Common Dogs by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | JUNE 2016

It was a balmy Thursday evening in east Charlotte. The four-day, 10.5-hour-a-day, late May workweek was now over. It was time to go looking for a new vignette.

Monique (my Filipina wife, aka Agent 32) and I (Parkaar, aka Agent 33) decided to eat dinner at Portofino, an Italian restaurant in a strip mall on Eastway Drive. The food was delicious as usual. And the service was superb. However, nothing of psecret-psociety grade seemed to be going on. Though, the joker-waiter gave us an odd smile as we passed him on the way out. *Should I have asked him a few questions?*

The next stop was The Peculiar Rabbit for an after-dinner drink. It was just 2.2 miles away in the heart of Plasma-Wigwood (slang for Plaza-Midwood).

After nursing a beer on the first level for 11 minutes, a table opened up on the rooftop terrace. The 30-something, blonde, tattooed hostess led us up the two flights of wooden stairs. Once seated I surveyed the scene. There was the usual grand view of the ever-budding Charlotte skyline. I noticed that a first date was in progress behind Monique's chair. To my right, a business discussion chattered along. And along the western railing, patrons were already taking their obligatory pre-sunset photos.

We then took some photos, too. Then we watched the sun drop just north of the tallest buildings. Solar touchdown would have appeared to have been around 13th Street from our vantage point.

"Do you remember, Monique, the December sun setting to the left of the Duke Energy Building?"

"Yes, I do. It was way south of where it is now."

"Yeah, winter solstice is way down the scale," I said as I pointed.

"And the summer solstice is way up there," Monique added as she pointed with her nose. "June 21st will be the furthest the sunset will go up North Tryon Street."

"June 20th this year, Agent 32." *Agent 32? Record mode.*

"I'll take your word for it, 33." *She knows that the microphone is hot.*

Our conversation died in the heavy, humid, hazy air. Though, others went buzzing on around us. However, nothing short-story-worthy was detected.

We paid our bill and walked out to Gordon Street in the near-darkness.

"Hey, want to check in at Common Market, Monique? Maybe Blake or Agent 23 is there."

"Sure! Why not? We're on no schedule, and I can tell that you're still looking for short-story material."

"Indeed I am, Agent 32. Our readers demand and deserve better than what we have relayed thus far. We can take this alley to save steps."

"To save steps and condense the procedure, 33?"

"Exactly, Agent 32. But, watch your high heels on this randomly dispersed gravel." *He's already talking for the recorder and his next short story.*

"I'll be fine, Agent 33, putting my pair of narrowly hewn gavels to the widely strewn gravels." *She's already playing her words.*

Soon we were passing through the Common Market's front patio scene: an assortment of about three dozen hipsters. We entered the old, round-arch-roofed, brick building and bought a couple of microbrews. We alighted on some stools at the bar in the back of the grocery store/deli/lounge.

Within eight minutes, an older, very light-skinned African American gentleman had taken the stool to my right. He was in a very gregarious way. I made sure that the digital audio recorder was still on. *Good. Still a green light.*

"So, how are you two doing tonight?" he suddenly asked.

"We're doing fine," I replied. "My name is Mike." *Let's just pass on the Parkaar nonsense.*

"I'm Tony, and tonight is my sixty-second birthday!"

"Merry mirthday!" [*sic*] I exclaimed.

"Happy birthday, Tony," Agent 32 added. "I'm Monique."

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- ➢ HTML (Free /Available to everyone)

- ➢ PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)

- ➢ Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below