir,” said Redmond. “You understand that I am trying to get as broad an overview as possible of the people involved in those events. You never know what may turn out to be significant. So when and how did you become racially aware?”

“Oh, I’m one of those NS from birth types who were fairly common in those days,” said Frierson with a reminiscent smile. “Drawing swastikas all over everything from the time I was six years old, desperate to find and watch every movie I could find about Holocaust Two just so I could catch a glimpse of that coal-scuttle helmet and hear German spoken.”

“Yeah, same here,” replied Redmond. “My wife is a witch, and she tells me that people like that are the reincarnated souls of the millions of soldiers and civilians of the Third Reich who were cut off from life prematurely and violently during the Second European Holocaust. We gravitated naturally towards right wing causes and ideologies because we left unfinished business behind in Germany.”

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“Be that as it may, it was always obvious to me even from my childhood that something was very badly wrong in the world,” said Frierson. “I was NS from a very young age and involved quite young as well, although not very constructively. I started out as a teenaged skinhead back in Atlanta, believe it or not, although I got those ridiculous tattoos removed many years ago,” he chuckled.

“Never a Piercie?” asked Redmond.

“No, even when I was a teenager it was obvious to me Piercism was nothing but a cult with a guru sitting up in a remote mountain ashram clipping coupons,” said Frierson. “I wanted action. I was arrested a number of times for various drunken escapades as a skinhead, which is one reason I was a bit hard on Ted Spears just now. You heard what he...?”

“Yes, Principal Rogers told us,” Redmond told him.

“I just want to make sure the boy understands that he has reached an age when things like that have consequences and they can stay with him. Through a combination of luck and a grandmother who doted on me and was wealthy enough to hire top-notch legal counsel, I got off with only a few short jail terms. Then one day I got hold of a leaflet from the Northwest Agency, the Fundamental Principles of Northwest Migration, and it hit me like a thunderbolt. This was it, never a doubt in my mind before or since. I hit the books like hell and brought my SATs up to 1400, conned Gran into paying for my tuition at the University of Oregon, and then one glorious day I was on a plane for Eugene. I completed my first year at university, and then I went into the underground. I was with Murdock from the very beginning, when the Old Man swore us in on 10/22 at Coeur d’Alene. Tom and I went off together and hijacked a gasoline tanker as our first revolutionary combat action.”

“When did you first hear about the planned attack on Port Orchard?” asked Nel.

“Not until we reached the Hoodsport safe house,” replied Frierson. “We got the order to assemble there the day before. I was responsible for fitting out a pickup truck we’d gotten hold of as a scout vehicle for the Column, putting on fake license plates, making sure we had enough gas and that we had basic weapons and first aid supplies. The purpose of a scout vehicle was to report any enemy activity or blockages on the road ahead when the Column was moving

by vehicle, and if necessary run interference for them while they escaped and evaded.”

“Can you recall anything special about the meeting in Hoodsport on that particular night?” asked Redmond.

“They were all special, Colonel,” said Frierson somberly. “We were a band of brothers and sisters and we lived every moment of our lives as if it were our last together. Then finally that night, it *was* our last. Every time we got together to plan an operation we knew that there was a better than even chance that some of us would be dead within twenty-four hours. That awareness tends to concentrate the mind. The memory of that meeting is especially poignant to me, in view of what happened later on that very morning. I have often thought about it, dreamed about it...that last time we were all together. We were all pretty excited about the new mortar technique. We all wanted to be there when Drago and Frank Palmieri set off the sixteen mortar tubes, but we knew that wouldn't be possible. Our job was to move in and surround the courthouse and complete what the mortars started with small arms fire and RPGs. Our objective was to make sure that not one single attorney or Federal got out alive. But all of us were looking forward to the mortars, seeing lawyers blown sky high. Joe Cord and Ron Nolan made a study from available media archives on the Internet on several occasions in the late 1980s and early 1990s when the Provisional IRA had used that particular weapon, and they felt it was feasible. With sixteen tubes and each home-made mortar shell packing a 200-pound warhead of home-made gelignite, we would be able to deliver over a ton and a half of HE right over the razor wire and the concrete abutments and right down onto the heads of dozens of legal leeches, judges and Federal thugs. As it turned out, four of our comrades were able to simply ram the truck through the front door and detonate the payload. The stupid fools had prepared for everything except an out and out frontal attack. They never thought we'd have the courage to go right up against them, head on.”

“Yes, we have already spoken to Minister Palmieri, and we will be interviewing the McCanlesses later on,” said Redmond. “That part of it seems fairly straightforward, sir. What I am more interested in is the meeting that took place at the Hoodsport safe house the previous night. Can we get back to that? If there is any clue to be

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found as to what Trudy Greiner intends to spring on us, it seems to me it must be found there. What time did Trudy Greiner arrive at the meeting that night?"

"Er, if memory serves, a little past midnight," said Frierson. "I remember that we weren't sure when she was getting there and there was also a little bit of concern, because her cell phone was on the fritz."

"Did that excite any suspicion?" asked Redmond.

"No, it was legit. Trudy had one of those crappy Chinese Astras, and their communications satellite had actually crashed into the South Atlantic that very morning. Quality Sino-Israeli workmanship. It was all over the media because all the thousands of Astras were dead as well as Trude's. In any case, Trudy checked her phone with Ed McCanless like we all did, and he made sure that working or not, it was turned off. The idea being that an incoming call might give away the location of the phone to some of Fattie's hotshot electronic surveillance. I never noticed that it was all that effective, but we took precautions anyway. For example, we ran metal detectors and voltage sensors over everyone who attended the meeting to make sure no one was wearing a wire or had any kind of subdural bugging devices planted beneath their skin."

"Couldn't the NVA afford to give her a decent cell phone that worked?" asked Nel. "After all, she was more or less in charge of their support unit."

"The cheap phone was an important part of her cover," explained Frierson. "Trudy was supposed to be a secretary for a temp agency making \$23,000 a year. If she'd been stopped and found to be in possession of a \$6,000 phone that accessed a worldwide grid through a decently constructed Euro satellite, it would have been a break in pattern that would have tipped off any sharp counterterrorism cop that something wasn't kosher, in every sense of the term."

"So she arrived at a little past midnight. Were you present during the whole time during that meeting, Mr. Frierson?"

"Yes, I was assisting McCanless on security," Frierson told them. "I sat in a corner with headphones on, listening to a souped-up police scanner, going up and down through the frequencies, listening for any kind of traffic or chatter that might have seemed out of place or might indicate they were onto us. Murdock was jumpy with all of

our force being in a single place, so he wanted me to keep my ears on. The result was that I couldn't actually hear much of what was being said, but I had a good view of them all."

"Can you recall anything at all about that meeting which might have indicated that anything was about to go wrong? Trudy Greiner or anyone else acting suspiciously? Asking unusual questions?"

"Anything that would indicate who the informant was, if it wasn't Trude?" asked Frierson. "No, Colonel, to be honest I can't. Oh, we were all pretty hyped. This was going to be a major action, we were trying out a new weapon against the enemy and we knew we had the chance of striking a major blow."

"Those cell phones..." said Nel, his brow furrowed. "You say they were all turned off. You say you were in the meeting for most of the time. Were you there at about two o'clock?"

"Yes...yes, Sergeant, I was. Why?" asked Frierson.

"Was Trudy Greiner still in the room at two o'clock?" asked Redmond keenly.

"Uh, yes, I believe she was," confirmed Frierson.

"What time did Trudy Greiner leave the meeting?" asked Redmond. "Can you give us any kind of concrete time for that?"

"As best I can recall it was a little past three," said Frierson.

"What vehicle was she driving when she left?" asked Redmond.

"Ah, her own car. A white Nissan, I believe it was. She had something to do before she reported to the aid station in Poulsbo."

"Do you know what that was?" asked Redmond. "Possibly pick up the van that was to be used as the ambulance for the wounded if necessary?"

"Uh, no, I can't say for sure, but whatever it was, Murdock seemed to know about it and he was okay with it," replied Frierson with a distant look, obviously straining his brain to remember. "She was supposed to be there at the aid station at seven in the morning. She never showed. Why? Is the time that important?"

"Yes, sir, it may well prove to be crucial. We know that the enemy commanding officer, Major Woodrow Coleman of the Federal Anti-Terrorist Police Organization, received a call on his private cell phone at a little after two A. M.," Redmond informed him. "Colonel

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Frierson, are you willing to swear that you were in the same room with Trudy Greiner at two in the morning? You understand the implications, sir?"

"Yes, I do," replied Frierson, appalled. "I...I never knew that you had an actual time on the call that the informant made to ZOG. Trudy's phone wasn't even working, and even if it had been she didn't have it in her possession. Ed McCanness had them stashed away somewhere, damned if I can recall where. She *couldn't* have made that call."

"An interesting question, Colonel," said Nel. "Why did no one in any of the previous investigations ever notice the fact that Volunteer Greiner had something of an alibi for the two A. M. time period?"

"As I recall from going over all those old files, the CO of the investigation did in fact notice that discrepancy but discounted it," returned Redmond. "He figured that Trudy might have had another cell phone hidden on her person. Or she might have been wearing a wire, a wire connected to someone who was listening and who made the call to Coleman. That is at least a feasible possibility, of course. Mr. Frierson, this is important. She didn't leave the room at any time? To go to the can, to get a cup of coffee or a beer, anything? I know it's been more than thirty years, but try, try to remember! The fact is that thus far you're the only person we've talked to thus far who was with Trudy Greiner during that brief window of time. We'll be talking with Dr. Cord, of course, but we want to get everything we can from you first."

"I'm damned if I can remember every single minute, second by second," said Frierson with a helpless shrug and wave of his hand. "I'm sorry. It's possible she might have done something to communicate with the outside, but I am damned if I can see how. If she was wired or bugged in any way, it must have been something so sophisticated that it contained no metal and didn't utilize any electric or electronic impulses at all, or our body scan would have picked it up. If there had been any suspicion at all we would have strip-searched the suspected person, by force if necessary, and that includes everyone up to Murdock himself. Gathered together like that we were vulnerable, we knew it, and we took no chances."

“Very well. Moving on, sir, can you tell us what happened that morning? I understand that you and Bill Vitale were in the green pickup truck that served as the Column’s scout vehicle during the movement towards Port Orchard. I know Bill personally and he once described to me what happened, but I’d like to hear your version of it.”

“We were on that county road just north of Shelton, and we were somewhat ahead of the column because we were coming up to the point where we were to cross over Highway 101,” recounted Frierson. “If there were any obvious enemy movements or anything else suspicious, Bill and I wanted to give the rest of them as much lead warning as we could. We rode right through the ambush position and we saw nothing. The FATPOs weren’t total slouches, and given time they knew how to use camouflage and dig scrapes. All of a sudden we heard the firing from behind us and pulled over. Bill and I both understood what was happening, instantly. We got out of the truck, took our rifles and headed back on foot to reconnoiter, but it was obvious from the magnitude of the fire that something major was going down. More by accident than anything else we ran into a couple of FATPOs; I think they were actually fleeing the scene. We shot and killed them both. We had no field glasses or anything but it simply became obvious that there was nothing we could do. There were so many round strikes on the hillside just out of our view that they were raising a cloud of dust. With great difficulty I persuaded Bill to go back to the truck and E & E the area in accordance with General Order Number Eight.”

“You drove right through the Ravenhill ambush site and you saw nothing?”

“Neither I nor Volunteer William Vitale saw anything at all,” said Frierson tersely. “In short, Colonel, we both failed to do our jobs. I would have given up my life willingly then and I would do so now if it would change that, but that is not possible. What happened, happened. We failed and so the responsibility for what happened to the Column lies largely with us, or more specifically with me, since I was the senior Volunteer.”

“Mr. Frierson, we have spoken with Arthur McBride, a former FATPO officer who took part in the ambush at Ravenhill on the enemy side, but who defected to the NVA soon after. He tells us that

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the negroid FATPO commander Coleman was aware that a green Dodge pickup truck would be used as a scout vehicle, and that he ordered his men lying in the ambush not to fire at you and let you pass. Were you aware of that?"

"I was," said Frierson. "I believe that all came out at the formal court of inquiry after the revolution. The same one that sentenced Gertrude Greiner to death in absentia."

"Who knew the exact vehicle that you and Vitale would be driving?"

"I'm not sure. I probably mentioned that the vehicle was a pickup truck at some point when I was in the conference, but I honestly can't recall if I mentioned the make or the color. I don't think so. I would have had no reason to do so."

Redmond sighed. "Mr. Frierson, as you are a National Socialist I know that you take a balanced view of the religious issues which I regret to say have plagued our country since its inception. But are you aware of the fact that Tom Murdock was apparently a follower of the Norse gods while Melanie Young, according to all historical record, was a devout Christian fundamentalist, what used to be know back in those days as a Jesus freak?"

"Yes. I once went so far as to ask Mel about it, just out of pure curiosity. She said that God's gifts sometimes come in unlikely packages. The simple fact was that from the moment they set eyes on each other they were completely head over heels in love, which was both a beautiful and a terrible thing for us to watch, considering where we were and what was happening all around us."

"Was Trudy Greiner jealous?" asked Redmond.

"She was hurt," said Frierson with deliberation. "I could tell that. And yes, the thought has crossed my mind down through the years that she might have been so badly hurt that she lost all sense of proportion and lashed out, but in such a terrible and evil way? I just can't buy that. I never did, despite the findings of the tribunal. She was as solid for the revolution in her own quiet way as Melanie was in her passionate and turbulent way. I believed at the time that she accepted the situation philosophically and with dignity. The story of that million dollars has always been what totally baffles me about that whole sorry mess. Dammit, I just can't see her...it just doesn't *feel* right!"

“Trudy Greiner left the safe house at Hoodspout at three,” said Redmond moodily as the aircar winged its way back to Olympia and hour or so later. “At seven o’clock she’s AWOL from her post at the aid station in Poulsbo. What happened with her in those four hours? That has to be the key.”

“I just remembered something,” said Nel “You never did tell me just who was the original commanding officer of the tribunal that investigated Ravenhill?”

“Commandant John Corbett Morgan,” said Redmond tonelessly. “He didn’t tell me that, either. I had to learn it from the files.”

Nel said nothing for the rest of the flight. There seemed to be nothing to say.

* * *

The next morning Nel and Redmond drove down to Centralia, 300 feet above the old Interstate Five. “Is Cord as weirded-out as everyone says he is?” asked the Afrikaner sergeant.

“He can be...difficult and abrupt,” Redmond said carefully. “You might say that he’s kind of the last of the GUBUs.”

“The *what?*”

“GUBU. Grotesque, Unbelievable, Bizarre and Unprecedented. It’s a slang term the Old Man picked up somewhere on his travels. He started using it in his writings about the twentieth century racial resistance movement, and it stuck. Cord is of a certain anachronistic type the movement mostly weeded out in the early part of this century, or who were more accurately weeded out by ZOG when they did stupid things and were arrested. Eccentrics, misfits, sad sacks, dysfunctionals or barely functionals who came to the cause looking for an intellectual night’s lodging, or simply a night’s lodging of any kind. Cord is what might be politely called a rugged individualist, and not so politely called an asshole. He is arrogant and conceited, he has an extremely abrasive personality and he has great difficulty getting along with people. The other side of that coin is that he is what’s called a polymath, a genius in multiple fields, and he has always placed those talents at the service of the Party and the Republic. I think Palmieri hit it right on the head. Throughout his

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entire life Cord has manifested an incredible ability to make himself absolutely indispensable to the revolution, to the point where the rest of us have learned to grit our teeth and put up with him. This should be interesting.”

Even with their Bureau of State Security credentials it took them almost half an hour to get through the extensive SS security into the main block of the Northwest Space Center. The facility itself was the size of a small town, neatly laid out, row after row of buildings and hangars and warehouses. The streets were labeled by specialty: Cybernetics Street, Telemetry Avenue, Propulsion Square, Plasma Place, Mars Boulevard, Luna Lane, Aerodynamics Avenue, etc. To the east stretched the great tarmac expanse of the spaceport itself, dotted with great gantries rearing skyward, scooters and trucks and service vehicles swarming back and forth like beetles. Two shuttlecraft on the launching pads were fueling from massive rolling tankers the size of Don’s house. The entire base was ringed with banks of plasma-ray anti-aircraft weapons, equipped with the latest computerized firing systems and the most highly trained battery crews in the Republic. Any attempt to hit the spaceport from the air or from space itself would draw a devastating counterfire.

They found Dr. Joseph Cord in his office, leaning back in his rolling chair behind his desk and contemplating a computer display plate that filled one wall of the room. The famous scientist was scowling intently at a weird congeries of geometric forms that seemed to be doing some kind of mating dance. Occasionally he diddled with a remote mouse and the dance seemed to change directions. Redmond had no idea what the gyrating rhomboids and tetrahedrons meant. Cord was a tall and stoop-shouldered man in his seventies wearing a dusty white lab coat. A shock of unruly white hair fell down into his eyes as he peered into the computer screen. His heavy-featured face was smooth-shaven but his sunken cheeks and chin were white-stubbled. Laser surgery to correct defects of vision was now a standard procedure in the Northwest Republic, in most cases being performed in childhood as soon as the problem was diagnosed, but nonetheless Cord still affected a large pair of thick, horn-rimmed spectacles. In a country where corrective lenses were now completely unknown, this was definitely on the high side of eccentric. Eyeglasses were more antique than the fad for waxed moustaches. As they

walked in, Cord looked up and stared at the two policemen through his bottle-lensed glasses. He had an odd facial tic and behind the lenses his pale green eyes seemed to roll like those of a child's doll, although possibly that was an optical illusion. "Dr. Cord, I am Colonel Donald Redmond and this is Sergeant Hendrik Nel, from the Bureau of State Security."

"Yes, I know who you are," said Cord abruptly, his voice a low, hollow booming sound. "My secretary gave me your message, which I had neither the time nor the inclination to answer. I have nothing to do with security matters. Not my department. What do you want?"

"The truth about what happened at Ravenhill Ranch," replied Don.

Cord took off his glasses. Without them his baleful glare was even more unnerving. "And what on earth makes you think I can tell you that?" he boomed. "Speak up, young man! You look like you need a dose of ipecac!"

It had been a long time since anyone had called Don 'young man.' "Well, now that you put it to me that way, I realize you probably can't tell me after all," admitted Redmond with a casual shrug. "I doubt if you know much of anything I can't get somewhere else."

"Do not patronize me and do not attempt to use reverse psychology on me, young man. You aren't very good at it and I am in any case immune to mind games, since my mind is infinitely superior to anyone who might attempt to play them. I am as close to omniscient as any human being in history has ever become," rumbled Cord. He wasn't even indignant. He was simply stating a fact that was entirely obvious to him. "I have spent my entire life filling my mind with anything and everything worth knowing, and as a result I can tell you pretty much what you want to know about anything at all, if I am so disposed and if you have the intellect to understand my response."

"That is an impressive talent to possess, sir," said Redmond dryly. "Omniscience can be a handy facility for a policeman. I may be consulting you more often in the future. But in the matter of Ravenhill Ranch, I believe you have a part of the truth, even though you may not know it. I want to discover your piece of the puzzle so that I can eventually fit them all together."

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“How very scientific of you!” sneered Cord. “That was very long ago and I haven’t thought of that episode for many years. Why now?”

“Because Trudy Greiner is Coming Home. She says she is innocent,” said Redmond.

“No woman is innocent,” grunted Cord. “Since the time of Eve, women have been vessels of iniquity. Original Sin, gentlemen, Original Sin. The curse of God is upon all womankind, clearly stated in the Scriptures. One of the reasons I never married one, in spite of our government’s fecund social policy.”

“Is that why not? Probably best for all concerned,” agreed Don politely.

“Personally I have always favored reproduction of the species through artificial insemination, based on a strict eugenic program. I am of course willing to donate my own superior genetic material for such an endeavor.”

“How very scientific of you, sir. Not to mention patriotic.” Redmond and Nel seated themselves on the sofa that stood against one wall of the office.

“I did not ask you to sit down,” said Cord with a scowl.

“I didn’t ask your permission,” said Redmond. “We’re BOSS. We sit where we like and we shit where we like. Doctor Cord, since your time is obviously valuable I will get right to the point. It is my understanding that as part of the troop dispositions for the mortar attack on the Special Criminal Court in Port Orchard, you were assigned to set up a temporary aid station in Poulsbo, in anticipation of possible casualties from the action. May I ask if this was a regular division of labor in the Column?”

“Yes. I worked my way through my junior and senior years at UCLA as a part-time paramedic, or EMT as they were called in those days,” said Cord. “I was never particularly interested in medicine, but it is a branch of biology and biology does have a number of scientific applications, and as an EMT I could also gain access to live specimens for experimentation in such fields a bacteriology, organic chemistry, and so on. The fact was that I was the closest thing to a doctor the Column had. I was at the aid station, a Burger Boy restaurant just outside Poulsbo that was run on a franchise by a Party sympathizer.”

“A Burger Boy?” asked Redmond. “Wasn’t that a rather public and exposed position?”

“Urban camouflage,” explained Cord impatiently. “Very basic stuff. Surely you were in the military yourself? Surely they give you some kind of training in your organization? I shouldn’t have to tell you these things. Hide in plain site, Colonel. We discovered through experience that a semi-public position for such facilities was actually better than some obscure little house in the country where unusual traffic in and out might be detectable by aerial and satellite surveillance. The satellites would not see anything out of the ordinary in many cars coming and going outside a fast food restaurant, only typical Americans and their grossly overweight offspring pulling in to tank up on cholesterol, starch and salt. We always set up a medic station before any major action, not only for medical purposes but for redirection if things went badly. If any of our men were wounded and could escape and evade, they tried to make it to the aid station, and I did what I could to help them. Sometimes I could save their lives, sometimes they ended up buried in shallow graves nearby. On the morning of August 1st, I had set up a crude operating theater in the store room, as sterile as I could get it using disinfectant and disposable sanitary wipes, along with as many units of plasma and whole blood as we had been able to steal from various hospitals and blood banks. I was required to know all our people’s blood types, of course, and I recall I had to re-type every pint of whole blood we obtained because the Third World medical personnel in the American hospitals and the Red Cross were so stunningly incompetent. Sometimes as much as 20 percent of the blood was mistyped. Volunteer David Leach was with me for security. He was a rather violent and uncouth young man, not to mention a blasphemer and a sinner who was headed straight for hell and no doubt still is unless he wakes up in time to accept Jesus Christ as his personal savior. But he was very good with a gun. He was my bodyguard. I was considered to be the most important member of the Column and Mr. Leach was my escort to make sure I could get my job done. Miss Gertrude Greiner was supposed to join me there. She was a damned fine nurse, and truth to tell she was as good a paramedic as I was. One of the few women on earth I’ve ever had any time for. But she never showed up.”

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“What time was she supposed to report to the aid station?” asked Redmond.

“0700 hours. When she was half an hour late Leach began trying to contact Commandant Murdock on a pager with a special coded warning number, meaning that something might be wrong and to proceed with caution. When she still hadn’t showed by eight o’clock, Leach tried calling on a series of cell phone numbers belonging to Murdock, Melanie Young, and others. He got no answer from any of them. We now know why, of course.” Cord hesitated. The memory of those grim, eerie unanswered calls was apparently powerful enough to penetrate even his self-absorption. “About eight thirty that morning we saw news of the ambush on CNN. I immediately broke everything down and Mr. Leach and I evacuated the area to our respective E & E stations. In my case it was a dirty trailer behind a Jiffy Lube in Tacoma.”

“And do you know what Volunteer Leach’s E & E station was?” asked Redmond.

“No, of course not!” replied Cord irritably. “That was a standard security precaution. Everyone in the unit had such a place of refuge in case things went bad, but we never told one another where our E & E’s were, specifically to frustrate informers. You wear the ribbon, Colonel. You must know this. What was your bolt hole?”

“I had two. A short-range hideout in the janitor’s office at Sammamish High School and a long-term regroup point in North Bend. Dr. Cord, we have come to believe that the secret to unraveling the answer to what happened at Ravenhill lies in something that took place during the conference at the Hoodspout safe house during the night and the early hours of the morning which immediately preceded the ambush. We understand that Trudy Greiner left the safe house at approximately three o’clock in the morning, and that she did so in her own car. Does that fit in with your recollection?”

“Mmm, yes, I believe so. A white Nissan, I believe.”

“We understand that she was supposed to arrive at the medical aid station driving a van which had been converted into an impromptu ambulance for use if needed. Is that right?” continued Redmond.

“Yes,” replied Cord.

“We are therefore working on the assumption that when she left the safe house she was headed to someplace else to collect that van. Do you know where?”

“I believe you are correct, Colonel. Where was the van? That I couldn’t tell you for certain. I do recall that Commandant Murdock and Miss Greiner had a conversation off in one corner of a few minutes’ duration. I assume he gave her his instructions then.”

“You don’t know if the van was parked or stashed somewhere? Or if it was delivered to her anywhere, by another driver, perhaps?”

“Ah, I understand,” said Cord. “You are trying to deduce the possible presence of an as yet unknown party in the affair who might have been involved in the betrayal of the column. Very clever.” Redmond was slightly unsettled by the quickness with which Cord picked up on his line of reasoning. The man was no fool, however unpleasant he came across. “The answer is, I didn’t know, nor did I ask. We operated on a strict need to know basis and I didn’t need to know that particular detail. All I needed to know was that the medivac vehicle would be there at the Burger Boy if we needed it. Yes, it is possible she was meeting someone to pick up the van directly. In fact, I think it probable.”

“Why is that, sir?” asked Redmond.

“She would need a very secure place to park her own private car, one where there was no risk it would be found,” said Cord. “To the NVA during the revolution, Colonel, vehicles were almost as precious a commodity as guns and ammunition. It was very much like living in the old Wild West where one’s life depended in equal measure on one’s gun and one’s horse, and we learned to keep both very close. We never liked to park our cars and be separated from our transport for any length of time. Never knew when we might need to make a fast break. Instead of parking our vehicle in some remote spot and hoping it wouldn’t be found by the police, or towed away, or stripped by Third World thieves, we always liked to do a hand-over to another Volunteer when it was necessary to change into something more suitable for the job at hand. Then we’d arrange for pickup or to trade cars again afterwards. It didn’t always work out that way, of course. Sometimes we had no choice but to stash a car for a while. But we preferred not to, and so that’s why I think it is not only

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possible but somewhat likely that Miss Greiner was supposed to hand over her Nissan to someone else in exchange for the van.”

“Mmmm, I see your point, sir,” said Redmond, rubbing his chin. *Oh, hell*, he thought. *Let’s get it over with and hope the tirade isn’t so bad.* “Doctor Cord, as reluctant as I am to introduce a religious aspect into this inquiry, are you aware of the fact that Commandant Thomas Murdock was apparently a follower of the old gods of the Norse mythology? Whereas Melanie Young was a Fundamentalist Christian?”

“Murdock was a pagan?” scoffed Cord skeptically. “I don’t believe it! Surely he would have said something to me about it!”

“Ah, well, perhaps it’s just a rumor,” said Redmond in some relief. “Unfortunately, I believe the well known liaison between Murdock and Volunteer Young was not mere rumor. We have become very interested in the personal relationship between Commandant Murdock, Volunteer Greiner, and Volunteer Young. Specifically, we understand that Murdock had been personally involved with Trudy Greiner up until the time that Melanie Young arrived from Montana to take up her assignment with the Olympic Flying Column. Murdock then allegedly broke things off with Trudy and took up with Melanie. This romantic triangle aspect has been suggested to us as a possible motive for Volunteer Greiner’s betrayal of the Column. What are your thoughts and observations on that?”

Cord scowled. “I am ashamed to admit that entirely too often, our racial liberation movement was a revolting hotbed of unbridled lust.”

“*Cies!* What a recruiting incentive!” whispered Nel *sotto voce*. Redmond shushed him, but Cord rambled on, oblivious. “Yes, I was aware that Murdock and Miss Young were committing the sin of carnality in the unmarried state, and before that the Commandant was doing the same thing with Miss Greiner. I am sorry to say that sort of thing was quite common and one simply had to learn to look the other way in order to be effective. I was especially disappointed in Miss Young’s wanton behavior, since she claimed to be a religious person. I attempted to speak to her about it on several occasions but she for some reason she seemed disinclined to discuss it with me.”

“Indeed?” said Redmond, his eyebrows arching. “One does wonder why?”

“I can only conclude that she retained at least some sense of shame regarding her carnal sin,” replied Cord pompously. “I hope that remedial diffidence has been sufficient to spare her some of the subsequent punishment she has endured in hell since her death in such a state of impurity.” Nel opened his mouth to say something, but Redmond caught his eye and shook his head. “As to that motivating Miss Greiner to do what she did? Who knows why a woman does anything? They are ruled by their emotions and not by reason like men are, or most men anyway. But I should have thought that the million dollars she was paid would also have formed some part of her motivation.”

All of a sudden there was a buzz on the intercom on Cord’s desk. “Doctor Cord? I’m sorry to disturb you, sir, but it looks like we’re coming down to the kill on that Omni Twelve on orbital track 733,” the young man on the other end told him.

“You’re sure?” asked Cord excitedly.

“Affirmative, sir. The bogey is over Indonesia now and we’ve got Falcon Four closing on him,” said the voice on the intercom. “The target will be within termination range in about nine minutes. I think you’d better come down to the control room.”

“I’m sorry, Colonel, but duty calls,” said Cord, rising with alacrity. The prospect of imminent technology seemed to alter and revitalize him. “Want a ringside seat for one of the battles in the first war fought in space?”

“Wouldn’t miss it for the world,” said Redmond. Despite Cord’s irritating arrogance, Don was genuinely fascinated by anything to do with space and eager to learn more.

