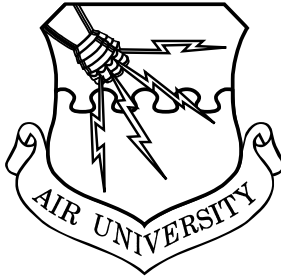


MARK CLODFELTER

Between **TWO**
SHADES *of* **BLUE**



Between Two Shades of Blue

MARK CLODFELTER

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Publisher's Note

This work of fiction encapsulates US Air Force Academy cadet life and other coming-of-age experiences from the perspective of a young man in the 1970s. To create an authentic world for readers, the author has included strong language and passages that might be considered offensive.

*For the Air Force Academy Class of 1977 and the 1976–1977
University of North Carolina basketball team*

and

Most especially

For Donna

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Part 1

Morphing

If you can't get them to salute when they should salute and wear the clothes you tell them to wear, how are you going to get them to die for their country?

—GEN George S. Patton Jr.

Chapter 1

2 July 1973

Paul Glattan sat silently as the blue bus turned into the US Air Force Academy's South Gate. The trip from the Colorado Springs post office had taken almost half an hour. He noticed that two minutes after the bus turned north on Interstate 25, civilization ended—the foothills of the Rockies were on the left, the plains of Colorado were on the right, but no homes, no offices, no buildings appeared until the bus turned off the interstate toward the Academy. There, at the beginning of Academy Boulevard, a stark hotel flanked by a restaurant sporting a rooftop windmill and dubbed “the Zyder Zee” arose from the prairie grass. But that was it. Nothing, except for a small guard shack marking the South Gate entrance.

He had arrived in Colorado Springs two days earlier, flying from Raleigh to Chicago to Denver to the Springs. He had never traveled west of the Mississippi, and ironically the trip marked only the third time that the prospective Air Force cadet had ever flown in an airplane. As he walked along Colorado Avenue and Tejon Street, surveying the Antlers Hotel with Pikes Peak in the distance and taking care not to scuff the highly polished black loafers that he would initially wear at the Academy, he wondered what awaited him at the “Blue Zoo.”

At first, Glattan felt good about his prospects. After boarding the bus, he met several of his prospective classmates, who enthusiastically speculated about their respective futures.

“I’m going to be a fighter pilot and fly the F-4 Phantom,” one said.

“I’m going to fly the F-111, the fastest fighter-bomber on the planet,” said another.

“I’m going to be an astronaut,” added a third. “I want to be on the first mission to Mars.”

“The Academy’s going to make all that happen for us!” someone yelled. “The Class of 1977 is going to be the best Academy class EVER!”

That comment drew whoops and hollers and a round of applause. The high-spirited banter continued as the bus rolled forward on I-25.

Once the bus slowed to stop at the guard shack, though, the conversations turned into whispers and then stopped. Some of the prospective cadets (all told, 1,461 of them) knew more than others did about what to expect. They were the sons of Air Force officers or had

brothers who attended USAFA. Eighteen-year-old Glattan, from the Pettigrew County tobacco fields of eastern North Carolina, knew only what he had read: the environment was tough and the discipline and regimentation severe—especially for the first six weeks of Basic Cadet Training and the freshman year. Could he take it? Glattan honestly wasn't sure.

Not the situation he envisioned three years earlier.

Then, he had planned to follow his father's path to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and become a Tar Heel. His dad planted that seed early, taking Glattan to football, and—most importantly—basketball games, touring him around campus, buying him Carolina sweatshirts and baseball caps. That was before money entered the equation.

And the new equation changed the results.

As the bus passed the Academy airfield, where senior cadets who were pilot-qualified learned to fly Cessna 172s, no one mentioned becoming a fighter pilot or an astronaut. The silence continued past Falcon Stadium. When the bus turned by the Cadet Field House and headed up the ramp to Vandenberg Hall, one of USAFA's two dorms, the tension was palpable. A final turn brought the "Bring Me Men" ramp in sight. Etched in giant block letters on the façade above the incline leading to the cadet area, those words came from the Sam Walter Foss poem "The Coming American"—"Bring me men to match my mountains." Glattan knew none of that; he just thought the granite phrase looked daunting.

The driver turned over his shoulder and said, "They're waiting for you."

An upper-class cadet in a crisp short-sleeved light blue shirt, Air Force blue polyester pants, white gloves, and a blue wheel cap sporting a silver eagle with a visor pulled so low that his eyes were invisible directed Glattan and company to drop off their suitcases and stand "in formation" at the base of the ramp.

Then all hell broke loose.

From behind the walls by the suitcases, upper-class cadets appeared, seemingly by the hundreds. One came up to Glattan.

"Get your fucking chin in!" he screamed.

Glattan did so, wide-eyed with dread.

"What the fuck are you looking at?" the upperclassman yelled. "Do you want to buy this place?"

"No!" Glattan answered.

“That’s no, *sir*, maggot!” the upperclassman blared. “If you’re asked a basic question, you’ve got only four responses: ‘Yes, sir’; ‘No, sir’; ‘Sir, I do not know’; and ‘No excuse, sir.’ You got that?”

“Yes—I mean, yes, *sir*!”

“ARE YOU FUCKING STUPID?!” the upperclassman screamed, spittle splattering across Glattan’s face.

“No, *sir*!”

“How the fuck you got selected to attend *my* Academy is beyond me. Stand up straight, you piece of shit, and keep your eyes caged in front of you!”

“Yes, sir!” Glattan answered.

As he tried to stand as straight as possible without shaking, with eyes staring forward without seeing, Glattan heard other upperclassmen berating the young men standing on either side of him.

“I gave up Carolina for this?” Glattan thought. “What have I done? What the hell have I done?”

Chapter 2

2 July 1973

What the hell have I done, indeed, Glattan mused as he stared into the darkness at the ceiling above his bed. I could've gone to Carolina, but no, I decided that would be a mistake. He felt the top of his head.

No hair.

Just one blur of a miserable day with unabated screaming in the background.

Day One of Basic Cadet Training—BCT.

Shots, uniform issue, mind-numbing briefings—all occurring at different spots in the cadet area. Glattan ran to each of those on the marble strips bordering a broad terrazzo. Walking, he quickly learned, especially in the middle of the Terrazzo, was a privilege limited to upper-class cadets. Every time he passed an upperclassman, he had to stop and render the proper greeting: “Good morning, sir!” “Good afternoon, sir!” “Good evening, sir!” Failure to do so resulted in a bevy of squat thrusts or push-ups.

As he ran back and forth across the cadet area, a cardboard number flapped around his neck. Like the rest of his classmates, he had been reduced to a set of digits dictating clothing sizes, vaccinations needed, and God-knows-what-else.

When he arrived at the station issuing combat boots, he received a pair of size 8½.

“Sir, I—I wear size 10,” Glattan stammered to the civilian distributing the boots.

“You’ll fucking grow into them, weak dick!” bellowed a nearby upperclassman. “Get to the next station, you slimeball!”

Glattan grabbed the boots and began running.

By noon, he carried a heavy duffle bag filled with uniforms and other assorted items. Running was not only difficult but painful.

“Have you men eaten?” an upperclassman asked Glattan and several of his cohorts.

“No, sir!” they answered in unison.

“OK. Step outside with me and we’ll head to Mitchell Hall. I know that you Basics don’t know how to march yet, but we’re going to give it a try. Get in line and do what I say.”

“Sir, can we go onto the Terrazzo?” one of Glattan’s classmates asked.

“You can to march—and that’s the only time.”

Glattan and the Basic Cadets received instruction on how to salute, stand at attention, turn about-face, and stand at parade rest.

“When you march, you always start out on your left foot,” the upper-class cadet said. “Grab your duffle bags. Ready, begin!”

The upperclassman called a slow cadence as the Basics advanced toward the dining hall. Whoa, Glattan thought—an upper-class cadet with compassion. Maybe there will be others like him.

That notion quickly vanished.

As they sat down in the enormous dining hall, the upperclassman said, “You guys look around—you won’t be able to do that for another year. And for this meal, you can relax while you eat—that’ll change starting tonight.”

Glattan timidly glanced about. Tables everywhere—440 of them to be exact—all with 10 chairs. Twenty-foot-high ceilings, with floor-to-ceiling windows on three sides offering spectacular views of the Rockies’ Front Range and the eastern plains.

He barely noticed the exterior. Instead, he focused on the fourth wall, containing a second story with a few tables and a staircase leading to it.

The upperclassman saw Glattan surveying the elevated tables. “That’s the Staff Tower. The Cadet Wing commander, group commanders, and their staff officers all sit there. They dictate the flow of the meals. The rest of the Cadet Wing sits where we are.”

A waiter brought a tray of hamburgers to the table. Glattan wasn’t hungry, but he finally took one and began to nibble it.

“No—you can’t just pick up a sandwich and eat it,” the upperclassman said. “You have to cut it in half first.”

Glattan saw that he wasn’t the only one making that mistake. Jesus, he thought. If there are rules about how to eat hamburgers, I am truly screwed.

“You Basics all received a copy of *Contrails*?”

“Yes, sir” in unison.

“Good. Take it out and follow along.”

Glattan and his classmates grabbed the small gray book that provided information about the Academy and the Air Force.

“You should carry *Contrails* in your back pocket at all times. Now—turn to page 172. See where it says ‘Fourth Class Knowledge.’ You must memorize—verbatim—the next 20 pages.”

Glattan’s eyes widened at the tiny boldfaced type. “The Mission of the United States Air Force Academy.” “The Mission of the United

States Air Force.” “The Oath of Allegiance to the United States.” “The Purpose of the Fourth Class System.” “Quotations from Military and Political Leaders.” “The American Fighting Man’s Code of Conduct.” “The Star-Spangled Banner”—four verses—why did Francis Scott Key write so damn many? The “Air Force Song”—another four verses. “The Phonetic Alphabet.” “Lists of Aircraft in the Air Force Inventory.” “Football Cheers.”

“The reason for memorizing that information,” the upperclassman continued, “is to simulate memorizing Emergency Procedures in pilot checklists, procedures that have to become so second nature that a pilot would perform them automatically in a critical situation. You men will have to recite them under pressure—that pressure will begin tonight at the evening meal.”

After lunch, the upperclassman marched the Basic Cadets to the west end of Vandenberg Hall. As they walked through the hallways, Glattan noticed that colored nametags appeared outside the rooms.

“Each class has a particular color: red, blue, gold, or silver,” the upperclassman said. “Your class has silver as its class color. The color of the nametag indicates your class year. My class, ’75—Best Alive, has gold as its color; First Classmen, the seniors in ’74, have red as their class color; Third Classmen, or sophomores in ’76, have blue, but you won’t find any blue nametags here—those guys are all in the ‘New Dorm’ undergoing survival training. Everyone has the same color baseball cap to wear with his fatigue uniforms, and the same color blanket on his bed.”

Glattan saw his name etched in white letters on a gray nameplate.

“Glattan, is it?” the upperclassman asked. “Drop your gear in the room, and then wait in the hall outside your door.”

Glattan went inside. Tile floor. Sink with a vanity. A large, three-ring binder on the vanity countertop titled *Cadet Regulations*. Built-in closet near the door. Two steel beds, one against each wall, with sheets, a pillowcase, and a pillow atop the mattress and two gray blankets. Two desks, with bookshelves above them, beyond the beds. A large picture window between the two desks. A duffle bag like his was beside one of the beds. Glattan put his own bag by the other.

Leaving the room, he saw a gray name tag above his: “Daniel Brooks.” Well, Glattan wondered, what will my roommate think of this fun-filled experience?

He found out soon enough.

After receiving an M-1 rifle from the Armory, Glattan returned to the room to find a guy with a shaved head, an inch taller and 10 pounds heavier, standing in front of the vanity with the regulations binder open to the chapter labeled “Cadet Room Arrangements.” The contents of his duffle bag spilled across his bed.

“Can you believe how they want us to place all this shit?!”

For the first time since arriving at the “Bring Me Men” ramp, Glattan smiled.

“I’m Paul Glattan—go by ‘Glat.’ From North Carolina.”

“Sorry, man—these regs are crazy. I’m Dan Brooks. Go by DJ. From Michigan.”

“Right now I’m wondering why I didn’t go to Carolina.”

“I hear that. Ann Arbor’s looking mighty good to me at this point.”

“Yeah. Well, money was a factor.”

“That was part of it for me, too, but I also wanted to fly. You get a guaranteed pilot slot if you graduate from here—but damn, I’m sure ROTC gets some slots as well.”

The door flung open.

“You chatterboxes stand at attention when an upperclassman enters your room!” bellowed a cadet wearing a blue polyester uniform suit-coat, matching trousers, and black and silver shoulder boards. “I’m Cadet Second Class Michael Brown—your flight sergeant. You’re a part of A Flight, in Bravo Squadron. Your flight commander is Cadet First Class Samuel Sheppard. Your squadron commander is Cadet First Class Mark Hines. You two fuck sticks better remember that, and you better get this room squared away ASAP! You also better study your goddamned Knowledge before the evening meal. Don’t let me down, dipshits!”

The door slammed shut.

Glattan and Brooks stood shaking.

“Damn it to hell,” Brooks whispered.

“You got that right,” Glattan nodded.

“I wonder how long we have before dinner?”

“Good question. I guess we’ll find out soon enough.”

“Yeah, I’m thinking *too* soon, Glat.”

“No doubt, DJ. Show me what you’ve figured out about where all this stuff goes.”

Together, the two Basics tried to match the reg book diagrams regarding placement of uniforms, socks, underwear, and footgear, grappling with how to fold underwear into appropriately shaped

squares, and socks into balls with one inside the other. They talked softly as they put away the items. Glattan learned that his roommate was the son of a Ford engineer in Detroit who served in the Navy in World War II and then went to the University of Michigan on the G.I. Bill. DJ's family was Catholic, and he had a younger brother and three older sisters. Glattan revealed that his dad had served in the Army Air Forces during World War II as an air traffic controller in the Pacific. Like DJ's father, Glattan's dad went to college on the G.I. Bill, graduating as a pharmacist from the University of North Carolina. Glattan mentioned that he had a sister four years younger.

"Dad raised me to be a Tar Heel, though I don't think he was too disappointed when I decided to come here. I'm the one disappointed now."

Brooks grinned. "My dad had me leaning toward becoming a Wolverine, and now I'm thinking that was a great idea."

The uniform items put away—correctly, they prayed—they tackled the beds, making the sheets and blankets with tight hospital corners—hopefully, tight enough. Then they sat down at their desks, took out the little gray book *Contrails*, and began studying Knowledge.

Glattan had just begun to memorize the "Mission of the United States Air Force Academy" when he heard a voice at the end of the hall yell, "Sir, there are 15 minutes until the evening meal formation! Uniform for the evening meal is Class B with white gloves and wheel caps. There are 15 minutes until the evening meal formation!"

"Shit," Brooks muttered as he flipped through the reg book. "What the hell is a Class B uniform?"

"Damned if I know, DJ—but at least we know that the evening meal is at six o'clock."



Glattan and Brooks ran along the Terrazzo's marble strips until they found the formation assembling behind the B Squadron guidon. Noting that they wore the same uniform combination as other Basics, they nodded in satisfaction before realizing what awaited. The closer they drew to the formation, the more clearly they could see a repeat of the scene that welcomed them earlier at the "Bring Me Men" ramp.

"What did you polish those shoes with, moron, a Hershey bar?!" "What's the American Fighting Man's Code of Conduct?!" "Give me 'Transport Aircraft, dirtbag!'" "Is that where your belt buckle goes on your uniform?!" "What's Giulio Douhet's quote, smackwad?!"

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Glattan tried to withstand the barrage by repeatedly shouting back, “Sir, I do not know,” which only caused upperclassmen to berate him more loudly.

Finally, when asked to list fighter aircraft, Glattan yelled, “Sir, US Air Force fighter aircraft are the McDonnell-Douglas F-4 Phantom II and the Republic F-105 Thunderchief!”

“Go on.”

“Sir, I do not know the others!”

“Well, dipshit, at least you know two of them. Keep studying your goddamned Knowledge!”

“Yes, sir!”

Upperclassmen focused on other victims. Glattan silently thanked God that he had read about the Vietnam air war.

A bugle blared.

“GROUP, A-TEN-HUT!”

Upperclassmen joined the formation at attention.

“RE-PORT!”

“ALPHA SQUADRON REPORTS ALL CADETS PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR!”

“BRAVO SQUADRON REPORTS ALL CADETS PRESENT AND ACCOUNTED FOR!”

Glattan surmised—correctly—that the last voice came from Mark Hines, the Bravo Squadron commander. Other squadron commanders made similar reports, through the letter “J.”

The initial voice then barked: “PRESENT, ARMS!”

Upperclassmen saluted, with the Basic Cadets quickly mirroring them.

A trumpet played taps as the Terrazzo flag was lowered.

The band transitioned to Sousa’s “The Stars and Stripes Forever.”

“Alright, you scum buckets,” an upperclassman said, “don’t forget to step off on your left foot.”

Glattan heard Hines: “FORWARD, MARCH!” The squadron guidon went from vertical to horizontal as the squadron lurched ahead.

“Get in step, maggot!” came the refrain from upperclassmen directed at individual Basics.

As they marched through Mitchell Hall’s entrance, Glattan saw Cadet Brown waiting by the doorway.

“You, come with me!” he said to Glattan, directing another four Basics to do the same.

Arriving at a table designated by the number 158, Brown barked, “Stand at attention behind these chairs!” as he pointed toward the end of the table opposite where four upperclassmen stood. He moved to join them, shouting, “Don’t forget where this table is located—you’ll be sitting here for the rest of the week!”

“GROUP, A-TEN-HUT!” a voice echoed from a speaker on the Staff Tower.

The upperclassmen joined the Basics at attention behind their respective chairs.

“TAKE SEATS!”

All upperclassmen except Brown sat down. As the Basics moved to do the same, he growled, “Not yet, dirtbags! You douches have to eat at attention! That means you sit up straight, your back doesn’t touch the back of your chair, and you keep your eyes caged on the Air Force eagle at the top of your plate!”

Glattan snuck a glance at his plate. Sure enough, a bald eagle was embossed on it at the twelve o’clock position.

“You don’t speak unless you are spoken to, with one exception—when the waiter brings a tray of food, you announce what the dish is to the cadet at the head of the table—the Table Commandant—and then you pass that tray forward to him.

“If you are spoken to, you take your eyes off the eagle, look directly at who’s asking you a question, and answer it. Then you stare back at the goddamned eagle. Do you pussies understand?”

“Yes, sir!” in unison.

“You’d better—take seats!”

Glattan sat down with his butt on the edge of the chair, trying to keep his back from touching it and his right leg from bouncing up and down. He looked at nothing but the goddamned eagle.

“Sir, roast beef for the Table Commandant!” the Basic next to him proclaimed. Glattan took the tray and passed it toward the head of the table. More dishes arrived—with the appropriate announcements—until everyone was served.

The inquisition then began.

“Basic Cadet Johnson!”

“Yes, sir!”

“Give me the quote from General Douglas MacArthur!”

“Sir, I do not know.”

“Pass in your plate!”

Johnson’s eyes widened.

“Are you deaf, dumb fuck?!”

“No, sir!”

“Then pass in your goddamned plate—maybe next time you’ll have studied your Knowledge.”

Johnson passed his plate to the Basic at the opposite end of the table from the Table Commandant. A waiter took it away. Johnson stared at the spot on the table where his plate had been.

“Basic Cadet Barnett!”

“Yes, sir!”

“Give me the American Fighting Man’s Code of Conduct!”

“Sir, I do not know!”

“Pass in your plate!”

The ritual continued. Glattan could not stop his leg from bouncing. Finally his turn came.

“Basic Cadet Glattan!”

“Yes, sir!”

“Give me the Purpose of the Fourth Class System!”

“Sir, I do not know!”

Glattan watched his food disappear. Two bites of roast beef, one bite of green beans. The Purpose of the Fourth Class System, he silently thought, was to assure that the only thing he and his classmates could get enough of to eat was shit.



Back in Bravo Squadron, Glattan and Brooks feverishly studied Knowledge while polishing their boots. Brooks revealed that he had three bites of roast beef, two of mashed potatoes, and one of green beans before surrendering his plate.

“Glat, we’ll never survive this place if we can’t eat.”

“*Survive* is the right word, DJ. Damn, I knew the Academy would be tough, but I didn’t expect what we got today—and I’m guessing tomorrow will be more of the same.”

“Yeah, man—not what I signed up for. I don’t know what I *did* sign up for, but I assure you this wasn’t it.”

After polishing the boots, the two began polishing the uniform dress shoes they had been issued. The shoes that they brought with them were now off-limits. Everybody received a pair of unpolished leather shoes, Glattan thought, to allow upperclassmen another opportunity to slam the Class of ’77. He was especially upset by this development because he arrived at the Academy in a pair of high-

gloss corfams, shoes that he now knew only upperclassmen could wear. At least the new shoes were correctly sized 10s.

The door opened.

Cadet Brown.

Glattan and Brooks jumped to attention.

“You wimps have five minutes to get out in the hall in your skivvies and shower clogs. You stink, and it’s time to wash that smell away!”

Glattan, his roommate, and the 13 other Basics in Bravo Squadron’s Alpha Flight soon lined both sides of the hallway in their underpants. Brown walked down the middle of the hall, smiling broadly.

“I don’t think you weak dicks got enough exercise today—but we can rectify that problem now, can’t we?”

Hoots and hollers came from nearby upperclassmen. “Yes, we can!” they chortled.

“How about a few squat thrusts?” Brown smirked. “You smack-wads make sure you’ve got ample space between each other so that you don’t bang heads—though that would likely do many of you some good. Alright—move to the middle of the hall and stand up straight. By my command—ONE—TWO—THREE! AGAIN—ONE—TWO—THREE! ONE—TWO—THREE!”

On “One,” the Basics squatted, forearms extended, palms flat against the floor; on “Two,” they fully extended their legs to assume the same planking position for a push-up; on “Three,” they jumped to stand at attention.

The mantra continued nonstop.

Suddenly, Brown called, “ONE—TWO. You pussies need to hold that position for a while—like until I get tired.” Lots of laughs from upperclassmen. “Keep your damn backs straight, wimps!”

After three minutes, Glattan’s arms began shaking. I will *not* be the first guy to drop, he thought. Holding the position would have been tough enough in tennis shoes; in shower clogs the tips of his toes had minimal support. He heard the thud of a classmate’s body hitting the tile floor, and then another thump.

“Pussies, pussies, pussies, just as I thought,” Brown snarled. “The rest of you weak dicks stand up. It’s time for showers.”

Glattan strained to get to his feet. He wanted to barf and shook his head several times in an attempt to remove the nausea.

“Here’s how the showers are going to work,” Brown announced. “The latrine has six shower stalls, and when you hear the whistle, if you’re at the head of the line, you jump into the first one. The whistle

will blow again 30 seconds later and you move to the next stall, while the next dipshit will go into the stall that's now vacant. We'll keep the line moving until each of you maggots has three minutes to shower—so make good use of the time.

“Oh—by the way, I like to sing in the shower, and I'm sure you pussies do as well. Since you've already demonstrated you know fuck all when it comes to Knowledge, maybe you just might know the first verse of the 'Star-Spangled Banner.' So when I blow this whistle, I want to hear it—over and over and over again.”

Brown blew the whistle.

“Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light!”

“LOUDER, PUSSIES!”

“OH, SAY CAN YOU SEE—”

Glattan jumped into the first stall. At least the water was on and it was hot, but trying to rapidly clean himself while singing at the top of his voice was a challenge. After trying to wash and remove the soap-suds in the first two stalls, Glattan realized that he should lather up before reaching the last stall and then get rid of the suds. Still, he wasn't sure that he had done so completely when he began to towel off.

Back in the room, he and Brooks began studying Knowledge before the door opened.

Brown.

“You wimps got the Academy stationery today?”

“Yes, sir!” they responded at attention.

“Good. You've got 10 minutes before lights out to write your fucking mother and tell her how wonderful you think this place is. Put the letters above the nametags outside the door. We'll take care of the stamps because we love you so much.”



“What do you think, Glat?” Brooks whispered as Glattan stared at the dark ceiling.

“I think we're screwed, DJ.”

“Big time, Glat.”

Big time indeed.

Chapter 3

3 July 1973

Glattan looked at his watch. 5:55 a.m.

Muffled voices in the hall.

Shit, Glattan thought, whatever happens isn't going to be pretty.

Then he heard a different noise—a high-pitched screech. Several high-pitched screeches. Birds, most likely, though he wasn't sure what type.

"You hear that, DJ?" he whispered.

"The goons outside the door?"

"No—the screeching—sounds like birds."

"Yeah, I hear it. They're magpies. I remember them from a family trip to Calgary, Canada, a few years back. They like to show up before sunrise and announce it when they arrive. I'm more worried about what I hear in the hall."

"True enough. I'd like to get up and at least make the bed, but I'm guessing that's a bad idea."

"I'm sure it is. One thing I learned from yesterday—don't be proactive."

WHAM!

A combat boot slammed against the door.

Brown's whistle wailed.

"Get out of the rack, fuck sticks! Uniform is fatigues, combat boots, and baseball caps! You've got 10 minutes to get dressed, get that bed made, and get out in the hall!"

Glattan and Brooks scrambled out of their beds, running to the closet. They chose to get dressed first and then make the beds—better to be out in the hall fully dressed with the bed unmade, they reasoned, than to have the opposite results.

Screaming—and whistle-blowing—continued.

Then they heard from next door above the din: "HOLY SHIT! LOOK AT THOSE SCUM BUCKETS! STANDING HERE WITH THEIR BEDS ALREADY MADE! TRYING TO GET A JUMP ON THE REST OF YOUR CLASSMATES, HUH?! WELL, THAT SHIT DON'T FLOAT!"

The sound of metal scraping tile echoed down the hall.

Glattan's hands trembled as he tried to button the front of his fatigue shirt.

Brooks shook his head as he struggled to put on his combat boots.

As they entered the hall, they glanced inside the room next door. Both beds were turned upside down, with mattresses, sheets, and blankets draping the floor.

“YOU PUSSIES READY FOR A LITTLE RUN?!” Brown snarled.

“YES, SIR!”

“We’ll see about that. Follow me down the stairwell!”

As Glattan and his classmates assembled outside—consumed by fear—he also absorbed the clean, crisp scent of fir trees in the morning mist. He stole a glance at the Rockies as beams of sunlight reflected off the peaks. A surreal juxtaposition of beauty and dread. He wondered if he would survive long enough to strip away any anxiety.

Unlikely.

“ALL RIGHT, WEAK DICKS!” Brown yelled. “JUST LIKE MARCHING! START OFF ON YOUR LEFT FOOT AND STAY IN STEP!”

An upperclassman began chanting: “I DON’T KNOW, BUT I’VE BEEN TOLD!”

“JOIN IN, PUSSIES!”

Glattan and his classmates echoed the chant.

“BRAVO SQUADRON’S GOOD AS GOLD!”

Another echo.

The squadron ran down the hill past the tennis courts and Field House, and then turned north toward the athletic fields. Other squadrons, with their own chants, competed with those from Bravo. The pace was steady, though Glattan breathed heavily in the thin air. Others did as well.

“Breathe through your noses, not your mouths, smackwads!”

“Keep in step—and keep up!”

“Don’t even THINK of falling out of formation!”

Glattan’s feet hurt from the chafing combat boots. Next time, try to wear two pairs of boot socks, he thought. Yeah, I’ll “grow into” the boots, all right. . . .

He figured that they had run two, maybe three miles when the squadron again passed the Field House and made the turn up the steep hill toward Vandenberg Hall. A few of his classmates struggled to keep up. Upperclassmen hounded them.

“SQUADRON, HALT!”

Glattan gasped for air as the formation stopped next to the Bravo Squadron stairwell. Some of his classmates bent over; several had hands on their hips.

“STAND AT ATTENTION, SCUMBAGS! BREATHE THROUGH YOUR GODDAMN NOSES!”

“You douches have 10 minutes to get out on the Terrazzo for the breakfast formation. MOVE!”

Glattan and Brooks barely had time to exchange head nods as they adjusted their uniforms and sprinted toward the Terrazzo. A repeat of the previous night awaited them there; the morning’s primary offense was failing to polish combat boots sufficiently.

God knows what awaits us in Mitchell Hall, Glattan thought.

Yet after sitting down when the Staff Tower commanded—taking care to keep his back off the chair and his eyes on the eagle—Glattan heard the Table Commandant yell “EAT!” after the food was distributed.

One minute of silence.

Two minutes.

Glattan ate several forkfuls of scrambled eggs and sausage before the inquisition started anew. He consumed half the eggs and two sausages before he turned in his plate.

Back at the squadron, a uniform change to Class Bs—short-sleeved light blue shirts, dark blue polyester pants—with wheel caps, and more marching—more opportunities for uniform inspections and Knowledge questions. This time, a poor uniform or the inability to recite Knowledge resulted in squat thrusts or push-ups.

Damn, Glattan thought—so this is how it’s going to be from now on? Pretty much.

Besides the marching, running, meals, inspections, shower formations, and screaming, came an array of briefings—on USAFA’s Honor Code, Air Force heritage, cadet rank structure—plus academic subject tests to determine which cadets should be placed in “advanced sections” once fall classes began. Basics who fell asleep during the briefings received squat thrusts or push-ups. Glattan and his classmates, though, quickly realized that officer instructors, not upperclassmen, monitored the academic tests, and that many of the officers were sympathetic to the Basics’ plight. While sleeping was not encouraged during the testing sessions, it was not punished. Glattan and many of his cohorts took advantage.

Attending chapel was also a reprieve from the torments doled out by upperclassmen, who told their charges in no uncertain terms that “Special Sunday Training Sessions” awaited those who refused to go.

Basic Cadets all got religion.

Like the officer instructors, the chaplains understood the nature of BCT and often lengthened their sermons to allow Basics a few extra minutes of peace before having to return to the reality of Vandenberg Hall. For many Basics, the services offered the opportunity to sleep or study Knowledge. To Glattan, the impact of the chaplains' words was 180 degrees from their intent—he was certain that God could do nothing to ease the agony of Basic Cadet Training. The loud snoring and quiet sobbing that he heard throughout the services verified that he was not alone in that sentiment.

Marching soon included drill with the M-1, typically occurring twice a day, morning and afternoon. Glattan initially dreaded the sessions. Failure to position the rifle properly for commands such as attention, parade rest, or present arms—or to keep its metal shiny and its wood polished—yielded squat thrusts or push-ups.

Or worse—runs with the M-1 on the marble strips surrounding the Terrazzo.

To “help” the Basics stay in step and follow commands, upperclassmen shouted chants like those for morning runs, but a bit more colorful.

Well, a *lot* more colorful.

Glattan blushed when he first heard them, but then began looking forward to the vulgar lyrics as a way to ease the stress of BCT. By the end of the first week, he relished echoing a nasty chant, especially when the squadron marched past admiring tourists lining the Chapel wall. He *wanted* the tourists to hear the lyrics—and be appalled.

The chants accompanying the marching revealed much about USAFA's testosterone-drenched ethos: the perceived need to constantly display machismo—a timid fighter pilot is a dead fighter pilot, upper-class cadets droned—matched by a continual desire for sex. (When Glattan finally recited the Mission of the United States Air Force correctly, an upperclassman yawned, “Yeah, that's the official version, but the Air Force's *true* mission is to ‘Fly, fight, and fuck.’ ”)

Glattan's two favorite chants highlighted masculine “virtues” and sexual craving:

A little bird, with a yellow bill,
Was sitting on, my windowsill,
I lured him in, with crumbs of bread,
And then I crushed his little head.

I know a girl whose name is Stella,
 Took me down to see her cellar.
 Fed me wine and whiskey too,
 Let me play with her Ring-a-Ding Doo.
 Ring-a-Ding Doo now what is that?
 Soft and furry like a pussycat.
 Hole in the middle and hair on the side,
 Six feet deep and twice as wide.
 Come on boys, now don't you linger,
 Ring-a-Ding Doo will swallow your finger.
 Finger, arm, and elbow too,
 That's what I call a Ring-a-Ding Doo.

The metamorphosis had begun.

When he thought about it, Glattan was horny—he just didn't have much time to think about it. Besides the chants, one of the few—the very few—things that he looked forward to during Basic Cadet Training was the daily trip to the Vandenberg Hall mailroom. His parents wrote him every day, telling him about their largely mundane lives back in Chowan that he now missed desperately. His father would often add tidbits about the University of North Carolina's sports prospects for the fall, especially the basketball team, which Glattan had followed with religious conviction. Not much about Carolina hoops in the *Denver Post* that Basics received daily, with its news stories becoming a part of the day's Knowledge.

The letters Glattan most revered came from Carol Whitney.

His first stab at romance.

For the lion's share of high school, Glattan didn't date. He had difficulty interacting with girls when it came to courtship—he didn't go to dances and parties like most of those in his high school class, nor did he drink. Instead, he focused on academics, classical music (which he loved despite being tone deaf), and Carolina basketball, justifying his monkish behavior by telling himself that girls would divert his attention from achieving the high grades needed for a scholarship or an Academy appointment.

Although chosen by his junior classmates to design the giant mural forming the backdrop for the band at his junior-senior prom, Glattan didn't even have a date for it. He went to the gym one final time at 6:00 p.m. before the prom to make sure that the mural was hanging properly, then drove to the home of his best friend Ernie

Black, sat down behind his chess table, and said, “You can have white as long as you put on Beethoven’s Ninth.”

But in March of his senior year, with the Academy appointment assured, he noticed a ginger-haired, green-eyed, freckled sophomore who admired him from afar.

Carol Whitney.

On their first date, she came out the front door and walked with him to the driver’s side of his old Ford, opening the door and sliding across the seat to sit close beside him.

He was smitten.

Glattan was slow to realize that she had eyes for him. But she soon revealed that she admired his regimented work ethic that enabled him to graduate from Chowan High as valedictorian. She also admitted that his shyness and uncertainty when it came to dealing with the opposite sex was irresistible, as well as his profound appreciation of history and his fondness for nature.

A month before graduation he drove her to Williamsburg, Virginia, the restored colonial city his parents had taken him to countless times. In the aftermath of a sumptuous dinner at the King’s Arms Tavern, amid the fragrant tall boxwoods behind the restaurant, he finally told her that he loved her—the resulting kiss still lingered with him. Soon afterward they began afternoon trips to nearby Albemarle College. There, they found an ancient tree that they dubbed their own, sitting under it for hours while they embraced and talked about the future. Glattan also discovered an unfinished bridge across the Albemarle River that he parked on illegally with Carol at night.

During one of those trips, he timidly grasped one of Carol’s breasts. She stared at him, took his hand away, and leaned back, removing her top and bra. What the hell, Glattan thought, I might as well go for the gusto.

But not a home run—can’t risk getting a 16-year-old girl pregnant.

Her eyes told him to continue as he began unzipping her jeans. His hands trembled as he touched her, but that was as far as it went. He repeated the experience on a few occasions but attempted nothing more. Carol didn’t reciprocate, and he was OK with that—he was just happy that she appeared content.

Glattan developed a cold the night before he left for the Academy and told Carol that he couldn’t kiss her because he didn’t want to make her sick.

“Well, we won’t kiss,” Carol smiled as they sat on the living room couch.

She then put her finger to her lips and unzipped his pants. Sweet Jesus, Glattan thought. He couldn't believe what was happening. And then it wasn't.

The unexpected entry of his sister into the room abruptly ended the episode.

Carol rode to the Raleigh airport with him the day that he left for the Academy, sitting close by him in the backseat of the family car. They said little during the two-hour trip. But at the departure gate, seeing Carol's eyes brimming with tears, Glattan threw his arms around her and kissed her as if it were the last kiss he'd ever give. As he settled into his seat on the airplane, he looked out the window and saw Carol, his mother, and his sister all sobbing.

Carol wrote him every day, sometimes twice a day, while he was a Basic. When he opened his mailbox, seeing—and inhaling—her flowery, perfumed envelopes, the agonies of BCT temporarily vanished. He waited to read the letters at night, just before taps, and her thoughts, no matter how trivial, spurred him to forget the day that was ending. On more than one occasion, he went to sleep with her letter under the pillow.

But the perfumed envelopes couldn't eclipse the reality of BCT.

The morning runs grew longer, the drill and shower formations more intense. So did the “joy” of eating in Mitchell Hall. By the start of the third week, Glattan guessed that he had lost at least five pounds, and at 5'11" and 125, he didn't have five pounds to lose. He resorted to stealing sugar packets during meals, risking God knows how many squat thrusts, taking the packets when upperclassmen focused on a poor classmate floundering with Knowledge. Glattan rationalized that his action wasn't technically stealing—an Honor Code violation—because the packets didn't belong to a specific person, plus he always shared them with Brooks.

Glattan and Brooks grew close as the weeks passed. They did what they could to help one another, viewing BCT as an “us against them” exercise in which they and their classmates opposed soulless upper-class cadets who sought to make Basics automatons. They shared tidbits from letters as well as pictures of family and girlfriends; Brooks had left behind a hometown sweetheart that he dated steadily for three years. Both wondered if their relationships would endure the separation.

“I tell you, if I lose Betty because I have to endure this shit, wouldn't that be a bitch?”

“Without a doubt, DJ, but you two have been together for so long, I don’t see that happening.”

“You’re the one getting the perfumed letters, Glat—not me.”

“Well, that’s because Carol and I have only been together for a short amount of time. We’ll see how long the perfume lasts.”

“Hopefully it all lasts at least until Christmas leave—I don’t know what I’d do without Betty’s letters.”

“Don’t I know it, man. Don’t I know it.”

Lectures continued as well, along with the increased physical demands, and staying awake for them remained a challenge. One, though, on USAFA’s academic program, held Glattan’s attention. In high school, he served as the sports editor of the local city newspaper, the *Chowan Sentinel*, and thought that he might explore those talents at the Academy. After the lecture, Glattan nervously asked the First Classman who presented it about USAFA’s journalism department.

“You stupid shit,” the cadet replied. “We don’t have a journalism department. We’re here to fly planes and kill people—not to write.”

Brooks cackled about the episode back in the room.

“Remember the true mission, Glat—fly, fight, and fuck!”

“I don’t think we’ll be doing any of that soon.”

But they would be fighting.

At the end of their third week, the Basics left Vandenberg Hall and marched to Jacks Valley, an area in the foothills of the Rockies two miles away from the Academy proper. The transition marked the halfway point of BCT, as Glattan and his classmates were well aware. Once they returned to the cadet area, they would be assigned to their permanent squadrons for the start of the academic year.

More significantly, they would receive shoulder boards with a single squiggly line (a cloud), marking their acceptance into the Cadet Wing as Cadets Fourth Class. They would rarely hear that title, though, because upperclassmen would berate them with the slang term Doolies, a loose rendition of the Greek word for slaves. No matter—they would have achieved the first goal—surviving BCT. Several hundred of their peers had already decided USAFA was not for them and dropped out.

Yet before they could officially become Air Force Academy cadets, they first had to overcome Jacks Valley.

There, the Basics slept in sleeping bags inside tents, ran the bayonet assault and obstacle courses, battered each other with pugil sticks, and learned how to fire the M-16. A different group of upperclassmen from

those who had previously directed their training supervised Jacks Valley—Brown was blessedly gone—but the verbal abuse continued.

The new upperclassmen added a special type of treatment for any Basic who screwed up during a training exercise: The Goon Run—a one-hour jaunt carrying the M-1 through the Rockies' foothills while upperclassmen “supervised” the progress of the offender. After failing to remember the exact words to Maj Gen John M. Schofield's quote on “Discipline,” Glattan and classmate Jim McSweeney had the joy of participating firsthand in the Goon Run's finer features.

Schofield's “Discipline quote,” taken from his graduation address to West Point's Class of 1879, was the longest of the quotations in *Contrails*. Glattan stumbled through the final sentence, but he knew the first one cold: “The discipline which makes the soldiers of a free country reliable in battle is not to be gained by harsh or tyrannical treatment.”

No irony here, Glattan thought. None whatsoever.

“I'll set the pace, and you dipshits follow!” an upperclassman barked to Glattan and McSweeney.

“And I want to hear a chant while you're running,” another upperclassman chimed in.

“And it better be a *good* fucking chant!” added a third.

The first upperclassman took off, with Glattan and McSweeney struggling to keep up and the other two upperclassmen behind them.

“LET'S HEAR IT!” blared one of the trailing cadets.

“Goon Run, so much fun!” McSweeney stammered.

“In the sun, love to run!” Glattan added.

“LOUDER, YOU FUCK STICKS!”

The mantra continued as the two Basics headed up and down hills, ran through streams, and tripped on rocks.

“YOU'D BETTER NOT DROP YOUR FUCKING RIFLE!” bel-lowed one of the cadets.

After 45 minutes, Glattan's M-1 almost touched the ground as he struggled to keep it aloft. McSweeney's rifle dipped as well.

“DO NOT DROP IT!” reverberated in their ears.

Glattan's pace slowed to a crawl, but he was determined not to drop the goddamned M-1. The rifle felt like lead, his arms like they were about to rip out of his shoulder sockets, his ankles—now covered with ugly, pus-filled blisters—ached with each step, but he would NOT drop it.

A boot kicked him in the butt. “KEEP GOING, DIRTBAG!”

Glattan stumbled but did not fall. His speed increased only slightly, but his hands clenched the M-1.

“Goon—Run. So—much—fun. In—the—sun,” Glattan and McSweeney puffed.

“You dipshits are pathetic,” said the first cadet as he turned to look at the two Basics. “Stop and get the hell out of here—you’ve got to run the assault course in a half hour—and you better not fuck it up, or you’ll be doing this again with us.”

McSweeney raised an eyebrow at Glattan.

“Not going to happen, Jim,” Glattan said. “We survived this shit, and we’ll survive that.”

The bayonet assault course was the Great Evil of Jacks Valley. With bayonets attached to their M-1s, Basics had to run through a mud-filled course, avoiding an abundance of concertina wire and stabbing “enemy” dummies made of sandbags. Upperclassmen from the varsity football team manned the course, firing blanks from M-60 machine guns at the Basics and screaming at them to move faster—failing to finish the course in 10 minutes meant repeating it. As Glattan and the other members of Bravo Squadron lined up to “attack” the course, a linebacker named Wynkowski began a Patton-like speech with a horned toad perched on his shoulder.

“My course is what Jacks Valley is all about,” Wynkowski proclaimed. “The ability to survive—and kill. To show what the fuck you’re made of. I have grave doubts that you pussies are up to it, but let me say this—you’d better not avoid any part of my course, because we’re fucking watching you. And you’d better not break your fucking rifles on my course either. If you do, you’ll regret it, because you’ll have to run my course carrying a sandbag instead of your M-1—and rest assured, you do *not* want to do that!”

“No, you *don’t!*” several laughing upperclassmen chimed together.

“SO, ARE YOU PUSSIES READY TO NEGOTIATE MY COURSE?!” Wynkowski yelled.

“YES, SIR!” Bravo Squadron roared.

“THEN DON’T FUCK IT UP!” Wynkowski grabbed the toad and bit off its head. Two Basics passed out.

Glattan, whose breathing had finally slowed after the Goon Run, grinned. He completed the assault course in 8:46. McSweeney clocked in at 8:50.

“I see you survived the Goon Run,” Brooks said back in the tent.

“Yeah—so much fun . . . but I do look forward to mail call tonight.”

Chapter 4

2 August 1973

The pain was excruciating.

Glattan lay in the mud under the parallel bars on the Jacks Valley obstacle course with a searing ache in his chest. He felt as though someone had taken an axe to the center of his breastbone.

“YOU FUCKING PUSSY! GET BACK UP ON THOSE BARS!”

“Yes, sir,” he choked to the upperclassman. Somehow, Glattan managed to rise to his hands and knees, and then—with enormous effort—lifted himself to a semi-upright position. He hobbled to where the obstacle began and looked at the steel beams. His chest throbbed. Once more he jumped, grasped the bars, and collapsed in a heap below them.

“YOU FUCKING PUSSY!”

The upperclassman’s voice bellowed once more as the burning pain cut through Glattan’s sternum. He lay on his back and could barely raise his hands above his body. “YOU WEAK DICK! YOU FUCKING PUSSY!” reverberated in his ears. Glattan rolled back and forth in the mud. His chest felt as though it would explode, but the screaming continued. “I’m dying,” he thought.

“Fuck me, fuck me, fuck me,” flashed through his brain. But apparently he couldn’t die just yet. A combination of rage and will enabled him to once more rise to his knees, and then, after what felt like an eternity, get to his feet. He slung his arms over the bars to help prop himself up and staggered to the beginning of the obstacle. Once there, he turned himself around and stared at it for the briefest of moments, and then feebly jumped to grab the outstretched bars.

He collapsed in the mud.

“YOU FUCKING PUSSY! GET AWAY FROM MY OBSTACLE, YOU SCUM!”

The fire in Glattan’s chest billowed as he rolled under the bars. With supreme effort he elevated to a crouch, and then shuffled to the end of the course—the parallel bars were the last obstacle on it.

The next day Glattan and other Basics ended their three-week tenure in Jacks Valley and marched back to the dorms. His chest still burned, but as long as he didn’t have to rely on upper body strength, he felt that he could handle it. Yet soon after arriving at Vandenberg Hall, Glattan and his cohorts were ordered out to the Terrazzo for an

in-ranks inspection. When he attempted to open the chamber of his M-1 with his left hand—a simple action during normal circumstances—the pain ripped across his chest and he nearly dropped the weapon. More verbal abuse ensued from upper-class cadets.

This time, however, Glattan ignored the remarks. Once he returned to the dorm, he went to see his squadron first sergeant, Cadet Second Class Harvey Goldstein.

“What the fuck do you want?” Goldstein answered after Glattan knocked on his door.

“Sir, I think that I need to see a doctor,” Glattan replied.

“You fucking limp dick, Glattan. You’re trying to dream up a reason why you can’t hold your rifle, aren’t you?”

“No, sir.”

“Well, goddammit, let me get your sorry ass to the clinic.”

An hour later an Air Force doctor told Goldstein that Glattan had strained a muscle. “You’re a fucking pussy, Glattan,” Goldstein responded. “Just like I thought.”

That night, Glattan tried to sleep, but the pain made sleep impossible. He could not lie flat on his bed; if he did, it felt as if a giant set of shears ripped his chest in two. In desperation he turned his body perpendicular to the bed, with his head against the wall and his feet on the floor, while Brooks watched his agony, sympathetic but powerless to help.

The next morning at dawn an upper-class boot kicked the dorm room door open.

Brooks jumped out of bed.

“Glattan’s hurt pretty bad,” he told the upperclassman.

The cadet looked at Glattan, who could barely move from the cramped position that he had assumed during the night. Goldstein soon entered his room and looked down at him. “Shit, Glattan, so you are really fucked up, aren’t you?”

A second trip to the clinic resulted in the flight surgeon, who saw Glattan the day before, requesting an x-ray and the x-ray indicating that Glattan had pneumonia—likely the result of having slept in his fatigues in his sleeping bag during the chilly conditions in Jacks Valley. More ominously, a large, flaccid red bump—roughly two inches wide, three inches long, and an inch high—had emerged in the center of his chest. The doctor knew that development was serious.

“We’re going to send you to the hospital,” the major told Glattan. “It looks like you have pneumonia, but you may have something else wrong as well. Don’t worry; they’ll take good care of you there.”

A half hour later a blue staff car arrived outside the cadet clinic, and Glattan headed toward the Academy hospital, a couple of miles away on a high ridge overlooking USAFA’s grounds. When he arrived at the emergency room entrance, three nurses with a wheelchair awaited him. Glattan got out of the car and walked toward them.

“Please sit down,” one of the nurses said.

“I don’t need to do that,” he responded.

“Yes, you do.”

“Oh shit,” Glattan thought. “This is not good.”



His room in the Academy hospital overlooking the cadet area wasn’t bad. From his bed, Glattan could see the famous Chapel with its 17 spires (one each for the 12 apostles, with the other five for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the four service chiefs, he had been told); Mitchell Hall; the unnamed “New Dorm” that ran along the heart of the Academy’s south side; and Fairchild Hall, the academic building. On a clear day, Glattan could even see the flag that waved over the Academy’s Terrazzo.

The vista was impressive.

To Glattan, little of it mattered.

The hospital staff was kind enough, and the doctors attending to him had remarkable credentials. The doc overseeing his case was the chief flight surgeon for the Apollo astronauts, and his assistant was an Army lieutenant colonel who was the Army’s top bone specialist. Both made frequent visits to his room, and Glattan found them easy to talk to. Both found his condition fascinating. Glattan wasted no time in picking their brains. The day that he arrived at the hospital, he asked the pair what they thought.

“We’re not exactly sure what you’ve got,” the flight surgeon said. “But first things first. We’ve got to cure the pneumonia before we really do anything else, and we’ve got to drain that damned bump on your chest before it explodes and spreads the crap inside it throughout your body.”

“It’s not good, is it?” Glattan asked.

“No, it’s not,” the flight surgeon answered. “But we have to take it one step at a time.”

The docs stated that Glattan would go into surgery the next day to drain the chest bump, with a local anesthetic that would not knock him out completely. That operation would be only a temporary fix; the “real” operation would occur after eliminating the pneumonia. Meanwhile, the attack on the pneumonia would begin with massive doses of antibiotics.

“You guys know best,” Glattan said.

The first thing he remembered after surgery was waking up on his back in bed with a bundle of bandages taped to his chest. A hazy white vision stood beside him.

“How do you feel?” the vision said. Glattan tried to focus. The features of an Air Force nurse slowly came into view. He noticed that she was a first lieutenant, but he fixated on the fact that she was a blue-eyed blonde. The uniform couldn’t hide the fact that she was truly beautiful.

“Like hell, but I’m better now.”

The nurse smiled. “Well, at least you still have a sense of humor.”

“I was serious,” Glattan grunted, and tried to sit up on his elbows to no avail.

The nurse squinted. “You’ve got a big hole in your chest.”

“If you say so. I guess I’m pretty beat up.”

“Yes, you are.”

“How bad is it?”

“That’s not for me to say.”

“Yeah, but you know, don’t you?”

“You’ll have to ask the doc,” the nurse said. Her face revealed concern.

“Come on, ma’am, tell me.”

“It’s Linda,” the nurse said, “and you’ll have to ask the doc. In the meantime, I’m here to clean up that hole in your chest.” She gently pulled at the bandages, and a foul odor escaped from the wound.

“God, I stink,” Glattan murmured.

“Yes, you do,” Linda said, “but I’m going to get that garbage out.”

Glattan lay still while Linda put a small hose to his chest that sucked out an array of pus and blood. She then poured a clear solution that bubbled and fizzed inside the depression.

“What’s that?” Glattan asked.

“It’s hydrogen peroxide. It’ll clean up your wound and help prevent infection.” Linda stood up. “I’ll be back to clean it up again later.”

“So—how bad is it, ma’am—er, Linda?”

"I told you I couldn't say." She leaned over his face and looked into his eyes. "Don't you worry," she whispered. "You've got the best docs on the planet taking care of you. You're going to make it."

A week later the pneumonia was gone, and Glattan faced the "real" surgery that would take several hours under complete sedation the next day. Linda walked into his room.

"I know that Basics are not allowed to call home," Glattan said, "but do you think an exception could be made and that I could call my parents before I go under the knife?"

"Of course. I'll have a telephone brought into your room."

His father answered the call. "Well, this is a surprise! I didn't think that you could call until after Labor Day."

"So, you don't know what's happened?" Glattan asked.

"No—what's happened?" his father answered. Glattan explained what had occurred during the past two weeks. "God Almighty!" was all that his father could say. Glattan later heard that the officer who oversaw Bravo Squadron was fired from his position at the Academy and sent to an assignment at Thule, Greenland, for failing to notify Glattan's parents that their son had been sent to the hospital with a serious medical condition.

Poetic if it happened, Glattan thought.

The morning of his surgery, the Air Force flight surgeon and the Army bone specialist stopped by Glattan's room to brief him on the operation.

After they finished, Glattan stared at the flight surgeon. "Tell me, doc, just how bad is it? I deserve to know."

The flight surgeon looked at his Army counterpart and then looked back at Glattan. "Well, I guess you do at that," he said. "You've got osteomyelitis, a severe bone disease. The best we can determine, the disease was triggered by the terrible blisters on your feet that came from wearing your combat boots. The infection in those blisters, it appears, collected in your sternum and started to rot it away. When you jumped on the parallel bars on the obstacle course, your sternum cracked in two."

"That still doesn't tell me how bad it is," Glattan replied.

The flight surgeon looked at him for a long time and said nothing. Finally, he spoke. "To be honest, you should have been dead two days before you arrived at the hospital. The surgery is likely to be a 50-50 proposition."

Glattan looked out the window. "Thanks for telling me," he said quietly.

He stared at the flag flying on the Terrazzo. Random thoughts roamed through his brain. So I leave North Carolina, come to Colorado, and two months later I get to die for my country? Goddamn it, I don't want to die—*not like this*. Killed by a moronic upperclassman insisting that too-small combat boots wouldn't be a problem? Maybe Mom and Dad could sue—that'd help with the money issues. How *would* Mom and Dad take my death? What about Carol? And we never got to really make love—I'll die a virgin. Maybe that'll help me get into heaven, if such a place exists. Maybe it'll be hell instead. I'll just keep repeating the last two months—for eternity.

When he awoke after the surgery, he could see that a female form again hovered over him. Gradually, he noticed a petite woman with brunette hair—no, this was not Linda.

“Mom, what are you doing here?” he mumbled.

“I came as soon as we heard. I was worried to death about you,” she answered.

“But you don't need to be here—I'm going to be OK.” Glattan squinted and noticed the flight surgeon and the Army doc standing in the background.

“The surgery appears to have been successful,” the flight surgeon said. “But you're going to have to stay in the hospital for a while.”

“And I will be here while you recover,” said his mom.

During the next month, Glattan received an enormous number of cards and letters from his high school classmates at Chowan. His high school art teacher, Mrs. Allison, even sent him a watercolor of a girl running through a field of flowers holding a banner that read, “Paul is better! Paul is better!” Carol wrote him nonstop, sometimes three or four times a day. In one letter, she sent him her fingernails, which she thought could serve as a good luck charm. Glattan answered none of the letters, not even those from Carol. He was haunted by the flight surgeon telling him that he should have been dead—and wondering what he had to live for.

Nothing mattered, Glattan thought. Not Carol, God bless her, not his mom, God bless her too, not the Academy, goddamn it, not even Carolina basketball. He felt as though he were watching himself from far away and what he saw was no longer real, like he lacked control over any thoughts or actions.

I'm 19 years old, Glattan mused. I've suffered a near-death experience. But so what? What fucking difference does it make whether I live or die? I've accomplished nothing, and to accomplish anything

here will entail only agony. And now, my existence produces nothing but pain for those who care about me, and I'm a pain in the ass for those here who have to deal with me.

A week after the surgery, two officers that he had not seen before—an Air Force colonel and lieutenant colonel—appeared at Glattan's bedside.

"You don't have to stay at the Academy if you don't want to," the colonel said. "You've sustained a terrible injury, and the Air Force is partly to blame for that. If you want to head back to North Carolina, we'll pay for the trip, and we'll also pay for any medical treatment that you may require once you're there."

Glattan mentally debated the option. Yes, he could go back to Chowan. But his high school classmates would soon start their college careers at Carolina, NC State, Wake Forest, or for God's sake even Duke, while he lived at home. He was Chowan's first-ever service academy selection—and he would have failed. He couldn't go to a "regular" college without his parents taking out a second mortgage—a key reason that he had pursued an Academy appointment in the first place. No, that was not going to happen.

Glattan looked at his mom. Her face was impassive. She had played a key role in his efforts to obtain an Academy appointment, but her eyes told him that this decision was his alone.

Glattan's mind churned. Nothing mattered anymore.

Or *did* it?

The stark choice presented by the two officers forced him to think carefully—actually, *very* carefully—about what it portended.

He was still alive and, for better or worse, would keep on living. Did he want to be an Air Force officer, a pilot, perhaps a general? A writer, a journalist? Glattan couldn't say. He wasn't really sure about what he wanted, but he was damn well sure about what he *didn't* want. I am *not* returning to Chowan as a failure, Glattan thought to himself, and I am *not* saddling Mom and Dad with overwhelming debt. The Air Force knows it fucked up with me and wants to make amends. Yeah, right. I'm not going to let it off the hook that easily, though—but I'm also not going to wallow in self-pity.

"I want to stay, sir," Glattan told the colonel. "I want to become a cadet and see where that leads me in the Air Force."

"You don't have to do that," the colonel responded.

"Yes, sir, I do. That is what I *want* to do."

