

INTRODUCTION

This book is dedicated to the brave young men and women, who unselfishly gave of their time, and some, their lives to defend our freedoms. Also to those wild and crazy characters who step outside the norm and do what most of us would never think of doing and have fun while doing it. and through their zany actions, make life fun for the rest of us.

A PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMAT

I grew up in the border town of Brownsville, Texas. I had me a woman and she got it on like an Easter bunny. She rocked me, swept me away. She carried me along to places I'd never been and made me strong; until one night I came home and she told me to fix my own supper and she ran off with the Fuller Brush man. That woman rode me into misery. After she left, I didn't care about tomorrow. To me, tomorrow was just another day.

I don't understand the things I do. I was still a dumb kid who couldn't see farther than the end of his dick. I hated my parents because of my old man. He was making every effort to drink the town dry and he left outta here like his dick was on fire. The last thing I heard him say was, "I'm going to ride the cold wind high and free and this will be the last you will see of me."

He was right. Three months later his body was found floating in the Rio Grande, the truth of his evil deeds silenced forever.

I spent some time in Matamoros, a little border town in Mexico, across the Rio Grande from Brownsville, where I blew my money on a gal with big brown eyes and bigger tits who swore she loved me long enough to get me drunk and in bed. Next morning, she and the money were gone, and I was hungover and broke. So I walked back across the border into Brownsville and I joined the army.

Two years later I finished my stint with Uncle Sam and, like a bad penny, I returned to Brownsville. Times got rough and cotton wasn't selling and I figured all we get is the chance to play the game, not make the rules, so I went into business for myself. While I was away I learned how to kill and I learned it well. I could shoot the eyes out of a snake at one hundred yards.

I found out there was a dark side of our society that had a need for the skills I had and I wasn't shy about hiring myself out. I help people make peace or make war, it don't matter which as long as the money makes it into my account. Business was good. I spent a lot of time in South America assisting our government in removing undesirables from positions of power in countries we needed to control.

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I didn't know my old man had made enemies and that they were looking for something he had and they thought I had it.

It wasn't long before they found me and left me bleeding in an alley behind Lucky's Bar. Two armed Mexicans in civilian clothes rushed around the corner, charging toward me. One was tall and thin and the other one was taller and muscular. He's the one that hit me with his revolver. I guess I should be happy he didn't shoot me. They said they would be back and I had better have their pharmaceuticals. They must have thought they worked for Merck or something. Pharmaceuticals? These beaners couldn't even spell the word. They told me I wouldn't be leaving Brownsville alive if I didn't have it for them by the end of the week. They hit me two more times to make sure I got the message. That was a mistake.

I wasn't going to let these strong-arm deuces come into my town and try to play rooster and beat the crap outta me. I couldn't let 'em get away with it, pharmaceuticals or no pharmaceuticals.

So, a week later I set a trap and sprung it on them.

Late Thursday evening, I watched as a stolen van, the sides advertising a nonexistent plumbing company, pulled to the curb alongside Lucky's Bar. One block away, I watched the two men who were sitting in it smoking cigarettes. They were studying the third-floor window across the street from Lucky's as I studied them. A lone figure was visible moving around the apartment. It was my apartment, I liked to live close to where I spent most of my time, Lucky's, and that figure belonged to Ice Malone, my long time friend.

Soon, the two goons exited the van and walked across the street and into the alley that ran behind my apartment.

I took a deep breath and vaulted through the door into the alley. Crouching I looked up and down the thin strip of dirt and saw them near the rear entrance. There was a commotion at the north end, the river side of town. A figure emerged like a phantom from the dark enclosure and took two quick steps behind them, and swung his club with everything he had. The blow knocked the big guy forward, sending him crashing into the sidewalk with a large gash on the back of his skull. It turned out he was the lucky one that night because we caught up with the second scum bag before he could make it back to the van. He lost a couple of teeth and a lot of memory, and from the beating he took, his own mother wouldn't recognize him.