They took a long elevator ride down to the control room. The Falcon program satellite command center was in a huge, cavernous chamber deep in the bowels of the earth, carpeted and air-conditioned and capable of surviving a direct hit with up to a forty megaton nuclear warhead, as Cord informed them proudly. The whole forward wall of the long room now showed the blue curvature of the earth, filling the lower left hand third of the giant screen. A small light blinked among the stars above the inverted blue bowl at about two o’clock.

Cord took them into a glassed-in booth that contained several banks of screens and instruments. The scientist seated himself in front

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of a control panel and began flicking switches and pressing buttons. He assumed a professorial and somewhat condescending tone. "What you are seeing, gentleman, is a fighter's-eye view of war in space. This telemetry is coming from one of our unmanned Falcon orbital interception modules. That's our target," said Cord intently, pointing at the blinking light. "In this view we are filtering out all the assorted space junk surrounding the target, so we can concentrate on it, although if something gets in the way it will appear on the screen. We have been pursuing an American spy satellite, an Omni Twelve, launched in July from Canaveral. One of their newest and most sophisticated. Chinese technology and Korean manufacture. The Americans seem incapable of actually building anything advanced for themselves any more. It is run by an artificial intelligence chip designed by Dr. Saul Bloomberg of MIT, a gentleman of Hebraic heritage who is one of our worst enemies. Dr. Bloomberg has openly dedicated his life to erasing the Northwest Republic from the face of the earth, as he blames us for the loss of his precious goddamned Israel."

"Blames us with some reason, I am happy to say," said Redmond with a proud snarl.

"Indeed. You might say he is my opposite number. Bloomie and I spend our lives destroying one another's work. He creates avionic polymers and amalgams he thinks to be plasma-proof, the Americans build aircraft and I create new plasma synergies to break through whatever they've come up with. That's what I was doing when you interrupted me just now. Bloomie thinks his Compound 19 will restore American air supremacy so they can slaughter us all from the sky with impunity like we were so many Arabs. We will see how well Compound 19 holds up against my Green Magic ray. I think he and a few hapless American pilots are in for a surprise. Bloomberg doesn't play fair, though. The little kike has tried to have me assassinated, twice. By the by, Colonel, next time you see Mr. Randall, please thank him again for saving my life on that second occasion. That American idiot with his grenade destroyed one of my computer drives and I lost some data. It was very annoying."

"I will, Doctor," promised Redmond. "Two times? I'm impressed. I've only rated three attempts myself."

“Now, sir, let’s not get boastful, *ek se*,” warned Nel *sotto voce*. “I don’t think he likes the idea of being outdone in anything by a mere copper. By the way, when do we ask him about how he got into the NVA in the old days?”

“Do you really want to sit through that?” Don whispered back.

“Point taken, sir.” Egotist though he was, Cord was too involved with his instruments and the screen to take umbrage at Redmond being one up on him in the assassination attempt department. “We’ve been tracking that Ugly Bird for weeks, trying to get one of our Falcons within range,” Cord told them. “It’s quite a game, since neither of the craft has a milligram of fuel to waste and every maneuver must be calculated to the last micron.”

“Rather than waste time in all this hanna-hanna and dancing about, why not hunt these spy satellites down and pick them off with plasma weapons from a manned craft?” asked Nel.

“Because they’ve started arming these little guys with counterweapons that might hull one of our vessels and get some of our astronauts killed,” said Cord. “The State President has decided that’s an escalation we want to avoid. The problem is, it’s entirely too easy to get killed in space and there would eventually be fatalities. If they kill any of our space crews we’ll have to retaliate by taking out some of theirs. You know the iron rule: no one lays a hand on any of our Republic’s people, anywhere, anytime.”

“We just got a reminder of that from talking to Bloody Dave Leach,” said Redmond.

“Yes, David practices what he preaches, as you know. As the good burghers of Wellington, New Zealand found out. And to think I knew him when he was a mere homicidal maniac! So far, the shooting part of the space war is only between unmanned robot vehicles, and apparently ZOG is willing to keep it that way. For now.”

“Good,” said Redmond with a sigh of relief. “My son Allan is at Landfall Station on Mars. He’s coming home soon and I want to be sure his shuttle has a nice, quiet re-entry.”

“Luftwaffe Captain Allan Redmond?” asked Cord. “Why yes, I believe I remember him. He was on several of my training courses in astronavigation and spatial engineering. Very bright young man.”

“So what’s happening now?” asked Nel.

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“Intercepting a satellite in orbit when it is trying to evade you isn’t an easy thing to do by remote telemetry, gentlemen,” said Cord. “You have all kinds of variables of gravity, trajectory, inertia, orbital centrifugal force, acceleration and deceleration to take into consideration. All that can get even more complicated when the target is equipped with various devices to escape and confuse pursuit, like this one is.”

“What kind of devices?” asked Nel curiously.

“Radar scrambling and distortion equipment making it impossible for us to lock on to it, helium balloons made of thin metal envelopes that surround the vehicle, create false images and serve as decoys,” said Cord, studying the screen and the instruments intently. “But they’ve now got a new wrinkle. That Ugly Bird can squirt a sort of smoke screen of silver nitrate particles that effectively blinds our radar for several minutes, almost like an octopus in the sea squirting ink to blind and confuse a predator while it escapes. Under cover of the silver nitrate cloud the Omni shifts direction a few degrees and assumes a whole new orbit, which we then have to plot out. Then we have to fire Falcon Four’s retros in a controlled burn to resume an intercept path and bring it within range of the Falcon’s plasma gun and laser. From the enemy’s point of view, the name of the game is for the target satellite to make like a jack rabbit, try to run us to death, exhaust our tracker’s fuel, thus losing it until we can get a manned shuttle to pick the Falcon up from orbit and refuel it, then re-launch it. But this bird hasn’t done that for a while now. We think he’s out of smoke. Now we’re close enough to try and nail him, but he is most likely also equipped with detectors that sense particle beam fire and set off a small gas-powered gyroscope that gives the satellite a short jerk or shift up, or down, right or left. Sometimes only an inch two, not enough actually to alter the orbit, but enough to avoid a particle beam that’s only a few millimeters wide. That satellite can literally dodge bullets, Colonel, and I don’t feel like wasting the Falcon’s plasma charges on it. Falcon has a laser as well, but I’d have to get a wee bit closer than I’d like to try and use it. It would be close enough so debris and shock from the explosion of the Omni might damage our own bird, not to mention any counter-weapons they might use. The laser beam is only a pin’s width and it’s possible we might not disable or destroy the enemy while depleting our own vehicle’s power

resources. We'll save the beams for taking out less athletic targets. Plus our own bird may need that juice to defend itself against an American interceptor later."

"So what will you do?" asked Nel.

"Torpedo the bastard," replied Cord.

"Eh?" exclaimed Nel.

"Falcon Four is also equipped with eight solid-fuel rocket torpedoes, two meters in length, each with a 10-kilogram warhead of plastic explosive wrapped with steel bands which will provide a wide spread of shrapnel. Even if we don't get a direct hit, detonate the warhead close enough and a blast of several thousand hot metal shards the size of birdshot going through the skin of that Ugly Bird should take it out of action, render it just so much dead flying junk. But let's go for a direct hit, shall we? I feel like seeing something vaporized. And I want Bloomie to see a nice big explosion."

"Eh?" asked Redmond.

"Right now Bloomberg is sitting in Canaveral behind the controls of that Omni, just as I am here. I can sense his presence. Good. I am going to break his toy." Cord spoke into a microphone. "Ready torpedos one and two!"

"Aye aye, Herr Oberst!" came a voice on the intercom. Cord looked up and grinned like a little boy. "I like to imagine I'm a U-boat captain in the North Atlantic, part of a Wolfpack zeroing in on an American convoy. Or maybe Walther Schweiger lining the Lusitania up in my sights during the first war! On these occasions my staff is kind enough to oblige me." He turned back to his controls and monitors.

"Does he still play with boats in the bathtub, I wonder?" wondered Nel in a whisper.

"He's a bit hard to take, that I grant you," whispered Redmond. "But this is all very real, and dammit all, as much as he pisses me off, I have to admit that if there's any one man the Republic owes its existence to, it's Cord. Not even the Old Man. The Old Man gave us an idea, but Cord was the one who brought down the bombers. Napoleon once said that revolution is an idea that has found bayonets. The Old Man gave us the idea. Cord gave us the bayonets."

"Torpedos ready, Dr. Cord," a scientist in a lab coat several chairs away said, staring into his own console.

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“Fire one and two!” shouted Cord gleefully. Two spinning glowing spots of fire seemed to whirl silently away from just below the camera’s range and out over the brilliant curving blue and white cloud-fleece of the earth. Redmond would have thought they would head directly for the light of the target satellite, but they seemed actually to be spiraling down towards the earth. Then the lights blinked out and for almost a minute there was silence except for low electronic beeps and pings from the equipment.

“Ugly’s firing retros, sir,” said one of the console people, a woman. “He sees the torpedos and he’s taking evasive action. One and two auto-correcting.”

Redmond could not detect any motion at all in the light of the American satellite on the screen. Then all of a sudden it seemed to flicker. “*Damn!*” said another one of the men in white lab coats. “Silver nitrate cloud, Doctor Cord! Looks like they weren’t out after all. Radar’s real patchy, can’t get a solid fix. Torpedos twenty-eight point four miles and closing”

“Give me manual,” commanded Cord. “I’ll try and bracket him.” Cord coolly and swiftly moved levers, pushed buttons, and rode a small joystick. There were several brief dual bursts, pinpoint of light on the screen as the NAR rocket torpedos fired and changed course. “I need to get those two torpedos on either side of Ugly Bird and blow them simultaneously,” he muttered by way of explanation. “Like swatting a fly by clapping your two hands together. Now, is Bloomberg dropping the orbit or raising it? Aryans are spiritual beings and our minds naturally rise to the heavens. Jews are materialists and in a crunch they automatically gravitate towards the earth. Bloomberg is going down. In every sense of the term.”

Redmond and Nel stared at one another. A woman scientist in a lab coat leaned over. “Metaphysical astrogation,” she whispered. “He does that all the time. He sometimes calculates interplanetary range and distance in Biblical cubits. The hell of it is, more often than not he’s right. He’s probably right this time.” Suddenly Cord touched a button and there were two twin blasts on the screen, like the popping of two flash bulbs. A moment after that there was a gigantic blaze of blue-white light that blotted out the huge screen. It was almost five seconds before the earth appeared again, and this time the blackness above the glowing bowl of Terra was empty except for the

stars. A wild cheer arose from the dozen or so people behind the consoles in the control room, and several of them stepped forward to shake Cord's hand and pound him on the back in joy. "One of those was a direct hit, sir!" yelled one of the technicians.

"Congratulations, Doctor Cord!" said Redmond in genuine admiration.

Cord grinned at him. "I have been up on the shuttles and the space stations over two dozen times," he told the two BOSS men. "Saul Bloomberg has never left the earth. Now you know why. One day I hope to meet him in space."

"We keep getting back to that crucial four hours between three and seven in the morning. Now we have another question to answer," said Redmond as they were leaving the space center.

"And that is?" asked Nel.

"Who, if anyone, was Trudy Greiner meeting to deliver the ambulance van? Why exactly didn't Trudy Greiner show up at the aid station to help with the wounded like she was supposed to? Was the van not where it was supposed to be? Joseph Cord's statement backs up Leach's. Trude was supposed to be at the Burger Boy in Poulsbo at seven in the morning sharp. Why wasn't she there?"

"Because she knew what was going to happen?" suggested Nel. "Because she really was the traitor and she was busy collecting her million dollar reward? Sir, nothing we have uncovered thus far in any way indicates to me that the Greiner woman was not the informant, just as history tells us she was."

"She was supposed to be there at seven in the morning. She wasn't there. That means something serious," asserted Redmond. "Punctuality was a survival skill in those days. You were *never* late, the only acceptable excuses being death or arrest. The survival of the whole unit and beyond that the fate of our whole people depended on a Volunteer being wherever he or she said they'd be, exactly when they said they'd be. So what delayed her? Was it guilty knowledge? But even if she was the traitor, why draw immediate suspicion to herself? She could have shown up at the aid station and once the disaster became known she could have gotten away on the pretext that she was going to her first E & E point like Leach and Cord did. No, I have a gut feeling that for some reason Trudy Greiner ran into trouble after she left the Hoodsport safe house."

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“What kind of trouble?” asked Nel.

“Trouble from whoever was delivering that medivac van to her. There’s someone else involved in this, someone whose name we don’t yet know.”

* * *

The Ancient Days bookshop stood gabled and awninged at the corner of Main and Tower Streets in the middle of Centralia’s meticulously restored historic district of mellow red brick and brick-cobbled streets. It was a large, comfortable place, redolent with mellow incense, fine carpet and the delightful smell all true bibliophiles crave, that only comes from generously stocked shelves of books. The walls were lined with row after row of volumes on ancient Celtic and Nordic religions, Wicca, magic and paranormal subjects, Tarot and astrology. The center spaces of the shop contained glass display cases and tables of jewelry, ritual objects used in the practice of the old religious ceremonies, and other nick-nacks. Sticks of fragrant jasmine and sandalwood smoked in discreet joss burners in various corners, and a log fire crackled in a brass Franklin stove against one wall. “We admit, we try for a 1960s ambience,” Brittany McCanless told them. “Yes, granted it was a degenerate period in most ways. But there was a beginning of an occult racial awakening among the Folk. True spiritual enlightenment eventually leads down the path of Nature, and Nature leads directly to the truth of Blood.”

“Hell, you might as well,” chuckled Don. “Half our population dresses from the 1930s and the other half from the 1890s, and a few old eccentrics like Lars Frierson go for the 1970s look. One of our freedoms in the NAR seems to be the freedom to pick whatever era of the past you’re most comfortable in.”

“And why not? America forced an ugly and unwanted future on the Folk, so why should we now not be able to choose a more beautiful and desirable past in some respects, if that is what we wish?” asked Brittany with a smile. She was a slim and graceful woman with long iron-gray hair done in a single long braid down her back. She had to be well into her sixties at least, but she looked at least twenty years younger. She was wearing a long woolen gown with embroidered full sleeves. Her husband Ed McCanless was

dressed in a more modern tweed jacket, with a Western string tie. He sported a neatly trimmed white Imperial beard. They both wore the green, white and blue ribbon of the War of Independence, Ed on his lapel and Brittany on her bodice. Beside those were the small red, black and white everyday-wear rondels of the Iron Cross, earned on the day they had driven the mortar truck into the Federal Special Criminal Court in Port Orchard. Don had read the official reports. He had seen the old photographs of them taken by the enemy. He could almost close his eyes and see this elderly couple in those days, he tall and strong like some gallowglass of old Ulster, she a magnificent Valkyrie with long hair flying in the wind of battle. Don could almost see and hear the guns blazing in their hands as they covered Saltovic and Palmieri while they rammed the truck into the courthouse, set the detonator and ran for the battered Oldsmobile. *Four of them!* thought Don in utter shame and despair. *Ten to one! After all their brothers and sisters were slaughtered, the four of them went into that town and fought forty of those yellow cur dogs who served red-white-and-blue Amurrica. Gun to gun, hand to hand. And now I come into their home to question them, to bring into doubt the whole fabric of their lives. Dear God, how dare I? Who the hell am I to so much as bend my head in their direction?*

The four of them sat in a small living room off the main shop floor and Brittany poured them camomile tea from a large, freshly brewed brown clay pot. There was also a plate of highly tasty cookies made of organic brown wheat flour and honey. Nel held his teacup and saucer delicately in his hand, somewhat put off by the outré and mystical surroundings. *Clearly your basic fish and chips man,* thought Redmond in amusement. "It's always good to have an old comrade stop by, Colonel," said Brittany. "Even if it is on official business."

"Tell me, does another of your old comrades ever stop by?" asked Redmond. "I refer to Dr. Joseph Cord from the Space Center? Seeing as how he's in the area, surely he must drop by occasionally to hash over old times? Not to mention this superb camomile?"

"I'm sure Sarah's is just as good," said Brittany.

"Well, yes," admitted Redmond. "I'm sure she'd want me to say hello, by the by. Does Doctor Cord ever drop in?" he persisted.

"Holy Joe? Not likely," replied Ed dryly. "As far as Joe Cord is concerned, we are Satan's emissaries on earth. We haven't spoken

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in years. Every now and then we see him on the sidewalk here in Centralia. He crosses the street to avoid us.”

“I’m sorry to hear that,” said Redmond, shaking his head. “Religious differences aside, that is not the way to treat former comrades from the Volunteers.”

“That’s just Joe,” said McCanless with a shrug. “He’s always been a bit of an eccentric.”

“He’s always been a bit of an asshole,” corrected Brittany with a sweet smile.

“Let’s be fair to the man, Brit,” sighed Ed. “Joe was a loyal Volunteer, and for an egghead he never lacked courage. Courage among white men was in rather short supply back then, and he should get credit for that. He’s a brilliant scientist and his plasma weapons are the main reason we’re all sitting here and we weren’t bombed into craters by the United States Air Force. But yes, to be absolutely truthful he’s also an insufferable asshole. Anybody who knows him can tell you that. It’s customary to make allowances for genius, I know, but in Joe’s case one has to make a *lot* of allowances.”

“Did Dr. Cord feel the same way about you during the War of Independence?” asked Redmond carefully. “Not just you personally, I mean did he seem to have issues with comrades who followed the old gods, or who were atheists or agnostics?”

“He was pretty much the same back then as he is now, yes,” replied Brittany McCanless. “That’s very sad, in a way. One is supposed to use one’s journey through life to grow in a spiritual sense, Colonel. Joe has spent his life accumulating a vast amount of knowledge of the universe without, and not a lot in the way of understanding the universe within. His is a very tragic karma, when one thinks about it.”

“But again, since this seems to be my day to play Devil’s advocate, we have to give the pompous ass his due,” put in Ed McCanless. “He did his duty well then as now, and as much as we disliked him even then, we knew that when the chips were down he would have been there for us, as we would have been there for him. As it turns out, that situation occurred on more than one occasion. Joe saved both our lives once, for which we will always be grateful, and we saved his life once, which I am sure embarrasses and bothers the hell out of him to this day.”

“You folks get much trouble from the Holy Ghost crowd these days?” asked Redmond.

“Mostly just empty threats,” said Brittany. “We ignore them. Once our eldest boy Siegfried caught one of our local Bible-punchers spray-painting ‘Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live’ on the side of the store. Sieg was on leave from the SS and he’d just completed a hand-to-hand course, and so he broke a few bones the man of God didn’t need. The preacher man squawked for the Civil Guard, the cop came and saw what he’d been doing, and so the officer slapped him around some more before loading him into an ambulance. For some reason we haven’t had any trouble to speak of since then.”

“Every now and then one of them comes by waving tracts and tries to save our souls,” said Ed. “We invite them in for tea and spend a pleasant hour or so messing with their minds. But to be fair, when they see our War of Independence ribbons they usually calm down. Hellfire and brimstone aside, even the ones who think we’re Satanic respect that little bit of cloth. I’d also like to say that with the exception of Joe Cord, neither Brit nor I have ever gotten any disrespect from any of our Christian brothers and sisters in arms who went through that war with us. The few problems we get come from new immigrants or from woodchucks.”

“We’re both woodchucks ourselves, dear,” his wife reminded him gently.

“Yes, I know, but you know what I mean.”

“Daryl and his other brother Daryl?” asked Redmond.

“Who?” asked Nel curiously.

“It’s an old Northwest expression from Migration times,” explained Redmond. “It means native-born Northwest country yokel types. I have no idea on earth where it originated. There is another one some of our settlers would use sometimes, DM, which means Drooling Moron. That is a mortal insult and is accepted by our courts as constituting fighting words, as you know, along with whigger. Not to mention being a disgraceful slur against any racial brother or sister against whom it is directed.”

“It’s not really the country yokels who give trouble so much as it is the descendants of the wealthier families who lived in the Northwest before the Migration started,” added McCanless. “You know there is still an undercurrent of resentment among those who

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were part of the old ruling élite, the bankers and lawyers and such who made money under the United States régime and who still resent being relegated to the status of mere white people.”

“Yeah, we get some of that in BOSS,” agreed Redmond with a nod. “Every now and then we crack an espionage or subversion case involving people who still hold a grudge from the American time, mostly older ones who only remember all the luxury toys and crap their rich parents gave them as kids. That’s pretty much dying out now. My kids are woodchucks themselves and so are yours. Interestingly, those few cases of disloyalty among pre-revolutionary residents are more than counterbalanced by the thousands of people who fled from the Republic when we took over, and have since come back Home. Or their children who have returned. They have enough horror stories to tell about life in the wonderful United States to shut up the last of the disgruntled Gawd Bless Amurrica types.”

“So, why did you want to see us, Colonel?” asked Ed anxiously. “I hate to sound paranoid, but it’s not about that asinine plot to murder Pastor Briggs, is it? We barely knew Mr. Andrews, although of course we have heard about his arrest, and those of the others. I promise you that we utterly condemn what he was planning and we would have nothing to do with any violence against other white people, whatever their religious views. Or violence against anybody. All that is over for us.”

“Remember that rock song from the last century that goes *‘Now you’re old and gray, Fernando, it’s many years since I have seen a rifle in your hand?’* said Brittany with a smile. “That’s Ed and me. I don’t even know if we still have any guns around. We gave them all to our kids. I think Siegfried still carries my old Glock nine-mil as a vehicle weapon.”

“Well, that may not be completely true,” demurred Ed. “I think I’ve still got that old Ruger Mini-14 I toted during the war up in the attic somewhere. But it’s an antique, probably rusted solid by now. Probably blow up in my face if I tried to fire it, even if I could find some ammunition for it. Anyway, when we did fight, it was to put a stop to just that kind of thing. Hatred between white people. Like this Andrews business. Straight up, Colonel, we had nothing to do with that crap and we *wouldn’t* have anything to do with anything like that!” McCanless was clearly on the defensive.

“No, believe me, if your names had come up in relation to that case, you would have seen me here before this, and I wouldn’t be sitting here drinking your tea,” Redmond assured them. “My reason for being here has to do with something in the past. I’m here to talk to you about the last days of the Olympic Flying Column.”

“Ah,” said Ed glumly.

“That was a very sad and terrible event in our lives, Colonel,” said Brittany quietly. “May I ask what possible interest state security could have in it today?”

“I am interviewing all the survivors of the Column,” said Redmond.

“Why?” asked Ed bluntly.

“Usually a cop keeps as much information back as he can, as leverage, but in this investigation I have made it a policy to be completely open with all of you as to the purpose of my questions,” said Redmond. “The State President has received a communication from Trudy Greiner, a communication that we believe to be authentic. She alleges that she is innocent of the charge of treason and she is Coming Home on October 22nd. She is demanding a public trial on the charges against her.”

“Trudy is Coming Home?” gasped Brittany. “She says she’s innocent?”

“And if she is, that means one of us has to be guilty,” grated Ed harshly.

“Bluntly, yes, that’s what it looks like,” said Redmond.

“That can’t be,” said Brittany quietly. “I’m sorry, sir, but you are wrong. That cannot possibly be. It *must* not be.”

“I hope there’s some way out of this particular maze, ma’am,” replied Don. “I am here to learn if that is possible. Sergeant Nel and I are conducting interviews with all of the survivors of the Olympic Flying Column, and we are taking a similar tack with all of you. The first thing I would like to know is some general background, how each of you became involved with the Party and the NVA, and...” There was a little tinkle from the bell over the shop door.

“I’ll get it,” said Ed, rising. “Excuse me, Colonel.”

“Of course,” replied Don. Ed McCanless got up and went out onto the shop floor to deal with his customer. His wife Brittany leaned forward.

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“I’m glad Ed is gone, Colonel, because I need to answer your question before he comes back,” she said urgently, putting her hand on Don’s wrist. Don remembered Palmieri’s description of that same hand on his wrist over thirty years before in the Port Orchard diner as being like a vice grip. It was not like that now, but somehow just as strong and urgent. “The whole topic upsets my husband and enrages him even to this day, and he is reaching an age where extreme emotional disturbance can cause him serious problems with his health. You asked how we became involved. I will tell you very quickly, and then when Ed comes back, please don’t refer to it. Please?”

“I understand,” said Don with a nod.

“I grew up in Seattle,” Brittany told them. “My parents were yuppies, my mother worked all day at a high-powered white-collar job just like my father, and so for all practical purposes I had no parents. I was what was then known as a latchkey kid. My childhood was completely aimless. I had too much money, too little love, and too much time on my own. From there it was straight into the drugs. Booze at twelve, marijuana at thirteen, ecstasy at fourteen, cocaine at fifteen, crack at sixteen, and heroin at seventeen. Seventeen was my bad year. To this very day, I am astounded by the fact that I ever lived to see my eighteenth birthday. I went to the wrong party one night, I snorted and shot up the wrong drugs, and I ended up in a Cadillac tooling down Interstate Five south towards Portland. There were six people in that Caddy, five niggers and me. They pulled off the interstate at the Highway Twelve exit going towards Aberdeen. At that time there was an abandoned gas station about half a mile down Highway Twelve, and that’s where the blacks took me. They had been there before and so they had a key. We were all there for the next twenty-four hours. I think you can guess what they did to me, which was everything. Then they left me there for dead. I damned near was. I had a number of broken bones and severe internal bleeding and organ damage.”

“Oh, Christ!” moaned Don. “Ma’am, I...”

“Don’t be stupid!” she ordered briskly. “It was half a century ago and if I hadn’t learned to accept it and to live with it, I wouldn’t be here. After another twenty-four hours or so I was able to crawl out of the building to the highway. A motorist saw me in his headlights

just before he ran over me. He stopped and called for help. A team of paramedics from Tenino responded. There was also a Thurston County sheriff's deputy with them, a young man of twenty-two, just out of his training course in Olympia, and this was his first night duty. That young man's name was Ed McCanless. I'd tell you all the rest, but I don't have time. Colonel, whatever else you must ask us over this Trudy Greiner business, can we leave the so-called background out when my husband returns?"

"You got it," said Redmond.

"Absolutely," agreed Nel.

Ed McCanless returned and sat down again. "Young woman. Sold a Crowley Thoth Tarot deck and a pack of black votive candles," he said to Brittany.

"She's casting a curse, or trying to," said Brittany. "Do you know her?"

"She's a friend of Danielle Haywood's," said Ed. "Don't know her name."

"The little black-haired girl?" asked Brittany.

"Yup."

"I'll get in touch with Danielle and see what I can do to put a stop to whatever she's planning," said Brittany. She looked at the men. "Poor kid is probably upset because a man dumped her and now she's going to try and get even with him or with the girl she was dumped for, or both. That's no reason to start cutting loose with negative psychic energy. I try to be responsible, Colonel. I'd appreciate it if you would mention that fact to Sarah."

"I will, ma'am," Don assured her. He knew that his wife was an extremely high-ranking priestess in the Wiccan community. Sarah seldom volunteered information on that part of her life, and he never asked. Theirs was an ancient division of labor in Aryan marriages since the beginning of time. Don was the man and he dealt with the material world, while Sarah was the woman who dealt with the home, the spiritual and metaphysical aspects of life. "I would like to ask you some things about the meeting which took place in the safe house in Hoodspout the night before the Ravenhill incident."

"When they were setting up the attack on the Special Criminal Court in Port Orchard, yes. I remember. I was security officer for that meeting," said Ed. "I followed SOP to the letter. I had some of the

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latest anti-bugging detection gear our geeky science kids had come up with, and I swept the whole house for any hidden microphones or fiber optics. There was nothing. Then when our people arrived I swept them for bugs and made sure everyone's cell phone was turned off when they entered the house."

"Including Trudy Greiner's phone?" asked Redmond.

"Yes, although in her case it wasn't necessary since hers was on the fritz anyway. She had some Chinese off-brand phone and the communication satellite it was routed through had crashed into the ocean that morning. The chinks were never as on top of their space program as we are. Colonel, as lame as this sounds in view of what happened that morning, I want you to know that *I did my job!* I will swear on my deathbed that no one in that house during that sitdown was wired or made any kind of contact with anyone they shouldn't have been in contact with!"

"Trudy Greiner arrived at the safe house at what time?" asked Redmond.

"Ah, a little before one o'clock in the morning, I believe," recalled McCanless. "She was coming from Bremerton."

"And she left when?"

"Sometime around three o'clock. She was supposed to be helping Joe Cord and Dave Leach at the emergency aid station which was somewhere to the north."

"Poulsbo," Brittany reminded him.

"Yes, of course you're correct, my love," acknowledged McCanless with a nod. "My understanding is that she didn't show up."

"And she left in her own car, a white Nissan?" asked Nel.

"Yes, so I recall," said McCanless. "Why? Where did she go?"

"We don't know. That vehicle was never found, either by us or so far as we can tell by the local authorities or the Feds either. Mr. McCanless, I know this was a very long time ago, but please try and remember. We know that someone called Major Woodrow Coleman of the FATPOs at almost precisely two o'clock that morning," said Redmond. "Did Trudy Greiner leave the room where the meeting was being held around that time, even for a few moments? Or anyone else, for that matter?"

McCanless shook his head. “Colonel, I know it seems odd for me to insist that after all these years I can be positive, but I was security officer in charge of monitoring the meeting and I was also a former policeman, trained to be on the lookout for anything unusual. I meant what I said. I am willing to take my oath even today that no one in that house made any kind of call without my knowledge, nor was anyone out of my line of sight long enough to do so.”

“Something else has come up,” said Redmond. “Mrs. McCanless, were either of you aware of the fact that while Melanie Young was an openly committed Christian, according to our information Tom Murdock was a follower of the Aesir?”