Just before classes started, Glattan learned that he had been assigned to 35th Squadron in the New Dorm. His squadron commander, a Firstie named Sean McKnight, stopped by Glattan's hospital room and presented him with his Doolie shoulder boards, signifying that he was now officially a member of the Cadet Wing.

His mom beamed. Glattan gave her a smile.



Glattan felt guilty.

He was now a Doolie, but with none of the shit that his classmates endured. No room or uniform inspections. No Knowledge questions. No passing in his plate in Mitchell Hall. In fact, hospital food was pretty damn good, and he could eat as much of it as he wanted. The threat of infection after surgery prevented him from returning to his new squadron in the cadet area. Classes had begun—and his instructors all came to his hospital room for individual instruction.

The life of Riley as a Cadet Fourth Class.

Glattan knew that his situation was temporary. After three weeks, the hole in his chest healed sufficiently to allow him to attend classes in Fairchild Hall—along with the noon meal and its inspection.

Fresh meat on the Terrazzo.

Upperclassmen in 35th Squadron circled him like vultures as cadets formed up for the noon meal. They couldn't yet force him to do squat thrusts or push-ups, but they could sure as hell make him squirm. In Mitchell Hall, he was the first Doolie at his table to pass in his plate.

The hospital remained his only salvation. Since he ate breakfast and dinner there, missing lunch was not that onerous. A hospital staff car picked him up after classes, so he avoided afternoon drill and its accompanying harassment. He had ample time to study in his hospital room; in the squadron, Doolies were supposed to be off-limits to upper-class hazing during "Call to Quarters" from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m., though the regulation was rarely enforced.

Glattan feared what was on the horizon.

He was not disappointed.

After two more weeks in the hospital, he returned full time to 35th Squadron. While shower formations, door-jarring wake-ups, and morning runs were now things of the past, drill and room inspections were not. Doolies still slammed against the hallway wall at attention whenever an upperclassman passed, which usually led to as many

Knowledge questions as needed to produce squat thrusts. Upperclassmen developed new methods to torture the Class of '77. Once a week, Doolies picked up laundry bags on the doorknobs of upper-class rooms (as well as their own), took them to a loading dock, and then delivered the clean laundry. Doolies also had to clean “common areas,” such as latrines, hallways, stairwells, the squadron assembly room, as well as the “upper-class use only” TV and phone rooms.

Primary responsibility for training Doolies now devolved to the Thirdclassmen in the Class of '76, who had been Doolies themselves just a few months ago. Many members of “the Spirit of '76” still remembered—and remembered well—their recent sufferings, and they chose to make sure that Glattan and his classmates received at least as much abuse as they had endured.

To avoid contact with upperclassmen during Call to Quarters, Glattan chose to spend most of that time in the Cadet Library. The library was a safe haven, monitored by officers and civilian librarians who demanded quiet and forbade hazing. He also went to the library to avoid his two new roommates, Chris Shaw and Steve Cortez. Both were nice enough guys, Shaw from New Jersey and Cortez from California, but neither placed much emphasis on academics. Rather than study, they spent much of Call to Quarters telling jokes or playing cards. Glattan deemed them destined to become part of the unofficial, but aptly named, “Square Root Club”—the square root of the grade point average of its “members” was a higher number than if the GPA were squared.

Glattan took academics seriously.

Very seriously.

Since deciding to stay at USAFA, he aimed to demonstrate that he belonged there. He would do enough in terms of the military and physical requirements to keep the upperclassmen at bay, yet when it came to academics—the one aspect of the Academy that he could control—he aimed to shine. Sixteen semester hours in the fall, including military studies, chemistry, composition and literature, geography, German, physical education, and two semesters of calculus crammed into one—the class met for an hour Monday through Friday—was doubtless a challenge, especially with drill, intramural sports, and whatever happiness the Class of '76 could dream up.

Well, he thought, fuck '76 (and, for that matter, '75 and '74) and all their bullshit. I will *not* let those assholes get to me. Yeah, I'll play their

silly games, but they won't beat me into submission. I've survived worse than they can dole out—and I will survive their crap as well.

Glattan began writing Carol and his parents again. The letters, though, were almost pro forma, revealing little about his innermost thoughts and feelings. His parents continued to write him each day, but Carol must have sensed the change; her letters declined to two or three a week—without perfumed envelopes.

So be it, Glattan reflected. If I lose her, I lose her. We had only a brief time together as it was, she's now a junior in high school with a gorgeous face and a damn fine body, and it's not likely to be long before someone else sweeps her off her feet. What can I do about it anyhow, from 2,000 miles away? I've got my own shit to deal with out here, and it's going to take all my time and energy to survive it.

Shaw and Cortez sympathized with the difficulty of trying to maintain a long-distance relationship—they each had girls back home—though they approached their plight in a different fashion. Both wrote their sweethearts syrupy sweet letters to maintain their affection, while aiming to find other love interests nearby.

For Doolies, finding nearby love interests was an enormous challenge.

Freshmen cadets received only one overnight pass during their first semester that allowed them to leave USAFA on a Saturday and return on Sunday by Call to Quarters. They also obtained only one Saturday “day pass” a month, permitting them to escape the Academy until midnight. Such privileges did not begin until a cadet completed his last military duty on Saturday, and some sort of training usually consumed Saturday morning, plus Saturday home football games were mandatory formations.

Glattan particularly despised the dreaded Saturday “triple threat”—a room inspection, an in-ranks inspection (in which cadets had their uniforms and M-1s inspected on the Terrazzo), and a parade. Each activity offered the opportunity to be written up for a regulation violation, resulting in demerits.

Or worse, tours.

Equal to 12 demerits, a tour consisted of a one-hour march with the M-1 around the Terrazzo's “Tour Pad” on Friday afternoons, Saturdays, or Sundays. Glattan marched two as a first-semester Doolie—for leaving his flight cap outside the Cadet Store after it closed (Offense: Gross Poor Negligence; Penalty: five demerits and two tours), confirming for him that most regulations were absurd.

USAFA. U Sure Are Fucked Again.

Still, most Doolies—actually, most cadets—aimed to make the most of their limited chances to pursue sex. The objective was unwavering, and allusions to it were the norm. When the English Department assigned William Faulkner’s book *Go Down, Moses* to Glattan and his classmates, most referred to it as *Go Down on Moses*; the Citadel, Colorado Spring’s only shopping mall, was dubbed the Clitadel. The desire for intercourse was certainly not unusual among young men, but the absence of women and the Academy’s isolation made the craving for sex particularly intense.

Isolated desolation.

Or was it desolated isolation?

Pretty much hell either way, Glattan thought.

Unlike the US military and naval academies, which had the respective towns of Highland Falls and Annapolis just outside their main gates, USAFA had only oblivion. Its South Gate was five miles away from the cadet area. Once departing that gate, aside from the forlorn hotel and the Zyder Zee restaurant, the first sign of life was a McDonald’s at the intersection of Academy Boulevard and Flintridge Road, another five miles away. Only “Firsties,” senior cadets, could have cars. Other cadets had to make their own travel arrangements, and hitchhiking was commonplace. Doolies, though, had to wear their Class A uniform when leaving the Academy grounds. In the immediate aftermath of Vietnam, short-haired cadets walking on the side of Academy Boulevard did not attract many offers for a ride, especially those cadets draped in Air Force blue.

Glattan took only one privilege during the fall semester, walking the expanse to the Golden Arches, which seemed like Mecca upon arrival. His goal was more to escape the austere environment than to meet a girl.

He did both.

After wolfing down two quarter-pounders, a large order of fries, and a chocolate milkshake, he headed back toward USAFA on Academy Boulevard. He had walked almost a mile when a green Ford Pinto pulled over to the side of the road.

“Want a ride, Doolie?” said a curly haired blonde with piercing dark eyes made more intense by an abundance of mascara.

“Yeah—that would be wonderful!”

“Then get in.”

When Glattan opened the passenger-side door, he saw a lithe figure in a miniskirt and platform heels, her lipstick ruby-red.

MARK CLODFELTER

“That’s a long walk to Mickey D’s, sunshine.”

“Uh, yeah. Nice of you to give me a ride.”

“Well, I don’t hate cadets. In fact, I love a lot of them,” she winked.

“I—uh—live in the New Dorm—35th Squadron—I can show you where that is when we get closer.”

“Honey, I’ve spent more nights in that dorm than you have. I know where to drop you off.”

Glattan’s eyebrows went up. He remained quiet for the rest of the ride.

As he got out of the car, she said, “Don’t worry, dear, it gets better after the first year. Maybe I’ll see you again once you’re an upperclassman.”

Chapter 5

19 January 1975

Glattan sat in his room at the start of Sunday night Call to Quarters. More than a year later, he still recalled the conversation with the girl in the Pinto—he and his new roommate Mike Barrow laughed about it many times.

Was USAFA better as an upperclassman?

It was certainly different. Now that he was a Third Classman, living back in Vandenberg Hall as a member of “Blackjack” 21 Squadron, Glattan could walk freely across the Terrazzo, eat as much as he wanted in Mitch’s—and eat it like a slob, no longer worrying about Knowledge questions that prompted squat thrusts.

Plus, he survived SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape) Training during the summer after Doolie year. A few officers oversaw the program, but First and Second Class cadets implemented it with minimal supervision. Several of those cadets, remembering their own SERE experiences, chose to make the experience as brutal as possible.

That was especially true of the program’s “compound phase,” 36 hours that simulated life inside a prisoner-of-war camp. Glattan and his classmates, playing the roles of pilots, had been “shot down and captured” by an enemy comprising junior and senior cadets who mimicked North Vietnamese captors.

Glattan and his cohorts aimed to avoid cooperating with the “enemy” cadets.

Easier said than done.

The first night in the compound, the captors marched Glattan and several other Third Classmen to a large, flat area. Glattan grew wide-eyed as one of his classmates was blindfolded, stripped naked, and led to a large, rectangular object laying on the ground. Slowly, Glattan discerned that the object was a coffin. As he watched the captors open the coffin’s lid, pick up a wooden barrel, and pour its contents inside, he felt a stream of urine flow down his leg. The barrel contained pinecones, and the water that flowed into the coffin with them indicated that they had been soaking for a long time.

The captors took the blindfolded cadet, forced him into the coffin, and slammed the lid.

The cadet screamed.

One of the captors motioned Glattan forward.

“You see friend,” he snarled in a miserable Asian accent. “We keep doing until you talk to us!”

The blindfolded cadet continued to scream. Glattan pissed himself again.

The captor pointed to the wetness on Glattan’s legs. “You pee! You pee!” again in the Asian accent. Laughter erupted from other captors. “How your friend feels?!”

Glattan clenched his teeth. “I—I—am not going to tell you anything.”

“No?! You watch. You watch Comrade No Shoulders.”

Glattan stood spellbound as a captor by the coffin reached into another barrel and took out a long black snake. The captor opened the lid and dropped the snake inside.

“AAAGGHH! AAAGGHH! JESUS FUCKING CHRIST! STOP! STOP!!!” The coffin shook back and forth.

“OK—OK—you goddamn bastards—what do you want to know?”

After the experience of the compound, the 15-mile survival trek ending SERE produced considerable hunger pains, but not fear. Like most of his classmates, Glattan lost about five pounds on the slog, which he and his cohorts tried to replace on a single night by ordering Domino’s after returning to the New Dorm, and they promptly barfed the pizza in the shower.

Yep, he survived SERE and was now a bona fide upper-class cadet.

Again, though—was he better off?

Academically, he wasn’t so sure. Fall semester hours jumped to 18.5 hours for sophomores, and now, in the spring, they totaled 23. Military studies, economics, more calculus (though only one course a semester, thank God, meeting every other day), mechanics, physics, computer science, physical education. At least as a Third Classman he got to take core courses that he enjoyed—history and political science. Since he couldn’t major in journalism, he decided to become a history major.

The joy of history courses could not, however, erase the agony of the sciences and math. The hellish course in computer science was unlike anything he ever saw at Chowan High, and mechanics was a close second. Thankfully, Barrow was a double major in aeronautics and math, able to explain thorny concepts and equations to Glattan in a way that he could understand. Still, Glattan hated most of his courses—and couldn’t choose an elective course until he became a Second Classman. Once he finally graduated, he would receive a Bachelor of Science degree in history.

BS indeed, Glattan thought.

Then there was CQ.

CQ, the acronym for “cadet in charge of quarters,” was an especially vile form of torture reserved for Third Class Cadets. They received the honor of answering the official squadron telephone and delivering messages from girlfriends, parents, instructors, and God-knows-who-else to the 120 cadets of Blackjack 21. CQs performed this thankless task for 24 hours at a stretch, during which time they also conducted room inspections using an enormous ring of keys that gave them access to all dorm rooms in a particular squadron. CQs further monitored the squadron’s sign-out logs on weekends. Cadets leaving USAFA had to sign out in a logbook next to the CQ’s desk, listing name, departure location, and departure time. Upon returning to the squadron, they had to log return time when signing in. Mandatory return times for cadets leaving USAFA on a Friday or Saturday was midnight; for a Saturday overnight pass, it was 7:00 p.m. on Sunday. If cadets failed to return by the designated time, the CQ got the anguishing task of writing them up for demerits or tours. The last to go to bed and the first up, the CQ averaged about four hours of sleep while on duty.

Serving as CQ ravaged academics. The tabbed individual could not leave the central post in the squadron behind the CQ desk except to eat or take an exam—the need to attend class was not a valid excuse to get a substitute to sit in. In theory, the duty should not have been onerous. All Third Class Cadets were on rotation, and with roughly 30 Third Classmen per squadron, the turnaround time should have been about once a month. It never worked that way, though. Varsity athletes were excused from CQ duty, as were cadets on academic or conduct probation. Sick-call cadets were also excused. Glattan had watched the numbers of Third Classmen eligible to serve as CQ dwindle to eight after Christmas and braced himself to take a major-league academic hit.

While not having to worry about being a Doolie anymore, he and his classmates now had the primary responsibility of training the Doolies in the Class of ’78. Glattan had no desire to inflict pain on the freshmen cadets simply because of his own suffering the previous year, yet he had to prepare the Doolies in his charge to become upperclassmen. That preparation, even if applied with a relatively gentle hand, took time—time no longer available to academics.

Meanwhile, the plethora of military bullshit continued unabated.

OK, perhaps it wasn't all bullshit, but much of it was—mindless activity designed specifically to kill time and make academics even more difficult. Glattan and Barrow were subject to random morning room inspections Monday through Friday, and twice a week in the afternoon Glattan's squadron performed drill.

Plenty of opportunities remained to be written up for a regulation violation.

Barrow felt like Glattan did about the lunacy of regs. Two of their favorites concerned room inspections—you'd get written up for having trash in your trash can or water in your sink. The two cadets became tight during their first five months together, so much so that when upperclassmen had the chance to change roommates at the end of the semester, they decided to stay together for the rest of the year. Barrow was an Air Force brat, the son of an Air Force fighter pilot and ace from the Korean War now a lieutenant general in the Pentagon.

Glattan initially wondered how Barrow, given his background, could be so opposed to cadet regulations.

"My dad told me that many regs, like those applying to flight safety, combat, and the chain of command, were essential to the good order and discipline of a military unit," Barrow said. "Some, though, were just plain stupid, designed to allow idiots to disrupt the smooth functioning of a military force. That's how he's approached his career, and it seems to have worked out OK."

Glattan couldn't argue with the logic.

He and Barrow also shared a similar mindset when it came to academics. Both were on the dean's list, wearing a silver star on the upper left pocket of their Class A uniform coats signifying that accomplishment. Barrow, Glattan thought, probably had a genius-level IQ. Despite his demanding double major, he sported a 3.91 cumulative grade point average. Glattan steadily increased his GPA each semester, obtaining a 3.16 at Christmas his Doolie year, a 3.23 at the year's end, and a 3.31 his first semester as a Third Classman.

As he sat at his desk watching the snow fall sideways outside his window, Glattan realized that improving his GPA this spring would be an enormous challenge, especially with the bitch of comp sci and mech.

The weather reflected his mood.

The Dark Ages.

The bleak, three-month span between the end of Christmas leave and the beginning of spring break. Cadets left the steel and glass dorms in frigid darkness for class, walked across the ice-encrusted

Terrazzo (often harassed by blowing snow), and returned to the gloom once classes ended. While making the dean's list gave him more privileges than the norm, Glattan thought the demands of academics and squadron duties prevented him from using them to escape USAFA's dungeon-like atmosphere. At least, he *believed* that getting away on weekends would wreck his grades. Now the grades counted toward a specific career-field assignment and a promise of Air Force sponsorship for grad school. Glattan had no intention of jeopardizing his life as a lieutenant.

Was life better as an upperclassman?

No, Glattan thought, it was not.

Although it sucked to be a Doolie, as one he simply had to respond to stimuli. He was Pavlov's dog as an Air Force cadet, and so long as he responded to commands in the correct fashion, he got fed. Not that the dog was going to get fat—that certainly wasn't the case—but it would survive.

Now, though, the dog had choices. It could spend its time making itself stronger, more resilient—or it could spend its time trying to raise puppies and assuring that the puppies could take care of themselves.

Or it could try to do both.

Guaranteed suffering.

By the end of January, Glattan was in agony; he desperately needed a break. He had no intention of wasting time to pursue female companionship, but that was what he desperately needed. He decided to take a long shot.

Sherry Renaldi.

Carolina senior Sherry Renaldi.

Glattan had met her six years earlier during a summer trip to 11 European countries in 14 days. Sherry, then a debutante and a rising senior at Chowan High, was impressed by his knowledge of European history and culture, even though he was two years her junior.

Over the next four years, a relationship of sorts developed, intellectual rather than sensual, based on reading Hermann Hesse novels and listening to Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff piano concertos. Of course, from Glattan's perspective, it didn't hurt that she was gorgeous—petite, with an hourglass figure, high cheekbones, piercing dark brown eyes, lustrous auburn hair that fell to her butt. Glattan loved her—or convinced himself that he did—and on Christmas leave during his Doolie year finally gathered the courage to tell her that and follow the confession with a full kiss on the

lips. Sherry responded with a kiss of her own. Afterward, they remained close but not intimate. Given her liberal idealism (she had marched at Carolina against the Vietnam War), it was obvious that she would never commit herself to someone destined to become an Air Force officer.

Still, they remained close, or as close as they could via long-distance. They wrote each other every month or so, and Glattan loved getting letters describing her life as a Carolina student. Since he hadn't spent very much of his cadet pay, he had enough money for an airline ticket, a hotel room, and a rent-a-car, and wrote asking if she would like to join him for the Superintendent's Valentine's Day Ball. To his surprise—and delight—she accepted. He would now have the chance to escape USAFA for a weekend—and would do so with a beautiful girl.

The Superintendent's Ball was a convenient excuse, Glattan thought, to be with a girl without much effort. Of course, he wanted sex, and it would have been fine with him if they spent the entire weekend together in bed. The Ball itself only demonstrated beyond all doubt that Glattan could not dance. After gamely trying to encourage him to the dance floor, Sherry finally yielded and suggested that they both sit down. An agonizing half hour of small talk later, he said that they should leave for the hotel. He wasn't sure if she bought the explanation that a single room was cheaper than paying for two, but at that point he didn't care. As soon as they entered the room he grabbed her and abruptly thrust his hand inside her panties. Her eyes flashed as she pushed him aside.

"So that was your goal in bringing me out here, to get yourself laid?"

"Well—not totally," Glattan stammered, "but I was hoping it would happen."

Sherry shook her head. "What's wrong with you, Paul? The Paul Glattan I knew in Chowan would have never acted this way. You were kind, considerate, and most of all, compassionate. Now you're anything but. What has this place done to you?"

"I don't know—I just don't know. I know I don't like myself very much right now . . . I'm very sorry about being a jerk."

Sherry noticed his brimming eyes. "Give me a hug, you poor dear—are you sure that you want to keep subjecting yourself to this place?"

"I can't quit, Sherry. I can't go back to Chowan and let the Academy beat me."

“Well, you just need to realize that beating it is causing you to lose bits of yourself.”

For Glattan, Sherry’s visit was worse than if she had not come at all. He too feared that the Academy was warping him beyond repair, and her confirmation of it, along with his sad behavior, threw him into the depths of loneliness for the remainder of the Dark Ages. Not even Barrow—who knew him better than any girl ever had—could change his mood.



On the first night of spring break in 1975 when Glattan got back to Chowan, he collapsed in his mother’s arms and sobbed uncontrollably.

“That place is killing me,” he moaned. “The courses—CQ—baby-sitting the Doolies—the isolation—it’s all tearing me apart.”

“You can leave,” his mom answered.

“No—I can’t. That is *NOT* an option—I will *NOT* quit!”

“You don’t have to stay.”

“YES I DO! But—but—I’m afraid I’m losing myself there. If you think that place is changing me—I mean, changing my basic beliefs and values—and I’m not the son you’ve known for the last 20 years—*please* tell me! I don’t think I’d see it. But *you* will, from my letters, the way I talk on the telephone. If I’ve become too different, if that place has changed me too much, then I might . . . might consider . . . I just don’t know . . .”

His dark eyes stared into his mother’s.

“I will tell you if you’re no longer the son I raised,” she said quietly. But he knew that she was powerless to stop the transformation that had begun almost two years ago.

Nor could *he* slow it, despite his intentions.

Glattan returned to the Academy bitter after spring break.

The first thing that he did was to complete an application for Carolina, which he placed at the front of his top desk drawer. He could leave USAFA without penalty any time before he began classes as a junior; the course credits that he accumulated at the Academy would benefit his chances of acceptance and, in all probability, lead to an Air Force ROTC scholarship.

Yet, despite looking at the application frequently, he could not bring himself to mail it, to admit defeat.

The Academy had won; his efforts to fight back against it and retain his identity had failed.

So he stayed.



At the start of Call to Quarters on Sunday night, 10 August 1975, Glattan was committed to becoming an Air Force officer. If he left USAFA for any reason prior to graduation, he had to serve two years as an Air Force sergeant.

“Well, Bareass,” he said to his roommate, “we’re truly fubar now.”

“Yep, that’s a fact,” came the answer.

Glattan had just completed his summer leadership program, serving as a SERE instructor for the new Third Classmen in the Class of 1978. He well remembered his own time in the simulated POW camp, pissing his pants after watching Comrade No Shoulders, the black snake, dropped into a coffin filled with razor-sharp pinecones, which never failed to cause the victim’s observing classmate to blurt out “classified information.” Glattan, now witnessing those incidents from the vantage point of an upper-class instructor, smiled as he watched Third Classmen shudder.

His specialty as a member of the prisoner-of-war camp cadre was “political indoctrination,” targeting cadets with strong religious convictions.

“Who here wants to suffer for Christ?” Glattan asked each group of cadets entering the camp.

Inevitably, someone raised a hand.

“Good—come with me,” Glattan commanded.

He took the cadet to a dark area of the camp where the cadre had assembled a multitude of two-by-four oak crosses, roughly 10 feet tall with crossbeams 5 feet wide.

“Pick up the cross, and carry it with you until I tell you to stop.”

The cadet looked at Glattan—and the five other members of the POW camp cadre standing nearby—put the cross on his shoulder, and began dragging it through the compound.

When other Third Classmen moved forward to help, Glattan shouted, “DO YOU WANT TO SUFFER FOR CHRIST AS WELL?”

Those responding affirmatively received the honor of carrying their own crosses throughout the compound.

And several, Glattan shook his head, always did.

As political indoctrinators, Glattan and his cohorts were responsible for the music that blared nonstop through the camp’s speakers.

Most of his classmates chose Asian chants and tympani to simulate Vietnamese tunes.

Not Glattan.

He found an 18-inch-long bit of reel-to-reel tape of loudly echoing nineteenth-century European church bells—and played it continuously for eight hours.

His classmates initially thought it was a good joke for the captives. By the seventh hour, they threatened him with bodily harm if he didn't change the music.

"You pussies," Glattan said, "Don't you have an appreciation for Christian culture?"



Glattan began his Second Class year with a 3.42 cumulative GPA. He hadn't had a date since Sherry's trip for the Valentine's Ball—and rationalized that the minimal female contact led to the improved grades.

He didn't have another date until Christmas leave.

With Carol Whitney.

They had maintained an off-and-on relationship since Glattan's sternum operation. Glattan had considered inviting her, instead of Sherry, to the Valentine's Ball but decided against it since Carol was only a senior at Chowan High—he wasn't going to succumb to parading "underage pussy" before his classmates, several of whom, he noted, showed up to Cadet Balls with girls who appeared to be in junior high. Now Carol was a Carolina freshman—ironically, he thought, a journalism major—and though her letters dwindled to no more than one a month, they still made him smile. Doubtless, he knew, she could find better things to do in Chapel Hill than take time to write an Academy cadet.

On Christmas leave as a Second Classman, his focus shifted from his books to his body and he asked her out, hoping to rekindle the romantic flame. She accepted, probably, he thought, because Chowan offered minimal nightlife. He asked her to a restaurant near Albemarle College, where they were unlikely to be recognized and their dinner interrupted. Plus, he knew that Albemarle had special significance, given they had spent many hours there early in their relationship. He hoped those memories might lead to more than dinner.

On the way, they made small talk about her college courses and, of course, Carolina basketball. Upon arriving at the restaurant, the conversation became strained.

“You don’t write very often,” Carol said.

“No, I don’t—I figure that you probably don’t want to hear about my mundane life as a cadet.”

“Actually, I’ve written back to you within a day or two every time I get a letter.”

Glattan thought about what she said. “I hadn’t noticed that was the case.”

“Well, it *is* the case, Paul. I wrote you nonstop when you first left for the Academy, and then you abruptly stopped writing me. I realize that you had a hard time when you went into the hospital at the end of Basic Cadet Training—and I tried to give you time to recover after the surgery—but I don’t think you ever really did.”

Thoughts of sex after dinner evaporated.

She paused. “I’m afraid that the Academy has destroyed the two qualities that I admired in you the most—sensitivity and sincerity.”

That thunderclap silenced Glattan.

“Those qualities were why I fell in love with you, and now they are gone.”

Glattan slowly nodded. “You’re right—my time in the hospital didn’t help,” he said.

“No, it didn’t. But it was much more than that. Where you were tender before, you’re now unfeeling. I know you’ve tried not to be. I know you’ve tried to fight against the discipline, the regimentation. But the harder you’ve fought against it, the more you’ve actually conformed to it. Whether you realize it or not, they’ve got you thinking the way they want you to think.”

Glattan sat quietly for several moments. Finally, he said, “I’m sorry.”

“I’m sorry too,” she replied. “I was proud of you going to the Academy, but perhaps if you had gone to Carolina, you wouldn’t have changed.”

“Perhaps. But I’ve always been driven.”

“Not the way you are now.”

Chapter 6

16 September 1976

Glattan had no intention of dating again while at the Academy. Then he met Emily Chadwick.

At, of all places, an Academy history symposium.

As a military history major, Glattan had to attend a two-day series of lectures on the American Indian Wars. He could see little relevance in the subject matter for future Air Force officers and had almost nodded off in Fairchild Hall's 300-seat auditorium as Professor So-and-So described Andrew Jackson's 1816 campaign against the Seminoles. Suddenly, a camera flash brought Glattan back to life. A vision in a miniskirt and platform heels darted down the auditorium aisle, pausing briefly to snap pictures of the speaker. Glattan, sitting next to the aisle, focused on the diminutive girl stopping beside him to capture another photograph. After shooting it, she pulled her dark, shoulder-length hair behind her ears, turned eyes tinted with hazel toward him, and smiled.

He stayed awake for the rest of the Seminole War lecture.

That evening, at the symposium banquet, he saw her again. Once more he struggled to fight off sleep as he tried to endure the after-dinner barrage of speeches. Gradually, he realized that the speaker, a major wearing pilot wings with several rows of medals from Vietnam, was talking about *him*. Glattan had written a term paper on zeppelins, the major said, that the history department had judged the best cadet paper written during the previous academic year. Glattan heard his name called, stood up awkwardly, and walked to the major, who handed him a plaque and shook his hand. When he turned around to return to his seat, a camera flashed, and once again he saw the girl with hazel eyes.

What on earth, he thought, was this girl doing here, at a history department banquet, of all places? Obviously, she was not a cadet. The only women in the Cadet Wing were Doolies—a small part of the Class of 1980, the Academy's first to include females, whom many of Glattan's classmates mistreated and humiliated at every turn for coming to *their* Academy—and she was certainly not wearing a uniform. Cut several inches above the knee and crossing her shoulders with spaghetti straps, her red dress revealed an athletic build that included

(Glattan couldn't help noticing) ample breasts. But the features that captivated him the most were her sparkling eyes and radiant smile.

After the banquet, Glattan attempted to get to her table. Several officers from the history department faculty impeded his progress by offering their congratulations for winning the term paper award. Glattan politely chatted with each while his heart raced and his brain told him that she would be gone if he didn't get to her soon; his eyes struggled to find her in the crowd without revealing their lack of focus on the officers talking to him.

Finally, he saw the red dress. She stood alone in a corner of the dining room with her arms folded, staring in his direction while a couple of officers spoke nearby. Glattan was surprised that a pack of his classmates had not gathered around her, and he wondered how much longer it would be before the cadet wolves swarmed. She remained standing—alone—near the group of officers, but her smile revealed that she had caught his eye. Glattan maneuvered away from the group of well-wishers and headed toward her corner, amazed that she was still focused on him.

"I came to offer my apologies for ruining your camera," Glattan said. "I wanted to warn you not to take that last shot, but I didn't get the chance."

She laughed. "I wanted to make sure I captured all aspects of the symposium, and you are part of the program."

"Well, I guess my name's no secret now. I'm Paul Glattan."

"I'm Emily Chadwick." The hazel eyes shone.

"Emily Chadwick." Glattan repeated the last name twice more. "You wouldn't happen to be related to Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick in the history department, would you?"

"Could be," she replied. "Hey, Dad!" Emily called to the group of officers standing nearby. A lieutenant colonel, standing roughly 6'2" with snow-white hair and chiseled features, cocked his head in their direction. "Come meet our award winner!"

The tall officer said something to the officers around him. He then walked to the girl standing beside Glattan. "I'm Bob Chadwick," he said as he thrust out his hand.

Glattan noticed the four rows of medals draped from the left side of his mess dress coat, capped by the Legion of Merit at the far left of the top row. Glattan was supposed to take two courses from the distinguished instructor next semester but had never met him. He had witnessed Chadwick's classic lecture on the Combined Bomber Offen-

sive, in which Chadwick donned a World War II bomber pilot's uniform, complete with the leather jacket and "25-mission crush" cap, portraying Frank Savage from *Twelve O'Clock High*. The performance convinced many cadets that he had flown in the Second World War.

More significantly, Glattan knew of Chadwick's reputation as a fearsome grader who used green ink rather than red so as not to "psychologically damage" cadets.

Glattan shook the proffered hand. "I'm pleased to meet you, sir."

"I understand that you're going to be writing a term paper for me next semester."

"Yes, sir," Glattan gulped.

"And you're going to be taking my History of Military Thought class?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, good," Chadwick said. "I look forward to hammering you twice."

The lieutenant colonel walked back to the group of officers.

"I wouldn't worry too much. His bark's louder than his bite when it comes to cadets," Emily countered.

"That's easy for you to say."

"I should know. I've been living with him for 21 years."

"Yeah, but he wasn't grading you."

"I wouldn't be too sure." Emily's eyes flashed.

"I'm sorry—I had no business saying that." Glattan inwardly kicked himself.

"It's all right," she replied. "My father's seen one too many cadets. I know that he loves my brother and me, but he often expects us to behave like they do."

"And how do *we* behave?"

"Now I should apologize," Emily stammered. "I know that cadets are not lemmings."

"How about if you give me the opportunity to prove that?" Glattan asked. "What are you doing Saturday night?"

"Oh, I—I don't know. I'm . . . not in the habit of dating cadets."

"Then why were you here?"

Emily's eyes flashed again. "I'm covering the symposium for my school paper at Colorado College. CC is where I go, by the way. I'm a double major in history and poli sci—I guess I couldn't totally escape Dad's influence. But I like to dabble in journalism, and the symposium gave me the chance to blend my interests."

Another interest in journalism, Glattan thought—how strange—and wonderful—is that? “Well,” his voice softened. “You still haven’t answered my question about Saturday night. Do you like Mexican?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Good. I thought we might give the Casa Bonita a try. I like that place—especially the guys diving off the cliffs.” The Denver restaurant was a cadet favorite, sporting nifty floor shows to go with the decent Mexican food.

“I like the Casa too,” Emily said, “but I don’t know—Denver’s a long way to go for dinner.”

“Not with me driving,” Glattan retorted. “Don’t worry—I’m safe.”

“Well, I don’t usually—”

“Make an exception this time.”

“All right. We live at 4403D Douglas Valley.” Douglas Valley was the Academy’s primary housing area for officers who lived on base.

“I’ll pick you up at six.”

Glattan arrived with his Carolina blue Celica at the Chadwick residence at 5:55 Saturday night.

After he rang the doorbell, Emily appeared, wearing a pink peasant blouse, black miniskirt, and maroon platform heels.

Damn, Glattan thought, she’s gorgeous.

“You look great,” he said.

“Thanks. You don’t look bad yourself.”

Glattan considered his open-collar white shirt and bell-bottom blue jeans. Well, he thought, if she likes the way I look, so do I!

He began backing out of the driveway.

“LOOK OUT!” she screamed.

Glattan slammed on the brakes as a buck and three does crossed behind the car.

“Whoa! Where’d they come from?!” he wheezed.

“They’re everywhere. Mom hates them—they eat her flowers.”

“I don’t think I’m fond of them either.”

Emily began to laugh, and soon Glattan joined her.

“Well,” she said, “that’s a memorable start to a first date!”

“Amen!” He looked at her twinkling eyes and beaming smile, noticing that her lipstick matched the pink of her blouse. I do *not* want to screw this up, he thought.

Conversation flowed easily on the ride to Denver. They talked about journalism, and Emily laughed as Glattan told of asking an upperclassman about the Academy’s journalism department when he was a Basic

Cadet. They also compared their history classes, agreeing that they despised writing term papers because of the time required.

“Of course,” Glattan said, “you can always go with the ‘cadet rule.’”

“I’m afraid I don’t know that one.”

“If you start a term paper two weeks before it’s due, it’ll take you two weeks. If you start it the night before, it’ll take you one night. I don’t recommend following that rule.”

Emily giggled. “No—I don’t think so! But hey, you’re good at writing them—you won that award.”

“Yeah, I guess—but you’re right—they take so dadgum much time.”

“Dadgum?”

“Uh—yeah. In case you couldn’t tell, I’m from the South. North Carolina, actually.”

Emily giggled again. “You don’t have much of an accent.”

“No. Three years at USAFA tends to destroy all of our accents. Mine comes back when I watch Carolina basketball—or talk to Mom on the telephone.”

“Makes sense. I think traveling around the country as an Air Force brat prevented me from having any real accent. But the New England in me comes out when I watch the Celtics or Red Sox.”

Holy shit, Glattan thought—she not only likes journalism and history, but also sports—especially basketball! They spent the rest of the ride to Denver trading stories about Carolina coach Dean Smith and Celtics coach Red Auerbach.

“You know that Dean went to three straight Final Fours during the sixties?” Glattan asked.

“Uh, no, but do you know that Red won nine NBA titles in 11 years?”

“Actually, I did know that. Red’s a legend—but so is Dean. He’s gone to four Final Fours in 10 years.”

“And won how many?”

“OK, smarty, you’re right, but one day he’s going to get there. Perhaps this season; the Tar Heels have a great team—oh, by the way, did you know he was an assistant coach at the Academy?”

“No, I didn’t know that. When was it?”

“From 1955 to 1958. I’ve read that while he was at USAFA he invented his famous ‘Four Corners’ offense, which puts four players in the corners of the half-court facing their basket with the point guard dribbling the ball in between them and passing it back and forth. The idea was to get fouled or get a layup while preserving a lead.”

Emily pondered the notion. “That certainly makes sense from the Academy’s viewpoint—you’re never going to have a pilot-qualified cadet who’s seven feet tall, and if you’re lucky enough to ever get a lead against the other team, might as well do what you can to keep it.”

“Exactly.” Glattan nodded at Emily, and she nodded back.

Damnation, he thought—who *is* this girl?!

At the Casa Bonita, where he secured a table with a great view of the cliff diving, talk turned to family. He learned that Emily had a younger brother—Bob Jr.—who was barely nine years old. “He had to be a mistake,” she laughed.

Glattan described his sister Sarah, five years his junior. “I think Mom and Dad spaced us out so we wouldn’t have to go to college at the same time.”

“Strategic planning,” she winked.

After watching the final cliff diver—they agreed that the rocks surrounding the pool below were fake—and having sopapillas, they slowly walked to the car. Emily clasped Glattan’s hand, and he held hers as they moved together.

“That was great fun,” she said after he opened the door and she climbed inside.

“Definitely. Perhaps we could do something like that again?”

“Yes—maybe so,” she smiled. “I haven’t had a date in a while, and I must admit this was nice.”

“Dadgum nice for me too,” which elicited a giggle. “You’re only the second date I’ve had since Christmas.” Instantly he regretted the remark.

She stared at him silently for several seconds. “Well, I guess I should feel honored.”

He scrambled to make amends. “Hardly. I’m the one who’s honored. You said you don’t date cadets.”

“I—I don’t . . . Dad’s the primary reason. He’s pretty strict in the classroom, in case you haven’t heard, and I guess most cadets figure he’d be the same way about his daughter.”

“Is he?”

“He hasn’t been thus far—but I haven’t given him many chances to show how he truly feels.”

“Well, perhaps this can be another opportunity.” He kept his eyes on hers.

She moved toward him and kissed him lightly on the cheek. “Perhaps it can,” she smiled.

They held hands on the ride back to the Academy. When they neared her home in Douglas Valley, Glattan slowed the car to a crawl and turned on his brights.

“Whew—no deer!” he exclaimed.

Emily laughed as he opened the door and walked her to the doorstep. She paused at the landing, looking in his eyes, and gave him a long, slow kiss on the lips.

“Thanks for tonight,” she said.

“I want to see you again,” he responded.

“And you will.”



Glattan never forgot the thrill of that first date. During the three-month span between mid-September and December, he dated Emily relentlessly, taking her to movies (*Rocky* was easily their favorite; they both teared up when Talia Shire and Sylvester Stallone said that they loved each other at the end), parks, and restaurants. They dined at some of Colorado Spring’s finest, including the Sunbird, perched on the hills overlooking the Springs, and the Broadmoor—the glamorous five-star restaurant that was part of the magnificent hotel complex. At the hotel’s “Golden Bee” piano bar, Glattan demonstrated in no uncertain fashion that he had memorized the words to “Carolina in My Mind” while she swayed in time to the music.

The more they dated, the more he realized that he was falling for her.

Her animated eyes, her incredible smile, her invigorating sense of humor combined with hard-nosed common sense, her stimulating intellect, and, yes, her body intoxicated him. Was it love? If it wasn’t, Glattan thought, it was as close as I have ever been. It’s certainly more than I had with Sherry, and at least as much as I had with Carol. When I’m away from USAFA, I want to spend every spare moment with her; hell, when I’m at the Academy, I want to be with her and away from it. She has become all-consuming.

He sensed that she felt the same way about him. Every time they met, she seemed thrilled. She listened intently whether he discussed academics, Carolina basketball, the Academy, or any other subject that crossed his mind. She even laughed at his jokes, many of which he knew were lame. And when they kissed, she melted into his arms, displaying utter contentment that made him ecstatic. She was, he thought, the embodiment of a vision that he never expected to be real.

But oh, was she ever real.

Not only did she share her hopes and dreams with him, she also shared her body. After several dates that ended with them cuddling in his Celica as they watched the twinkling lights of the Springs below, she took his hand and put it on her breast. Glattan shuddered, trying not to fumble too much when it came to unhooking her bra. Soon they were nearly naked. As he moved toward her, he narrowly avoided the gear shift, which elicited a giggle from her. Yet the evening consisted only of groping and kissing while managing to keep the gear shift out of the way.

“We’ve got to remember that this car has an obstacle in it,” Emily deadpanned on the ride home.

Similar scenes played out many times during late October and early November. On one occasion, Glattan asked her if she wanted to go all the way.

“Not yet, sweet Paul, I’m happy with what we’ve got, if that’s OK with you.”

“I’m overjoyed with what we have,” he exhaled. “I—I think I’m falling in love with you.”

“And I feel the same way . . . just want to be sure,” Emily said. “Can you understand that?”

“Yeah—I can—I certainly can.” He reflected on his past romantic endeavors. They were not like this, he thought to himself, and I imagine she’s also been stung before. The romps in the Celica were more than satisfying to him. From her blissful expression afterward, he believed she was content as well.

On a few occasions when Glattan picked her up, Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick met his knock at the door, explaining that Emily was still getting ready. Chadwick always invited him inside, and they usually sat in the living room, discussing cadet concerns or Air Force’s dreadful football team, which was on the way to compiling a 2–9 record. They also chatted about some of their mutual interests—classical music, literature, and old movies. They agreed that Beethoven was the world’s greatest composer, Hemingway was the greatest American writer of the twentieth century, and Humphrey Bogart and Gary Cooper were Hollywood’s greatest actors of its Golden Age.

Although the conversations were always cordial, Glattan approached them with trepidation. He was in awe of Chadwick’s legendary reputation, and here he was dating—and fooling around with—his daughter. Like all cadet history majors, he knew the details of the lieutenant colonel’s career. After completing two years of study

at Yale, Chadwick secured an appointment to West Point, where he graduated in 1954. Dreams of becoming a fighter pilot led to the unusual step of commissioning into the Air Force, the newest branch of the US armed forces. He easily mastered piloting the T-33 jet trainer but could not get the gist of formation flying. He washed out of pilot training on the program's last check ride.

Determined to make a worthwhile contribution to the Air Force despite being out of the cockpit, Chadwick became an intelligence officer and quickly demonstrated a deft capacity for analysis. During the Bay of Pigs, his examination of Cuban air defenses helped persuade Air Force leaders—and President Kennedy—that committing aircraft to support the invasion would be folly; during the Missile Crisis, his examination of photographs confirmed the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. Those episodes resulted in his early promotion to major plus a teaching assignment at the Air Force Academy.

USAFA, which graduated its first class in 1959, desperately needed faculty for the new institution. All instructors were Air Force officers, and most were pilots. Although Chadwick lacked wings, he was a West Pointer with two additional years of study under his belt at one of America's top colleges. The head of the Academy's history department found his résumé especially appealing and offered to send him back to Yale for a master's degree at the Air Force's expense.

It was an offer that Chadwick couldn't refuse.

Arriving at USAFA in summer 1964, he committed his soul to the fledgling Academy. He loved every aspect of it—its glistening steel and aluminum buildings, the aircraft flanking the cadet area, and especially the cadets—most of whom believed that they were part of something special, the centerpiece of a unique force that would provide American security by conquering not only the sky but also the space above it.

Chadwick felt the same way.

From his West Point experience, he knew the importance of traditions, of actions that would help build camaraderie and esprit de corps. Besides teaching history, he became the academic advisor of the Academy's rugby club, offering a few songs from his playing time as a Yale undergrad that the cadets eagerly adopted as their own. He further served as the academic advisor to 24th Squadron. During one of his trips to the squadron to evaluate cadet grades, he let slip that while a cadet at West Point, he and his regiment simultaneously flushed all the toilets in Scott Barracks, which put them out of action for an afternoon.

USAFA's 24th Squadron cadets took the cue. One day in spring 1965 they orchestrated the simultaneous flush of all the toilets in Vandenberg Hall, disabling the dorm's water system for two days.

Chadwick thought the war in Vietnam was folly. Nonetheless, he volunteered for Southeast Asia because he believed that he should serve in a conflict to which the nation was committed—well, at least most of his West Point classmates were assigned there, and he felt a special kinship to them. He left the Academy in summer 1967 to serve as the sole Air Force intelligence officer on Army general William Westmoreland's Military Assistance Command staff in Saigon. Rumor had it that Chadwick discovered the North Vietnamese buildup around Khe Sanh that preceded the Tet Offensive, but no one knew for sure because he refused to talk about his time in Vietnam. When he returned in summer 1968, his accolades convinced USAFA's history department chairman to recommend him for a Yale PhD.

Another offer that Chadwick couldn't refuse.

Back at USAFA in summer 1970—after completing the doctorate in a record two years—he once more continued as academic advisor to the rugby team and 24th Squadron. But his emphasis on academic excellence, which had always been strong, came back with a vengeance.

Green ink was the hallmark of his term paper grading deemed “vicious” by cadets. Everything about a term paper was fair game with him, and woe to anyone making a spelling error. Each mistake resulted in the loss of a letter grade, with the misspelled words ensconced in jagged green “shark's teeth.” Yet colleagues and cadets alike widely acknowledged Chadwick as the history department's best instructor, able to deliver magnificent lectures without notes.

I'm not only dating this man's daughter, Glattan thought while waiting for Emily, but I'm also about to be graded by him.

In the spring, Glattan was to take Chadwick's History of Military Thought course—regarded by history majors as the department's toughest. Glattan's academic advisor also picked Chadwick, the biographer of World War II Army Air Forces general Haywood Hansell, to supervise Glattan's independent study project. Glattan's strong performance in his history courses had earned him a six-week summer trip as a rising First Classman to the National Archives and Library of Congress to research America's World War II bombing of Japan. In the independent study course, he was to write a term paper based on the multitude of historical documents that he reviewed in Washington.

How can I write that paper, Glattan thought, for the man whose daughter I'm falling in love with? *And* I've got to take the department's hardest course from him? He'll know that the time I spend with her will take away from the time I could spend on his courses. What does he *truly* think of me? Will he hammer me more because of my relationship with Emily? Does he suspect what we're doing in my car before I bring her home at night? Granted, our conversations have been friendly, and he's never brought up what's coming my way in the spring. But the fact that he's said nothing only makes it worse—it's like I'm playing poker with him, and he's got a pair of aces while I'm holding squat.

The closer he got to Christmas leave, the more Chadwick's imminent courses dominated Glattan's thinking.

So much so that on a date in late November, he couldn't be aroused.

"What's the matter, Paul?" said an exasperated Emily. "Have I done something to upset you?"

"No—no Em, not at all. It's me. I'm just worried about your dad, having to take his courses in the spring—and what he thinks about me . . ."

"You're kidding, right? Dad thinks the world of you! Can't you tell?"

"No—I really can't. Sometimes I think that he's just being nice to me because he loves you, and other times I think that he'd kill me if he knew what we've been doing."

Emily paused, then smiled. "Don't you think that he was young once? You know he went to West Point. You think he got horny there? He and Mom went out when he was a cadet—and there's a good chance she was pregnant when they got married in the Chapel there after graduation. After all, my birthday's January 10, and he graduated the first week of June."

The hazel eyes stared into his and she kissed him with abandon. Glattan returned the embrace.



Despite Emily's compassion, fear of the coming semester continued to nag him. The more he thought about it, the more the situation demanded that he make a choice—an agonizing, hellish decision. I can continue to see Emily, he thought, which will consume much of the time I need to do my best work for Chadwick, or I can stop seeing her, eliminate any tension between Chadwick and me, and perform at the level I need to ensure I get a grad school slot sometime after graduation.

When he took her to dinner in early December, she sensed that all was not ideal between them.

“You’re still worried about my dad, aren’t you?” she said.

“Yeah. Damn it, Em—I can’t get him out of my head.”

“Why don’t you talk to him about it?”

“No, no. Can’t do that. Don’t want to let him know I’m concerned about being in class with him. Whatever he thinks of me, he would then think less.”

“I don’t believe that, Paul. Would you like for me to talk to him?”

“NO!”

Emily sat back in her chair. “Do—do you think—we should keep seeing each other?” Her eyes glistened.

“I don’t want to give you up. Damn it to hell, Em—I love you! But I can’t sacrifice my ability to do my best in your father’s courses, and I’m afraid that won’t be possible if I keep seeing you . . .” Glattan faltered. “I just don’t know.”

A tear trickled down Emily’s cheek. “Paul, I love you, too.”

Glattan matched her tear with his own. “The last thing on earth I want to do is to leave you,” he stammered. “But I’m not sure there’s another way forward for me.”

“Paul, please . . .” She grabbed his hand, and he grabbed hers back.

“I hate it, Emily—goddamnit, I hate it. I just don’t see any other way.”

Part 2

Recalibrating

*With a holy host of others standing 'round me
Still I'm on the dark side of the moon
And it seems like it goes on like this forever
You must forgive me, if I'm up and gone to Carolina in my mind*

—James Taylor, “Carolina in My Mind”

Chapter 7

17 March 1977

“Hey, Ramirez! Give me an attitude check!” Glattan called to the Doolie headed for the door to the latrine.

“Sir, this place sucks!” Ramirez responded.

“Very good,” Glattan said. “How about a positive attitude check?”

“Sir, this place positively sucks.”

“How about a negative-positive attitude check?”

“Sir, no place sucks like this place positively sucks.”

“Uh huh,” Glattan answered. “How about a relative attitude check?” He winked at the slim figure.

Ramirez smiled back. “Sir, my mother says this place sucks.”

“She’s right, too, you know, although perhaps it doesn’t suck quite as much on the night before the beginning of spring break,” Glattan mused out loud. “What do you think, Ramirez?”

“Sir, I do not know.”

“Come on, Ramirez, don’t give me the standard line,” Glattan persisted. “Do you think that this place sucks less on a night like tonight?”

“Yes, sir!”

“Tell me why,” Glattan implored. “Do you have some sweet thing who’s going to be sucking you back in Dallas?”

Ramirez began turning red. “Ah, sir . . . ah . . . ah, sir . . . I do not know.”

“Well, then, keep your secret, Ramirez. Have fun on leave.”

“Yes, sir!”

Glattan walked away shaking his head, and the other Firsties who witnessed the exchange chuckled. “Hey Glat—I wonder if Ramirez has to screw by the numbers?” Brett Green asked.

“That’s my guess,” Glattan said as he stepped inside the 21st Squadron telephone room. He felt on top of the world. Tomorrow he was really going to get the hell out of “this place”—the politest term he could think of for USAFA—and now he was going to call home. He checked his watch: 8:55 p.m.—10:55 p.m. on the East Coast. The time should be just about perfect.

One of three telephone booths was available—just as he had arranged. He stepped inside and turned his body into a 140-pound pretzel, with his back resting on the wooden seat, his feet pressed against the glass doors, and his shoulders jammed against the far wall. Glattan normally slumped when trying to stand erect; in the

booth's close-knit confines he became a hunchback. Gripping the telephone with one hand and two rolls of quarters with the other, he carefully dialed the number to his parents' house in Chowan. It was Thursday, the 17th of March—St. Patrick's Day—and Carolina was playing Notre Dame in college basketball's East Regional semifinals at Landover, Maryland. Glattan *had* to hear it. He couldn't see it—there was no way that the game was going to be televised west of the Mississippi. But he could *hear* it.

Fortunately, Glattan's father answered the call, not his mother, and his father put the portable radio next to the mouthpiece without Glattan having to endure his mother's hassle about the exorbitant cost of listening to a basketball game by long-distance telephone. Through considerable experience, Glattan had learned to calculate the time remaining in a 40-minute game that included a 15-minute halftime plus stoppages in play for time-outs, fouls, and free throws. He had waited to call until he estimated that fewer than five minutes were left, and this time, he had been extremely precise—the banter in the hall with Ramirez had provided an ideal diversion. "Two minutes remaining in a 75–75 tie game," drawled Woody Durham, the "Voice of the Tar Heels." Point guard Phil Ford was dribbling out the clock in Dean Smith's "Four Corners" offense, causing Glattan to smile. No doubt, Notre Dame coach Digger Phelps was furious at this development.

Now, as the final seconds ticked away, Glattan's body froze and his brown eyes stared without focusing through the phone booth's glass door. Twenty-first Squadron's phone room was a lively place on the Thursday night before spring break. Cadets crammed into the two other booths as well. Had he looked, Glattan could have seen "Boots" Renfro smoking as he babbled away to his fiancée, Daisy, and could have watched Jack Wiggins try to line up some action after he arrived back in Philly. At that moment, though, girls were the farthest thing from Glattan's mind.

If he paused to consider it—and he did so on many occasions—he knew his love of Carolina basketball had long since spiraled out of control. The reasons behind the passion had become warped, although the commitment had begun innocently enough. Glattan grew up in Chowan, and his dad, a 1951 Carolina grad, guaranteed that his son would love Tar Heel basketball. But somehow the wearing of Carolina blue and white became twisted with notions of upholding Southern honor, defending liberty, and choosing good over evil. At USAFA, Carolina basketball was the tie to his past—to a time before

the Academy began to chip away at him bit by bit until he was certain that he was no longer the same person he had been at Chowan; Carol, Sherry, and now Emily had confirmed that sad fact. Whenever Carolina played, his world stopped spinning. When the Tar Heels won, he was euphoric; when they lost, he despaired.

Glattan told his roommate Barrow that if he could either fuck Cheryl Tiegs or watch Carolina win the national championship, he would take the basketball victory. "Of course you would," Barrow replied, "because you haven't seen a pussy for months, and you've forgotten what it looks like—and *feels* like."

No matter, Glattan thought. Tomorrow I'm out of here, and if the Tar Heels win tonight, I'll be watching their next game in Chapel Hill.

He lay rigid in the telephone booth as the final two minutes ticked away. Woody Durham said Carolina had come back from 14 points down to tie the score with Notre Dame at 75. With just over a minute left Phil Ford hit the floor hard in a wild scramble for a loose ball, hurting his right elbow. Despite the pain, he managed to get off a shot and was fouled. Woody said Ford grimaced as he stood at the foul line, but the Carolina junior managed to sink both free throws. The Irish countered with a 10-foot jumper, again tying the score.

Glattan was immobile, visualizing the court and how Dean Smith again raised four fingers to indicate Four Corners. Amazingly, Glattan thought, Digger Phelps was going to let the Heels hold the ball for a final shot. Woody counted down the time remaining, and when the clock reached 10 seconds Ford began dribbling toward the Carolina basket from near midcourt. Just past the foul line he attempted a jump shot, but a Notre Dame defender blocked it. The ball caromed back into Ford's hands and he shot again. The ball bounced off the rim.

Glattan braced himself for overtime.

But Ford had been fouled. A Notre Dame player hacked Ford's injured arm as he released the ball, and the Carolina point guard would go to the foul line with two seconds left in the game. The corners of Glattan's mouth turned upward. No doubt Phil Ford was hurt, but this was Phil Fucking Ford, the point guard who as a freshman in 1975 led Carolina past 1974 NCAA Champion NC State and its sensational senior David Thompson. As Ford toed the foul line—still grimacing, Woody noted—Glattan's eyes began to glisten. "Cleanly through!" called Woody after the first free throw. "And another cleanly through!" A desperation shot by the Irish missed.

“You weren’t worried, were you?!” His father’s voice mirrored Glattan’s enormous sigh of relief.

“Lord, I loved that, Dad! We beat those clowns on St. Patrick’s Day! Nice coaching, Digger!” Glattan’s body began to uncoil in the telephone booth.

“Well, I better hang up before your mother starts to yell. We’ll see you tomorrow at Raleigh.”

“I can’t wait!” Glattan replied. “You sure it’s OK if I drive to Chapel Hill to watch the Saturday game with Ernie?”

“It’ll be fine, son; we’re driving both cars. We’ll see you tomorrow. Bye.”

Glattan hung up the phone and waited for the operator’s voice to tell him that he owed \$4.95 for an eight-minute call. He quickly pushed the quarters into the slot and then began to dial Ernie Black’s number. He had to hear the on-campus reaction to the victory.

After talking to Ernie and hearing Carolina students violently rattling the iron railings of Morrison Dorm, Glattan was like a satiated lion after a kill. He strolled into his room to find Barrow sitting at his desk studying for Friday classes.

“Hey, Bareass, I can’t believe that you are fucking studying the night before spring break begins—especially since Carolina just beat Notre Dame in the East Regionals,” Glattan said.

“Hey, Glat, why don’t you fucking get a life?” Barrow countered. “We do have class tomorrow, and do you really think I give a shit about your Tar Holes?”

“Nice talk, Bareass. You might at least consider packing.”

“I’ll get to it.”

“Yeah, well, I think I’ll tackle that project myself.”

“You might want to look at this first,” Barrow said as he tossed a folded piece of paper in Glattan’s direction. “The CQ brought it by while you were trapped in the phone booth. I knew better than to have him disturb you there.”

Glattan picked up the note and unfolded it. He read it, shook his head, and then read it again: “Please call me tonight before you go on leave. I have something I have to tell you. Emily.”