Ice and I hogtied them and threw them into the back of the plumbing van and drove them over the border, south of Matamoros. We gagged them and pinned notes on each one of them, in case they weren't given a chance to talk. The notes said the next time they showed up in Brownsville, we would send them back in a body bag, cut up into little pieces.

I also left my card in case they might be in need of my services at a later date.

BECOMING A SPOOK

The man in front of me was big with his hair clipped short on the side, military style. He was wearing a white trench coat and a brown hat, brown oxford shoes, white shirt, brown tie, and I assumed he had a government issued revolver on him somewhere.

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He didn't offer his hand and neither did I.

I was wearing my brown Dan Post cowboy boots, brown corduroy sports coat, Wisconsin Badger sweatshirt, Wrangler Jeans, and my silver belt buckle I won for being the runner-up all-around cowboy on the Texas Rodeo Circuit in 1937. I had my Colt .45 belly gun in its rig, situated snugly under my left arm pit. I topped everything off with a white Stetson hat. I looked good.

I had a brandy manhattan in front of me and he had a Scotch and some change. He bought the drinks. It was his meeting.

"Thank you for agreeing to see me, Max. I realize you are a busy man."

"That's true but Harry said it was important. Something to do with national security?"

He ignored my question and asked one of his own.

"You and Lieutenant Harry Marshall pretty tight?"

"I guess. What's this about?"

It was a Monday afternoon, 2:15 p.m. Central Standard Time, to be precise. We were sitting in the back of Rocco's Pub, near the ladies room and close to the phone where I receive most of my calls. My friend and proprietor, Dan Ciorrocco, known as, The Rocco Man, was busy wiping down the bar and filling the cooler with beer, preparing for the evening crowd that would start arriving around 4:00 p.m. It was dark. I asked Rocco to keep the lights turned down and he agreed. This was a secretive meeting.

"Yes, well, I'm Colonel Jack Clarkston, I'm the Assistant Director of the Central Intelligence Agency." He paused to let the importance of that set in, I guess. I stared at him.

He continued. "What do you know about the CIA, Max?"

I thought a moment and realized I didn't know a great deal about the CIA, so I did what I usually do when I found myself lacking knowledge, I lied.

"Quite a bit actually. You are a bunch of weird spooks snooping around in everybody's business trying to overthrow governments of small defenseless nations. How's that's for starters?"

He stared at me nodding his head.

"That's fairly factual. Actually, we gather intelligence. We deal with two types of intelligence gathering. First, there is white intelligence which is information gathered from open sources such as newspapers and magazines and then there is covert intelligence gathering and this is what I am interested in hiring you for, to work directly for me outside the normal channels of the agency. I believe you are the perfect candidate."

"Hire me? What for?"

Clarkston stared at me for an instant before pulling out a cigarette and lighting it. He blew smoke over his head and took a sip of his Scotch.

"Max, you have military and investigative experience. You don't have a family. No siblings, your mother is dead and your father disappeared years ago, most likely died and buried in a pauper's grave somewhere. Your history with women is shaky at best. You don't have a wife or any kids, no attachments. You are familiar with the southwestern states as well as Mexico and South America and you cheat on your taxes. In other words, you are a perfect candidate for covert operations, this operation. We need someone outside the agency, someone we can trust. Are you interested?"

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“And why should I do this?”

“Because you love your country and because we are asking you to do it. You don’t need any special talent or high intelligence. If intelligence, talent, and ability were hereditary, we would have to dig deeply into your family tree to find its source,” he said with a flicker of a grin, “and we don’t have the time to do that.”

I didn’t appreciate his failed attempt at humor.

“I don’t know. I’m making some pretty good money now. I would hate to give it up.”

“Max, we know what you are making and it isn’t what you have been reporting on your tax returns. We don’t care about that. We are willing to pay you twice as much as you brought in last year and we’ll lose the information we have on you so the Treasury Department will not get their hands on it. We don’t play games, Max.”

We looked at each other across the table.

I picked up my brandy and took a big swallow.