“It was fairly common knowledge, yes, among those of us who took an interest in the spiritual aspect of the struggle,” said Brittany. “Most didn’t. Most of the Volunteers were simply ordinary white people who had finally had enough of America’s shit. They only knew that they would rather die than live one more day under ZOG and they didn’t care what God or gods any other white man or woman worshipped.”

“Did anyone in the Column take an undue interest or offense at the, ah, metaphysical incongruities involved in the Murdock-Melanie situation? Did Joseph Cord do so, for example?”

“Back to Joe Cord again, eh?” said McCanless with a wry smile. “He must have really pissed you off.”

“Mmm, well...yeah, kind of,” admitted Redmond with sigh.

“Don’t sweat it. He pisses everybody off. I see where you are leading, Colonel,” said McCanless. “All I can tell you is that you’re wrong. Joe Cord’s eccentricities in the religious department were just that, eccentricities. They would never involve treason. As much as I dislike the man, I will swear that’s the truth.”

“And no one else seemed to object?” pressed Redmond.

“No one else *cared*, Colonel. Just as no one ought to care today. We were rather too busy most of the time to worry about such things at all,” said McCanless. “In case you have forgotten, there was a rather large army of political gangsters trying to kill us all.”

Redmond changed tack. “Mrs. McCanless, one of the things that we are trying to explore as extensively as it’s possible to do after all these years is the exact nature of the personal relationship between Tom Murdock, Trudy Greiner, and Melanie Young. From what we

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have been able to gather it sounds rather like a typical love triangle, but of course under those conditions nothing was typical.”

“Looking for a motive for Trudy to betray the Column?” asked Brittany.

“Let’s just say I am trying to understand the whole situation. Scope the big picture, so to speak. You were with Murdock longer than most and you’re also a woman. Can you give me any informed insight on that aspect of things?”

“You mean was there the occasional bit of girl talk between me and Trude and Melanie?” asked Brittany with a rueful smile.

“Exactly, ma’am,” said Redmond imperturbably.

“Well, yes. There was some. First off, Melanie Young loved Tom Murdock with a love that was utterly incandescent, and he returned that love. I have never seen anything like it, before or since. That part of our national legend is one hundred per cent true. As for Trudy? She was a brave and noble woman and she ended up being an also-ran, which humiliation I never believed she deserved. I will tell you quite frankly that when Tom Murdock left her for Melanie Young, Trudy was utterly devastated. And do you know what she did?”

“What, ma’am?” asked Redmond.

“She ate it, Colonel,” said Brittany. “She took it right on the chin and she drove on. We had a world to win and personal considerations were secondary. Because her role in life was not of the heart, it was of the blood, and she knew that and accepted it. Trudy Greiner was a political soldier of the Aryan race, Colonel Redmond, at least up until the time she betrayed us all, if indeed she did so. It is part of a soldier’s duty to endure pain. Pain of all kinds. Insofar as I could tell, Trudy endured the pain of Tom Murdock and Melanie Young as she would have endured any bullet or shrapnel wound.”

“There is one other thing that I need to ask you about,” said Redmond. “I apologize yet again for raking up these particular dry old bones, but one never knows just what may prove to be relevant. It is my understanding that before you joined the Party, both of you were briefly members of the Pierce cult.”

“Yes, that’s true,” admitted Ed. “If you found that in our files then you also know that back at the turn of the century, Pierce was all there was. The Northwest Migration was only just beginning to

appear on the radar screen by the middle of the first decade. We were associated with the cult for less than a year, and we both immediately resigned when it finally came out after his death that William Pierce had been a long-term Federal government informant, as did virtually everyone else involved who had any sense of decency or integrity. The day after our resignations Brit and myself called the Old Man, explained who we were, and offered our services. He accepted. We have been completely devoted to the Party ever since. We have had no contact with the remnants of the Piercies since then except very occasionally, and then we urged them to drop all that crap, quit fooling around, and Come Home.”

“You know what the weirdest thing about all that is, to me?” put in Brittany. “The fact is that to this very day, there are *still* some poor, wretched white people living in what’s left of the United States who refuse to Come Home, who denounce the Republic because it isn’t all of America. We’re not ideologically pure, you see.”

“Well, we’re not,” laughed Nel.

“No, Sergeant, we’re not,” agreed Brittany with a smile. “That’s what so bemuses me. The fact is that Pierce succeeded in his odd way. There are still a few tragic old people who think he’s the Messiah, some kind of prophet who will somehow rise from the grave and restore all of America to our people at one magical swoop. They think that *The Turner Diaries* is just around the corner. They don’t understand that it’s already happened, right here in the Northwest, and they would rather live surrounded by the living mud than Come Home and give up their beloved illusions. It’s so sad...”

“Yes, ma’am, I am aware of that phenomenon,” said Redmond. “I am also aware that in most cases it isn’t quite as esoteric as you think with those people. I know because President Morgan gets hate mail from the Piercies to this day, and it passes across my desk in case any of them might be nutty enough to try something, against him or against the Old Man. It’s really the Old Man they hate. Every religion has to have its devil, its principle of ultimate evil, and the Old Man is the Pierce cult’s devil. Has been for a very long time, even before the Old Man himself Came Home. He did the ultimate evil in their eyes. He proved that he was right, and their great guru William Pierce was wrong, and they will never forgive him for it. These people would quite literally rather exist in the living hell of multi-

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racial America than Come Home and thereby admit that the Old Man was right. It is completely irrational, but then our race has always been capable of great irrationality. Now, I have a purely personal question, just to satisfy my own curiosity. You are practitioners of the Old Religion,” said Redmond “What do you feel when you hear our National Anthem?”

“Colonel, if you have read my file then you know that seven months after the Olympic Flying Column was destroyed, I was arrested in Spokane by the FBI,” said Brittany. Ed started to say something. “Ed, *no!*” she said sharply. “You did absolutely the right thing when you turned and walked away back down the street! There were too many of them! If you had pulled down on them then we’d both be dead!”

Ed started to say something, angry and upset and ashamed. Redmond raised his hand. “Sir, General Order Number Eight was not issued by the NVA for no reason. It was vitally necessary, and it was also an order. You were duty bound to obey it. Since you are both here and together, sir, it is entirely obvious to me that you *did* in fact do the right thing. Please continue, Mrs. McCanless.”

“They never bothered to charge me with anything. By that time we’d moved beyond all that legal bullshit. I was white, I had a gun, so I was a Jerry Reb, end of story. ZOG sent me to the women’s camp in Pullman. I will not go into what happened to me. It was in some ways worse than what happened when I was seventeen, but it was long ago, it is over, and it’s *not important now.*” She glanced over at her husband. “I will tell you that when I was in Pullman Federal Detention Facility, Cathy Frost was kept three cells down and across the corridor from me. The rest of us were warehoused in large bay-like cells with twenty or thirty women in each. Overcrowded, but you could at least stand up and move around a bit, sit against a wall and meditate, and we had a thin pallet each we could stretch out on. Cathy had her own cell, all four by four by four of it. Those monsters used to fold her up like paper when they’d finished with her, to stuff her back inside. Every third or fourth night, for six months, I heard the officers of the law of the United States of America come and take her to the interrogation room, where they desperately tried to force her to confess and name those whom they wanted her to name. And every night she was in there, at her own request, we did the only thing

we could do for her. All night long, at three or four minute intervals necessary to recover our voices, all ninety women on that block sang. We sang with every ounce of our hearts and souls, our voices sometimes even drowning out the sound of her screams of mortal agony. Over and over again, we sang Cathy's favorite hymn. That was *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*.

"The Federal guards would come in and hit us with water hoses. They dragged us out of the cells by our hair and shocked us with electric cattle prods. They beat us with their nightsticks, with padlocks in socks, they flogged us with stretched-out wire coat hangers to try and silence us, but we kept singing, and after a time they stopped trying to prevent us. It was as if they understood that we would never be broken, and all of a sudden it was they who were afraid of us. We sang the hymn in English, and because there were women from many different nations among us, after a while we could sing it in the original German. In French. In Norwegian. In Russian. In Italian. In Polish. In Afrikaans. The words of that hymn are burned into my memory in a dozen languages. Cathy Frost was a believing Christian, and regardless of our own religious beliefs we all gave her without stint that which she needed to survive and triumph over what those beasts who wore suits as if they were men did to her. That hymn was a form of magic, Colonel. It was then and it is today. It was written by a great man who was touched with the divine spirit, and it was sanctified by centuries of faith. No, sir, I do not begrudge my Christian fellow citizens of this Republic one single word of our national anthem. Cathy Frost earned it for them. Every word, every note, every syllable. I sang it with pride thirty-odd years ago, Colonel, as a Maiden. I sing it with pride today as a Crone. And I know that neither the God nor the Goddess take offense, for they were always admirers of courage wherever it is found."

VIII.

*And now my boy, I've told you why on autumn morns I sigh,
As I recall my comrades all from dark old days gone by.
We fought the scum and made them run with rifle and grenade.
May heaven keep the men who sleep from the ranks of the Old
Brigade!*

*Where are the men who stood with me when history was made?
They set us free from tyranny! The Boys of the Old Brigade!*

They met with Dragutin Saltovic in his dressing room at the Seattle concert hall. "Do you like Rachmaninoff, Colonel?" asked the great pianist, his accent barely perceptible after all the years he had spent in the Northwest. He was slim and elegant, his flowing pony-tailed mane and his large sweeping moustache pure white. He sat in an armchair completely at ease, wearing casual slacks and a turtle-necked sweater, puffing on a briar pipe, swirling cognac in a round-bottomed snifter. "I am doing a special performance tonight with the Seattle Philharmonic and Choir, dedicated to Rachmaninoff's work. We will be starting with the piano concertos and working up to the Requiem."

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“I’m afraid I won’t be able to make it tonight, sir, but my wife and I have both heard you in concert before, and my daughter Eva has a large number of your CDs in her music collection. She is a great admirer of yours,” Don told him.

“I will be happy to procure you and your family tickets to any of my performances, once I return from Europe. So, tell me, how may I be of assistance to the Bureau of State Security?” asked Saltovic politely.

“We’re working on a somewhat unusual case. It involves something that occurred during the War of Independence. If you don’t mind, sir, I’d like to get a little background on your personal involvement with the revolution first. We have our files, of course, but it’s always more instructive to hear these things at first hand.”

“Certainly,” said Saltovic with a shrug. One did not rush BOSS.

“How did you end up with the NVA?” asked Redmond.

“When I was a child, I heard the American bombers coming for us in Belgrade,” Saltovic told them. “I was six years old. One night the sound of the jets was especially loud. There was a great flash of light and I knew nothing more for a long time. I am told that electronic sensing equipment heard me crying beneath the earth. It took the rescue parties almost two days to dig me out, during which they themselves were bombed and strafed several times by the Americans and some of them died, so their lives had to be added to my accounts payable as well. They haunt me in some ways worse than my own blood, those brave and simple working men of Serbia who never knew me or my family, who owed me nothing, and yet who kept on digging and seeking a crying child beneath the rubble even while Bill and Hillary Clinton’s power of darkness came for them and butchered them one by one. The men finally found me, and I lived. None other of my family did, besides myself. My father and my sister were never found, at least nothing that could be identified, but afterwards, I swore on the grave of my mother and my brother that someday the Americans would hear me coming for them, and that they would know the fear and the horror I felt during those days. It was the oath of a child, but I meant it. Fortunately for me, one of the housemothers at the orphanage where I grew up was an elderly Orthodox peasant woman from the countryside named Dorotta, who

remembered the old ways, the old truths from the time of our fathers' fathers, when men could speak such truth without fear. She would come to me at night when I had bad dreams about the American bombers, and she would sit by my bedside and we would talk, very quietly. She told me about the Jews, so that I came to understand that it was not only America that was my enemy, but also that evil alien race who are the enemies of all mankind, the enemies of all life.

"I kept that promise of vengeance, Colonel. In my youth I became a Muslim of convenience for a time and pretended to be Bosnian, so that I could fight against the Americans alongside the *mujaheddin* in Afghanistan, and later on against the Israelis in Palestine. Then I heard that the white people of the Northwest had revolted against ZOG, and so I became a Christian again and crossed into America down by El Paso, on what was then the Mexican border before it moved north. I was caught by the U. S. Border Patrol, but then I pretended to be a Turk. I didn't speak any Turkish, but neither did the Border Patrol, so they had no clue that in my jabber I was describing to them in Pashtun the various obscene and improbable acts their own mothers had performed with goats and horses. At that time the secular puppet government of Turkey were the only reliable Muslim allies with ZOG against the Saudis and the Afghans and the Palestinians and the Iraqis. So they had special orders to ignore Turks, and they let me go. I made my way Northwest, to Seattle, and made contact with the local Serbian community. In the orphanage we had no computers or television, only music, and I had come to love music as the only sign I could find that there was either a God or an Allah. I worked as a piano tuner for several months. One of my customers was a family of very rich Jews on Bainbridge Island. They had a magnificent Steinway and a beautifully restored seventeenth century harpsichord made by Stefano Faureggio of Pavia. The Jew boasted that the harpsichord had been 'liberated' by his grandfather from a German *schloss* of some kind during the Second World War. Eventually I met a man whom I had reason to believe knew where I could find the NVA. I told him I wanted to meet one of their commanders. The man said to me, 'But why would they want to meet you?' I told him, 'Because I have something for them.'

"After some delay I received a call from the man who told me to be in a boathouse on Lake Union at midnight. I came there at the

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appointed time, and I met Tom Murdock. I had a bag with me and this caused Commandant Murdock and his men to point their weapons at me in suspicion. Murdock asked me what was in the bag. I told him it was my admittance fee to the Northwest Volunteer Army. He became angry. He said ‘Yeah, we need money and that’s a fact, but nobody *buys* their way into the Volunteers!’ I disagreed. ‘I think you will find this an adequate price,’ I told him. They opened the bag and found the head of the Jew with the Steinway. After they had finished laughing Murdock told me, ‘I’d take your price, mister, but I’m afraid I don’t have change. All I got on me is two nigger heads and a Filipino dick.’ I shrugged and told him ‘So keep the change!’ Then those mighty men laughed even more loudly, and I was sworn in.”

“You got in cheap. O. C. Oglevy would have sent you back to kill the rest of the family and burn the house down,” observed Redmond sourly.

“Oh, I had already done that,” said Saltovic airily, waving his hand. “But I only had the one small bag.”

“Er...right. So you fought with the Column until the disaster. Then where?”

“Then with the Number One Seattle Brigade, as I suspect you know, Colonel, since you tell me you have examined my military records. Then I spent a time just after Longview with Charlie Randall where I carried out special assignments.”

“Including the capture of Hillary Clinton herself, I believe?” asked Redmond. “I recall Corey Nash mentioning you once.”

“Yes. That foul hag was attempting to influence her weak-minded daughter to abrogate the treaty and resume the war, and that could not be allowed. Randall saw a window of opportunity during an enemy political conference. I was able to infiltrate into the Denver Hilton by posing as a waiter and the rest I am sure you know. By the way, that man Nash is insane,” commented Saltovic.

“Sir, I am aware of the fact that Mr. Nash’s treatment of Mrs. Clinton has been characterized as excessive even by some of our own historians,” said Redmond cautiously. “I am not sure myself whether he was left alone with her by accident or by design. I have always avoided asking. In any case, it should have been better handled, and I have stated that opinion personally to President Morgan. But she was a wicked woman and she deserved punishment, and if I may speak

from personal knowledge, Mr. Nash has a story rather similar to your own.”

“Yes, Colonel, he is a Rhodesian. I know what happened to his family. Nor do I, of all people, dispute that Hillary Clinton deserved death a thousand times over. She sent the bombers to Belgrade, after all. I do not criticize Mr. Nash or deny that I am very grateful to him. I am simply making an observation. I know the difference because I could see it in myself. There is a difference, sir, between evil and crazy. I am an evil man. Corey Nash is simply mad. I understood my own situation, and since the end of the War of Independence I have attempted to rectify it. I have tried to stop being evil and rejoin the human race through music. I hope I have at least somewhat succeeded. I kept my vow to avenge my family, Colonel. But after I had kept it, I knew that my parents would not have wanted me to live on in nothing but hatred and violence. My father was a cultured and gentle man who, I later learned, always did his best to try to make peace between the various nations of Yugoslavia. There comes a time when vengeance must end, sir, or else the enemy has destroyed yet another soul. I left the NVA when my duty was done, and I devoted the rest of my life to music, except when I was called up during Operation Strikeout, when I was attached to the military agitprop and psywar office. I know most Eastern European languages and I was able to help persuade the many Eastern European immigrants in British Columbia to support the Republic. Not that they needed much convincing in view of the persecution to which they were subjected by the Ottawa government and the B. C. provincial regime. Now, Colonel, may I inquire as to the exact purpose of your visit? If you have access to my files you probably know more than I do about my own career with the NVA, since I have forgotten quite a bit in the past thirty-odd years. How may I help you?”

“You are one of the eight survivors of the Olympic Flying Column,” replied Redmond.

“Yes,” said Saltovic, turning his head momentarily. He put his hand to his mouth. “That was a terrible time. The Republic lost some of the finest men and women who ever fought for us all. I’m sorry, sir, but they were...they were good friends. One especially. I assume you have some reason for reminding me of them?”

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“Mr. Saltovic, we need to speak of the events surrounding the destruction of the Olympic Flying Column during the War of Independence.”

“Why?” demanded the pianist.

“Trudy Greiner is coming back to the Republic on October 22nd,” Redmond told him. Saltovic seemed to freeze. “She says she is innocent. She is demanding a public trial.”

“*What? Keep her away from me!*” whispered Saltovic, his face suddenly going completely ashen. “I don’t know what you intend with this, Colonel, but do not ask me to go anywhere near her. I cannot. I swear to God that if you do I will find some way to kill her! I still remember some of those things. How to kill. Dear God, how could a woman so beautiful be so evil?” He looked up. His eyes had suddenly become almost insane. “But I want to be there when she is hanged!” he snapped.

“If that is your wish, sir, and if a security court finds her guilty, then you would certainly have that right,” said Redmond neutrally. “We need to be sure of our ground, though, and go over once again what we do know about what happened. You drove the mortar truck from Hoodspout down to Port Orchard?”

“Yes. It had to be me. I was the only one with a full CDL license, a license to drive an eighteen-wheeled vehicle, in case we were stopped. If that happened I had all my documentation and we would just hope to God they didn’t look inside the PVC pipes or notice that rather odd steel bar arrangement just behind the cab, the lift we would use to raise the mortar tubes into their firing position.”

“How did you manage to get that license?” asked Nel. “How did you pass the ID and background checks?”

“It wasn’t real. I had one forged when I was looking for work in Seattle. It was good enough to pass, and if it didn’t the cop who pulled me over just figured I was another foreign immigrant talking gibberish and would always take \$50 to ignore it. My driver’s license wasn’t real either, but in those days all you had to do was talk like a foreign fool and the cops figured you were just another illegal. Since local police were forbidden to enforce what was left of the United States immigration laws, in some cases it was actually better to be caught with a forged document than a real one. ‘I am goot Amurrican!

I come dis country for freedom, God bless Amurrica, iz greatest cuntry in verld!' You get the idea."

"You and Frank Palmieri drove the mortars?" asked Redmond. "With Ed and Brittany McCanless driving your forward scout car?"

"Yes," said Saltovic. "Young Vitale wanted to go with me, he wanted to lay the mortars and fire them off. Like all young men, he enjoyed large explosions. But Commandant Murdock vetoed that."

"Why?" asked Redmond.

"Because..." Saltovic chuckled, shaking his head. "Because, I think he felt I might not be comfortable with Volunteer Vitale. Or him with me."

"Because Bill Vitale is the illegitimate son of William Jefferson Clinton? The man who sent the bombers that killed your family?" asked Redmond.

"Bill Clinton didn't send the bombers, Hillary did," said Saltovic again. "That is why I told you that I hold no grudge of any kind against Mr. Nash, even though my personal opinion of his mental stability is not good. Even in those days, before all the research and exposition done by the Republic's historians, we knew that this was true, that Hillary was responsible for the American attack on Serbia. I knew it was true long before I came to America, although Clinton was certainly just as morally guilty of my parents' death as was his evil wife. He went along with it. Commandant Murdock was actually incorrect in trying to keep Vitale and I apart. Despite a history of vendetta among the Serbian people that rivals that of the Sicilians, I personally do not believe in transferring the sins of the fathers to the sons. If you want to know the truth, I found the presence of Bill Clinton's bastard progeny in the ranks of the NVA to be an amusing and edifying twist of fate. As to young Vitale himself, I liked him. Somehow I understood that he was aware of what his father did, but he was always too courteous to try and speak to me about it, and I found that very mature and honorable of him. After all, what could he say? 'Gee, Drago, sorry my father was a berserk tyrant who slaughtered your family?'"

"I understand. Now, the NVA men who ferried your two vehicles across Hood Canal. Did you know them?"

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“No. That often happened. People appeared out of the mist, sometimes quite literally in this land, and then disappeared after doing what had to be done.”

“Their identities probably aren’t important, since it was the main column that was ambushed and not the mortar truck. Do you have any idea why the mortar vehicle was sent into the attack zone separately with such a small team of Volunteers or why Murdock kept the rest of the group together?”

“No. Why? Is that important?”

“The only reason I can think of why he might do that is if he were expecting the main column to be ambushed,” said Redmond thoughtfully. “But if that were the case, why did he walk right into it? Murdock was never that careless. It just seems odd to me. We have already interviewed Frank Palmieri and the McCanlesses, and I think that we have a pretty fair idea of what happened during your heroic assault on the courthouse, which jibes with our official military history of that day.”

“We were not heroes,” said Saltovic. “We were simply doing what had to be done. None of us could have lived with ourselves if we had run away from the destruction of our brothers and sisters without striking a blow to make sure their deaths were not in vain.”

Redmond spoke again. “Mr. Saltovic, there’s another angle we’re looking at in our investigation. That’s the possibility that what you might call a lover’s triangle between Commandant Murdock, Melanie Young, and Trudy Greiner might have some bearing on what happened at Ravenhill. It goes to motive, you might say. I know it’s been a lifetime ago, and believe me, sir, I’m not just fishing for idle gossip from the long dead past. But what can you tell us about the relationship between Trudy and Murdock and Melanie in that sense?”

“Trudy Greiner was an extremely beautiful young woman,” said Saltovic. “That I will grant her freely. Yes, it is my understanding that when I first joined the Column, she was Commandant Murdock’s mistress. One has a feel for these things, you understand. And then there came a time when there was a perceptible change, just after Melanie Young arrived. We all knew, of course. You cannot keep secrets in such a close group of people who live in one another’s pockets and share the daily danger of death.”

“Did you yourself feel any attraction to Trudy Greiner?”

“Beyond the ordinary admiration of a normal man for such a woman, no,” said Drago. “There was another one of the female Volunteers whom I loved. A French Canadian girl. Her name was Gina. That story is not relevant to your inquiry, Colonel, except insofar as it tends to indicate that I am capable of judging the situation between Commandant Murdock and the other two objectively. Gina died with our comrades on that morning, but she lives on in my memory. In my heart, she is forever nineteen. Next question, please.”

“Did you ever speak of religion to Commandant Murdock?” asked Redmond. “Were you aware of the fact that he wore a Mjolnir on his person and appears to have been a follower of the Old Gods?”

“I seem to recall that he did, yes. There were men and women of all different Aryan religious persuasions in the NVA, Colonel. Many of us were there, in fact, because the dictates of religious faith demanded it and it was felt to be a duty to God or the gods as well as to mortal men to fight against the tyranny of ZOG. I myself once fought against ZOG in the name of Allah, as I have told you. But to most of us it did not matter why our comrades were there, so long as they were there.”

“There must have been exceptions?” asked Redmond. “Dr. Joseph Cord, for example?”

Drago shrugged. “Joseph could be annoying, Colonel, but he had a very good instinctive feel as to just how far he could go and he was always careful not to cross that line. And no one has ever questioned his genuine devotion to the revolution. If I understand your hint, no, I cannot believe that Cord had anything to do with what happened to the Column.”

“What *do* you believe happened?” asked Nel.

“My understanding is that Trudy Greiner is known to have received one million dollars from an unknown source the day after the ambush, and it is certain that she disappeared. Why should we doubt the official version of events?” responded Saltovic.

“If that version is correct, why would Gertrude Greiner suddenly decide to come in from the cold after all these years?” asked Redmond.

“Do you know what motivated me during the time I was on my quest to avenge my murdered family and my murdered country, Colonel?” asked Drago grimly. “Most would say it was hate, and yes,

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there was great hate in me. But most of all it was *guilt*, the unreasoning guilt of the survivor. My family were gone, all destroyed, and yet I remained behind. Why? Why should they be gone forever and why could I not be with them? Religious belief aside, sir, one has an inescapable feeling of being cursed of God, that one's survival is not a blessing but a punishment. Have you considered the possibility that this woman can simply no longer live with what she did and seeks to expiate her crime before the eyes of God and man?"

"But she says she is innocent," prompted Nel.

"Her mind may believe that," said Saltovic. "It is even possible, I suppose, that she is innocent in fact and that someone else betrayed the Column. But I can guarantee you, Sergeant, that her soul tells her she is guilty. She is guilty for being alive, while all those others whom she loved are dead."

"And how can you tell that?" asked Redmond.

"Because there are eight more like her," said Drago. "Me, and seven others."

"We have one more survivor to interview," said Redmond as they floated down over I-5 back to Olympia. "The one I am most reluctant of all to approach with this."

"General Willem Vitale?" asked Nel.

"Yes. I've sent word through military channels that I need to see him, so he knows we're coming. He's still down on the border, and so we'll be away for a night, maybe two."

"Sir," began Nel diffidently, "I understand this man is your lifelong friend. I'd offer to take over the interview myself, but I am only a sergeant and it would not be correct for me to interview a general in the SS, nor frankly could I muster the necessary officer presence in view of the difference in our rank. As late in the day as it is, would it not be better for you to bring another senior officer into the case?"

Redmond chuckled. "In the first place, *Sergeant* Nel, under Section 30 of the Offenses Against the State Act, that BOSS brassard you're carrying makes you Jesus Christ and all twelve apostles rolled into one anywhere in this man's Republic. As an agent of the Bureau of State Security you have the legal authority to walk into Longview House right now, without asking anybody's permission, and you can ask John Corbett Morgan what he had for breakfast if it is germane to

a security matter you are investigating. John Corbett damned well has to answer, and he knows it. He may well have your guts for breakfast the next day, but he has to answer you first. You can go anywhere, arrest anyone, beat the crap out of anyone or kill anyone if need be, and if you can convince your superiors that it was necessary to prevent forty million white people from going back to the horror we lived in all those years ago, then you're Jack the Lad. The Republic faces a clear and present danger from the United States and damned near everybody else in the world, and a society in our position must have blunt instruments at its command to break open the heads of those who would destroy us. That is the only way that an organization such as ours can possibly do our job. Remember the first rule you were taught on your first day in training when you came out of the Civil Guard to join the Bureau. This revolution of ours is *forever*. The white race will never, *ever* go back, and your job is to make damned sure we don't."

"Technically, yes sir, I do have that right, but President Morgan's breakfast menu aside, we do live in a real world, you know. Realistically, as regards this case?"

"Look, Hennie, I get what you're saying, and I appreciate it, but no," said Redmond, shaking his head. "Duty isn't something you pass off to someone else when the going gets rough. That's why it's called duty. It is *yours*. I had that drummed into my head during my History and Moral Philosophy classes at Sandpoint. It's Old Man 101, not to mention the core of Aryan manhood. Duty is what being a white man is all about, duty to family and country, duty to God, duty to history and to the Folk, duty to the past and the future...Christ, the citizens of the Republic have duty crammed down our throat, because that is who we are and that is what we were made for. The Christian Identity people call it the Yoke of God. The Old Believers say that a man must dree his weird. Beyond that, this is something I have to do for myself. If I shirked this, neither Bill nor my own family would forgive me and I would never forgive myself. It would be like I was afraid to face reality, and that is against the First Principle of National Socialist Thought. We accept things as they are, not as we would like for them to be. That's us, Hennie. That is how we live now. We are the men who did what had to be done forty years ago, and we do what has to be done today."

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“Where exactly will we be meeting the general?”

“He’s down in the Sawtooth hill country, touring the crossings and the forward positions and the outposts, checking on readiness, getting a personal feel for what the Mexicans are up to down over the line, that kind of thing. I could wait until he’s back, but we need to get this done. You up for a little copter ride?”

“Of course.”

“Good. When we get back to the office, go home and meet me at the Bureau helipad in two hours. Change into your bush tackies and take along whatever weapons or rations or gear you take when you go walkabout. Wherever Big Bill Vitale is, I can guarantee you that business suits aren’t required dress.”

* * *

The two BOSS men, now attired in their own camouflage fatigues, finally ran Major General William Vitale of the Special Service to earth at Outpost Twelve down on the border. Redmond and Nel landed at Twin Falls airport in the small hours of the morning, where they were met by a smaller military chopper and flown to a forward airfield in the rugged Sawtooth range about thirty miles to the southeast. Below them occasional lights twinkled in the cold blackness from the isolated border ranches and farms. From the forward airfield they arrived at the outpost after a long and bumpy ride in a Groundhog, a half-tracked all-terrain vehicle capable of climbing the hills like a mountain goat, crossing a lake, and roaring down a tarmac road at eighty miles an hour if necessary. Their driver was an SS sergeant from Vitale’s personal staff who seemed to know the way and thought it might be a good idea to see if the Groundhog could fly in the dark. Somewhat to Redmond’s surprise, they made it in one piece just as the sun rose over the mountains to the east.