Glattan looked at his roommate. “Is this a joke?”

“I don’t think so,” Barrow replied. “The CQ said it was definitely a female voice, and she sounded very serious.”

“I haven’t talked to her since that night in December,” Glattan said.

“I know,” said Barrow. “But if I were you, I’d talk to her tonight.”

Chapter 8

17 March 1977

“Who the hell is *this*?” The voice on the telephone seethed with hostility.

“Sir, this is Cadet First Class Glattan.”

“Cadet First Class Glattan? Glattan . . . what the hell are *you* calling for? Haven’t you had enough of trying to figure out what made Curtis LeMay kill thousands of Japanese?”

“Sir, I wasn’t calling for you. I was calling for your daughter.”

“Oh, my daughter?! My *daughter*. Yes, I have one of those, from time to time. But I guess it’s tough for *you* to remember her name, given that you haven’t spoken to her for several months now,” Chadwick trailed off. “Son, you are one piece of work—one piece of work—I don’t think that I’ve ever—”

“Daddy, give me the phone!” Glattan heard Emily’s voice in the background. “Paul,” she spoke into the receiver quickly. “I’m terribly sorry to call you now, but I need you to come over here and talk to him. I think you’re the only one who can make a difference.”

“A fucking difference in *what*!?” Glattan heard Chadwick’s voice, dripping with sarcasm.

“Paul, please come over.”

“I’m on my way,” Glattan said.

What the hell could be wrong, he thought as he drove toward Douglas Valley. I haven’t spoken to Emily since we had dinner in December, and now she calls me out of the blue? She seemed scared, too—really scared. And Chadwick—what the hell is up with him? In all the times I’ve been with him in class, or before when I was dating Emily, he never sounded like *that*. He sounded like . . . well, Glattan didn’t know exactly what he sounded like. But it certainly wasn’t normal.

When he arrived at the house, Emily met him at the door. She started speaking rapidly, her voice rarely rising above a whisper. “I never thought that I would see you again to talk to you, and I wouldn’t have called you this time, but I didn’t know where else to turn,” she said. “My father’s an alcoholic—a *bad* alcoholic—and tonight I think he intends to kill himself. I know how much he thinks of you, and I thought that you could make a difference.” The hazel eyes pleaded.

Glattan’s bowels turned to ice at the revelation. “Where—where’s your mother?”

“She left—went for a drive or to see a friend. When he gets this way, she won’t stay here—she’s probably at a friend’s house.”

“Where’s Bob Jr.?”

“She probably took my brother with her—she usually does. I just got home from the library and found Dad smashed. Usually I can deal with it, but tonight he’s really blown away, and he keeps saying that he’s ‘tired of it all.’ Oh Paul, I am so sorry to have called you—I just didn’t know who else to call!”

Tears trickled down her face, and Glattan noticed that she was trembling. He had seen her cry only once, that bleak night in December when he had told her goodbye. Glattan haltingly put his arms around her.

“HEY, WHAT THE HELL’S HAPPENING UP THERE?!” Colonel Chadwick’s voice bellowed from the basement.

Glattan was terrified. Yet he knew that the worst thing he could do was to reveal his fear. “Let me try to talk to him,” he whispered in Emily’s ear. Then he opened the basement door and headed toward the booming voice.

“So, *Cadet First Class Glattan* has returned. I didn’t think you’d have the balls to come back to my house.” Chadwick spit the words at Glattan as he came down the steps.

Glattan was stunned by what he saw. The lieutenant colonel sat in a large leather easy chair in the far corner of the room. He wore only white boxer shorts and a blue T-shirt displaying a white silhouette of a B-52 with the words “Fly the friendly skies of North Vietnam.” Newspapers, some piled several inches deep, covered the floor. Emerging from them was a coffee table with a half-empty liter bottle of Jack Daniel’s, a near-empty glass, two packs of Marlboros, and an ashtray piled high with cigarette butts. A cigarette dangled from Chadwick’s mouth, and his eyes, streaked with red, followed Glattan as he crossed the room. Glattan shuddered; he recalled the same wild-eyed stare from his mother during her drinking bouts when he had been in junior high. But what made the scene particularly unnerving was Chadwick’s disheveled appearance. Chadwick was always impeccably groomed and dressed in classroom settings and one-on-one visits to his office, or even when Glattan had stopped at the house to pick up Emily. Tonight he was anything but—a grotesque representation of a man that Glattan respected and even admired, who had shown him only civility and deference despite Glattan’s dismal treatment of Emily.

"I'm a pretty fucking picture, aren't I?" Chadwick asked as Glattan reached the sofa beside the easy chair. "Well, tonight I can paint myself out of it."

Chadwick sat up in the chair and kicked a pile of newspapers with his right foot. A .45-caliber pistol revealed itself. "I got this in Saigon from Captain Frank McCurry, US Marine Corps," Chadwick said as he picked up the gun. "A damn fine weapon . . . and a damn fine officer. Of course, he's dead now. The gomers got him at Hue when they surrounded the Citadel there, but before they did he saved the lives of many Marines in his company. Placed them in positions that he knew the NVA couldn't penetrate, gave his guys enfilading fields of fire. But a fucking sniper got him just after he positioned his last platoon, so now he's dead . . . but I've still got his weapon." Chadwick waved the gun around in his hand.

Glattan's heart raced. He looked at Emily, who had walked down the steps to the basement, and saw a look of horror. "Sir, could I see that?" Glattan motioned toward the pistol. "I always heard that the .45 was the best sidearm ever made."

Chadwick's eyes narrowed on Glattan's for several seconds. "Sure, son—catch," Chadwick said as he tossed the pistol at the sofa.

Glattan flinched and caught the weapon with both hands. His fingers remained tightly wound around the grip as he stared unbelievably at Chadwick, who grinned in return.

"You look it over all you want," Chadwick said. "Of course, you don't think that's the only gun I've got in the house, now do you?"

"Sir, I—I don't know," Glattan stammered. "Why are you doing this?"

"What do you mean by *this*, Mr. Glattan? Haven't I told you it's one of the vaguest words in the English language without a noun behind it?"

"Yes, sir, you have . . . many times. Why did you drink so much tonight?"

"Why did you use the *past* tense? Do you think I'm finished?" Chadwick reached for the whiskey and started pouring it into his glass. "Have a drink with me." Once more, his eyes focused on Glattan's.

Glattan felt like someone twisted a knife in his stomach and that his bowels were about to explode. He struggled to hold Chadwick's gaze and quietly called to Emily, who remained frozen at the bottom of the stairs. "Em—get me a glass, please." Glattan gradually included her in his field of vision. Her look of fear had intensified. He nodded to her briefly and forced a smile. Slowly, she turned and went upstairs.

"I can't believe that you fucking treated her the way you did—son, you are one piece of work," Chadwick said.

Glattan's bowels were ice. "I don't claim to be perfect," he said.

"*Perfect?! You're one hell of a long way from that,*" Chadwick snorted. "My daughter *loved* you—even I could see that. And you kissed her off because you thought she would take away the precious time that you needed to work for *me?*" He drained his glass. "I thought that cadets were supposed to be able to put their priorities in order.

"Son, your priorities are all fucked up."

As Chadwick spoke, though, Glattan noticed that the bloodshot eyes, while still red, showed less anger than they had first revealed. A tinge of the wildness had disappeared; the bitterness was not quite as pronounced. Glattan observed that Chadwick's expression continued to soften as he watched Emily place a glass filled with ice, and a can of Coke, on the coffee table.

Chadwick winced. "Do tell me, son, that you're not going to pollute Jack Daniel's with Coke," he grunted.

"Yes, sir, I'm afraid so," Glattan answered. He saw the thinnest trace of a smile on Emily's lips as she moved toward the stairs.

"I'll wait for you up here," she said to Glattan as she neared the top. Her eyes still brimmed with tears, though her face was less tense. At least, Glattan thought, he had accomplished something worthwhile tonight. But temporarily improving Emily's frame of mind meant nothing if he failed to stop Chadwick's plunge toward self-destruction.

"That girl's like Hanoi," Chadwick said as he watched her disappear.

Glattan turned toward the lieutenant colonel. "I'm—I'm afraid I don't follow, sir." He gently placed the pistol on the couch beside him.

"You're not usually so fucking slow," Chadwick muttered. "I guess I'll have to spell it out. Hanoi was the one target every pilot in South-east Asia wanted to bomb, and it was the one that stayed off-limits for the longest time. When it finally became available, everybody tried to give it a shot."

Glattan's face revealed that he couldn't follow the twisted analogy. "You, see, son, here's the way it is," Chadwick continued. "Emily's made herself off-limits now because of your bone-headed actions. But sooner or later she's going to be back on the 'acceptable target list,' and when that happens, you're going to be shit out of luck. You had your chance, and you blew it."

Glattan poured a couple of shots of whiskey over the ice. He knew that Emily rarely dated while her father taught at the Academy, largely

because she, like Glattan, devoted most of her time to studying. Plus, most cadets—and Colorado College students—refused to submit themselves to Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick's scrutiny when they stopped by his quarters on base to pick up his daughter. Glattan was reasonably certain that she had not dated at all since he had abandoned her in December, and he did not foresee her plunging ahead to establish another relationship soon after his callous behavior. I have played a great role in ruining her life, he thought, and now she has to deal with this shit.

As he filled the glass with Coke, Glattan saw Chadwick rolling his eyes.

"It's how I learned to drink it, sir," Glattan said. "I had to pour something into my cup at Falcon Stadium to help me get through a 2-9 season."

"I agree with you there," Chadwick responded. "I would have thought that tonight you would've been drinking in honor of that basketball team of yours. They did win, didn't they?"

"Yes, sir. They beat Notre Dame by two points."

"Notre Dame losing on St. Patrick's Day. I don't imagine that'll sit too well with the pope. At least it wasn't football."

As the conversation continued, Glattan desperately tried to devise a plan to guarantee that Chadwick didn't get the pistol—or any other weapon for that matter—during the night. Glattan figured that he could prevent Chadwick from killing himself by continuing to drink with him and keep him company. Of course, helping to drain the whiskey would play hell with getting back to Vandenberg Hall. After talking to Emily on the phone, Glattan had called Captain Hoffman—the officer who oversaw 21st Squadron's cadets—and received special permission to stay out past taps in Douglas Valley. Yet that special permission didn't include getting ripped. Besides dulling the faculties, the whiskey would also play hell with Glattan's wretched stomach.

Despite the risks, Glattan could think of no other approach that might produce success. He would try to drink slowly, consuming the lion's share of the liquor. He would also keep the conversation focused on innocuous topics like sports or movies. Glattan decided to shun their mutual interest in classical music because Chadwick tended to wax philosophical about a composer's motivations for writing, and Glattan feared that such speculation could trigger dark thoughts. Above all, he would avoid any mention of Vietnam. In his many discussions with Chadwick on bombing Japan, Glattan had re-

ceived plenty of Vietnam asides, and what Glattan saw before him told him to stay away from that subject at all costs.

When Glattan had dated Emily, she had mentioned that her father often went to bed very early. Perhaps, Glattan now thought, Chadwick did so because he drank too much and passed out. Maybe the liquor tonight would have the same impact—Lord knows Chadwick had downed enough of it. Glattan noticed that Chadwick's eyes began to focus randomly and his speech slowed; he started babbling about the 1946 Notre Dame–Army football game. With luck, he would be asleep in an hour. If Glattan were doubly lucky, his sphincter would hold out that long.

As he haltingly sipped the whiskey and Coke, Glattan decided that he would recount last year's Notre Dame–Air Force game. Chadwick had missed it because he had been away teaching at the Army War College, and the game remained the most memorable that Glattan had seen in the last two years of agony called Falcon football. Air Force compiled a 1–9–1 record during his junior year; it “improved” to 2–9 the past fall. But the 1975 Notre Dame game would forever haunt Glattan as a Falcon Stadium nightmare. He remembered its details despite his churning gut and the fear that Chadwick would suddenly lunge for the pistol.

Slowly, deliberately, Glattan described how Air Force amassed a 30–10 lead with only 10:47 left to play against the nation's seventeenth-ranked team when Irish coach Dan Devine called time-out and put in his backup quarterback—a freshman named Joe Montana who had rallied Notre Dame from a 14–7 deficit the previous week against North Carolina in Chapel Hill to win 21–14. Glattan listened to that game via the Mutual of Omaha radio network, and when Montana entered against Air Force, Glattan's heart sank. The freshman threw three fourth-quarter touchdown passes for a 31–30 win. Glattan remembered the tears streaming down his face, and the faces of his stunned classmates, as visions of “free” overnight weekend privileges until Christmas vanished with the obligatory postgame rendering of the third verse of the Air Force Song.

Chadwick's glass thumped as it hit the floor. His right hand dangled beside the chair, while the rest of his body slumped in it. His head rested on his right shoulder, the edge of his lips curved upward in a faint smile. Glattan quietly picked up the glass and put out the cigarette that smoldered on the coffee table after it had burned beyond the edge of the ash tray. Chadwick didn't move. Glattan clutched

the pistol, slowly stood up, and gingerly stepped among the newspapers toward the stairs. Chadwick remained motionless.

As he reached the staircase, Glattan saw that Emily sat on the top step, leaning against the wall. She did not move as he softly walked toward her. When he neared the top she stood up, abruptly turned, and walked into the living room. Glattan followed.

"I found these," she said, pointing to two pistols lying on the couch. "I'm pretty sure they are the only other ones he has."

Glattan saw a .38 and a .357 Magnum. "Jesus Christ," he whispered. "You can't keep these here!"

"So, where *do* I keep them?!" Her eyes brimmed.

"Um . . . I'll take them with me," he answered. He was not wild about the idea of keeping firearms in his car, which was a massive violation of cadet regulations, but he also knew that he couldn't leave the weapons any place that Chadwick might find them. Glattan could conceal the pistols with the green wool Army blanket he kept in the trunk.

Tears now trickled from the hazel eyes that stared into his. "You—you were wonderful tonight. If you hadn't come over, I don't know what I would have done. He's made vague references to suicide before, but tonight was the first time he's ever gotten out one of his guns."

"How often does he drink like this?" Glattan asked.

"Now it seems like all the time. It's been getting progressively worse. Mom can't tolerate it any longer. When he gets this way, she leaves."

"I never saw anything like this while we were dating."

"Of course you didn't—he was on his best behavior for you. You went to the top of his list when you started dating me."

"I'm afraid I'm at the opposite end of that list now."

"No—you're not. Couldn't you tell tonight that he still cares for you?"

Emily's eyes glinted. The question begged far more than it asked, and Glattan wondered what demon had possessed him that December night with her at dinner. "I'm not sure what I know," Glattan said. "I know that I was scared to death that your father was going to kill himself—and maybe that he was going to kill me, too—and—and I know that I was an incredible jerk the last time you saw me."

Emily turned away. She remained silent for more than a minute, and when she spoke she didn't look at him. "Dad's drinking wasn't good when he came back in '68, but we could tolerate it. When South Vietnam fell in '75, it wrecked him. It was like all the friends he had lost there had died for no purpose. Yesterday he learned that the status of one of his West Point classmates who was declared MIA

changed to KIA. Usually finding out that another friend is gone provokes a binge, sometimes a threat of suicide. Lately the binges have lasted much longer and gotten worse, and the suicide threats have become more—well, more urgent. But tonight's the first time he's pulled out a gun."

"Why didn't you call me before?" Glattan asked.

"I never really believed that he would follow through with the threat. And then—there was a part of me that saw how much it hurt him, how much he agonized—and sometimes I thought maybe it might be . . . it might be . . . the right answer."

"You can't mean that!" Glattan raised his voice and then became silent when he realized he might wake Chadwick.

"No, you're probably right," Emily said. "But I could empathize to some extent with his pain."

Glattan looked at the floor. "I guess the way I behaved in December was another reason you didn't call me," he whispered.

Emily slowly nodded.

"Well, I can't blame you for that," he said. His gaze returned to her eyes. "I am not a very nice person at times. I'm not sure I can explain why."

A loud snore erupted from the basement.

"I've got to get these pistols into the car," Glattan said, "and then I'll come back and help put him to bed."

"No need—he's too much trouble to get up the stairs. Anyway, Mom will not want him in the bedroom when she returns. I'll just put a blanket over him down there—it's what I usually do."

"Are you sure he'll stay asleep?"

"He never wakes up until morning after a binge—the snoring's normal."

"I want to help you."

She stared at him with a softness that he had almost forgotten. "Paul, thank God you came over," she quietly said. "I was petrified when I saw the gun—and then you got him to go to sleep. But now you'd better go. Captain Hoffman will be wondering what happened to you."

"Are you sure you can deal with him?" Glattan asked.

"Yes, I'm sure."

"Well, I want you to call me if you need to—I don't fly out until four o'clock tomorrow afternoon—and I could just as easily stay here."

"I'll be fine, Paul. You need to go home to your parents. They're expecting you."

“I guess you’re right. Will he—will he remember any of this?” Glattan wondered aloud.

“Hard to say. Usually bits and pieces—but it’s impossible to say what pieces will stay with him. I do hope tonight won’t mess up your courses with him.”

“That’s the least of my worries. I just want you to be OK.”

“I’ll be fine.”

“All right, Emily. If you need to call me in North Carolina, you’ve got my number. I’ll be at Ernie Black’s this coming weekend, but my parents will know how to reach me.”

“Don’t worry about me—and have a good leave.”

For an instant, Glattan thought about kissing her, but the thought passed. “Good night, Em,” he said. “Please take care.”

“Good night, Paul.”

Glattan walked toward his car, awkwardly clutching the three pistols. He felt his stomach cramp and his body shudder. He looked at his watch as he carefully put the guns in the trunk and covered them with the blanket. It was 1:45 a.m.—the CQ was probably going ape wondering where he was. Fortunately, calling Captain Hoffman should help a great deal—provided Glattan could get to the dorm without getting nabbed by the security police, who were likely out patrolling on the night before spring break.

As he drove the curving road leading to Vandenberg Hall, Glattan prayed that his sphincter would hold long enough for him to run to the latrine after he arrived at the lower parking lot. The upper lot, closest to the dorm, would certainly be full.

Suddenly his bowels lurched, and Glattan knew that he would never make it to the lower lot. He was about to drive by Air Academy Elementary School and quickly turned into the entrance. He got out of his car, pulled down his pants and underwear, and squatted as spurts of diarrhea darkened the pavement. Then he fell forward, catching himself on his hands and knees, and vomited violently. He stayed in that position for several minutes—his face inches away from the asphalt, and his naked butt pointed skyward while he tried to keep his feet and knees out of his shit. He considered just staying there all night. Finally, he wobbled upright and pulled up his underwear and trousers. His head throbbed. He climbed back into the Celica, reeking of shit and puke, and thanked God that the security police had not witnessed his loss of bodily control.

MARK CLODFELTER

As he drove toward the cadet area, making sure not to break the speed limit, Glattan turned on the radio. The opening strands of Elton John's "Funeral for a Friend/Love Lies Bleeding" echoed through the car. The song was one of Glattan's favorites ever since Barrow introduced him to the British pop star's music in return for a crash course on Beethoven.

Tonight, though, the combination of sorrowful organ and piano play that marked the beginning of the epic song proved too much. Tears fell on his putrid pants. He got out of the car and began the long trek to Vandenberg Hall.

Chapter 9

18 March 1977

Glattan stirred in his seat on the United 747 at Denver's Stapleton Airport. The last 15 hours were a blur. After arriving back in the squadron, he had called Captain Hoffman, saying that he helped resolve a domestic dispute in Douglass Valley, and Hoffman, thank God, did not ask for more details.

The details went to Barrow.

The roommate patiently listened to Glattan's description of events and then said, "You got an enormous shit sandwich to deal with, but there's no time to deal with it now. Think about what you want to do while you're on spring break—of course you know that I'm willing to help in any way I can."

"Thanks for that, Bareass. That means a lot."

"Hey—what's a roomo for?"

While Barrow's sympathy was satisfying, Thursday night dominated Glattan's thoughts as he plodded through Friday's classes. Gradually, though, the realization that he would soon be in Chapel Hill brightened his mood. If he needed an ideal spot to think through an agonizing problem, the Carolina campus was it—and he would be there in a matter of hours.

Glattan surveyed his surroundings on the enormous jet. Cadets headed to the East Coast filled virtually the entire aircraft. The most amazing aspect of the plane was a bar near the cabin by the staircase, where stewardesses passed out free beer and liquor. Once airborne, cadets flocked to the bar area and began drinking nonstop. Glattan's normal tendency would have been to order Jack and Coke, but after the ordeal the previous night, he had no desire to taste that concoction any time soon. After four Coors, he stumbled to his seat and passed out.



"Wake up, you dildo!" Jack Wiggins nudged Glattan out of his slumber. "We're in Chicago now—time to change planes!"

"Damn," said Glattan. "Thanks for making sure I made the flight to Raleigh."

"Have fun in Chapel Hill!"

"And you have fun in Philly!"

Glattan found the Raleigh gate as the aircraft began boarding. No 747 this time—just the standard 737. No matter. The plane was half full, he had a window seat, and no one sat in the seat next to him. He put his coat next to the window and his head on his coat. Before take-off, he was back to sleep.

At the sound of the wheels striking the runway in Raleigh, Glattan woke up once more. He was beyond groggy when he walked off the plane and stumbled as he saw his mom, dad, and sister waiting for him.

“Well, I made it!” he proclaimed as he angled toward his family.

“Yeah, you did,” said his father as he assessed his son’s degree of inebriation.

“Time to head to Chapel Hill!” Glattan announced.

“I’m not sure that’s a good idea,” his father stated.

“Why not?”

“Because I’m not sure that you’re able to drive there.”

“Ah, come on, Ernie’s waiting for me.”

“And he’s going to have to wait for you a while longer. Right now, you’re headed home with us.”



Glattan’s eyes fluttered as he rolled on his back in bed. Slowly they started to focus on the multitude of model airplanes hanging from the ceiling: a Sopwith Camel, Richtofen’s red Fokker triplane, Eddie Rickenbacker’s Spad S.XIII, the B-17 *Memphis Belle*, a B-24, the B-29 *Enola Gay*, and a Stuka.

Yep, he thought, I’m in my room—at home.

A framed print depicting the Battle of Yorktown hung behind his bed. Another print of Jacques Louis David’s *Napoleon Crossing the Alps at the St. Bernard Pass* appeared on a wall beside his bed, along with a copy of James Montgomery Flagg’s World War I poster of Uncle Sam saying, “I want YOU for U.S. Army.” On another wall, taped newspaper clippings from Carolina football and basketball victories covered every bit of space from floor to ceiling, including one Raleigh *News and Observer* photograph that Glattan loved: Carolina running back Don McCauley surrounded by a mob of enthusiastic fans on the field in Kenan Stadium after he had run for 270 yards in a 59–34 victory over Duke in 1970. A close examination of the picture revealed a beaming Glattan patting one of McCauley’s shoulder pads.

Bookshelves lined the wall across from the bed, along with a desk, a filing cabinet, and a chest of drawers. The majority of books were

military history or historical fiction, though novels by Tolstoy, Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe, Hermann Hesse, and Ayn Rand also appeared. Glattan was especially taken with Rand, having read *The Fountainhead*, *Anthem*, and his favorite, *Atlas Shrugged*. He had even made a presentation to his Chowan classmates in his junior English class on the “Virtue of Selfishness,” but he doubted Rand’s objectivist philosophy resonated with his peers—or if he fully understood it himself. Nonetheless, her values seemed to suit his Spartan high school lifestyle.

Another favorite was Anton Myrer’s *Once an Eagle*, which featured the indomitable Army officer Sam Damon pitted against rival Courtney Massengale, who relied on sycophantic charm to stay ahead of Damon in rank both before and during World War II. To Glattan’s delight the Academy’s military history core course included the novel as required reading. He recalled that during a visit to the history department as a Second Classman, Colonel Hartman, the department chairman, stopped him in the hall and asked, “Cadet Glattan, are you a Sam Damon?” Glattan responded that he hoped so.

The question nagged him throughout high school and at the Academy.

Did he have Damon’s remarkable courage, impeccable integrity, and steadfast self-discipline? Any man who measured himself by Damon’s standards was certain to fall short since Damon was not real—he was Myrer’s allegorical representation of all that was good in the American Army during four key decades of the twentieth century. Glattan, though, viewed Damon as the gold standard, and much of his behavior reflected his desire to achieve an unachievable goal.

A record player with attached speakers sat on the chest of drawers. Vinyl LP albums, all containing classical music, filled half of the bottom bookshelf, with Beethoven dominating. Glattan never forgot the time he first listened to the Ninth Symphony, on a cold winter day when he had the house to himself. Instead of playing the new record on his turntable, he went downstairs to his parents’ stereo cabinet in the family room to play it while he sat on the floor over a furnace vent next to an antique hutch—something that he often did while he waited for his mom to make breakfast on school days in the winter. When the “Ode to Joy” began in the fourth movement, Glattan got goose bumps.

He did every time he heard it thereafter.

Wagner, Tchaikovsky, and Brahms also filled the LP shelf; so too did Bruckner and Mahler. Glattan had never heard of the latter two before

listening to the classical radio station out of Norfolk, Virginia, which he could tune in with a long antenna wire he had stretched across a bedroom wall. Mahler's symphonies captivated Glattan. He often played them late into the night as he drifted off to sleep; his parents, whose bedroom was across the hall, condoned the playing because they also enjoyed the music, plus they believed it expanded his horizons. Little did they know that the first time Glattan heard the haunting opening strands of Mahler's First on the Norfolk radio station, after many previous unsuccessful attempts, he finally masturbated.

As Glattan scanned his room, he smelled bacon frying. Mom and Dad were making breakfast in the kitchen downstairs, and the delightful aroma confirmed that Glattan was indeed *at home*. Donning a pair of jeans and a Carolina sweatshirt, he headed downstairs.

The wooden stairs creaked, as they always did, but that was to be expected in a house built in 1836. When his parents moved from High Point to Chowan in 1960, the former plantation home served as a barn for drying tobacco. Glattan's mom—who worked part-time as an antique dealer—changed that, restoring the house to its antebellum splendor and making it a showplace.

The white, two-story house with a covered front porch and dark green shutters sported 11-foot ceilings downstairs, which helped keep it cool in the summertime despite eastern North Carolina's oppressive heat and humidity. The downstairs had no air conditioners; upstairs were two window units, one in the hallway that cooled his parents' and sister's rooms, and one in Glattan's room. In the elegant dining room downstairs, a six-foot gold-trimmed mirror reflected an antique mahogany Chippendale table, a set of eight matching chairs, and a cherry corner cupboard. More antiques filled the living room, including two Martha Washington chairs, a walnut loveseat, and old bookshelves filled with an array of first edition novels. An eighteenth-century Scottish grandfather clock, refinished by Glattan's maternal grandfather, stood in the main hall entryway. Antique copper utensils adorned aged wooden beams in the kitchen.

Glattan's parents had bought the house for a song, and his mom had transformed it. He loved every part of it, especially the "June 1836" completion date carved into the exterior of one of the home's four brick chimneys, the wavy glass windows, and the little bronze ship that rocked back and forth on bronze waves with each ticking second on the face of the grandfather clock.

“Somebody got wasted on the flight home yesterday!” Glattan’s 17-year-old sister, Sarah, greeted him as he walked into the kitchen.

“Bite me,” Glattan responded.

“You know, you never drank while you were in high school,” Glattan’s mom chimed in.

“No, I never felt the need,” Glattan stated.

“So the Academy made you drink?” Sarah prodded.

“Hey, you try getting a \$100,000 education crammed up your ass a nickel at a time and see how you react,” Glattan retorted.

“Apparently that \$100,000 did not include manners,” his mom said.

“Sorry,” Glattan stated. “The past two days were tough, getting ready for leave and all, and I guess I overdid it on the way back. The flight to Chicago gave free beer to the cadets on board.”

“Well, that didn’t mean that you had to drink it all,” his father added. “But I wasn’t going to let you drive to Chapel Hill last night in your condition. I’m afraid you’ll be forced to watch the Kentucky game with me this afternoon if that’s not too much of a problem.”

“Of course not, Dad,” Glattan smiled at his father. “That will be great.”



It would be nice to have Dad at home, Glattan mused, because that hadn’t been a normal condition until recently.

During the last two years of high school, Glattan saw his father only on weekends, and even weekends were no guarantee. His dad moved the family from High Point when Glattan was five years old because of an offer to become the pharmacist at one of the two drugstores that served the small town of Chowan. After working in the drugstore for five years, his father bought it. Yet his acumen as a businessman was inversely proportional to his skill as a pharmacist, and Bill Glattan was a superb pharmacist. Near the end of Paul’s sophomore year in high school, his father declared bankruptcy. That same day, he had his wife drive him to the Chowan bus station, which she did with 16-year-old Paul and 11-year-old Sarah sitting in the backseat. Upon arriving there, Bill got out of the Buick LeSabre, took a suitcase out of the trunk, handed Paul’s mom the keys to the drugstore, and boarded a bus that departed as soon as he stepped on.

William Glattan had seemed a worthwhile catch when they began dating, she a senior in high school and he a junior pharmacy major at Carolina. He had served in the Army Air Forces in World War II as an

air traffic controller on Guam, Tinian, and Saipan and had monitored the departure of the *Enola Gay* on its fateful mission to Hiroshima. Attending Carolina on the G.I. Bill after the war, he appeared to have a bright future as a pharmacist, while both her parents worked at a hosiery mill in High Point. She was not poor, but Bill offered the opportunity to improve her lifestyle. Moreover, he was decent looking, with piercing brown eyes and a six-foot tall athletic build; he was smart; and he was witty—always making her laugh when they went out.

They married in mid-March 1951, his senior year at Carolina. She had begun her freshman year at UNC Women's College in Greensboro as a business major instead of her desired focus on interior design because her mother said that a business major would pay better after graduation. But the economic advantages of marrying a pharmacist eclipsed those of a business degree from Women's College, so she dropped out. After a small private ceremony in her High Point home—she was an only child, as was Bill, whose mother had died in childbirth—they moved into Carolina's married student housing, a collection of Quonset huts near Kenan Stadium. Bill worked in a High Point neighborhood drugstore after graduating until the Chowan opportunity came nine years later. In the meantime, Paul arrived in 1954 and Sarah almost five years after that.

Paul thought it ironic, given his admission to the Air Force Academy, that his December 17th birthday was the same as the anniversary of the Wright brothers' first flight at Kitty Hawk. In all likelihood, he surmised, his birth was the result of his parents celebrating in the bedroom on the night of their third anniversary.

Glattan loved his dad but never truly understood how he could abandon the family after the loss of the drugstore. That his father would simply walk away from the family at the time of its greatest need—a predicament that Bill Glattan had inflicted on it—made no sense. When Paul was a boy, his father read him tales stressing honor, integrity, and courage and ensured he saw movies like *The Dawn Patrol* and *Casablanca*. Bill Glattan's abandonment of the family contradicted every value that he had tried to instill in his children.

The morning after Glattan's father left, the lawyer who processed the bankruptcy agreement met Glattan's mom at the drugstore: bankruptcy would not prevent the loss of the collateral used to secure the loan Bill obtained to buy the store. That revelation was devastating, since the collateral was the home in High Point that her father built next to his own—and gave her as a wedding present. She and Bill had

rented out the house when they moved to Chowan, and its loss meant even less income for the family. The lawyer suggested that she sell everything in the store to get whatever money she could, though he realized it would be a pittance of what the inventory was truly worth.

Although reeling from the double sting of Bill's departure and the loss of the High Point home, Elizabeth Glattan did not collapse. Instead, after leaving the lawyer she drove to the office of the *Chowan Sentinel*, the town newspaper that appeared on Tuesday and Friday each week. There, she took out an advertisement announcing that all merchandise in the drugstore would be on sale the next Saturday for 50 percent off—no questions asked.

She then went to Chowan's office supply store and bought a ream of butcher block paper and a package of colored markers, which she took back to the drugstore to make sale signs to tape on the store's front windows. After posting the signs, she methodically began examining all the merchandise to make sure the prices of all items were clearly marked. She also went to the storage room that contained a small quantity of extra inventory, brought the additional items to the main part of the store, and put prices on them that would guarantee a sale—knowing that the amounts she wrote would be reduced by half.

Next, she walked across Main Street to Chowan's other drugstore, told the pharmacist there what had transpired, and asked if he would like to purchase the prescription medications. The pharmacist walked back with her, looked over the drugs, but shook his head. Nonplussed, she telephoned the pharmacist in Anton, the small town eight miles from Chowan, which had only one drugstore. The Anton pharmacist knew Bill and was familiar with his store but could offer just \$100 for all the prescription medicine.

"I'll take it—God bless you," Glattan's mom replied.

Finally, she called Harold Robinson, Chowan's leading Black businessman. Chowan's population was two-thirds Black, and no one could succeed in town without support from it. After explaining her situation, she asked if Mr. Robinson might be interested in buying the drugstore's soda fountain. He said that he would give her \$50 for it, plus he would talk up the impending Saturday sale with others in Chowan's Black community to make sure that the word got out. At that, Elizabeth Glattan choked back "Thank you so much" as a tear ran down her cheek.

By 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning, when Elizabeth, Paul, and Sarah Glattan arrived to begin the sale, a three-block-long line of potential

customers stretched from the drugstore's front door to the Belk's that marked the end of Chowan's business district. Hundreds of people, Black and White, quickly filled the store. Glattan's mom manned one of the two cash registers, while Glattan manned the other. Meanwhile, Sarah did her best to keep order and good cheer by walking up and down the lines asking buyers if they had found everything that they were looking for, and if they were happy with the prices. Not until 5:00 p.m., with many shelves completely bare and the rest almost so, did shoppers begin to trickle away.

Glattan was drained. His hands and arms ached from punching the keys of the manual cash register and changing money, while his feet and legs throbbed from standing on the tile floor for nine straight hours. Sarah sat on one of the stools at the soda fountain with her head cradled in her folded arms on the countertop, sound asleep. Glattan looked across the store at his mom and saw that she was staring in his direction. When his eyes met hers she nodded and gave him a faint smile. "What a hero," Glattan thought. "What a hero."

In the days that followed, Sarah took her father's absence especially hard. She was "Daddy's Girl," and, despite the upbeat attitude she displayed at the drugstore sale, she hurt terribly inside. She ate little and slept fitfully; the trauma she endured manifested itself on the exterior in her failure to do any schoolwork and in miserable grades. Indeed, Glattan's mom received a telephone call from Sarah's fifth-grade teacher, saying that Sarah was performing dismally in class and isolating herself from her friends, refusing to participate in any group activities.

Still anguished by her husband's departure, Elizabeth Glattan was not about to allow her grief to wreck her children's lives. While she displayed affection for Bill and had learned to love him during the marriage, her children were her *life*. She had considered leaving Bill after three years of marriage had produced a minimal return on the investment to improve her means. Yet after Paul was born that thought disappeared. The joy she received from being a mother was limitless, and it only increased after the birth of Sarah. Now, her husband's abandonment threatened her children's well-being.

That was intolerable.

Elizabeth Glattan telephoned Bill's lawyer. "My guess is that you're the only person on earth who knows where my husband is right now," she said. "If you know how to reach him, please do so, and let him know that he's going to lose his daughter if he doesn't come home to see her."

That evening the telephone rang. Glattan's mom answered it.

"Beth, I'm sorry," Bill Glattan began. "I'm in Rocky Mount doing relief work. I didn't know what else to do."

"Well," Elizabeth Glattan answered, "if you care about your daughter, you'll come home when you get some time off. If she doesn't see you soon, I don't think that she's going to make it."

"What do you mean?"

"She's not eating, not sleeping, not doing any of her schoolwork, and not associating with any of her friends. You hurt her terribly. You hurt me terribly—you hurt us all terribly."

"I'm sorry—I was so ashamed—I didn't think that you'd want me around after the mess I had created."

"Just because you lost the drugstore, did you think that Sarah would love you any less?"

Bill Glattan paused. "I guess I thought she might—I thought you all might—I'm a failure, after all. I couldn't stay in Chowan; there was no work for me there. I had to do something that would at least bring in *some* money."

"But why didn't you *tell* us what you were going to do and where you were going? How did you think that we would react to you leaving?"

"I guess I really didn't consider it."

"No, you didn't consider a lot of things. But if you don't start to consider them now, your daughter's going to keep getting worse. You've got to come home, Bill, and start doing that on a regular basis."

"Yes . . . you're right. I'll be home this weekend."

Thereafter, Bill Glattan came home most Friday nights and left for work as a relief pharmacist late on Sunday afternoons. He traveled throughout much of eastern North Carolina—Rocky Mount, Goldsboro, Williamston, Tarboro, Edenton, Elizabeth City, and Jacksonville. When he could rent a low-rate apartment for five days, he did; otherwise, he lived during weekdays in dingy hotels. Ultimately, he concocted a work schedule enabling him to be in Chowan on weekends. Sarah's health steadily improved, though she still endured nightmares. Screams of "NO! NO! NO!" often woke Paul's mother, who would rush to Sarah's bedroom, clutching her daughter, stroking her hair while rocking her to sleep.

If there was any doubt before, there was none now—Elizabeth Glattan was the head of the Glattan family, and she refused to let her husband's demise tarnish Sarah or Paul. The drinking binges that had terrified Paul as a boy vanished; Elizabeth never drank again after the

loss of the drugstore. She stopped the antique business that she ran in a barn behind the house. The sporadic sales didn't justify the shop's expenses, so she sold off much of the merchandise to a larger dealer in Wilson. She then applied for a job at Belk's in the women's clothing section. Within a month, she became Belk's top earner—assuring that neither Paul nor Sarah would hurt for clothes or school supplies. She also got a part-time job at Chowan's jewelry store on Main Street. Her instinctive sense of fashion and design paid dividends—it seemed that everyone in Chowan wanted her thoughts on what looked good or was appropriate. And despite her financial hardships, Elizabeth's friends remained close allies and frequently visited, helping to restore a sense of normalcy to the Glattan family.

The situation was anything but normal.

Although no one at school said anything to Paul or Sarah about their father's absence, evasive looks and hesitant actions from friends and teachers told them that everyone knew.

Glattan thought that what had happened somehow made him less equal in the eyes of his classmates, and he imagined that his sister felt the same. He surmised that his mom felt the same way about her friends, despite their support. He guessed that everyone who knew members of the Glattan family pitied them—and that disgusted him. Glattan had always worked hard at school but now had an extra impetus to do so—not just to show that he was unsullied by his father's failing but also to demonstrate that he could outperform anyone else.

From that point on, he determined to attend the Air Force Academy.

Obtaining a service academy appointment was a long shot, to be sure, and his father's fiasco didn't help matters. But his mom embraced the notion. She took her son to meet business and political leaders (all Democrats) not just in Chowan but throughout Pettigrew County and eastern North Carolina. At each stop, Paul gave a memorized soliloquy: he wanted to serve his country; he wanted to learn to fly; the best way he could combine those two pursuits was as an Air Force officer, preferably a fighter pilot; the Air Force Academy would provide him with the best foundation to become an officer; he aimed to serve as an officer for a full 30-year career; that time would allow him to make a real contribution to the Air Force and the nation. The impassioned delivery never failed to make an impression: the recipient of Glattan's monologue inevitably stood up, vigorously shook his hand, and promised to send an endorsement to North Carolina's congressional representative from the district.

Glattan guessed that he must have made between 30 and 40 visits during his junior year at Chowan High. The week before Christmas his senior year, the telephone rang.

“Is this Paul Glattan?” the voice said.

Glattan responded that it was.

“I’m Congressman Walter Jones,” the voice continued, “and I’m pleased to inform you that you have my nomination for an appointment to the US Air Force Academy.”

“I am thrilled to hear that, sir,” Glattan answered. “I will do my best to serve my country as an Air Force officer.”

Glattan’s mom sensed the nature of the call.

“That was Congressman Jones,” Glattan said. “I got the Academy appointment.”

Elizabeth Glattan fell to her knees sobbing.

Her son thought to himself, “She will not have to worry about paying for my college.”



Paul settled into one of the wingback chairs while his father sat down on the family room couch.

“Do you want to listen to Curt Gowdy and John Wooden call the game?” Glattan’s father asked.

“Is that a serious question, Dad?”

“Well, I just thought I’d check. That’s who NBC has as announcers. But I’m guessing you’d like me to turn down the sound and turn up Woody on the radio.”

“Without a doubt.”

Bill Glattan winked at his son.

As his father got up to turn on the radio and mute the TV volume, Paul could see out of the corner of his eye into the kitchen where his mother prepared dinner for after the game. Sarah sat at the kitchen table, reading a magazine. She was content, enjoying her final year of high school and looking forward to college at Carolina as a drama major.

Bill Glattan was largely responsible for the change in his daughter’s demeanor.

In the spring of her sophomore year in high school—Paul’s Third Class year at the Academy—a third drugstore had opened in Chowan. Bill had applied for a job as one of its pharmacists and gotten the position. His return to steady living at home erased the despair Sarah exhibited after the loss of the drugstore. The nightmares disappeared.

She even began participating in productions with Chowan's Little Theater Company, which Bill Glattan attended religiously each night his daughter performed, no matter how many times he had seen the show.

"Do you think we can do it?" Paul asked his father.

"It's going to be tough," Bill Glattan answered. "Phil Ford's got that hyperextended elbow from the Notre Dame game, Walter Davis has three screws in the broken index finger on his shooting hand and has the finger taped to another, and, of course, Tommy LaGarde's been on crutches since late February. And face it, Kentucky is never a slouch team."

"It's a tall mountain to climb, but that doesn't mean that Dean and the boys can't climb it," Paul assessed.

Bill Glattan winked at his son again.

Paul smiled back. Watching with Dad would be like old times, when he and his father watched games together on TV while Paul was in high school.

Except that it really wouldn't be.

During Paul's last two years at Chowan High, Bill Glattan was gone much of the time.

Paul was happy that his father could finally live at home again for seven days a week. But six years after he and Sarah had sat stunned in the backseat of the Buick, watching his dad board a bus headed to God-knew-where, he still did not know what to think of his father's behavior.

It made no sense.

Woody's voice indicated that the game was about to start. Deft shooting in the first half seemed to bear out the Glattans' optimism, as the Tar Heels took a 53-41 lead at intermission. In the second half, though, Carolina's array of injuries began to take its toll. Phil Ford had four fouls, scored only two points, and spent most of the game on the bench holding an ice pack on his right elbow. With the Heels clinging to a 59-54 lead with 16 minutes remaining, Dean Smith signaled Four Corners to a chorus of boos in Landover's Cole Field House.

"Let 'em boo," said Paul. "This isn't the NBA. There's no shot clock, and Dean can run the Four Corners all game long."

Carolina's backup point guard, senior John Kuester, orchestrated the offense in Ford's absence, baffling the Wildcat players. At one point, Tar Heel center Rich Yonakor, filling in for the injured LaGarde, stood with the ball near midcourt and motioned for a confused Kentucky defender to "come get me." When the Wildcat player tried, Yonakor hurled a backdoor pass to Carolina freshman Mike O'Koren,

who cut behind his man for a layup and a 65–55 Tar Heel lead. From that point, Carolina rolled to a 79–72 win, nabbing the Heels the 1977 East Regional Championship and a spot in the Final Four.

“Lovely, just lovely!” Paul screamed as he grabbed his father when the horn sounded.

“It was great watching it with you,” Bill Glattan said.

“Yeah, it was, Dad. Truly special.”

Chapter 10

20 March 1977

Paul Glattan's butt hurt as he sat in the wooden pew of Chowan's First Methodist Church. Despite weighing 140 pounds as an Academy senior compared to the 125 he weighed as a senior in high school, the extra pounds did not equate to sufficient padding for his behind. He squirmed as the minister continued the sermon.

At USAFA, the only times Glattan attended chapel—aside from Cadet Chorale performances of Handel's *Messiah*—were as a Basic Cadet. Chapel then was an hour-and-a-half reprieve from upper-class torture; prayers for deliverance went unanswered. His religious skepticism intensified while a cadet, especially in the aftermath of the sternum injury.

He didn't want to go to church when he returned to Chowan, but he knew that his mom wanted him to.

"You grew up in the Methodist Church, and now that you're home, you should be there," Elizabeth Glattan said.

"OK, Mom, I'll go, but none of my high school friends will be there—they're all away in real colleges now. They had their spring breaks during the second week of March, and now they're back in school. The Academy has the latest spring break in the nation, and no one else is home."

"So you don't want to see the 'old people' who taught you in Sunday School? Or hear the sermon from Dr. Smithson?"

The Reverend Dr. Smithson had written Glattan a glowing letter endorsing his application for an Academy nomination. Dr. Smithson also provided lengthy counsel after 13-year-old Glattan read the New Testament, focusing on the Book of Revelation, and was convinced that the Apocalypse was imminent. Smithson persuaded him that most of Revelation was written in code to confuse the Romans persecuting the Jews.

"Yeah, I said I'd go, and I will," Glattan replied, though he knew that her desire to have him in church had nothing to do with his Methodist upbringing. She wanted him there so that she could show him off—so that Chowan could see her son on the eve of his graduation—a son who had succeeded at the Academy despite all the obstacles that he—and his family—had overcome.

Everyone in Chowan who knew Elizabeth Glattan knew that her son had made the Academy's dean's list every semester.

"If the minimum wasn't good enough, it wouldn't be the minimum," an Academy dictum stated. Glattan repeated that phrase many times and thought that it fit perfectly in regard to USAFA's military aspects.

But not when it came to academics.

Academic performance was the key to his future as an Air Force officer—or so Glattan believed. When it came to hitting the books, "maximum effort" was his subconscious battle cry. His cumulative grade point average responded: by the end of the 1976 fall semester it stood at 3.52. The rise in his GPA was inversely proportional to his concern for all else, with the exception of Carolina basketball.

Or was it?

As Dr. Smithson spoke about redemption, Glattan's mind drifted to Emily and the possibility of saving their relationship. Does she still love me, he wondered? Do I still love her? Is dating her again a possibility? What about Chadwick? How would he treat me in class now? Such thoughts consumed him until the Reverend Dr. said, "Amen."

As Glattan walked out of the church with his parents and sister, he stopped to speak to Dr. Smithson, who waited by the door to greet the members of the congregation as they departed.

"It was a wonderful sermon," Glattan said.

"Thanks very much for the kind words, Paul," Smithson replied. "It's great to see you again. Your mother has told me about how well you're doing at the Academy."

"Well, Mom likes to brag about her son, as all mothers do."

"True, but all sons have not accomplished everything that you have. You've made Chowan—and the Methodist Church in particular—very proud."

"Thank you, sir."

Glattan turned away from the minister toward the steps leading to the church's front door and saw a line of parishioners waiting to speak to him. He smiled as he walked down the steps to shake their hands, noticing another throng of Methodists standing around an animated girl with butt-length auburn hair.

Sherry Renaldi.

After speaking with the well-wishers, Glattan made his way to the circle surrounding her. She noticed his arrival and smiled at him.

"Paul—I had no idea you'd be here."

"It's our spring break—very late compared to everyone else's."

“Well, I’m thrilled to see you. I don’t know if you’ve heard, but I’m engaged.”

Glattan had no clue. He knew Sherry had graduated from Carolina with a double major in French and business and studied as an exchange student at the Sorbonne during the first semester of her senior year. The last he heard, she worked at Peugeot headquarters in Paris.

“That’s—that’s great news, Sherry. I hadn’t heard.”

“Come by my house at 2:00 today and we’ll chat—we’ve got some catching up to do.”

“I’d like that—I’ll see you this afternoon.”



As Glattan drove to Sherry’s home, he wondered what they would say to one another. He had not seen her since the unmitigated disaster at the Academy’s Valentine Ball. Afterward, he thought that any chance of a relationship was hopeless, knowing that he was to blame for the horrible weekend. Nonetheless, he believed that it would be good to see her after two years—until her visit to USAFA, he had always enjoyed their discussions.

Glattan knocked and Sherry opened the door.

“Come inside,” she stated. “It’s quite a surprise to see you.”

“And you as well—it’s been a while.”

“Yes.” She looked at the floor.

“My behavior was horrible the last time I saw you—I do hope you’ll forgive me for that weekend.”

Sherry stared into his eyes. “Well, we were both pretty stressed out—I had just returned from the semester in Paris and was facing graduation and the job hunt, so I’m not sure how wonderful my behavior was then either.”

“Far better than mine, that’s for sure. And it looks like the job hunt turned out very well.”

“Seriously—it led to my engagement. Come into the living room and let’s sit down and talk. Would you like a glass of wine or perhaps some sweet tea?”

“A glass of tea would be sensational.” Glattan fondly remembered the sweet tea that Sherry’s mom made; it was the best in Chowan. In Colorado, sweet tea was nonexistent.

As they sat, Sherry’s mom appeared with two glasses of tea. “It’s good to see you, Paul. Your mother talks nonstop about how well

you're doing at the Academy, and we were all so worried about you when you had to go to the hospital a few years ago."

"Thanks for all the prayers, Mrs. Renaldi. I have no doubt they helped," Glattan lied. "I think they helped me survive the Academy's academics as well," he lied again. "But I hear that Sherry has some great news herself."

"She does," Mrs. Renaldi replied. "And I'll let her tell it. It's good to see you again, Paul," she said, closing the living room door.

"It's funny," Sherry said. "I was so stressed out about getting a job, and that job has changed my life."

"I thought you were working at Peugeot in Paris?"

"Yeah. A month before graduation they contacted me and asked if I'd be interested in a position in their Paris headquarters. Carolina's French department and Business School made all the difference."

"But how much do you know about cars?"

"Far more now than when I began—then I knew zip. That didn't matter, though. They wanted someone who understood marketing, profit margins, and the like—and who could speak French and English. I'm generally present on most of the deals involving North America or the UK."

"Whoa—that's heavy-duty!"

"Yeah—I guess so. But the best thing about it is that it allowed me to meet Jim—my fiancé. He's 28 and a Canadian—I met him six months ago when I visited our Three-Rivers plant near Quebec, and now he's been transferred to Paris. In some ways, he reminds me of you, with his love of history and culture—he even likes classical music."

Glattan glanced away.

"The way I used to be," he responded.

"Oh, you can't tell me that you don't still love Beethoven and Brahms or that you're not thrilled by studying history. You're still a history major, aren't you?"

"Yep—and I still listen to Ludwig van and his cohorts."

"Well, see, I'm right."

"Only to a point. Do you remember what you told me in Colorado?"

"About the Academy changing you?"

"I'm afraid you were on the money. The only reason I went to church today was so that Mom could show me off—and, to a large extent, I felt good about that."

"Don't think you were the only one smiling to have a crowd around them today."

“What do you mean?”

“I know what it’s like to leave here and return triumphant. I didn’t leave North Carolina to go to college the way that you did, but I was thrilled to get the job that took me away from Chowan and even more thrilled to meet Jim. We’ll have the wedding in Paris, and I couldn’t care less whether anyone from Chowan can make it.”

“Hmmm. I’ve always known that Chowan wasn’t exactly your cup of tea, but you never really seemed upset about it while you were in high school.”

“Ha. You think that you’re the only one who can bury emotions? I remember when I was a senior at Chowan High and your father lost his drugstore, and that’s what you did then, wasn’t it? You buried the pain, right?”

“Yeah, but—”

“I assure you I wanted to leave here as much as you did—and then return and show *them* what I’ve accomplished—though who in the hell *they* are I can’t even say—certainly no one whose opinion I would even take the time to listen to, much less take seriously.

“But—like it or not, our roots are here. We can accept that—and then ignore it.”

Glattan thought about that comment. “I’m happy you appear headed toward Nirvana.”

“Hopefully. I guess we’ll find out soon enough whether I get there. As for you, you got out of here, but the place you went has been a dual-edged sword.”

“That’s a pretty accurate description. The question is, has it been worth it?”

“Well, you tell me. Is it any better since I saw you two years ago?”

“Hard to say. I’ve got a car now, so I can escape every now and then. I like my courses more now that I can choose some of them. I like my classmates, especially the guys I’m with in 21st Squadron. But—overall—I still feel it’s been a minus, not a plus. I can be one callous son of a bitch on occasion, as you well know—and I’m afraid that’s still the case.”

Glattan sighed, then stared at Sherry.

“What have you done, Paul?”

He described the relationship with Emily, emphasizing how he had treated her on the eve of taking her father’s courses.

“At least you didn’t try to fuck her and forget her,” Sherry said.

“I deserve that.”

"I thought so too." Sherry's eyes twinkled. "But seriously—how do you feel about her now? Do you regret what you did?"

Glattan related the night before spring break.

"Jesus Christ, Paul! What are you going to do when you go back?"

"I honestly don't know. I never thought I'd have to deal with something like that. Chadwick's still my instructor, so I'll continue to see him until the end of the semester. Funny thing, I admired the hell out of him before last Thursday night."

"And now you don't?"

"I'm—I'm not sure. The man is brilliant—absolutely brilliant—and fearless. I can only imagine what he really did in Vietnam."

"That corrupt war?"

"He wouldn't disagree with you."

"He doesn't sound like your typical Air Force officer."

"He's anything but typical, which is one reason I've loved learning from him. But after Thursday night, I'm not sure what to think."

"Well, if nothing else, he's revealed himself to be human. He's suffering just like the rest of us."

"But to think about killing himself?"

"Haven't you ever thought about leaving the planet?"

Glattan remembered how he felt in the aftermath of his surgery. "You can't tell me that you've thought about that sort of thing."

"You'd be surprised. My life has not been a bed of rose petals, especially while I lived in Chowan. My family's not wealthy, but we're relatively well-off, and 'friends' envied our money. Other 'friends' envied my looks, while a lot of guys thought that my looks meant 'come take me.' Don't think for a minute that you were the first person who tried to get in my pants."

Glattan was silent for a while. "But it seems you've overcome all that. Chadwick continues to suffer from stuff that occurred in the past."

"And you don't?"

"Touché."

"It sounds to me like you might actually be able to benefit one another."

"How's that? He's a lieutenant colonel after all, and I'm just a Firstie cadet."

"Yeah, well, it seems to me that you've already established a fairly 'intimate' relationship. Aside from the episode on Thursday night, you see him several times a week, right?"

"Uh huh."

“And you talk about ethical issues as much as you talk about military ones?”

“Yep.”

“Well, if what happened on Thursday night doesn’t have to do with ethics, then I don’t know what does.”

Glattan pondered the observation. “Yeah, I guess we do have more in common than just academic interests.”

“And what about Emily?”

“What do you mean?”

“Is this all about you and her dad, or is she also in the mix? After all, you let her go because of her dad, and then you saw her again—granted, under grim circumstances—because of him.”

“I—I—don’t know.”

“Well, you need to figure that out. From what you told me, you loved being with her after meeting her at that symposium, and then your work ethic told you that you couldn’t handle simultaneously seeing her and doing the work that her father’s courses required. Really? What’s your GPA now?”

“3.52.”

“My God, Paul! What more proof do you need? You spent three months with this girl, and your grades didn’t suffer—in fact, they went up—and then you threw a promising relationship away?!”

Glattan silently sipped his tea.

“You asked me whether you’ve changed. If this is going to be the approach you take, then my answer is yes, and for the worse.” Sherry paused. “But I also don’t think this is the end of the story. The Paul Glattan I know—that I’ve always known—doesn’t forsake basic values like kindness and sympathy.

“I know—perhaps better than most because I saw you there during a dreadful time—the impact that the Academy has had on you. Despite what I said then, I do *not* believe that place has stripped away your basic values. There’s no doubt that it’s challenged your fundamental beliefs, but I believe it’s only masked the values I first noticed when we took that trip to Europe together when I was a rising Chowan High senior. Those beliefs still exist inside you—go back to them.”

“What about Emily?”

“Yes, indeed, what *about* Emily? Despite what you did to her, do you still want to see her?”

“I—I don’t know.”

“That depends on whether you care about her, doesn’t it? And you need to think about that *a lot*.”

“No wonder I believed I was in love with you,” Glattan said. “Even though you’re two years older than me, and our contact was limited, I always knew that you could dissect me better than anyone else! Thank God for you, Sherry.”

“I’m not sure that God’s happy with either you or me—if ‘He’ even exists. But I’ll take the compliment. I’ll always care for you, Paul.”

“And I will for you. You know, if you ever get tired of the Peugeot gig, I think you’ve got a job waiting as a shrink.

“Is Emily the key to my salvation?” he mused aloud. “Maybe. I honestly don’t know . . . I tried to help her with her dad, but—at the same time—I want to hear what her dad has to say to me. I think that he still has a lot to teach me that would make me a better person.”

“Yeah, that makes sense, but again, what about *Emily*? Does having her father as a professor mean that you can’t see her?”

