

**another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory**



**Tiki Wiki** by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | NOVEMBER 2016

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by Mike Bozart

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We, my wife Monique (Agent 32) and I (Agent 33), checked into the Golden Sands, a mid-rise oceanfront hotel on Carolina Beach (NC, USA), at 3:33 PM on Wednesday, November 23, 2016. The friendly, middle-age, Caucasian female desk clerk gave us a card key for room 223. *She looks familiar. / I've seen them before.*

"It's a nice private end unit with a king-size bed," she said.

"Does it have an ocean view?" I asked, wondering if it was blocked by lower structures, since the room was only on the second floor.

"Yes, it has a nice Atlantic Ocean view, sir. The balcony is just above the indoor swimming pool building's roof. No visual obstruction."

"Sounds great!" Monique exclaimed.

"You two look very familiar. Have you stayed here before?"

"Yes," I answered. "We were here exactly two years ago. [chronicled in the short story *The Balcony*] It's another family Thanksgiving on the coast."

"Well, I'm glad that you guys came back. Enjoy your stay."

"Thank you," Monique said as I began to shuffle away.

Once inside our room, Monique unpacked the luggage while I poured a couple of cordial liqueur drinks. I then wandered out to the narrow balcony that had accordion-style storm shutters just behind the railing. I began to close one of the heavy-gauge metal screens a little bit, which was difficult as

the leading edge had come out of the track. The scraping of the front peg on the concrete made a lot of noise.

“What in the world are you doing out there, Parkaar?” [my ailing alias] Monique asked.

“Oh, just shielding my chair from the solar rays. You know that I’m a vampire when it comes to the sun.”

“As am I. Pull the other side out, too.”

“Sure thing, mahal.” [love in Tagalog]

“Salamat, [thanks in Tagalog and Cebuano] my bana.” [husband in Cebuano]

Monique came out a few minutes later and took her seat on the other side of the narrow balcony.

“A little chilly goo-goo,” [sic] she opined. (It was in the upper 50s Fahrenheit – 14 to 15° Celsius – with a slight breeze.)

“Glad I brought my jacket.”

“I’ll take it over scummer, [sic] though.”

“Likewise, Parkaar. No complaints.” *I bet he’s recording.*

“And no bugs. Funny how the summer lovers conveniently forget about the millions of annoying insects.”

“Agent 33, are these blinds really just for blocking the sun?” she questioned.

“No, honey; they are storm shutters. They are pulled together and locked when a hurricane or tropical storm is

approaching. They protect the sliding glass door and windows from shattering.”

“Well then, they serve at least two purposes,” Monique stated.

“They certainly do,” I concurred.

We had a chuckle. Then I got up and looked at the flat rooftop that was only about six feet (about two meters) in front of us, and about three feet (about one meter) lower than our balcony.

“You know, if we really had to, we could jump from this railing onto that roof,” I posited.

“Why in the world would we want to do that, 33?”

“Well, what if some violent meth-heads [methamphetamine addicts] were kicking in our door ...” *Why does he come up with such scenarios?*

“Hold on, Parkaar! Once we leaped to that roof, we would be trapped. There’s no ladder or stairway to the ground. We would have to drop 15 feet [4.57 meters] to the hard sidewalk, leading to a broken foot or ankle.” [Coincidentally, Liverpool Football Club’s Philippe Coutinho would suffer an ankle injury three days later against Sunderland at Anfield.]

“But, if there were a fire engulfing the hallway ...”

“Ok, in that case I guess it would make sense, 33. But, please don’t attempt to jump that gap tonight. I don’t want to have to call 9-1-1 for a medic.” *I wonder if he sprinkled some of those ‘granules de grandeur’ into his drink. He’s such a sly*

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