Outpost Twelve turned out to be a carefully camouflaged base camp of tents, prefab buildings, plasma anti-aircraft batteries and vehicles hidden in a small canyon on the Republic’s southern Idaho border. It sat by a rushing stream deep in the rugged forest. The lean larches and aspens with their white trunks seemed to knife into the sky, their leaves bright orange and red. The smell of wood smoke, fresh coffee and frying bacon and eggs in the outdoors filled the air,

mixed with the smell of small arms oil and the indefinable odor of cold metal that always seems to hang over gun barrels and military equipment. The green, white and blue Tricolor of the Republic curled and floated in the cool dawn breeze, and beside it billowed the red, white and blue flag of the Lone Star State. The soldiers at the outpost included a few of Vitale's SS commandos, but were mostly part of the NDF's First Battalion, 32nd Regiment. The Thirty-Second was also known as the Texas Light Infantry, drawn from first or second-generation Texas immigrants. These TLI men were considered to be one of the regular army's élite units, upholding the long and proud tradition of arms of their native land.

The Texans wore the standard NDF military camouflage fatigues, but on their heads they wore gray felt Stetsons with their regimental badge, an honor granted to their corps after Operation Strikeout due to their successful capture of Kamloops and their subsequent defense of the city against over 35,000 Canadian government and U.N. troops. The day after the local white underground had revolted and seized the government buildings, 435 Texans from the NDF had parachuted in. They held Kamloops for the next eight days against overwhelming odds, mostly manning the plasma ray weapons that had brought down the UN and NATO bombers, but also organizing the defense of the hastily-erected fortifications and barricades against the Zionist ground troops. The TLI took charge of a ragtag force of over eight thousand white Canadian citizens of Kamloops, ranging in age from 12 to 80, most of whom had never held a rifle in their lives, since Canada had imposed over a generation of gun control on her white citizens. But they had manned the earthworks with the NDF rather than be returned to the Zionist government in Ottawa. Without their bombers, the troops of ZOG were baffled and reduced to clumsy, half-hearted mass attacks. They had never faced anyone who fought back without air support, and they were beaten back time and again, but the sheer weight of numbers had rendered it a bloody business. Of the 435 TLI from the first eight days, only 197 had survived. Of the eight thousand Canadian militia, only about four thousand were alive when the besieged city was relieved by the Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler and the Second and Third SS Panzer Divisions. When the war ended five weeks later, British Columbia and Alaska had become part of the

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Republic. To this day, any Texan who visited Kamloops found that his money was no good there.

They were taken to meet General Vitale in his command tent. “Don!” said Vitale in genuine pleasure. He rose from his seat behind a folding metal table and shook Don’s hand warmly. He was wearing a trim camouflage field uniform with SS runes his general’s oak leaves, and his Leibstandarte riband with the words *Adolf Hitler* in Germanic Fraktur lettering just above his left sleeve cuff. Big Bill Vitale always slightly unnerved Don and others who knew anything of history, because he bore more than a passing resemblance to his infamous father at the height of his power, but no one ever dared to mention the fact. “I heard you wanted to talk to me about something, but it must be more important than I thought for you to come all the way out here. Haven’t found any more of my doppelgangers from ONR running around, have you?”

“No, not thus far,” Redmond replied.

“I actually didn’t think that character favored me at all.” Redmond forbore to tell him that in an effort to fool the DNA scanners at GHQ, the Federals had located one of Bill Clinton’s many illegitimate by-blows who was approximately the same age as Vitale, a broken-down drunken derelict from Little Rock. Then the Federals had surgically altered him and mentally programmed the man to act as a suicide bomber. Although he had never referred to Vitale’s background out of courtesy, it seemed unnecessary for him to know that Don had killed his half brother. Suddenly Big Bill’s face went slack. “*Dio*, Don, it’s not Tori, is it? Is she all right?”

“No, no, Tori’s fine,” Redmond hastened to assure him. “Everybody back home is fine. That’s not why I’m here.”

“Whatever it is, couldn’t it wait until our 10/22 barbecue at your place?” asked Vitale curiously. “Don’t get me wrong, you know I’m always glad to see you, but things are a bit up in the air right now. Is this official? Look, Don, if there’s a state security problem going on here in this command that I need to know about, spit it out, man! We can’t afford any slip-ups today!”

“No, it’s not really an official visit, just want to have a little chat, sir, but I’m afraid this is something that has to be taken care of as quickly as possible, and definitely before the twenty-second. It’s an old case that we’re re-opening.”

“And you brought your BOSS partner for a casual little chat?” asked Vitale with arched eyebrows. “Must be some old case. Never mind. You’ll tell me when you’re ready, I’m sure, and in the meantime I’m forgetting my hospitality. Have a seat, gentlemen. Care for some coffee?”

“Real coffee or *ersatz*?” asked Redmond with a smile.

“Real honest to God coffee from the Medford hydroponics garden,” said Vitale. “That’s the one thing we suffer from in the Republic, the lack of a tropical climate to grow proper coffee and tea and tobacco, but the hydroponics guys are really doing wonders making up for it. Our homegrown real stuff costs like hell, but it’s available in every supermarket and I understand they’re even going to be re-opening Starbucks soon. Won’t that be something, after forty years? And I might add this isn’t special officers’ ration either. Any unit I command, I eat and drink exactly what my men eat and drink. No more and no less.”

“Actually, I developed a taste for the acorn brew when I was first married,” laughed Redmond. “Sarah has some variations on it, honey and special magical herbs. We still drink hers at home, but I have to admit a proper java is great on a cold morning.” Vitale took out a thermos and poured them each a mug of strong, steaming black brew into metal canteen cups and handed it to them. “Then came the *ersatz* instant. I think I was about twenty-five before I ever had my first cup of real coffee, and thirty before it had real sugar in it.”

“All the sugar beet crop had to be used to make fuel alcohol before that,” Vitale reminded him, sipping from his canteen cup.

“Yeah, I remember. You’re a hard man to track down in the field, sir. You’ve implied that this is something more than a routine border post inspection?”

“Officially, yes, that’s all it is,” said Vitale. “Unofficially, I’m here because we’re expecting a consignment in sometime today.”

“I always got a kick out of sanctions-busting,” said Redmond with a grin. “What’s the consignment? Medicine? Electronics parts? Vintage champagne?”

“No. We are awaiting a consignment of the most precious contraband of all,” said Vitale soberly. “Fifty-seven refugees from one of the last surviving Mormon fundamentalist communities in Utah. Twenty-one of them are children under twelve, including two

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newborn infants. They've been living rough all summer since the Mexican authorities evicted them from their homes in Provo."

"*Limpezia de sangre?*" asked Don with loathing.

"You got it. No one with what the Mex refer to as 'pure blood' can own property or be a citizen of the wonderful Nuevo Mondo Hispanica now. The pale and wicked gringo must be driven at last from the lands of La Raza, so forth and so on. Military intelligence heard rumors of the colony's existence and we sent Wild Man Mooney down there undercover to try and make contact with them."

"Now there's a name to conjure with!" exclaimed Redmond. "Rescuing whites from Aztlan is Captain Mooney's specialty, I believe?"

"Yes. For the umpteenth time, Paul Mooney stained his skin brown and dyed his hair black. His Spanish is perfect. You stand next to him, you'd swear to God he was a cholo. He even sweats Mexican."

"I beg your pardon?" asked Redmond.

"The War Prevention Bureau biotechies have these pills now that these deep cover guys can take, and it actually chemically alters the composition of perspiration so that the body odor reflects the DNA composition of a mestizo, or even a negroid."

"I know WPB has agents who can pass for monkoids for short periods of time, but that's a new one on me," said Redmond, shaking his head in wonder.

"It's important. Mooney can now fool a trained police dog as well as other Mex. He has an authentic East L. A. accent. He ought to. He grew up down there and his hatred for the spics is total, but with a little alteration he can pass for one of them and they haven't caught him yet. He's so authentic I understand the Mormons damned near killed him when he got into their camp in the Wasatch. Not hard to understand. The beaners have been hunting them like animals for months. Mooney was able to persuade them to Come Home easy enough; they were about ready to try and run the border on their own anyway, although there's no way a group that size could have made it past the minefields. Mooney took command and they've made it on foot up to a point about twelve miles from here on the Mexican side, where we were able to infiltrate and get them a dirt bus and a couple of SS men for the last run Home. They were supposed to take the gap

this morning, in the hours of darkness, but they had a delay. The two infants are now three, a little white boy who was born at four o'clock this morning. Mooney has a communicator and he brought us up to date. He's decided to try and take the gap in the daylight, as dicey as that is. The other side is swarming with Mexican patrols and they now have a unit of Chinese helicopter gunships on the border. The Mex don't savvy heat-seeking infrared sensors but the Chinese do, and Wild Man didn't feel comfortable waiting another day at the jump-off for nightfall. There's no way that where he was could have been defended long enough for us to go pull them out. He's coming down from the mountains with all of them in the bus, and he's going to break cover and make a flat run for the Keziah Crossing checkpoint."

"Right under their noses?" asked Redmond. "Isn't that risky as hell?"

"Yeah, I'll grant you, the danger's not small. But better than risking another day hunkered down like sitting ducks. Here," Vitale gestured to a map on the desk before him. Both the BOSS men leaned over the table to look at it. "You can see. It's only about a mile of open country, we've given him our latest poop on where we think the Mexican minefields are, and that bus is souped-up and mineproofed, water in the tires, the floor lined with heavy nylon conveyor belting. With any luck at all, they should be able to make it before those dozey *Borderos* realize what's happening. There's only two things that worry me. One is those damned Chinese choppers. We can spot them a little on radar and by satellite, bobbing up and down over the woods and the prairies. They're keeping their noses low and looking hard at what's on the ground, which is their mission after all. But my guess is that once Mooney breaks cover he'll be halfway to the line before they even see him. The second thing is that the Mexican commander on their side this month is United Nations General Alfonso Castaneda. He's a monster, but he's smart and he's tough and it's never a good idea to underestimate him. Him and me have a history."

"I know Castaneda," said Don, his voice suddenly growing cold and hard. "He has his own ideas about how to cure *limpezia de sangre*. His treatment of white women is...well, you know what he does."

"Oh, yeah. I know what he does. Well, with any luck he won't catch any of these Mormon girls today and un-purify their blood. As

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you can see, we have a reinforced company of TLI, air mobile with Valkyrie gunships to give him cover. The Valkyries are packed and armed and warming up just down the creek here on a little LZ the engineers dug out for us and camouflaged. Pull down a few nets and they can be in the air at the drop of a hat. We're hidden up here in the hills so the Mex don't spot us from one of their border observation posts and figure maybe something is up, and the heat shield should blur and block any satellite surveillance from the U. S. or Chinese orbitals they may have access to. We can be over there in a matter of minutes if we can get adequate warning and a good fix on Mooney's position. Besides, we have a battery of self-propelled 88s at Keziah. Once he leaves the starting gate, Mooney will be in range almost all the way and those 88s can discourage any pursuit. Now we're just waiting for news. It should go OK. Mooney is an expert at this sort of thing."

"A legend is more like," said Redmond.

"I have always wanted to meet Captain Mooney," said Nel slowly, turning his coffee cup in his hand. "He got my sister and my niece out of South Africa. Mooney entered the country, Azania as it is called now by the kaffirs, by posing as a Mexican delegate to the 24th World Anti-Racist Congress. He made contact and brought as many as he could Home with him. Mooney flew an ancient Russian transport plane directly from a secret airfield near Germiston with over 200 Afrikaners crammed into the hold like sardines, almost suffocated by the smell of the extra fuel. He evaded the Chinese fighters and he got out over the sea. He was the only pilot available. The man who was to be co-pilot had been captured by the Chinese and tortured to death. Fortunately the man who had to hand-pump the drums of jet fuel into the aircraft's tanks to refuel it did survive. The flight took over twenty-six hours, almost all of it over the Pacific. No airfield along the way would let the aircraft land to rest or refuel. Anna and Louwietje Nel sliced open Mooney's trousers with a knife, and they took turns massaging his legs on the foot controls and pouring coffee down his throat, slapping his face and shouting in his ear so he would not fall asleep. He brought the plane down at the Luftwaffe airfield in Astoria. It was a perfect three-point landing, using only two of the four engines and those two running on fumes. He asked Anna if his work was done. She told him it was done. Then

Mooney passed out and did not wake up for thirty hours afterwards. I always wanted to thank him for that. Just after he left, the 24th Ant-Racist Congress incited more massacres of whites throughout South Africa. What was left of my family did not survive.”

“Jesus,” whispered Don in dismal wonder. “All those years before the revolution the Old Man *begged* our people to Come Home. Begged and pleaded, cajoled and cursed, berated and mocked and threatened, anything to get them to come to the Homeland. Most of them sat on their lazy asses in the United States for how many years? Five, ten, fifteen? When at any time they could have gotten up, packed their gear and come to our people’s Home, *legally!* Now our people from all the world over risk their lives every day to come here. In some countries a white person can be sentenced to death for any attempt to emigrate to the Northwest Republic, sent to prison for so much as speaking about it. In the United States it’s a felony hatecrime. You know, sometimes I wonder if there are any of those left back there who heard the Old Man’s call back in the old days, when they were young? Who didn’t come when all they had to do was pack their suitcases and hire a moving van? And now, if there are any of those old people left, do they turn on their TVs and see white people running the border, the mines and the sensors and the fences and the razor wire, the helicopter gunships and the machine gun nests to get here? I wonder what goes through their minds? I wonder if they understand what a precious gift they threw away in their confusion and their laziness, back in the early part of this century when all they had to do was to cut out all their stupid crap and *listen* to that one voice of desperate illumination calling to them from the Northwest?”

“I can tell you. They would have given anything if only they had listened,” replied Nel. “I come from the remnants of an entire nation who wish with all our souls that we had listened in time to the call to act instead of to talk. We talked instead. We swilled beer and then talked some more and then swilled more beer until we fell down onto the ground like drunken swine while our land was stolen from us by the beasts of the field. We listened to people like that buffoon Terre Blanche. Or we listened to no one and ordered another Lion lager in the hotel bar.”

“And in this country we listened to wretches like William Pierce and that old bald-headed drunk down in San Diego, what the

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hell was his name? And dear God, how we paid for it! *How we paid!*” said Don with a sigh and a sad shake of his head. “Why? Why in God’s name did we not listen to that one voice of sanity that called for us to quit fucking around and *Come Home!*”

Vitale leaned forward on the desk. “Look, Don, we may not have much time, and I know beating around the bush when I hear it. What’s up? Why are you two here?”

“Bill...look...oh, Christ, I don’t know how to say this...back when you were a Volunteer during the rebellion, you were with Tom Murdock’s Olympic Flying Column. You’re one of the eight people who survived Ravenhill.”

“Yes, I am,” replied Vitale curiously. “You know that, Don. You’ve known it all your life. And now you come all this way to ask me about it? What the hell is going on?”

“That is the case that has been re-opened.”

“What do you mean it’s been re-opened?” asked Vitale in genuine puzzlement, still not comprehending what Don was saying.

“I need to interview you about what happened at the meeting that occurred at the Hoodsport safe house in the early morning hours of August the first, that year. And things that happened before it.”

“You need to talk to me about *what?*” Vitale’s face was blank. “Sorry, Don, maybe I’m a bit groggy this morning, but that was more than thirty years ago. I was a teenager still, fresh off the plane from Sicily. What on earth are you talking about?”

“Trudy Greiner has contacted the office of the State President. She says she will enter the Republic on October 22nd, at Mountain Gate in California,” explained Don. “She says that she’s innocent. She is demanding a public trial to prove her innocence, or guilt as may be. I am looking into that whole episode and frankly, I’m finding some things that don’t add up. I need you to tell me everything that you remember about that time in your life.”

“Ah, comes the dawn!” said Vitale softly. “This really *is* an official visit. The Olympic Flying Column was betrayed by an informer, Don. We always knew that. If it wasn’t Trudy, then the *stukach* must be someone else. Most likely one of the eight of us who survived.”

“God damn it, Bill, I didn’t mean...!”

“Then you should have meant,” said Vitale quietly and forcefully. “Look, Don, you and I have both had much to do with duty in our lives. I’ve always tried to do mine, and now you have to do yours. There is no need to be in any way diffident or ashamed. Ask your questions. I have nothing to hide and I’m not worried.” Vitale’s face clouded. “Don, all my life I have believed that Trudy Greiner was responsible for what happened that day to some of the finest and bravest men and women in the history of our people. Commandant Tom Murdock and Melanie Young were like my own brothers and sisters back in Sicily, hell, all of them were. I have hated Trudy Greiner in my heart and desired her death all these years. I still can’t believe she’s claiming that she wasn’t guilty, but if she’s not, and if I have been wrong all these years, then I want to know as much as you do. If I owe her that kind of apology, then I pray to God that both she and I live long enough for me to make it in person. Now ask me what you want to know.”

“The first thing I want to know is the first question I am asking everyone. How came it that you were not with the Column when the ambush at Ravenhill Ranch went down?”

“I was in the main column’s scout car, or rather scout truck, with Lars Frierson. Why did Murdock pick me? Lars and I were kind of buddies, and I think that’s just the way it played out. I wanted to go with the mortar truck, but the only guy we had who had a full CDL license was Volunteer Saltovic, and...”

“Yes, we know.”

“There wasn’t any reason Drago and I couldn’t have been alone together on a mission, at least not on my part, and I’m pretty sure not on Drago’s part either. We always got along fine when we were with the Column and I’ve met him a couple of times since then. There’s never been any bad blood between us, although God knows he had reason enough,” Vitale felt compelled to add with a sigh. “I’ve always admired and respected him for that. But I guess Murdock just figured it was better to be safe than sorry, and so he always kind of made sure it never happened. Nothing at all was said, ever, but Drago and I were never assigned to anything that required close personal contact.”

“Yes, we’ve already spoken to former Volunteer Saltovic, and with Colonel Frierson. What puzzles me, Bill, is a military question

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you're probably the most qualified of them all to answer. Why Tom Murdock, who was ordinarily such a cautious commander, seems on this one occasion to have put all his eggs in one basket and moved the entire column, mostly in daylight, in one comparatively vulnerable convoy of only four vehicles total? Can you shed any light on that?"

"Well," said Vitale slowly. "The only thing I can offer there is just a fragment of something I overheard between Murdock and Mel Young just before we moved out from the lumberyard where the vehicles were. I forgot about it for years, and when I did remember it was just ancient history."

"That's more than we've gotten so far," said Redmond.

"Something about secondary targets after the courthouse. We were all given briefings on their locations, vulnerable points for RPGs, security, etc. I got the impression that at the last minute the operation had become a bit more extensive than originally planned. We were really going to do a number on Port Orchard, the Special Criminal Court, the phone company, the cop shop, the whole nine yards. Take a lot more than the fifty-odd Volunteers we had. So we were hooking up with some reinforcements."

"What reinforcements?" asked Nel.

"Murdock asked us to make sure our CB radio in the truck worked. It did. He went back to Melanie and I heard him say something like 'We should run into the P. T. boys just past the Ravenhill access road, but if I don't see the signal we pull off and I'll send the scout up the road to go look.' The impression I got was that we were going into a combined operation with the Port Townsend Flying Column, and that Corby Morgan and his men were supposed to be meeting us at some rendezvous point somewhere down Ambush Alley, where we would presumably get our final assignments and dispositions."

Don Redmond's blood suddenly ran as cold as ice water. "Bill, Corby Morgan and the Port Townsend Flying Column were nowhere near your operational area that morning."

"Yeah, I know," said Vitale. "I found that out later, so I always figured I must have misunderstood what I thought I heard. Anyway, just past the Ravenhill access road Fattie sprang the trap. We heard the gunfire. We couldn't actually see what was going on over the hill. We couldn't actually see our brothers and sisters dying.

We knew damned well with all that heavy fire it had to be bad, but we couldn't do anything, and we somehow convinced ourselves they'd bop their way out of it. Hell, this was Tom Murdock and Melanie Young. They were our best. They could fight their way out of anything. So we obeyed General Order Number Eight and we left. Lars Frierson made me E & E with him."

"You told me about that once, Bill, many years ago. Anything to add?"

"No," said Vitale. "I've been a soldier all my life. That is the only time I've ever run away. I know it was complying with General Order Number Eight and I know it was necessary, but I don't think I've ever really forgiven myself, deep down inside."

"There's something else..." began Redmond hesitantly. "Bill, I have known you for many years now, and I have never uttered one word to you on this one particular subject. I am deeply sorry that I have to do so now, but I have to ask. We are dealing with a matter of treason against the state and the race. It's my job."

"Ask your question," ordered Vitale.

"Your father was the President of the United States..." He could not go on.

Vitale looked at him with a face of stone. "Yes, Don, you are quite correct. Never once in all these years have you or John Morgan or Sarah referred to my biological parentage in my presence, and I am more grateful than you can know for that. The only time I have ever discussed it with any of you was twice, many years ago, with Tori. Once in Sicily, when I was twelve years old, when she and Tony Stoppaglia and a man named Visconti, whom you wouldn't know, came to our home in Castellamare. And once again with Tori privately, after I came here, when she filled in some details. That was enough. I learned all I ever want to know about my birth. I've never even read the Old Man's novel about it. You want to know if that fact somehow has left me with some kind of emotional or spiritual bond with the United States?"

"Has it?" asked Redmond bluntly.

Vitale shook his head. "Don, by an accident of history my biological father was William Jefferson Clinton. But my true father, the man who made me what I am today, was the cabinetmaker and leather worker Anselmo Vitale, a citizen of Castellamare del Golfo in

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the prefecture of Trapani, in Sicily. My true mother was Giulia Vitale. My godfather was Antonio Stoppaglia. I did not grow up as an American, I grew up a Sicilian. That is who I am. I have spoken English for most of my adult life, but I still think and dream in Italian. By the grace of God I came to know my duty and my destiny in this life. I came to this Northwest land as a young man, to fulfill that destiny and to repay my debt to your family, to Matt and Heather Redmond and to Tori, who saved my life back in North Carolina at the risk of their own when I was a baby in arms. It is a life that I have never once regretted for a single moment. In the course of fulfilling that obligation, I became a National Socialist by conscience and a citizen of the Northwest American Republic. That is my family history. It is intertwined with your own, and if there was ever any doubt there, then you would know of it without having to ask. As to the other part? My biological father was a coward and a dog, a degenerate drug addict who raped my mother and then murdered her for the crime of giving life to me.” In William Vitale’s voice was a lifetime of hatred and anger and bitterness, of inconsolable loss beyond any help or understanding. Don’s heart verged on the breaking point for this terrible curse born so long by so brave and noble a man, for he understood that never before in half a century had Vitale ever spoken such words.

“He was also President of the United States,” Don reminded him.

“Yes,” said William Vitale quietly. “I was told the truth at a young age, by Tori and Tony and by John Visconti, who were there when it happened. I was given a burden to carry all my days, and I accepted it as the will of God. I have lived all my life in order to try and give some kind of decent meaning to that unspeakable horror from the past. My father was evil, Don. My mother was not, and I have always tried to be the kind of man she would have been proud of. In my home I keep a collection of every movie Alice Silverman ever made, every advertisement she ever did for detergents or stupid computer toys, every rock video she made as a teenaged girl, every interview or talk show she ever did in the 1990s. In the blackest moments of my soul, I watch them over and over. Those images on my comscreen are all that I will ever have of her. I will never, ever forgive Bill Clinton for that. Nor will I forgive the government and

the society that was capable of electing Bill Clinton not once, but twice. There is only one political or military implication to that which need concern the Bureau of State Security, Colonel, and that is that I want to place a priority on the NAR reconquering southern California for the white man. Before I die, I want to place a wreath of flowers on my mother's grave, if it is still there and the Mexicans haven't destroyed or desecrated it. That is the one and the only area where I constitute any possible concern to BOSS."

"Fair enough," muttered Don in utter misery. "Bill, there's something else. I'm starting to think this angle may be a long shot and most likely isn't relevant in any way, but what can you tell me about the personal situation between Murdock, Trudy Greiner, and Melanie Young? I understand that there was a bit of a love triangle going on there. And again, please forgive me, but I have to ask. One of the survivors we've interviewed hinted that you more or less came on to Trudy Greiner after Tom Murdock dumped her."

"Like a rocket, the minute I knew she was unattached," laughed Vitale sadly. "Just swaggered up to her in my best Italian style and told her, 'Hey, *bellissima*, when the time comes, I want a shot.' She just laughed and said, 'Not yet, Valentino, but if and when the time comes I'll keep your resumé on file.' Or something like that. Very light, but we both knew I was serious. Who knows what would have happened if she'd given my resumé a closer look before she...before she did it."

"You think she did it?" asked Redmond.

"Somebody gave her a million dollars, and it damned sure wasn't the Party paymaster," said Vitale. "We didn't have that kind of shekels. It was almost ten years before I got all my back pay from the NVA as a simple Volunteer."

"We do seem to keep stumbling over that million dollars," said Hennie Nel, glancing at Colonel Redmond.

Suddenly a young SS lieutenant stuck his head through the tent flap. "Sir, we've got a bit of a situation developing," he said.

"Mooney?" demanded Vitale, rising to his feet.

"Yes, sir. They made it to the jump-off point and he got them all on the bus, and he was taking it nice and slow down the cat roads, but it seems we weren't as on top of the landmine situation as we thought we were. The bus hit one, left rear tire. The mineproofing

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held and there were no injuries on board, but the rear axle is wrecked, the vehicle is damaged and the Mexicans have spotted them. Radar says they've got the whole nine yards closing in on the bus, copters and ground pursuit vehicles. Captain Mooney has been advised, and he's flooring it, but he can't make any speed on what's left of his rear tires and with a busted axle to boot. He's not even into the DMZ yet. They're going to nail him, sir. Him and all those refugees."

"Like hell they are!" Vitale ripped the radio from his belt. "Fire up the Ladies!" he snapped into the communicator. "All three of them, and both of the transports! Scramble the fire teams. I'll be there in two minutes and we'd damned well better be in the air ten seconds after that or I'll have somebody's guts in linguini sauce tonight! Captain Maxwell, do you copy? You get on those boom boys at Keziah and tell them I want a solid sheet of .88 shells on any damned thing out there that moves besides Mooney! *Capiche?*"

"You're going to invade Aztlan, sir?" asked the lieutenant with a bemused chuckle. "That'll be what, only the third time this year?"

"Yeah, I know, I'm getting out of practice," growled Vitale, buckling on his web gear and strapping on his coal-scuttle helmet. "Don, you and your sarge feel like participating in a little international incident?"

"Nothing like an international incident before breakfast to work up an appetite," agreed Don, standing up. Vitale tossed both of them a pair of Schmeisser machine pistols and a canvas bag of magazines apiece.

"These are Wilkerson Kine-modified!" exclaimed Nel, noticing the odd squarish bulge at the back of the receiver group.

"Yeah. You never fired the GW Schmeisser?" asked Don.

"Not the Schmeisser, but I have the range course on the Mark 7," said Nel. By now they were sprinting down the pathway towards the helicopter pads, following Vitale and the lieutenant. They could hear the whine of the Valkyrie gunship engines starting up.

"They handle like cartridge weapons, Just load the magazines like you normally would," panted Don. "Instead of the normal fifty rounds in the clip, you've got two hundred plain copper-jacketed slugs, with butterfly twists on the tip of each slug to make sure anything Mexican you hit turns into guacamole. Jack in a round, it

will chamber against the kinetic energy plate, pull the trigger and you've got a burst with very little recoil. Easy to aim and control, no hot brass flying about to roll down inside your collar and sting hell out of you. You can make like a Steve McQueen German from an old movie, spraying endless bullets from a bottomless magazine and yelling "*Macht schnell!*" Unless you'd rather glom a standard issue Mark Seven rifle?"

"I learn fast, sir," said Nel, slapping in a magazine. "Hey, General, if I bag a spic with this, can I keep the weapon?"

Vitale had no time to answer as they leaped into the cabin of a hovering Valkyrie gunship. The aircraft were floating like lazy dragonflies four feet off the ground, their light but bulletproof plastic fuselages painted in camouflage and sporting circular green-white-and-blue rondels on the tail assemblies. Nel and Redmond quickly strapped themselves into the rear rumble seats behind the door gunners, which was lucky for them since the minute they were on board the Valkyrie's pilot tore away from the landing zone. Vitale swung into his seat like a monkey, strapped himself in with one hand, and was immediately on the com, demanding a sitrep and issuing orders. Don looked up over the pilot's head and saw the Valkyrie's traditional runic inscription burned into the metal above the visor. Nel saw it as well and asked, "What is that, Colonel?"

"The NDF Air Cav's official motto," explained Redmond. "It's an old Viking expression in some ancient Norse dialect that European archaeologists found in the ship-burial mound of a king, in Denmark I believe. Those are runic letters. It means: *Hurry to meet death, before your place is taken.*"

"Is this where they start playing the Wagner through the loudspeakers?" shouted Nel over the roaring slipstream.

Vitale overheard him. "The TLI doesn't use Wagner," he called back to them. "They have a couple of old country songs from a hundred years ago they like." As if in response there was a sudden burst of sound from speakers embedded in the copters' landing skids. Don couldn't catch most of it, but it was some jaunty tune about there being beer in Texarkana, thirsty in Atlanta, and watching a bandit run. It seemed an odd song to ride into battle with, but then Don had always believed privately that Texans were a bit odd. There were three gunships and two larger armed transports to ferry the refugees

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back, both of which carried a team of medics. The five choppers zoomed in and out among the hills and canyons, over the trees of red and gold foliage, and all of a sudden they broke out over a spreading, flat plain matted with sagebrush and scrubby vegetation, the old country song blaring in the air around them with a twang of banjos. “What is a smokey?” asked Nel.