“I just don’t know. She knows me—perhaps even better than you do—and I don’t want to lose that connection. The only thing I really know is that I’m suffering out there—and she is too—and that perhaps we can make each other suffer less.”

Chapter 11

21 March 1977

Glattan woke up late on Monday (which was heavenly), walked downstairs, and of course Mom had breakfast waiting for him—blueberry pancakes, complete with Carolina sausage.

“How was your time with Sherry?” she asked.

“It was good, Mom—she’s engaged and getting married soon.”

“Really? That seems pretty fast.”

“Not really. She graduated from Carolina two years ago.”

“She couldn’t have waited for you?”

“Come on, Mom—that was never going to work. She thought well enough of me, but she was not going to marry an Air Force officer—that simply didn’t compute. I’m just happy to have her as a friend—someone who knows me well and who will always be willing to listen to me during tough times.”

“That sounds like BS to me.”

“Well, you can think of it that way, but she’s never going to be someone I dislike.”

“You paid for her trip two years ago on Valentine’s Day Weekend.”

“Yeah, so?”

“I think she should’ve appreciated that.”

“You mean she should have slept with me?”

“That’s not what I said.”

“But you meant it, didn’t you?”

“I just wanted you to be better able to deal with the situation that you faced then.”

“So she should have taken me to bed?”

“That’s not what I said. But—”

“Jesus, Mom, that was not the answer to what I’ve had to deal with.”

Though he thought to himself it might have been *exactly* the answer.

Glattan mopped up the last of the syrup. “I think I’ll go into town today and see Brett Bennett at the *Chowan Sentinel*. We’ve written a few times, but I haven’t seen him since I left for the Academy.”

Broad-shouldered Brett Bennett was the *Sentinel’s* editor in chief. Early in Glattan’s junior year in high school, the *Sentinel’s* sports editor received a job offer from the *Raleigh News and Observer*, causing Bennett to scramble for a writer who could cover Chowan High sports. Glattan was sports editor of the *Tiger Clause*, Chowan High’s monthly

student newspaper, and Bennett had read much of his work. He offered Glattan the job of writing up Chowan High's major sports—football, basketball, and baseball—for 10 cents a column inch.

Glattan decided to make the most of a chance to write for money. Given the terms of employment, his game descriptions were epic—the summary of a football game mentioned every series by both teams, including every completed Chowan pass, every Chowan run of more than five yards, every fumble or interception. Chowan touchdowns often received three or four paragraphs. Moreover, Glattan's lead paragraph always began with an applicable (he thought) historical analogy. *Sentinel* readers learned a high-scoring affair resembled the gunfight at the O.K. Corral, a low-scoring one mirrored Nathanael Greene's strategy during the American Revolution, and a disappointing loss could actually prove beneficial like the Spartan sacrifice at Thermopylae.

At the end of each month, Glattan walked into Bennett's office with a ruler and clippings of his articles. Bennett did the measuring that determined the total amount of the paycheck, along with Glattan's gas receipts for away games. The gas payment was a special bonus—Glattan drove his Ford, carrying his hand-picked photographer from the *Tiger Clause* staff, but that still left the backseat empty. The football team bus had only enough room for players, coaches, and managers—not cheerleaders. They had to ride *somewhere*, and since Glattan always attended away games, he usually had three of Chowan High's prettiest girls sitting in his backseat. Bennett was unaware of the added benefit, though he would have smiled had he known. What mattered to him was how well Glattan covered the Chowan Tigers. No doubt, the articles were *long*. But readers seemed to relish the details, especially since they highlighted the exploits of sons/grandsons/nephews/cousins/boyfriends. Bennett even had readers tell him that they liked the historical references.

At the beginning of Glattan's senior year of high school, Bennett made Glattan the *Sentinel's* sports editor, complete with a *real* monthly paycheck—no longer was he paid by the column inch. Every day after school he went to the *Sentinel's* office and worked until 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., then headed home, had dinner, and studied for the next day's classes. Instead of finding the schedule exhausting, he found it exhilarating—he thrived on his freedom to cover sports in the way that *he* chose, to identify human-interest stories that would appeal to Chowan readers.

One of those human-interest stories was almost his undoing.

In December of Glattan's senior year, Chowan's quarterback, Joe "Long Bomb" Johnson, received a full scholarship to play football at Auburn. Chowan usually had decent football players, but, given that the school played in North Carolina's 3A high school division, it rarely attracted attention from premier programs, much less a dominant Southeastern Conference school like Auburn. Glattan was thrilled for Joe and thought that his classmate's accomplishment certainly merited a human-interest write-up in the *Sentinel*. Bennett agreed, allowing him to have a banner headline on the first page of the sports section announcing Long Bomb's accomplishment. Glattan even conducted a formal interview with Long Bomb, quoting it extensively in the article. The lead began, "For the first time in Chowan High history, the school has produced a Division I scholarship player."

The statement was incorrect.

On the Wednesday afternoon that the article appeared, a phone call came into the *Sentinel* office asking to speak to the sports editor. Glattan answered it.

"Is this Paul Glattan?" the male voice asked.

"Yes, it is."

"You said that Long Bomb Johnson was the first Chowan player to ever receive a Division I scholarship."

"Yes, I did."

"That's not true. My son, R. J. Smith, a defensive back at Chowan, went to NC State on a full scholarship in 1970."

"I—I—didn't know that, sir."

"You should have done your homework, son."

Glattan sat frozen with the phone in his hand. "Jesus Christ," he thought. "How could I have been so stupid?"

Long Bomb Johnson was White. R. J. Smith was Black.

Glattan was not a racist—at least, he didn't think that he was. His write-ups lauded the achievements of Chowan's Black and White athletes alike. Yet the vast majority of his close high school friends were in the "accelerated group"—a class of 25 students, 22 of whom were White, in a high school that was almost 70 percent Black. In 1969, Pettigrew County's three high schools—two Black, one White—merged into a single school dubbed Chowan High. The "accelerated group" was a concession to White town leaders who demanded that county commissioners assure as much segregation as possible in the

new arrangement, backing their argument with the results of standardized testing at the new school. Their logic prevailed, though Chowan High's racial tension was minimal. Combining the three high schools produced sports teams superior to many others in their conference—Chowan won the 3A state football championship in 1970 and was runner-up for the 3A basketball title in 1971. Those accomplishments minimized the racial friction from the high school merger. Glattan thought the oft-stated observation regarding Chowan football was on the money: "If you want to rob a store in town, do it on the Friday night of a home football game—everyone in Chowan, police included, will be sitting in the stands watching the game."

Glattan's gut churned after the call from R. J. Smith's dad. He hung up the phone, sitting with his head in his hands for several minutes.

Then he walked into Bennett's office and explained what had happened.

"So—you didn't do the research that you should have done?" Bennett queried.

"No—I didn't," Glattan answered.

"What do you think you should do?"

"I—I don't know. I guess we need to write a correction."

"No—you need to write a correction."

Glattan froze—and then nodded.

Glattan's correction, appearing in the *Sentinel's* Friday edition, acknowledged his failure to adequately research the list of Chowan's football graduates. It stressed that R. J. Smith was the first graduate to receive a football scholarship from a Division I college. The correction concluded, "Chowan High was created in 1969 as the merger of three Pettigrew County high schools. Two of those high schools were predominantly Black, and one was predominately White. I am a White writer, and I know many of the White Tiger players well. It is my fault that I do not know the Black Tiger players better. I aim to correct that deficiency, starting at this very moment, and will do everything that I can to represent ALL Tiger players in the manner they deserve."

Glattan received praise for the correction from readers Black and White. Bennett kept him as sports editor.



As Glattan drove to the *Sentinel* office, he reflected on his relationship with Bennett. In many respects, Bennett had become a father figure—he was in the office every day, Monday through Friday, while

at home Glattan often had no father to turn to. His résumé was impressive—he received the Silver Star in Korea as a Marine company commander, returned to Chowan with his Carolina journalism degree, and worked his way up to editor in chief of the newspaper. The *Sentinel* seemed to be his second home. Glattan recalled arriving in the office at midnight after an away basketball game to find Bennett behind his desk reviewing articles, saying, “So what are you going to do to make this write-up 50 column inches?”

Bennett’s edits paid dividends at the Academy, where Glattan tested out of his only USAFA core course, the senior core requirement in English composition. That hole in his schedule allowed him to take Classical Music Appreciation, by far his easiest A.

“Paul, what the hell are you doing here?” Bennett yelled as Glattan walked into his office. The tall, burly editor got up from his desk, grabbing Glattan in a bear hug.

“I’m on spring break, Brett, and I thought it was only appropriate that I stop by to see you.”

“Well, I’m damn glad you did! You look great—you’re on the eve of graduation now, aren’t you?”

“Yep, sure am—in another three months, I’ll be a second lieutenant.”

“God Almighty—time flies!”

“I must admit that it’s moving far faster than it did when I first arrived.”

“Yeah, I heard you got sick then—everything OK now?”

“Yep, I’m fine. The docs out there patched me up, and I’m as good as new.”

“Glad to hear it—despite all the talk about the ineptitude of military doctors, I’ve found they usually know what they’re doing.”

Glattan knew Bennett had the Purple Heart to go with his Silver Star, the result of a Chinese grenade that put shrapnel in both legs.

“I certainly can’t complain about the medical care I received,” Glattan responded. “Those guys saved my life.”

“Well, sit down and tell me how you’re doing.”

Glattan rehashed many of his Academy experiences, noting that serving CQ reminded him of Bennett’s approach to running the *Sentinel*. “Are you still working here after midnight?” he asked.

“No, I gave that up a couple of years ago after Lorraine was born. I’ve got a higher priority mission now, and the paper seems to be doing just fine without the extra attention.”

“Perhaps I could take a lesson . . .” Glattan relayed his abandonment of Emily.

Bennett shook his head. “That doesn’t sound like you, Paul. When you worked here you managed to juggle schoolwork with the *Sentinel* pretty effectively. I went to your Chowan High graduation. You were valedictorian, right?”

“Yeah.”

“Well, I have no doubt that the Academy’s a demanding place. But you’ve dealt with pressure before. What’s so special about this Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick?”

Glattan thought about mentioning the previous Thursday night but decided against it. “He’s the best—and the toughest—professor in the history department, and I don’t want to let him down with mediocre work.”

“I can’t imagine that any work you’ve done for him has been mediocre.”

“No, it hasn’t thus far, but I didn’t want to take the chance that it might become that way—grades still count for grad school slots and career-field assignments.”

“I thought all you Zoomies got to be pilots if you wanted to.”

“True, assuming we make it through pilot training. I just don’t see flying as the end-all be-all of my career.”

“An Air Force Academy grad who doesn’t want to ‘fly and fight’? I’d have given my left nut to have been out of the mud in Korea.”

“Yeah, I suppose so. But that’s another thing about Chadwick—he’s a hero from Vietnam. Not a hero like you with the Silver Star and Purple Heart, but in the sense that he identified the buildup at Khe Sanh that enabled us to hammer the VC and the NVA.”

“Does that intimidate you? Did I intimidate you when you worked for me?”

“Yeah, I guess he does intimidate me a bit. With you, I always felt pretty comfortable because *you* offered *me* the job. I felt like you saw something in me that was promising, that you liked, but with him, I’m just not sure.”

“What type of grades have you gotten from him?”

“In the Military Thought class, I got A minuses on an essay exam and a book review, and his written comments on both clearly indicated he thinks I can do better. As for the major paper I’m writing for him based on my research in Washington last summer, I won’t get a grade on that until I turn in the final product at the end of the semester. But the initial drafts I’ve given him have come back with more green ink than my black type—I’ve even received several pages with a big green X on them, along with the word *bullshit*.”

“Hmmm—that’s a tough grader to say the least. Did you ask him why you received the Xs?”

“I did, and he just said that I needed to think a lot more about what I had written.”

“Do you remember what you were saying on those pages?”

“I think I was arguing about how firebombing Japanese civilians made sense as long as it allowed us to avoid an invasion of the home islands.”

“So the more quickly a war ends, the better it is for all concerned?”

“Of course.”

Bennett stared at Glattan. “I’m afraid I have to agree with Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick’s comment.”

“How so?”

“Having unfortunately seen war up close and personal, I can tell you that some incredibly nasty things can be done and then rationalized by the argument, ‘Those acts brought the war to a quicker conclusion.’ Just because a war ends sooner than envisioned doesn’t necessarily mean it saved more lives. Sometimes, *a lot* more people die than otherwise would have.”

“But without the firebombing and atomic bombs, we would have invaded Japan—and it would have been a bloodbath.”

“Maybe. But you can’t say that with *absolute* certainty. The Russians came into the war around the time we dropped the atomic bombs, right?”

Glattan nodded.

“The Japanese might have decided to surrender after that. My point is that you can never be completely certain how the future will play out because it is *always* an unknown. There is no such thing as the ‘foreseeable future’ because you can never really foresee it.

“You might want to take that lesson to heart regarding your relationship with Chadwick—and his daughter.”

Glattan slowly nodded again.

“In the meantime, I have something for you.” Bennett opened his desk drawer and began rummaging through it. Finally, he came to a small black box. “I was going to give these to you when you graduated from the Academy—and I was going to get them wrapped. As you can see, I failed to do that.”

Bennett handed Glattan the box.

“Should I open it now?” Glattan asked.

“Please.”

Glattan did and saw two gold second lieutenant bars.

“They were mine,” Bennett said, “and I wanted you to have them.”

“Damn, Brett, they’re your bars—I can’t take them.”

“Yeah, you can, and you will. You deserve them, and I’m thrilled to give them to you. I can’t imagine anyone who deserves them more.”



Glattan sat in the car and opened the box again. The gold bars gleamed. “How long has this journey been?” he thought. “And has it been successful?” He had no certain answer to the last question. He just knew that much of the journey had been unanticipated—and agonizing—and that the first part of it was almost over.

But was it?

To be sure, the physical part of it would end—come June 1, he would become a second lieutenant and leave the Academy. As for the mental aspect, he had serious doubts that a clean break with USAFA could ever occur. How could it? Glattan knew that four years of turmoil—and torment—could not just fade away. Too much had transpired, too much that he didn’t like, too much that he could never forget. His classmates’ rewritten version of the Eagles’ song “Hotel California,” dubbed “Hotel Colorado,” pretty much summed up USAFA’s impact. The new lyrics ended,

Last thing I remember, I was running for the door, trying to find the passage back to the life I had before.

“Relax,” said the CQ, “we are programmed to receive. You can sign out any time you like, but you can never leave.”

So fitting, Glattan thought. So goddamn fitting.

Still, he decided to pursue other voices calling from far away.

Glattan drove to Chowan High, flanked by a bevy of yellow school busses on the adjoining streets, and parked by the football field. The brown grass had splotches of green but plenty of divots; much work needed to be done before the field was ready for spring practice. Glattan followed faint chalk lines until he arrived at the bare spot in front of the home bench, where he had stood many times before, clipboard in hand, recording plays. Behind the end zone to his left was an electric scoreboard, a big deal for Chowan High that arrived his junior year. To his right, behind the end zone, was Chowan’s gym, where the Tigers played basketball.

Glattan looked at the gym and smiled. The night of his graduation, he and his classmates paraded from it toward an array of folding chairs near the center of the football field, while the freshman, sophomore, and junior members of the Chowan High band played a brassy rendition of “Pomp and Circumstance.” A makeshift wooden stage paralleling the 50-yard line stood in front of the folding chairs. Chowan’s principal and faculty sat at the rear of the stage, with the front open so students could walk across it to receive diplomas. After the National Anthem, benediction, and opening remarks from the principal, Glattan presented the Class of 1973 valedictory address. He kept his comments brief, stressing the achievements—especially sports accomplishments—resulting from the merger of the three high schools; he repeated “e pluribus unum” three times in five minutes. “We Tigers are going to conquer the world,” he concluded, “and nobody’s going to stop us!” With that he screamed, “Tigers One! Tigers One! Tigers One!” which his 254 classmates echoed in unison.

The principal then awarded the diplomas, calling every student to the stage to the applause of family and friends. The ceremony over, the new graduates filed back to the gym, hugging the sideline, accompanied again by “Pomp and Circumstance.” Sitting in the last row of folding chairs, Ernie Black stood up with Glattan, awaiting their turn to march off the field.

Glattan looked at the slow-moving formation and turned to Ernie. “Should we?” he beckoned.

“Hell yes!” Ernie answered.

They turned toward the gym and bolted toward the end zone, knocking over their chairs as they ran from the center of the field. When they got to the goal line, as if choreographed, they both took off their mortarboards and threw them through the goal post toward the gym’s sloping roof.

Ernie’s hit the edge of the tiles and fell to earth. Glattan’s soared like a frisbee, landing in the center of the roof and staying put. When he was a Basic Cadet, Carol Whitney wrote him that the mortarboard stayed in that spot for six weeks until a hard rain washed it off.

Glattan looked at the gym and smiled again, hesitating a moment before walking back to his car.

Driving down Main Street, he scanned the scenes he remembered so well. He walked the street countless times as a freshman before he got the Ford, heading to his father’s drugstore where he’d study in the back office before Dad closed the store and took him home. The

houses appeared mostly the same, though many could have used a new coat of paint. Dogwoods, white and pink, bloomed in many of the newly greening yards, and in some, azaleas bloomed as well. Homes soon gave way to businesses. Glattan noticed that the jewelry store where his mom had worked part-time was now closed.

He crossed the railroad tracks that ran through the center of town. Glattan played on the tracks with his friends as a kid, placing pennies on the rails as trains approached and comparing whose penny had flattened into the neatest copper design. The tracks, and the train station accompanying them, made Chowan the commercial hub of Pettigrew County after the Civil War. Union troops burned Randolph, the county seat, causing postwar state legislators to select Chowan as the county's rail transit point for hauling tobacco to processing centers in Winston-Salem and Richmond.

Tobacco was the lifeblood of Pettigrew County.

When the crop was good, Chowan and the rest of the county thrived—people bought new cars or appliances or spent a few extra days at the beach in the summer. County schools didn't begin until tobacco season ended, usually in late August. Glattan and his classmates made decent money picking it (\$4–5 a day) or hanging it to cure in barns (\$8–10 a day). Both jobs were brutal work—the leaves left a sticky, hard-to-remove residue on hands and arms, while temperatures in the fields generally hovered above 90 with matching humidity.

Hanging tobacco was worse.

Thirty-foot-tall wooden barns with tin roofs housed rickety frames for hanging the leaves, which required physical stamina to lift the leaf-filled laths up ladders and position them and mental toughness to do it in stifling 120-degree heat. Farmers ran charcoal heaters continuously to speed the process of removing water from the leaves, turning them from green to yellow to brown. The cured crop then went to Chowan's massive warehouse at the north end of Main Street, where representatives from major cigarette manufacturers assessed the crop's value and hopefully purchased it for a worthwhile price.

That was if everything went according to plan.

Too often, it did not.

Drought, excessive rain, yellow dwarf virus, beetles, hornworms, nematodes, and a host of other maladies could wreck the crop—and in turn wreck Pettigrew County's livelihood. During winter, spring, and summer, most county residents—Black and White—bought goods on credit, counting on a successful tobacco crop to pay the ac-

cumulated bills. If that hope failed to materialize, everyone suffered, some more than others. Many farmers went into debt paying for seeds, fertilizer, pesticides, and equipment. Those unable to pay their bills produced a ripple effect, as businesses waiting for payments from them then couldn't pay their own bills.

One of the dominos to fall was Bill Glattan.

He extended credit to most Pettigrew County residents, not just farmers, for health and beauty aids as well as prescription medicine. When the 1970 tobacco crop tanked, he refused to press customers who owed him money, thinking it would not be right to demand payment when times were bad for all. His empathetic nature was not the only reason he lost the drugstore—he was never going to be a solid businessman—but it certainly didn't help.

Paul Glattan now knew—though he didn't know it at the time—that his father had refused to demand payment from those owing him money. To some extent, the son admired his father for taking such a stand. Bill Glattan taught his son not to take advantage of others less fortunate, and the lesson stuck. Bill also stressed loyalty—to ideals and people deemed virtuous. What could be more important, Paul thought, than loyalty to one's own family? No, he didn't want his father to scalp Chowan's residents to survive, but—in this case—didn't family come first? No matter how many times he thought about his father's behavior—and he thought about it *often*—he simply could not reconcile it.

As he crossed the railroad tracks slicing Main Street, Glattan noticed more stores with paper-covered doors and windows. Another poor tobacco harvest had likely occurred, he thought. He was right. That, combined with a Kmart opening north of town six months earlier, devastated downtown businesses.

He looked to his left as he neared the King Movie Theater—yep, it was still closed, and had been since his junior year in high school. Chowan's only functioning theater remained a drive-in on the road to Anton—famous throughout eastern North Carolina because it showed only porn. On the Saturday night before Halloween of Glattan's senior year, he, Ernie Black, Roger "Heatfeet" Novotny and his brother David, and Mark Edwards all piled into Heatfeet's old Chrysler station wagon to pay the drive-in a visit. In the rear of the car they had five cartons of eggs with firecrackers taped to each egg, along with 20 bottle rockets and several empty Coke bottles.

The target was challenging—the drive-in had a ten-foot-high wooden fence surrounding it (though if you parked far enough behind the fence you could still see the screen; you really didn't need the sound), and the pay booth was just off the entrance facing the Anton road. A quarter mile beyond the drive-in's entrance, a dirt road paralleled it, offering an entry point for the "attack." Heatfeet turned onto the dirt road and turned off his lights, slowly advancing until he aligned the car with the back of the theater's fence. Then the "troops" got out, moving with their "equipment" to preplanned locations. Carrying three cartons of eggs, Glattan and Ernie knelt beside the fence closest to the dirt road. Accompanying them was Heatfeet with the bottle rockets and four Coke bottles. Meanwhile, David and Mark advanced to the ground-level marquee in front of the drive-in and began rearranging the letters of the movie titles.

To assure that David and Mark had time to do their work, Glattan, Ernie, and Heatfeet waited five minutes before starting the "live fire." At 11:10 p.m., bottle rockets zoomed across the movie screen while firecrackers exploded over the parked cars, depositing egg residue. Two minutes later Heatfeet yelled, "We've got to get out of here!"

The theater manager had left the pay booth in his pickup truck and was headed for them. Heatfeet got to the Chrysler and started it just before Glattan and Ernie piled into the backseat. Meanwhile, David and Mark ran for the car as Heatfeet revved the engine. David made it to the backseat as the pickup turned down the dirt road toward the station wagon.

"Oh shit!" yelled Ernie. "We're trapped!"

"Hang on!" Heatfeet replied.

"We still don't have Mark!" David screamed.

"I'm lowering the rear glass window!" Heatfeet answered. "HANG ON!"

With that, Heatfeet drove on the grass to the left of the dirt road, while the pickup stayed in the center of it. Heatfeet slowed slightly as he passed the pickup, and Mark jumped through the open rear window—degree of difficulty: 9.8—landing on the two extra cartons of eggs with firecrackers attached.

"EVERYBODY OK?!" Heatfeet bellowed. "HANG ON!"

He floored the engine on the dirt road, arrived at the intersection toward Anton, and turned toward the town. The pickup reversed course on the dirt road and followed.

“HANG ON!” Heatfeet turned sharply by the Chowan radio station, taking a road leading to Taylor’s Cross Roads and, ultimately, the Virginia state line. The Chrysler speedometer read 80, 85, then 90. The pickup’s lights remained a quarter mile in the distance.

Suddenly at the Cross Roads stop sign, the Chrysler screeched to a halt.

“What the hell are you doing?!” Glattan yelled.

“I don’t want to break no laws!” Heatfeet replied.

The four riders laughed hysterically as Heatfeet increased his speed back to 90. Just before the turnoff for the Pettigrew County Country Club, the egg-covered Mark yelled, “The pickup’s turning around!” Heatfeet turned into the Country Club entrance, turned off his lights, and waited.

Five minutes passed. Then 10. Then 15.

“I think we’re safe,” Heatfeet sighed. Anyone listening inside the clubhouse would have heard his exhale.

The next morning, as Chowanians heading to church on the Anton road passed the drive-in, they noticed it offered an intriguing double feature: “Four on the Floor” and “The Talking Pussy.”



After passing the defunct King Theater, Glattan thought about parking the car and walking to his father’s old drugstore. But he couldn’t do it. Instead, he drove slowly past the building, noticing it was now a beauty shop—and a pretty shabby one at that. Many of the tiles in front of the shop were broken, and one of the large windows on either side of the door was cracked.

How sad, he thought—but he didn’t want to dwell on it. Soon, he would be in Chapel Hill.

Chapter 12

24 March 1977

Glattan waited until Thursday before leaving for Carolina. He didn't like staying in Chowan, but he also felt that he owed it to his parents to stick around for a while, given that they didn't see him very often. On Tuesday he drove back to the high school to visit some of his favorite teachers, talking about his Academy experiences in only general terms, omitting details he shared with Sherry Renaldi or Brett Bennett.

Those details nagged him repeatedly.

How, he wondered, would Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick react when they met again in class? What about the damn guns? What about Emily? The thoughts tormented him as he played with his 105-pound Saint Bernard, Ursula, named for Glattan's take on the best Bond girl ever, Swiss actress Ursula Andress (or "Undress" as cadets dubbed her). They distracted him Monday night when the family gathered in front of the TV to watch *Laugh-In*; they flickered through his mind as he played chess with his father on Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

By Thursday, Glattan had to escape. The trip to Chapel Hill offered a respite from what awaited back at USAFA. Moreover, most of his friends were at Carolina, and Chowan was not Chapel Hill. He loaded the Ford with his suitcase and sleeping bag, while his parents agreed to meet him on Sunday at the Raleigh airport to pick up the car and say goodbye.

The drive through eastern North Carolina was serene. Tobacco, soybean, and peanut fields lay fallow; woods sported lots of pines, interspersed with budding oaks, maples, and neon-purple redbuds. The magnetic redbuds grabbed Glattan's attention, especially when paired with the delicate white blooms of dogwoods, which in several spots made the terrain look like a fairyland.

The dogwoods were his favorite. When a boy, his parents told him that the dogwood once was a sturdy, oak-like tree, but the Romans used it to construct the cross on which they crucified Christ. Thereafter, the tree was cursed, growing twisted, never tall, forever displaying the symbols of the Crucifixion when it bloomed in the spring—four frail white petals in the shape of a cross, with red dimpled tips representing the nails piercing Christ's hands and feet and a greenish-brown center mirroring the crown of thorns.

Glattan had become skeptical of the legend, though his attachment to the dogwood's beauty remained. His mom had filled the yard surrounding the old plantation house with them. Whether they harkened to the Crucifixion made no difference—to Glattan they were spectacular, heralding the arrival of spring in a way so different from its mundane arrival in Colorado. There, Glattan thought, the only way to identify spring was by noticing that the scrub oaks had traded their brown leaves for green ones. In North Carolina, you couldn't miss the white blossoms filling yards and woods. And each October, the dogwood leaves turned deep maroon, foretelling the arrival of another Carolina basketball season.

The best basketball seasons lasted from the time the dogwoods' leaves turned red until the white blossoms appeared.

Carolina's 1976–1977 season was one of the best.

And Glattan would spend the Heels' semifinal game of the Final Four in Chapel Hill.



“Ernie! Damn, it’s good to see you!” Glattan yelled as he drove into the circular driveway adjacent to Morrison Dorm’s front door.

“And you as well, Glat!”

“Where should I park this thing?”

“Yeah, that’s a great question, given all the restrictions. But—” Ernie winked, “since I’m premed I spend a lot of time working at the hospital, and the doc I work with the most has gone to Atlanta for the Final Four. He’s given you his parking slot at Memorial.”

“That’s fantastic, Ernie!”

Ernie climbed into the car and they drove to the doc’s space, less than a quarter mile away. On the walk back to the dorm, Glattan asked, “You sure your roommate won’t mind me sleeping on the floor?”

“Hell no—Jim’s thrilled to have you aboard. He said that having you here would be good karma—he laughed his butt off when you called last Thursday night after we beat Notre Dame.”

After introducing himself to Jim Kennedy, who was from Greensboro, Glattan surveyed the room in Morrison. Two beds, two desks, two closets—yep, just like at USAFA.

Uh, no.

Dirty clothes were strewn everywhere, with pizza boxes and empty beer bottles balanced precariously on both desks. A multitude of

shoes, boots, and coats lined the floor. Life-sized posters of Cheryl Tiegs and Farrah Fawcett—both bikini-clad—grinned from a wall.

“Er, sorry for the mess,” Ernie stammered.

“What the hell are you talking about?” Glattan replied. “It’s *beautiful!*”

Glattan silently thought about how many demerits and tours such a room at the Academy would have produced—just having alcohol in the dorm was a 30-tour hit.

“Let me show you the bathroom facilities,” Jim said.

Jim and Ernie led Glattan past another two-man room leading to a bathroom with a couple of showers, sinks, toilets—and a half-size refrigerator.

“A fridge?” Glattan questioned.

“Yeah,” Ernie said, “We went in with the other guys who share our suite—we wanted to make sure we didn’t run out of beer during basketball season.”

“Your suite?” Glattan asked.

“Yeah,” Jim answered. “Each two rooms—four guys—is a suite with its own bathroom. The next suite over has the same arrangement and four girls.”

“You have girls living in the next suite?” Glattan’s mouth was open.

“Ah, sure,” Ernie responded. “Carolina’s still got separate dorms for guys and gals, but most of the high-rises like Morrison are coed. It’s nice.”

I damn well bet it is, Glattan thought. USAFA kept the 157 freshman girls in the Class of 1980 sequestered together in a small section of Vandenberg Hall off-limits to all upperclassmen. Although a few stealthy liaisons occurred in stairwells in the middle of the night, those relationships were not the norm. Finding girls in Colorado Springs or Denver required a bit more effort than just walking down the hall.

“Are the arrangements satisfactory?” Ernie asked.

“Oh, hell yes!” Glattan said. “Oh, *hell* yes!”

Ernie smiled. “Hungry?”

“Yeah, I am,” Glattan replied. “It was a pretty drive, but it’s been five hours since I had lunch.”

“Let’s go to Franklin Street,” Jim said.

“No complaints here.”

They walked outside on the brick trails through the woods along the east side of Kenan Stadium, then paralleled Stadium Drive until they arrived at the Bell Tower, the Morehead-Patterson Bell Tower, to

be exact. Glattan inhaled deeply as they walked past the tall boxwoods surrounding it—their aroma reminded him of home, where Mom had planted many boxwoods in front of the house. The Bell Tower chimed briefly, the four lighted Roman numeral clockfaces below its conical spire indicating 6:15 p.m.

In the fading light, the trio headed past the center of campus—Wilson Library, South Building, and the Old Well. They crossed Franklin Street at the post office, heading west on it until they passed Sutton's Drug Store, turning to descend the stairs leading to an alleyway below. The Rams Head Rathskeller beckoned to the left.

“Will this work?” Ernie asked.

“Perfect!” Glattan replied.

The “Rat” was a Chapel Hill institution.

Everyone ate there—students, faculty, businesspeople, visitors—the place stayed packed. Bill Glattan practically lived there as a student, often having both lunch and dinner at the Rat, and the same was true for Ernie and Jim. Every time the senior Glattan visited Chapel Hill with his family, they ate there, so Paul knew the layout and menu well. The dining room closest to the front door was dingy—to put it politely—with heavy wooden booths carved with names and notations from previous diners since 1948. More light appeared in the next dining rooms—the Lautrec, with Paris scenes decorating the walls; the Train Room, with tight booths like train seats; and the Circus Room, with brightly painted animals and clowns. The final dining room, curving back toward the main one, was smothered in darkness and aptly named the Cave.

If the Rat had a counterpart in Colorado Springs, Paul Glattan guessed it would have been Giuseppe's, a pair of Italian restaurants frequented by cadets. Like at the Rat, you didn't want to look too closely at the state health rating for Giuseppe's—in fact, the two-story Giuseppe's on Nevada Avenue collapsed early in Glattan's Firstie year, fortunately while closed, but its demise offered its own statement about the viability of its kitchen. Still, cadets flocked to the remaining restaurant at the Depot adjacent to the C Springs train station, ordering pizza and pitchers while ignoring the less than wholesome atmosphere. One thing about the Rat, though, Glattan thought as he surveyed the main dining room—girls were everywhere, whereas at Giuseppe's, short-haired guys occupied many of the tables.

“Where do you want to sit?” Ernie asked Glattan.

“How about the Cave? I've always liked it.”

The headwaiter nodded and took them to a cramped table with dark gray stucco walls protruding at odd angles. Glattan grinned—the grimy ambiance of the Rat was part of Chapel Hill’s mystique, something that C Springs could not duplicate. Spots like Giuseppe’s sufficed for the transient cadet populace, Glattan mused; the Rat was a place that he wanted to return to again and again.

“I’ll have the double gambler,” Ernie announced to the waiter. The double portion of skirt steak, a menu staple, was marinated in spices and red wine vinaigrette and served with grilled onions on top along with fries and—oddly—a side of peas.

“I’ll have the lasagna,” Jim said.

“Ah, the bowl of cheese,” Ernie offered. “Have you ever ordered anything else?”

“Hey, I like it,” Jim said of the dish with meat, pasta, and tomato sauce and brimming with baked cheese—another crowd favorite.

“I’ll take the spaghetti,” Glattan stated. He loved its rich meat sauce.

“Beers for you guys?” asked the waiter.

“Heineken on tap,” said Ernie.

“Me too,” echoed Jim.

“Don’t laugh, guys,” Glattan said, “but I’d like the apple cider. I used to get it when Dad first brought me here, and I love it.”

“Your secret’s safe with us,” Ernie chuckled.

Small salads with tart French dressing—a Rat basic served with every meal—soon arrived in wooden bowls.

“So, what are your schedules like tomorrow?” Glattan inquired as he munched the lettuce.

“I’ve got labs starting at 8:00 a.m., and they’ll run until the early afternoon,” Ernie said.

“You’ve always got eight o’clock classes,” Jim said.

“Yeah, well, at least it’s not organic chemistry this time—that nearly killed me last spring.”

“That would have killed me,” Glattan said. “It was only by the grace of God—or more accurately, my roommate’s tutoring—that I managed to survive the Academy’s two required chemistry classes.”

“You had to take two chemistry classes?” Jim asked. “I thought you were a history major.”

“Well, I am a history major, but at the Academy we all have to take a boatload of math and science classes as part of our core curriculum—physics, electrical engineering, aeronautical engineering, six God-forsaken semesters of calculus. I *hated* every one of those

courses and was very lucky to have Mike Barrow as a roommate—he's a double major in math and aero and has had only one academic B his entire time at USAFA. He could explain all that stuff to me in a way that I could understand, and, believe it or not, I eked out Bs in most of those classes."

"Whoa," Jim replied. "I'm a history major here, but thank God I didn't have to take all that crap."

"I hear you," said Glattan. "I guess the rationale for it is that we're a high-tech Air Force, and we have to be familiar with all that stuff to 'fly and fight.' I have my doubts about that, though—I don't think having a BS in history will make me any more proficient a pilot than having a BA would."

"Wait a minute," Ernie stated. "You said your roommate had only one 'academic B.' What did you mean by that?"

"Oh. We get graded on our PE courses, and those grades count toward our GPAs. You have to take four different courses each year, and most of them are core—you don't get to select a PE course until your Firstie, ah, senior year. Barrow and I usually pulled Cs on 'em."

"I bet those are lots of fun," Jim smirked.

"You're right, Jim, most aren't—at least for me anyway. I had to take boxing my freshman year, took an uppercut to the nose, and all my instructor said was, 'Don't you bleed on my mat!' Wrestling and unarmed combat were equally joyful."

"Did you have to take tennis?" Ernie asked. "You should've done OK there." Glattan played tennis his senior year at Chowan High, and Ernie had been his doubles partner.

"Yeah, I did—that was one of my few As in PE. I did well in swimming, too, which was a bitch for a lot of the guys who didn't know how. But we also had to jump off the 10-meter diving tower while wearing a flight suit and combat boots—to simulate releasing the parachute too soon above water after a bailout—and then swim 20 yards under water. That was *scary*. Not the swimming under water part but just walking to the end of the tower and stepping off—it's a *long* way down—and you didn't want to fall from that distance face-first."

"Damn, Glat," said Ernie. "Are you happy to have done all this stuff?"

"I'm happy to have survived it, Ernie. I guess that's about the best way that I can put it."

Conversation slowed when the entrées arrived. Glattan savored the marvelous smell of the spaghetti sauce, which he slathered with Parmesan cheese.

“If you put any more cheese on it, you might as well have Jim’s lasagna,” Ernie grinned.

“Yep, I guess you’re right, but I love this stuff.”

“Just like I love my bowl of cheese,” Jim responded. “Hey, Ernie’s got to get up at the crack of dawn tomorrow, but I knew better than to schedule any eight o’clock classes. I’ve got a history lecture on World War II tomorrow at eleven—want to sit in?”

“Would the instructor mind?”

“Not in the least. We’re in the main auditorium in Hamilton Hall—must be 100 people taking that class on *The World in the Twentieth Century*. You wouldn’t be noticed.”

“All right—that sounds like a plan! I may get up a bit earlier—though not as early as Ernie—to stroll around campus first.”

“Sure—you can meet me at the entrance to Hamilton at ten to eleven.”

The waiter appeared. “More beers—or cider?”

“None for me,” Ernie said. “I’ve got a long day in the labs tomorrow.”

“That will do me as well,” Jim added.

“I think one cider’s my limit,” Glattan said to laughter.

How different, he thought to himself, from a night at Giuseppe’s. There, no one would have stopped after just one beer—or JD and Coke. Of course, those nights were Fridays or Saturdays, with no class looming the next day. But still—when Glattan and his classmates went into the Springs, the usual objective was to get drunk—to forget about what they had to go “home” to. Why would anyone want to forget about waking up in Chapel Hill?



Glattan barely moved when he heard Ernie step over his sleeping bag and close the door. Sleeping on the floor of a warm dorm room wasn’t so bad, he thought—ininitely better than the last time he slept in a sleeping bag. That night, a miserable evening on a sloping hill in a driving Colorado rainstorm at the end of Third Class Summer survival training, was literally gut-wrenching—his bowels were in disarray from eating undercooked beef jerky, causing him to crawl out of his damp sleeping bag to take a shit in the rain.

No, nothing like that in Morrison Dorm.

Jim snored in the bed beside him as Glattan tiptoed to the bathroom. After getting cleaned up, Glattan decided to make good on his pledge to tour the campus before the lecture—he hadn’t seen it in

four years. The morning was ideal—lots of sun, Carolina blue sky, with temperatures hovering near 70 and promising to rise several more degrees.

He walked toward Kenan Stadium, pausing at its south entrance. Oaks, maples, dogwoods, and pines surrounded the stadium, built in a little valley. Glattan's father told him that 1894 grad William Kenan donated most of the money for it in the late 1920s, with the stipulation that its top deck could never be taller than the surrounding tree-tops. Thus, when Bill watched Tar Heel All-American Charlie "Choo Choo" Justice slice and dice opposing defenses in the late 1940s, the one-level stadium seated 24,000. By the time Bill took his son to see a game in Kenan, the trees had grown, allowing an upper deck to be built that doubled seating capacity.

Paul Glattan well remembered his first Carolina football game—Saturday afternoon, October 11, 1969, against—ironically—Air Force. Bill shepherded his son to their 30-yard-line seats near the student section. To 14-year-old Paul, the spectacle was intoxicating. He saw Carolina's players decked out in their light blue jerseys with white trim, Air Force's wearing all white with blue lightning bolts on their helmets, and 200 uniformed Air Force cadets standing in a dark blue block near the north-side end zone. His father stood and sang Carolina's alma mater, "Hark the Sound," at halftime; the cadets bellowed the "Air Force Song" after every Falcon score; and Carolina's goateed head cheerleader—black hair streaming over his shoulders and wearing an unbuttoned white shirt with Carolina blue bell-bottoms—marched back and forth on a field-level ramp with a microphone, leading student chants.

One of those chants in particular caught Paul's attention:

Marijuana, Ho Chi Minh!
Come on Heels, first and ten!

The son raised his eyebrows to his father.

"Don't worry about it—just watch the game," Bill replied.

The son did so, seeing the Falcon quarterback carve up Carolina's defense time after time with precise passes to speedy receivers.

Air Force 20, Carolina 10 was the final. The next day, after Bill taught his son the words to "Hark the Sound," the Glattans settled in to watch *The Ed Sullivan Show*, where they saw 24-year-old heart-throb Oliver sing his hit "Jean." Afterward, Ed Sullivan said that Oliver's brother John Swofford, quarterback of the University of North

Carolina's football team, was in the audience. As the camera focused on Swofford, Sullivan stated, "Last Saturday he led the Tar Heels to a 38–22 win over Vanderbilt."

"Ha!" Bill snorted to his son. "No mention of what we saw yesterday. I don't guess that would have made for good TV."

Paul walked from the stadium to the cafeteria in Lenoir Hall, adjacent to the "Pit" across from the Student Store. Students filled the steps surrounding the Pit, focused on a man sporting a gray beard several inches long, with wild gray hair flowing from the sides of a balding head. He was dressed in black and holding a Bible.

"You all are all forsaken!" the man yelled.

"Why is that?" one of the students yelled back.

"Because you've been corrupted by the teachings of Satan—the blasphemy of professors who turn you away from the word of God to what they say is 'free thought,' causing you to abandon the righteous path that will take you to salvation."

"What path is that?" another student hollered.

"You know the answer," the man replied. "The avoidance of sin—not just forgoing drugs, alcohol, and sex, but refusing to succumb to the demonic literature inflicted upon you by professors claiming to expand your thinking, when actually what that trash does is provide you with even more temptation to engage in sin."

"And what literature is that?"

"D. H. Lawrence. Vladimir Nabokov. James Joyce. Judy Blume. Aldous Huxley—"

"Have you ever read any of their books?"

"Of course not—I will not be—"

Peals of laughter drowned out the Pit Preacher.

Glattan laughed as well as he stepped into Lenoir for a quick breakfast. The last time he was in the building was early in his senior year at Chowan High, when he had applied for an Air Force ROTC scholarship to Carolina as a backup in case he failed to gain an Academy appointment. The ROTC detachment was on Lenoir's second floor. A rotund lieutenant colonel who had served as a B-52 navigator during Vietnam interviewed Glattan for 15 minutes, concluding with, "You know, if you don't get the scholarship, you can still join the program, and once you begin your junior year the Air Force will pay your tuition."

That episode redoubled Glattan's efforts to secure an Academy slot.

Glattan left Lenoir, turning north at the magnificent Wilson Graduate Library, adorned with Corinthian columns in front of its lime-

stone frame, built during the 1920s. He continued through Polk Place—named for 1818 Carolina grad and future president James K. Polk—admiring the redbuds, dogwoods, and azaleas that flanked the academic buildings. Arriving at South Building—during the early 1800s Carolina’s main academic building, now housing the chancellor’s office and other university administrative bureaus—he turned and looked back toward Wilson Library.

His father had told him the story many times during walks through campus. John Motley Morehead III, 1891 Carolina grad from a wealthy family of Carolina grads, wanted to donate a library to the university. But since Morehead had already given so much, administrators allowed another donor to give what ultimately became Wilson Library, completed in 1929.

“That’s fine,” Morehead responded, “I’ll give the university a bell tower.”

“A bell tower?” the chancellor replied. “OK, but I’m not sure Carolina needs one.”

“Of course it does—it’ll enhance the campus. Just one stipulation. It goes where I want it to go.”

“Sure. After all, it’s your money.”

“And I want it to go 75 yards behind the new library.”

As he looked toward Wilson Library, Glattan could see the Bell Tower’s conical spire perched like a dunce cap on the center of the library’s dome.

Glattan smiled. The story was a good one, and he imagined that it contained at least a nugget of truth.

He walked to the east around South Building, with its large North Carolina flag lazily flapping above its columned entrance, and ambled past the university’s original library, now serving as the Playmakers’ Theater for Carolina’s drama department. During the Civil War a Union cavalry detachment stabled its horses there when it occupied Chapel Hill, though university buildings survived intact because the cavalry commander fell in love with the Chapel Hill mayor’s daughter.

Love conquers all, Glattan thought.

Carolina’s long history—the nation’s oldest state university, chartered in 1789 and graduating its first seven students in 1798—was a great part of its appeal, helping make it a leading college not only in the South but also in the nation. Almost two centuries of operations further assured a majestic campus, with various architectural styles complementing a meticulously maintained landscape.

USAFAs stood in stark contrast.

Every feature of its “campus”—a term rarely heard from cadets or faculty—screamed sleek, cutting-edge technology. Gleaming steel and aluminum structures filled the “cadet area,” the term that cadets and faculty *did* use to describe the academic and dormitory environment. No touring the cadet area. Because of USAFA’s military nature, the area was off-limits to visitors; even graduates needed an escort when they returned.

Like Carolina, the Academy hearkened to its past. Historic aircraft—an F-4 Phantom and an F-105 Thunderchief from the Vietnam War, a T-38 Talon jet trainer, and an F-104 Starfighter, the “missile with a man in it” like the one Chuck Yeager flew out of the earth’s atmosphere—appeared in the corners of the large grassy quadrangle. The area was flanked by the Chapel, Fairchild Hall, Vandenberg Hall, and the New Dorm—recently named Sijan Hall in honor of 1965 grad Lance Sijan, shot down over North Vietnam in 1967 and captured, who tried to escape several times before succumbing to his wounds—USAFA’s first grad to receive the Medal of Honor.

The Chapel, certainly the Academy’s most distinctive structure, was perhaps most reflective of USAFA’s modern focus with ties to the past. Completed in 1962, it dominated the cadet area with its seventeen 150-foot steel spires enclosed by aluminum panels and separated by one-inch-thick stained glass. To Glattan, the Chapel resembled a futuristic bomber with spires that could emit laser beams to destroy a heathen enemy below. That its stained glass reflected disparate shades of Air Force blue made sense given the Academy’s mission. God was on our side, Glattan thought, and if you crossed us, our high-tech Air Force was going to blow you to hell.

The Chapel housed four denominations—Protestant, on the main floor, and Catholic, Jewish, and Buddhist one floor underneath. In the Protestant section, the ends of the oak pews formed tall arcs mimicking wooden aircraft propellers. As a Basic, Glattan often looked out the stained-glass-bordered windows to the east and felt like he was in a glider floating above the plains of Colorado. Then he realized he would soon return to the agony of training sessions in Vandenberg Hall. But for a few fleeting moments on Sundays that first summer, the Chapel provided peace.

Glattan looked up as he crossed Cameron Avenue behind South Building. Before him was the oldest and, he thought, the most enchanting part of the campus.

To the right was Old East, America's oldest dorm in continuous use, whose cornerstone was laid in 1793. Its counterpart Old West, completed in 1823, was to the left. Between the two was the Old Well, built in 1897, a neoclassical rotunda surrounding a drinking fountain on the spot that served as the university's sole water supply for its first century. Beds of red and white azaleas blossomed beside it, while to the north four *pink* dogwood trees—hybrids—bloomed magnificently. White dogwoods near Old East were also in full bloom. A large oak on its north side, with several limbs overhanging the dome, had just begun to sprout leaves.

When the time came, Glattan decided, he wanted his ashes spread here.

According to legend, drinking from the well on the first day of class guaranteed that a student would pass all courses. Glattan took a sip. Couldn't hurt, he reasoned. Should help with the UNLV game tomorrow, with my grades, perhaps even with the paper for Chadwick—and the graver situation awaiting him—and maybe even with Emily.

Glattan walked north from the Old Well. Soon he came to an enormous tulip poplar tree.

The Davie Poplar.

Another Tar Heel legend that Bill Glattan passed on to his son.

"Here is the tree where Revolutionary War general William Davie tied his horse in 1792 and said, 'This is the spot for the university,'" Bill explained. "He was the 'Father of the University.'"

Who knows, Paul thought, perhaps Davie did actually tie his horse to it. When Bill first told Paul the story, the two tried to join hands around its trunk but could not. And, though lightning struck it in 1918, the pale-yellow flowers emerging from its branches revealed that the tree remained very much alive.

Looking east from the Davie Poplar, Glattan saw the imposing façade of Morehead Planetarium. Like the Bell Tower, the Planetarium was a gift from John Motley Morehead III. As with most features of Carolina's campus, Bill had introduced his son to it.

Although Paul liked the Planetarium's main show well enough, what he really liked were the exhibitions in its basement, especially the large electric orrery depicting the solar system. The model, with painted planets hanging from the ceiling orbiting the sun in circular patterns, went only as far as Saturn; to keep it to scale, the final planets would have appeared beyond Franklin Street. From the first time

he saw it, Paul was thrilled by the spinning planets and the moons that swirled around them, graphically illustrating eclipses.

Yet it was Elizabeth Glattan's visit with him to the Planetarium that was perhaps most significant.

Mesmerized by Stanley Kubrick's 1968 movie, *2001: A Space Odyssey* (which had stimulated Paul Glattan's love of classical music), Paul designed a large cardboard display of a space station as a junior high science project. He was proud of his creation, which showed part of the station growing plants not only to provide foodstuffs but also to absorb carbon dioxide and emit the oxygen that would help keep the crew alive.

"So, you think you've got a decent design?" Elizabeth asked her son.

"Yes, I do," he replied.

"Well, let's really find out. I've called the Planetarium director at Chapel Hill, and he's willing to critique what you've developed."

The son was blown away—first, that his mother had called the Planetarium director and, second, that the director agreed to meet with him. The director spent a full 30 minutes with the 13-year-old Glattan, patiently answering his questions and evaluating his project.

At the end of the meeting, the director said, "You've got an intriguing proposal here, and I can tell that you've put a great deal of work—and research—into it. It's impressive, and it should serve as a guide for you in the future."

"How so, sir?" Glattan asked.

"Any time you set your heart to something, go all out—don't take half-hearted measures or shortcuts. In whatever field you choose, when you finally get old enough to think about a career, be the best in that field that you possibly can. Never settle for just 'that should be good enough.'"

The lesson stuck.

Glattan walked toward Franklin Street until he arrived at the only statue on campus—a Confederate soldier facing north on a pedestal commemorating the more than 1,000 Carolina students and grads who fought for the South during the Civil War. At least 287 died defending the "Lost Cause."

Glattan wasn't sure what to think about that. He knew that the "Cause" was ultimately based on slavery and that slaves had built much of the university. Slavery's romanticized depiction in *Gone with the Wind*—Elizabeth Glattan's favorite movie, which he had seen many times—was, he thought, pure fiction; he had no doubt that the

institution was fundamentally evil. Still, slave owner Robert E. Lee—the embodiment of the Confederacy—remained a revered figure to many who, according to one legend, confirmed the nickname for Carolina’s sports teams. Glattan remembered reading that at the 1864 Battle of Reams Station, when Union cavalry threatened to overrun the entire Confederate line, a brigade of North Carolina troops held firm, allowing Lee to reestablish his position. Afterward, he allegedly said to an aide, “God bless the Tar Heel boys,” acknowledging their claim that they never ran from a fight.

Reverence for Lee extended beyond White Southerners. As Glattan walked around the statue’s base, he noticed an inscription on the pedestal: “To the sons of the university who entered the War of 1861–65 in answer to the call of their country and whose lives taught the lesson of their great commander that duty is the sublimest word in the English language.” Glattan knew the entire quote well: “Duty then is the sublimest word in the English language. You should do your duty in all things. You can never do more. You should never wish to do less.” General Robert E. Lee, page one of “Quotations” from *Contrails*, which all Academy cadets had to memorize verbatim as part of Knowledge.

Lee’s quote wasn’t the only tie to USAFA. The statue was known as “Silent Sam.” Legend had it that if a virgin ever walked past, “Sam” would fire his rifle, and his rifle had remained silent since the statue’s 1913 dedication. The Air Force Academy had its own version of Sam: a marble rendition of Pegasus, the winged horse from Greek mythology. A gift from the Greek Air Force Academy, it perched just outside the Arnold Hall ballroom. Cadets made it a point to take their dates to the statue and have them touch it, for if a virgin did so, the horse would fly away.

Glattan shook his head as he walked toward Old East, headed for Coker Arboretum, created in the early 1900s by Carolina’s first professor of botany, William Coker. It was Elizabeth and not his father who had highlighted this landmark, unlike most others on campus. During the Planetarium trip, his mother drove past the Arboretum and said, “That’s where your father used to make out with me at dusk.” Thereafter Coker Arboretum was on his must-see list when visiting Chapel Hill.

Today, with temperatures approaching the mid-70s, Glattan figured he might as well absorb as much springtime glory as possible before meeting Jim for the lecture. The Arboretum did not disap-

point. Dogwoods and azaleas bloomed throughout, along with an abundance of Spanish bluebells. Appropriate, Glattan thought. He was also impressed by the wide variety of trees—a saucer magnolia sporting grapefruit-size pink blossoms, four types of Japanese maples—some deep red, others lime green—a redwood tree, three varieties of cypress, an enormous swamp oak, and a loblolly pine. As he walked about Coker, he suddenly came to an open area facing Raleigh Street and looked across.

Alderman, Kenan, and McIver Dorms.

Girls' dorms.

And the beach was open.

Bikinis and beach towels were seemingly everywhere. Glattan felt a growing stiffness between his legs. Damn, he thought—got to get rid of this before I see Jim. He looked back toward the trees and flowers, hoping no one would see him. But he couldn't stop himself from staring across Raleigh Street. As he stood transfixed, a miniskirted blonde walked past, looked at him, and giggled. Glattan blushed. Problem solved.

Jim greeted him at the entrance to Hamilton Hall.

"Beautiful day, man!"

"Seriously," Glattan replied. "Just spectacular."

"Did you enjoy your walk around campus?"

"Yeah, a lot of memories. So nice with everything blooming—I even went to the Arboretum—and I saw the 'beach' in front of the girls' dorms across Raleigh Street."

"Carolina girls—best in the world."

"That's got to be tough getting used to."

"Well, it's always nice to have the additional scenery around. I'm guessing there will be less of it today in class given the gorgeous weather, plus it's Friday."

That's right, Glattan thought to himself—classes aren't mandatory here.

He entered the large lecture hall and took a seat next to Jim near the back. Other students began taking their seats. Shorts, cutoffs, T-shirts, tank tops, tennis shoes, and flip-flops appeared to be the "uniform of the day"—a heck of a lot more conducive to learning, Glattan surmised, than starched shirts, polyester pants, and, God forbid, ties in the winter. Also far more revealing, he thought as he surveyed the girls in the class, hoping that he didn't have a repeat experience like the Arboretum.

At 11:05, the professor—wearing a yellow golf shirt, khaki shorts, and sandals—walked to the front of the room and said, “Good to see that several of you could make it class on such a beautiful day.”

Laughs answered.

“I’ll try not to go too long, given that I’m sure most of you can find something to do outside of Hamilton Hall this afternoon.”

More laughs.

“But hey, we’re talking World War II here—the greatest tragedy mankind has ever inflicted upon itself—somewhere between 60 and 70 million people killed. Untold numbers of people maimed and homes lost. And it was all our fault, right? By ‘our’ I mean the Allies—the British, the French, and yeah, we Americans—right?”

A few students fidgeted.

“What, you think I’m wrong? The British and French didn’t have to fight—they couldn’t do anything to save Poland. They could’ve cut a deal with Hitler to allow him to maintain control of eastern Europe—his real enemy was the Soviet Union anyhow—and they could have stood on the sidelines while the Nazis and Soviets—two of the nastiest regimes ever to exist on planet Earth—beat each other’s heads in and then picked up the pieces.

“As for the Americans, well, we compelled the Japanese to attack in the Pacific when Roosevelt embargoed oil—they had to have it—and even after Pearl Harbor we didn’t have to fight—there was no ‘clear and present danger’ to the American homeland. The Japanese had no intention of invading Hawaii, much less our West Coast. We could have let them control a chunk of China and Southeast Asia and been just fine. Right?”

Eyes narrowed on the professor.

“Who’s going to challenge what I just said? *Who?!?*”

A cautious hand went up. “Britain had to fight. If Hitler defeated the Soviet Union and controlled it as well as eastern Europe, Britain’s economic viability would have ultimately been threatened—the British had no choice.”

Another hand. “We Americans had to fight as well. A Europe dominated by the Nazis and an Asia dominated by the Imperial Japanese would have become intolerable for the United States. Not just for our economy, but for our values.”

A third hand. “It *was* crucial to preserve our values—our way of life. The Nazis were *evil*. They had to be eliminated. Look what they did to the Jews.”

“Yeah,” the professor answered. “They slaughtered the Jews—and when American and British leaders found out about it, they tried to keep it quiet. How do you explain that?”