“Since you put it that way, I guess I’m your man.”

“Good, that’s good, Max.”

He took another drag on his cigarette and continued to look at me.

“We found over the years a man becomes a spy for different reasons, hatred, anger, political zeal, money, and sex and then some of them are coerced. You exhibit all these qualities. Hell Max, you voted for Senator Joseph McCarthy. In addition to these qualities, you seem to have inner demons which could also help you be successful. This is an opportunity to do something special, something important for your country. Because of your tradecraft, and independent nature, we feel you would be a perfect fit for this job. There is no reverence in what you will do. I have to tell you, now that you are a part of this,

there is no way out. You can't fuck around with these people. They will break you and turn you into something awful.

"I'm just a private dick, Colonel. I'm not a Spook."

"We'll make you one and you will be one of the best. Hap Schultz will join you.

We want you guys to fly under the radar. When someone comes to us saying they have some information relating to this job, we want to send you and Hap, someone who cannot be traced back to us. You set up your network of friends you can trust. No more than ten people. We will train you and pay you well. Tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m. you and Hap Schultz will meet me in Lieutenant Marshall's office down at the Milwaukee Police Department's 16th Precinct. Don't be late. Hap is being briefed by another agent as we speak.

"Have you heard of a sleeper agent, Max?"

"No, I can't say I have. What is a sleeper agent?"

A Sleeper Agent is an inactive deep-cover agent. What we are about to tell you came from a sleeper agent. It is top secret and if any of this information leaks out, it could cause the death of many people and that will make me angry and you don't want to make me angry, Max.

After you sign these forms I am going to tell you some things and you cannot breathe a word to a soul. You are also going to meet some very powerful people who are going to pass along some top secret information to you and you are going to forget you ever met them. Do you understand?

I nodded my head. I figured I had already forgotten more than I know and forgetting more shouldn't be too much of a problem.

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“Good. Your cover will be that you are traveling and writing about life on the rodeo circuit throughout the southwestern United States, Mexico, and South America. We will assist you in getting jobs as a pickup rider at the different rodeo events. Those where we can’t help you, you will be on your own and will have to figure out how to maneuver around the event. We want you to mingle with the cowboys in the area as well as the people who are putting on the event. You will just be another rodeo junkie while you spook some really bad people.

“Since you are a writer and a former newspaper man your background fits.

“We will teach you a code and provide you with a code book.

“Dan Cirrocco will be your contact. You will leave your encrypted reports here at Rocco’s Pub with Dan. You will learn the code. Mr. Cirrocco will have no idea what the codes mean. He will hand them off to Homicide Detective Harry Marshall who in turn will get them to us.

“We will never leave you naked. We will have friends in the area at all times but you will never know who is covering you.

“Your code name will be Cheese Head.”

“Cheese Head? Where the fuck did you come up with that?”

“It doesn’t matter. All your correspondence will be signed Cheese Head. No exceptions. I’m going to leave now. A car will be out front in fifteen minutes to pick you up and take you to the Pfister Hotel. You will be meeting another Harry, Harry Truman.”

I stared at him in disbelief.

“President Harry Truman?”

David Hesse

“It’s the only one I’m aware of, the man who created the CIA, this Frankenstein I work for. This is big, Max, real big.

“Oh, and by the way, if asked, I was never here. We never talked.”

SPOOKS

THE SPY

He glanced at his watch. It was 11:45 pm and the street was still deserted. He had been standing there for fifteen minutes. It was a Sunday night and the buildings were dark. A lone streetlight cast shadows across the street and sidewalk and he watched the mist as the wind blew it across the yellow beam put forth by the light. It was remarkably quiet. Not a sound. Nothing!