“Uh, not sure, it used to be some kind of bear, I think,” replied Redmond. Don never ceased to be amazed at how quickly the terrain could change here in the border country, both here and along the Montana salients where he had done his own military service with the SS. One minute they were flying through mountain forests of golden autumn foliage and now they were over flat prairie. Don twisted around in his seat and tried to catch a glimpse of where they were going. Ahead he could see fountains of earth erupting from the red ochre desert floor, and he understood that the choppers were swinging wide and coming in from the south at a high angle, in an attempt to avoid the artillery barrage. He couldn’t tell whether the shells came from the enemy or from the NDF’s .88-millimeter batteries. He could not see any sign of the bus full of Mormon refugees, or indeed any motion on the ground of man or vehicle at all. Several bullets clacked and whined off the outer skin of the choppers. “We’re being shot at!” he told Nel. The distance was short now, and all of a sudden the NDF choppers were over the bus. Redmond saw that an SS man in camouflage fatigues was lying prone on the top of the battered bus, a bipod-mounted splat gun against one shoulder. The splat gun was outwardly modeled on the Browning Automatic Rifle of the previous century, although it weighed about five pounds lighter. Instead of ordinary ammunition it chambered 18-inch long Wilkerson KE rounds of cadmium steel rod, sliced lengthwise from the top into eight slender, needle-like sections. When the kinetic energy plate hurled this projectile from the barrel at over seven thousand feet per second muzzle velocity, the sections opened and were thrown into a spin, resulting in a spread of eight whirling buzz saws that would be three to four feet in diameter by the time a target was reached. A tank or armored vehicle would be sheared through, and by the time the shards tore through the armor plating the heat of air and matter resistance would have turned them molten. As for a man, the kinetic force would literally dismember him, hence the weapon’s name.

“Ugly Birds downrange, five each, two miles and closing!” someone squawked over the coms. The two transport choppers began settling down on either end of the bus. The door of the bus opened, and a brown-skinned, shirtless, Hispanic-looking man with a heavy black moustache and wearing patched jeans leaped out.

“That’s Mooney! Hold your fire!” shouted Vitale into his com. Medics leaped from both transports and ran to the bus in the swirling dust and sand. Wild Man Mooney began pulling men and women off the bus and sorting them toward the copters, one left, one right, one left, one right. Two of the medics grabbed women carrying babies in arms and hustled them towards the open loading doors of the choppers. A rocket plowed into the ground about fifty feet away from the bus and shook the earth, sending a geyser of soil and sagebrush into the air. “Ladies, hit those Ugliers! Keep them away from that bus!” snapped Vitale into his mike. The Valkyrie surged forward and the bus below them was gone from view. Don looked forward just as the copter pilot leaned hard starboard and soared, then suddenly dived, bringing one of the Chinese helicopters into view in the open door. The door gunner cut loose with his twin machine guns, the 1000-round drums feeding slim and deadly .180 bullets against the energy plates and spitting them like a water hose. The pilot suddenly barrel-rolled out of a spray of Chinese fire that pattered against the fuselage like deadly raindrops. One of the machine gun bullets came through the door and slammed into the bulkhead a couple of inches to the left of Don’s head, making his left ear ring. From that point on Don lost all track of what was going on. There were long minutes of twisting, soaring, diving and rolling accompanied by the clatter of machine gun fire, the thud of explosions, and incoherent voices coming out of the com, and then suddenly the Valkyrie dropped like a stone, hovered briefly a few feet above the desert floor, and set down. “Let’s go!” yelled Vitale, jumping to the ground as the starboard door gunner covered him with a long sweep of fire. Redmond and Nel ripped off their harnesses and stumbled out after him.

“Go where?” Don shouted. Then he saw that one of the Valkyries was down, black smoke pouring from its methane engine, its fuselage battered almost shapeless by hundreds of bullets and a hole from an RPG or some kind of shell in the pilot’s windscreen. Through the open side door he could see the starboard door gunner

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firing at something in the distance. The port gunner hung in his harness, bleeding, and one of the pilots was crawling toward them, right leg bloody and smashed. Vitale and Nel ran for the wounded man on the ground. Redmond slung his submachine gun and leaped up onto the stricken copter. One glance was enough to show him the first pilot was dead; his helmeted head was hanging off his shoulders over the back of the seat by a few white sinews. Don pulled open the portside gunner's harness. As the man slumped forward Redmond shouldered him, hoisted him into a fireman's carry and began lumbering back towards his own Valkyrie. The starboard door gunner there unhooked, jumped out, and helped Don load the wounded man onto the deck and hook a safety line onto his belt. "I'll take care of Harley, sir!" the soldier shouted. "Help the General!" Redmond whirled and saw Hennie Nel staggering back towards the gunship, half-lifting the pilot with the wounded leg whose arm was around the Afrikaner's neck, half dragging him. Bill Vitale was in the portside door of the downed Valkyrie, standing tiptoe on the now empty gunner's seat, and firing at something over the roof, his head hunkered down beneath the still turning rotor blade. Redmond unslung his Schmeisser and chambered a round. Other than a few brief glimpses of the black Chinese helicopters, he hadn't seen an enemy yet.

Then he did. Four, then five, then six men in khaki uniforms and OD green helmets came over a small slope at a dead run, then stopped to spray automatic fire at the Northwesters. Redmond hit the dirt, slipped the cuff over the firing chamber of his Schmeisser and quickly rotated the long magazine ninety degrees up and to the left so he could better fire from the prone position, snapped it back into place and cut loose. He saw one of the Mexicans drop, and then others as they were hit by fire from Vitale and the starboard gunner on the downed bird. "*Don! Let's go!*" came a shout. Vitale and the door gunner were now running towards him. Don scrambled to his feet. They reached the door of their own copter. As they leaped in Vitale yelled at the crewman, "You set the charge?"

"Yes sir, she goes in another thirty seconds...*shit!*"

Some sixth sense seemed to warn Don. He whirled just as another group of Mexican soldiers leaped out of the whirling dust from nowhere. Vitale was on the starboard door guns in what must

have been microseconds and Hennie Nel opened fire with his Schmeisser. All of them twirled and twisted and tumbled except one huge mestizo who leaped onto Don with a long dagger or bayonet in his teeth. The Valkyrie began to rise rapidly into the air, as Don and the Mexican grappled, half in and half out of the door, the Mexican trying to draw back far enough to stab Don around the protruding machine gun barrels while Don tried to twist his gun muzzle inward enough to fire and hit the man who clung to him like a leech. A hand holding an old-fashioned BOSS issue 7.65 Walter PPK leaned out and fired, sending a bright brass cartridge casing into the air. The Mexican's skull popped open like a piñata, bloody crimson and white bone and brain fragments spraying, and he twirled back down to earth. Just as his corpse hit the downed Valkyrie exploded into a ball of flame.

Strong hands pulled Don into the copter. "Thanks, partner!" he yelled as he strapped himself in.

"Dit maak niks," said Nel.

* * *

The Mormon refugees all made it Home safely. They had been fed and warmed and clothed, and the transport copters were revving up to fly them to the reception center in Twin Falls. A gaunt and weary man with a battered slouch hat, a long yellow beard, and wearing patched denim coveralls appeared out of the gloom. He saw Vitale's general's stars among the men standing by one of the campfires drinking coffee and eating field ration meals from tin plates. He spoke. "General, my name is Carter Jurgenson, elder of the stake you rescued today. Our bishop was murdered in Provo when they came for us. The man who was killed today, your helicopter pilot. What was his name?"

"Warrant Officer James Lawson," said Vitale somberly. "Born in Nacogdoches, Texas. Died a soldier of the Northwest American Republic."

"My son was born at four o'clock this morning. Warrant Officer Lawson died to make sure he lived, and lived in freedom. Now my third sister wife and I know what his name is to be. James Lawson Jurgenson."

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Vitale and the men around him raised their canteen cups. “I hope you don’t mind a toast in coffee, Elder Jurgenson,” he said. “Long life and prosperity to your son, and we appreciate your naming of him for Jim Lawson. In the circumstances, I think the TLI can consider him to be a son of the regiment, so to speak. Do me a favor, will you? In the years to come, keep me posted on how he’s doing as he grows, and if I’m still around when he comes of age, and he feels it is the right path for him, I can promise him a berth in the military academy at Sandpoint. For personal reasons I won’t get into, I am highly interested in his situation. It parallels...another such, long ago.”

“The Saints pay their debts, General,” said Jurgenson. “He’ll be there.”

* * *

On the flight back Nel was silent until they were coasting downward into Olympia. “What now?” he asked.

“We now have to deal with the possibility that Tom Murdock thought he was going to combine forces with the Port Townsend Flying Column for a major joint attack on every ZOG facility in Port Orchard,” said Don. “If that is the case then it would explain quite a bit about his seemingly odd behavior on that morning, why he kept the whole column together instead of splitting into three or four mobile sections. I would be extremely interested to learn just how Commandant Murdock came by that impression. I do know that in the almost four decades since the ambush at Ravenhill, there has never been the slightest hint in any history of those events ever written that the Port Townsend Column might have been in any way involved.”

“And since President Morgan was at that time the commandant of the Port Townsend column, then he would of course know if there had been any such plan. And he said nothing, before or since,” said Nel.

“No. Nor did he make any statement to that effect when he was leading the official inquiry into what happened at Ravenhill,” said Redmond. “This is the first we’ve heard of it, and that only by accident.”

“It seems that we have a few gaps in our information,” said Nel neutrally.

“Gaps that John Morgan seems curiously reluctant to fill in. There is something else going on here we don’t know about,” said Redmond. “I should have mentioned this to you before, Hennie, but I wasn’t quite sure of what it meant. Charlie Randall told me that about twelve years ago, President Brennan called off the WPB’s search for Trudy Greiner. He did so at the personal request of none other than the Old Man himself.”

“Called it off? What on earth for?” asked Nel in astonishment.

“I don’t know. I can only assume that at some point, someone discovered something that made it more politically inexpedient than otherwise for the truth to come out. Whatever that reason might be and however unofficially, the government abruptly brought the search for Trudy Greiner to a halt. They must have hoped to hell that she was dead or at least that she’d stay the hell away from the Republic. Then we get that letter saying she’s coming back and somebody’s ass needs covering, fast. Brennan is dead, and I have to face the fact that I can no longer rely on the State President to tell me the truth, or at least the whole truth. The fact is, I think we’ve probably got about all the information we’re going to be able to get after the lapse of so many years. There is only one more avenue of information I can attempt to explore, and that is to find out what happened back in Brennan’s administration. I’m going to try to get permission to speak with the Old Man.”

“How will you do that?” asked Nel. “I understand he is in complete seclusion and retirement now.”

“Hey, it helps if you’re married to the President’s little girl,” said Redmond. “I can go straight to the top without cutting through too much red tape and inform the head of state that it is necessary to my investigation that I speak with the President Emeritus.”

“What if Morgan refuses to let you see him?” asked Nel skeptically. “I say again to you that in the real world there are certain limits to BOSS’s power. General Capshaw could sign an order getting you in to see the Old Man, to be sure, but he would want to know why. And would he do so if President Morgan objected?”

“If Morgan objects, then we’ll know,” said Redmond with a shrug.

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“Know what?” asked Nel.

“We’ll know that Morgan knows more than he is telling and that there is something he doesn’t want to come out. Why he gave me this assignment to begin with if that is the case I don’t have a clue, except maybe I’m supposed to act as a plumber. Test for leaks, so to speak.”

“And if that happens, then what?” persisted Nel.

“We wait for Trudy Greiner to arrive, if she does, and we see how it plays out,” replied Redmond. “If she ends up as fertilizer without a public trial or any public admission that she was ever here, that will tell us what we want to know as well. And don’t ask me what then? Because I don’t know what the hell then!”

When they got back to Olympia it was past nightfall. Don sent Nel home, but he himself returned to his office in the Temple of Justice. He typed up and printed two copies of a short document, put one into the file folder on the Greiner investigation, slipped the second copy into his vest pocket, and then called over across the street to Longview House. “Is the State President still in his office?” he asked Morgan’s aide and secretary.

“Yes, Colonel,” replied the young man. “He’s a workaholic, as you know, but he should be knocking off for dinner around eight. Mr. Nash is cooking up some kind of sausage and greens and mashed potatoes dish. It looks disgusting but I’ve eaten it before and it’s quite good, and I’m sure President Morgan wouldn’t mind some company.”

“This is official business, Captain Barringer, not family and so I would rather speak with the President in his office. Can you buzz him and ask if I can step over and have a quick word?”

“Certainly, Colonel Redmond.” The captain came back in less than a minute. “Come on over whenever you’re ready, sir.”

Don crossed the cobbled plaza and the street to Longview House in the gathering autumn darkness, checking in at the gate and saying hello to a different SS guard and the same GELF dog. He stepped up onto the portico of the house and was startled to feel a hand on his shoulder. Don turned, and in the yellow light from the faux ironwork gas lamp on the porch he found himself facing old Corey Nash. Nash was wearing the same threadbare blue blazer and flaccid tie it seemed he had been wearing ever since Don knew him, the dress of an alcoholic bellhop or an usher at a seedy funeral home.

The old man's rheumy eyes stared at him from a leathery face. "Barringer said you wanted to see John C.," said Nash. "I know what's going on. I know what John C. told you to do. What are you going to say to him?"

Don looked at him. "Mr. Nash, at the time of the Ravenhill ambush you were sometimes used as a courier between the Port Townsend and Olympic Flying Columns. Do you have anything you want to tell me about that time in your life?"

"The last time anyone asked me about that time of my life, as you put it, was when you was still trying to get into Sarah's jeans back in Bellevue," said Nash. "Some blokes from the FBI. They used a dentist's drill. I didn't tell them bugger all either." Don was suddenly struck by the similarity between the old man's Rhodesian accent and Hennie Nel's.

"I understand," said Don, and he did. He knew that nothing on earth would force the old codger to reveal anything at all he did not wish to reveal about John Morgan, to anyone, and he could not bring himself to try. He turned to go inside, but Nash held his arm.

"Don, you know I've never in my life asked anything of you," began Nash tentatively in an odd, subdued voice.

"Not only have you never asked anything of me, I think that's the first time in over three decades you have ever even spoken my first name out loud," said Don in amazement.

"Yah, well, maybe that's been a mistake on my part. I'm asking something of you now. This business you're working on. *Leave it!* Tell J. C. you've got no idea what the bloody hell's going on and just walk away from it. There are things in this country's past that have been buried for most of a lifetime and they need to stay that way. Just leave it, son. Just walk away!" Nash's voice was urgent and plaintive in supplication.

"Someone has been just leaving it for a long time," said Don. "But now we can't cuff this any more, Corey. What do we do when Trudy Greiner walks across the border at Mountain Gate in less than two weeks' time?"

"We do what was done before," said Nash. "I did my duty then and I can do it again. You know the drill. You grab her ass, you bring her into a room with me, and you lock the door. You go have a

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nice long smoke on one of them cigars himself gave you. When you come back, there will be no more problem.”

“Trudy Greiner isn’t Hillary Clinton, Mr. Nash,” said Don. “She is, or was, one of us, a soldier of the Northwest Volunteer Army. She is coming here to be tried in public, before God and her country, on the charges against her. Not to be left alone in a room with you.”

“Since when did you become so damned high and mighty?” growled Nash.

“I’m not. I’ll do it the old way if I have to,” said Don. “I’ll even do it the old way if I’m ordered to. But before I do, I have to know not only that it’s necessary, but that it’s *right*. Now you have a choice. You can either tell me what the hell happened back then, or else I’ll keep on digging until I find out on my own. Did Corby Morgan have anything at all to do with the destruction of the Olympic Flying Column?”

“Did...Morgan...?” said the old man slowly, disgust in his voice. “You know, son, I thought a lot about you over the past thirty-odd years, not much of it good. But until this night, I never thought you were fucking *stupid*. I’ve got bangers and mash on the stove, and cabbage. Stay to dinner, boy. Cabbage is brain food and you bloody well need it.” The coot turned and stumped around the corner of the porch to his kitchen.

Don Redmond found the State President in his upstairs office with two sideburned men in 1890s collars and cuffs, stolid in pinstriped broadcloth and with gold watch chains dangling. He knocked on the door for admission. “Come on in, Don,” said Morgan. “You know Jacques Comeaux and Roland Stanford of the Revenue Commission? Gentlemen, my son in-law, Colonel Donald Redmond of the Bureau of State Security.” Don shook hands with the two bureaucrats. “Don, do you have any idea what that damned *Bismarck* floating fortress of Bloody Dave Leach’s is going to cost us? I tell you, the folks in this country are lucky that our Constitution forbids any form of income tax.”

“You put a few more pence on the pint and you’re going to revive moonshining as a cottage industry!” protested Don.

“Actually, Colonel, excise is booming. This year we’re looking at our best import-export ratio ever,” said Comeaux with a smile. “The NAR is among the last reliable manufacturers in the

world of medicines, high tech components and machinery that actually *works*. The same countries that pillory us on the floor of the United Nations send us trade delegations sneaking in through Canada begging for our products.”

“Never mind,” said Morgan. “I’m about ready for some eats. Corey’s got some of that cabbage and potatoes and sausage of his bubbling away downstairs. Are we through, gentlemen? Sure I can’t persuade you to stay for supper? If not, thanks for coming by.” After a few more pleasantries Morgan ushered the two men out the door under the care of Captain Barringer, then closed the door of the office. “What’s up, Don?” asked Morgan. Don surprised him by formally standing to attention in front of his desk.

“Mr. President, as part of the investigation into the Greiner affair which you have assigned me, it has become necessary for me to request your permission to interview the President Emeritus of the Republic.”

“Great jumping Jehosophat, boy, what the hell do you want to talk to him for?” demanded Morgan roughly. “You want listen to some senile old loon babble, I can call in Corey from the kitchen. Or I’ll even do in a pinch.”

“Actually, I just had a rather interesting if somewhat cryptic conversation with Mr. Nash on the subject. It is a necessary part of the investigation,” repeated Don. He handed Morgan the piece of paper he had prepared. “I am making this request officially and formally, in writing. A copy of this request will be attached to my final report and included in the case file. If you decline to grant me permission to see him, sir, then as far as I am concerned, that is the end of the matter. You are after all State President and commander in chief. Or I should say it will be the end of the matter until Trudy Greiner arrives on October 22nd, if indeed she does. But if you decline to give your permission, I would like you to so note that refusal at the bottom of my request, in writing. I don’t expect you to give your reasons, either in writing or verbally, if you should choose not to do so. But I want it on record.”

“And why on earth do you want to nail my hide to the barn door like that?” asked Morgan, incredulous. “What the hell did I do to bring this on?”

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Don's reply was low and even. "This has nothing to do with hides or barn doors, sir. I want your refusal in writing so that when this cluster-fuck, whatever it is, comes apart at the seams and blows up in all our faces, as I have reason to believe it will, then at least it will be on record that I didn't pass the buck."

"If you see the Old Man, will you be able to prevent it from blowing up?"

"That depends on what kind of answers I can get from him, if any. And on what kind of sense those answers make, if any. The President Emeritus is of a very advanced age."

Morgan pulled out an ink pencil, scrawled something on the bottom of the paper, and handed it back to him. "All right, you can go and listen to the mummy mutter. Be out there at ten tomorrow morning. I'll call ahead and let his honor guard know."

Don let himself into his front door very late, accompanied only by the silent Baskerville. He found Sarah sitting alone at the kitchen table, in the dark. "You were in battle today," she said tonelessly. "I felt it. I always do when someone meets you with death in his heart."

"Yes," he said, sitting down beside her and pulling her head onto his shoulder.

"I also know that things aren't right between you and my father," she said. "How bad is this going to get?"

"I wish I knew, Snoops," he said softly. "I wish I knew."

IX.

The Old Man's retirement estate was a large, beetling mansion of cut gray granite and limestone on verdant Bainbridge Island, west of Seattle across the Puget Sound. It resembled a large English manor house from the Queen Anne period, sporting gabled roofs, diamond-paned windows, and ivy-covered walls, with a large artificial lake and park garden at the rear. The great house had been built in the late part of the nineteenth century by one of Seattle's lumber barons. In the early 1920s it had been purchased and expanded by Mr. Roy Olmstead, Seattle's primary bootlegger and the man who quenched the thirst of millions on the West Coast during Prohibition. The cellars still concealed large secret chambers where cases of liquor and mammoth hogsheads of ale smuggled down from Canada had been stored prior to shipment to points onward. In the latter part of the twentieth century the mansion had served as the love nest of a computer tycoon. Then it had been the crash pad of a rock star who blew his girlfriend's head off with a shotgun in one of the bedrooms and then stepped into the jacuzzi where he slit his own wrists. The ghost of the rock star and the murdered groupie were alleged to walk the halls at night, wailing. "He like ze ghosts." The two BOSS men

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stood in an office off the mansion's vestibule with a white-uniformed, blond young nurse from Quebec. Beside her stood a tall, crew-cut SS lieutenant in dress black with silver piping as required by the formal nature of his post. The nurse was speaking. "I fear zem, but he say he finds zeir caterwauling restful. He say it reminds him of how we beat zem and destroy zeir world. He is a very strange man."

"He always was," said Don.

"But he is very much ze true gentleman," responded the French girl. "Most old men sink zey can pinch my bottom and get away with it because they are old. This patient has treated me with nothing but courtesy and respect."

"Yeah, he's kinder odd," agreed the SS man. "'Course, I guess you get that way at his age. Christ on a raft, you been through everything he done been through, I reckon you got a right to get a little funny in the head!"

"Weird in what way?" asked Redmond.

"Well now, you look at this house," said the officer, gesturing around him. "Seventy some-odd rooms, but we use about a dozen of them. The rest of them are closed up with sheets over the furniture. The Old Man himself lives upstairs in only three rooms that used to be servants' quarters, one bedroom and a living room and a small kitchen, with a toilet and shower down the hall. We got a cordon bleu chef here, just for him, but he insists on trying to cook his own food. Major Ferguson, the OIC here, had to get permission from the Home Office to disconnect his stove in his rooms. He might start a fire. Now he sneaks into the main kitchen at night and we'll find him boiling a can of beans. He says living like that makes him feel at home. Really weird. They say he was from one of the richest families in North Carolina, left there and joined the American army at seventeen and he's been living dirt poor ever since. They say he laughed when the Feds put him in his first prison cell at Florence. Said it was twice as big as his room in Earl's Court back in London, back in the '80s when he was on the run from the Greensboro grand jury. He seems to have issues with animals. Keeps trying to kill all the ducks in the pond out back, sets' traps for 'em, tries to sneak up on 'em and beat them to death. He has this big aquarium full of fish, and he'll sit watching them for hours. He has two cats, and the fish drive 'em crazy, and he thinks that's funny as hell. He reads a lot, nothing since 1914, a lot of

Dickens and whatnot. Like he's trying to crawl back inside the past, when here he done made the future for all of us. I ast him about it once, and he told me he's done what he come here to do, he ain't interested in this world any more, and the only reward he wants is to live in the nineteenth century for the rest of his life. Says his main goal in the afterlife is to get a blowjob from Emily Brontë, wants her to wuther his heights. Not Charlotte, because she was an ugly bossy little bitch and *Jane Eyre* was soppo subjective hackwork, whatever the hell that means. I wouldn't know. I'm still tryin' to finish *Moby Dick* I started in seventh grade."

"He really enjoys it when we bring children," said the French Canadian girl. "Ze staff's kids, or from ze local Lebensborn. He is happiest when he is playing with zem, especially very young ones, toddlers. He helps zem build with blocks and race zeir toy cars. I made a joke with him once, I ask him if he was in his second childhood. He said 'No, my first.'"

"He really loves the kids but he sure hates them ducks!" commented the SS man.

"Colonel, he will most certainly try to beg tobacco from you," said the young nurse anxiously. "Ze doctors all agree, he mustn't have it! He is still quite active for a man of his incredible age, but his body is as fragile as glass. Even something like a temporary carbon monoxide intake from smoking could kill him!"

"How is his mind these days?" asked Redmond. "I keep hearing that he's senile."

"He goes in and out," replied the SS man. "Not so much senility, as it is he just gets crotchety and foul-mouthed and very weird."

"With adults, never with ze children," said the girl. "He wants to take long walks in ze woods alone, which we can't allow because he might get lost or hurt, and so he tries to sneak away. We wanted to put an ankle bracelet on him so we can find him if he wanders off, but ze State President said it would be too much ze indignity, since he is such a great man."

"We had to take his guns away, as horrible and disrespectful as that sounds in view of what he did so that we'd have the right to keep and bear arms, because he was a danger to himself and others," said the male officer. "He kept getting drunk and shooting out his

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window at anything that moved, ducks on the lake or squirrels in the trees or birds. Or just shootin' out other windows, laffin' and cacklin' like a loon."

"Where on earth does he get drink?" asked Nel, astonished.

"I'm damned if I know!" snapped the SS lieutenant in exasperation. "We've found everything from whole beer kegs to mason jars of moonshine to vintage champagne bottles in his room. He even got hold of a big bottle of two hundred year-old Napoleon brandy once, and he wouldn't give it to me unless I helped him drink it. I ought've just took it away from him, but dammit...he's the reason there are any white people left in the world. And I got to admit, it was damned fine sippin' liquor."

"I go up and find zem both drunk and singing about shipping zose niggers back," said the nurse in exasperation.

"Hit war a old Hatenanny song mah daddy taught me," said the lieutenant defensively.

"Duty is a harsh taskmaster sometimes, Lieutenant," commiserated Redmond with a straight face.

"But how does he get drink?" asked Nel again.

"I think he has this underground network of supporters who smuggle hooch to him somehow," said the SS man. "That's the only way I can figger it."

"Well, he'd be an expert at that," chuckled Redmond. "I recall that many years ago, long before the revolution and even before the Migration, the Old Man was famous within the Movement for being able to survive with just a few very loyal supporters. Sounds to me like he's retained the knack."

"Yeah, well, you can laugh about it, Colonel, but you ain't the one who's gone have to explain to Corby Morgan how the Old Man done drunk hisself to death on mah watch!" snapped the SS lieutenant.

"You a Carolina man yourself?" asked Redmond.

"Uh, yes sir, Wilkes County, up towards the mountains. I've been Home about six years now. How'd you know?"

"I recognized the accent. How is it back in the old country these days?"

"Not good. War a lot of white people there once, but not no more. Nothing left 'cept real old folks who don't speak Spanglish. All

Mexicans and Filipinos and gooks and Somalis now. My family, we was among the last to leave for the Homeland. That was one reason they chose me for this detail. The Old Man was from Carolina originally and maybe they figured...you say you from back home, sir?" asked the young officer.

"I was really young when we Came Home, but yes. A place called Chapel Hill. Don't recall much, but I remember my uncle Matt had the same speech. Way before your time."

"Matt Redmond?" gasped the officer.

"Yeah."

"He was a great man, sir, Carolina's noblest and bravest son!" said the officer, in awe. "It is my honor to meet you."

"Matt Redmond was a great man, yes. I'm Don Redmond, and I'm not. How was your trek Home, LT?"

"Uh, kinder rough," said the young man with an embarrassed smile. "Me and my brother and my sister Jenny and her man worked our way west, with whatever fake papers we could get, then when we hit the DMZ in Montana we went into the woods. We were all fairly experienced, did a lot of hunting back home, and we were almost able to make it, but I think some damned heat sensor or something tripped us up. We took the gap outside Holter Dam in the Missoula salient." The young man's face saddened. "We ran into a Yankee patrol lying in ambush when we were within a few hundred yards of the border, which up thar is some little creek the name of which I never got. They warn't real Yankees, they was muds of some kind, talking some language or other. We Cullises, we all made it. Jenny's boyfriend Kevin McNamara, a real Yankee kid from up Boston way, he didn't. They shot him and tried to drag his body away. Goddamned animals probably wanted to eat him."

"I think they wanted the bounty," corrected Redmond gently. "The United States government now pays sixty thousand dollars a head for any white person apprehended trying to enter the Republic. Dead or alive."

"Maybe. Anyway, I had an old .357 Magnum from my granddaddy that was a sheriff, and he also had some ammunition stashed he told us about when he was on his deathbed. The cartridges were old but they were factory, not reloads, and so they still worked. I shot a couple of the muds and they ran off. We humped Kevin across

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the creek, bleeding like a fountain. The SS picked us up on the white side and the medics did all they could, but he was dead. I calculate Kevin actually died on Homeland soil, so he got what he wanted. I'm glad. He was a good man, Yankee or not. Anyway, I didn't have no skills or nothing, in North Carolina they don't let white boys into college no more, leastwise not if they like girls. Whites gotta have a so-called character reference from the right people in order to get beyond high school, only they're really the wrong people. So I joined the army here in the Republic. Soon as I did my three years in the gray, I put in for the black. I calculate I owe the Corps."

"I see," said Redmond. "That was an honorable decision on your part, comrade."

"Comrade?" asked Lieutenant Cullis, brightening. "You a Nazi, sir?"

"I am."

"I guess I am too. I had to read *White Power* and study the Twenty-Five Points of the NSDAP and the Cotswolds Declaration and the Ten Principles and the NSWPP Program and answer questions on 'em in order to get into the SS. It all made sense to me."

"I am a National Socialist, and I am also a detective. That carries with it a certain natural skepticism. Uh, son, you made SS lieutenant in three years, you are placed in charge of the detail guarding the father of our country, and you expect me to believe this Jethro Beaudine act?" inquired Don curiously.