“That doesn’t mean we were perfect, either,” a Black student seated in the front row interjected. “We still had anti-Semitism and racism in this country during World War II, and in fact, we still do today. But we didn’t try to kill an entire race of people during the war.”

“We killed hundreds of thousands of German and Japanese civilians by bombing them,” the professor replied. “Was that justified?”

The food fight was on. Glattan flashed back to similar debates he’d had with Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick. Damn good questions with no real answers. Even in the case of World War II, hindsight was not 20/20.

“What did you think of the lecture?” Jim asked when the class ended.

“I loved it,” Glattan said. “Especially the way the professor brought everyone into the discussion—it really wasn’t a lecture at all.”

“No, that’s his style. He doesn’t like to hear himself speak. And he’s always provocative. One thing, though—you damn well have better read the assignment before you go into class—otherwise, you’re lost.”

As it should be, Glattan thought. No, classes here were not mandatory. But anyone who missed that performance today would have a *very* tough time passing the next exam.

“How about some lunch?” Jim asked.

“Works for me.”

“Then we can head back to Morrison, meet up with Ernie, and make plans for tonight.”

“I’m thinking Rat, round two,” Glattan grinned.

“That *definitely* works for me—bowl of cheese, here I come!”

Chapter 13

26 March 1977

Glattan woke at 7:30. Stretching out in the sleeping bag, he could tell that both Ernie and Jim were awake as well.

“Damn, guys, I’m sorry to be awake so early, but I just can’t sleep,” he said.

“Don’t think you’re the only one,” Ernie replied.

“That makes three,” Jim said. “Who could sleep on a day like this—WE’RE IN THE FINAL FOUR!”

“What time is tip-off?” Glattan asked.

“At 2:30,” Ernie answered. “We play the second game—UNC—Charlotte and Marquette go first. We should get something to eat beforehand.”

“Makes sense to me,” Glattan said. “Got to put something in the gut before the game.”

“How about the Old Waffle Shop?” Jim offered.

“Sounds like a plan,” Ernie said. “Let’s get cleaned up.”

As they walked toward Franklin Street, they noticed they were not alone. Throngs of people—not only students—were everywhere. Grads had returned to campus, along with fans who weren’t grads and the just plain curious who wanted to see what might happen if Dean Smith finally won a national championship.

Goodness knows he had come close to the promised land. Glattan knew the history well. Smith had played on the 1952 Kansas team that won the national title and was coached by Phog Allen, who learned the game from Dr. James Naismith, its creator. After graduation Smith briefly served as a Kansas assistant coach, then as an assistant coach at the Academy as an Air Force officer—no irony there—and then as assistant coach at Carolina before becoming head coach in 1961. Since then, he molded the Heels into a perennial power and even took them to the 1968 national championship game against mighty UCLA and Lew Alcindor. And the previous summer, coaching the nation’s 1976 Olympic basketball team, Smith restored the honor of American college athletes when the team won the gold medal after the 1972 debacle in which Soviet professional players defeated American college athletes for gold.

But Dean had never won the grand prize.

Would his fifth trip to the Final Four be the charm?

Glattan hoped that it would—and that he would be able to say he was in Chapel Hill for part of that history.

The weather was again ideal—high 60s, with the promise of 70s to come. The dogwoods and azaleas surrounding the Old Well blazed with color, and today it had an additional splash—Carolina blue helium-filled balloons tied to each of its eight columns.

“A good omen,” Jim said.

“Yes, but wait,” Ernie replied. He paused for the crowd around the Old Well to disperse a bit and then went to its water fountain to take a drink. Jim and Glattan followed suit.

“I drank from it yesterday,” Glattan proclaimed.

“Can’t do it too many times—especially on a day like today,” Jim said.

“I hear that,” Glattan responded. “It’s not like we’re playing Little Sisters of the Poor.”

UNLV—the University of Nevada–Las Vegas—was anything but. Boasting a 29–2 record, the “Running Rebels” had scored more than 100 points in 25 of those games. Their furious pace of play left their opponents appearing to stand still and mirrored the sideline antics of their coach, Jerry “Tark the Shark” Tarkanian. In contrast to the composed coaching style of Dean Smith, Tark wore his emotions on his sleeves (which were often rolled up) and frequently berated players who made a mistake. When he finally sat on the bench, he often chewed on a white towel while watching the action.

By the time the threesome arrived at the Old Waffle Shop—technically, Ye Olde Waffle Shoppe—a long line stretched out its front door.

“Hmmm. What do you think, Glat?” Ernie asked.

“Well, I don’t think we’d get served any faster elsewhere—plus, I really want some blueberry pancakes. I don’t mind waiting if you guys don’t.”

“We’re with you,” Jim said. “I really want a Belgian waffle and bacon.”

“Plus, it’ll give us a chance to dissect the game,” Ernie added. “We need to think through how Dean can pull it off.”

“That’s the doctor in you,” Jim said. “Always being analytical.”

“So—Doctor-to-be Ernie, what do you think about Phil Ford’s elbow?” Glattan asked.

“It’s a shame he dorked up his shooting arm. I’m thinking that he plays a lot—we need him—but I think he’ll be a much better passer today than shooter.”

“What about Walter Davis’s broken finger? That’s on his shooting hand, too.”

“True enough. But having his index finger taped to his middle finger doesn’t seem to bother him much. He was our high scorer with 21 against Kentucky, and he shot 7–11 from the floor and 7–9 from the line. I think he’ll be just fine.”

“So, do you think that Dean and company can slow down the Running Rebels?” Jim asked.

“That *is* the question,” Ernie replied. “No one else has really been able to do that. I tell, you, though, if we get the lead against them—especially in the second half—I expect to see the Four Corners.”

“Makes sense,” Glattan said. “But can we ever get the lead? They’ve been blowing everyone out.”

“If anybody can figure out how, it’s Dean. He’s the master strategist.”

“That sounds like something an Air Force cadet would say,” Glattan responded.

“You don’t disagree, do you?”

“Of course not!”

“What bothers me is that sleazy Tark the Shark,” Jim rejoined. “You never know what he may do. There’s already been talk about recruiting shenanigans. He might try to have the game fixed—he is from Sin City, after all.”

“Not only that,” Ernie said, “look at Tark’s graduation rate—I’m not sure it’s even in double digits.” Everyone knew that Dean’s rate was almost 99 percent.

“OK, so we have ‘right’ on our side,” Glattan concluded. “We just need to make sure that it conquers ‘might.’”

“Amen to that!” Jim said.



They would have preferred to linger over breakfast, but a line still stretched out the door, so they left soon after finishing. Instead of making a beeline back to Morrison, they headed west on Franklin Street to the intersection with Columbia, then turned south to walk past the frat houses near the Carolina Inn—partly to see the sights, partly to burn off nervous energy. Music blared from the houses, their doors and windows open to benefit from the sensational weather. The enticing aroma of barbeque filled the air—two of the houses had cooked pigs during the night—and frat boys with an abundance of beer, and an abundance of girls showing an abundance of skin, filled the grassy areas and parking lots.

“Nice parties,” Jim said. “I just hope everyone’s able to focus by game time. We’re going to need all the karma we can get.”

More music pounded out of campus dorms, including Morrison. Ernie and Jim’s suitemates alternated between playing the Stones’ “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction” and “You Can’t Always Get What You Want,” explaining that both songs summed up their thoughts about Carolina’s previous trips to the Final Four. They insisted that the more those songs were played, the more likely Carolina would prevail this time around. Ernie, Jim, and Glattan agreed that the logic made sense. Students, most of them holding a beer or something stronger, danced on the walkways connecting the rooms.

“Want a beer?” Ernie asked Glattan.

“I do!” said Jim.

“I figured,” Ernie replied. “I thought I’d be nice and ask our guest first.”

“Why not?” Glattan answered. “Might as well get in the mood with everyone else.”

The threesome went outside to the railings by the walkway and began sipping their beers. Suitemates Rick Barno and Freddy Jonas were already there, beers in hand, singing along with Mick Jagger. Every time Mick or the choir sang “you just might find, you get what you need!” Rick and Freddy shouted out the lyrics, and Ernie, Jim, and Glattan soon joined in.

So too did the girls from the adjoining suite.

Then they walked over.

And they were simply stunning.

Miss January, February, March, and April, Glattan thought to himself.

The girls obviously knew Ernie, Jim, Rick, and Freddy; Ernie introduced them to Glattan.

“His name’s Paul but he goes by Glat, short for Glattan, his last name. Glat went to high school with me in Chowan, and now he’s a senior at the Air Force Academy in Colorado. They’re on spring break, so he came here to watch the game.”

“So, Glat, you’re an Air Force cadet?” asked the girl named Barbara.

“Yep, that’s me.”

“I guess that explains the short hair,” she giggled. “Actually, it’s kind of cute. Your bangs remind me of the Beatles.” The three other girls nodded.

Glattan couldn’t help noticing that blonde Barbara wore gym shorts with a light blue tank top and no bra. Down boy, he thought—just look at her eyes.

“Are you going to be a jet pilot?”

“I hope to be after graduation.”

“How long does it take to learn to fly a jet?”

“A year.”

“Wow! That must be intense. Where do you go to do that?”

“Most of the bases are in the Southern states—Texas, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Arizona.”

“Are you excited?” asked a raven-haired Gayle in cutoffs, a Carolina T-shirt, and again, no bra.

FOCUS ON THE EYES, Glattan thought. “Yeah, I guess so.”

“You guess so? That sounds pretty exciting to me!”

“Well, I’m just trying to make it to graduation first—then I’ll focus on the flying part.”

“Is the Academy hard?” asked brown-haired Nancy—gym shorts, Carolina T-shirt, sans bra.

“Parts of it were sure hard to me. I’m a history major, but I had to take a lot of math and science core courses.”

“Eeew,” said blonde Diane—cutoffs, tank top, braless.

Apparently, bras are not a “uniform item” for Carolina girls, Glattan thought—and I’m *just fine* with that.

“We’re all impressed by Ernie being premed,” Diane continued. “I’m a sociology major. I’ve done everything I can to avoid math or science.”

“Have you flown an airplane?” Barbara asked.

“I have. Nothing fancy, though—a single-prop Cessna-172. All of us who are going to pilot training learn to fly the Cessna before we leave the Academy.”

The four girls raised their eyebrows.

“That is *so cool!*” Barbara said.

“Wow!” Nancy blurted.

“How neat!” Gayle added.

“*Day-um,*” cooed Diane, converting a one-syllable word into two.

DOWN BOY!!! DOWN-DOWN-DOWN!!! Glattan silently commanded.

Ernie walked toward Glattan. “Can I get you ladies some beers?”

Barbara said, “Did you know that your friend has flown an airplane?”

“Pretty impressive, huh?!” Ernie winked at Glattan.

“It *shur-ley* is,” purred Diane. “Yes, please be a dear and get us some cold ones.” She put her hand on Glattan’s arm and drawled, “You *m-u-s-t* tell us what it’s like to fly.”

Glattan again felt a growing stiffness between his legs. Damn it, he thought, if they laugh, they laugh—I really don't care. It's the first time I've ever had so many good-looking, scantily clad women interested in *me*.

With hand gestures resembling a fighter pilot, Glattan talked about what it was like to make a two-G turn, a loop, and an Immelmann.

"Landings can be really tricky, with the winds blowing off the Rockies, so you have to make sure you've got your bearings and then take the wind into account."

"Day-um," Diane said. The girls remained wide-eyed.

"Were you scared?" asked Barbara?

"A little at first. But the Air Force pilots training us were top-notch. A lot of them had flown in Vietnam."

The magic evaporated.

Glattan immediately regretted saying "Vietnam." Barbara, Nancy, and Gayle looked away when they heard the word; only Diane held his gaze.

"That's all right, honey," she said. "That war's been over for a while, and you *shur-ley* didn't fight it." She touched his arm again. "What got you so interested in Carolina?"

"My dad was a '51 grad, and he raised me to be a Tar Heel. He was OK with me going to the Academy, but I've never lost my love for Carolina. For a while I thought about leaving the Academy and coming here." Barbara, Nancy, and Gayle returned their focus to Glattan.

"What made you stay?" asked Nancy.

"In all honesty, it was money. My parents would have struggled to send me here, even with the tuition break that Carolina gives in-state students, and I have a sister they have to put through college too. So I figured I could suck it up and endure the math and science courses—and the Academy's discipline—for a little bit longer."

"What's it like going to a military academy?" Gayle asked.

"Well, it's slightly different than going to Carolina."

The girls laughed.

"We march around with rifles a lot, have to wear uniforms all the time, and aren't allowed to miss class."

"What happens if you miss class?" Barbara questioned. "I'm guessing it's not good."

"You're right. You have to march around in your dress uniform with your rifle for four hours on a Friday afternoon, Saturday, or Sunday during what would otherwise be free time."

“Wow—that sucks!” said Gayle. “How many times have you had to do that?”

“I’ve only marched two tours, the technical term for the punishment. But that was enough.”

“Day-um. I wouldn’t have survived. Do y’all have girls there?”

“They arrived this year for the first time ever.”

“Do they have the same rules as y’all guys do?”

“Yep. And like us, they had to get their hair cut the first day they arrived. Not all off, like the guys, but very, very short.”

“That would have killed me,” said Barbara with her long blonde hair. The other girls, all with hair below their shoulders, nodded.

“Hey, we’re 15 minutes from tip-off!” Ernie yelled. The declaration seemed to throw a switch—throughout Morrison, the music stopped, people disappeared from the walkways and railings.

“Do you want to watch the game with us?” Ernie looked at the girls.

“Sure, if you’ll have us,” Barbara responded.

“Trust me,” Jim smiled, “you all are *always* welcome!”

Glatton ran into the room, rolled up his sleeping bag, and tossed his suitcase in a corner. The parade followed—Ernie, Jim, Rick, Freddy, Diane, Barbara, Gayle, Nancy. Ernie and Jim placed the TV (color!) on a stand in the center of the room, then turned their beds to face it, along with their two chairs.

Diane sat on the edge of a bed. “Come sit next to me, Glat,” she coaxed.

“You won’t have to ask twice,” he responded to laughter.

“I’m turning on the radio and will turn down the TV sound,” Ernie announced.

“If we can’t hear Woody, I don’t want to hear anything,” Jim said.

“Woody is the voice of truth!” Rick proclaimed.

“He always calls it the *r-i-t-e* way,” Diane drawled, elbowing Glatton.

“No disagreement here,” he said. “I called from Colorado the night of the Notre Dame game, and my father put the telephone receiver next to the radio so I could listen to Woody call the last five minutes.”

“You *didn’t*,” Diane said. “Honey, you *are* a Tar Heel!” She touched his knee and gave him a wide smile.

“More beers, anyone?” Jim asked.

“Do y’all have anything more *in-vig-oratin’* than that?” Diane asked.

Jim returned from the bathroom with his arms full—two fifths of Jack Daniel’s, a stack of Carolina blue cups from the bar He’s Not Here, a bucket of ice, and a bottle of Dom Pérignon.

"The champagne is only for after the game, and only if we win," Jim said.

"Honey, do you have any Coke for the JD?" Diane questioned.

"What type of place do you think this is?" he replied. He put the Dom Pérignon back in the bathroom fridge and returned with two six-packs of Coke.

"That's just the way I like it, too," Glattan said.

"Then pour me one, sweetie," Diane smiled at Glattan.

Glattan put a handful of ice cubes in a blue cup and poured in a small amount of Daniel's.

"Oh honey," she said, "please make me a *real* one."

Glattan poured in more until the cup was half full. Diane nodded.

What's good for the goose is good for the gander, Glattan thought. He made a duplicate for himself.

Ernie turned on the TV. A replay showed the final seconds of UNC–Charlotte and Marquette—a length-of-court pass deflected by Charlotte's Cedric "Cornbread" Maxwell into the hands of Marquette's Jerome Whitehead, who banked in a layup with one second remaining to give Marquette a 51–49 win.

"Suck," said Rick. "I was hoping for an all-North Carolina final."

"I couldn't care less," said Ernie. "I just want us to be in the title game."

He turned down the TV sound as Woody began introducing the players:

"The 28–4 Tar Heels will start Rocky Mount native, 6'2" junior Phil Ford at point guard; 6'2" senior John Kuester from Richmond, Virginia, at shooting guard; Pineville's 6'5" senior Walter Davis at small forward; freshman sensation 6'6" Mike O'Koren from Jersey City, New Jersey, as power forward; and 6'9" freshman Rich Yonakor from Euclid, Ohio, as center. Carolina is coached by Dean Smith, who's in his sixteenth season at the helm."

Cheers erupted in Ernie and Jim's room.

"For the 29–2 senior-laden Running Rebels of Nevada–Las Vegas, 5'11" senior Robert Smith from Los Angeles will start at point guard; 6'4" senior Sam Smith from Ferriday, Louisiana, will join him in the back court; Boulder, Colorado's 6'6" senior Glen Gondrezick will play small forward; Houston's 6'7" senior Eddie Owens plays power forward; and 6'9" senior Larry Moffett from Gary, Indiana, will start at center. The Rebels are averaging 108 points a game and are coached by Jerry Tarkanian in his fourth season as head coach."

"Screw him!" Barbara shouted.

“Cheater!” yelled Jim.

“Just face it—he’s an asshole,” Gayle declared.

That comment produced a clinking of beer bottles and blue cups.

Glattan thought to himself, I am as close to paradise as I will ever be.

But paradise can have pitfalls. UNLV jumped to a 12–4 lead as the Heels committed a flurry of turnovers. Carolina responded with a 10–0 run, highlighted by fast break baskets from O’Koren and Kuester. A foul on Walter Davis by the Rebels’ Reggie Theus caused Tark to bury his face in his hands on the UNLV bench.

“Yeah, cry cheater!” Jim bellowed.

“Want some cheese with that whine?” asked Freddy, which drew applause.

The game remained tight until the four-minute point of the first half, with the score tied at 29. Dean then called for Four Corners.

“Try and figure that out, Tark!” yelled Ernie.

“He can’t—he’s never seen it before,” exclaimed Rick.

But the tactic backfired as the Heels continued to throw away the ball. Vegas scored the next eight points to take a 37–29 lead. Although Carolina cut the margin to 41–37, the Rebels surged to a 49–41 advantage with 30 seconds remaining. Dean again raised four fingers—the signal for Four Corners—and after Phil Ford stepped across the center line, he stopped, unguarded while he dribbled. The clock ticked down: 20 seconds, 15, 10. Finally, with eight seconds remaining, Ford dribbled toward the basket as Rebel defenders collapsed on him. With two seconds left he flipped a baseline pass to a breaking O’Koren, who put in a layup as time expired.

Cheers—along with sighs of relief—rippled across the room.

“Well, we’re only down six, and certainly we can come back from that,” Barbara said.

“No kidding,” responded Ernie. “Y’all remember three years ago. We were down eight to Duke with 17 seconds to go, and we tied the game and won it in overtime.”

“I’ll never forget Walter Davis’s half-court shot hitting the backboard and going through the hoop with one second left,” said Nancy.

“I peed in my pants and spilled my drink when that happened,” said Diane. “Speaking of drinks, Glat honey, why don’t you make me another one?”

“Sure, I’d be glad to.”

“The fixings are all in the bathroom fridge,” said Jim. “Anybody else want something?”

After placing their orders, everyone headed outside to the walkway and railing. The entire dorm seemed to be there. No music this time. The talk ranged from loud, rapid-fire banter to almost whispers. When Jim and Glattan brought out the drinks, Ernie was doing jumping jacks, explaining that he had to burn off nervous energy. The girls laughed.

“Ernie, you’re *cra-zy*,” Diane exclaimed. “I’m taking care of my nerves with JD and Coke.”

Glattan was worried too. We can’t lose, he thought. I’ve made it to Chapel Hill watching Carolina play in the Final Four on a glorious day surrounded by beautiful girls and great guys—but we can’t lose.

“Game time!” Jim hollered.

Glattan got back in the room in time to hear Woody say that Walter Davis had 15 first-half points and Mike O’Koren had 14—and that Carolina had 16 turnovers.

“We can’t keep throwing the ball away!” Rick shouted.

Carolina did exactly that, and after two minutes UNLV led 55–45.

“Day-um, Tar Heels—get your butts in gear!” yelled Diane.

Perhaps Carolina’s players heard her. More likely, they heard the calming voice of Dean Smith, who huddled with them when Tarkanian called a time-out after the Heels trimmed the lead to 55–49 with 17 minutes remaining.

When play resumed, Phil Ford drove for a layup but was undercut by Rebel center Larry Moffett. Ford landed hard on his right elbow—his hyperextended right elbow—and got up in obvious pain.

“That bastard!” yelled Jim. “That should be a technical foul!”

“Damn dirty play!” shouted Glattan.

“Total BS!” screamed Nancy.

At the foul line, the reinjured Ford could make only the first of two free throws. The Rebels got the rebound, sprinted down court, and put up a quick shot. It missed, and in the battle for the ball Rebel forward Glen Gondrezick inadvertently elbowed his teammate Moffett in the nose, breaking it. Moffett left the game.

“That’s justice!” exclaimed Ernie. “Payback for taking out Phil Ford!”

“And it was ‘friendly fire’ to boot!” Glattan rejoined.

Laughter ensued.

With UNLV’s starting center on the bench, Carolina carved up the inside. O’Koren scored on a layup, then took a beautiful pass from John Kuester for another score and got fouled. That play brought everyone in the room to their feet as Carolina tied the score at 55. On the Heels’ next possession, Walter Davis scored under the goal to give Carolina

the lead. More jumping up and down. Dean Smith then raised four fingers. More screaming and jumping. Phil Ford promptly drove the lane for an uncontested layup. The room registered a solid 8.5 on the Richter scale. Carolina had gone on a 14–0 run and led 59–55.

But UNLV was not about to surrender.

With Moffett back on the court, the Rebels and Heels traded baskets until Carolina pulled to a 77–69 lead on an O’Koren dunk with just over six minutes left. UNLV then cut the margin to 77–73 with 3:47 to go. After a Davis score on a pass from Ford, the TV camera zoomed in on Tarkanian, savagely biting a white towel. The room exploded in laughter.

Way too soon to rejoice.

Vegas scored the next four points to trim Carolina’s advantage to 79–77 with 1:45 remaining. With the Heels in the Four Corners—of course—the Rebels fouled John Kuester. Everyone in the room stood in silence. The first free throw bounced off the right side of the rim, hit the backboard, then went through the hoop.

“YESSSSSS!”

The next free went cleanly through the net.

“YESSSSSS!”

Kuester stole the ball on the next possession, producing screams and jumps, only to have the Heels throw the ball away.

“Shit!” bellowed Jim. “Shit! Shit! Shit!”

UNLV’s Tony Smith drained a 23-footer from the top of the key to make the score 81–79.

“Oh *god-day-um!*”

On the inbounds play, the pass went to Ford, who was run over—literally—by two Vegas players. No foul. UNLV’s Reggie Theus came away with the ball.

“NOOOOOOO!”

Theus dribbled into the lane, colliding with Kuester after passing the ball. Foul on Theus.

“YESSSSSS!”

Kuester to the free throw line. Ten seconds left. One-and-one.

“Oh please! PLEASE! PLEASE!”

First shot cleanly through.

“YESSSSSS!”

Second shot rimmed in.

“YESSSSSS!” “YESSSSSS!” “YESSSSSS!”

UNLV's Tony Smith drained a 25-footer with seven seconds left. 83–81.

The Rebels fouled Kuester going for the rebound.

Kuester back to the charity stripe.

Everyone standing. Total silence.

Kuester took the ball from one of the refs and handed it back. "It's wet," Woody said, "and he wants a towel." Kuester got one, wiped off his own sweat, passed it to Walter Davis, who also wiped off sweat. A ref then took the towel, wiped off the ball, and passed the ball to Kuester.

"God Almighty!" yelled Gayle.

Prayer answered—the ball swished.

SCREAMS. JUMPS. SLAPPING HANDS.

The second shot rimmed out. UNLV's Reggie Theus recovered. O'Koren and Davis hounded him as he brought the ball up court, forcing him to pass to Sam Smith on the baseline. The Heels let Smith drive, and he hit a layup as the horn sounded.

Final: Carolina 84–UNLV 83.

PANDEMONIUM.

Diane shrieked and threw her arms around Glattan. Glattan squeezed back, vaguely aware that Ernie and Jim had also collapsed on him. He looked at Diane and saw tears, then realized that his own eyes were moist. He heard the pounding of Morrison's iron railings. Ernie, Glattan, and the four girls went outside to pound on them as well, though Freddy and Rick soon eclipsed that noise with "Satisfaction" blaring through Bose 911 speakers.

"We did it—we DID it—we *DID* it! We're going to play for the title! Marquette, here we come!" Ernie shouted. The girls began dancing, and Ernie, Glattan, Freddy, and Rick joined them. Who cares if I can't really dance, Glattan thought. No one gives a damn, and if today isn't a day for dancing, there never will be.

Suddenly a stinging wetness hit Glattan in the face. Jim had opened the Dom Pérignon, spraying the entire group. The girls looked like they had entered a wet T-shirt competition but seemed oblivious to the imprints of nipples on thin fabric. They laughed and continued dancing. I have, Glattan thought, died and gone to heaven.

"FRANKLIN STREET!"

Ernie's roar triggered Morrison's exodus. Jim passed what remained of the Dom Pérignon around, and everyone helped drain it as they headed to the stairwell.

“Come on, sugar!” Diane said to Glattan. “It’s time for some *real* partying!”

As Glattan stepped out of the dorm, he saw a Carolina blue wave surging past Kenan Stadium, headed north. He joined it, with Diane grabbing his hand as they started to run with the masses toward Franklin Street. Ernie and Jim led their group, with Freddy and Rick behind them and Glattan, Diane, Barbara, Nancy, and Gayle in trail. Glattan noticed that Jim had traded the Dom Pérignon bottle for one of Jack Daniel’s; many beer cans also made the trip.

Whoops and hollers accompanied them as they ran through campus. To Glattan’s delight, the Bell Tower chimed “Hark the Sound.” Passing the Old Well, he saw that two students had climbed on Silent Sam. He looked at the trees bordering Franklin Street, noticing several people in those, one of whom, a guy, wore a Carolina T-shirt and nothing else.

Franklin Street rivaled Times Square on New Year’s Eve. Police had blocked it off from the Planetarium to Columbia Street, with Columbia blocked from Rosemary Street to the Carolina Inn. Glattan and company slowly squeezed into the multitude, which swayed back and forth to music blaring from bars and restaurants. Diane put her hands on Glattan’s hips, attempting to dance. Glattan could barely move his feet without bumping into a body. He saw Ernie oscillating with Barbara, Jim with Nancy, but beyond that, he couldn’t pinpoint anyone. With effort, Jim passed the Jack Daniel’s among the group, which soon emptied it.

“Make way! Make way!” a voice yelled. “Right here—Phil Ford’s jock!”

Glattan looked in the direction of the voice. A hefty guy carried a broom handle with an enormous jock strap attached to the top of it. Everyone laughed as he made his way through the crowd.

A police siren then drowned out the music. Glattan looked toward the post office and saw the flashing lights of a police car making its way south on Henderson Street. Behind the police car was a big rig hauling a flatbed trailer.

“HOLY SHIT!” yelled Jim.

Glattan stood on his tiptoes, squinting at the flatbed. On it was a four-man band, complete with drums, amplifiers, and electric guitars. People spilled around Silent Sam, the Planetarium parking lot, and the grassy area in front of the Methodist Church as the rig turned on Franklin Street.

“*Day-um,*” said Diane.

Day-um is right, Glattan thought, as Fleetwood Mac, Boston, Led Zep, and Elton John boomed from the flatbed. Any movement was now impossible; singing along was the only option.

And the crowd sang away.

When the band played “Saturday Night’s All Right for Fighting,” the singing turned to screaming. The band stretched the song out—the continued refrain of “Saturday!” lasted at least five minutes—and then the crowd demanded to hear the song again. The band complied.

After the second rendition, Diane said in Glattan’s ear, “Let’s head back.”

Glattan saw a mischievous smile matched by beckoning blue eyes. “Ah, sure.”

As the two snaked out of the throng, Glattan caught Ernie’s eye. Ernie winked.

Glattan and Diane held hands walking back to Morrison but said nothing. As they stepped into Gayle and Diane’s room, Diane closed and locked the door, threw her arms around Glattan, and planted her tongue deep inside his mouth.

“Why don’t you lie down on the bed, honey?”

Glattan knew how to follow orders.

“Let’s see what we have here,” she said as she removed his pants and began to undress.

“My God, you’re beautiful!”

“You’re sweet.”

“Diane—I—I have to tell you—I’ve never done this before.”

She stared at him as she stepped out of her panties. Another wicked smile.

“Darlin’—there’s nothing to it—plus it feels *so* good. You just lie back and enjoy.”

“But I don’t want to get you pregnant.”

Diane smiled again as she took off the rest of his clothes. “Honey, it’s nice of you to worry about that, but I’ve been on the pill ever since I got to Chapel Hill. Now you just lie back.”

Chapter 14

27 March 1977

Glattan glowed as he sank into the aisle seat of the United flight bound for Chicago. Carolina's win and his virginity's loss left him both euphoric and incredulous. Yes, the Heels downed UNLV and would play for the national title tomorrow night—the front page, not to mention the sports pages, of the *News and Observer* and the *Durham Morning Herald* made that abundantly clear; he relished reading about the details. And yes, the romp with Diane was a totally unexpected but all-too-real delight.

“Do you want to stay in touch when I return to the Academy?” Glattan asked as he left her room.

“Honey, please don't take this the wrong way, but I'm not into forming relationships. It was wonderful to meet you, watch the game with you, and afterward was really special. Perhaps we might repeat it sometime in the future if you get back to Chapel Hill. But I'm not ready to do things long term, not yet anyhow.”

With that, she gave him a long, slow kiss. “By the way, you weren't bad at all—in fact, you were pretty *day-um* good. You take care back in Colorado.”

Magical.

Everything about the trip to Chapel Hill.

Glattan looked at the front page of the *Durham Morning Herald*. A photograph of O'Koren dunking. The caption read, “Carolina's Mike O'Koren slams home two of his career-high 31 points to help send the Tar Heels to Monday night's national championship game against Marquette.”

Glattan opened the sports section. Walter Davis, with his broken finger, had 19 points on 7-7 shooting from the floor and 5-6 from the foul line. Rich Yonakor scored 11, Phil Ford 12, John Kuester 9; collectively, the Heels shot an impressive 59 percent from the floor. Nice balance and admirable accuracy, Glattan thought. Ford had nine assists, most on dazzling passes to O'Koren or Davis. Yet Ford also had nine turnovers, and as a team Carolina threw the ball away 27 times. If we do that against Marquette, Glattan surmised, Monday night would be a long one.

Yes, but—Carolina *would* play for the title.

And the title game would be televised in Colorado.

Yep, back to USAFA.

Back to reality.

Glattan wondered if snow might be falling when the flight from Chicago landed in Denver. That would be fitting—a cold dose of yin to go with the heavenly yang he experienced. Driving over Monument Pass would be treacherous, and he *had* to get back to Vandenberg Hall. Shit, he thought, I've got *class* tomorrow, plus Barrow and I have to get the room in shape for inspection. Tonight will be a late one, regardless of snow.

Then there's Chadwick—and Emily.

Glattan wondered what the hell he would do about the three pistols in the trunk of his car—and whether Chadwick remembered anything about the night of St. Patrick's Day. His Military Thought class was on Monday's schedule. Glattan determined to be fully set for that one even if it meant slacking off on other courses; no way would he allow Chadwick to chastise him for a "failure to prepare." Chadwick might have other reasons to reprove him, but Glattan didn't think he would in a public forum. At least, he hoped not.

As for Emily, Glattan was also clueless. She was so helpless and fearful that night, he thought—how could she not have been? I guess I helped her, but then I left for nine days. Who knows how her home life has been since I went away? Would she want to see me again, or would I just remind her of a terrible evening?

For now, though, he decided to go back to reading the paper—and thinking about Diane.



Glattan got lucky.

Denver was blanketed by white, but the snow had stopped and the roads were clear. He even got a parking space in the upper lot adjacent to Vandenberg Hall. Walking into the squadron, he first went to the CQ desk to sign in—and to sign the separate roster confirming he did not get married while on leave. No, I didn't get married, he thought as he signed his name. But I sure as hell got laid.

"Hey Glat! I know you had a good leave—I saw that your Tar Holes won yesterday!" Mike Barrow shouted from down the hall.

"Good to see you too, Bareass."

"Hey—you'll be impressed. I even watched the UNLV game."

"Damn—I am impressed. What caused you to watch college basketball?"

“Well, my dad was watching, so I decided I’d watch too. I saw both games—they were good ones. Carolina’s comeback surprised me. That O’Koren kid is tough.”

“I told you the Heels were good, even though they’re banged up. Guess where I watched the game?”

“I’m thinking ‘at home’ isn’t the right answer.”

“No—I was in Chapel Hill with my best friend from high school. We were dancing on Franklin Street—the main drag—after the game.”

“That had to have been fun.”

They walked inside their room and Glattan closed the door.

“Yeah, quite a bit—and I got laid.”

“No shit?!”

“No shit.”

“Well, goddamn, Glat—you *finally* got your cherry popped!”

“Must admit I liked it.”

“How could you *not*? You truly did have a big leave! Is this the beginning of a beautiful friendship?”

“Don’t think so—more like a classic one-night stand. It certainly wasn’t her first time.”

Barrow grinned. “Always good to learn from talent. No matter—there’s plenty of other girls out there.”

“I guess so.”

“Maybe—even Emily?” Barrow stared at his roommate. “What the hell *are* you going to do about that situation—and those damn guns?”

“Beats the hell out of me. I’m hesitant to go to Captain Hoffman about them because he might try to take some action against Chadwick. And—despite what happened that night—I’m not sure that any punitive action is warranted.”

“Hmm . . . that’s a tough one. Not only did he threaten to kill himself, he could have killed you. Emily was also at risk.”

“True enough. But he was reminiscing about the loss of one of his friends from Vietnam. He was so sad.”

“And so drunk. You don’t know what he might have done.”

“No. I admit I was scared shitless—literally.”

“Yeah, you were incredibly ripe when you got back to the room.”

“I think for the moment . . . the answer is . . . to just see what happens in class tomorrow. I need to hit the books.”

“Don’t forget we’ve got to clean up the room as well.”

“You really know how to hurt a guy.”

“After three years, I think I have it down pat.”

Glattan smiled. Yes, it sucked being back at USAFA. But it was damn good being back with Barrow.



Glattan made sure he was seated in Chadwick's seminar room by 7:45; the class started at 8:00 a.m. Only Firsties could take the History of Military Thought, with enrollment capped at 12. The day's topic was "friction," the third installment from Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz's epic tome *On War*. Nothing about Clausewitz was easy, Glattan thought, but at least his notion of friction was fairly straightforward: uncertainty, chance, danger, and exertion—the elements comprising the "climate of war" that usually disrupted the most careful planning and profoundly affected war's conduct.

At precisely 8:00 a.m. Chadwick stepped into the seminar.

"Room, a-ten-hut!" called out Dave Johnson, the "section marcher" who took attendance and called the seminar to order at the start of class.

"Take your seats, gentlemen," Chadwick responded. "I trust you had an enjoyable spring break. Now it's back to the cold of Colorado—and to Clausewitz. Today we'll dissect his concept of friction, which in many ways reflects Colorado's weather. Right, Mr. Glattan?"

Chadwick's eyes bore into the cadet's.

Glattan returned the stare.

"Yes, sir, I'd agree with that. Colorado's weather is always uncertain—it can change from one hour to the next, and when it does, it can ruin your plans. So, if you want to go skiing at Breckenridge, or hiking in Estes Park, you're taking a chance that the weather may not cooperate, and the gamble may not pay off. Depending on the time of year, the weather—snow, ice, hail, high winds—can produce a lot of exertion in getting from point A to point B. In fact, sir, it can be downright dangerous—and if you're stressed out or believe you're in danger, you're probably not going to accomplish your mission of getting to where you'd like to be."

Chadwick maintained his gaze. "So, Mr. Glattan, what does the 'Great Clause' say is the best prescription for dealing with friction?"

"Combat experience, sir."

"But that's often hard to come by. What's second best?"

"Reading military history, sir."

Chadwick's lips curved upward and his eyes turned to the rest of the class. "Mr. Glattan's done his homework. Let's see who else has."

When the class ended, Glattan stood up to leave.

"Mr. Glattan, could I have a word with you?" Chadwick asked.

“Yes, sir.” Glattan moved toward the lieutenant colonel.

“Your Tar Heels have a big game tonight, don’t they?”

“Yes, sir.”

“If you’d like, you’re welcome to watch it at my house.”

The offer clearly surprised Glattan. “Sir, I—I really appreciate the invitation, but a lot of the guys in the squadron have planned to watch it together.”

“Well, I certainly understand that. But if you change your mind, the offer still stands.”

“Thank you very much, sir—that’s very kind of you.”

“Your guys are fun to watch—plus you’ve got an old Air Force coach. By the way, Emily will be home tonight.”

Glattan paused. “Thanks again, sir—you might see me.”

Glattan remembered nothing from the rest of the day’s classes. As the tip-off approached, he focused on the game ahead, wondering how Clausewitzian friction might affect the outcome. Yet his thoughts also turned to Chadwick—and Emily. She probably persuaded her dad to invite Glattan over, or at the least, told Chadwick that she’d be home that evening. Did that mean she had rekindled feelings for him? He had no idea. And what about Chadwick? What condition would he be in tonight? Would it be a repeat of St. Patrick’s Day? Unlikely, given the invite. Still, uncertainty and chance, and certainly stress and maybe even danger loomed large for more than just the hardcourt.

Glattan finally decided to watch the game in his room. Even Barrow planned to forgo studying to watch it, and a crowd of Blackjack 21’s Firsties wanted to see how Glattan reacted to the game as much as they wanted to see the game itself. His love for the Heels was legendary in the squadron. At the start of the NCAA tournament he constructed a huge poster of the brackets and taped it on the wall outside his room; after each game he updated the results. After the post-sign-in discussion with Barrow on Sunday night, Glattan carefully printed in the winners to show that Carolina and Marquette would play for all the marbles.

Technically, he could have gone to a bar in C Springs and watched the game—after spring break, First Classmen could stay off base all night provided they showed up for their scheduled classes. The privilege was especially beneficial to Firsties with girlfriends in the Springs. Another twisted bit of Academy logic, Glattan thought. Apparently, it was fine for a cadet to sleep with a woman so long as you didn’t marry her.

But karma told Glattan, well, he believed it told him, to watch the game in his room.

As tip-off neared, the atmosphere became raucous—Boots Renfro, Jack Wiggins, Pete Dawson, Tom Nheman, and a slew of other Firsties wheeled in chairs and began a loud pregame analysis—no one sat on the beds to prevent disrupting them for Tuesday morning’s potential inspection.

Slightly different from two days ago in Chapel Hill.

No booze.

No girls.

No Woody Durham.

Glattan would have to suffer through Curt Gowdy, Billy Packer, and Dick Enberg calling the game for NBC. Pretty good as announcers went, but still, not Woody.

“So, Glat—many pundits are saying Marquette is a team of destiny. That tipped length-of-court pass against Charlotte with two seconds remaining—most of the Warriors’ games in the tournament have been close—and their coach, Al McGuire, announcing that he’s retiring at the end of the season—sounds like a Cinderella, huh?” Jack questioned.

“I’ll admit they seemed charmed. They’ve got some very talented players—I was impressed when I watched them blow out Air Force in the Field House back in January—”

“Everybody blows out Air Force,” Boots said to laughs.

“—but Carolina could be considered a team of destiny as well. The Heels have made it to the title game despite being banged up throughout the tournament. In fact, one of their best players, center Tommy LaGarde, has been out of the lineup and on crutches since February, so I’m not about to coronate Al McGuire just yet.”

“Yeah, but don’t you think playing in the title game for a coach who said months ago that he’d retire this year gives Marquette extra incentive?” asked Tom.

“No doubt,” Glattan responded. “But this is the fifth time Carolina’s been in the Final Four under Dean Smith, and he’s never won it all. Rest assured Tar Heel players know that, and they want to get that monkey off his back.”

“Well, it should be an interesting game to say the least,” Barrow offered. “I can’t believe it’s got my attention. Damn you, Glat.” More laughs.

A ref tossed the ball up in the center jump circle. Glattan felt his stomach churn.

Marquette, alternating between a 2-3 and 1-2-2 zone defense, jumped to a 4-1 lead.

"I thought your guys were good," Tom said.

"Jesus," Glattan countered. "It's only three minutes into the game."

Seemingly responding to that observation, Carolina fought back to take a 7-6 lead after Rich Yonakor scored underneath.

Glattan glared at Tom.

"Hey, don't be pissed at me," Tom said. "I'm just here to watch—and to get your goat, of course." Laughter broke out.

For the next 10 minutes, the teams traded buckets. Marquette led 18-17 with seven minutes to go in the first half when Warrior senior Butch Lee scored on a three-point play, followed by Marquette's Bernard Toone hitting a jumper to give Marquette a 23-17 advantage. On the next series Carolina turned the ball over when a ref called the Heels for three seconds in the lane without a shot.

"That's utter bullshit!" Glattan yelled. "That was a second and a half at most. What fucking clock are the refs using?!"

"One that tells the correct time!" Tom answered to guffaws.

A loud knock came at the door. Boots opened it, and there stood an Air Force major in his Class A uniform with a wing staff cadet, also in Class As, by his side.

The Senior Officer of the Day—the sole officer in the cadet area—who patrolled the dorms after classes ended.

"What the hell are you guys doing in here?" he asked.

"We're watching a basketball game," Barrow responded.

"Damn it, you guys know it's Call to Quarters. If you're not going to study, so be it, but you'd better keep it quiet so other guys can. Otherwise, I'll write you all up."

"Yes, sir," Barrow said, followed by lots of nods.

The door closed.

"Well, fuck me," Glattan whispered. Then he looked at the TV. Marquette now led 31-20 as Bo Ellis scored on a backdoor cut that flummoxed his Carolina defender.

"Well, REALLY fuck me," Glattan said. Hushed laughs all around.

The Heels tried to battle back, but every time they chipped into the lead, the Warriors answered. With 10 seconds left in the half, Yonakor hit a jumper to make the margin 37-27. Marquette's Lee brought the ball up court, with Phil Ford closely guarding him. Ford stopped moving in front of the Carolina bench, and Lee, leading with his right shoulder, crashed into him. Ford hit the floor hard as Dean Smith

stood up with his hand behind his head, indicating a charge, as did many Carolina players.

The ref blew his whistle—and placed his hands on his hips.

Blocking foul on Ford.

“BULLSHIT!” screamed Glattan. “I don’t give a shit if the SOD does write me up! That call was TOTALLY fucked!”

“Looked like a block to me,” Tom said.

“Bite me, Tom.”

Lee nailed the two free throws to make the halftime score 39–27.

“Doesn’t look like the same team I saw on Saturday,” Barrow stated. “Marquette seems to have Carolina’s number.”

“Well, I admit that it doesn’t look good,” Glattan agreed. “But it’s not over yet. In the meantime, I have to take a piss.” Laughter all around.

Glattan left the room but did not head to the latrine. Instead, he walked into the phone room, which, fortunately, was vacant.

He made a call.

“Colonel Chadwick, it’s Cadet Glattan. Is your offer still available?”

“Sure it is. Your guys are in trouble. I’m more than happy to help you cheer them on here.”

“Thanks, sir. I’m on my way.” The ribbing had gotten to him, and now he could watch the second half without harassment.

Emily answered the door.

She looked wonderful, Glattan thought—so different from the last time he saw her. Tight jeans and an Air Force sweatshirt. And yet—her eyes told him that everything was not quite as it should be.

Something was amiss.

“Hi, Paul. Dad and Bob Jr. are in the basement. It’s good to see you.”

“You too.”

“Did you have a good leave?”

“Yeah—it was a great time.”

“Then you’ll have to tell me all about it—but not now. I know you want to get to the game.”

“You OK?”

“Yes, I’m fine. Just a little stressed by school, but nothing serious. You get downstairs.”

Perhaps that’s it, Glattan thought, but during their time together she had never showed that schoolwork rattled her.

Glattan walked into the living room, where Emily’s mom read a magazine.

“Hello, Paul. Good to see you—it’s been a long time.”

“Yes, ma’am—good to see you too. And you’re right—it’s been far too long.”

“Well, enjoy watching the game—basketball is not really my thing—but feel free to cheer as much as you want.”

“Thanks, ma’am. I’ll try to keep my emotions under control.”

Glattan walked to the staircase leading to the basement with Emily following. Suddenly he shivered. The memory of the last time that walked down those stairs flooded back. He grabbed the railings.

“You all right, Paul?” Emily asked.

“Yeah, I’m good. Just didn’t want to miss a step.”

The placid scene below was almost as unnerving as what he had witnessed 10 days ago. The room was immaculate. Chadwick sat in the same armchair where he sat on St. Patrick’s Day. He wore khakis with an open-collar shirt and a wool sweater. A ginger ale and a bowl of peanuts sat on the table in front of him. His eyes focused on the TV but turned to Glattan when he began descending the stairs.

Chadwick got up when Glattan reached the bottom step.

“I’m glad you could make it,” Chadwick said, extending his hand. “The situation appears grim now, but the situation can change. Half-time’s almost over—have a seat.”

Glattan sat down in the center of the couch beside Bob Jr., with Emily sitting in the other corner.

“Are you a Tar Heel?” towheaded 9-year-old Bob Jr. asked.

“You bet I am—I’m from North Carolina, and my father went to school at Carolina.”

“They’re the ‘good guys’ tonight, aren’t they?”

“Well, I think they are—that’s who I’m cheering for.”

“Me too.”

“Good to hear—we’re going to need all the help we can get.” Glattan made a mental note to eliminate any four-letter vocabulary that might cross his mind during the second half.

“Can I get you something to drink?” Emily asked.

“No, I’m good, Em.” The memory of Jack Daniel’s and Coke came back in a flash. Glattan noticed that Chadwick stared at him when Emily asked the question.

“Here we go!” Chadwick said.

Carolina won the tap, and Mike O’Koren drove inside for a quick layup.

“Yeah!” said Glattan.

“Yeah!” echoed Bob Jr.

O’Koren then blocked a Warrior shot, allowing Carolina to recover the ball. Davis added two free throws, and then O’Koren nailed a 20-footer in the deep right corner to cut the lead to six. Al McGuire called time-out.

“Sweet!” Glattan proclaimed.

“Sweet!” said Bob Jr.

“Impressive,” said Chadwick. “Good defense usually leads to good offense.”

Emily squeezed Glattan’s arm. Not the same as Diane jumping up and down, but not bad, either.

O’Koren continued the tear, hitting another 20-footer, followed by a John Kuester jumper and layup. 41–41.

“YEAH!” Glattan jumped from the couch.

Bob Jr. did as well.

Glattan put out his hands, and Bob Jr. slapped them. Glattan turned to Emily with his palms extended, and she slapped them as well. Pretty damn close to Diane, he thought, but he could also tell that her focus was on more than the game.

The teams traded buckets. Then Dean told the Heels to stop the pressing defense and go to a zone. Carolina reserve Tom Zaliagiris promptly stole the ball, taking it the length of the court for a layup—and Carolina’s first lead since early in the first half.

“YES!!!” Glattan exploded, followed by an echo from Bob Jr.

“That’s how you play defense,” Chadwick observed.

“FOUR CORNERS!” Glattan yelled when the Heels regained possession.

Dean Smith thought otherwise, and Carolina remained in its flowing offense until Marquette tied the game.

Then Dean raised four fingers.

“All right!” Glattan yelled.

“This time it’s unexpected,” Chadwick said.

The Heels began passing the ball around the perimeter of the Marquette zone, looking for an opening.

For the next two minutes, a chess match ensued between Al McGuire and Dean Smith.

McGuire twice extended his defense; each time he did, Smith sped the pace of play, only to have the Warriors drop back into their zone, with Smith resorting to Four Corners. Finally, McGuire switched from a zone to man-to-man, and the Heels attacked the basket.

Backup center Steve Krafcsin zipped a pass to breaking Carolina reserve Bruce Buckley, momentarily open under the goal. Buckley put up a shot.

As the ball reached the top of its arc, Marquette's Bo Ellis blocked it. "GOAL TENDING!" screamed Glattan.

The refs' whistles remained silent.

"That's a tough one," said Chadwick. "Hard to say."

Marquette responded with a stall of its own, ultimately scoring a bucket that Davis answered with two free throws to again tie the game. The Warriors scored twice to go up 51-47 with 5:30 left.

"We're in trouble," Glattan said as his right leg bobbed up and down. Bob Jr. nodded his head.

Carolina pulled within two. Kuester then planted his feet as Warrior Butch Lee lowered his shoulder and dribbled into him, knocking Kuester to the floor. Blocking foul on Kuester.

"THAT'S BULL—!" Glattan caught himself before finishing the curse. "THAT'S JUST BULL!"

"BULL!" yelled Bob Jr. as Glattan turned red.

Emily put her hand over her mouth to hide a laugh.

"I understand your frustration," Chadwick said. "That was a really tough call."

A minute later Kuester fouled out. With 1:56 to go, reserve Dudley Bradley committed Carolina's seventh team foul, sending Warrior Jerome Whitehead—only a 55 percent foul-shooter—to the line. Whitehead swished both shots to give Marquette a 53-49 lead.

Friction, Glattan thought to himself. Chance writ large.

But friction could also be a good thing.

A Carolina turnover gave Marquette the ball, and O'Koren fouled the Warriors' Bernard Toone. Toone responded by swinging his elbow at O'Koren. Technical foul on Toone.

First, Toone missed the front end of his one-and-one. Davis then hit the two technical free throws to trim Marquette's lead to 53-51.

The Warriors then reeled off four consecutive free throws because of two O'Koren fouls.

Down six with a minute left.

"Good grief!" Glattan shouted. "They're killing us at the line!"

Davis hit a jumper to trim the lead to three.

"YEAH!" Glattan screamed, with an echo answering.

But then O'Koren fouled Ellis on the inbounds play—and O'Koren fouled out.

Ellis made the free throws—of course, Glattan thought, as a tear trickled down his face. Emily squeezed his arm hard. He looked at her through overflowing eyes and saw Bob Jr. shaking his head.

“I’m sorry, Cadet Paul,” Bob Jr. whispered.

“Me too,” Emily said with another grasp of his arm.

Glattan wiped his eyes as the Marquette free throw parade continued. Marquette 67, Carolina 59. Final.

“Mr. Glattan,” Chadwick said, “why don’t we head up to the kitchen?”

“Yes, sir.”

Glattan followed Chadwick up the stairs. As he did, he saw Emily staring at him—and her father—in a way that hearkened to St. Patrick’s Day.

The lieutenant colonel took two glasses out of the kitchen cabinet, and then a fifth of Jack Daniel’s. He poured less than an ounce in each glass, then put the bottle back in the cabinet.

“I remember that you like it with Coke, but I think straight is appropriate for tonight.”

Glattan looked into Chadwick’s eyes and slowly nodded.

Chadwick lowered his voice. “You probably wonder what I remember from that night before you went on leave. I’ll be honest—I don’t remember everything—not by a long shot. When I have those episodes—which, unfortunately, have become more frequent—I only remember bits and pieces. But I do remember that you were here that night—and that you tried to help me. For that, I am grateful.”

Glattan turned pale.

“I have a drinking problem, no doubt about it. I imagine Emily’s told you so. I’ve been drinking too much for a while now, and I know it. What’s sad is that now I can tolerate a great deal of whiskey before it does me in, plus I can recover from it very fast—the next day. Good genes, perhaps—or maybe really bad ones? That’s not going to last much longer, though.”

“What do you mean, sir?”

“Let’s take a drink to your Tar Heels first. One day, Dean Smith is going to win one—to the Tar Heels!”

Chadwick raised his glass, and a wide-eyed Glattan did the same. Chadwick clinked the glasses and took a sip. Glattan forced down a swallow.

“When I was in Vietnam,” Chadwick continued, “I spent a lot of time in the field—I didn’t think that an intelligence officer could do his job the right way unless he was truly aware of the conditions that he was analyzing—seeing as much as he could up close and personal. In early January

'68, we got word that the NVA might make a move against the Marine base at Khe Sanh. If that happened, we were going to rely a lot on airpower to support the Marines, and I wanted to see how we might best do that. So I hopped on a chopper at Tan Son Nhut and flew out there.

"I spent three or four days with the Marines and got them to take me outside the wire so I could see the terrain surrounding the base. I wanted to determine how the NVA might use it to mass against the outpost—and to try to avoid our aerial firepower. On one of those ventures, I was about a mile away from the base when a C-123 flew over. The plane was spraying something, I wasn't sure what, though I guessed it was some sort of defoliant.

"I was right—Agent Orange."

"Jesus, sir—that's horrible."

"Well, it's not good, that's for sure. I've been lucky thus far, no real symptoms. But I saw the doc a couple of weeks ago—in fact, a few days before you came over—and he said that I'm soon going to take a turn for the worse—the very worst. So that night you were here I thought that maybe I should try to avoid the agony that lies ahead."

"Damn, sir. Does the family know?"

Chadwick whispered, "Janet and Emily know—I told them last weekend. Bob Jr. is still in the dark."

Glattan whispered back, "Sir, why did you tell me?"

"Because you helped dissuade me from doing something that would have been incredibly stupid. I once thought that you might be my son-in-law one day. Whether that happens or not, I will be eternally grateful for what you did that night."

"Sir—I—I don't know what to say."

"I'll tell you what I'll say: 'Thank you, Paul.'"



Glattan stopped outside the door to his room in Vandenberg Hall. He looked at his large poster displaying the NCAA Tournament brackets. "MARQUETTE RULES!" appeared in giant block letters, written across the entire poster with a Sharpie.

He opened the door.

Blackjack 21's Firsties all stood inside, jammed against one another. Barrow dropped the needle on the turntable. The culmination of the "1812 Overture" boomed throughout the room.

Glattan raised both hands with middle fingers extended.

"FUCK YOU ALL!" he exclaimed. "FUCK YOU ALL!"

Part 3

Awakening

Work out your own salvation.

—Philippians 2:12

Chapter 15

29 March 1977

Glattan slowly walked from Vandenberg Hall past the F-105, through the Air Gardens, and into Fairchild Hall. He did not look forward to the forthcoming meeting with Chadwick to discuss the research paper on bombing Japan. Glattan's head still spun from Chadwick's confession—make that *confessions*—the night before. Talking about firebombing Japan now seemed trivial, not that killing half a million people was trivial. But after last night, Glattan thought, it sure seemed out of place.

He stopped outside the open door to Chadwick's office and knocked on the frame.

"Cadet First Class Glattan, reporting as ordered," he said with a salute.

Chadwick returned the salute. "Good to see you, Mr. Glattan. Come in and have a seat—and close the door."

Glattan sat down, facing Chadwick, who sat behind his desk in front of a giant window overlooking the cadet parade field.

Chadwick pointed out the window. "It won't be long now. You'll be marching on that parade field for the last time. Your graduation parade."

"Yes, sir."

"I remember my graduation parade at the Point. Gorgeous day, especially for June—not too hot in those damn wool uniforms. Yours are wool, too, aren't they?"

"Yes, sir."

"I remember on those hot, humid days when we'd march on the Plain, scores of cadets would collapse from the heat, but that day was special—not hot and humid."

Glattan thought to himself about past parades. He and his classmates had been told countless times not to lock the knees, to shift weight from one foot to the next, but inevitably on hot days cadets passed out in formation. Taking a knee to avoid collapsing was a "write-up" offense, so most cadets tried to tough it out and remain erect.

To eclipse the agony of standing still for what could be an ungodly amount of time, Glattan and Barrow made a game of it—Parade Ground Bingo.

From their position in 21st Squadron, they could observe 22nd Squadron dead ahead, and they had decent oblique views of 20th and 24th Squadrons. Other squadrons were more difficult to discern—

which was why Parade Ground Bingo was at least a two-man game. A cadet hitting the ground had to be confirmed by a minimum of two observers. Glattan and Barrow always marched beside one another to verify results. Often, though, all of Blackjack 21 (except Doolies, of course) joined in the verbal score-keeping.

Keeping score was simple. The first cadet to collapse—or take a knee—was designated “B,” followed by his squadron number. For instance, if the first cadet to fall was in 22nd Squadron, he was “B-22”; if the second cadet down was in 24th Squadron, he became “I-24.” The fifth cadet to fall equated to one “Bingo.” The goal was to see which parade accumulated the highest Bingo tally.

That was easily the Thomas D. White Award Parade in May 1975.