Earlier that evening, the fog moved in and soon after the heavy mist began to fall. The tall thin-faced man pulled the collar of his trench coat up around his neck and pulled down the brim of his hat to keep the dampness out. Nothing about him drew attention. He kept an eye on the phone booth down the street. It was still empty. He reached into his breast pocket and removed a package of Chesterfield cigarettes. He tapped the package on the back of his hand and bent down and removed a stick with his teeth. He replaced the package in his pocket and removed his lighter. He spun the wheel, igniting the flint and a flame shot up momentarily illuminating his lined and

haggard face. He hadn't slept in two days. He snapped the lid shut and returned it to his pocket. The smoke he exhaled was lost in the thick fog that enveloped him.

He looked around. He didn't see anything, but he felt it. He didn't like the feeling. He stuck to the plan to make sure he wasn't followed, but you just never knew. From experience, he knew he couldn't trust anyone and it was one helluva way to live your life.

He glanced at his watch once more. It was 11:53. He took one last drag of his cigarette and flipped it in a nearby puddle. He listened to the brief hiss before the butt was extinguished.

He inhaled deeply and looked to his right and left once again to make sure nobody was around before he moved out. Hurriedly, he crossed the street to the phone booth. He stepped in and closed the door. A light went on. He wrapped his hand in his handkerchief and smashed the light, enveloping him in darkness. He lifted the receiver and dropped in a dime. He knew the number by heart and had dialed it many times in the dark. The phone rang once before it was picked up. There was complete silence on the other end.

The tall man said, "7-1-1-3-4. I've been burned."

"Where are you?"

"Zone three, drop one."

"Stay there."

The line went dead.

He hung up the phone and took a deep breath. He lit up another cigarette and hungrily sucked in the smoke. His throat was raw. He had been smoking too many of these things. He opened the door and tossed it across the sidewalk. He reached under his coat and removed his gun, a 9mm Beretta. He chambered a round and put his hand

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and gun in his outside right coat pocket. Even though he dry cleaned the area he could never be too careful.

Quickly he walked to the corner and turned left heading toward an alley behind an old warehouse. He stepped into the shadows and waited. His mind wandered to his earlier conversation with Serena and he couldn't erase it from his mind.

"Paul, she said, "I have the bona fides, documents that prove the CIA along with a German expat, one of those Paperclip Nazi's, named DeMohrenschildt, a Dallas oil geologist and close friend of Lee Harvey Oswald's, was in on the plot to kill John F. Kennedy and it goes higher than we thought. Paul, this makes me sick."

It had been so long since anyone called him Paul, he had to pause for a moment to gather his thoughts. "Okay, put it together and meet..."

Was that a click on his phone, or hers? "Selena, did you hear that?"

"Yes, I have to go. I'll meet you..."

Those were her last words. He heard her scream and a moment later an unknown voice came on the line.

"You're next Paul. We know where you are."

The line went dead.

It wasn't long before a black Lincoln limousine pulled around the corner and came to a stop in front of the alley. The back door opened as it slowly rolled by and Paul jumped in closing the door behind him.

When he caught his breath he said, "We lost our Asset, Selena. They got to her this morning and they outed me. They called me by name."

As they drove away his handler looked at him and gave him a scotch. "We are going to have to bring you in, Paul."

“Why? I am about to tie this whole thing up. We got ‘em right where we want them. What we gathered isn’t chicken feed. It’s some serious stuff.”

“No, we don’t.”

“What?”

“Your swallow was killed last night. She was beaten and raped and dumped in the East River. They found her body this morning. She is currently at the morgue. Her apartment was trashed and her camera, typewriter, and files are all gone. Nothing.”

The tall man was quiet for a moment, taking this all in. If this was true, all the work he put together for the past year was ruined, compromised. Without supporting documentation, all he had was his word and he would be going up against some of the most formidable men in the world, not just the CIA but the President of the United States himself.

Paul threw back the scotch and looked over at his handler and found himself looking down the barrel of a silencer.

“I’m sorry Paul.”

Ffitt, the sound of the silenced gun was the last thing Paul heard before the .22 caliber slug entered his skull, mixing up what was left of his brain. The slug didn’t exit his skull. It was the perfect caliber round for an execution.

He died instantly.