"I calculate I'm qualified for my job. Did I mention the time when I was sixteen and Sister J. was thirteen and some niggers laid hands on her, sir?" said Cullis quietly. "They never touched a white girl again. Or any girl."

"You know, there was a time when white men would have done nothing about that," commented Redmond.

"Then they weren't men, they were yaller dogs. Did I mention what happened to the Somali cops and the FBI men who came after me for hatecrime? I still don't think they've found 'em all where I left 'em to rot up on Sourwood Mountain or Candletop. I lived in the woods for a few years before we decided to risk Coming Home, Jenny and Kevin and others bringing me food and powder."

"Powder?" asked Nel.

“Because of the Schumer Act hit war kinda hard to get hold of proper weapons and ammo, so I snuck into a machine shop in Wilkesboro and I made myself a black powder rifle,” explained Cullis. “Hit war a flintlock, old Kentucky Daniel Boone type. We had a lotta flints up on Candletop, and you can melt down fishing sinkers and cast old-timey lead balls outta them thangs. You can pan the sodium nitrate out of fertilizer and mix it with sulphur and charcoal and you got yourself black powder. Kept me full of venison and squirrel and rabbit, and I popped me some muds with it as well. Still got that ole home-made piece of mine back in my locker at the SS barracks. Anyway, all that time, we heard stories about this place, this country far to the Northwest, a country where there weren’t nothing but people who looked like us. Sometimes we didn’t even believe that such a place really existed, that it was just something the Jews made up to justify what they were doing to us, but we knew that we had to come here and see. And always we heard of this one name, a name now spoken only in whispers in his own land of birth, the name of that old man sitting down there by the lake cussing the ducks. Do you have any idea what I will do to anyone who ever attempts to harm him?”

“There’s no need for me to wonder. The SS does not choose men like you lightly, son. I know that. Those pips on your shoulder tell me that you passed some of the most extensive psychological analysis and testing in the world. If you weren’t the best man for this detail, you wouldn’t be here. Glad you made it past the gap, troop,” said Redmond. “Sister J. found herself anybody yet?”

“Yes, sir, a German, immigrant to the Homeland like us, a commo engineer, real fine feller named Johann. They’re expecting their first baby in about two months. The scan says it’s a boy, and Yo and Jenny agreed he’s going to be named Kevin. Horst Kevin Barkmann.”

“And when are you two going to quit fooling around on the back stairs when the Old Man isn’t looking and get married?” inquired Redmond. The French girl blushed.

“Monsieur...!” she protested.

“I’m a detective, remember?” he reminded her. “So I detect.”

“Uh, I ain’t actually ast Céline yet...” mumbled the young man, totally nonplussed. “I mean, hell, she’s a nurse, she’s eddicated,

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and I'm just a peckerwood from down in Carolina. I reckon she knows how I feel about her, though."

"I know," said the French girl, her eyes downcast.

"You heard the lady. She knows. I suggest you get on the stick, son. We need some time alone with the Old Man, and that will provide you with an excellent opportunity to remedy that little omission."

"It might do at that," agreed Cullis. "Colonel, if you will follow me I will be honored to take you to the President Emeritus of the Northwest American Republic."

* * *

They found the ancient creature sitting on a marble bench looking out over the lake, scowling at the ducks as if they were vile enemies badly in need of chastisement. As they watched, he tossed bread to them, finally luring one of the birds onto land and close enough to him. Then he lashed out with his heavy, silver-topped blackthorn cane with surprising speed. But he was not fast enough. The duck scuttled back into the water, swallowed the bread, and quacked at the Old Man. It sounded for all the world like a jeer.

In the far-off, largely unremembered time when Aryan racial nationalism in North America had numbered only a few thousand scattered, fragmented and dysfunctional people in a hundred factions who did not yet dream of coalescing into a nation, one of the Movement's favorite pastimes had been smearing and vilifying the Old Man. Don recalled that one of the more idiotic accusations against the former General Secretary and State President Emeritus was that he had weighed 300 pounds. This had never been anywhere nearly true, but Don remembered some old photos, and he knew that the man before him had once indeed been a portly and Falstaffian character, bearded and often sporting red suspenders and a broad-brimmed hat. Other enemies of the media and Judaic persuasion had called him "an evil Santa Claus." The massive thick body and the suspenders were gone now, although the beard remained, thin and straggly. The man who was now well entered onto his second century settled back on the bench and leaned on the heavy blackthorn cane with the wrought silver head, patiently waiting for another of the

ducks to come within striking distance. His hands were white and his knuckles swollen and gnarled, riddled with liver spots. As of old, a broad-brimmed fedora perched rakishly on his head, which beneath the hat was as bald as an egg. His body was shrunken and his shoulders were stooped. The white beard was stained brown with ill-gotten nicotine around veal-colored lips. It flowed from his gaunt face, down over a sunken chest. He wore a tweed jacket, brown corduroy trousers and soft leather brogan-style shoes. His eyes were small and black, sunken in mounds of pallid flesh, and he muttered to himself as Don and Hennie Nel approached. The Father of His Country no longer resembled Falstaff. Now he looked and sounded like an insane garden gnome trying to beat ducks to death. "Barking mad, *ek se*," whispered Hennie Nel, shaking his head sadly.

"Good morning, Mr President Emeritus," said Don formally. "I am Colonel Donald Redmond from the Bureau of State Security, and this is my partner, Sergeant Hendrik Nel."

"*Goie mora, sargant*," said the Old Man, continuing to stare out at the lake. "*Hoe gaan dit met jou van mora?*"

"*'N bieke goed, 'n bieke slegs*," replied Nel in surprise. "*Dankie, Meneer Staatspresident. Kan ek fra jou van waar het jou geleer die Afrikaans taal om praat?*"

"I was fortunate enough to see South Africa before you hairy-backed rock spiders threw it away. You Afrikaner idiots voted yourself out of existence on March 17th, 1992," said the Old Man. "I remember the day. I was sitting in an empty corridor in at the Morgan Grenfell merchant investment bank in London. I was a security guard, making sure no one crept in to steal the rich people's money. Toffee-nosed twits. Gormless gits. Thatcher's children. That's where I was the day South Africa died. That is where I was when our Folk's youngest child disemboweled herself. Now I suppose you want us to invade South Africa and do what your fathers didn't have the guts to do?"

"I want what every South African and Rhodesian who ever came here wants," said Nel. "I want to go back to my own true *huisland*."

"Your people are now almost gone, Hennie," Redmond reminded him gently. "There are more Afrikaners here in the Homeland than there are remaining in South Africa."

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“It doesn’t matter. Jan Van Riebeeck started with less than a hundred men. We can do it again if we ever get the chance. Give us the guns, *Meneer Staatspräsident*. Give us the weapons, the transport, the supplies, and some money, and we’ll do it ourselves!” said Nel.

“I wanted to do just that, *jong*,” croaked the Old Man. “Many years ago when it might have been possible. That is one of the reasons I am now Emeritus. I suppose I should be glad they sent me here instead of having me whacked, pretending ZOG did it and making me a goddamned martyr. Pat Brennan and his so-called Pragmatic Tendency said I was endangering the existence of the Northwest Republic. Got to live in the real world and all that crap. Threw my own words back at me. Bullshit, bullshit, bullshit! The existence of the Republic is not important. The existence of the Aryan race is. My views on the matter did not carry. They never did, not really. The result is that I am no longer State President, and I no longer in a position to do any damage to anything except these damned ducks. Can’t do that either anymore. That chawbacon up at the house and his French chippie took my guns away. Any relation to Matt Redmond?” asked the Old Man of Don.

“I have the honor to be his nephew, sir,” said Don.

“Any man who bears that name is always welcome in my company, Colonel. Matt and me go back a while, you know.”

“Yes sir, I know.”

“Chapel Hill High School, class of 1971, the both of us. Back in ‘70, after Kent State, we spent a great springtime afternoon pelting hippies and commies with rocks and full milk cartons from the lunchrooms on the high school campus.”

“What is a hippie?” asked Hennie Nel curiously.

The Old Man ignored him. “God Almighty, do you believe I was once sixteen years old? I don’t believe it myself, most days. Matt went his way and I went mine. Matt used to say about me that there but for the grace of God went he. I said the same thing about him. Matt’s dead now, isn’t he?”

“Yes, sir. Many years ago.”

“Heather too?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Mmmm, I kind of thought so, but my memory plays tricks sometimes. Heather was a fine woman. He lucked out there.”

“So I often heard him say, sir. Tori’s still alive though. And Big Bill Vitale. He’s a general in the SS now.”

“Oh, yeah, Bill Clinton’s by-blow. The one Matt and Heather sent to Sicily so the Mafia could hide him from ZOG. Good for him. They ever tell you that story?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Don. “Actually, you may recall that yourself told us that story. It is now recognized throughout the Republic as one of our most heroic sagas. Your novel about those events was seminal.”

“My novel was, and is, a facile piece of crap,” replied the Old Man. “It was written in the heat of immediacy before the true implications of those events during the age of the first Clinton were evident. It is a museum piece, and not a very interesting one. It is a cameo snapshot of an epoch of what we now know was very minor madness, although we were really hot and bothered by it at the time. That novel is hopelessly dated. It is completely insufficient to do justice to the times and to the characters, and it deserves to be cast onto the dungheap of history. Events had already passed it by three months after its publication. That is the problem when one writes of contemporary events, and why I always preferred historicals. The situation that existed in the year 1999, when I wrote that book, is now completely irrelevant to anything in the real world. There was a time when we thought the Clintons were the be-all and end-all of liberal evil, and in truth they were bad enough. We forgot the terrible evil that could be done by the pale and soulless white men in the business suits. We forgot that from democracy steps forth the cruelest of tyrants. Little did we know the cataclysm that would follow. The truly bad craziness started afterward, when Bush Two staged his coup in 2000 and all of a sudden the Constitution was dead and we had a president who was not elected, but appointed by the Supreme Court. A president who was a tool of the most black-hearted and inhuman forces in history, and a moron to boot. Bill Clinton was a wretch and a murderer, a drug-addicted asshole and a traitor who sold military secrets to the Chinese, but he never tried to conquer the world like his bird-brained successor did. Matt and Heather and Tori were genuinely heroic figures beyond any ability of my ridiculously inadequate keyboard fingers to portray. So let’s get down to the nitty-gritty. What is it? You want to put a suit on me and trot me out like a department

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store dummy at some damned ceremonial bullshit function or other? Fine by me, I could use a day out. But I want you to gimme a box of stogies, good ones, and a gallon jug of Jack Daniels or cognac, one of the two. If you want a speech I'll do that too and I promise I won't cuss, but for speeches I charge two boxes of cigars and two gallons of hooch. How you get it past the SS and into my grubby little paws is something for you to figure out."

"No, sir, we don't need you for any public or ceremonial occasion. I would just like to ask you a few questions."

"That comes with a price too," the old loon grunted. "You smoke those same Dominican cigars your uncle Matt did?"

"When I can get them," said Don. "I don't have any on me, I'm afraid. I do have a rolled Havana, though."

Covetous greed flared in the Old Man's black fathomless eyes. "That Wilkes County hillbilly up there at the house won't let me have any smokes, but me being a living goddamned icon and all that crap they won't actually take it away from me if you give me one," he said. "Odin might strike 'em down with lightning, me being such a godlike critter and all."

"Sir, I need some information from you," said Don. "If I give you this cigar and endanger your health against the advice of your physicians, will you promise to help me by telling me the truth as best you can remember it?"

"Now why would you speak so disrespectful to the father of your country, young man?" snarled the Old Man.

"Because I really do need to know some things, and I would rather not waste your time and mine if it turns out you're really crazy as a coot like they say," replied Redmond calmly. Nel gasped in horror at such blasphemy. Redmond quickly waved him to silence.

The Old Man cackled with laughter, slapping his knee. "Hot damn, son, I ain't been insulted in years!" he gasped in mirth. "Jesus Christ on a raft, that's music to my ears! I used to feed off their hatred and their insults, their lies and their slanders! Hate, boy, hate kept me young all those years! I've had nothing but respect and flattery and mooncalf adoration for years now and I'm so sick of it I could puke! Reckon your uncle told you that about me, didn't he?"

"He did in fact once remark to me that you were like a punch-drunk boxer who came to enjoy the pain of being hit," agreed Don.

“Yeah, I eat it like candy. Guess it must be important then,” said the Old Man. “Okay, give me that stogie and then tell me what the hell it is you want. Whatever it is, I’ll give it to you straight. That’s what I spent my life doing, son. Giving it to the world, straight. I’m obliged for the opportunity to do it again.”

Redmond pulled out one of Morgan’s cigars, removed it from the tube, cut it and placed it in the Old Man’s mouth, then lit it with a match. Nel was rigid with horror. “Sir!” he hissed. “The nurse said...”

“This is more important, Sergeant,” said Redmond evenly.

“More important than my life?” asked the Old Man keenly as he drew in on the cigar.

“It may be, yes, Mr. President Emeritus,” replied Don.

“Good for you! Duty overrides all. Thanks. Hot damn, that’s cool and fine on my tongue! And to save you the time probing and guessing, I’m pretty much in my right mind today, at least as much as I ever was. Damn, that’s fine tobacco! Gift of the gods, boy, gift of the gods. Okay, son, spill it.”

“Sir, I’m here to consult you on a case I’m working on now for the Bureau of State Security,” replied Redmond.

“It must be something really obscure for you to come looking for me, kid. I been out of touch with pretty much everything political ever since Pat Brennan booted me out here to crumble into dust because he was scared I’d invade South Africa, restore the white government, beat him in the general election, make the NS Tendency the dominant force in Parliament, and establish a National Socialist state. Brennan and that little pissant who stabbed me in the back and took over my job as General Secretary. Civil war, my ass! Brennan’s dead now, you know. Old age, no less! But hell, I asked for it. A hundred years on and I still haven’t learned never to trust anyone in the Movement. Been betrayed so often by my own people I must have some kind of karmic sign taped on my back that says ‘Kick me!’ So what can I do for BOSS, Colonel?”

Redmond was silently relieved that the old gentleman had elected not to pursue an obsessive political tirade that would have made it difficult for Don to wrestle him back on track. “Sir, I would like to ask you why as one of your last political acts, before you retired, you asked President Brennan to call off the War Prevention Department’s hunt for Trudy Greiner?”

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“Because she didn’t do it,” grunted the Old Man. “Trudy Greiner wasn’t the traitor.”

“*Magtig!*” exclaimed Nel. “I mean, how do you know that, *meneer?*”

“I got bored once Pragmatic Tendency threw my ass out,” grumbled the ancient curmudgeon. “I was sitting in a big fancy office down there in Olympia with no real power, waiting for my loyal comrades to work out the details of where and how they were going to bury me alive where I couldn’t embarrass them any more, with all my ranting and raving about duty and ethics and all the other things we’ve always tried to avoid like the plague. I had a lot of time on my hands. There was this little girl file clerk who believed all that propaganda crap about how I was this brilliant leader and philosopher king, yadda, yadda, yadda. She thought I was some kind of revolutionary god, and I was able to persuade her to feed me some special reading material against orders. Able to persuade her to do some other things, too, but we won’t get into that. Anyway, I spent my time catching up on all the things that went on when I was in prison, the stuff I missed out on while the fighting was going on. I took the trouble to actually *read* the raw case file on Ravenhill,” said the Old Man. “All the statements taken for the trial *in absentia* of Volunteer Gertrude Greiner on the charge of racial treason and collaboration with the enemy. I spotted something no one else ever had. The FATPO defector Arthur McBride stated that the head nigger in charge of the Federal ambush was informed of the Column’s location and projected route at almost exactly two o’clock on the morning of August first, after which he ordered his men out to the choppers and dropped them into the ambush zone at Ravenhill Ranch. You with me so far?”

“Yes, sir, I know,” confirmed Redmond. “Sergeant Major McBride is still alive, and we have spoken with him. McBride was Charge of Quarters at the FATPO barracks and he heard Woodrow Coleman take the call on his wireless phone. McBride also stated that it was unusual for Major Coleman to be up and about, or at least up and about while sober, at that time of the morning. It was obvious to him that Coleman had been told something was up and he was waiting for the call.”

“And where was Trudy Greiner at two o’clock that morning?” demanded the Old Man.

“By all accounts, she was still at the safe house in Hoodspout, along with Murdock and the rest,” said Redmond.

“Right. Now, Colonel, do you agree that as a working proposition we can take it that the statements given by the eight survivors are true, with the possible exception of one traitor who may be lying, if such a person exists?”

“We more or less have to, sir,” conceded Redmond. “At this distance in time, their statements then and their recollections now are virtually all we’ve got by way of evidence.”

“I agree. Now, there are some crucial times in those witnesses’ statements that we need to peg down. The first is the receipt of the call by the Federal commander at or almost exactly at two o’clock A. M.”

“Sir, when I was reviewing the case file a few days ago at BOSS headquarters, I noticed the time element. Murdock’s decision to take Highway 119 and then cut off on the county road by Ravenhill Ranch before they reached Shelton must have been made either right at around two in the morning or before that, because the informer gave FATPO that information.”

“Fine, I’ll buy that,” agreed the Old Man. “So the informer was in a position to know that exact route that the Column would take into Port Orchard. That could be any of them. But with Miss Greiner in plain view at two in the morning, the big question is, who made the call?”

“The official version is that somehow Trudy Greiner found some excuse, slipped into the bathroom and make a hurried call tipping off Fattie while she was surrounded by men and women who would kill her if she was caught. It would have taken brass balls to do it, but everyone who ever knew her agrees that she was a fearless and resourceful young woman. I have since learned that at least insofar as anyone who was present can recall, this was impossible for her to do. Not only did Ed McCanless collect and turn off all cell phones, but Trudy’s phone wasn’t even working because the satellite serving her unit had crashed. I am also aware of some other discrepancies, but I’m sorry, I seem to be interrupting you, sir. Please proceed.”

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“You wear that green, white and blue ribbon, sonny,” pointed out the Old Man, “Although Jesus, you must have been young!”

“Very young, sir,” agreed Redmond with a nod.

“Back in those days, did you ever attend a meeting in a safe house?”

“A few,” said Don. “Like the one I delivered papers to in Bellevue.”

“And what was the very first thing the officer in charge ordered all the others to do?” asked the Old Man.

“Turn off their cell phones and pagers, so an accidental incoming call or page didn’t tip off the enemy’s satellite monitoring or other electronic surveillance that there was anyone in the facility,” repeated Redmond patiently.

“And after that he...?”

“He also swept the personnel present for wires,” said Redmond. “Yes, sir, I thought of that. Just as he swept the whole house beforehand. Volunteer McCanless and Volunteer Frierson have both stated in no uncertain terms that they checked the house out from the ground up and it was clean, and that they ran metal and fiber-optic sensors over every participant in the meeting, beginning with Commandant Murdock as Murdock always insisted be done. We are assuming that is true, unless Frierson or else one or both of the McCanlesses are traitors and were lying.”

“Right. On that particular night Ed McCanless, a particularly conscientious Volunteer, swears that he made damned sure this was done. Lars Frierson, equally conscientious, backs him up. I see no reason to disbelieve them. Have you any evidence that we should?”

“No, sir.”

“Then we’ll take what they tell us at face value. Are we still on the same page?” asked the Old Man. “Sorry to come on like such a know-it-all and act like the great detective revealin’ the murderer in the drawing room at the end of the mystery, but I never get a chance to talk to anyone about anything serious these days.”

“Yes, sir.”

“So we agree that Gertrude Greiner did not make any kind of call at all from her own cell phone, then or later, because the communications satellite was down in every sense of the word and also due to NVA security precautions. We can also accept that no one

was wired. That means that the communication with the enemy did not occur from the vicinity of the central meeting in the safe house. It came from someone who was not present at the meeting, and yet who was in a position to know the planned route and order of battle for the next day's operation. Now, the Greiner gal left the safe house at what time?"

"Approximately three o'clock in the morning," said Redmond. "Which is the last time anyone in the NVA ever saw her. I would dearly love to know what she was doing during the four hours between the time she left and the time she was officially AWOL from the medical aid station at seven that morning. Any ideas on that, Mr. President Emeritus?"

"One or two. But we're still at three o'clock in the morning. Trudy Greiner has just left, the meeting has been dismissed. Whereupon the Column did what?"

"They moved out, some in cars and others on foot. They moved overland about a mile to the lumberyard where the vehicles to be used in the attack were being held in readiness. The convoy was assembled there, seating was assigned, and so forth. The mortar truck and the McCanlesses' Oldsmobile moved out one way, along with the Kenworth flatbed containing the mortar tubes. The two vans, the second truck, and the green pickup scout vehicle went another."

"They left the lumberyard at what time?"

"Approximately five-thirty A. M., sir."

"And Monkey Meat Coleman got the call at two A. M.?" continued the Old Man.

"Two in the morning, yes, sir. As the Column were pulling out, he and his goons were already setting the ambush on the road past Ravenhill Ranch."

"Now go back to the court of inquiry transcript," said the Old Man. "Look at McBride's testimony. He said when his FATPO group were briefed before they left base and went down into the ambush that morning, they were told by Major Monkoid Coleman to be on the lookout for two vans, one blue and one white, and one Kenworth truck with wooden slat sidings."

"Yes, sir, I saw that. Those are in fact the vehicles that the Column used," agreed Redmond. "So?"

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“Don’t worry, son, I ain’t wandering. I do have a point, but you seem to be missing it. I’ll pitch it again, a little bit slower. When Coleman got that call from the informer or someone who was hooked to the informer, what was he told to look out for?”

“He was told to set his ambush for a green Dodge pickup truck scout vehicle, which Coleman ordered his men to let pass, and then a blue van, a white van, and the Kenworth truck which carried the...*Christ in Heaven!*” bellowed Redmond in sudden astonished chagrin.

“Comes the dawn!” chuckled the Old Man.

“What, Colonel?” asked Nel, uncomprehending. Redmond turned and stared at Nel.

“*How the hell did the informer know what color the pickup and the vans were?*” demanded Redmond. “By everything we know, Trudy Greiner never went anywhere near the staging area with the vehicles. And if she did, it would have been after three in the morning, when she left the conference. Somebody would surely have seen her, including Palmieri and Saltovic and Leach. Surely at least one of them would remember her being there? But Coleman got the call at two A. M.”

“Ergo, the informer was someone who had been involved in vehicle selection, transport, fueling and staging prior to the meeting in the Hoodsport safe house!” exclaimed the Old Man triumphantly. “Which Trudy Greiner was not. That wasn’t part of her job. We also know that whoever made the call was not in the meeting at the Hoodsport safe house. It is possible that the person who made the call was a secondary contact, but I myself have always been of the opinion that the person who called Coleman was the actual informant, mostly because of the incredible danger which would have been attached to bringing someone else into something like that. Not to mention having to share that humongous reward.”

“I’ll need to go back to all of them now and find out who was involved in the preliminary staging and servicing of the convoy’s vehicles,” moaned Redmond. “Even if seven of the eight are telling me the truth, it may be impossible to determine after all this time who had actually seen the vans prior to the meeting.”

“No need,” said the Old Man. “We can still do some elimination with what we’ve got. Time, place, and opportunity, son.

Check the statements of Dr. Joseph Cord, and also of Lars Frierson, and also of Edward McCanless and Brittany McCanless. Bear in mind we are assuming for the time being that they are true, lacking any evidence that they are not. Cord and Frierson attended the entire meeting in the living room of that bungalow from beginning to end, so they could not have made the call. Ed McCanless was also there at all times in his capacity as security officer for the sitdown, and his wife was there as well, according to both their statements. They indicated that they arrived at the safe house that afternoon so they could go in first and make sure everything was hunky dory and then let Murdock and the rest know it was safe to move in. They specifically stayed away from the lumberyard where the heavy artillery was waiting, in case they were being followed or tracked by satellite. They probably at that point didn't even know where most of the other members of the Column were. Frank Palmieri and Dragutin Saltovic did stage the mortar truck at the lumberyard along with the other vehicles, but as of two A. M. when the traitor called Monkey Meat and dropped the dime, *they didn't know that they were going to the target area separately*. Whoever made the call knew that the mortar truck would be taking a separate route, but for reasons known only to himself neglected to mention the mortar truck at all when he ratted our people out to Fattie. So that rules Palmieri and Saltovic out. Cord did go to the lumberyard briefly, to run a final check on the loading and detonation system and the hydraulic lift to raise the mortars in position, after which he proceeded to Poulsbo with a carload of medical supplies. But the informer's call had already been made at 2 A.M. So Cord, Palmieri, Saltovic, Frierson and the McCanlesses seem to be in the clear, as well as Trudy Greiner."

"That leaves Leach and Vitale," said Nel in a neutral voice. "They were in the lumberyard area prior to the meeting breaking up and no one has accounted for their whereabouts at two A.M."

"Leach and Vitale were both just gun-toters then, Vitale a green kid just off the plane from Italy," said the Old Man. "Yeah, it could have been them, maybe, but would they have known about the mortar truck splitting up from the main convoy and taking a separate route into town, any more than Saltovic or Palmieri? No one at the yard was actually informed of that disposition until Murdock and the officers arrived at a little past three. Call was made at two, gents, the

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call was made at two, and if it had been made by someone in or around the staging area they would have told Coleman to watch for the mortar truck as well. Whoever made it had some kind of prior knowledge of Murdock's plan of attack on Port Orchard. Someone who was an officer or otherwise involved on a command level."

"Which to be frank, *Meneer Staatspräsident*, does not fit *any* of our survivors, with the half-assed exception of Doctor Cord who was a technician but not a strategist or field commander," said Nel.

"Nor does it fit Trudy Greiner for that matter," commented Redmond. "She was support and liaison but had nothing whatsoever to do with actual military decisions or planning. My God! You mean to say, sir, that you believe the informant was someone else?"

"Someone else in the Column who didn't survive the ambush?" said Nel in horror. "Someone we don't know about? Someone who thought he had a deal with the Americans to let him live, but who was betrayed? *Cies*, if that's the case then we might *never* find out what the hell happened that day!"

"Sir," asked Redmond, "Do you have any idea at all who such a person might be?"

"Yes," said the Old Man. "Don't worry, son, I won't run the melodrama out. I can't give you an actual name, but in a general way, yes, I think I know who it was. I think it was whoever Trudy Greiner went to meet after she left the Hoodsport safe house at three o'clock on the morning of August 1st. Someone who knew what was going to happen, and who either forcibly detained her from going to the aid station, or else persuaded her that she was about to be hopelessly compromised and she'd better desert if she wanted to live."

"How do you know any such person exists, Mr. President Emeritus?" asked Redmond.

"It doesn't take four hours to get from Hoodsport to Poulsbo, Colonel, not even in the dark. But more close to home, Volunteers always moved in pairs, son, whenever possible," said the Old Man. "Especially when they were closing in on a target. It simply wasn't a good idea to rely on loners not to lose their nerve, not to get lost, not to fuck up, or not to get caught or delayed through no fault of their own. Why did Trudy Greiner leave the house on her own that morning? That looks like a potentially dangerous violation in procedure to me. But was it? I don't think she was violating

procedure. I think she was meeting someone else for some purpose we don't know, and she was doing it on Murdock's orders."

"Leach and Frierson said they got that impression," Nel reminded him.

Redmond took a deep breath and spoke. "Mr. President, Bill Vitale told us he overheard one small snippet of conversation between Commandant Murdock and Volunteer Melanie Young, just before the Column pulled out at five, that indicated to him there might be some kind of rendezvous planned with the Port Townsend Flying Column. Can you shed any light on that aspect at all?"

"No, I can't," said the Old Man. "Why don't you ask that old hoss who's sitting in my chair down in Longview House right now about that?"

"There has never been any suggestion of any such thing," said Redmond evasively. He felt a chill. He had a horrified suspicion he might know who Trudy Greiner had been meeting. Nel unwittingly came to his rescue.

"But what about the million dollars?" he asked.

"Yes," Redmond said. "One almost insurmountable obstacle that we have yet to overcome, Mr. President Emeritus. The one million dollar certified check allegedly collected by Trudy Greiner first thing on the morning of August first, at the opening of business while the bodies of the Flying Column dead were literally still bleeding. Every which way we turn, we keep coming up against that."

"Do you *know* for a fact that million bucks was collected by Trudy Greiner?" asked the Old Man keenly. "Do you know for a fact that million bucks ever existed at all?"

"No, sir," said Redmond morosely. "It did occur to me. We do not know that for a fact. All we have is a few photostats of old Bank of America documents and computer files. We have no idea whether what we are looking at ever existed in the form of one million real, spendable dollars or not. Did Trudy Greiner end up with that money in her kick? If not, who did? We have no idea on earth, and at this distance in time we have no way to find out. That thought has bedviled me no end, believe me."

"Any ideas at all, son?" probed the Old Man.

"None I want to speak of at the moment, sir, with all due respect," said Redmond in growing despair.

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“Well, why not just wait until Trudy Greiner walks across the border on 10/22 and see what the hell she has to say about it all?” asked the Old Man curiously.

“I get the impression, sir, that the present State President is especially anxious for that not to occur, at least not without some idea of what skeletons might be found by anyone who starts poking through the Ravenhill closet.” Redmond rose to go. “Mr. President Emeritus, you have been extremely helpful, more so than anyone we’ve talked to yet. There is one final question I would like to ask you, sir, and I very much hope that you will choose to answer me, and answer me truthfully.”

“And that is?” prompted the Old Man, leaning back and sending long, aromatic swirls of cigar smoke into the air.

“Exactly who was it who contacted you and warned you that I would be coming, and what I would be asking you about?” asked Redmond levelly. “And when did this occur?”

“You know, at my age senility comes and goes,” said the ancient creature, blowing a smoke ring. “I can geezer it up real quick. In fact, I feel a real funkey fogley fugue coming on.”