On that occasion, the Cadet Wing commander forgot to give the order for parade rest, resulting in the wing standing stiffly at attention for the entire ceremony. With the temperature a solid 89 degrees, a Southern senator with a penchant for oration talked for more than an hour after accepting the award.

Eight confirmed Bingos.

A picture on the front page of the *Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph* the following day looked like grapeshot had raked the Cadet Wing.

“We’ve seen some hot parades, that’s for sure,” Glattan grinned.

“Yes, I’m sure you have. I’m just glad to be an officer viewing them now, so I can move around—and stay seated. Are your parents coming out for graduation?”

“Yes, sir. They both came out for Parents’ Weekend when I was a Doolie, plus they came out for the Navy game this past fall—one of the two we won. Graduation will be a big deal for them.”

“And it should be. I imagine they had something to do with it.”

“Yes, sir—they provided the groundwork and much of the inspiration that helped me survive this place.”

Chadwick smiled. “*Survive* is the right word, I guess—that’s how I felt about West Point at the end of that journey. Now that you’re near the end of your time at USAFA, how do you feel about it? Would you have done it all over again, knowing what you know now?”

Glattan was silent. The conversation had begun differently from the way he thought it might, though he really wasn’t sure how the discussion would transpire. Chadwick’s question took him by surprise.

“I—I’m not sure, sir. I haven’t thought about it very much.”

“No, I imagine you haven’t. Since you’re on the eve of graduation, though, I think you’re entitled to some reflection.”

Glattan hesitated. “Well, sir, I guess I don’t hate this place as much as I once did.”

Chadwick’s eyes narrowed. “And why *did* you hate it so much?”

Damn, Glattan thought. No reference to last night’s conversation? And now it appears that *I’m* the target of psychoanalysis.

“Did you dislike West Point, sir, while you were a cadet?”

“Of course. No one loves the academies while they’re attending them. But I asked what upset *you*. I’ll make the question easier. What upset you the *most*?”

Conversations with Carol, Sherry, and his mom flooded back.

“I guess—I guess what bothered me the most was that I felt like USAFA was changing me—and not in a good way.”

“How so?”

“Sir, I’ve had girls tell me that this place has made me insincere and insensitive—and I think they’re probably right. Just look at the way I treated your daughter in December.”

“And the Academy did that to you?”

“Yes, sir—I think so.”

“You were always kind and compassionate before you got to USAFA? You never displayed anger or contempt?”

“I—I wouldn’t say that, sir.”

“Were you competitive in high school?”

“To a degree, sir.”

“Really? Where did you graduate in your high school class?”

“I was valedictorian, sir.”

“Hmmm. Did you try to be?”

“Yes, sir.”

“You did so because you thought it would help you get an Academy appointment, right?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Why do you think I went to Yale for two years before West Point?”

“I don’t know, sir.”

“Take a stab at it.”

“To help get into West Point?”

“Damn right—the competition was fierce, and having two years of Yale on my record likely made a difference.”

“Sir, if you don’t mind me asking, how could you afford Yale?”

“I was on scholarship—my parents sure as hell couldn’t have paid for it.”

“It was easier for you to get a scholarship to Yale than to get an appointment to West Point?”

“That’s how it worked out.”

“That’s fascinating, sir. I applied for an ROTC scholarship to Carolina but got turned down for it. Fortunately, the Academy appointment came through.”

“What would you have done if it hadn’t?”

“I don’t know, sir. Money was tight.”

“So you came to USAFA because of money?”

Glattan paused. “I guess that’s true. I thought it’d be neat to fly and everything, but the prospect of a ‘free’ education was huge.”

“And now we both know that West Point and the Academy are anything but ‘free,’ ” Chadwick smiled.

Glattan smiled back. “That’s certainly the truth, sir.”

“So back to my original question—how much has USAFA changed you?”

“I—I don’t know, sir. I still think I’m pretty callous.”

“Well, I’m not so sure about that. I think you’re pretty driven—and I’m not sure that feature came exclusively from USAFA. No one—except for an occasional genius here and there—becomes high school valedictorian unless they’re incredibly focused.”

“But, sir—you’ve got to agree that the Academy takes away individuality.”

“It initially strips away your identity to show you the value of the group over the individual—no military outfit can exist effectively unless it’s a total group effort—the same goes for that basketball team of yours. But how much of Paul Glattan was *truly* stripped away? I know you still love classical music. We’ve spent time discussing movies that mean as much to you as they do to me. USAFA didn’t wreck your fondness for Hemingway—or Hesse for that matter. And as last night showed, it damn well didn’t kill your love for Carolina basketball—though I imagine you went through hell when you returned to the dorm after skipping out on the second half with your classmates.”

“You’re right about that, sir. They had a reception waiting for me, complete with the finale of the ‘1812 Overture.’ ”

Chadwick chuckled. “Never underestimate the coldhearted humor of fellow cadets.”

“No doubt I brought it on myself, sir. My love for Carolina basketball can be a bit over the top.”

“But that’s part of my point. It always was—and it still is. Are you *really* all that different than you were four years ago?”

Glattan pondered the question but had no response.

Chadwick continued, “Do you think that the *essence* of Paul Glattan has really changed all that much?”

Glattan remained silent.

“I have a theory,” Chadwick said. “You know USAFA’s Honor Code, of course: ‘We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate among us anyone who does.’ We had exactly the same Honor Code at West Point—in fact, USAFA’s creators took our words and put them to use here. Good words, but—in my opinion—they really don’t count for much.”

“Why do you say that, sir?”

“Because if you haven’t acquired those notions before you arrive here, you’re not going to learn them in four years. You and your classmates were able to discern right from wrong long before you showed up for Basic Cadet Training. Your parents taught you it was wrong to lie, to steal, and to cheat, and I’m guessing that you’ve always hated someone who participated in such activities. I imagine you take a special pride in accomplishing something on your own.”

Glattan nodded.

“Here’s what I think the Academy does to you,” Chadwick stated. “It does indeed destroy your individuality when you arrive to show you the importance of the group. But it does not take away your fundamental ethos, your distinctive character traits. Those traits endure to help you survive the ordeal of USAFA—and again, *survive* is the right word. Yet key to survival here is surviving it en masse—only a very few make it through USAFA—or West Point—alone, and those people are ones that I hope never get to wear stars. I know I couldn’t have made it through the Point without relying on my classmates, and, on occasion, some of them relied on me. We had an ‘us against them mentality,’ with ‘them’ being the officers assigned to oversee us and the cadets on brigade or regimental staffs who pandered to those officers. They were all ‘the enemy,’ and when we could achieve victories over them—like additional weekend privileges, a forgiveness of demerits or tours—we felt like we had conquered the world.”

Glattan thought about some cadets he knew on group or wing staff who used negative motivation techniques, such as limiting privileges or prowling for anyone violating regulations, to “inspire” improved performance and thereby curry favor from USAFA’s officer cadre. When such a cadet leader also tried to appear sympathetic to the gen-

eral concerns of the Cadet Wing, he acquired the moniker “Dancing Bear,” taken from the character on the *Captain Kangaroo* TV show that cadets watched as children. To the general cadet population, the “bear” danced between officers and cadets to demonstrate his loyalty, but in the end was loyal only to himself.

“I know that feeling, sir. My classmates and I love beating ‘them.’”

“And when you do, it’s a victory for the proletariat, isn’t it?”

“Truly, sir!”

“A team effort that’s blended the distinctive capabilities—and character—of each cadet into a formidable force. And when you live with a group of guys, day in, day out, for four years straight, you learn all about their personal capabilities—as well as their foibles and fears—and that makes you an incredibly tight group—one that you can count on when the chips are down.”

Without Barrow, Glattan thought, I would never have made it through this place with its math- and science-heavy curriculum. I wouldn’t have made it through other aspects of USAFA either—the bullshit regulations, the loneliness. And I’ve also been here for him. Glattan recalled returning to their dorm room one Saturday after he had gone to the Springs, only to find Barrow sitting under his desk. A beautiful model that Barrow had painstakingly built of his father’s F-86 Sabre jet from the Korean War lay smashed into hundreds of pieces on the floor.

“*What the hell is wrong?!*” an ashen Glattan asked his roommate.

“I can’t finish this goddamn math problem set.”

Glattan blinked several times, then reached out his hand, pulling Barrow to his feet. “Fuck the problem set. We’re getting the hell out of here. A trip to the Peppermint Lounge is in order.”

Barrow didn’t argue.

After two hours of drinking Jack and Cokes while watching the strippers, they returned to Vandenberg Hall in a far more relaxed frame of mind. Barrow finished the problem set before noon on Sunday.

To say that Glattan and Barrow were tight was a gross understatement. Besides getting the same type of car at the end of their junior year (although Barrow’s Celica was Air Force, not Carolina, blue), they had T-shirts made that identified them as the inseparable duo “Glatrow.” The front of Glattan’s read “GLAT,” with the front of Barrow’s reading “ROW.” On the rear of the shirts, Glattan’s read “PRO” and Barrow’s read “FANE.” Everyone in Blackjack 21 knew that if you crossed Glattan you also crossed Barrow, and vice versa. Doubtless

other roommates were intertwined, Glattan thought, but damn, he *loved* Mike Barrow—and Barrow, he was sure, loved him back.

Glattan was tight with the other Firsties in 21st Squadron, though nothing equated to the relationship with Barrow. Jack Wiggins and Boots Renfro were wonderful friends—hell, that was true of all his classmates in the squadron—even Tom Nheman’s taunting during the Marquette game was good-natured. Most Blackjack 21 Firsties got together after class on Friday afternoon for happy hour at Giuseppe’s, when the mixed drinks and beers were two-for-one. There, they’d solve all the world’s problems, or at least those of the Cadet Wing, over way-too-loud conversation and laughter. These guys are my brothers, Glattan thought, and I’d trust any of them in a dire situation.

“Classmates are everything, sir,” Glattan said. “Especially your roomo.”

“A roommate is irreplaceable—I still call mine from time to time—he’s now an Army colonel and brigade commander at Fort Campbell. But I still remember all the guys in my company like it was yesterday.”

“We have a saying,” Glattan offered. “‘You don’t pimp over your classmates.’ That doesn’t mean that you don’t turn anyone in for an Honor Code violation, but it does mean that you don’t rat them out for violating regs or trying to beat the Bears.”

“The Bears?”

Glattan explained the analogy.

“Oh yeah, as I mentioned, we had plenty of those at the Point. It was also understood that you didn’t screw over a classmate. That notion still holds.”

“So, sir, you believe that USAFA not only creates enduring bonds among cadets but also enhances each cadet’s individual character?”

“Cementing bonds, yes, though I’m not sure about *enhancing* individual character. I don’t think that it *wrecks* one’s personality—the facets of one’s personality must endure to survive here, as you put it. But I’ll add this caveat: the way the Academy is orchestrated, with its demanding academics, its regimented lifestyle, and indeed its ‘Bears,’ tends to make most cadets a bit cynical when they leave here—and that’s not necessarily a bad thing.”

“I’ll admit that I’m pretty cynical, sir—and so are many of my classmates. I’ve never felt good about it, though. How can cynicism be an asset?”

“Remember what you said in class yesterday about Clausewitz’s ‘friction’? Plans rarely, if ever, work out the way they’re supposed to. It’s up to you—and the rest of ’77—to constantly question the as-

sumptions that underpin those plans, to look for potential flaws and pitfalls. You *never* want to accept a notion simply because someone with more rank says it's going to work just fine."

"Are you saying that I shouldn't follow orders?"

"No—no—not at all. What I'm saying is that you must do everything you can to make sure orders are as sound as possible, and that you understand them as well as you possibly can. Granted, as a lieutenant, you're not going to have much of an ability to modify them. As you advance in rank, though, your opportunities will increase—and it will be your *duty* to make your thoughts known. Clausewitz referred to such acts as moral courage. You don't attend USAFA to become a silent robot."

"I've sure felt like that at times, sir. Plus, I think that being cynical leads me to being callous. Look what I did to Emily."

"Cynicism had nothing to do with that, Mr. Glattan. In the final analysis, neither did being callous. You just made a warped value judgment based on your *projection* of how hard it was going to be to do my work. That projection was based on what you heard from your classmates—and perhaps even from other faculty members.

"I know that I have a fierce reputation among cadets—and I'm just fine with that."

"Why would you want that reputation, sir?"

"Think about it, Mr. Glattan. You're usually quicker than that."

Glattan paused—and then smiled. "Because you want to make sure that we all do our best work for you."

Chadwick grinned broadly.

"Sir, I'm still not completely sold that USAFA doesn't change us."

"I understand that. Let me just offer this idea: college—whether it's USAFA, West Point, Carolina, or Yale—is an evolutionary experience. But your fundamental beliefs will likely endure, despite being challenged. I'll add that college shouldn't be just about calculus and Clausewitz—though I think that Clause has a lot more to say about the future life of a military officer than calculus ever will. How many semesters of calculus do you have to take?"

"Six, sir."

"Jesus Christ. I'm not sure we had to take that many at the Point. But you are entering a high-tech Air Force, aren't you?"

"That's what I hear, sir."

"The American officer corps would be far better off if it had more graduates who majored in history or philosophy rather than math

and physics. Don't get me wrong—you've got to understand math, physics, aeronautics, and whatnot to develop weapons and the means to deliver them. But the real key is to know *why* and *when* those weapons should be used. Developing strategy is just as much an art as it is a science, and I'd argue it's actually more art than science."

"That's Clausewitz again, isn't it, sir?"

"'War's grammar may be its own, but not its logic.' Page 605. When you've examined Clause as much as I have, you'll have a few favorite quotes squirreled away, and that's one of mine. Just realize there's as much danger in cherry-picking Clause quotes as there is in quoting Bible passages. As we've talked about in class, with his dialectical method of thinking, Clause is seemingly full of contradictions—you've got to be sure that you're focused on a thesis, an antithesis, or a synthesis. Once you get that aspect down—which, admittedly, can be damned tough—I'd contend his work is timeless."

"Makes sense to me, sir."

"But reading Clause isn't necessarily a healthy career choice."

"Why's that, sir?"

"Look at my shoulders, Mr. Glattan. What do you see?"

"You—you—mean your rank, sir? The silver oak leaves of a lieutenant colonel?"

"That's right. And when did I graduate from West Point?"

"1954, I think, sir."

"Right again. I've been in the Air Force almost 23 years. As you probably know, I was promoted early to major. I made lieutenant colonel on time. And I've been passed over for colonel. Why do you think that is?"

"Sir, I—I—have no idea."

"Because I've spent too much of my career here at USAFA—or in school, preparing to teach at USAFA. The Air Force puts a premium on doing, not teaching—and sometimes, it seems, it also downplays thinking. If I had wings over my left pocket, I couldn't have taught here as long as I have—after a two-, or at most, three-year tour, I would have gone back to an operational squadron to assure that I got the necessary flight hours to maintain my pilot qualification. Assuming I performed well, didn't screw up, the timing was right, and I got a bit lucky—none of those were certainties, of course—I would have moved up the chain to become a squadron, then group, and possibly even a wing commander, and now be wearing eagles on my shoulders as a colonel."

“Are you upset about that, sir?”

“Not at all. I knew staying in the history department wasn’t ‘career-enhancing,’ to use the current terminology—and I was just fine with that. I love my work here at USAFA. I think it makes a vital contribution to the Air Force, whether the service recognizes it as that or not. I truly enjoy influencing—some of your classmates might say warping—young minds like yours. It’s satisfying in the extreme.”

Glattan didn’t know what to say. *More* confessions, he thought, as if last night wasn’t enough. He stared at Chadwick, remaining silent.

“Well, that’s probably enough philosophy for today. Next time we can talk about bombing Japan, though I’m guessing you spent some time in North Carolina thinking about that?”

“I actually did, sir.”

“Did you come to any conclusions?”

“I reexamined some of my fundamental assumptions. I guess Clausewitz would be pleased with that.”

“No doubt he would—good for you. We’ll talk about your new thoughts in the days ahead.” Chadwick stood up.

Glattan did the same. “Thanks again for last night, sir. I imagine we might talk about that again in the future as well.”

“We will indeed.”

Chapter 16

31 March 1977

Glattan strolled into the mail room after classes ended on Thursday. Time to check the spider, he thought, though in reality he received a consistent stream of letters from Mom and Dad. That mail was nice, but the letters he had relished the most—those from Carol Whitney—stopped after he returned from Christmas leave his Second Class year. He didn't really expect the long-distance relationship to endure, given that she was now a sophomore at Carolina—and given the conversation during their “last supper” over Christmas leave. Glattan believed her pronouncement that he had changed for the worse; he had felt that way for the past three-and-a-half years. Maybe the diagnosis was correct. Tuesday's conversation with Chadwick, though, planted a seed of doubt.

Glattan peered into the glass casing surrounding mailbox number 1361. No spider today—two letters, one very thick. He turned the dial and took out the mail. The thick letter was from his dad, no doubt filled with newspaper clippings about the Marquette game. The other was from Ernie Black and, Glattan surmised, also addressed Carolina-Marquette.

He waited until he got to his room to open the letters. Mail was a special treat, especially so during Doolie year when it was his only link to “civilization,” and receiving it remained a small thrill. Since someone had taken the time to write him, he wanted to savor what he read—he never opened letters in the mail room to read while walking through Vandenberg Hall. Indeed, he kept all the letters he received while a cadet. It would be a pain in the ass to move them at graduation, but he just couldn't bring himself to throw any away.

Glattan's suppositions about the letters proved correct. His father had sent clippings from the *News and Observer* and the *Durham Morning Herald*, along with his own commentary on the game. “I couldn't believe the ref didn't call goal tending when Bruce Buckley's shot got blocked,” he wrote. “That blocking call on Kuester near the end of the game was horrible.”

Ernie also mentioned the two plays in slightly different terms: “The missed goaltending on Buckley's shot was horseshit, just horseshit. And when Butch Lee ran over Kuester, and Kuester got called for a block, Jim threw his beer bottle against the wall, shattering it. Jim

had bought another bottle of Dom Pérignon to celebrate a championship win, and when the game ended, he took it outside and threw it into Morrison's quad, shattering it as well. But that was not the only bottle thrown in the quad, not by a long shot."

Glattan could envision both episodes.

Ernie said that his room was again packed, with Rick and Freddy (who repeated their Rolling Stones prelude—and then threw the album into the quad after the game), Barbara, Gayle, Nancy, and Diane. "Diane sends her regards," Ernie wrote, causing Glattan to smile broadly. Franklin Street was closed off once more in anticipation of a celebration, but no one went there in the aftermath of defeat.

"All in all, we had a great season, especially given the injuries we had there at the end," he scribbled. "I'm just pissed that we didn't win the title. That's five times now that Dean has been in the Final Four, and this time was *so* close."

Ernie added a PS: "When I was walking across campus on Tuesday, I saw Carol Whitney. She looked good and asked about you. I told her that you were here on spring break for the Vegas game, and we watched it together. She said to wish you well, and it seemed to me there was more than casual interest when she said that. Thought you might want to know."

I'll be damned, Glattan thought.

Memories of Diane and Carol triggered thoughts of a more immediate female concern—Emily. Glattan considered calling her after Monday night but relented because he wasn't exactly sure what he should say. He figured the angst she displayed that evening was because she had learned of her father's condition. He wondered, do I tell her that I'm sorry about her dad? That I'm sorry about the way I treated her when I returned from Christmas leave? Do I try to rekindle the spark we had before Christmas?

Glattan finally decided to give her a call.

"Hi, Em—it's Paul."

"Paul—nice to hear from you."

"I'm afraid I wasn't too talkative Monday night."

"That's OK. I'm sorry Carolina lost."

"Yeah, well, as I tell myself this time each year, 'There's always next season.' I didn't call to discuss basketball, though."

"No?"

"No. I wanted to ask you out—that is, if you'd be willing to go out with me again?"

A long pause. “Yes—yes, I think I would like that. I’ve got some things I’d like to talk about with you.”

“How about dinner Friday night? Would six o’clock work?”

“Yes, that sounds good. I’ll see you then. Goodbye, Paul.”

“Bye, Em.”



“So she’s going to go out with you?” Barrow asked.

“Looks that way,” Glattan said.

“Good on you for asking her—I know you were nervous.”

“Damn right I was—for *many* reasons.”

“Can’t blame you for that. What are you going to say to her?”

“I’m not sure. I’ll certainly apologize for being a jerk in December. But I’m not sure what else to say.”

“Are you going to mention Chadwick and Agent Orange?”

“I’d like to—but I’m not sure it’s my place.”

“And you’ve still got the guns.”

“Yeah . . .”

“Probably no need to mention those.”

“Nope.”

“Do you still have feelings for her?”

“I—I honestly can’t say. I certainly thought I did before Christmas.”

“Do you think she has feelings for you?”

“I just don’t know. I’m sure she’s grateful for me being there St. Patrick’s Day. But whether she cares for me the way she appeared to before I left her, I really can’t say.”

“Would you fuck her if the opportunity presented itself?”

“Whoa, Bareass—nice talk!” But Glattan had to admit that the thought had crossed his mind—and he didn’t know how he might react to such a situation.

“Just trying to run through all the possibilities, and to gauge where the relationship might be headed—assuming the relationship is restored.”

“Damn you, Bareass.”

Barrow chuckled. “Well, you’re not a virgin anymore.”

“No. But screwing her is certainly not my aim on Friday night.”

“Of course not. But my job as your roomo is to make sure you’re ready for anything that might happen.”



Emily walked out of the house as soon as he drove up. She looked ravishing—a tight, light (Carolina?) blue sweater; a dark blue mini-skirt; black, three-inch platform heels—and a white gold necklace that he had given her back in October. He wasn't sure what to think: she was dressed to kill, with the necklace an obvious reminder of what they once had together.

He got out of the Celica and opened the door for her.

"You look sensational," he said.

"Thanks. It's been a while since I went out."

Another zinger.

They remained silent on the ride to the restaurant. Glattan decided that they would go to the Sunbird, one of their favorites when they had dated in the fall. When he turned off the exit on I-25, Emily exclaimed, "Oh, the Sunbird—you read my mind!"

"I haven't forgotten everything about you, Em."

She smiled. "No, I guess not."

The moon was almost full in a cloudless sky, making constellations easy to find as they walked from the parking lot to the restaurant perched on the mesa.

"There's the Big Dipper," Glattan pointed, "and the North Star."

Suddenly a comet streaked past.

"Wow!" Glattan said.

"Did you make a wish?" she asked.

"I—I didn't. I guess I should."

Emily nodded.

He silently hoped that he could restore his relationship with her—and that Chadwick might survive Agent Orange.

"I made two," he answered.

"So did I."

Glattan stared at her gleaming eyes. He thought about clasping her hand as they walked toward the Sunbird's entrance but decided against it. Too soon—way too soon.

He had requested a table for two next to a picture window overlooking the Springs, and the hostess came through. The city lights sparkled below, shimmering even more with the flickering light from the table's single candle.

They decided on beef Wellington (medium rare) with a bottle of Merlot, plus tiramisu for dessert.

Glattan kept the conversation light, focused on his leave and the trip to Chapel Hill. Diane was a no-show in his recounting of events.

Emily enjoyed hearing about the campus legends, especially the Bell Tower “dunce cap” atop the library. The class that he watched intrigued her, and she compared its prof to several she had at CC. The postgame celebration, though, really caught her attention.

“They actually brought a flatbed semi, with a full band on it, into the street?”

“Yep, they did. We could hardly move there were so many people, so we just stood jam-packed and sang at the top of our lungs. Not that I can sing, mind you, but nobody seemed to care that afternoon.”

She laughed, and he did as well. He couldn’t keep his eyes off her. She simply looked stunning, her dark hair hanging over one shoulder with the rest cascading down her back, her eyes dancing. He was now certain her sweater was Carolina blue.

Emily smiled at him. “I’ve always loved this place,” she said as she finished her tiramisu. “The food’s great, and the views are to die for. Thanks for bringing me here.”

“Well, I like it too. We’ve got some good memories from here . . . but . . . speaking of memories . . . I can’t begin to tell you how sorry I am for the way I behaved when we last met in early December. I was such an idiot. I thought that I couldn’t do the work necessary for your father and still have time to see you. I let him intimidate me when I really had no clue about what he was like in class, and I was wrong. Will you forgive me?”

The hazel eyes that he still adored pierced him. “Yes, I forgive you,” she said quietly. “But your dumping me hurt, Paul, and a bit of that pain still lingers, especially in light of everything else that has happened.”

“Well, I can understand that. Hopefully I can help repair some of that damage—as well as help with the other stuff that has happened.”

“I hope so, too, Paul. My life’s in disarray right now. St. Patrick’s Day was just the tip of the iceberg.”

“How so?”

“As I told you that night, I can’t thank you enough for what you did. I don’t know what would have happened if you hadn’t come over, but I shudder when I think about it.”

“I was glad to help and happy it worked out the way it did.”

“Well, that’s just it: ‘working out’ hasn’t exactly been a great thing. I was only 13 when Dad came back from Vietnam, but I could tell something was wrong. He’d have a drink while he watched the news,

which usually led to more drinks until he went to bed. Then it became more drinks until he passed out, which has been the norm since Saigon fell.”

“I don’t see how he can get all his work done. From what you’ve said, he was drinking when he got his PhD at Yale, plus while he was away teaching at Army War College. Yet every time I see him in class, or in his office, there’s never a hint of being blasted.”

“That’s because he isn’t blasted any more. He usually winds up getting close to eight hours of sleep, which I guess allows him to burn off the booze. As for being prepared, his capacity to read and write astounds me. I honestly think he’s a genius who can accomplish more in an hour than most people can in a day.”

“Wow. Think of what he could accomplish if he didn’t drink.”

“I’ve thought about that—many times. He could certainly have written more books and articles, though he still seems to crank out articles at will. It seems like he has a new one every other issue of *Air University Review*.”

“Yeah, I’ve read quite a few of them.”

“When I’ve asked him through the years about writing another book, he always comes back with, ‘I’m just happy teaching cadets. I enjoy bending the minds of future generals.’”

“No doubt he’s had an impact on me the past three months.”

“Yes . . . and that leads me to what I really wanted to talk about with you. He’s not going to be able to teach much longer—and it won’t be because of the alcohol, though Lord knows that doesn’t help. While he was in Vietnam, he got sprayed by Agent Orange. He didn’t think much of it at first, but he saw his doctor a few weeks ago, and the doctor told him he doesn’t have long to live.”

She stared at Glattan with pleading eyes. He reached for her hand, and she grabbed his.

“I—I don’t know what to say, Em—except that I’m here to help in any way I can.”

She clenched his hand with both of hers.

“I know my dad’s been a pain in the ass—I can’t imagine how hard it’s been on my mom. But I still love him, and I don’t want him to die.”

A tear trickled down her face.

“Of course not,” Glattan whispered. “He’s your father.”

She brushed away the tear. “Yes . . . I can’t believe he’ll be leaving my life so soon.”

“How long did the doctor say he had?”

She shook her head. “The doctor doesn’t know for sure. He said Dad had a type of leukemia that has mostly been dormant since Vietnam but will soon take control of his body. Perhaps he has three months left, maybe less.”

“Does Bob Jr. know?” Glattan knew the answer, but still felt it was a proper question.

“No. Mom knows, of course, but they want to hold off telling my brother until absolutely necessary.”

“What does your dad want to do about teaching?”

“He’d like to keep doing that as long as he can—focus on work rather than what’s coming.”

“How do you feel about that?”

“Makes sense, I guess . . . I wouldn’t want to dwell on the inevitable.”

“Is there nothing the doctor can do to diminish the effects?”

“No, not really. The cancer Dad has is just too aggressive.”

Another tear.

Damn it to hell, Glattan thought. Damn it to hell.

“Emily, I’m not kidding when I say that I’d like to help. To be sure I could do some things.”

She managed a smile while wiping away the tear. “That’s kind of you, Paul. Perhaps you might be able to help a bit. I just don’t know—there are so many unknowns right now. But I’m grateful for your offer. If nothing else, you can help *me* get through this ordeal.”

She squeezed his hand, and he squeezed both of hers back. He thought about telling her that he’d like to get back together, to renew the relationship they had before Christmas. Instead, he said, “If it comes to it, I could drive your dad back and forth to Fairchild Hall, and I could take him to doctor’s appointments. Now that spring break has passed, I only have to show up for class and don’t have to be in the squadron on a consistent basis.”

Emily smiled thinly, her features etched in anguish. “That’s incredibly generous, Paul. I’m sure that would be a big help to both Mom and Dad. And anything that helps them out also helps me.”

Tears rolled down both cheeks. Glattan took out his handkerchief and handed it to her.

“Damn it, Paul. I’m sorry to cry. Everything’s happened so damn fast. In the past two weeks my dad’s gone from threatening suicide to knowing he’ll soon be dead from cancer. I’m having a hard time absorbing it all—a very hard time.”

Her mournful look melted him.

“I’m going to help you get through it, Em. I will. You and your mom aren’t going to have to do this alone.”

She wiped her eyes with the handkerchief and then leaned over the table to pass it back. As she did, she kissed him on the cheek.

Glattan took the handkerchief and stroked her hair. Emily sat with her eyes closed, her face finally relaxed. After almost a minute, he softly said, “Let’s go.”

They silently held hands for much of the ride back to Douglas Valley. When they arrived at her house, Glattan turned the engine off and prepared to walk her to the door. She grabbed his head with both hands, pulling his face toward her and kissing him full on the lips. Glattan returned the kiss as they embraced.

Finally she said, “You are a good person, Paul Glattan. I dressed the way I did tonight to remind you of the pain you caused me in December—it was a bit of an April Fool’s joke, I guess. But you’ve helped me far more than you’ve hurt me, and I’m certain that you’re going to help me again. I apologize for my little stunt.”

“No apology necessary, Em. I deserved it. And, if truth be told, I loved looking at you—your April Fool’s joke was a nice surprise. Damn, you’re gorgeous.”

She smiled. This time the smile was not sad but mischievous, much like what he had seen from Diane on Franklin Street.

“Can I see you tomorrow?”

“Sure.”

“How about I pick you up at 10:00 and we go hiking in Garden of the Gods, then head to Manitou Springs for a late lunch?”

“That sounds great.”

He walked her to the front door. When they got there, she stopped, looking up at him. “Thank you for tonight—I can’t tell you how much I needed that. I look forward to tomorrow.” With that, she kissed him lightly on the cheek and went inside.



Saturday morning was clear and crisp. Glattan and Barrow always left the windows in the room cracked open, even in the dead of winter unless there was a blizzard. For some reason, Vandenberg Hall’s thermostat seemed stuck on 75 degrees, making it difficult to sleep in the stuffy conditions.

Glattan smelled the spruce trees surrounding USAFA when he awoke. The clean, pungent aroma was always appealing—the only

pleasing part of heading out for a morning run as a Basic Cadet. This morning, with the outing with Emily on the horizon, he found the smell especially enticing.

Barrow stirred in his bed—he had a date with Karen planned for the day. “Looks like an ideal day for going to Garden of the Gods,” he said.

“Seems to be,” Glattan responded. “You and Karen headed to Denver?”

“Yeah, I’m taking her to dinner at the Brown Palace Hotel, and then we’ve got a room booked for the night.”

“Whoo-hoo—big-time splurge!”

“It is, but it’s been a while since we really ‘went out,’ and we both like the city. Should be a good time.”

“And a really good night!” Glattan smirked.

“I imagine it will,” Barrow grinned.

“Ha! I’m sure that’ll happen. You all have been an item for quite a while. What is it? A year-and-a-half, now?”

“Yep, that sounds right.”

“Will there be a wedding in the Chapel the day after graduation?”

“I—I don’t know. I’ve been putting off thinking about it. You know I haven’t proposed yet.”

“Well, if you *are* thinking about it and want to have a Chapel wedding, you’d better do it sooner rather than later. That place will have a waiting list.”

“Yeah. It’s like a production line for three or four days after graduation. I think they give you 30 minutes per ceremony. Not exactly the epitome of a romantic event.”

“That depends. Some girls like all the military display, the guys in mess dress uniforms.”

“I hear you. But Karen’s been watching all the military hoopla here for a while now, so I’m not sure it’d mean that much.”

“Perhaps. But back to the bigger question: are you going to propose?”

“Yeah, probably. I *do* love her. I just wonder what she’d think about being married to an Air Force officer.”

“Well, given that she’s been with you for as long as she has, I think she knows what’s coming and understands what an Air Force career is all about. Plus, since you’re so damned smart—which I will be eternally grateful for—you’ve got that grad school slot at MIT right after graduation before you head to pilot training. You guys would get to start off easy, so to speak.”

“When did you get so smart about the opposite sex? I’m usually the one to bail your ass out in that category as well as academics.”

“I can’t argue with you there—God knows you’ve made ample inputs into my romantic endeavors—and I’ve been grateful for those inputs, too.”

“Speaking of which—it looks like last night might have been the spark that rekindles the flame with Emily. You said she enjoyed the date, plus you got a kiss?”

“That’s true about the kiss—it was a good one, no doubt about it. But at least part of it came because I had a sympathetic ear. I meant what I said about being willing to help her father with the illness, and I think that touched her. I’m sure it also mattered that I helped on St. Patrick’s Day. But—as she pointed out—I hurt her, and she hasn’t forgotten. Still, I think there’s hope for a renewed relationship. Hard to say what impact her dad’s condition will have on it.”

“Well, as for a willingness to help her dad, you can also count on me to do whatever I can. I hate what’s happened to him—it’s such a shame given how much he’s contributed to the Air Force.”

“Thanks, Bareass. I’ll keep you posted.”



Glattan got out of his Celica and knocked on Emily’s door. She opened it, dressed in jeans, a thick sweater, and hiking boots, and said, “This should be a nice day. But before we head out, Dad wants to talk to you.”

Glattan’s gut churned.

What type of conversation would this one be, he wondered. Nothing out of the ordinary had occurred in the Military Thought class on Wednesday and Friday. What—if anything—had Emily told him about their date last night? Had he received an update from the doctor? Glattan walked to the door of Chadwick’s home office with trepidation.

“Come in, Paul, and have a seat,” Chadwick said when he saw Glattan standing in the hallway.

“Hi, sir—how’s it going?” Glattan instantly regretted the question.

Chadwick smiled. “Well, you know part of the answer to that. As of right now, though, it’s not going badly. But as you also know, that’s going to change—and that’s what I wanted to talk to you about.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Emily’s told me that you want to help out when my condition worsens.”

“Yes, sir—I want to do that.”

“That’s certainly kind of you, Paul, but do you know how bad things are likely to get?”

“No—no, sir—but I’m still willing to help out.”

“It’s funny. When I got back to Saigon after I got sprayed at Khe Sanh, I went to the doc and told him what happened. The doc said not to worry—lots of guys had been sprayed by Agent Orange, but it only affected vegetation, not humans, and I shouldn’t be concerned. I didn’t feel bad afterward so I didn’t worry. When I went for my annual physical for the next few years after returning from Vietnam, I told the docs examining me about the spraying, and they all said it was no big deal. So I quit mentioning it. Then after I went for my last physical, I got a call saying I had a severely elevated white cell count in my blood and needed to come in for additional testing, so I did . . . and those results showed that I had stage 4 chronic lymphocytic leukemia—CLL—that has now progressed into a high-grade non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. I figured something was wrong several weeks ago when I started having bad night sweats and pain under my arms and in the groin, plus I’m short of breath on occasion.

“Anyhow, the bodily deterioration is going to accelerate pretty fast. You sure you want to help deal with that?”

“I—I do, sir. I realize it’s going to be difficult, but I figured you and the family could use an extra set of hands. I know I can’t envision everything that might happen, but I’m serious about wanting to help.”

Chadwick’s eyes narrowed on Glattan’s. “Well, I can’t say that I won’t need the assistance—from what the docs tell me, my decline will be a lot for Janet and Emily to handle . . .” Chadwick trailed off. “I’ll be honest, Paul. I would greatly appreciate the help—*your* help.”

“I’ll be here for you, sir.”

“One thing, though. Don’t think for a minute that your assistance will have any impact on how I grade you in the Military Thought class or on your Japan paper.”

“I hope not, sir. I don’t want any gimmes from you, though I can’t imagine that you’ve ever provided any.”

“You’re right—I haven’t, and that record will remain intact. Oh, one other matter—I’m guessing that you’ve got my .45?”

Glattan shuddered. “Yes—yes, sir. I do.”

“And that you’ve got my other two pistols as well?”

“Yes, sir—they’re all in the trunk of my car.”

“Good. Emily says that you’re headed to Manitou Springs after Garden of the Gods?”

“We are, sir.”

“As you probably know, there are several gun shops there. Take the guns into the first one you find and sell them. Don’t quibble about the price—just take whatever the dealer offers and give the money to Emily to give to me.”

Glattan blinked. “OK, sir—I can do that.”

“Thank you—and thank you for what you’re about to do.”



“I think Dad was relieved that you’re willing to help him,” Emily said as they drove toward Garden of the Gods.

“Yeah, I think you’re right. I didn’t know what to expect when I went into his office. The entire tone of the conversation was different from any I’ve ever had with him, almost subdued. I don’t think he’s scared—I’m not sure your father knows fear—but it seemed to me that he’s accepted what’s coming and realizes it’s not going to be an easy path.”

“That’s why he’s grateful for your assistance.”

“I guess so. It’s going to be a tough row to hoe, Em. I’m not sure I’m ready for it, but I’ll try my best. Are *you* ready for it?”

“No—not at all. I can’t begin to envision how bad it’s going to be. I’m just grateful you’re here to help.”

Glattan smiled at her and she smiled back.

“Oh, look!” she said. “The Kissing Camels!”

Glattan pulled off the road to a bare spot where other drivers had obviously stopped. Massive red, pink, and white sandstone rocks, some hundreds of feet high, jutted from the ground like enormous shark teeth, formed millions of years ago by upheavals and erosion. Collectively dubbed the “Garden of the Gods,” the various rock formations acquired distinctive monikers based on their resemblance to animal shapes. The red “Kissing Camels,” silhouetted against a backdrop of Pikes Peak, were distinctive from the roadside near the park’s entrance, twin peaks resembling one-hump camels that appeared nose-to-nose.

“Should we follow suit?” Emily grinned.

“If we must,” Glattan responded as he leaned over for a kiss.

“That was nice,” Emily said. “A little spark before we start on the trek.”

“Works for me,” Glattan beamed. “Where do you think we should park?”

“Why don’t we head to that valley pointing toward the Springs with the large rock formations on either side of it?”

“Sounds good.”

They got out of the car, walking south with giant, jagged white sandstone rocks on their left and equally high pink formations on their right. Cheyenne Mountain rose in the distance. They held hands as they began on a paved path, then had to go one behind the other when the paving stopped. Glattan let Emily take the lead. The vista was majestic; “Garden of the Gods” was indeed an apt name for the incredible rock formations and the spectacular views they provided. She frequently pointed out sights along the way, and they stopped to admire them—with many of those delays producing long embraces and equally long kisses.

Glattan could tell that she was happy. For a brief time, the forthcoming agony disappeared, with her focused on the scenery—and Glattan. He wondered how much of her affection stemmed from his willingness to help and how much from a genuine desire to be with him. She loved me once, he thought—at least I’m pretty sure she did—before I went stupid and before the trauma with her dad. Could she love me again just for who I am? And could I love her again? He wasn’t sure of either answer.

They both found the trek exhilarating. They climbed back into the car breathless—but not so much that they couldn’t kiss once more.

“You ready for lunch?” Glattan finally asked.

She nodded several times.

“Off we go to Manitou Springs!”

A brief drive later, they walked up the main drag of Manitou Avenue, adjacent to the gushing water of Fountain Creek. General William Palmer, the father of Colorado Springs, and his friend Dr. William Bell founded Manitou Springs in 1872 as a health resort. Glattan thought that the town did indeed exude vigor and fitness—its streets were curved and steep, with the clean smell of the creek and fir trees in the background. The town itself was a tourist haven hearkening to its nineteenth-century roots. Boutiques and trendy restaurants lined Manitou Avenue, and Glattan and Emily walked into many of the little shops displaying buffalo skins or Navajo turquoise jewelry.

They decided on a pizza at Savelli's, savoring it at an outdoor table while they people-watched. Manitou Springs was ideal for that. The hippie movement was alive and well there, morphing with the town's normal allotment of "mountain men" to produce an array of ZZ Top look-alikes who often had Patty Hearst clones in trail. Tourists were the ones who stood out in this blast from the past. Glattan and Emily made a game of trying to guess which states the different tourist groups came from, made easier by their conversations and accents. Emily giggled that New York was the winner, and Glattan agreed.

They continued to roam Manitou Avenue after lunch. Arriving at a roundabout, Glattan saw the sign Mountain Armory over a storefront.

"Em, I need to go in here," he said.

"I figured."

"You OK with that?"

"Yes—I definitely want the guns out of the house. I don't think Dad would now be inclined to do what he threatened on St. Patrick's Day—but I don't want the opportunity to be there."

"Do you want to go in with me?"

"No. I'll look in the shop next door while you take care of what you need to do. I really don't want to see them again."

Glattan walked back to the car and took out a laundry bag containing the pistols. He went back to the Mountain Armory and made the sale. Then he walked into the jewelry shop beside the Armory. Emily stood in a corner, looking at a display case, though he could tell that she was not really focused on it.

"Is it done?" she asked.

"It is. Here—your dad said to give you the money."

"Damn, Paul—two hundred and fifty dollars?!"

"Yeah. Your father had some very expensive weapons."

"Well, I imagine the money will come in handy."

Glattan stared into her sad eyes. "No doubt," he whispered.

He looked down at the display case. "They have some nice bracelets here."

She looked at them as well. "Yep, they do."

"See one you like?"

"Oh, Paul, you don't have to do that!"

"No—I want to. The last time I gave you some jewelry, it didn't work out too well. This time I'd like for it to be different."

She paused—then smiled. "I'd like for it to be different too. I do like that one," she said, pointing.

The sterling silver bracelet had a pale blue turquoise in the center, with engraved heart-shaped designs on either side of the center stone. Delicate and lovely.

“We’ll take it,” Glattan said to the clerk.

“Good grief, fifty dollars!” Emily exclaimed when she saw the price. “That’s too much, Paul—way too much!”

“And you’re worth it—and more,” Glattan winked.

The clerk watched the exchange between them. “It does seem perfectly suited for the lady . . . and it just so happens that we have a special on our jewelry this weekend. Twenty-five percent off all turquoise. That makes the price \$37.50, which with tax comes to \$40. Would that work?”

“Yeah, for sure!” Glattan said. He placed the bracelet on Emily’s wrist. She kissed him while the clerk smiled.

Chapter 17

3 April 1977

Damn that noise, Glattan thought, groggily pushing the alarm clock's snooze button. He was on the verge of kissing Emily when the clanging ended his dream.

Seven a.m. on a Sunday was an ungodly time to get up. Glattan hated to do it, but today was a serious workday on the paper for Chadwick. After shaving and showering, Glattan put on his uniform and strolled to Mitchell Hall for a quick breakfast. Then it was back to the room to grab a knapsack filled with copies of documents from the National Archives, notes, and his rough draft, along with the case containing his electric typewriter. Off to the library.

Glattan would have preferred to work in his room, but that was not an optimal environment for accomplishing anything academic during the weekend before Sunday night Call to Quarters. The Sunday before spring break he and Barrow were studying at their desks before noon when they heard the repetitive wail of hungover Third Classman Steve Ward from the room next door: "He's in fucking Chapel! He's in fucking Chapel! He's in fucking Chapel!" when another cadet asked the bedridden Steve the whereabouts of his roommate.

Chadwick's paper demanded complete concentration—no distractions. Glattan secured the perfect place in the library to work on it—a spot inside the Special Collections rooms on the third floor. As a history major who often prowled the personal papers that many Air Force generals donated to USAFA, Glattan befriended Edward Rossier, the civilian archivist who oversaw the collections. Glattan showed Ed his documents from the National Archives, and Ed was ecstatic over them—asking if he could make copies for other cadets to reference. He then provided Glattan with a cubicle, along with the Special Collections' entrance keypad code so that Glattan could work there on weekends.

Glattan carefully arranged the materials that he lugged into the cubicle. The electric typewriter—a Chowan High graduation gift from his parents—was a godsend, so much easier to use than the manual typewriters requiring a pounding of the keys for the ribbon's ink to print. Yet as he knew all too well, the smoother touch did not guarantee an absence of typos. Glattan had several strips of correction tape with him and a bottle of Wite-Out correction fluid. Still, he used the

typewriter only for drafts that would go to Chadwick. Despite having a detailed outline for the paper's various sections, he had not mastered composing on the machine. He penned the initial drafts on lined paper, which often contained mark-throughs, marginalia, and boxes of text with arrows pointing to their proper spots on the page.

As he sat in the cubicle with the materials in place, he recalled the spring break conversation with Brett Bennett, the *Chowan Sentinel* editor. Brett was curious about Glattan's current writing at USAFA, so Glattan described the endeavor for Chadwick. When he outlined his fundamental thesis—that America's firebombing (and atomic bombing) of Japanese cities was justified because it helped bring the Pacific War to a faster conclusion that ultimately saved lives on both sides—Brett challenged the premise. Brett maintained that a faster victory did not necessarily produce a better victory. Trying to speed the end of the war might actually have killed more people than a slower progression.

Perhaps, Glattan surmised, Brett was right.

Glattan read through his neatly typed, five-page outline. The more he read, the more he believed that his argument had a *righteous* tone to it. America *had* to kill hundreds of thousands of Japanese civilians to assure that hundreds of thousands of American troops didn't die in an invasion of Japan—doing so ultimately saved more *Japanese* than the bombing killed. America did a bad thing to assure a greater good.

But maybe—just maybe—a less brutal bombing campaign, combined with the Soviet entry into the war, the loss of the Japanese merchant fleet, and the success of the American island-hopping campaign may have caused Emperor Hirohito to conclude that the war was unwinnable and choose peace. It was a hypothetical, counterfactual argument to be sure—one that reminded him of the Chadwick catchphrase, "What if Superman had been a Nazi?"

Still, Glattan thought, the new argument had merit, and part of it was rock solid, not that it would court him any favor from men in blue uniforms wearing stars. Glattan had documents unmistakably showing that Army Air Forces leaders wanted to end the war in Japan without an invasion to demonstrate that the Army's air arm deserved to be an independent service. Of course, they wanted to save American lives in the process, but they were equally committed to creating a new United States Air Force. To assure they accomplished that goal, they demanded rapid results. They assumed that more bombs secured a quicker outcome.

In short, speed kills.

And to the Army Air Forces, speedy killing equaled an independent Air Force.

Reluctantly, Glattan began revising his outline. He wasn't thrilled about the prospect, given that he had invested a boatload of time and effort on the original version, not to mention the typed 55-page draft. The original outline, though, as well as the draft, didn't contain original thought—few would question that the bombing of Japan ended the war sooner and saved lives on both sides in the process. An argument that the brutal bombing of Japan was not necessarily essential to Allied victory in the Pacific, may have killed more people than it saved, and was spurred by Army Air Forces commanders to assure service independence would likely raise some eyebrows. Rather than presenting a righteous tone, the new thesis contended that American leaders devalued Japanese lives compared to American ones. The more that Glattan modified the outline to reflect the fresh argument, the better he felt about it. I don't have to create a masterpiece, he thought, but I do want to write something that will be new, distinctive, and hopefully provocative.

Something worthy of Chadwick's tutelage.

After modifying the outline, Glattan turned to rewriting text. He scribbled on most pages of the typed draft, plus handwrote 11 pages of new text on lined paper. He was about to start typing a new draft when he heard the trumpet call announcing Call to Quarters. Damn, he thought—7:00 p.m. and I haven't eaten since breakfast. But hey, I've got the old standby—bread and peanut butter—back in the room's overhead, and it'll suffice.

As he plodded through the Air Gardens on the way back to Vandenberg Hall, balancing his knapsack and typewriter, he whistled the Air Force Song.



Glattan looked at his academic schedule for the week ahead while wolfing down two peanut butter sandwiches. Chadwick's Military Thought class would meet just twice, on Tuesday and Thursday, making it an easier week to prep for than the previous one with Military Thought on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Naturally, Glattan had other classes during the week, but none came close to requiring the amount of effort that Chadwick's did. Tuesday did present a double whammy, with Military Thought in the morning and the solo meeting with Chadwick on the Japan paper that afternoon. Today's prog-

ress in the library made Glattan feel better about the solo session—a lot better. Tomorrow’s classes did not appear too onerous, so he had time for a quick phone call.

“Em, sorry to bother you on a school night, but I just wanted to hear your voice.”

“Like that’s a bother. I’m glad you called—I was thinking about you,” she replied.

“Oh? I’ve been doing that about you a lot lately . . . I even dreamed about you last night.”

“Was it a good dream?”

“Very. I just woke up too soon.”

She giggled. “I’ve had those dreams before.”

“You have, have you? Maybe we should do something about making those dreams a reality?”

“Yes, perhaps we should.”

“Well, why don’t I put in an early bid for Friday night?”

“That sounds like a great idea.”

“Along with Saturday? We’ve got a damned parade that morning, but I could see you afterward.”

“Sure.”

“Now I’ve got something to look forward to the rest of the week.”

“I do, too. One thing though, Paul.”

“What is it?”

“Dad was walking around the house late this afternoon, looking for a book, and all of a sudden he grabbed a chair and plopped down in it. He was breathing hard—very hard—for more than five minutes. Mom asked if he needed to go to the ER, and he shook his head. Gradually, his breathing returned to normal, but soon afterward he went to bed. No booze tonight—in fact, it’s been several nights since he had any.”

“Damn, Em. I’m so sorry to hear that. Is there anything I can do?”

“No—not right now. I just wanted you to be aware. You’ll see him in class this week, right?”

“Of course. I have class with him on Tuesday, but I’ll stop by his office and check in on him tomorrow.”

“Thanks, Paul.”

“You know if you need anything—”

“Yes, I know—call you.”

“That’s right. As James Taylor says, ‘You’ve got a friend.’ ”

“You’re more than that, Paul Glattan. I look forward to the weekend.”

“You and me both.”



Glattan made a beeline to Chadwick's office when his class on the American Civil War ended. He looked inside, seeing the lieutenant colonel sitting behind his desk, green pen in hand, poring over a cadet term paper. Chadwick looked up at the movement outside his office door.

"My apologies for the interruption, sir. I thought you might want to know that I had a productive Sunday working on the Japan paper, and I'm excited about our discussion tomorrow afternoon."

Chadwick took off his glasses and laid his pen on his desk. "I'm glad to hear about your progress, and I want to hear more about it when we meet tomorrow. As for right now, though, I'm having to teach a Second Classman how to write."

"My apologies again, sir. I'm certain you'll show that cadet the error of his ways."

Chadwick smiled. "Thanks for stopping by, Mr. Glattan. I look forward to our session tomorrow."

Glattan began climbing down one of Fairchild Hall's stairways. He realized that *he* was the one hyperventilating and was sure his heart rate was up. Chadwick seemed all right to me, he thought. But was he really? I should know more after being with him for two hours tomorrow.

Glattan's sigh resonated throughout the stairwell.

He finally relaxed as he walked through the Air Gardens. When he got back to his room, he quickly reviewed the reading for the afternoon's first class, Early Modern Europe, then pulled out the typewriter and began typing the new outline for the Japan paper. Doing so helped him organize his thoughts for his Tuesday one-on-one with Chadwick, and he'd give Chadwick a copy of the outline for written comments.

He finished typing as Barrow walked into the room.

"That looks important," Barrow said as Glattan scrolled the last page out of the typewriter.

"My Japan paper outline for Chadwick."

"Didn't you already type that up, along with a *long* draft of the paper?"

"I did, but it wasn't good—or, I guess I should say, good enough."

"Is that what Chadwick said?"

"Not in so many words. He just put big green Xs on several pages of the draft and wrote 'Bullshit' beside them."

"Could be an indicator."

“No kidding. But the more I think about it, the more I think he’s right. While I was on spring break, I saw the editor of the town newspaper that I worked for in high school and talked to him about the paper. He basically agreed with Chadwick that my argument was flawed. So yesterday, at the library, I changed it—hopefully for the better. I guess I’ll find that out tomorrow when I meet with Chadwick.”

“How is he, anyhow? You said last night that he had labored breathing and Emily was worried.”

“I stopped by his office today, and he seemed fine.”

“That’s good to hear. Damn, it’s got to suck to be him.”

“Amen to that.”

A shout echoed through the squadron: “Sir, there are 15 minutes left until the noon meal formation. Uniform for the noon meal is Class Bs with athletic jackets.” A Doolie—the “Minute Caller”—stood at attention in front of the clock at the end of hall with his eyes trained on the clock’s second hand. When it crossed 12, he did an about-face and called out the number of minutes remaining until the formation, along with the uniform for it. Once he got to five minutes, he left for the formation himself.

“Shall we do lunch?” Barrow asked. Like all meals, lunch at Mitchell Hall was optional for Firsties after spring break, but if they went to it, they had to march with the rest of the squadron, meaning they also risked a hair and uniform inspection.

“Well, we’ve got to eat. I’ve got afternoon classes, and I think you do, too.”

“I do—goddamn quantum physics. We’ll take our chances on the inspections. I can’t see a Firstie getting written up two months before graduation.”

They stepped out on the Terrazzo, blending into a sea of Air Force blue rectangles, each indicating a different squadron. Glattan and Barrow filled in as part of the rear rank of Blackjack 21, a privilege reserved for First Classmen, who, unlike other cadets, did not have to carry rifles, though their squadron commander and three flight commander classmates had to lead the squadron with sabers.

Sunlight was abundant, with a slight breeze wafting the squadron guidon. Glattan looked to the granite wall in front of the Chapel. Yep, the tourists were out in full force. Hundreds cheered as the wing began marching in echelon to Mitchell Hall. Glattan had to admit—from a tourist’s vantage point—it was an impressive spectacle: 4,400 cadets in 40 separate squadrons advancing in step while the Air Force

band played the “Colonel Bogey March” memorialized in *The Bridge over the River Kwai*, along with Sousa’s “The Washington Post March” and “The Stars and Stripes Forever.”

Normally, the noon meal formation was an enormous pain in the ass. Today, though, it felt special. Glattan smiled throughout the march to Mitch’s.

Once inside, cadets stood at attention at their assigned table until they received the command to “take seats!” from the Staff Tower. Officers, and cadets on group and wing staff, sat there overlooking the rest of the wing. Appropriate, Glattan and Barrow agreed, that the Dancing Bears should not only sit above us but stay isolated as well.

The command given, everyone took their seats. The three Doolies at the end of the table announced the menu and passed the food brought by waiters to the upperclassmen. At the opposite end of the table from the Doolies sat Firsties, with the “Table Commandant” directing the meal’s orchestration.

Not much has changed since I sat at the far end of the table, Glattan mused. The Table Commandant still dictated when Doolies started and stopped eating. Second Class Cadets sat next to the Firsties, with Third Classmen between the Second Classmen and the Doolies. Doolies sat without leaning their backs against their chairs and with eyes glued to the Air Force eagle embossed on their plates—unless, of course, they received a Knowledge question.

Boots Randolph was the Table Comm at Glattan and Barrow’s table. “*Everybody eat!*” he bellowed after the Doolies finally served themselves. A few minutes later, Boots lit a cigarette. He then barked, “Doolies—look at me and don’t laugh!” When they stared in Boots’s direction, the Doolies saw him simultaneously puffing on the cigarette, drinking milk, and putting a forkful of meatloaf in his mouth. The entire table exploded in laughter, with the Doolies unable to restrain their mirth. “Sit at rest!” Boots exclaimed after a long exhale.

Instantly the Doolies assumed the slumped posture of the rest of the table, uncaged their eyes, and began chatting with their classmates. All had tears streaming down their faces, which was also true of Glattan, Barrow, and most of the upperclassmen.

“Boots, you kill me!” Glattan said.

“Hey—the Doolies have it tough enough,” he replied. “Might as well brighten up the day for them—it’s Monday, after all.”

Glattan continued to chuckle as he left Mitch’s for his class on Modern Europe. The instructor, Squadron Leader William McPherson,

was an exchange officer assigned to USAFA's history department from the Royal Air Force. McPherson had flown Avon-Sabre jets against Chinese insurgents in Malaya, but his greatest attribute—in Glattan's opinion—was his uncanny knowledge of the trivia comprising European history, which he spouted to cadets in a thick Scottish brogue. When a cadet asked if it were true that Catherine the Great had a specially constructed bed chamber that would allow her to have sex with a horse, he deadpanned, "That's an apocryphal tale, Mr. Brown, but it is true that the Empress had a prodigious sexual appetite."

Today's topic was Napoleonic Europe, and Glattan was sure that he'd hear some unique insights about the famous French leader.