SUPER WARRIORS: DRUGGED UP GI'S

HOME:

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I felt the liquid creep through my veins and the tension and fear leave my body. I was mellow.

I was trying to escape all the ears in the walls. Every night it was the ears, always the ears.

Yesterday silence was the only friend I had. I thought the bottom was the only place I'd been but I wasn't there yet. No matter how hard I tried I was always behind.

Tommy got into a fist fight. He didn't fare well. His right ear was almost severed and he re-broke his nose and dislocated his ring finger. I didn't know if we would be able to remove his wedding band without cutting it off. I fixed him up the best I could using my wife's sewing kit to sew on what was left of his ear.

Thanks, Doc," he whispered.

That night I watched the needle take another man and I silently cried once again.

Chinese Premier Chou En-lai told the president of Egypt in 1965: "Some American troops are trying opium, and we are helping them. We are planting the best kinds of opium especially for American soldiers in Vietnam...Do you remember when the West imposed opium on us? They fought the war with opium. We are going to fight them with their own weapons."

VIETNAM:

I fell in love with a Saigon butterfly of the night, a whore named Kim Lien and she kept my plumbing clean. She looked like a bottle of cheap wine and worked on Tu Do Street and swore in English like a sailor. But she was mine and I was hers. We had a need and we filled it for each other.

She told me she was a hired wife for a CIA agent in Saigon. "He had a lot of money, money to burn. The CIA was accountable to no one in the United States

government. Congress did not have a clue what money they had or how they spent it. That the CIA was its own government with its own set of rules. He didn't care what happened to his money. He said he could always get more. The mother fucker kicked me out because I could not cook his stew properly. I was not a good housewife, he said."

She told me she started working in tea houses when she was 10 and now she only worked for her father on his Flower Boat, a sampan, and for her brothers who pimped her out on dry land.

She informed me she was 19 but I don't think she was a day over 16.

That night I held her hand for the first time in the bottom of her father's sampan. I kissed her for the first time five minutes later and it was then that I gave her father 300 piasters so we could spend three hours together. I gave him another 100 piasters for some opium. We smoked it before she cleaned my pipes.

I told her I loved her in front of a bar on Tu Do Street with her brother standing on a nearby corner.

I proposed to her in front of the Meyerkord hotel, ranked #11 by the GIs, #10 being the worst and #11 being beyond the call of duty.

We were wed by a Buddhist monk on her father's Flower Boat.

We spent our romantic honeymoon in a hooch I rented for 1200 piasters a month.

I delivered our first child in that hooch two months later. A boy. He didn't look anything like me.

Lien told me, "In my village, they call our son bui doi ("dirt of life"). I am shamed."

I held her close to my chest as she sobbed. We shared a

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joint and made love.

“Don’t worry, Lien everything is going to be all right. Let’s live life like there is no tomorrow because for us, there may not be. Let’s make love all afternoon. I don’t have to be back until this evening.” We shared some opium.

HOME:

I wept at night as I thought of her and my son and what fate had in store for them. I feared my bui doi boy more likely than not, was forced into prostitution along with his mother.

I still meet her in our secret meeting place and our small son joins us. In my mind, miracles can happen. I need miracles.

VIETNAM:

It was 1969, Saigon, South Viet Nam and it was raining, again. It rained every day since we got in country.

“Name’s Pappy Smith,” he said, holding a half-empty bottle of Tiger beer which he told us tasted better than the Viet Cong Bia Hoi.

He had skin like leather and welcomed us to Viet Nam, “You are in for a helluva fight. The average age of a ground pounder over here is 19 years old. The average age of a ground pounder when he is sent home in a body bag is 19 years old. I’m 35 and I have spent three tours in Nam and three years in Korea when I was younger than you are today. I went along with General MacArthur, chasing those fuckin’ slope heads right to the Yalu River before Mr. Truman and the rest of those fuckheads in Washington stopped us. If they woulda’ let us finish business back then, you boys wouldn’t be here today.”

He stopped his orientation long enough to finish off the rest of his Tiger beer.

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