“Maybe that’s why you forgot that I never at any point in our conversation informed you that Trudy Greiner was coming back on October 22nd,” said Don.

“Maybe so. Son, believe it or not, I do retain some sense of responsibility to this Republic I helped to create. I could give you a name and one of two things would happen. Either I’d wake up one night to find Charlie Randall standing over my bed with a pillow in his hands, or else it would explode into a full scale scandal, the top ripped off a major league can of worms and them worms crawling all over the Northwest and pooping worm-shit all over this country that is the only hope of our race to survive. I’ll pass on that, but I’ll tell you what I told...that individual that I spoke with. I told him that every word I told you would be the truth, and it has been.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Redmond.

“Uh, *Meneer Stäatspräsident*, I have a question as well,” spoke up Nel suddenly. “What on earth do you have against these ducks?”

The Old Man grinned at him through a haze of cigar smoke, and all of a sudden they caught a glimpse of the almost Satanic

malevolence that alone had sustained him through a century comprised mostly of living hell. “They’re big, soft white things who just waddle around and do nothing. When they open their mouths nothing but blat comes out. I always had a problem with big, lazy white things who waddle around and do nothing and just blat when they open their mouths,” he said. “You see, for fifty years, those were our leaders in the so-called Movement. I couldn’t crush them then like they deserved, so I crush them now. Or try to. Ain’t no better at it now than I was then.” He looked out at them. “Every one of them has a name. The name of a piece of pale-skinned shit who should have died in mortal agony long ago, if there was any justice at all. But there never is any justice except what a man takes for himself. Like I said, every one of them has a name. That one over there by the shore, with the dark greasy feathers, that is Matt Koehl. That bloated thing out there with the hooked beak is Benny Klassen. He seems to have a habit of molesting the other drakes, and that’s how he got his name. The one with the bald head is Tom Metzger. The sleek-looking drake out there is David Duke. Watch him, he’ll steal the bread right out of your hand while you’re not looking and gamble it away on the riverboat casinos. The sneaky-looking bastard with the black spot on his bill is Pierce. The lazy fuck floating out there at a drunken angle is Eugene Terre Blanche, which should be of interest to you, Sergeant. Terre Blanche used to fall off his horse during parades he was so drunk. The prissy little one there who looks like a faggot is Martin Webster, and the big fat pompous ass to the right there is John Tyndall. And the others, all the others...I know their names. Before I die, I am going to kill every one of them.”

“I’m sorry to see that you really are insane, sir,” said Redmond sadly, shaking his head.

“Always was, son, always was,” chuckled the Old Man, leaning back on the bench and sending a cloud of ringed cigar smoke rising into the cool autumn air. “Nutty as a fruitcake all my life. Sane men didn’t revolt against ZOG. And sane men *damned* sure didn’t win!”

* * *

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That afternoon, they both sat in Redmond's office in the Temple of Justice. Henny Nel was turning over various pages in the old Ravenhill file. The day had gone cloudy and the famous Northwest rain was dripping from the windows. "It was President Morgan who told him why we were coming," said Nel.

"Of course it was Morgan! What in God's name is he playing at?" responded Redmond in weary despair. "Why this song and dance routine? Why did he bring me into this? Why the hell doesn't he just *tell* me? My God, I'm family!"

"Is there anyone else we could interview before the twenty-second comes?" asked Nel.

"No one I can think of. Anyone who might help either fled the country after the revolution, or they're dead or just unavailable. You know, I wish to hell we really *were* the totalitarian state that our enemies accuse us of being. A nationwide identification and location service would certainly be of help, but since we've abolished driver's licenses, unless someone has actually come to the attention of BOSS, we really have no way of knowing where anyone in this country is other than picking up the telephone directory. Odd that a so-called fascist state should have that kind of individual liberty, eh? I've tried to find Van Der Merwe with no luck."

"Who?" asked Nel, looking up with interest.

"J. P. Van Der Merwe. The Bank of America branch president who authorized and issued the million dollar check, and who would hopefully remember something about that million dollar transaction on the morning of August the first. But he's not in any of the Republic's phone books, he doesn't have a criminal record, and beyond that we're stumped unless we can pick up his trail some other way. He may be dead, he may be a loyalist who fled the Republic after the revolution and he's now living in the States or somewhere else, he may be sitting right down there on the mall feeding the pigeons beneath the Rockwell monument and we wouldn't know." Sergeant Nel riffled through the file and found the bank record photostats, then he held them up to the light, studying them. "The devil of it is, whatever John C. is afraid I will turn up, he's wrong. I still have no idea on earth who the traitor is," complained Redmond in weary despair.

Nel looked up from the papers. “Oh, that’s no *shupa, ek se*. I know who it is.”

“Eh? What the hell do you mean by that?” said Redmond irritably.

“I mean just what I said. I know who the traitor is, because I know now there never was any million dollar payoff. This whole bank transaction is a fraud, and I know who created it.” Then Hennie Nel told Don Redmond the name of the traitor who had betrayed the Olympic Flying Column, and explained how he knew.

“Damn, I am a fool!” muttered Redmond bitterly.

“*Dit maak niks*, I just happened to have a little bit of background you didn’t,” said Nel with a shrug. “How could you? The question is, sir, how in the name of God are we going to *prove* it? I am as positive as I can be that he’s our man, but after almost four decades where do we look for any hard evidence? I doubt any even exists. I don’t see any choice that we have other than to wait for Trudy Greiner to show up and hope she can provide us with something concrete. If she can’t, she may still end up carrying the can for Ravenhill.”

“The thing that puzzles me is *motive*,” sighed Redmond. “*Why*, in the name of all that is holy? What possible reason could he have to do such a thing?”

“We could ask him,” suggested Nel.

“You don’t make an accusation like this with no proof or evidence, Sergeant. Nor do I know where to even begin to look for any. Unless...it’s a long shot, but hell, looks as if we’ve nothing better to do until the twenty-second. Let’s go.”

X.

“We need to get inside,” said Don Redmond. He and Nel were standing in the dark, in a pouring Northwest rain that rattled the tin awning roof over the porch on which they stood. A sagging swing drooped on one edge of the porch and a sodden pile of firewood logs loomed gray and lumpy on the other. It had taken some time for them to find the place. Their raincoats and the brims of their fedoras were dripping.

“We don’t have a warrant,” pointed out Nel. “In view of his state connection it might be prudent to get one, just to preserve the niceties. In case we find something, or more especially in case we don’t.”

“I’m willing to go Section 30 on this and cross my fingers it will stand up,” said Redmond. “If the issue comes up at all.”

“Ah, the Breathing Act,” chuckled Nel.

“You got it, Sarge,” replied Redmond. “The lovely Section 30 of the Offenses Against the State Act. The law that gives us the authority to do whatever the hell we think is necessary to preserve the revolution and carry out our duties. I know we’re supposed to show sensitivity and gentlemanly circumspection as to when and how we

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invoke it. Don't want the citizenry to *feel* that they're living in a police state, even if they are, rather. But this is a big case, and big consequences hang on it. I'll take responsibility. Although just as a historical note, getting a warrant was never any kind of legal protection. It never made any difference to the American police under ZOG. Warrants are meaningless when the judge simply signs whatever outrageous piece of rubbish the police put before him. If your judiciary is corrupt and your judicial system is broken, why bother with the fig leaf of a warrant? That's what I like about the Republic, this refreshing absence of hypocrisy."

"I'd prefer a refreshing absence of rain right now. You know, even in BOSS we do have to prove our case before we take action, if only to our own superiors. I know he's our man, but I don't still think we'll ever prove it. What makes you think we are going to find anything in here relevant to a crime committed more than thirty years ago, sir?" asked Nel in some exasperation. "What would he keep? Why *would* he keep anything that might implicate him in such a monstrous act of betrayal?"

"Depends on why he did it," ruminated Redmond.

"What, exactly, are we looking for?"

"Generally speaking, something that might at least give us a clue to *motive*. But specifically? I'm damned if I know, Sarge," replied Redmond. "I can only hope that we'll know it when we see it."

"Well, let's get out of the bloody rain, at least. Door or window?" asked Nel.

"Mmm, door, I think. This lock must be at least a century old. Doesn't even look like it has any electronics in it. Straight brass tumblers. Wonder what kind of alarm system he's got rigged in there? If any?"

"Why would he have any alarm system?" asked Nel. "This isn't America. No one has to worry about burglary any more." Redmond took out a small folding tool, similar to a pen-knife, with a number of oddly-shaped extensions. He diddled with the lock for about a minute. It clacked and the door swung open. The two men stepped inside.

"Might as well turn on the lights. No one is going to see us this far out in the woods," said Redmond. He snapped a light switch

but nothing happened. “Must run off a separate generator,” he commented. “A house this old is probably not even hooked up with a transformer-converter for the broadcast power grid.” Nel took out a flashlight and turned it on. Redmond took a glow wand from his pocket and thumbed the switch. Immediately the room was illuminated in soft light, almost like a rising dawn. “I always carry one of these as well as a flashlight,” said Redmond. “A flashlight is useful when you don’t want your target to see you, but you want to see him. Always use a flashlight if there is any chance at all you’re going to be shot at, and hold it away from your body. But for a search, a wand is best. It lights up the whole room.” The two BOSS men saw battered, antique twentieth-century plastic furniture, bits and pieces of hunting and fishing detritus, and a lot of dust.

“Not much of a housekeeper, is he?” sniffed Nel.

“I don’t think he comes here often,” said Redmond. “I only just by chance remembered this place even exists.” They separated and moved from room to room. The place had a dismal, careless, un-lived-in look. Redmond mounted the stairs and rummaged through an unremarkable bedroom with a single, old-fashioned box spring mattress and frame. The sheets and blanket were rumpled and the pillow folded; God alone knew how long ago the bed had last been made. Suddenly he heard Nel call from downstairs; his voice sounded choked and strange.

“*Colonel Redmond!* Colonel, you need to come and see this!”

Redmond went back downstairs and moved to the rear of the house. The doorway in which Nel stood seemed to lead into what might have once been a breakfast nook or small den. Redmond held his glow wand high, lighting the darkness of the interior, and he saw what Nel had seen. At one end of the room was a wooden paneled wall of bare and unpainted pine that had gone dark with age, and on that wall was tacked two rows of photographs, each one of them blown up into small poster size. There weren’t many of them, only about a dozen, because the woman who featured in them had made it a point to be photographed as little as possible. Two of the photographs were long-ago police mug shots. They showed a young and beautiful girl with long blond hair. Below the wall was a bureau or dresser of some kind, draped in a white cloth, and on it stood several rows of burned-out candles, the votive kind in small glass

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receptacles. A single chair stood in front of the primitive altar, where the sole worshipper of a strange and unhealthy religion sometimes sat in contemplation and adoration. "Bring your light in as well," said Redmond, stepping into the room. In the soft yet penetrating illumination of the phosphorescent wand and the flashlight, the slapdash montage might have looked cheap and pathetic, but somehow it did not. Both men felt a cold and creeping chill in their blood. They intuitively understood that they were looking at something strong, poisonous and terrible, the outward manifestation of a love that had transcended the bounds of time and sanity. A love that had developed a life of its own and fed on itself, time and again ripping out its own entrails and rising from the putrescence of its own grave to live unnaturally over and over. There was no bloodstained altar whereon sacrifice had been made. That had been done long ago on a hillside many miles away. "It's a shrine," muttered Nel. "A shrine to her...wait a minute...*that's not Melanie Young!*"

"No," agreed Redmond. "I agree, one would think this kind of obsession would be over Melanie Young. Hell, our whole nation obsesses over her, starting with every teenaged boy when he hits age twelve. But that's not Melanie. That's Trudy Greiner. Probably every photograph ever taken of her in her whole life. He must have gotten into the BOSS files somehow and made copies. I'm sure he could figure a way. Damn, that looks like her junior high school class photo! Wonder how the hell he ever got hold of that? That's Trudy when she was as young and as beautiful as ever Melanie was, to give her fair due. Thank God! Thank God! *Thank God!*" moaned Redmond, leaning against the creaking, dusty wall in a sudden release of terrible tension from his mind and his heart.

"Eh?" asked Nel. "What do you mean, Colonel?"

"The betrayal of the Column! This whole hideous mess, all those deaths of our people. Thank God, *it wasn't religious!* It wasn't political! It wasn't even for money!" laughed Redmond in shaky relief. "It was insanity! Just good old-fashioned, looney-tune, they're-coming-to-take-me-away-ha-ha Movement GUBU! The kind of nuttiness that was the very hallmark of what little community we had back in the Old Man's day. Good old-fashioned Movement GUBU, Lord love it! Now I'm going to go find the generator for this place and start it up, so we can get some proper light on the scene. Then we

toss this place good and proper, from top to bottom. He may have left something else behind.”

* * *

“You know, I always wanted to do this, since I saw my first Agatha Christie movie,” Don Redmond told them all with a grin. He was standing in the library at the presidential residence of Longview House, leaning insouciantly against the wall, his fedora at rakish angle on his head. Before him on the chairs and sofas sat a group of ten people. These were former FATPO defector Arthur McBride, all eight of the surviving Volunteers from the Olympic Flying Column and the State President, John Corbett Morgan, who was scowling angrily at Don in a manner like piling dark thunderheads in the sky, which presaged unfortunate events. “The detective’s dream. I always wanted to do the Hercule Poirot number, gather all the suspects in the library and reveal the killer’s identity through my brilliant deduction.”

“It had better be *damned* brilliant deduction,” muttered Morgan irritably. “Jesus Christ on a raft, Don, you know I wouldn’t go along with this kind of dog and pony show from anybody who hadn’t given me some mighty fine grandkids!”

“Colonel Redmond, I highly resent the term ‘suspect’,” said Dr. Joseph Cord huffily. “I have the most impeccable credentials of anyone here and I am accustomed to receiving invitations to Longview House only to discuss and praise my work. How long is this going to take? All of interplanetary space is my domain, and I have more important things to do than sit here and play childish games.”

“How long will it take? How long is a piece of string?” asked Redmond. “Don’t worry, folks, I’ve called down to the kitchen and asked for coffee and drinks to be sent up, and also some herbal tea for you, Mrs. McCanless.”

“And why is that entire sordid incident at Ravenhill Ranch being resuscitated in any case?” complained Cord cranklily. “My understanding has always been that there was never any doubt as to informed on the Olympic Flying Column. It was Gertrude Greiner.”

“No, Dr. Cord,” said Redmond firmly. “It was not Trudy Greiner.”

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“Then it was one of us,” said SS General Bill Vitale grimly, his large frame in camouflage fresh from the front lounging in a leather armchair. “I have to agree with Dr. Cord, Don. Under such circumstances this Mad Hatter’s tea party is just a little bit wearing. If you have something to tell us, then say it!”

“Colonel, you must have asked us here for a reason,” said Brittany McCanless anxiously. “You must have found out something new about what happened at Ravenhill. What is it?”

“It’s not so much that we have found out what happened at Ravenhill, comrade, but that we have found out what did *not* happen there,” said Don. “At a certain point in our investigation, it became apparent that Trudy Greiner could not possibly have committed the crime she was accused of committing.”

“How could you tell that?” asked Palmieri.

“How could you tell that when my own court of inquiry just a couple of years after it happened couldn’t tell that?” demanded Morgan.

“Oh, you were in charge of that, were you, sir? Oh, yeah, I remember now. I read it in the file.” Don turned to the others. “We were lucky enough to make one key discovery which very understandably escaped you at the time, Mr. President. You weren’t fortunate enough to have a partner from the Transvaal. To begin with, the question of motive struck me as significant. I couldn’t quite get a take on *why* Trudy would betray her comrades, including a man whom everyone agrees that she loved. All of you still living who knew her personally have concurred that betrayal for money, no matter how much money, was totally out of character for Trudy Greiner.”

“I agree. I never bought that,” said Leach, shaking his head.

Redmond continued. “Gertrude Greiner had no other conceivable motive other than the possible one of jealousy, and everyone who was there seems to agree that this was also unlikely. She never exhibited any symptoms of jealousy and seemed to accept the situation between her former lover Commandant Murdock and Melanie Young. As a certain someone told me at the beginning of this case, she was a good soldier. Neither did Trudy have the opportunity to commit the crime. Her cell phone was down because it depended on a communications satellite that crashed, she was in the middle of

the meeting at the safe house when the phone call to the FATPO commander was made, and to make a long story short, so far as we could determine it was impossible for her to be the culprit. That indicated to me that there was at least one other person involved.”

“That person might be dead or fled to the States or Aztlan long ago,” Transportation Minister Palmieri reminded Redmond.

“True, but the fact that he or she existed was significant to me. Hell may hold no fury like unto a woman scorned, but jealous women contemplating a murder of passion usually do not involve third parties. Such a thing is too intimate. Nor do they take another fifty uninvolved people along for the ride. Most importantly, we now know that whoever made that call conveyed information to the enemy which Trudy Greiner had no way of knowing, specifically the number and type and colors of the vehicles that would be in the NVA convoy. But there was a problem. The one insurmountable obstacle we kept running up against, the one damning fact that seemed to prove Trudy guilty for all time, was the one million dollar payoff which was allegedly collected by her on the morning of the ambush,” said Don. “In the heat of the revolution’s aftermath, just coming out of a time when betrayal was so terribly common in the NVA and some of our comrades had been betrayed to the Americans for the price of a bottle of whiskey, this motive was very convincing indeed. Very early on it struck me that we had no real evidence Trudy had ever actually received the money. Old photocopies of computer printouts do not rank high in my estimate of evidence. In point of fact, we had no indication that *anyone* had ever received that money. No original documentation. No photographic evidence or actual fingerprint ID, which was in use at the time. Only a notation on a piece of paper that such an ID had been provided, and that struck me as odd. There wasn’t even a signature on what documentation we had. Oh, *come on*, now! A woman walks into a bank, she gets handed a check for a million dollars, and they don’t even get a signature? But then, a faked signature was a little bit beyond our traitor’s technical capacities. He could dummy up computer-generated material but not handwriting, at least not well enough to fool an expert graphologist if one ever looked at it. He knew his limitations and so he avoided that trap. That was what first tipped me off that something was off kilter. No signature on any kind of document or receipt for a million dollars? Not even a

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photostat? Then I spoke with Charlie Randall who had participated in the hunt for Trudy on behalf of the WPB, and he told me that the one time they actually got close enough to make any personal observations on their target, the poor woman was a poor woman in every sense of the word, definitely not living a millionaire lifestyle. More and more, I became convinced that there never was any million-dollar payoff, at least not to Trudy Greiner. But after all this time it was impossible to prove, one way or another. Then it turned out that the Bank of America vice president who allegedly signed the million dollar check never existed.”

“How do you know that, Colonel?” asked Lars Frierson keenly.

“I didn’t, at first, and I probably never would have, but fortunately my detective sergeant was a bit more on the ball than I was,” admitted Redmond. “He spotted something I never would have spotted.”

“Only because I happen to be an Afrikaner, sir,” said Nel. “A cultural thing. I noticed that the alleged vice president of the bank who signed the draft order for the one million dollar check was one J. P. Van der Merwe.”

“So what?” demanded President Morgan impatiently.

“You didn’t grow up in South Africa, *Meneer Staatspräsident*. I did, or what was left of South Africa after the horror of March 17th, 1992. In this country we tell Wyoming jokes. In Ireland they tell Kerry jokes. In South Africa we tell Van der Merwe jokes. There *is* no Jaapie Van Der Merwe. He’s a fictional character, a national joke name, like Joe Six-Pack or the Jukes and the Kallikaks, like Tommy Atkins the typical British soldier, like G.I. Joe or Jimmy Higgins, like Tyl Eulenspiegel among the Germans, or Cowboy Bob in our own Wyoming jokes. Jaapie Van der Merwe is a kind of Afrikaner Everyman. He has many lives and many silly adventures in our culture, *Meneer*, but signing off on million dollar checks to traitors who betray the white race is not among them. Suppose you had seen those computer printouts on that million dollar check and it had been issued by Vice President Joe Doaks or Beavis N. Butthead? That is what it looked like to me.”

The double doors to the library swung open and old man Nash came shuffling in, pushing a tea cart loaded with a large coffee urn,

cups, glasses, and liquor and beer bottles. "This is your party, so you can do your own damned bar-tending!" he snapped at Don.

The rest of them ignored him, fascinated by the story Don was unfolding. "So you're saying that the Olympic Flying Column was betrayed by a South African?" asked Admiral Leach in puzzlement.

"Or someone who knew who Jaapie Van Der Merwe is," said Nel, standing and beginning to move toward the door. "You know, they call us Africa's White tribe, and in a way we are. But long ago, even before we destroyed ourselves, there was another White tribe in Southern Africa. A smaller one, but not a bad bunch of blokes, really. Most of 'em, anyway." Nel slid his gun from his shoulder holster.

"They were once called Rhodesians," said Don, standing as well, his pistol in his hand. "Ironic, isn't it, Nash? That crap on those phony bank documents was probably the only joke you ever made in your entire bleak and horrible and humorless life, and now after almost forty years it comes back to bite you."

"You bloody *kak* bastard!" hissed Nel in utter rage and loathing, as Nash stared at him. "A crime like this...done by a white African! How can we ask them now to give us back our *huisland*? You have disgraced us all, forever! You dog!"

In a proper detective story, now would have been the time for the killer to break down and render an emotional confession to the group, and then be taken away for some future stern but unseen punishment offstage. Prior to his exit he would have added in the few details necessary to supplement the brilliant detective's deductions. But this was not a mystery. It was a horror story, and in the Northwest American Republic punishment tended not to be delayed overlong. Corey Nash was a very old man, and no one dreamed he could still move as fast as he did. Nash hurled a full pint bottle of beer at Don's head, turned the drinks cart over with a crash and managed to trip Nel, and then he turned and tore open the double doors. He dodged the outstretched arm of the cursing Sergeant Nel on the floor, and he pelted down the hall towards the back entrance of Longview House as if he were a youthful decathlete of twenty. God alone knew where Nash thought he was going. Where could he run to? But he ran. John Corbett Morgan leaped to the doorway almost as quickly, where he turned his head and bellowed at the top of his lungs. Morgan did not call the SS guards. He called the dog. "*Bruno! Runner! KILL!*" A

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brindled furry form seemed to fly past the open door, five feet in the air. The attack dog caught Nash somewhere outside in the rear garden, out of sight of the people in the room. There was a single pistol shot from Nash's gun, but the GELFs were designed to take a bullet or two. For about fifteen seconds the corridors of the old mansion rang with the hideous screams of a human being who was being torn limb from limb. Then there came an appalling silence. Several SS guards appeared at the door, submachine guns at the ready. "Mr. President, what the *hell*?" shouted the officer of the guard in stunned amazement. "That was old Mr. Nash you just..."

"That was a traitor," said Morgan. His voice was ice, and his face was stone. "Later, Captain. Don't worry, son, I may be old, but I haven't lost my marbles yet. There was a reason. I'll fill you and your boys in later on. Right now, get the dog to a vet and get whatever is left of that...get it out of here."

"Yes, sir," said the captain, stunned. Morgan closed the door. He turned to Redmond and the staring group of people in the library.

"Corey Nash betrayed the Olympic Flying Column?" said Leach in utter amazement. "But how? I remember seeing him around camp a few times back then, but I don't remember him being anywhere around on that night."

"There's still a few gaps in the how," said Redmond. "Unfortunately, now we'll probably never know what they are, unless Trudy Greiner can tell us. I am particularly looking forward to her account of what happened during the four hours between the time she left the safe house at three in the morning and the time she didn't show at seven in Poulsbo. Assuming I am allowed to hear it. I'm not sure that will happen. A little time ago someone suggested to me that when she crosses the border, Trudy be taken to a locked room from which she would never emerge. Is that going to happen, sir?" demanded Don of the President bitterly. "Is Trudy going to be taken to a locked room where she meets someone like Nash? Some O. C. Oglevy, Junior? Or a GELF dog? Because after all this, if she's still just going to end up as fertilizer in a hydroponics farm, let's just invoke the Official Secrets Act and we can all go home right now, all right?"

"No," said Morgan tonelessly. "That will not happen. I thought about it, but no. That will not happen. You have my word."

“Thank you, sir. I am glad to hear it. Getting back to your question as to what Nash did and how, Admiral Leach, in a general way, we’ve got that figured out. Nash was acting as a courier and liaison between Murdock and the president’s own column operating in the northern part of the Olympic Peninsula. He carried information and orders from the Army Council, stuff that could not be communicated over the air or put in writing. Murdock naturally accepted that anything Nash told him came from higher up, and that was the chink in his armor Nash used to destroy him and the others. As such Nash came into contact with Trudy Greiner, and he somehow convinced her to tell Murdock that John Morgan was going meet him somewhere along Ambush Alley that morning along with the entire Port Townsend column for a combined mission. He also involved himself in the planning of this non-existent plan to the extent that he was able to give Coleman of the FATPOs all the details, including the make and color of the vehicles in the convoy. This kind of combined operation had been done before, with the attack on the American aircraft carrier *John F. Kennedy*, so there would have been credibility to the story. That would have meant that we would have been able to party down in Port Orchard with about 150 people and really do the place up good and proper like Quantrill did Lawrence, Kansas in 1863. Level everything flying that red, white and blue Masonic dishrag. Murdock must have been thrilled at the prospect, so eager to inflict a titanic blow against ZOG that he didn’t scope the idea close enough and spot the holes in it.”

“There never was any such plan,” said Morgan. “We always avoided that type of major combined operation. Simply too much to lose if it went bad. There were rare exceptions of course, like the attack on the *Kennedy*, but those exceptions were carefully planned and organized at the highest level.”

“I know, sir, but apparently Nash was able to sell the idea, with Trudy’s unwitting help. Murdock trusted Trudy Greiner and Nash must have convinced Trudy. Afterwards...well, we still don’t know what happened in that four hour time period. Somehow Nash must have diverted Trudy Greiner from her rendezvous in Poulsbo, most likely when he met her to deliver the van we were to use as an impromptu ambulance, and change vehicles with her.”

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Shaking his head in amazement, Ed McCanless asked, “But in the name of all that is holy, Colonel, *why?* Why did he do it? And why did he falsely accuse Trudy?”

“And what else did he do down through the years against the state?” wondered Morgan grimly. “Have I been harboring a spy in my own household all this time?”

“I doubt he did anything else at all, sir,” said Redmond. “I’m going on my personal knowledge of the man, but my opinion on that is also due to the fact that as a BOSS agent I have never seen anything that indicated any serious security breach anywhere that close to you, Mr. President. My guess is that when we get through tearing apart and examining under a microscope every day of Corey Nash’s life that we can trace, we will find that he was an absolutely loyal and dedicated white revolutionary and Party member both before Ravenhill and after. My guess is that the betrayal of the Olympic Flying Column was Corey Nash’s only act of disloyalty to the Republic. I know that’s kind of like saying ‘Other than that, how did you enjoy the play, Mrs. Lincoln?’ But I am convinced that Ravenhill was a one-shot deal with Nash. As to why he did it? The answer is simple and terrible. He loved her. Young Trudy Greiner was the only woman and probably the only human being that Corey Nash ever loved in the normal sense of the word, or as close to normal as a man with his terrible past could ever love anyone.”

“I’m sorry, Colonel, you’ve lost me,” admitted Frierson frankly. “How in the name of God does Nash’s fixation on Trudy Greiner lead to the death of fifty-two Volunteers and fitting her up for it?”

“There we enter into the realm of madness,” said Redmond, shaking his head. “Nel and I did a Section 30 entry on Nash’s hunting and fishing cabin up along Hood Canal, ironically enough not far from Hoodsport, the last meeting place of the Olympic Flying Column. We found evidence there that Trudy Greiner has haunted Nash all his life since then, a kind of weird shrine to her memory and some very disjointed writings in a kind of diary.”

“*Ja*, he was bloody bonkers all right,” said Nel, shaking his head. “I tried to read that journal or whatever it was. He seemed to think Trudy Greiner was some kind of supernatural being, sometimes an angel, sometimes a devil, sometimes a kind of extraterrestrial

being or emissary...the man hadn't the full shilling, *ek se*. Colonel Redmond tells me this kind of thing was called GUBU."

"Love is a kind of madness at the best of times," said Redmond grimly. "When it gets bitter and twisted in a mind that is already diseased, the results can be truly bizarre, unbelievably destructive. GUBU. I believe that the early murders of his family in Zimbuggerly completely unhinged the man. Look, anyone who met old Corey even back in those revolutionary days very quickly discerned that he was a few bricks shy of a load. Some of you who remembered him from that time told me as much. But we wrote it off as mere eccentricity. Our Movement long ago fell into a very bad habit of tolerating odd and eccentric behavior that verged on cackle box material, so long as we felt we could get some mileage out of an individual. Some vestiges of this survive even today, Corey Nash being a prime example." Redmond pointedly avoided looking at Doctor Joseph Cord. "This isn't the only time that extremely dangerous practice has come back to bite us. It used to happen all the time back in the Old Man's day. We put up with Corey Nash because Nash made himself useful in a hundred ways. He talked to himself occasionally, true, but on the other hand he didn't rave, he didn't stab strangers with scissors, he didn't think he was Napoleon, and he was coherent if cantankerous. He found this little niche here in the Morgan household as a kind of eccentric butler type, so he appeared to be more or less functional in real life. No one ever connected him with the Olympic Flying Column disaster."

"Maybe he didn't mean for things to go that far?" suggested Brittany McCanless. "Was the whole Ravenhill thing some terrible accident that went wrong? Or God forbid, did he do it to her deliberately after he could no longer fail to understand that her heart belonged to Tom Murdock even after Murdock chose Melanie over her?"