He didn't have to wait long.

Soon after class began, McPherson noted that "Napoleon conquered most of the nations of continental Europe, leaving a plethora of bastards behind his advances."

"But don't think it was all wine, women, and song for the emperor," McPherson continued. "Napoleon suffered from a glut of maladies. He had a severe skin condition that was probably eczema; he had a debilitating nervous condition that was likely epilepsy, which often afflicted him at the worst possible times, like at the Battle of Waterloo; he also was often constipated, perhaps because he suffered from terrible hemorrhoids, which he claimed to have cured—with leeches."

Twenty sets of eyebrows went up, twenty faces turned ashen, and twenty mouths fell open.

"Where does he get that shit?!" Tom Nhemman asked as he and Glattan departed the room at the end of class.

"Damned if I know," Glattan responded, "but I'll tell you one thing—it's impossible to sleep in there!"

Glattan had an hour to kill before the day's last class, The American Way of War. He went to the library to review the reading for it and then began reading for Chadwick's Military Thought class on Tuesday morning. The topic for that session was "Ferdinand Foch and the *Offensive à Outrance*." Glattan took four years of French in high school, hating the language (he thought that any language having five different ways to ask the question "What?" was fucked up); at USAFA, he had switched to German. Still, he remembered enough to know that *à outrance* was "to the utmost." That phrase was how French military leaders described their strategy for an anticipated conflict with Germany after the 1870–1871 Franco-Prussian War.

The strategy's originator was a French colonel, Ardant du Picq, who died in the Franco-Prussian War. "Success in battle is a matter of morale. . . . He will win who has the resolution to advance," du Picq wrote. French commanders interpreted the remark to mean that an offensive strategy always should succeed, relying on an army's positive attitude and esprit de corps to carry it to victory. Right, Glattan thought. Let's see how far a positive attitude will get you against heavy artillery and machine guns. Just before leaving for class, he read that Prussian artillery killed du Picq. No irony there, he grinned.

Glattan finished the assignment in his room that night, trying to determine what Chadwick would say about it. That the strategy was stupid was too obvious. There's got to be more to it than that, Glattan believed, but he couldn't pinpoint any benefits of such an emphasis on morale—not against modern rifled weapons. He closed the textbook thinking that he had failed to decipher the lesson's true meaning yet looking forward to the insights that Chadwick was certain to provide.

The next day did not disappoint.

At precisely 8:00 a.m., Chadwick strode into the room. After the preliminaries, he said, "Gentlemen, I imagine that most of you think the strategy you read about last night was dumber than dirt. As you know, Colonel Ferdinand Foch embraced the notions of Ardant du Picq, teaching them to a slew of officers at the French War College so they were firmly ingrained in the French officer corps at the start of World War I. For France, which suffered a humiliating peace at the end of the Franco-Prussian War, why did this *offensive à outrance* make sense?"

Cadets squirmed uneasily in their seats. No hands went up.

"Come on, gentlemen. Why on earth would the French demand an offensive strategy?"

Rob Stimson finally raised his hand. "Sir, because the French had lost the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine to Prussia—now Germany—at the end of the war, and they wanted them back. To take them back demanded an offensive strategy."

"That's right. What about the focus on morale to do the job?"

More cadet crickets.

"Ah, I suppose you gentlemen think that emphasis was ridiculous, huh? No merit to it whatsoever?"

Glattan had to speak. "Well, sir, it certainly got a lot of French soldiers killed in World War I. I mean, going into battle shoulder to

shoulder in tightly packed formations with bayonets out, wearing bright blue coats with red trousers, against German machine guns doesn't make a lot of sense."

"Much like Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg? The entire Class of 1914 at the *École Militaire*, the French West Point, were second lieutenants when the war began in August—and were all dead by December. So the lesson is—don't rely on morale to achieve success?"

More silence.

"What about on the Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944? The beaches of Tarawa, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa in the Pacific? Didn't morale count there?"

"Yes, sir," a cadet timidly responded. "Without high American morale, those invasions don't succeed."

"Then what's the difference? Napoleon said, 'The moral is to the physical as three is to one. Is *that* the right answer?'"

Glattan gritted his teeth and raised his hand. "From everything you've said, sir, I think it must depend on the situation. You mentioned Gettysburg. The Confederates marched almost a mile over open terrain taking constant fire from Union artillery and rifles. The French did the same thing in 1914 against the Germans, who now had machine guns to go with their rifles and artillery. In those types of situations—which are incredibly unequal in terms of firepower—it makes no difference how much morale you have—you're simply not going to prevail."

"And what about situations in which you have equivalent firepower?"

"Then morale plays the decisive factor, sir," said Rob.

"It *may* play the decisive factor," Chadwick stated. "It did at Normandy—there are plenty of other examples where that's the case. But it's not a certainty. And don't think for a minute that morale *cannot* overcome superior firepower. Du Picq and Foch were not completely wrong—they were just incorrect about *how* to apply morale to overcome a firepower superiority. You don't do it in a straight-up assault against a dug-in enemy. Look at the Vietcong and the NVA—they were masters of negating America's firepower advantage—and their morale was often off the scale. They rarely allowed our technological superiority to be used directly against them, instead they—they—they . . ."

Chadwick managed to sit down in his chair but couldn't speak. His breathing came in gasps—he couldn't seem to get enough air into his lungs. His face glowed red.

Glattan rushed forward to him, as did several other cadets.

"Colonel Chadwick, would you like some water?" Glattan asked.

"Do you need to go to the clinic?" questioned Rob.

Chadwick continued to gasp for air. He looked at the cadets surrounding him and raised a hand. "I'll . . . be . . . OK," he muttered. He took a sip of Glattan's water. A few seconds later, his breathing stabilized and his color returned.

"My apologies, gentlemen," he said. "I guess I got carried away a bit by mentioning Vietnam. I'll be fine, but why don't we call it a day for now?"

"You sure you're OK, sir? We could take you to the clinic," another cadet said.

"No—no need for that . . . I'm just showing my age a bit. Don't worry, I'm good."

The cadets slowly filed out of the seminar room, with several looking back at Chadwick. Glattan remained by his side.

"Sir, I'd like to escort you to the clinic."

"And what would they do for me? I don't think they have a magic pill that's going to make me better."

"No, sir, but they might have something that would help with the breathing."

"They don't—unfortunately. Why don't you just walk with me back to my office?"

"I'm happy to do that, sir, provided we take the elevator."

"OK, I'll give you that one, Paul."

Chadwick went into his office with Glattan in trail. "Why don't we forgo the session on the Japan paper this afternoon, sir, and you can go home and rest?"

Chadwick smiled. "We didn't talk about it last week, as I recall. I don't want you to miss two sessions. Are you able to talk about it now?"

"Yes—yes, sir. I'm ready. I've changed my argument—and have typed up a completely new outline. Would you like to see it?"

"Why don't you tell me about the new argument first? Have a seat."

Glattan chronicled the revamped argument and his rationale for it. As he did, Chadwick's lips curved upward.

"It appears you've done some serious thinking about this subject," Chadwick said when Glattan finished his explanation. "I like this

analysis better than your previous notions. Your take on bombing Japan won't win you any points with the Air Force hierarchy, but you're not writing the paper for them—you're writing it for me."

"So, sir, you think that I should continue with the way I'm heading?"

"I do indeed. I'll look over your outline, of course, but in the meantime press on."

"Sir, I'll do that. But—forgive me for being direct—what are you going to do about your condition?"

Chadwick tightened his focus on Glattan. "Yes, I'm going to have to tell people about what's happening. I admit I've been putting it off until the symptoms got worse. Now, it appears, I have little choice. I'll have to let the department head know—along with other members of the faculty—and your classmates. I want to keep teaching as long as I can."

Glattan wasn't sure what to say. Finally he blurted, "I'm very sorry about all this, sir."

Chadwick smiled. "That makes two of us."

Chapter 18

5 April 1977

“Hello, Em?” Glattan debated whether to call in the aftermath of Chadwick’s breathing episode, finally determining that she needed to know what happened.

“Hi, Paul. Dad said he gave you and your fellow cadets a scare in class today.”

“Yeah—yeah he did. That’s why I was calling. I just wanted to make sure you and your mom were in the loop. How did he do today after he got home?”

“I was in class when he got back here, and when I arrived he was taking a nap. Unusual for him to say the least, but I’m starting to think it’s going to be common from now on.”

“Probably so. Does he seem to be hurting in any way?”

“If he is, he’s not saying anything—which is the way he’s always been. I don’t expect that to change.”

“No, I doubt it. But if he does say something, I’m guessing that likely means the pain is off the scale.”

Emily paused. “Yes—I’m sure that’s right.”

“Why don’t you ask him to stay at home tomorrow and rest? He doesn’t teach again until Thursday.”

“Tomorrow he’s telling the faculty about his cancer.”

“Whoa—I didn’t think it would be that fast. The sooner the better, I guess. Hopefully, the department head can cut him some slack and allow him to stay home when he’s not teaching.”

“If only Dad would do that. He views it as part of his job to be in the office, available to cadets—and other faculty members—seeking his advice.”

Glattan couldn’t argue with Chadwick’s logic. Indeed, one of the great aspects of USAFA instruction was that the officer-professors didn’t keep “office hours”; they were *always* in their offices when they weren’t teaching. Even with Barrow’s assistance, Glattan knew that he wouldn’t have survived computer science, mech, electrical engineering, or astronautics without spending many hours in the instructors’ offices getting EI, “extra instruction.”

Yep, Glattan thought, Chadwick will be in his office until he’s unable to get there.

“I understand, Emily. That’s how your dad is—and it’s a good thing.”



After his Civil War class ended on Wednesday, Glattan went to the history department to check on Chadwick. As he walked by the office of his academic advisor, Major Beaufort, Glattan heard his name called and stepped inside.

“Mr. Glattan, this morning I just heard—well, actually, all of us on the history department faculty heard—that Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick has terminal cancer resulting from his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. Needless to say, this came as a shock to us all. He’s always been so robust, so outgoing—I would never have expected it, and I still find it hard to believe. But for your immediate concern—I know you’re writing a major paper for him based on your bombing of Japan research—and I wanted you to realize that might become challenging given his condition.”

“Sir, that’s—that’s—horrible. Do you know how long he might have left?”

“He didn’t say—but he said the cancer would soon incapacitate him—and would take him away soon after that. Do you want me to find another instructor to supervise your writing project?”

“No—no, sir—I don’t. I hate what’s happened, but during the months I’ve been working with Lieutenant Colonel Chadwick, I’ve learned an enormous amount from him, and I would like to continue to work with him for as long as I can—if I can do that?”

“I don’t see why you can’t, Mr. Glattan. You just have to realize that it’s likely to become very difficult for you to meet with him on a consistent basis.”

“Yes, sir, I understand. If I had to meet with him at his home, I could do that—I know where he lives.”

Glattan blushed as the words came out.

Major Beaufort didn’t see—or ignored—the redness. “Yes, it might come to you having to see him at home. We just don’t know at this stage.”

“Do you know if he plans to continue teaching his Military Thought class?”

“He said that he did—but also said that he might need another instructor to take over for him if he can’t continue. If that happens—and I pray to God it will not—you’ll be stuck with me.”

“Sir, I like you a great deal as an instructor—after all, I signed up to be a history major as a Third Classman after taking Modern War and

Society from you—but I also hope that you do not have to teach Colonel Chadwick's course."

Glattan saluted and left. He went to Chadwick's office, found it vacant, and sullenly walked to the library to review for Early Modern Europe. He tried to focus on the reading but could not. How difficult it must have been, he thought, for Chadwick to stand before the members of the history department and tell them that he had terminal cancer.

And how brave.

Sure, Glattan thought, the history department faculty was going to find out about Chadwick's condition sooner or later—no doubt about it. Yet Chadwick chose to tell his assembled colleagues in a dignified manner about what was to come—before he lost the ability to do so with composure. To Glattan, it was a true display of moral courage.

The next morning, at exactly 8:00 a.m., Chadwick walked into the History of Military Thought. After saluting the section marcher, he said, "Gentlemen, please take your seats," as he sat down himself. "Our last session ended early, as I became short of breath. I recovered from that episode, but it may well recur. Gentlemen, I regret to inform you that, because of my exposure to Agent Orange, I now have terminal cancer. I could give you the fancy medical terminology for my affliction, but I won't because it doesn't matter—it is, as I said, terminal. I don't know how much time I have left, and it could well be that I will not last out the semester. If that happens, Major Beaufort will take over the class—but I wanted you to know that I may have additional episodes like you saw before—or worse—before I become unable to teach anymore."

Glattan gauged reactions while Chadwick's eyes remained fixed on each cadet's. Many of his classmates' mouths were open, others shook their heads, a few stared at the table before them.

"Now, now, gentlemen," Chadwick continued. "I appreciate your concern, but the last thing I want is your pity. Yes, I'm dying. We all will. And in my case, I'm essentially a victim of friendly fire. We didn't know at the time that Agent Orange was toxic to humans. As we've talked about many times in this course, commanders make the best decisions they can with the information they have available—war is not a perfect science. Did using Agent Orange help save American lives? Probably so. That it ended up costing American lives—and Vietnamese as well—was an unforeseen consequence. Still, even if we had known the dangers, we might have deemed it worth the costs.

We've done that before. We—we Americans and British—killed 6,000 French civilians by bombing before D-Day because we wanted to turn towns near the coast into rubble to block roadways and prevent the Germans from bringing in their tanks to oppose the invasion. Was that wrong? I don't know. But I do know that one day in your Air Force careers you may face similar choices.

"Are you gentlemen OK being with me for as long as I'm able to be with you?"

Twelve heads slowly nodded.

"Good. Mr. Stimson—what were the flaws in the Schlieffen Plan that the Germans thought would lead them to a quick victory in World War I?"



Glattan picked up Emily Friday at 6:00 p.m. Tight jeans and another tight sweater, this time dark gray. She wore the necklace he gave her again, with the turquoise bracelet on her right wrist.

Gorgeous as always.

She kissed him lightly on the lips when she got in the car.

"Dad had another breathing episode this afternoon."

"Jesus, Em—do you want to go out?"

"It went away after five or six minutes. He's asleep now."

"Still, Emily, we don't have to go. Don't you want to be with him?"

"It's likely he'll sleep the rest of the night. I've decided—there are going to be a lot of times when I'm going to have to be with him. But I can't just sit at home and try to anticipate those times. If I do, I'll go mad . . . plus, I want to be with you." She kissed him again.

"OK, I'm not going to complain about that." He leaned over for another kiss.

"I thought we might go for pizza tonight at Giuseppe's, if you don't mind seeing more cadets. My roommate, Mike Barrow, is going to be there with his girlfriend, Karen—perhaps we might join them for dinner?"

"A double date?"

"Well, I guess you could say that, though I thought we might see *The Eagle Has Landed* after dinner. If we don't show up at G's before 6:45, they're going to take off."

"Sure, I'd love to meet them—I've heard so much about Mike."

"The guy is brilliant—and funny—and one hell of a friend. Karen's great too. I think you'll like them."

“I can’t imagine I won’t.”

As they entered the restaurant, Glattan spied Barrow and Karen sitting at the bar, each sipping a beer.

“Nice of you all to wait on us,” Glattan said.

“No rush, it’s Friday night,” Barrow replied.

“Mike Barrow, Karen Pittman, meet Emily Chadwick.”

“Nice to meet you, Emily, but I’m terribly sorry about your father,” Barrow said.

“I am too,” Karen followed.

“Thank you all for that,” Emily responded. “It’s good to have everyone pulling for him. But let’s focus on other things tonight. Mike, I hear that you’ve been Paul’s math messiah.”

“Yep, that’s me—we’ll talk more about that over dinner.”

As the foursome began leaving the bar area, Glattan spied a table with five of his classmates, downing the last of their two-for-one happy hour cocktails. Five sets of eyebrows rose when they saw Emily go by, clinging to Glattan’s arm.

“Wow, Glat—YOU THE MAN!” one of them shouted.

Glattan hoped that Emily hadn’t heard but could tell from her eyes that she had. She responded by stopping, putting her arms around him, and planting a huge kiss on his lips—and then waving at the table. The cadets sat dumbstruck.

“Nicely done,” Barrow winked. “Cadets can be such assholes.”

“So I’ve heard,” Emily said. “But they can also be redeemed.” She winked at Glattan who winked back.

“What’s with all this winking?!” Karen exclaimed. “I guess I’ll have to give you a wink later,” she said, smiling at Barrow.

“I look forward to it,” he grinned with a wink.

“How long *have* you two known each other?” Emily asked as they sat down.

“It’s been a while,” Karen answered. “What is it now, Mike, almost two years?”

“Yep, it’s going on that. All stems from that sorority party at CC I went to that fall. I take one weekend off from studying, and look what happens!”

“You took several more Saturday nights off after that,” Karen giggled.

“You’re at CC?” Emily asked.

“I am. I finish there in another five weeks. Environmental science major.”

"I had no idea," Emily said. "I'll be graduating from there too—double major in history and poli sci."

"I guess the different majors are why we never crossed paths," Karen replied.

"Well, Mike mentioned a sorority house—I've had to live at home."

"Oh, don't think that I lived there," Karen said. "I was with a girlfriend at the party. I live in an apartment with three other girls."

"Forgive me," Emily stated. "Sounds like a good way to save money."

"Sure is. I've also got a part-time job with the National Park Service. If you ever want a special tour of Garden of the Gods or Rocky Mountain National Park, I'm your girl."

"Hmmm," Glattan murmured. "We had a pretty special tour of Garden of the Gods last weekend." He winked at Emily, who blushed. Mike and Karen both laughed.

"I think we've had similar tours of Garden of the Gods," Mike grinned.

Karen winked at him.

"Ha! I finally got a wink!" he exclaimed.

Emily smiled. "Other than 'touring' Garden of the Gods, what else do you guys enjoy doing together?"

"We've gone skiing several times—I think Copper Mountain and Breckenridge are our favorite spots," Karen answered. "We also like to go to Denver and walk around the shops in Larimer Square. And eat there. We love several of the Italian restaurants, though our favorite is Russell's Smokehouse—ribs to die for!"

"We love going to Denver," Emily said. "Larimer Square is a great area. We'll have to check out the Smokehouse!"

The waitress arrived, and they decided on an extra-large combo pizza with pepperoni, sausage, ground beef, mushrooms, green peppers, and black olives—they said no to the onions. A bottle of Chianti accompanied the order.

"Damn," Barrow said after the pizza arrived. "G's doesn't have a lot of ambiance, but it does have hellaciously good pizza."

"I'll second that," Glattan agreed as he munched on a slice. Emily and Karen nodded.

Glattan put down his pizza and raised his wine glass. "To the Class of '77. I won't say it's the best class that the Academy has ever produced, but I will say that it's got some damn good potential. And I will say that Blackjack 21 is a great squadron."

"You've decided to wax philosophical tonight, Glat?" Barrow replied.

“I guess so, Bareass. I’ve got my best friend, his best girl, and my best girl all sitting here together. None of that would have happened if we hadn’t shown up that July day in 1973 with the rest of ’77. But we did—and now here we are. All I can say with certainty is that all of us—all four of us—are on track to graduate in a few weeks. And I couldn’t be happier. You—Bareass—are the *perfect* roommate, and you, Karen—from my perspective—are his *perfect* girlfriend. And I can say without a doubt—that you, Emily, are the woman that I love without question—the woman I cannot live without.”

After he said it, Glattan couldn’t believe what he had just blurted out. Yet he had.

As he tried to process its ramifications, he saw Karen look longingly at Barrow—and Emily look the same way at him.

Damnation, he thought—Bareass must think I’ve gone crazy—and I’m not even toasted.

What the hell have I done?!

“To the women guiding our lives!” Barrow said, raising his glass. He smiled at his roommate. Karen continued to stare at Barrow. Emily’s gaze remained frozen on Glattan. Four glasses slowly clinked together.

“Well,” Glattan stammered. “I didn’t mean to get so—what did you say, Bareass? ‘Philosophical?’”

“It’s OK with me, Glat. Your words were good ones.”

“I thought so, too,” said Karen, still focused on Barrow.

“Me as well,” said Emily. After a few seconds she turned her head toward Barrow. “So what did you think, Mike, when you ended up with this guy as your roommate?”

“Good question. I wondered about him, to be sure, especially his fetish for all things North Carolina—when it comes to his Tar Heels, I think he’s got a mental problem.”

Laughs ensued.

“But don’t let him snow you about his ‘inability’ when it came to math or science courses. Yeah, I gave him some help, but he wasn’t ‘clueless’—he already had a solid foundation to work with, and, if truth be told, I don’t think he’s ever made less than a B in those courses, and in some of them he’s pulled As.”

“How about comp sci?” Glattan asked.

“OK, yeah, there you were clueless.”

More laughs.

"I don't think anyone could have a better roomo, though, than Glat," Barrow continued. "He's always been there for me when I needed a friend, and we think the same way about the regulations and other military BS. You have to have a sense of humor about that stuff, and, as I imagine you know, Emily, Glat has a highly refined sense of humor."

"He *has* made me laugh on occasion," she chuckled. "You guys seem to be ideally suited for one another."

"Yeah, I think we're a good match," Barrow replied. "It's strange, I guess, how an Air Force brat like me who specializes in science courses and wants to be an astronaut and a Southerner who likes only 'fuzzy studies' and thinks Dean Smith is God could become so tight, but it's happened. And I wouldn't have it any other way."

"Nor would I." Glattan raised his glass, with everyone else following suit.

Then Karen said, "To the men in our lives!"

"I second that motion," Emily responded. Again, four glasses clinked.

"Hey," Glattan said, "We're thinking of seeing *The Eagle Has Landed*. Would you all like to join us?"

"That should be a great movie if it lives up to the novel," Barrow answered. "I read it as a Third Classman." He looked at Karen, who looked at the floor. "But I think we'll take it in another night." Her disposition brightened.

"Actually, Paul, even though I really like Michael Caine, I'm not really in a movie mood this evening," Emily stated. She winked at Karen, and Karen winked back.

"OK—as Barrow will tell you, I'm pretty dense on occasion—but I can take a hint. We'll see Michael Caine another night."

The girls laughed as everyone departed G's.

"You sure you don't want to go to the movies?" Glattan said once they got in the car.

"Paul—after what you said at Giuseppe's—which I *certainly* was not expecting—what I want to do is park in the mountains and take in the lights overlooking the Springs."

"We can make that happen."

When they got to the spot where they parked many times in the fall, Emily said, "I can't believe you admitted that you loved me in front of Mike and Karen. Let me just say, Paul Glattan—I *love you*." With that, she kissed him deeply and then placed her hands behind her neck and took off her necklace, carefully placing it in the glove

compartment. Next, she pulled her sweater over her head and unfastened her bra. Glattan stared at her, spellbound. She smiled at him and began removing his jeans.

Later, as they embraced in the cramped Celica, Emily gingerly moved so that they were face-to-face. “I never *stopped* loving you,” she said.

Glattan held her tightly, feeling ecstatic. She positively glowed. She was as bright, he thought, as the twinkling lights below them.



The weather was too good, Glattan surmised, for many Bingos. Barrow agreed as they headed to parade formation.

“With a temperature in the mid-60s, I don’t think we’ll see a lot of flops today,” he said. “But I’ll be honest—I’m going to be thinking about last night while I’m standing at parade rest.”

“I’m with you, Bareass. I still can’t believe what I said last night at G’s.”

“Sometimes, what your Tar Heel tongue says pays dividends.”

“A broken clock is right at least twice a day.”

Glattan’s intuition proved correct; they tabulated only a single Bingo for the parade.

“Well, damn, that was worthless in all respects,” Barrow said as they walked back into 21st Squadron.

“Hey Glat!” yelled the CQ as they entered the squadron’s main hall. “I just got a message for you less than a minute ago.” Glattan opened the folded piece of paper. “Call me—Emily.”

“Oh shit, Bareass—something’s wrong. I need to call Em.”

“OK, let me know!”

Glattan stepped into the phone booth.

“Paul, Dad’s really messed up,” Emily said. “He’s fallen, and I’m pretty sure his arm is broken. I’ve called an ambulance, but can you get here too?!”

“On my way!”

Glattan shouted to Barrow, “Chadwick’s fallen and is hurt—will you go with me to help out?”

“Of course—let’s go!”

They stripped off their uniforms in seconds, running to Vandenberg Hall’s upper lot after changing. Glattan drove, going more than 75 miles an hour on the curvy mountain roads to Douglas Valley. Upon arriving, he and Barrow jumped out of the Celica and headed to the front door. It was open and they rushed inside.

Chadwick lay in the hallway outside the kitchen. He was wearing jeans and a sweatshirt, but his left arm was grotesquely twisted under his body, a bloody bone protruding from it, blood and vomit covering part of the hall.

“We couldn’t get him up,” Emily said, “and we didn’t know what to do.” Emily’s mom sat beside Chadwick on the floor, rubbing his back. Bob Jr. watched in silence, tear tracks lining his face.

“OK, we’ve got this, Em.” Glattan and Barrow moved forward, careful not to touch Chadwick’s arm. They clutched him by the waist and raised him to an upright position.

“How do you feel, sir?” Glattan asked.

“I’ve felt better, Paul—my arm’s broken.”

“What happened?”

“I’m not entirely sure. I was walking down the hall, and all of a sudden I was nauseous and threw up, then I felt weak and fell . . . that’s really all I remember.”

“All right, sir. We’re waiting for an ambulance—you need to have your arm taken care of as a minimum.”

“Yes, I guess that makes sense. I’m a mess, aren’t I?”

“Don’t worry about that, sir—that’s what the guys at the hospital get paid for. By the way, this is my roommate, Mike Barrow.”

“It’s an honor to meet you, sir—I’ve heard so many great things about you, Colonel Chadwick.”

“Hmmm. I’m afraid I don’t look so good, now.”

“Don’t worry about that, sir. The guys at the hospital will take care of you. If you don’t mind me saying so, I’m in awe of what you did in Vietnam. Glat’s told me all about it.”

Chadwick balanced himself between the two cadets, looking at Barrow. “He has, has he? Well, he might be a bit biased, given he’s dating my daughter.”

“Don’t think so, sir. I’ve been living with him for the past three years. I know when he’s giving me a ration of BS. This isn’t one of those times.”

Chadwick smiled. “Barrow, is it? I like you. Why aren’t you a history major?”

“Because I want to be an astronaut, sir. I don’t think history will get me there.”

“Well, you’re probably right. . . Thanks for coming over today—it’s good to see that Cadet Glattan’s judgment remains solid.”

The ambulance finally arrived, and Glattan and Barrow helped get Chadwick inside it. Janet and Bob Jr. rode in it as well, while Emily went to the hospital in the Celica.

“Sorry to have called you guys,” Emily said, “but I didn’t know what else to do.”

“That’s what we’re here for,” Glattan replied, with Barrow nodding.

“I’m not sure what they can do for him at the hospital,” Emily stated.

“Well, they can certainly take care of the broken arm,” Glattan said, “plus I imagine they’ll run some more tests regarding the spread of the cancer. Don’t worry, Em. You know that I’ve spent time in the USAFA hospital before—the people in it are top-notch, and I guarantee they’ll do everything in their power to take care of your dad.”

He looked at her and saw a tear trickle down her face. “I’m not going to BS you—we both know that the situation is not good. But if anyone can help make it better, it’s these guys—I’m living proof.”

Emily wiped away the tear.

“He’s right, you know,” Barrow added. “Anybody who can save Glat has to be good—no doubt he challenged the USAFA hospital staff more than they’ve ever been challenged.”

Emily smiled at that.

Glattan parked the car, and they headed to the ER. Chadwick was the only patient there, with two doctors and several nurses surrounding him. “I’ve never had so much attention,” he proclaimed as Emily, Barrow, and Glattan walked into his room.

“Well, Dad, you deserve it,” Emily said. “You definitely need to get that arm fixed—and you need to hear what else they have to say about you.”

“She’s right, Bob,” Janet added. “Your arm’s in bad shape, and you need to have the docs run tests regarding the cancer.”

“I’m not sure how much more they can tell me. They know that it’s terminal.”

“Yeah, Dad, they do—but they might be able to determine better how much time you have—and if there’s anything you can do to prolong that time.”

The lead ER doc, an Air Force major, spoke: “She’s right, Colonel Chadwick. It’s a simple enough matter to patch up your arm—your fracture was straightforward; it should heal without any difficulty. But the reason that you had the fracture in the first place was because your bones are extremely fragile—the cancer is eating away your bone marrow—all of your bones are now susceptible to breaking. If

you'll pardon me saying so, sir, you just can't walk around normally because your bones aren't normal anymore. Each time you take a step, each time you reach for something, you've got to realize that your bones don't support you the way they once did. I'm very sorry to say this, Colonel, but you absolutely have to behave as if a bone may break whenever you move."

Chadwick paused before responding. "OK, doc. I needed to hear that. So did my family. How long do you think I need to stay here before I can get back to work?"

"That's hard to say—for now you need to rest, and we need to run some more tests. We can get your arm in a sling in less than an hour, but the test results will take some time."

"I'm sure that's the case—and I'm willing to stay here overnight—but I want to go back to class on Monday."

"Well, sir, I'm not sure that's a good idea—"

"Why not? I'm going to die, one way or another. At least let me teach while I still have the ability. I can certainly teach with my left arm in a sling—plus I grade with my right hand."

The doctor looked at Janet, Emily, Glattan, Barrow, and Bob Jr. Their eyes all pleaded Chadwick's case. "Well, Colonel, until we get all the results back—assuming you take proper precautions—I don't see why you can't head back to the classroom."

Chapter 19

9 April 1977

Glattan arrived back at Chadwick's Douglas Valley home with a packed car—Mrs. Chadwick rode in the passenger seat, with Barrow, Emily, and Bob Jr. crammed in the back.

"My apologies for the rear seating arrangements," Glattan said.

"Yeah—next time I expect a Cadillac," Barrow chirped. Emily chuckled.

"I think everyone made it just fine," Mrs. Chadwick responded. "I can't thank you and Mike enough for helping out."

"We're happy to do so, ma'am," Glattan answered.

"That goes double for me," Barrow added.

"Well, it was mighty kind of the both of you," she said.

"These guys are my heroes!" Bob Jr. exclaimed, eliciting laughs from Mrs. Chadwick and Emily and red-faced smiles from Glattan and Barrow.

"We're always ready to lend a hand," Glattan stated. "Ma'am, if you need help getting Colonel Chadwick home from the hospital tomorrow—assuming he's released—please don't hesitate to call."

"I'll do that, Paul, though I think we should be able to manage. However, if he does go to work on Monday, if you could meet him at the department elevator under Fairchild Hall when I drop him off and carry his books and papers up to his office, that would be enormously helpful."

"By all means, ma'am. What time would you like me to meet him?"

"Let's say seven o'clock—he always likes to get there early. I'm sure you'll be in touch with Emily this weekend, and she can confirm the time."

"Yes, ma'am. I'll be ready."

"Paul—and Mike—thank you both so much for all that you did—you're my heroes, too!" Emily remarked, giving each a light kiss on the cheek. "I'm going to stay at home today and help out Mom and Bob Jr."

"Of course," Glattan replied. "If you all need anything—including takeout—don't hesitate to give me a yell."

"I will—and thanks again for last night," she said with a knowing smile and a loving wink.

“You are one lucky son of a bitch,” Barrow observed when they were in the car.

“You are right about that, Bareass, though I feel horrible for Em and the rest of the family. . . . But speaking of lucky, you’re not doing too badly in that category.”

“I won’t disagree. I’m taking Karen to the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo today, and you’re welcome to tag along now that your plans with Emily are shot to hell.”

“Thanks for the invite, but this change of plans allows me to refine my paper for Chadwick and maybe to start typing up the final draft.”

“Aren’t you taking a chance if you do that? You haven’t gotten the new outline approved yet, have you?”

“No, I haven’t. But when I explained my new argument to him last week, he seemed pleased. Still, you’ve got a good point, and if I do begin typing, I think I’ll hedge my bet and stop at 20 pages.”

“Makes sense. It would truly suck to have to type a 50-plus page paper three times.”

“Off the scale.”

Returning to his room, Glattan put away his parade uniform, changed into his Class Bs, and lugged his knapsack and typewriter to his cubicle in the library. Food was off-limits there, yet he knew this library session would be a long one and packed a peanut butter sandwich to go with the can of Coke that he stashed in the knapsack. No one would know about the food because no one had the keypad code to Special Collections.

In the cubicle, he methodically arranged the typewriter, typing paper, final outline, and text—a combination of 11 handwritten and 55 typed pages with scribbles. After carefully placing the sandwich and Coke on the cubicle’s top shelf, he read through the outline and began a final edit of the text. OK, Glattan thought as he munched the sandwich—I’ve finally got it the way I want it. He looked at the clock: 4:30. Got to give Emily a call before I start typing.

He left everything as it was in the cubicle, making his way back to 21st Squadron’s phone room.

“Hi, Em—I just wanted to check on how you all are doing and see if you’ve heard anything from your dad.”

“I knew you’d call,” she said with a buoyant voice. “Dad’s doing alright—we just talked to him about an hour ago, and he sounded good. The docs are running more tests, but it looks like he’ll be allowed to come home tomorrow and, if all goes well, be able to teach

on Monday. That's so good of you to help him get to his office Monday morning."

"Come on, Em—I'm happy to help out. It's not like I won't be up."

"I'm sorry we couldn't get together today—I felt like I should be here. I helped Mom clean up the hallway, and I think she's just glad to have me around."

"I'm sure. Bob Jr.'s got to be glad to have you nearby as well."

"Well, I guess . . ."

"Well, I *know*. I've been working on the paper for your dad today and will head back to the library to continue it soon. If anything comes up, you know that you can leave a message with the CQ."

"Yep. But I don't really expect any problems to arise. In fact, like you, I'm working on my courses tonight."

"I love you."

"Love you too."

Glattan returned to the library with a bounce in his step. Before starting to type, he carefully scraped the sandwich crumbs in his hand and put them in a trash can. I don't want to dirty up the cubicle, he thought, nor do I want to smudge any of the typed pages.

The mechanical clicking began.

Glattan finished typing page 17—happily thinking that he had used only four inches of correction tape—and no Wite-Out—when the library's lights flashed. It was 10:45—15 minutes until closing. He packed his stuff and trucked back to Vandenberg Hall. Upon arriving at 21st Squadron, he went to the CQ desk, asking the cadet manning it if he had any messages. The Third Classman shook his head. Glattan went to his empty room—Barrow was with Karen on an overnight pass, ate another sandwich, and went to bed. *No* alarm for Sunday morning.

The sound of yelling Third Classmen next door woke him. Glattan looked at his watch—9:10 a.m. He had slept almost 10 hours. Damn, I needed that, he thought. He cleaned up, threw on his Class Bs, and trudged to Mitch's for a quick breakfast. Then back to Vandenberg to check in with Emily.

"How's your dad?"

"He's good—well, as good as he can be. The docs have run all the tests. Now it's just a matter of waiting for results."

"When will they release him?"

"One o'clock this afternoon. We should be able to manage."

"I'd still like to help out—I'll meet you at the hospital entrance at one."

“Paul, you really don’t have to do that—”

“Yeah, I know, but an extra set of hands might be useful.”

“All right—I must admit I won’t be disappointed to see you today.”

“That goes double.”

With a few hours to kill, Glattan decided to return to the Japan paper. Typing a draft from a handwritten text wasn’t the same as creating a draft from scratch, and even with the periodic noises next door, he aimed to knock out a few more pages before heading to the hospital. He finished three pages in less than an hour, taking him to his target of 20. I could—and probably should—stop now, he thought, but I’m going to shoot for 25. He made the new goal at 12:30.

Changing back into jeans and a sweatshirt, he drove to the hospital parking lot and walked to the entrance. How many times as a Doolie, he thought, did I return to this entrance at the end of classes for the day? The three-and-a-half years since his diagnosis of osteomyelitis and the subsequent surgeries erased none of those memories. How different would my life be if I had decided to return to North Carolina instead of staying at USAFA? I would never have met Barrow and the rest of the guys in 21st Squadron. I would never have met Chadwick. And I would never have met Emily.

He shook his head. Thank God I stayed, he reflected.

Chadwick’s car—a Buick LeSabre like that owned by Glattan’s parents—appeared just as Chadwick emerged from the entrance in a wheelchair. Glattan remembered the day of his own discharge. He was also wheeled out, despite being perfectly capable of walking—hospital procedures, the nurse said. In Chadwick’s case, though, the wheelchair was merited. With his left arm in a sling and awkwardly clutching a cane in his right hand, he grimaced, reflecting more than just pain from the broken arm.

Janet Chadwick’s, Emily’s, and Bob Jr.’s eyebrows all went up after Janet parked the car to allow Chadwick easy access. Glattan was sure that his face also showed concern. He walked to the wheelchair, steered by a first lieutenant nurse.

“Sir, let me help you get into the car.”

Chadwick stared at him. “So now I have a damned cane to help me walk. That’s a nice match for a broken arm, isn’t it?”

“Well, sir, it’s probably a good idea. You don’t want to fall again.”

“No, you don’t, Bob,” Janet said, opening the passenger’s door to the front seat.

“Daddy, let Paul help you. Give me the cane, and let Paul take your right hand,” Emily directed.

Chadwick removed his feet from the pedals and put them on the sidewalk. With effort, he stood. Glattan put his left arm around Chadwick’s waist, held his right hand, and slowly walked him to the open car door. Chadwick plopped down in the seat, gradually swinging his legs in after him.

“Give me the damn cane!” he barked. Emily handed it to him. “All right, let’s get out of here.”

Bob Jr., who stood silently beside the car, got in the backseat along with Emily.

“I’ll follow you all back to the house,” Glattan said.

“Thanks, Paul,” Janet replied. “It’s good to have you here.”

As soon as the Buick arrived in Douglas Valley, Chadwick opened the passenger’s side front door. Glattan went to assist, but Chadwick motioned him away with the cane in his right hand. “I’ve got to be able to walk on my own, damn it, and get used to this damn cane.”

Chadwick placed the cane’s tip on the sidewalk, moved his feet to the driveway, and gingerly stood up, using the cane to balance his weight. He advanced slowly to the front door, with Glattan behind, arms outstretched in case he faltered. Once reaching the door, he turned to his family who stood watching: “See, I’m going to be just fine. A little practice, and I’ll move faster than all of you.”

Glattan stared at him. “Sir, I’m glad you’re able to move around a bit, but do you really want to try to teach tomorrow?”

Chadwick glared back. “You’re goddamn right I do! What do you expect me to do? Curl up in the fetal position and surrender?!”

“No—no, sir. But it might be wise to get some of your strength back before you return to class.”

“Goddamn it, Paul! My strength isn’t going to come back! I’ve got to use what’s left while I still can!”

Glattan looked down. A tear flowed down Emily’s cheek while Mrs. Chadwick wiped her eyes. Bob Jr. clutched his mother’s waist.

“I’m sorry, Paul—I’m sorry to all of you. I didn’t mean to get so carried away. What’s ahead is not going to be easy . . . and I don’t need to make it any worse by being an ass. I’ll practice walking with the cane for a little while, and then I *will* take a nap. Paul, you don’t mind meeting me at the department elevator tomorrow morning at seven?”

“No, sir—of course not. I can be there earlier if you’d like.”

“No—seven’s early enough. I think I might take that nap first this afternoon, and then practice maneuvering afterward. Thanks for helping out today.”

“Anytime, sir.”

Chadwick tapped his way into the house.

“Paul, thank you again for being here this afternoon—you made it so much easier to get Bob home,” Mrs. Chadwick remarked.

“If you need any more help, just give me a call—the 21st Squadron phone is always manned.”

“Yes, that number is listed by our phone,” she said while looking at Emily, who smiled. “Come on, Bob Jr.—let’s go inside and see about your dad.”

“Cadet Paul is still my hero!” Bob Jr. shouted as he ran by.

“And he is still my hero as well,” Emily stated as she kissed him.

Glattan returned the kiss but kept it short. “No kidding, Em, if you all need me, call.”

“You know I will—although I may call just to hear your voice. You could call me too, you know.”

“I’d say the odds are high of that happening.”

Once in his room, Glattan changed back into his Class Bs and trudged toward Mitch’s. He was hungry—*really* hungry—peanut butter sandwiches were not going to cut it this time. Mitchell Hall served a Sunday afternoon buffet, with hamburgers the main fare. Nice, Glattan thought, grabbing three of them along with several handfuls of chips and a couple of Cokes.

He sat at an empty table, wolfing down the burgers while wondering how things were going in Douglas Valley. No doubt Chadwick aimed to be in class tomorrow and likely would practice walking with the cane. But how long before his body totally failed him? Just walking was obviously an ordeal, and trying to do so with a cane and a broken left arm made it doubly difficult. Meanwhile, the lymphoma generated intense pain throughout his body. Glattan couldn’t imagine the physical—and mental—fortitude it took simply to move forward.

And tomorrow, Chadwick intended not just to walk into class, but to teach.

Back in his room, Glattan perused next week’s schedule. Chadwick’s seminar would start the day Monday. Got to be ready for that one, Glattan thought, and then smiled when he read the lesson’s title: “Billy Mitchell and the Air Power Theorists.” If I don’t know something about that topic, he mused, then what the hell have I been doing

for the past eight months? Nonetheless, he read the assignment carefully, highlighter in hand.

The door opened as he finished the last paragraph. Barrow walked into the room sporting the goofiest grin Glattan had ever seen.

“What the hell happened to you, Bareass? You look like the cat that swallowed the canary.”

“I did it.”

“Did what?”

“I finally did *it*.”

“Did *it*? What the fuck are you talking ab—Holy shit, you proposed to Karen?!”

Barrow nodded vigorously. “Yes—YES—YES!”

“At the fucking Cheyenne Mountain Zoo?!”

“No—*no*! Give me some credit.”

“You went there, right?”

“Yeah. But before I did, I went to Zales at the Citadel and bought a ring. Nothing horribly expensive, but still . . . nice. I picked Karen up as planned and we went to the zoo—hey, have you ever seen the size of a buffalo’s dick?”

“Gee, that’s romantic.”

“Never mind. After the zoo we went to the Broadmoor.”

“You went to the Broadmoor in jeans?”

“Not the fancy restaurant part, but the bar on the lake behind the hotel. We had champagne cocktails, and then we went on a walk around the lake. The sun had just begun to set behind the mountains—and that’s when I popped the question.”

“Ah, so you *are* a romantic at heart despite focusing on buffalo dicks and all that science you’ve absorbed. *But what the hell did she say?!*”

“She said yes, of course—why do you think I’m standing here with this shit-eating smile?!”

“Well, goddamn, Bareass—that’s *wonderful!*” Glattan stood up and threw his arms around his roomo. “When’s it going to be? Is it going to be a Chapel wedding?”

“We don’t know yet—we’ll work it out. But what’s important for now is that she said yes!”

“I’m thrilled for you all, Bareass. I’ve always thought you were the perfect couple.”

“Well, that little speech you gave at G’s on Friday night pushed me over the edge. You know—this can happen to you as well.”

The thought had crossed Glattan's mind. Could he live without Emily? He wasn't sure that he could. He wondered if she felt the same way about him. "Yes—I won't deny it's a possibility—but first things first—I'm afraid Chadwick's going downhill fast."

"Yeah, I saw that yesterday. Did he get out of the hospital today?"

"He did. I went to help. I tell you, Bareass, he looked fragile. They gave him a cane at the hospital to help with his balance, and it was slow going getting him into the car—he's in a hell of a lot of pain. I still can't believe that he's going to teach tomorrow."

"He is one tough son of a bitch."

"That he is."



Glattan checked his watch as he waited by the history department elevator: 6:50. He arrived at 6:35, just in case Chadwick showed early. His black parka was welcome, given that the temperature was in the low 40s, though he also felt he needed a gas mask to block out the exhaust fumes accumulating in Fairchild Hall's confined ground-floor parking area.

At 6:58, a Buick LeSabre entered the parking area and stopped at the elevator. The passenger door opened, a cane tapped the pavement, and Chadwick emerged, slowly, deliberately. Damn, Glattan thought, he *did* practice!

"Hi, Paul. Again, thanks for your help. My bag's in the backseat."

When Glattan opened the car door, Bob Jr. handed him a leather briefcase. "Hi, Cadet Paul!" Bob Jr. grinned.

"Hi, little man. I see you're helping out today—good for you!"

"I'll drop him off at school next," Mrs. Chadwick said, "but he rode with me so that he could see you."

"Well, have a good day, Jr."

"Hey—I need to get upstairs!" Chadwick shouted.

"Yes, sir! I'm with you!"

Glattan waved at Mrs. Chadwick and Bob Jr. and then pressed the elevator button for the sixth floor. "You're moving better today, sir."

"Yeah—I'm more confident using this contraption," he said, lifting the cane as the elevator door opened. "I won't win any road races, but I can get from point A to B. Speaking of which, I've got a few books and articles I'd like you to take down to the classroom once we get to my office."

"Yes, sir."

Glattan followed Chadwick, who advanced steadily to his office. Once there, he had Glattan put the briefcase on his desk. Chadwick went to it, pulling out a book and several articles, and then took another book off a shelf. He opened the first book, thumbing through it and placing a three-by-five-inch card at the desired spot inside, and did the same with the second.

"Please take those to the classroom, Paul, and put them at my end of the table. I'll be there when class begins."

"Do you want me to escort you to class before it starts, sir?"

"No—that won't be necessary. It may come to that, but not today."

"Yes, sir."

Chadwick nodded. "I imagine you're looking forward to this morning's class on Billy Mitchell and his cohorts. That's right in your wheelhouse, isn't it?"

"Well, sir, I have read a bit about those guys."

"That you have. Thanks again for helping me."

Glattan carried the books and articles to the seminar room. 7:25. No time to go anywhere else, he thought, plus I probably should review a bit now that Chadwick stressed my knowledge of the material. Glattan quickly scanned his highlighting and marginal scribbles. Damn, I *do* know a fair amount about this stuff. Still, I don't want to let Chadwick down, he mused—and reviewed the highlighted passages again.

At precisely 8:00 Chadwick walked into the room. Several eyebrows went up. "Take your seats, gentlemen—we'll dispense with the formalities given that I'm now more encumbered than normal. I took a fall on Saturday that broke my arm, and the hospital staff gave me this damn cane to make sure I keep my balance. I aim to do that—and I think I can do it best by sitting down."

A few cadets shifted in their seats. All eyes caged on Chadwick.

"Today we'll discuss Billy Mitchell and his fellow air theorists. I always thought it a bit strange that Billy got the dining hall here named after him, though on second thought, I guess it's not so unexpected—he was a connoisseur of fine French cuisine."

Some Firsties shook their heads.

"What, Mr. Johnson, you don't think that Mitch's lives up to Billy's high standards?"

"Well, sir," George Johnson responded, "I don't think the frequent servings of 'mystery meat' would suit General Mitchell's taste."

Several snickers.

“Let’s explore what would suit Billy’s taste. Mr. Johnson, do you think that the air campaign we Americans and our British allies waged against Germany in World War II would have received a head nod from Billy?”

“Sir, I’m not sure. I don’t think he would have been happy about the large number of German civilians we killed—at least half a million people.”

“But it was a total war for unconditional surrender, right? Civilians worked in the armament factories, manned the rail yards that transported German troops and equipment to the front, helped produce the synthetic oil that fueled the German war machine—certainly they were legitimate targets, right?”

Johnson squirmed. “Sir, we killed a lot of people who didn’t actively support the German war effort.”

“All of whom were loyal to the Nazi regime—and that regime had to be destroyed, didn’t it?”

“Sir, it did . . . but we were pretty ruthless.”

“Mr. Johnson raises a good point—did we have to be so ‘ruthless’ with our airpower? What would Billy say?”

“Sir, I think he would say no,” Glattan stated.

“And why do you say that, Mr. Glattan?”

“Sir, Mitchell thought that massive bomb tonnage applied against key enemy targets in a short time span would break the will of the enemy populace—and its government—to fight and quickly end a war. He said that such an air campaign would be ‘a distinct benefit to civilization’ because it would make wars shorter and cause fewer deaths. We Americans—and the British, for that matter—never had the force he envisioned to knock out Germany until late 1944.”

“True enough, but then it took six months of bombing before Germany threw in the towel,” Chadwick responded.

“Yes, sir. Mitchell likely underestimated the resilience of a civilian population to withstand a massive air campaign. But the Allies’ overwhelming airpower might have been used in a better way.”

“And what would that have been, Mr. Glattan?”

“Sir, it could have been used to directly support the advance of Allied armies across Europe. That use might have resulted in a later surrender, but it would still have wrecked the Nazi regime—and saved far more civilian lives in the process.”

“So a quicker victory is not necessarily a better victory?”

“Exactly, sir. And I think Billy Mitchell would have been happy with an outcome that minimized civilian losses.”

“Anyone want to challenge what Mr. Glattan has said?”

No hands went up.

“Well, I’m not going to say that his argument is spot on . . . but I will say that it’s worth considering.”

Glattan waited until the other cadets left and followed Chadwick back to his office, carrying his books and articles.

“You stole my Mitchell quote in your response today, Paul—I had planned to read his notion of ‘beneficial bombing’ to the rest of the seminar.”

“Sorry, sir—it seemed like an appropriate time to mention it.”

“No apology necessary—the time for it was certainly appropriate.”

Chadwick wheezed out the last phrase, and Glattan saw that his movement had slowed.

“You OK, sir?”

“I think so. Just let me get to my office.”

Chadwick said nothing the rest of the way, but Glattan noticed him grimace on the elevator ride to the sixth floor. Once in his office, he staggered to his chair and collapsed into it.

“I guess the teaching took more out of me than I expected,” he huffed. He stared silently at Glattan for a few moments, then reached into his briefcase, taking out several typed pages lightly spattered with green ink. “Here’s the outline of your Japan paper. I’ve made a few comments on it, but they’re mostly cosmetic. Your argument’s solid—that was a nice defense of it in class, by the way—and you can now type up the paper in final form.”

“Sir, I—I’ll do that and get it to you as soon as I can.”

“That sounds good, Paul . . . and, if it’s OK with you, I think we’ll forgo our session tomorrow afternoon—I will stay home and rest.”

Chapter 20

11 April 1977

“Hi, Em. Your dad was very tired after class today—so tired that he said he was going to stay home and rest tomorrow.”

“I heard. He was asleep on the couch when I got home. Mom said he had another breathing episode. One that lasted almost 10 minutes.”

“Damn. I wonder if he’ll try to teach on Wednesday?”

“Likely depends on how well he does tomorrow.”

“You all need any help?”

“No, we’re good. Dad’s asleep in bed now.”

“Good. Call if you need anything.”

“I will.”

“Love you.”

“Love you more.”

Glattan walked into his room.

“How’s he doing?” Barrow asked.

“He’s asleep—has been for most of the day.”

“No doubt he needs it. Wonder how long he’s going to hang on until he decides teaching is a bridge too far?”

“I don’t know—but from what I saw heading back to his office today, I don’t think it’s going to be long.”

“So sad—a guy so brilliant.”

“Yeah—but you’ve got to wonder how much the drinking accelerated his condition.”

“I’m sure that’s not helping. Just goes to show you, you don’t know what the future holds.”

“Seriously.”

“Speaking of the future, Glat—I went by the Chapel this afternoon.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah. I was able to get a slot for the wedding two days after graduation. You still going to be here then?”

“I—I guess now I have a reason to.”

“Good, because I want you to be my best man.”

“Damn, Bareass—I’m honored. Sure—of course I’ll do that!”

“That’s good. If you’d said no, I don’t know who the hell I would have dug up.”

“Well, it just wouldn’t look right to have ‘FANE’ standing at the altar without ‘PRO’ beside him.”

“Truly. Glat, I’m afraid you know me better than my own brother.”

“Hmmm. That’s scary—but probably true. You know me better than my sister.”

“Funny, Glat. But hey—when I went to the Chapel, I checked—there are still a few slots available two days after graduation.”

Glattan raised an eyebrow. “Nice of you to do that, Bareass—but I’m not where you are yet.”

“Really? You can’t tell me that Emily isn’t the girl for you. It’s been obvious once she took you back after you fucked up in December. How many girls would do that—especially for *you*?”

“I won’t argue with you there,” Glattan smiled. He was silent for a few seconds. “But I want to make absolutely certain that her feelings for me aren’t just tied to what I’ve done for her dad.”

“But of course they are, Glat—it’s part of who you are. Why do you think she called the night of St. Patrick’s Day if she didn’t think you could help resolve that godawful situation?”

“I treated her so badly before, though.”

“Yeah—and she’s forgiven you. Granted, it won’t be easy dealing with what’s on the horizon with her dad. But you will—and that will only make Emily love you more.”



Glattan waited on Wednesday morning for the Buick to arrive at the history department elevator. 7:00—not yet. 7:15—still a no-show. At 7:20 the car appeared. The passenger door opened slowly. Chadwick’s cane tapped the pavement, but he had difficulty moving his legs outside the car. After almost a minute he stood up—clearly in pain—and started shuffling toward the elevator.

The rear door opened, with a pale Bob Jr. handing Glattan the briefcase. Mrs. Chadwick also reflected concern: “Look after him, Paul—he’s being stubborn, and I’m not sure he should be here.”

“Come on, Paul,” Chadwick wheezed.

Glattan nodded to Mrs. Chadwick as he moved to the elevator. “Sir, you sure about teaching today?”

Chadwick glared at him. “And who else would guide you and your classmates through the Blitzkrieg?”

“Sir—no one would do it as well as you—but I’m sure someone could be found.”

Chadwick smiled thinly. “Help me get to my office.”

Upon arriving, Chadwick plopped down in his desk chair, motioning for his briefcase. Glattan took it to him. Grimacing, Chadwick pulled out a book, dog-eared one of its pages, and then leaned back in his chair with his eyes closed.

“You OK, sir?”

Chadwick squinted. “I’m alright. Look on that top shelf, and bring me Guderian’s *Panzer Leader*.”

Glattan followed the direction of Chadwick’s right hand and brought him the book. Chadwick slowly opened it, thumbed through several pages, and dog-eared one.

“That’s a good combination, don’t you think—Basil Liddell Hart and Heinz Guderian? Please take them down to the classroom—and take a cup of water down for me as well. Then come back here at 0750 to walk with me down to the seminar.”

Glattan hesitated, looking at Chadwick.

“Go—NOW!”

“Yes, sir!”

Glattan returned at 7:45 to find Chadwick leaning on his cane behind his desk, reviewing his notes for the seminar.

“You’re early,” he said.

“Yes, sir. I thought—”

“You thought I might need extra time.”

“Well—yes, sir.”

“Normally I can get to class in three to five minutes. I’ve added a cushion that should assure my arrival at 0800. We’ll take off at 0750.”

“Yes, sir.”

Glattan stood by the doorway while Chadwick continued his review. At ten minutes to eight, he looked at Glattan and said, “Let’s go.”

Glattan followed him to the elevator. His pace remained slow, though it was faster than the earlier trip to his office. Adrenaline, Glattan thought. He’s psyched for class and—as best he can—he’s burying the pain.

They arrived outside the classroom at 7:59. “You go inside and get seated,” Chadwick said—this time with a stronger smile than before.

The section marcher called the class to attention as Chadwick entered.

“Take your seats, gentlemen—as will I. Today we’ll examine the idea of Blitzkrieg—lightning war—a notion first developed by the British after World War I (though they didn’t give it a German name) and then refined by the Germans before World War II. Why didn’t

British leaders endorse those ideas that Gen J. F. C. Fuller and Captain Basil Liddell Hart advocated so fervently?”

“Sir, the British didn’t want to fight again,” said Rob Stimson. “They suffered three million casualties in World War I, and they didn’t want to repeat that experience.”

“True,” Chadwick replied. “But didn’t Fuller and Liddell Hart contend that their approach to war—relying on tanks and armored personnel carriers—would keep casualties to a minimum, preventing slaughter like that seen on the Western Front, and yield rapid success?”

“That’s right, sir,” Larry Opal answered. “But the British public was sick of war, plus they saw no threat. The Treaty of Versailles emasculated the German army, limiting it to 100,000 men, and abolished the navy and air force. Additionally, the world now had a League of Nations to keep future wars from occurring—*Sir, are you OK?!*”

The cadets turned to a beet-red Chadwick, gasping for breath. Glattan and several cadets rushed to him. After a few seconds, Chadwick raised his right hand, and his color began returning to normal.

“Gentlemen,” he whispered. “I told you I might have another such episode, and I’m afraid I was right.” He gulped a few sips of water. “I’ll be alright—just give me a minute or two.”

The cadets returned to their seats, with many exchanging worried glances.