"I still don't get it, Colonel," said Arthur McBride, shaking his head. "He called Woodrow Coleman that night and betrayed and murdered fifty-two of his own people just to get this girl's attention in some way? Impress her? Impress her with what, the fact that he's a bloody bastard? This is way beyond me."

"How could he think that betraying the Column to their deaths would show his love for Trudy?" demanded Drago, stunned and

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appalled. “I told you when you spoke to me before, the man must have been mad!”

“As a March hare,” agreed Redmond. “I haven’t been able to figure out the ins and the outs of it from his disjointed ravings in the book, which seem to cover a period of some years. There are two possibilities,” Redmond went on musingly, rubbing his chin. “As much as I have puzzled over his scribblings, I honest to God can’t tell which one is correct. The first possibility is that he set the whole thing up as a complex revenge for her rejecting him, that he planned from square one falsely to implicate her for his own crime and betrayal. The second is that he didn’t intend for it to play out that way, as far as Trudy being blamed for his own act of treachery, but somewhere along the line he screwed up. He had constructed in his own half-coherent mind some bizarre scenario whereby Murdock would be removed from the scene by the FATPOs and he would catch Trudy on the rebound, possibly after rescuing her in some knight in shining armor scenario. The only way to get at Murdock was to go through the rest of the Column. The fact that more than fifty Volunteers would die alongside his rival evidently meant nothing to him. He was living in the world of his own private obsession and nothing else was important.”

“*Damn!*” swore Palmieri, clenching his fists.

“Trudy would find herself in a tight spot, but one that he planned to get her out of and thus earn her appropriate gratitude,” continued Redmond. “Although we still don’t know exactly why Trudy didn’t show up at her post at the aid station, think of what it must have been like for her on that terrible morning! Remember, her cell phone was down, and she had no way of checking anything Nash told her. All Trudy knew was that the whole Column was gone and anyone who survived might have been an informer. Where else would she turn? He set this whole thing up so that Trudy would be *forced* to turn to him as a matter of survival. Turbulent and violent times such as revolutions can present a lot of opportunities like that. This man staked it all on one big chance to become Trudy Greiner’s knight in shining armor, saving her from a charge of treason and elevating her to revolutionary heroine status, and then reaping his reward, or so he thought in his mind. But something went wrong...jeez, I wish I knew what it was! I wish I knew what he said or did in those dark morning

hours so long ago. I suspect it is a horror story, but only she can fill us in now. Somehow he convinced her that she would be accused for what was about to happen and that her only hope was to E & E. Maybe he asked her to go with him...Christ, who knows? But for whatever reason, Trudy ran. Maybe she just took her own E & E route and planned on reporting back later on, but then realized she was being blamed for the ambush at Ravenhill and she had to get the hell out of Dodge to save her own life. Like I said, there's some gaps yet, and some of them may never be fully answered now that Nash has been used as a chew-toy by Bruno. But at some point later on, Nash painstakingly fabricated the million-dollar documents that framed her for the betrayal he himself had committed. Whatever he originally intended, in the end the swine deliberately made sure Trudy took the fall for him. An ironic twist if he originally intended to be her rescuer and hero."

"No, I can't see it that way," disagreed McBride. "The bastard knew damned well what he was doing. I told you that Coleman actually had a hand-drawn map describing the best terrain for setting up the ambush. Someone actually scouted the lay of the land ahead of time, and it wasn't Monkey Meat. Someone who is capable of deliberately assisting in the murder of his own comrades in that way is not capable of being motivated by...romance, however twisted a version of romance. My wife and I had a turbulent relationship, but neither one of us ever worried one second about all those loaded guns in our house. We both knew there was never any need on either of our parts. You can sometimes hurt the one you love, may God forgive you, but you never destroy them. Destruction isn't love, it's hate."

"I tend to agree. Then there was that whole fraudulent bank transaction," said Nel. "Maybe Nash did that later, after she refused him, to make sure Trudy would catch the blame and she'd be too afraid to come back and accuse him. But I don't think so. It's too much of a piece with the cold and methodical planning he showed over setting up the ambush. At some point he created these hoax computer printouts, dated them August the first, then somehow arranged for the first court of inquiry to 'discover' them. He deliberately had her accused and convicted and tried to cause her death, but more than that he caused her to be slandered and vilified for all her life as a traitor. That is not love, Colonel. That is hate."

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Black, overwhelming hatred of another individual that transcends every last boundary of reason or justice or right. The hatred of true madness.”

“But surely Trudy must have known that Nash betrayed her as well as Murdock?” asked Palmieri. “Why didn’t she come to the Party and denounce him?”

“Well, we’ll have to wait until she gets here to ask her, but I don’t think she did know it was Nash at the time,” said Redmond. “In fact, she may not know it even now. Nash must have been the one that met her, delayed her from her post, and then after it hit the news that the Column had been destroyed told her that she must be suspected and she needed to lie low. Even now she may not be aware of what he did. In her letter she never did claim that she actually had any new evidence, just that she was tired of it all and she was coming back to face the music. To this day, she may think that Corey Nash was indeed her knight in shining armor, the man who saved her. God, what a horrible thought!”

“But if she has no new evidence, no way to prove her innocence, why is she coming back?” asked Leach in wonder.

“Because this is her Homeland,” said Redmond. “Because by virtue of her blood she has the right to live here and to die here.”

Morgan was shaking his head, “Don...Jesus, Don, you don’t mean to tell me that after almost forty years it turns out...?”

“Yes, sir,” said Don, his face absolutely deadpan. “The butler did it.”

* * *

After the others left in bemusement, Don rounded on Morgan. “God *damn* it, what the hell did you do to me?” he roared. “*Why?* What have I ever done that you should do something like this to me? You knew, didn’t you? You knew all along it was Nash!”

Morgan sighed and sank into his chair. “I...had an idea.”

“John, you have to tell me!” commanded Don. “Did you know it was Nash? Have you nursed this viper in the bosom of our family for a whole generation? All this time did you let a sister of our race live in hell, disgraced and vilified by her own people, solely in order

to save yourself from scandal and political embarrassment at failing to detect a traitor that close to you?"

"I'm sorry you think me capable of that, son," said the old man sadly. "I'm a bad man, Don, but not that bad."

"You are capable of whatever you feel is necessary, as am I, as are we all. We're Volunteers and it is the way we chose long ago. Did you know?" repeated Don.

"Did I *know*?" replied Morgan softly. "No, Don, I did not *know*. Not for certain. As I hope for the salvation of my soul, that is the truth."

"You suspected. And you still did nothing." It was not a question or an accusation. It was simply a statement.

"Can you prove that, copper?" laughed Morgan bitterly.

"Legally, no. To a moral certainty, yes," said Don. "GELF dogs are programmed to respond to the digitally authenticated voice commands of certain individuals. They cannot attack any person whom they recognize by smell and sound and voiceprint as a command-authorized human being. The animal's mind will not accept such an order. You ordered the dog out there to kill Nash and he did so. That means that Nash was not command-authorized for that GELF. I now recall that while you had our own family dog Baskerville command-authorized for all of our family, including yourself, you did not authorize him with a voiceprint for Corey Nash, your lifelong aide and companion in arms to our family. That indicates to me that you knew, or at least that you suspected, that someday some occasion might possibly arise when we might have to be protected from Nash." There was silence for a time.

"The suspicion was there, yes," admitted Morgan. "When did it appear in my mind? I honestly don't know. Some time back. What caused that suspicion? A word, a glance, a thought? I don't know. Just one day it was there and it has gnawed on me ever since. There was never any proof, and I did not seek any."

"You didn't *seek* any? Mother of God, why not?" shouted Don in incredulous rage. "*Fifty-two Volunteers, sir!* Fifty-two men and women of our race butchered by ZOG because one man among us was a dysfunctional *nut* of the kind we should have purged from Day One! What did the Old Man tell us from the beginning? Never try to get mileage out of creeps? How much mileage did you get out of

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Corey Nash down through the years? Enough to justify fifty-two dead white men and women? How...*damn you, John!* How *could* you?" Redmond was on the verge of breaking down into tears.

Morgan spoke to him in a voice of stone. "Do you seriously believe, Don, that you can say to me one single thing, that you can utter to me one single reproach or accusation or denunciation that has not burned into my brain and my heart and my soul, night after night for years? Whatever you think it may be your duty to curse and rail against me now, I assure you, hit war already done. A thousand times over. A million times over."

"Why did you do nothing?" demanded Don. "How could you let Nash stay so close to you, to me, to Sarah, to my children? You must have known what we all knew, that he was never completely right in the head? What were you thinking, man?"

"I believed, and as it turned out I believed correctly, that he would never again do anything *quite* so evil," sighed Morgan. "Although that business with Hillary Clinton came close. That was an accident, by the way. We didn't...never mind, all that's gone now. Don, I owed Corey Nash. Owed him big, big time. Did it never strike you as odd that in all the time you have known both of us, I never told you how we met? How he came into the family, so to speak?"

Don frowned. "You know...damned if you ever did," he said softly, remembering in surprise. "How strange. During this whole investigation, that thought never even crossed my mind. Nash was just...always *there*. He was the first person who opened the door at that house in Bellevue when I knocked on it at age twelve to collect my newspaper money. I remember he tried to Jew me down on the price. How did you meet?"

"You know how Sarah's mother died?" asked Morgan.

"Yes," said Don. "I also know that Sarah ran away from the corrective school where they sent her to be de-nazified and somehow she was able to get back to you up in the mountains, just before you came down to Bellevue to organize Number Two Seattle Brigade where I ended up. Sarah and I have never spoken of it. It is the one off-limits subject between us. Not overtly forbidden, just...closed. She's never actually said to me that she doesn't want to talk about it. It's just that I've always known that to speak of it would hurt her more than any possible good that could ever come of it. Over the

years we have developed an understanding that it's the one and only topic that we will never talk about. Once a year or so, Sarah makes some passing reference to Vandy, and I pointedly don't take her up on it. I believe she notices this, but she has never voluntarily offered to lift the taboo, and I have no intention of asking. She obviously wants to keep that one door locked, and I have always respected her wishes."

Morgan lit a cigar. His hands were shaking as they held the match. "I was in the mountains for the first time when ZOG tracked down my family. They were in a safe house in Ballard, although it obviously wasn't as safe as we thought it was. Vandy saw them coming in time to get Sarah dressed and send her running out the back door, but they caught her anyway. That was early days, they didn't have the special camps set up then, so they took Vandy and Sarah to the King County jail. The Federal section was notorious. The FBI and the Department of Homeland Security had a...they had a special treatment there they would inflict on women Volunteers...there was this one Jew FBI agent..."

"Sir, I know what happened," said Don. "You don't have to..."

"Did you know they made Sarah watch, in case she knew where I was and she'd betray me to save her mother?" asked Morgan, staring out the window.

"Yes, sir. I know. It is a matter of historical record. Odd, isn't it? Everyone in this whole country knows what happened. Yet Sarah and I are the only ones who pretend we don't. And no one speaks of it. No one, not ever, not for forty years. My God, what a mighty and magnificent compassion and respect we receive as a family, from an entire nation! It fills me with awe every time I think of it! How could anyone not love this land and this people?"

"Well, there are some details you don't know. When...it happened...Corey Nash was in the same jail, on the floor above," went on Morgan tonelessly. "He'd gotten caught heisting some wheels for the NVA, but the idiots pegged him as an ordinary car thief and he was waiting in the bull pen to get bailed out by a Party bondsman. Some Seattle cops were taking him down for out-processing, they got another call for something or other and they tossed Corey into a holding cell on the Federal block until they could

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get back to him. Then they forgot about him until noon the next day. An open holding cell. No walls, just bars. Right next to where lay what was left of my wife and my child.”

“Ah, I think I understand...” said Don with a nod. “FBI Special Agent In Charge Bruce Goldberg. He liked to play with electric drills into the skull and turkey basters of acid. Do It Yourself lobotomies, he called them. One of their most notorious and brutal counter-terrorism operatives. I remember. He and his entire family were found dead in their home several months later. The family was shot, Goldberg had been burned to death with the necklace. So that was Nash who did that? Yeah, that sounds like his style. I can see why...”

“*No, it wasn't Nash!*” snapped Morgan. “Shut up and listen to me, God damn it! Christ, boy, do you think that I would leave a personal obligation like that to anyone else? That Goldberg job was me and Tom Murdock and O. C. Oglevy. No, what Nash did in that prison cell...it was nothing less than holy. Sacred, touched with the divine spirit of human mercy and compassion. Kind of odd that we can speak of Nash in such terms, eh? But we can.”

“Tell me,” ordered Don softly.

“Somebody had left one of those old Styrofoam coffee cups in the cell he was in. You remember those? It was raining, and Nash was able to get up onto the cell's bunk and stick the cup into an outside corner of the barred window where there was a little drip. It wasn't much, but throughout the night he managed to refill that cup again and again. Sarah dragged her mother over to the bars and time and again, Corey Nash held that cup of water to what remained of Vandy's mouth, and she was able to drink a little. And in between times, while he waited for that slow drip from the rain to fill the cup in the barred window, Corey Nash comforted my ten year-old daughter, who was by then quite out of her mind. Sarah had become a child again, a little baby, and Nash sensed this. She was talking baby talk, curling up in the fetal position, on the verge of shutting down her brain and leaving us forever. So he sang to her, every children's song he could think of, London Bridge Is Falling Down, Mary Had a Little Lamb, Barney the Dinosaur and Great Big Gobs Of Greasy, Grimy Gopher Guts, the Alphabet Song, anything. He told her every story he could think of. Three Little Pigs, Jack and the Beanstalk,

Rumpelstiltskin and Rapunzel, Little Red Riding Hood, and he held her hand through the bars. It wasn't me, it was Corey Nash who was holding Sarah's hand in the dawn when her mother died before her eyes. Somehow, Nash kept Sarah with us in her mind. He also managed to get into Sarah's head an address and phone number in Seattle. Afterwards, when she got away from them, Sarah didn't come looking for me. She came looking for Corey Nash. Nash brought her back to me, past the Fatties and the cops and the Homeland Security and the FBI. From that moment on I lived in his debt. Please try to understand that, Don. You have to remember, this was in the time of It Takes A Village, when white children were being stolen away every day. I had already accepted in my mind that Sarah was gone forever from me, just like her mother. You have Cindy El, you have Eva, so can you understand what that means. I had *accepted* in my own mind that my beautiful girl was gone forever, taken from me by the Beast, to live the rest of her life at the bottom of a latrine, for all the world to piss and shit on. I think I went insane for a time, and I probably would have gone Oglevy's way. I'd have been dead myself soon after. And then one day up there in the Olympic mountains I saw Sarah rise from the dead. I saw Corey Nash walk into camp, and he's leading my little girl by the hand. He returned my child to me, returned her from the dead. Don, whatever you may think of me, that is a debt that one never, ever forgets or betrays."

"That was what? Six months, ten months before I met Sarah?" whispered Don in wonder. "She never said anything. Not then, not to this very day."

"Now you tell me how the hell I was supposed to call that man in here and accuse him of treason to his face without any proof at all? Based on nothing more than a funny feeling, a nagging baseless suspicion?" asked Morgan. "What if I was wrong? Worse, what if I was right? What was I supposed to tell Sarah?"

"So you put it off. You put it off for almost forty years. Until Trudy Greiner came back and you couldn't put it off any more, and then you dumped it onto me," said Don.

"Yes," said Morgan. "I put it off until Trudy Greiner came back and I couldn't put it off any more, and then I dumped it onto you. It is the only act of cowardice I have ever committed in my life. For what it's worth, I'm damned sorry about it."

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“Why me?”

“Sarah will forgive you for taking Corey from her,” said Morgan. “I’m not sure she’ll ever forgive me.”

“And now I get to go home and tell her,” said Don wearily, standing up to go. Morgan stood up as well.

“I’ll come with you,” he said. “I’ll do it.”

“I’d rather you didn’t, Mr. President,” said Don. “When I am given an assignment I prefer to carry it out to the end. Myself. You’re wrong, by the way. Sarah is still a soldier after all these years, a Volunteer, and she knows this vicious life we have lived inside out. She is also your daughter and a very wise and compassionate woman. You’re wrong about her. She will forgive you. But will Trudy Greiner ever forgive you? Now that’s another story entirely.”

* * *

The woman was small and trim, her hair thin and white, and her slight figure on the concrete seemed dwarfed and tiny against the soaring height of Mount Shasta on the northern horizon. She wore a subdued and businesslike skirt and jacket, and sensible shoes. Although she had to rely occasionally on a cane, she walked with calm and deliberate steps across the open bridge at Mountain Gate, California and for the first time in more than thirty years, she stepped onto the soil of the Northwest American Republic. She was calm. She had made her peace with God and composed herself for death.

It was barely past eight o’clock in the morning when Gertrude Greiner began what she felt would surely be her last walk on earth. As she passed the customs inspection station over which the green, white and blue Tricolor snapped in the wind, a single Civil Guard in full dress khaki uniform stood to attention smartly and gave her the open-palmed National Socialist salute. She stepped off the bridge onto the white side of the border where she saw the long lines of men in SS dress black tunics with silver piping, spit-shined jackboots and coal-scuttle helmets gleaming, white-gloved hands bright on immaculate rifles at parade rest. They were lined up on either side of the ancient highway leading to the Northwest, toward Home. There was total silence. Behind the ranks of the Special Service were vans from the Northwest Broadcasting Authority and a number of the foreign media

who were authorized to report the news from the Republic. Their cameras were rolling, but no one was saying anything. They all seemed to be watching something.

Trudy hesitated briefly, dazed, completely uncomprehending. She had envisioned this moment for years. She had resigned herself to arrest and then God only knew what kind of ordeal before the end. She, of all people, knew what the men who had made this land and raised that green, white and blue banner into the sky were capable of. But whatever she had expected, it was not this. Had she walked into the middle of some kind of 10/22 parade or commemoration? She walked down the center of the road towards whatever awaited her. As she walked an officer somewhere shouted a crisp order, and on both sides of her the SS men snapped the rifles up, bayonets fixed, and hundreds of white-gloved hands presented arms at the military salute. Trudy Greiner suddenly saw a group of people step out in front of her. There were nine of them, and she knew them all, They were older and grayer now, and even at a distance their faces seemed to her to be filled with a portion of the sadness she had known for so many years. Crazy old Bible-thumping Joe with his heavy spectacles. That short fat old guy, could that possibly be the buff and powerful young Frank Palmieri? Drago's moustache she recognized at once, white as it was. And Brit McCanless, still tall and straight, her braided hair down to her waist, yes, that was her, despite the years. That had to be Ed standing at her side. Big Bill in his camouflage. Lars and Dave in naval dress blue. At their head stood a tall old man with a white beard and a grim face. Him she recognized immediately. She walked forward resolutely and stared up at him. "Hello, John," she said, ready to die.

"Hello, Trudy," he said. Tears were streaming down the old man's face into his beard. He took a small velvet box from his pocket. His voice quavered. "I believe I have something of yours." He opened the box and took out the medal of the War of Independence. He leaned over and pinned it onto her bodice. "Welcome, my comrade and sister," he said, his voice cracking. "*Welcome Home!*"

The Foggy Dew

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The Foggy Dew

*When through the glen I drove again,
My heart with grief was sore,
For I'd parted with those valiant men
Who I never would see more.
But to and fro in my dreams they go,
And I kneel and pray for you.
For slavery fled! O glorious dead!
When you fell in the Foggy Dew!*

XI.

One key figure in the drama was missing from the dramatic and historic scene at the Mountain Gate border crossing. The man most responsible for bringing it about.

On that Independence Day morning, Don Redmond stood hundreds of miles away on a hillside, at the wrought iron gate of the Ravenhill National Monument. Most of his family were at home getting ready for the traditional bonfire, barbecue and marksmanship contests. Cindy El was shooting that afternoon in the city of Olympia open competition with an AK-47 Don had restored by hand in his workshop, while Matt Redmond, home on leave, was shooting with his army-issue weapon as a freelance. Don had a twenty-credit side bet with Matt that Cindy El would beat him. Matt had taken the bet, but Don could tell with amusement that Matt was sweating. Cindy was damned good. Eight year-old John was delightedly plinking away at Little Willie with a school-issued .22 on his playground, trying to pop the little pig when he peeped out from behind the armored briefcase of his attorney. Sergeant Hennie Nel had drawn station duty for the day but he and his wife would be joining the Redmond family that night for dinner.

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Sarah had understood why Don wanted to be here today, but she had been a bit surprised by his choice of company. Beside Don stood his teenaged daughter Eva. "I've never been here before," she said.

"I am ashamed to say that neither have I," her father told her. "It's one of those things I always meant to do, and yet somehow or other I just never found the time. I should have found the time, Evie. We all need to find the time. We'll all come back here one day for a picnic," promised Don. "I just wanted to see the place on this one day, when this...this terrible thing that happened is going to be righted, insofar as it ever can be righted. I suppose in some way I want to let them know that maybe they can rest a bit easier now. An old comrade of theirs is Coming Home today. Many, many years too late, but she's Coming Home. Better late than never. Dear God, I hope it's better late than never!" The front of the monument read:

*To those who shall come after: from the Time of Struggle, we greet
you.*

*This hallowed ground is dedicated to the glorious and everlasting
memory of the 52 heroes of the Northwest Volunteer Army, here fallen
in battle against the enemies of all humanity. May their names live
forever in the hearts and minds of the Folk.*

Below that was the date of the fatal ambush. On a bronze plaque at the base of the monument was the Roll of Honor. Don walked up to foot of the obelisk hand in hand with his daughter, and quietly read the names of the dead out loud.

Vol. James G. Armstrong
Vol. John W. Bell
Vol. Anne D. Bonnar
Vol. William F. Books
Vol. Roelof W. Botha
Vol. Samuel F. Collingwood
Vol. Anthony T. Carlisi
SGT. Carol B. Dumas
Vol. Andrew M. Elliot
Vol. Arne Ericsson

CMDT. Thomas J. Murdock
Vol. Patrick C. Murphy
Vol. Karen J. Martinelli
Vol. Donald G. Maxwell
Vol. Maxim F. Menzhinski
SGT. Ronald G. Nolan
Vol. Jennifer C. O'Donnell
Vol. Myles F. X. O'Donnell
Vol. Craig J. O'Neill
Vol. Michael L. Osterling

The Hill of the Ravens

Vol. John R. Forster	SGT. Casimir G. Ostrovski
Vol. Marguerite E. Frick	Vol. Leigh Anne Pierce
Vol. Walter F. Gottschalk	Vol. James D. Purdue
Vol. Alexander V. Ivanoff	SGT. Martin A. Quayle
Vol. Daniel R. Jardine	Vol. Peter C. Randolph
Vol. Wayne C. Jones	Vol. Susan Y. Randolph
Vol. Douglas M. Kaye	Vol. Hans G. Reichert
Vol. Gina C. LaFrenière	Vol. Henri N. Rembert
Vol. Corrado A. Manfredi	Vol. Archibald M. Robertson
Vol. Jürgen G. Meiss	Vol. Catherine L. Robertson
Vol. Wilhelm A. Meiss	Vol. Heinrich U. Rotenburg
Vol. Donald A. McAlpine	Vol. Silva P. Tagliagamba
Vol. James D. McCracken	Vol. Heather M. Thomas
Vol. Richard R. McDougall	Vol. John C. Williams
Vol. Angus S. McGaskill	Vol. Johann F. Wortmann
Vol. Lewis M. McPherson	LT. Melanie A. Young

Slowly the two of them walked around the four-sided obelisk. On each side, there were engraved words of honor and commemoration. “One side for the Christians, one for the Old Believers, and one for the National Socialists,” sighed Don. “It’s as if even in death, we couldn’t leave them to rest, their sacrifice accepted and treasured by all as a common heritage. We had to squabble like jackals over who would get the kudos from their memory.”

“But I don’t see it like that, Dad,” said Eva. “They are all noble words, no matter what tradition of our race they come from. It’s like everyone wanted to lay a wreath on their graves.” On the left side of the obelisk, the Christians had inscribed:

*Be thou strong and of a good courage: for unto
this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the
Land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.—
Joshua 1:6*

On the reverse, words from an ancient saga:

*Here do I see my father and my mother.
Here do I see my sisters and my brothers.*

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*Here do I see the line of my people back to the beginning.
Lo, they do call to me. They bid me to take my place among them
In the hall of Valhalla, where the brave may live forever.*

On the right side of the marble pinnacle, beneath a wreathed swastika, the National Socialists had imprinted not a passage from *Mein Kampf* as might have been expected, but two simple lines from the *Anabasis* of Xenophon.

“You will know that strength and weapons alone do not always prevail in battle. When an army is stronger in soul, then their enemies cannot withstand them.”

“Look, Dad!” said Evie, pointing skyward. Don looked up and saw that a large black feathered form was perched on top of the obelisk, a beaked and beady-eyed face looking down on them imperturbably.

“Well, I always figured there must be some reason they call this spot Ravenhill.” Don turned to his daughter and spoke. “You know, they say ravens live a long, long time. Wonder if that old black fellow was here back then, when it happened?”

“Evie, one night a few weeks ago you asked me a question. You wanted to know the truth about what happened. Jesus, what can I tell you about that whole time? It’s just something that happened. It *happened*, Evie. It all happened. It is now something that was, and something that is. It was a war, and like all wars it was a hell that can only be known by those who lived through it. The glory, the terror, the good and the bad, the pride and the disgrace, the fire, the ice, the mud, the steel and the shit, the laughter and the blood, the courage and the nobility, the cowardice and the just plain get-me-through-this-and-I-shall-not-sin-again-O-God. It was terrible beyond belief. But it was all part and parcel of one mighty, irresistible event in the affairs of men, and when such things happen it’s like a volcanic eruption. The lava flows and destroys all in its path, but eventually it cools and then the lava fields grow green with life. What you must always remember is that all in all, that event was a *good* thing, Evie, a great and wonderful and magical and blessed thing. Like all that is ultimately good, it has an element of tragedy and horror and sadness,

because those aspects of life are all part of the process whereby good must overcome evil in this world. The time will come, as you grow older, when you learn more about that time. What you learn may horrify and disturb you. War does. But you will learn that sometimes war can uplift and inspire men and women to such things as heroism, idealism, and nobility of the soul. When that time comes, honey, I want you to remember this day and I want you to remember these names here, because what is important is what you will find here, not what anyone in other times and places may speak of us. Whatever you may come to think of me, of Tori and John Corbett and all of us who lived through that terrible epoch, I want you to remember the sacrifice that these people made on this hill on that summer morning. These names, these souls who lived and died so that you and your brothers and sisters might be at all, and so that you could have some kind of meaningful life in this world.”

“Dad, you know what I feel right now?” she asked.

“Mmmm?”

“I feel blessed,” said Evie.

“Eh?”

“I am coming to understand now how incredibly lucky I’ve been,” said Eva. “Lucky to be born here and not somewhere else, and to be born now instead of fifty years ago. My future is bright and shining and clean, because you and Mom and Tori and Papa John did what had to be done. You fought against the Jews, and you beat the bastards. And the gods have smiled on me. I have a journey to make now, through life. I come here and I find that these people here, people that I never knew and never heard of by name, have already paid my fare. Your name could have been on a plaque like this. Mom’s name could be there. Papa John’s name might have been there. Aunt Tori’s name might have been there. But you’re not there. You have been here with me, all my life. These people here, those names you just read, they died so that you could be here for me and for Allan and Cindy El and all of us...I...I just don’t know what to say to them, to their spirits.” Eva was quietly crying.

“They don’t want you to *say* anything, honey,” said her father. “That was always our fault, back in the old days. We said, when we should have done. We were what the Irish called whiskey priests. We knew what was right. We just didn’t *do* it. But then one day, for

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reasons no one has yet figured out, we decided to do instead of to say. Now these people who lie here, they want you to *do*, to *live*, and to *be*, in whatever strength or weakness or joy or sadness or triumph or failure or just plain life comes to be your lot. For over a century long past, some very evil people conspired to make sure that you would never have that chance, that a white girl like you would never even exist in this year. But like you said, we beat the bastards. We paid a price. You see part of that price before you, but you mustn't feel bad or sad about it. They gave up their lives so that you could have yours, so that you could walk this earth. After you they want your children and your grandchildren to live and to be. That's why we did it, Evie. That's why we did it all. Now, they want us to leave this place and get on with it. They were then, and we have built them this monument, and it is fitting and just that we do so. But they are of the past. This hallowed place is theirs for all time, but all the world from now on is yours. Your day is yet to come. You and your brothers and sisters have got a whole wonderful future ahead of you, and I'm kind of curious to see how it plays out. So let's go home and start writing one more chapter in the long, long history of this wonderful world we Men of the West have made, eh? You have a clean slate, Evie, thanks to those whose names you see before you. It's time for you to start writing on it."

After Don and Eva got into their car and drove off, the monument grounds were empty, except for the SS sentry on guard at the tourist booth.

The raven shivered his wings, rising silently into the air from the granite. Then with sudden speed he rose higher and higher, soaring into the cold clear sky. For a time the ancient messenger was visible as a black spot against the blue. Then he was gone.

Below, the Land remained.

About the Author

In this grim and impressive novel, H. A. Covington has created a chilling glimpse into a future America seventy years or so down the road, as the 22nd Century approaches. It is an America torn and riven by violence, fascism, racial and cultural division, and political Balkanization and fragmentation. In short, an America that yet could come to be. Covington has already attained a kind of underground cult status with his ten previous novels. (One of these, *Vindictus: A Novel of History's First Gunfighter*, is available from 1stBooks.) *The Hill of the Ravens* may yet turn out to be Covington's foreboding masterpiece of a future gone dark and terrifying.