“OK, gentlemen. I’m back to the land of the living. Where were we?”

“We were talking about why the British downplayed the ideas of Fuller and Liddell Hart,” Opal replied, his face showing concern.

“Yes, that’s right. So the British won’t embrace Blitzkrieg tactics. Why do the Germans?”

George Johnson hesitantly raised his hand. “Sir, the Germans found the idea of a fast-paced war, based on an offensive strategy, very appealing. They had lost the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine in the Treaty of Versailles, and they wanted them back. And since their military was restricted in size, a small, elite force, able to avoid strong enemy defenses and move rapidly, was perfect for them.”

Chadwick nodded. “And how did Hitler play into this notion?”

Glattan volunteered. “Sir, those notions ideally suited Hitler’s desire to dismantle the Versailles Treaty and achieve ‘living space’ for the German people, plus they allowed him to—DAMN IT, SIR!”

Chadwick had passed out. He slumped in his chair and didn’t appear to be breathing.

“ANYONE KNOW CPR?!” Glattan shouted.

"I do!" Stimson responded. "Put him on the floor—careful with his arm—unbutton his shirt and take off his tie!"

"George—run up to the history department and have them call the hospital ambulance!" Glattan yelled.

Cadets moved as directed. Stimson straddled Chadwick's body, alternatively pumping his chest and blowing into his mouth. "Give him room—don't stand too close!" Stimson commanded. He repeated the procedure, 30 chest compressions followed by two breaths, for almost three minutes.

Then Chadwick blinked, coughed, and slowly inhaled.

"FUCKING-A, ROB!" Opal hollered, while other cadets slapped his back.

"Guys, still stand back!" Stimson motioned. "Glat, help elevate his head!"

"Sir, are you conscious?" Glattan asked as he knelt behind Chadwick.

"Yeah, yeah . . . I'm here," Chadwick mumbled. "My . . . apologies . . . gentlemen."

"Sir, we're just happy to see you breathing again!" Stimson sighed.

"So . . . am . . . I."

"BOB—HOW ARE YOU?!" Colonel Hartman, the history department chairman, exclaimed as he ran into the room, followed by Major Beaufort and several other history instructors.

"I've . . . I've been better, sir," Chadwick answered.

"I'm sure—but you're still with us. We've got Cadet Stimson to thank for that," Hartman said, patting him on the shoulder. Hartman turned back to Chadwick: "A medical team should be here soon with an ambulance to take you to the hospital. Well done, '77!"

Chadwick smiled wanly.



"How's your dad?" Glattan asked.

"He's pretty zonkered, Paul—we just got back from the hospital an hour ago."

"What did the doc say?"

"They have to run more tests—of course. It's unlikely he'll be going home anytime soon, though. He's eaten up with cancer."

Glattan heard a snuffle. "I'm so sorry, Em. He tried so hard to teach today. I'm just glad Rob Stimson was in the class—his CPR probably saved your dad's life."

“We found out—Dad was so lucky. Colonel Hartman called Mom and told her what happened, and then she called me. I joined her at the hospital, and we stayed until it was time to pick up Bob Jr. at school.”

“Do you need me to bring dinner? I can always make a McDonald’s run.”

“No—we’re on the same wavelength. We just finished Domino’s.”

“Emily—do you need *anything*?”

“No—no—we’re good. I just didn’t think . . . didn’t think he’d be incapacitated so soon.” More snuffles.

“Well, just because he’s in bed, I don’t expect him to throw in the towel.”

“No—I’m sure he won’t—but his body will only let him do so much.”

“He’s still got his mind, though, Em.”

“Yes . . . but I don’t see how his mind can ignore the pain.”

“If anyone can do that, *he* can.”



Glattan drove to the hospital after classes ended on Thursday. Memories resurfaced as he walked through the hallways. Three-and-a-half years ago, he felt guilty when he departed the staff car that brought him to the hospital from the cadet area after classes. Sure, the hole in his sternum required daily cleaning so that it didn’t become infected. Yet while he ate a relaxed dinner in the comfort of his quiet hospital room, his classmates suffered abuse from upperclassmen screaming Knowledge questions in Mitch’s. After dinner, he studied without worrying about a room inspection the next morning. And he studied in solitude—many Doolies lived in three-man rooms. He could also get eight hours of sleep—an unimaginable luxury for a Doolie.

He arrived at the door to Chadwick’s room and looked inside. It was spacious, though Glattan’s room had been almost as large. Chadwick’s overlooked the cadet area, as had Glattan’s, with a backdrop of the Rockies.

Chadwick was awake, propped up in bed reading an article. He had an IV drip in his right arm and plastic tubes in his nostrils for oxygen. A multitude of machines monitored his vitals.

Glattan knocked softly on the doorframe. “Hello, sir.”

Chadwick looked up. “Paul—nice of you to stop by.”

“I’d ask how you’re feeling, sir, but I’m guessing I know the answer.”

“Not as bad as you might think. They’re taking good care of me, and the food’s actually pretty good.”

“Yes, sir—I remember. I was here for a month during my Doolie year.”
“Oh?”

Glattan recounted the episode on the obstacle course and his subsequent time in the hospital.

“I had no idea, Paul—damn glad you survived. What do you think of all this stuff?” Chadwick pointed to the medical equipment surrounding him.

“Well, sir, you’ve got a few more gadgets than I had—the ones I had helped me.”

“I guess ‘help’ is a good thing—but we both know it isn’t going to make a real difference for me.”

Glattan paused. “That depends on what you mean by ‘making a difference,’ sir.”

“How’s that?”

“If—if all this apparatus allows you to live longer than you otherwise would, then that’s a good thing. I—I can’t imagine what you’re going through, sir. But—but—if all this stuff gives you more time for you to say what you’d like to Mrs. Chadwick, Emily, and Bob Jr. . . . then that’s got to be a good thing.

“Sir, when I got here as a Doolie, prior to going into the operating room, the doc told me I should have been dead three days before I got to the hospital and said my chances of surviving the operation were 50-50. Obviously I made it—but as I lay here in bed looking at the cadet area and the mountains, I wondered why God had let me live. It took me a while—a long while—to realize that living longer was good—even living longer as a Doolie.”

Chadwick’s lips curved upward. “Yes, I guess an extended stay in a hospital bed with a great view can provide time for reflection; and I’ve got time now to think—which is not to say that I haven’t been thinking before. I didn’t realize what you went through as a Fourth Classman . . . and I wouldn’t mind having you stop by periodically for chats—that is, if you wouldn’t mind and if you have the time.”

“Sir, I’d be happy to do that. As a Firstie I have a fair amount of time, and now that I’ve almost finished your paper, I have a lot more.”

Chadwick chuckled. “Yeah, I’m sure you do. But I imagine that you’d like to spend a lot of that free time with my daughter.”

Glattan blushed. “That’s true, sir . . . I care for her a great deal.”

“I can tell that—and I’m certain her feeling for you is mutual. I’m happy that you two have found each other again. You two are serious, aren’t you?”

“Ye—yes, sir. But sir . . . I can’t tell you where the relationship will go right now. I just know that I want to be with her for a long time—a *very* long time.”

“Well, like I said, I’m happy for you two. You’ll stop by and see me again?”

“Count on it, sir.”



Glattan and his classmates waited for the start of Military Thought on Friday. At 8:05 Major Beaufort walked into class and they came to attention. He saluted the section marcher, telling the cadets to take their seats.

“Guys, I’m afraid that you’re stuck with me for the rest of the semester. And that includes grading your term papers and final exams.”

Sighs of relief could be heard.

“Really, guys? No—I’m not the killer grader that Colonel Chadwick is, but I’m no creampuff either. Mr. Glattan’s been with me before—what’s your assessment?”

“Ah, sir. . . . It wasn’t a great deal of fun to get papers back from you.”

Beaufort smiled as several heads recoiled.

“And let’s get something else straight from the start. I’m not happy about this situation, and I know that none of you really is, either. I’ll admit it—I don’t have Colonel Chadwick’s expertise or his experience—no one in the department does. That’s why he taught this course—the department’s toughest. But I do know the material, and I intend to continue the free-flowing discussion that is the hallmark of a Chadwick seminar.

“Don’t think that everything I say will be gospel—far from it. I want the focus of the class to be cross-table rather than aimed at my end of it. When it’s all said and done at the end of the semester, I hope the seminar will prove a suitable homage to Colonel Chadwick and his approach to teaching.”

Twelve heads nodded.



As arranged, Glattan picked up Emily Friday night at six o’clock. She kissed him when she got in the car.

"I spent two hours this afternoon with Dad."

"How was he?"

"In and out. We'd talk for a while, and he'd drift off to sleep. Then he'd grimace and wake up—and we'd talk some more. Part of the time he was awake, we talked about you."

"Oh?" Glattan briefly looked away from the road, focusing on Emily.

"Yeah," she said slowly, making it a two-syllable word. "It wasn't anything bad. In fact, it was a very good conversation."

"Hmm. Will you share any details?"

She shook her head, smiling.

"OK, I'll leave it at that. You still up for *The Eagle Has Landed*?"

"By all means—it'll help take my mind off what's happening."

"Any thoughts on dinner?"

"You'll laugh—but I really enjoyed the pizza at Giuseppe's last weekend."

"Then G's it is."

Glattan put his arm around her as they sat in the theater. The World War II thriller wasn't a date movie, but she grabbed his hand—or squeezed his leg—during tense scenes.

"Michael Caine is a great actor," she said as they exited the theater. "He makes you believe his character is real in every role he has."

"You're right. When my dad took me to see him in *Zulu*, which I think was his first movie, I was impressed. I've enjoyed his movies ever since. What would you like to do now? We could get a drink—perhaps at the Golden Bee?"

"No—I think I'd just like to park in the mountains."

"OK—if that's what you'd like."

"It is—but not to make out." She put her hand on Glattan's arm. "I love you so much, Paul, but I just want you to hold me while we look over the lights."

The Celica was cramped—extremely cramped—with Emily sitting on top of him. Her arms were around his neck, and her head rested on his chest.

"It's not fair," she whispered. "He's going away far too soon."

Glattan felt her tears on his shirt as he stroked her hair. "It's *not* fair, Em. It's not fair to you, your mom, Bob Jr., the history department, my classmates—or me. All I can say is that I'm grateful to have known him for just a little while. You, your mom, and your brother have known him for *years*—which has to make your pain especially ago-

nizing because you all have known him so well—your mom most of all. I'm so sorry for all of you."

She pulled away and stared at him. "Kiss me, Paul."

Glattan did, feeling his own tears mingle with hers.

She put her arms back around his neck, with her head back on his chest. And she sobbed.

Chapter 21

16 April 1977

Glattan didn't see Emily for the remainder of the weekend. She spent much of it in the hospital, while Glattan finished typing the paper for Chadwick. The library cubicle was a godsend, enabling him to work in a quiet environment and to think clearly without interruption.

Well, it should have allowed him to think clearly. Whenever he considered changing an idea or rephrasing a sentence, his mind wandered to whether Chadwick would find grading his paper too onerous a task.

Glattan also thought about Emily and how devastating Chadwick's condition was for her. Granted, parts of growing up with him once he began to drink heavily had to be hellish; Glattan's memories of his mom's bouts with the bottle still haunted his dreams. Still, Glattan loved his mother dearly—damn, he admired her—and he was sure that Emily felt the same way about her dad.

Glattan's mind also drifted to Emily in a different way—their future lives *together*. I know that I love her, he mused, and that she loves me. Is that enough? I can't imagine finding anyone else more perfect—and I can't imagine life without her. Does that mean marriage? Just living together? Kids? Given her background, my future in the Air Force isn't likely a problem. But what if I decided to get out after my initial service commitment? Would she accept that? And perhaps the biggest question of all—how will losing her father affect her?

He finished typing on Sunday morning. His pace was slow, deliberate, and he used only a small amount of correction tape—and no Wite-Out—because he wanted the paper as perfect as possible. If he made more than three typos on a page, he retyped it. He even retyped several pages that he had typed the previous weekend. Yes, he thought, I want to turn in an excellent paper. But there's more to it than that. If Chadwick's going to try reading it in his incapacitated state, my work must be flawless.

After completing classes on Monday afternoon, Glattan headed to the hospital. He carried the now 64-page paper with him in a large manila folder, plus he kept a copy for himself that he xeroxed for 10 cents a page in the library. Stopping outside Chadwick's room, he saw that the lieutenant colonel was asleep, with more tubes connected to

him than Glattan remembered from Friday. A first lieutenant nurse appeared at the door.

“How’s he doing, ma’am?” Glattan asked.

“As well as can be expected, I guess. He’s been sleeping a lot lately, and I’m afraid I’m going to have to wake him because I need to check his vitals. If you’d like to chat with him after I do the checks, I’m sure he’d appreciate that.”

“Thanks, ma’am.”

“You have a visitor, Colonel Chadwick,” the nurse said as she emerged from the room.

Chadwick turned his head. “Paul—you’re a nice surprise.”

“Good afternoon, sir. Actually, I did bring a ‘surprise’ with me.” Glattan raised the manila folder.

“Your term paper, right?”

“Yes, sir.”

“And you’re happy with it?”

“Sir, I’m as happy with it as I can be—I feel good about the effort I put into it and the argument I made.”

“Well, set it down next to my water bottle, and fetch me a green pen from my briefcase.”

Glattan opened the leather briefcase—at least 10—no—15 green pens were in the front flap. “Wow, sir—looks like you’re ready to do some serious grading.”

“I just accumulate them—always good to be prepared. And now it looks like your paper will be the final one I grade. I really wanted to grade the papers and exams in *Military Thought*, but Major Beaufort persuaded me that might be too much of an undertaking, and he’s probably right.”

“Sir, my paper’s not exactly short.”

“No, it isn’t—but it’s not like I’m unfamiliar with it. I may not get it back to you for a few days, but I will get it back.”

“Thanks, sir.”

“Honestly, Paul, I look forward to it—it will allow me to think about something other than these damned tubes inside me. . . . For now, though, let’s talk about other things.”

“Of course, sir.”

“So, are you a native Tar Heel, or did your family happen to move to North Carolina while you were growing up?”

“Native, sir. I was born in High Point, near the center of the state, but when I was five my dad moved the family to Chowan, in the eastern part of the state near the Virginia border.”

“And what line of work is your dad in?”

“He’s a pharmacist, sir. He graduated from Carolina and raised me to be a Tar Heel. It’s funny, sir—the first college football game I ever saw was against Air Force in Chapel Hill in 1969—must have been an omen since Air Force won.”

“That was a decent Falcon team in ’69, with Ernie Jennings as wide receiver. We had a better team in ’70, with Jennings, Bob Parker as quarterback, and Brian Bream as running back. I remember we ended up number 16 in the nation and played Tennessee in the Sugar Bowl. But basketball’s really what you cut your teeth on in North Carolina.”

“Yes, sir. Carolina went undefeated and won the national championship in 1957 in triple overtime against Wilt Chamberlain and Kansas in Kansas City. Was the first game televised throughout the state of North Carolina. My dad watched with my grandfather—my mom’s dad—on my grandfather’s new TV until the start of the third overtime, and then got so nervous he went back to his own house next door to listen to the final minutes on the radio. I guess the karma worked; the Heels won. I was three years old then, but Dad’s told me the story many times.”

“So your dad instilled your obsession.”

“Yes, sir, he’s to blame. My mom used to say all the time, ‘Paul’s actions are your fault, Bill.’ ”

“Sounds like he must have been a great father for a young man.”

Glattan paused. “Well, sir . . . he *is* the reason I love the Tar Heels. But . . .”

“But?”

Glattan didn’t know what overcame him. Perhaps it was Chadwick’s condition. Perhaps it was that he loved Emily, and he felt that Chadwick needed to know the “whole story” of the guy who was likely to live with his daughter for “a long time.” Perhaps it was just that Glattan finally thought he had found someone he could talk to about *his* family—something that he was unwilling to share even with Barrow. Regardless, he told Chadwick about his father losing the drugstore, leaving home, and the resulting pursuit of an Academy appointment.

Chadwick listened without interrupting. Then his eyes narrowed. “What impact did this episode have on you?”

“That—that’s a good question, sir. I was pretty focused on academics in high school before, but afterward—”

“You became *extremely* focused.”

“Yes, sir.”

“So focused that you decided to become high school valedictorian—that you decided to get an appointment to the Air Force Academy.”

“Yes, sir. As I mentioned, money was tight.”

“Tell me, Paul—if you don’t mind—how do you feel about your dad now?”

“I—I’m not sure, sir. I know that I still love him, but . . . it was a bad time—a *very* bad time—when he lost the drugstore and left the family. I couldn’t understand it. After all that he had taught me about being true, honest, and courageous—his abrupt departure made no sense. I’m still having a lot of problems reconciling it.”

Chadwick shifted in his bed. “It’s not easy being a father. I’m living proof of that, and I’ve often been a sad example—as you well know. Bad things happen—they’re inevitable, really—and you do the best you can to deal with the circumstances when they arrive. Your dad did what he thought was best; he wanted to continue to provide for your family, even after he lost the drugstore. Could his departure have been more ‘acceptable’? Perhaps. But it really wasn’t going to be acceptable in any case. His journey didn’t mean that he loved you any less—it just meant that he wasn’t sure how he could display it and continue on.

“God knows I can relate to that condition. My response to finding out that I had terminal cancer was beyond the pale—yet at the time I thought that ending it all might be the right thing to do.”

“What made you change your mind, sir?”

“I realized that it wouldn’t be fair to the family, having to live with the stigma of a father—and husband—who committed suicide, not to mention having to clean up the mess. They had done nothing to deserve such an outcome.”

“Hmmm. Ours was not as grim a situation as yours, sir, but I imagine that my father had similar concerns after my mom told him what his absence was doing to my sister—and I’m sure he knew that his departure was hurting me—as well as my mom.”

Chadwick nodded. “He did the best he could by coming home on weekends—and that made a difference, didn’t it?”

“It did, sir—certainly in my sister’s case.”

“But not in yours?”

“Well, it helped some, sir. It was just that he—that he left so abruptly—without any explanation.”

“Did he apologize for that when he returned?”

“Yes, sir—several times.”

“And you didn’t accept those apologies?”

“I said I did, sir—and I’ve honestly tried to—I have.”

Chadwick stared at him, shifting again in bed. “Yes, Paul, I’m sure you have. . . . But aren’t you guilty of the same offense?”

“How’s that, sir?”

“Ask Emily.”

Glattan turned fire-engine red and gazed at the floor.

Chadwick was silent for a moment. “As I said before, Paul, we all make mistakes. We’re not proud of any of them . . . some we’re flat-out ashamed of. I can assure you that your father will forever regret his actions, but he’s tried to do what he could to overcome the situation.”

Glattan looked at Chadwick, who smiled. Suddenly he grimaced. “Oh damn! DAMN! DAMN!”

“What’s wrong, sir?!”

“My joints—they’re killing me!”

“I’ll get the nurse!”

“No—no. It won’t matter. The pain comes and goes—though lately it’s been coming more frequently—*far* more frequently.”

“Can’t they give you something to stop it?”

“Not much more than aspirin—they’re not ready to go the morphine route yet. Fortunately, the pain doesn’t last long—but when it comes, it’s *intense*.”

Chadwick’s face began to relax.

“Sir, forgive me for asking—but have you told your parents about your condition?”

Chadwick looked away and then back at Glattan. “No, Paul, it’s OK that you asked. They were killed in a car accident when I was in Vietnam. I’m an only child.”

“Damn it, sir—I didn’t know.”

“I know that you didn’t—but your instincts are good ones. The docs haven’t told me how much time I have left—but my body tells me it’s not long. Don’t worry, though, you’ll get your paper back with green ink before that happens.”

“Sir, that’s not funny.”

“No, I suppose it isn’t. But I’d like to keep some sense of humor while I still can. Will you come see me again?”

“By all means, sir.”

Glattan held back his tears until he got in the Celica. Emily’s right, he thought—it’s not fair.



“How was he?” Barrow asked when Glattan returned to their room.

“He’s in severe pain. His joints started hurting—big time—while I was there. There’s not much they can do to stop it except morphine, and they don’t want to do that yet.”

“Bummer. How did he seem aside from the pain?”

“As well as he could be, I guess. We had a decent chat.”

“Well, he’ll be hurting more once he reads your paper.”

“Bareass—”

“Just kidding. I have no doubt your paper’s a winner. You know that, too.”

“Yeah, I feel good about it. Hey, do you want to head to the Springs and grab dinner?”

“We can’t. Remember ‘Hell Week’ starts tonight for the Doolies.”

“Oh shit—I had completely forgotten.”

“Hell Week,” the moniker for “Recognition Training,” was the last hurdle that Doolies faced before they became upperclassmen. Technically, Hell Week stressed major points of training during the freshman year, with a heavy emphasis on Knowledge from *Contrails*, plus physical and mental fitness. It was a final chance for upper-class cadets to harass Doolies, and several upperclassmen seemed to take a perverse pleasure in “assuring” that members of the freshmen class were well suited to advance in rank. For the Class of 1980, the Academy’s first with women, some of Glattan’s classmates had decided to guarantee that female Doolies received an ample dose of hell because they had the audacity to encroach on the male bastion. In the view of those classmates, women were not worthy of being cadets of any rank, much less officers—and God forbid fighter pilots.

Glattan recalled his own Hell Week. The only time he really slept during the ordeal was in class—most instructors avoided teaching and allowed Doolies to put their heads on their desks for 50 minutes of relief. The rest of the time mirrored Basic Cadet Training—inspections, runs, marches, and shower formations to go with the nonstop screaming and cursing. When the week finally ended, with a three-

mile class run to a massive stone pillar known as Cathedral Rock, Glattan and his classmates received “prop and wings” insignia for their flight caps, signifying their recognition as upperclassmen. From that point on they could walk across any part of the Terrazzo instead of being confined to running on its marble strips, stroll through the Air Gardens, talk to whomever they desired whenever they desired, and eat like slobs in Mitch’s. In short, they could be as close to “normal” college students as the Academy would permit.

Which was still not very close.

For Glattan as a Firstie, Hell Week was a giant pain in the ass limiting his freedom. Upperclassmen could not leave USAFA during the four-and-a-half-day span to assure, he wryly noted to Barrow, “the last full measure of the Fourth Class experience.”

“Yeah,” Barrow said, “the Bears want to make sure the Doolies get screwed one last time.”

“The Doolies will, no doubt about it,” Glattan answered.

“Well, we did when we were Doolies.”

“So that makes it right for us to hose the Class of ’80? Just because we got boofed?”

“It’s part of the tradition, Glat.”

“Part that sucks.”

“Won’t disagree with you. Look, I have no intention of beating up on ’80—those guys—and especially the gals—have already taken tons of abuse. I’m not about to give them more.”

“I hear you, Bareass. I feel the same way. The only thing I’m concerned about now is keeping my grades up—and seeing Emily, of course—and, I must admit, checking in on Chadwick.”

“You can still do that, can’t you? They’re both on the Academy grounds.”

“That logic works for me. What’s that saying, ‘It’s better to ask for forgiveness than permission?’”

“Always.”

At Mitch’s, they didn’t let the Doolies at their table eat at rest, but they also didn’t allow the other upperclassmen to scream Knowledge questions at the freshmen. At least allow the poor bastards to eat in peace, Glattan thought. As Glattan and Barrow exited the dining hall, scores of Doolies ran past them on the marble strips, stopping to shout, “Good evening, sir!” The two Firsties waved them past.

Other upperclassmen were not so accommodating.

“Hey—you, *bitch!* Drop and give me 30!”

A female Doolie left the marble strip, advanced toward the Firstie barking the order, and began squat thrusts.

Glattan walked up to his classmate.

“Joe, really, do you have to call her that?”

“I’m being polite, Glat. I could have called her a c---. There’s no place for these bitches in our Air Force.”

“You know that why?”

“Think about it. Would you really want a pussy as your wingman? You get in trouble, and she’s going to turn tail and fly away—assuming the bitch doesn’t piss herself at the first sight of an enemy aircraft.”

“You know so much, fuck stick. Ever heard of Lydia Litvyak?”

“No.”

“I thought not. You might ask some Luftwaffe pilots about her—if they’re still alive. She shot down 12 of them in World War II. A double ace for the Soviet Union. If anybody pissed themselves in those dogfights, it was German *men*.”

“You’re an asshole, Glat.”

“And you’re a dumbass, Joe.”

Glattan and Barrow walked into the squadron. Two Doolies slammed against the wall in a brace when they passed.

“Good evening, sir!” the Doolies shouted.

“Hi guys,” Barrow responded. “Good luck this week.”

“YES, SIR!”

Glattan looked down the hall. Three Doolies ran in place with their M-1s while singing the fourth verse of the National Anthem, overseen by four upperclassmen screaming “encouragement.” Another Doolie stood in his Class A uniform while two Second Classmen asked him Knowledge questions. Screams and shouts echoed throughout Vandenberg Hall.

“Got to get out of here,” Glattan said.

“Yeah, but go where?”

“I know a spot.”

Barrow’s mouth fell open when Glattan opened the door to Special Collections.

“You sneaky SOB,” Barrow smirked. “How long have you had this secret?”

“Ever since I started working on Chadwick’s paper. This place is open to any cadet, but after five o’clock, it’s locked up. I made friends with the curator, though, and he gave me the code—along with a cu-

bicle. Sorry—no cubicle for you, but you can sit at the big table to study—it should be adequate.”

“You’re damn right it is!”

“You might want to leaf through the big scrapbook at the head of the table. It’s a photo album from our former superintendent, Albert Clark, containing pictures taken inside Stalag Luft III after he got shot down in World War II. He scrounged the camera from a guard.”

“Neat. Speaking of World War II, how did you know that shit about the Russian female pilot?”

“I’m a history major, Bareass. How did you know those tricks you taught me about deciphering diodes and electrodes in Double E?”

“Yeah, OK. But that was beautiful how you shut up that dipshit Joe Highsmith. I’m afraid I can’t use Double E magic the same way.”

“Should have been a history major.”

“Nah—but I’m happy as hell to know one with the secret code to Special Collections!”



Wednesday after classes Glattan snuck away to the hospital. He looked in Chadwick’s room and saw Emily sitting inside, reading a book. Chadwick was asleep.

“How is he?” Glattan whispered.

Emily closed her book and shook her head. “Not good. His joints hurt so badly that he couldn’t stop tossing and turning until the doc finally came in and started him on a morphine drip. He fell asleep about 20 minutes ago.”

“How long have you been here?”

“A little over an hour.”

“I’m sure he was glad to see you.”

“He was—but he was in terrible pain. He’d barely get a sentence out before he grimaced.”

Glattan stared at the sleeping body. Despite the morphine, Chadwick’s face was contorted, pale. His arms and legs twitched, including the broken left arm. He’s being tortured, Glattan thought, and even sleep won’t allow him to escape.

Glattan looked at Emily. He considered asking her how she was doing but didn’t—it was an idiotic question. He ached to be with her—and away from this scene.

“You’re studying, I see.”

“Yes—I figured I might as well be productive while he slept!”

“And now I’m bothering you.”

“No—not at all! I haven’t seen you since last Friday!”

“Do you still want to go out this Friday night?”

“I’d like to. It just depends . . .”

“I certainly understand. No need to decide now.”

“Could you get a chair?”

“I’m sure I can find one.” He left the room and returned with a chair like Emily’s.

“Put it next to mine,” she said.

Glattan did and sat down. She put her head on his shoulder.



He returned to the hospital the next afternoon. This time, Chadwick was awake—and alone. He saw Glattan standing in the doorway and motioned him in.

“I heard you came by yesterday, Paul.”

“I did, sir. You were asleep.”

“Yes . . . and that was a good thing. Can’t seem to do that much anymore.”

“Are you eating well?” Glattan immediately thought the question was inane.

“From time to time. The food *is* good; I just don’t seem to have much of an appetite.”

“Emily told me you’re getting morphine now.”

“Yeah—the more I get, the more it helps, though they have a blocker on how much I can receive at a time. Soon enough I’ll be feeling positively pastoral.”

“Sir, that’s what Beethoven named his Sixth Symphony.”

“Yes, I was thinking about that when I said it. Did you ever see the movie *Fantasia*?”

“I did, sir. I remember the animation of Beethoven’s Sixth.”

“Right—so idyllic. Not a bad place to be, and the more times I press this drip button, the faster I get there—up to the point it cuts off. You remember there’s a thunderstorm in the Sixth?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Well, the drip is good . . . but it doesn’t take all the thunderstorms away.”

“Hopefully it helps with most of them, sir.”

Chadwick smiled. “You know, for all the musical genius that Beethoven possessed, he went deaf at the end.”

“Yes, sir, I knew that.”

“And did you also know that Michelangelo went blind before he died?”

“I did, sir—he carved his last statues by feel.”

“God can play cruel jokes on occasion, don’t you think?”

“I—I guess so, sir.”

“I know so. Nothing is certain, Paul . . . well, one thing is. Open up the main pocket of my briefcase.”

Glattan took out his term paper. The title page had a single green phrase: “Very well done. A.”

Glattan looked at Chadwick. “It’s not perfect, Paul—you’ll see green ink on several pages. But it’s damn good. You should clean it up and submit it for publication in a scholarly journal. I called Colonel Hartman and told him so, and he’s going to make sure that happens.”

“I—I don’t know what to say, sir.”

“There’s nothing to say. Get it cleaned up and send it off. Other people need to read it—especially other people wearing stars.”

Chapter 22

22 April 1977

Emily.

Glattan's mind drew a bullseye around her as he daydreamed through Friday classes. The more he thought, the more he *knew*—he could *not* live without her. But what, exactly, did that mean? Marriage? He pondered the idea of a Chapel ceremony and what would follow. Soon after, I'll be in pilot training and it'll be intense. Yeah, but haven't I already seen that movie? I thought she'd distract me when I wrote Chadwick's paper—and she did anything but. Perhaps having her with me would provide necessary encouragement, enabling me to focus on learning to fly jets—and allowing me to relax when I needed to.

Glattan's reverie continued. Just having her live with me—without being married—wouldn't be fair to her. What assurance would she have that we'd be together for the long haul? She would likely come to pilot training with me if I asked her, but our relationship would not be as solid as it would if she were "Mrs. Glattan." Either way, there would be the agony of her lost father. But with her as my wife, she would have a sense of permanence regarding her future—a good outcome for me as well.

By the time he watched the Doolies' recognition ceremony on the Terrazzo that afternoon, Glattan knew what he would do.

First, though, he had to go to the hospital.

Glattan tapped on Chadwick's doorframe.

"Paul, I didn't expect to see you so soon. I thought you'd still be reading my comments on your paper."

"I've read through them, sir, and when I get some more free time, I'm going to type up a new version that incorporates them."

"Well, I'm glad you think they're useful."

"Very, sir."

Chadwick grimaced and his joints twitched. Glattan turned away.

"Another bad one," Chadwick groaned, clicking the morphine drip. "There, that's at least a little better . . . but I don't imagine you stopped by to talk about your paper."

"No—no, sir. I came by to ask you a question."

"Oh?"

"Yes—yes, sir. I—I wanted to ask for your permission to marry your daughter."

Chadwick silently stared at Glattan. After what felt to Glattan like several hours, Chadwick's lips curved upward. "You have it, Paul—and it thrills me to know that you'll be my son-in-law. But—I have to add—she's got an independent streak that you're going to have to deal with. She's not going to automatically agree with everything you say."

"I know that, sir—it's a big reason I love her so much."

Chadwick's eyes widened—and then he smiled. "Yes—I think the two of you will be good for each other. Again, I'm thrilled."

Another grimace and more thrashing. More clicks on the drip.

When the episode passed, Chadwick whispered, "Emily's stopping by later—your secret will be safe with me."



Glattan drove to Manitou Springs. When he had been there with Emily, they looked around in a jewelry store specializing in estate sales. Glattan remembered seeing similar stores on antiquing trips with his mom when she still had the shop in the barn behind the house.

Elizabeth Glattan had a big-time fetish for antique jewelry—especially rings.

He recalled her admonition: "When the time comes to buy an engagement ring, don't go to a regular jewelry store—they'll rob you. You can always do better at stores selling estate jewelry."

Inside the shop, Glattan examined an array of diamond rings with platinum or white gold bands (Emily preferred that to yellow gold). One in particular caught his eye—a glittering one-carat diamond in the center, with two half-carat diamonds on either side, on a delicate platinum band. The tag read: "1903—Total Weight: 2.5 carats—\$400."

The clerk saw him staring. "Would you like me to take the ring out of the counter so that you can see it better?"

"Yes, ma'am—that would be great."

Glattan twirled it in his fingers. It sparkles just like Emily's eyes, he thought. Four hundred dollars is a lot of money—more than I make as a Firstie each month and more than half of what I'll make as a second lieutenant. But I have some money stashed away—and it seems this price is a damn good deal. Still, I want to make sure.

"Could you hold the ring for me until tomorrow?"

"Of course, sweetie. I'm guessing you have someone in mind for it?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, if you decide to buy it, and she says yes, we'll size it for free."

"Thanks—that's nice to know."



“Hello, Dad?”

“Hi, Paul—great to hear from you!”

“Is Mom there?”

“Yes, she is.”

“Why don’t you hand her the phone, and you get on the phone upstairs?”

“OK, son.”

“You all know that I’ve been seeing Emily pretty regularly—and I’ve decided—I’ve decided—to ask her to marry me.”

Silence.

Finally, his mother spoke. “You’re sure about this, Paul? You left her before Christmas, and even though I know you’ve been seeing her again lately, it hasn’t been all that long.”

“Yes, ma’am—you’re right. But I have no doubt—she is the girl I want to spend the rest of my life with.”

More silence.

“And she feels the same way about you?” his mom asked.

“I’m certain of it.”

“How’s her father?” his mom questioned.

“You all know that he’s not doing well. I told you that he’s very sick from Agent Orange. Now he’s in the hospital—and he doesn’t have long to live.”

His mom continued, “How can you be sure that her feelings for you aren’t just emotions to overcome the sadness she feels for losing her father?”

I guess I should have expected the inquisition, Glattan thought. “You know, Mom, I actually considered that—I really did. But I knew that she loved me well before Christmas, when I did an incredibly stupid thing to end our relationship. I’m just grateful we were able to get back together. I love her . . . and I hope that you and Dad will be able to love her as well.”

Glattan’s father spoke. “Son, I’m very happy for you—and I’m sure your mother is too.”

Silence again.

“Yes, Paul, I’m happy for you—I just want to make sure she’s the right girl for you.”

“You mean you want to make sure she’s *good enough* for me?”

“I didn’t say that.”

“No, you didn’t. But that thought works both ways, Mom—am *I* good enough for *her*? She’s a remarkable young woman—brilliant, beautiful—and she’s been right there to help her mom ever since her dad got sick, even though she’s still going to school. I don’t just *love* her—I *admire* her.”

“Alright, Paul—alright . . . I trust your judgment. I just want what’s best for you.”

“And that is Emily Chadwick.”

“I’m going to assume she says yes,” Bill Glattan said. “Will you get married at the Academy after graduation?”

“I honestly haven’t decided, Dad—I’m waiting for her to say yes first, then see what she thinks.”

“Well, we’ll need to know—I’ll have to change our airline tickets and hotel reservations.”

“And I’ll have to add to my wardrobe,” Elizabeth Glattan said.

Glattan heaved a sigh of relief at that comment. “Speaking of things to wear, Mom, I wanted to ask you about a ring I found. I took your advice and went to a shop specializing in estate jewelry.”

He described the ring and gave its price.

“That’s a lot of money, Paul—a whole lot of money. But from what you’ve described, you’re getting a steal.”

“Thanks, Mom.”



Emily took Glattan’s advice to heart: tonight we’re dressing up. She wore a floor-length black gown with a long slit up the left side, with décolletage leaving no doubt about her full breasts. Ruby-red lipstick with her dark hair pulled up. Black pumps with four-inch heels. A single piece of jewelry—the white gold necklace Glattan had given her.

For his part, Glattan wore a charcoal gray suit, white dress shirt, a black-and-red checkered tie, and the black Italian loafers his parents gave him as a birthday present.

The maître d’ ushered them to their table, an intimate arrangement for two that Glattan secured in the Broadmoor’s Penrose Room, overlooking the hotel’s lake.

Heads turned.

When the champagne cocktails arrived, Glattan raised his glass and said, “To the woman I love.”

Emily responded, “To the man I love.”

Glasses clinked.

Small talk and giggles punctuated the dinner of filet mignon, sweet potatoes, and spinach—supplemented by a sommelier-recommended Napa pinot noir. The flaming crème brûlée produced gasps from others seated nearby while Emily clapped in appreciation. After they finished it, Glattan ordered two glasses of Hennessy cognac.

“Paul, you’re splurging!”

“Yep—I am—I think it’s appropriate.”

With that, Glattan stood up, moved toward Emily, and took a knee. He took the ring out of his pocket, placing it in his palm.

“Emily Chadwick, will you marry me?”

She quietly stared into his eyes, then looked at the ring. As she picked it up and put it on her left hand, a tear trickled down her face. It fit perfectly.

“Yes, Paul Glattan, I *will* marry you. YES! *OH GOD YES!*”

With that, she threw her arms around him. Applause, hollers, and pounding tables echoed throughout the Penrose Room.



“I told Mom I’d be staying with a girlfriend in the Springs since we’d be out so late, but I don’t think she believed me,” Emily said as they entered the hotel room above the lake.

“I’m sure she didn’t,” Glattan responded. “Hopefully, she’ll be OK with me after tonight.”

Glattan turned on the light. A bouquet of red roses rested on the table near the window. Rose petals lined the floor as well as the bed.

“Oh Paul, it’s beautiful!”

“Like you.”

She walked to the center of the room, stopped, and untied her hair. She shook her head, allowing the dark, luminous array to cascade down her shoulders. She stared at Glattan: “Undress me.”

He moved forward and unzipped her gown. No bra. The gown fell to the floor. No panties. She gave him a mischievous smile at this discovery and began breathlessly undressing him.

“It’s finally time for bed, my love,” she cooed.

They awoke in each other’s arms, their bodies as one.

“Good morning, Mrs. Glattan,” he said when he saw her eyes flicker. “I know it’s a bit premature, but I just wanted to get in the habit. Would you like to get breakfast?”

“You got late checkout, didn’t you?” Emily flashed the wicked smile again. “I think we can get breakfast later.”



“You were incredible, Em,” Glattan said as they stepped out of the shower together.

“As were you.”

Unlikely it was Emily’s first time in bed, Glattan thought—and that’s just fine. We’re definitely compatible there.

“I’m hungry now, Paul.”

“Yeah, me too. Let’s grab brunch. Then we need to pick up your mom and Bob Jr. and head to the hospital.”

“Oh—what a wonderful idea!”

They devoured Western omelets, which they washed down with Bloody Marys.

“Em, we’ve got to decide—when will we get married—and where?”

“What would you like to do, Paul?”

“Whatever you want.”

Emily pursed her lips. “When does your pilot training start?”

“I’m supposed to report in early July to Columbus. I won’t start actual training until August, so we’d have some time to get acclimated to the base.”

“Isn’t that in Mississippi?”

“It is, but don’t worry—I speak Southern.”

Emily laughed, then became serious. “I want to arrive there as Mrs. Paul Glattan.”

“Makes sense to me, Em. Would you like to get married here?”

She paused. “Yes, Paul, I think I would. I’ve grown up at the Academy. I think it would be fitting to get married in the Chapel. Dad would appreciate that.”

“I’m sure my mom would like that, too. I’ll check tomorrow to see if we can get a slot.”

Glattan and Emily held hands as they walked into Chadwick’s room. Mrs. Chadwick and Bob Jr. followed.

“Is this a parade?” Chadwick questioned.

“No, Dad, but it is a special event—Paul and I are getting married!”

Chadwick smiled broadly. Then his head slammed back against the pillows and his limbs twitched uncontrollably. With great difficulty he grasped the drip button, clicking it nonstop despite its limited release.

“OH, BOB!” Mrs. Chadwick shouted.

“DADDY!” screamed Bob Jr.

Almost a minute passed before the episode ended.

“I—I’m better now, Janet. Don’t worry, Little Bob,” Chadwick groaned. He looked at Emily and Glattan, who stood immobile. “I’m . . . so happy for you two. . . . That’s wonderful news.” Tears flowed from his eyes.

Emily went to the bed, carefully put her arms around him, and gave him a kiss. Her eyes were also moist.

Glattan walked to the bed and gently shook Chadwick’s right hand. “Thank you, sir. I will do my best to take care of your daughter.”

“I know you will, Paul,” Chadwick nodded.

“We plan to get married in the Chapel,” Emily said.

“That’s good,” Chadwick replied. “Very good.”



Glattan was about to check the coming week’s schedule when Barrow entered the room.

“Man, I tell you, the greatest girl in the world is engaged to me!” Barrow exclaimed.

“I’m not sure that’s right.”

“What the fuck are you talking about?”

“The greatest girl in the world is engaged to me.”

A pause. “Oh my God, Paul—you finally asked Emily!”

“Yep—and she said yes.”

“Was there any doubt?! Stand up, man!” Barrow embraced him in a bear hug. “When’s the wedding going to be?”

“We’re hoping it will be here after graduation.”

“Damn—I knew it! And you haven’t made any arrangements, have you?”

“No—I’ll check with the Chapel tomorrow.”

Barrow shook his head. “That’s why you have me as your roomo, Glat.”

“What do you mean?”

“I could see this coming a mile away. When I arranged the ceremony with Karen, I asked the Chapel scheduler to reserve a slot for you the same day. I guess I sweet-talked her enough because she said she’d hold it until it was the last slot left.”

“I’ll be damned.”

“Yeah—it’ll be a Chapel tag team!”

“You’re right about that, Bareass—because I want you to be my best man.”

“I don’t know who else you could get.”

“Go fuck yourself, Bareass. But you *are* a great goddamn roomo.”



Appropriate, Glattan thought, as he surveyed the mountains with flecks of green in the foothills—the scrub oaks had begun to sprout leaves. The temperature was in the mid-60s amid bright sunshine. The crisp, refreshing fragrance of the fir trees lingered. A gorgeous spring Saturday morning on the Front Range.

Chadwick would have liked the day, Glattan mused.

The flag at the USAFA cemetery fluttered at half-mast. Indeed, all flags at the Academy, including the one on the Terrazzo, flew at half-mast. A fitting tribute, Glattan thought.

Colonel Hartman and the history department faculty stood at attention in the cemetery as the bugler played taps. Glattan stood at attention as well, next to Emily. Mrs. Chadwick and Bob Jr. also stood stiffly. Barrow and Karen were close by, as were more than 100 cadets, not all of whom were history majors.

Tears flowed.

Bob Jr. flinched when seven Airmen with gleaming M-1s simultaneously fired three times each—a 21-gun salute.

Eight Airmen carried the American flag-draped casket to the open grave site. After placing it on the grave’s lowering device, they removed the flag and meticulously folded it. An Air Force major, the officer in charge, then presented the flag to Mrs. Chadwick, now seated with Emily and Bob Jr. at the graveside.

More tears.

A strong gust of wind caused the cemetery flag to pull against its stanchions. Many hats went flying as everyone in uniform tried to grab their headgear.

“Your dad approves,” Glattan whispered to Emily.

She wiped her eyes, smiled, and nodded.

Epilogue

25 April 1997

Glattan looked out his window in Fairchild Hall, watching the Cadet Wing form up for a Friday afternoon parade. I wonder how many Bingos there'll be today, he smiled to himself.

How ironic, he thought, that he now had Chadwick's old office, 20 years after his passing. Glattan always believed that Chadwick had the best office in the department, and after becoming department chairman the summer before, he claimed it as his own—he let the prior tenant take the larger office formerly occupied by Colonel Hartman. The only addition Glattan made to the office was draping the North Carolina state flag from the ceiling.

True to his word to Chadwick, Hartman assured the publication of Glattan's paper on bombing Japan. Its appearance in the Air Force's flagship publication for scholarly articles, *Air University Review*, during spring 1978 while Glattan was in the final stages of T-38 jet training at Columbus, sent lots of attention his way—not all of it good.

To the Columbus wing commander, the essay was heresy. "How dare an Air Force *lieutenant*—and even worse, a *cadet* at the time—contend that hallowed World War II air leaders stressed service independence over saving Japanese lives?" the colonel voiced at a staff meeting. That perspective filtered down to the instructor pilots in Glattan's squadron, likely causing him to receive a C-141 transport rather than a fighter when he got his wings. Yet he also received acclaim for making such a sophisticated argument, including a letter of commendation from Secretary of the Air Force John Stetson. It guaranteed that Colonel Hartman would recommend him for a master's degree to teach at USAFA after Glattan finished his initial flying assignment at Charleston Air Force Base.

Glattan went to Carolina for his master's.

Chadwick planted the seed for that as well, Glattan surmised. Before my future father-in-law died, he told Hartman not only about my Japan paper, but also about my love for Carolina. The choice made sense from an academic standpoint: UNC's history department ranked in the top 10 nationally, with an abundance of world-renowned scholars on its faculty.

The timing could not have been better.

EPILOGUE

Glattan and Emily—with son, Robert William, and daughter, Elizabeth Janet—arrived in Chapel Hill at the start of the 1982 spring semester. The previous season, they had watched (Charleston TV showed most of Carolina’s basketball games!) the Tar Heels advance to the Final Four behind sharp-shooting guard Al Wood, point guard Jimmy Black, and forwards James Worthy, Sam Perkins, and Matt Doherty. Though the Heels fell in the title game to Indiana, the future was bright. Al Wood graduated, replaced by freshman Michael Jordan.

The night of the 1982 national championship game against Georgetown in the Superdome, Glattan and Emily sat decked out in Carolina blue at Bub O’Malley’s Bar on Rosemary Street.

The evening demanded a babysitter.

Emily screamed louder than Glattan when Jordan hit the 17-foot jumper to put Carolina ahead 63–62 with 17 seconds left, though Glattan outyelled her when Georgetown’s Freddy Brown mistakenly passed the ball to Worthy with eight seconds remaining—and secured Dean Smith’s first national championship in seven trips to the Final Four.

Along with a sea of fans, Glattan and Emily stormed Franklin Street. When they returned to the nearby Carrboro home they rented, both were covered in Carolina blue paint. Many students made it their mission to paint the street Carolina blue after the victory. They largely succeeded, with a lot of collateral damage.

Glattan knew Emily would love Chapel Hill but was surprised by how much she did. They spent their honeymoon there, staying at the Carolina Inn in the center of campus. Glattan gave her his tour of the university; by the time they returned for his master’s, she was a better tour guide than he was. She adored the blooming dogwoods and azaleas in the spring, the turning of maples and oaks in the fall. They shared many long family walks through Coker Arboretum and took the kids to Morehead Planetarium—little Bob also found the electric orrery fascinating. Of course, Glattan frequently took his family to the Rathskeller, but he couldn’t persuade Bob to order the spaghetti—his son always opted for the “bowl of cheese” lasagna. Daughter Liz, though, liked the spaghetti best—and both kids loved the apple cider.

His parents often visited during the master’s stint. Glattan’s mom embraced Emily from the first time they met at graduation. In Chapel Hill, their bond only strengthened until Glattan believed that his mom loved his wife just as much as she loved her own daughter, Sarah.

The extended stay in Chapel Hill also allowed Glattan to spend more time with his dad. The longer they were together, the more Glattan came to realize that his father had not been a failure. Yes, Glattan concluded, my dad suffered a humiliating setback in his effort to provide for the family. But he never stopped trying to do what he thought was best for us. Glattan recalled Chadwick's words: "It's not easy to be a father of a family." Now with the "father" title himself, he had a first-hand appreciation for what that acknowledgment truly meant.

I have been incredibly fortunate, Glattan thought. I haven't had to worry about money the way dad did. I'll never be rich in the Air Force, but my family won't suffer either—at least monetarily. The steady pay increases, along with the extra flight pay, have been a definite plus.

Did they offset the frequent deployments?

Hard to say.

Thank God for Emily—she *is* the perfect mom *and* the perfect Air Force wife.

She has always been there for the kids during my absences, getting them places—school, sports practices, dance lessons, birthday parties—and doing so much more.

And she's been with me for *every* key decision about our future.

After Carolina, the three-year teaching assignment at the Academy was beyond wonderful. Glattan modeled his teaching after Chadwick's, grading in green ink and even adopting the evil "shark's teeth" notation for misspelled words. Cadets loved his instruction, feared his grading, and fought to take his elective course on Air Power and Modern War. In the meantime, Bob and Liz benefited from the constant attention rendered by grandmother Janet, who remained in Colorado Springs, and Uncle Bob, who had followed his sister's path to Colorado College, and then obtained a law degree from CU in Boulder. All members of the family were sad when Glattan departed the Academy to return to flying duty at McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey, but Glattan and Emily both believed one day they would return to USAFA.

It happened sooner than they expected.

After working his way up to flight commander and instructor pilot during more than three years at McGuire, Glattan received a call from Colonel Hartman, asking if he'd like to return to Carolina for a PhD and then go back to USAFA as deputy department head.

"What do you think, Em?" Glattan asked.

"Would it make you happy?"

EPILOGUE

“Would it make *you* happy?”

“Yes—yes it would. To raise our children in Chapel Hill, and then at the Academy, would thrill me.”

Glattan found the logic infallible.

Another two-and-a-half years in Chapel Hill resulted in another trip to the Final Four for Dean Smith and the Heels in 1991. More significantly, Bob and Liz got more time to spend with their Chowan grandparents, along with Aunt Sarah, who regularly performed with theater ensembles across the state after graduating from Carolina’s Drama School.

From an academic standpoint, Glattan’s time at Carolina was a resounding success. His dissertation examining the philosophy guiding American strategic bombing campaigns in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam received widespread acclaim after Simon & Schuster published it.

In summer 1991, Glattan, Emily, and the children returned to US-AFA. Two years later, after celebrating Dean Smith’s second national title from afar, Glattan was promoted to lieutenant colonel and became Colonel Hartman’s deputy.

One day in January 1996, Hartman walked into Glattan’s office.

“Paul, I’m going to retire this summer—and I want you to take my place.”

“Sir—I don’t know what to say.”

“Say you’ll apply for the job.”

“But I’m only a lieutenant colonel, sir.”

“If you’re selected, you’ll automatically become a full bird. You’ve checked all the boxes—the required operational time, excellent teaching, masterful publications, and graduating by correspondence from Air War College.”

“Well, sir, I don’t know—”

“You don’t know what? Do you enjoy it here? Does Emily enjoy it here? Do Bob and Liz enjoy going to Air Academy High?”

“Of course, sir.”

“Then apply for the job. As a permanent professor and department head, my vote carries weight—and I want to vote for you. You’re the best possible choice for the department—and, more importantly—for the Cadet Wing. If you become department chair, you can serve in that position until you’re 64 years old. And, as I’m sure you know, the day you retire you’ll become a brigadier general. I want you to do

a great deal of good for the department—and the Air Force—for a long time to come.”

“That’s very kind of you, sir.”

“Kindness has nothing to do with it—I want *enduring competence*.”

Glattan went home and asked Emily what they should do.

“Would you be happy staying here for the remainder of your career?” she asked.

“I would—provided we get back to Chapel Hill from time to time.”

“I think we can make that happen. You know I love that place—almost as much as you.”



Glattan smiled recalling that conversation as he looked over the parade field. Good grief, he thought, four cadets already down—all in the back ranks—and it wasn’t that hot out there. Must have been a tough Thursday night for several Firsties. He’d have to call Barrow—now the colonel commanding the 1st Operations Group and its F-15s at Virginia’s Langley Air Force Base—and give him the final tally.

Glattan drove to their home in Rockrimmon, close to the spot where they used to park when he and Emily dated.

The view was still gorgeous, especially at night.

And tonight, the kids were staying with neighbors.

“Hi, my love,” Emily said when he walked in the door. She kissed him deeply.

“My beautiful Em.”

“I have a bottle of pinot noir waiting on the kitchen counter. And the hot tub is ready to go.”

“You don’t have to ask twice.”

They clinked glasses in the tub, with the lights of Colorado Springs twinkling below.

“You are the most marvelous woman I have ever met.”

“And you are the most sensitive, sincere man I have ever known.”

He held her tightly as she put her arms around him with her head on his chest.

Acknowledgments

I started writing this novel in 1995, when I was the Air Force ROTC detachment commander at the University of North Carolina. I guess the close interaction with college students who were prospective Air Force officers triggered thoughts of my own cadet experiences as a member of the Air Force Academy's Class of 1977. Teaching cadets at Chapel Hill also revived memories of teaching cadets at the Academy, which I did for almost five years in the 1980s and 1990s as a member of the history department. But work prevented me from completing anything other than nonfiction, and not until I retired from teaching at National War College in summer 2019 and moved to Chapel Hill could I return to the novel that I had begun almost a quarter of a century before.

Needless to say, the story has evolved from how I originally envisioned it, though the basic structure remained intact. And *many* people have contributed to plot development. First, I must thank the former cadets and family members from both USAFA and Carolina ROTC that I got to know well during—and after—my time in the Air Force. Chris Holland (UNC '99); Rondall Rice (USAFA '89); Rondall's wife, Annette, and their daughters Katie and Rachel (both Carolina grads); and Sheila Johnson Baldwin (UNC '96) all provided worthwhile critique of various drafts, as did Tori Leigh (TL) Touzin. Ken Feldman, my colleague at the Air Force's School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, and Donnie Holloway, my colleague at National War College, offered excellent comments. Karen Heymann, maid of honor at my wedding, and her daughter, Jessica, also added great commentary. Don Winslow, my fellow master's grad student at the University of Nebraska and now a *New York Times* best-selling novelist, offered tremendous advice and a line-by-line critique of my latest drafts. That was also true of my lifelong mentor from Nebraska, Pete Maslowski, and my '77 Academy classmate, George "Barney" Ballinger. Pete and Barney patiently read every word of every draft—and there were at least 10 drafts—and presented careful critique and commentary that was always taken to heart. I must thank as well Corinna Fales, editor of Boone Street Books in Chapel Hill, who provided wonderful edits, and Donna Budjenska, my sensational editor at Air University Press (AUP), and Chris Rein, AUP's managing editor, both of whom further improved the manuscript. Finally, I reserve my highest

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MC
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About the Author

Mark Clodfelter is a 1977 US Air Force Academy graduate who served in the Air Force for almost 23 years. During that span he twice taught history at the Academy, commanded the Air Force ROTC detachment at the University of North Carolina (UNC), and earned a PhD in American history at UNC. He is the author of *The Limits of Air Power: The American Bombing of North Vietnam*, *Beneficial Bombing: The Progressive Foundations of American Air Power, 1917–1945*, and numerous articles and book chapters examining military history and strategy. *Between Two Shades of Blue* is his first novel.

Paul Glattan, a high school student in rural eastern North Carolina, has an unbridled passion for UNC and its fabled basketball team. When financial concerns dash his dreams of attending the university, he pursues an Air Force Academy appointment and is accepted as a member of the Class of 1977. As he struggles to maintain his Carolina ties, Paul finds the Academy produces more grief than gratification, and only after bonding with his most important instructor, a highly decorated Vietnam veteran—and finding love unexpectedly—does he overcome the anguish and ultimately find redemption.

A vivid and sometimes-frighteningly accurate reminder of cadet life in the 1970s at the US Air Force Academy. Mark Clodfelter nails the little details of a cadet's journey from the moment of stepping off the bus on that first day to the fine art of "sitting at rest" at lunch, the "joys" of playing Parade Bingo, and the life-long camaraderie that develops between roommates. At turns hilarious, poignant and inspiring, it transports us back in time to the slick-marbled terrazzo—but this time, without the threat of marching tours!

— Maj Gen Curtis Bedke, USAF, Retired, USAFA Class of 1977

Mark's beautiful story reveals the other "Three Rs" we should learn as we grow: recognition, reconciliation, and redemption. Along the way we may witness these lessons in those we love—if we're lucky, we may experience them ourselves.

— Maj Gen Robertus "Dutch" Remkes, USAF, Retired, USAFA Class of 1977

If Pat Conroy's The Lords of Discipline was a representation of all southern military colleges, Clodfelter's new book does the same for the Academies. This work presents an unvarnished view of the Academy experience in the post-Vietnam era. It is a must-read for anyone seeking to understand the many shifts in officer training over the last four decades.

— Dr. Brian Laslie, Command Historian, US Air Force Academy

Mark Clodfelter's amazing recall of Carolina's games in 1977 is beyond reproach. His accurate memory and attention to detail are just superb, bringing back nothing but fond memories of a great Carolina run at the Final Four.

— Dave Hanners, UNC guard, 1972–76; UNC basketball graduate assistant, 1976–78; UNC assistant coach, 1989–2000

