

Teenage Spies and Lovers



SILENT WARRIORS

Joe Hornsby

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For five years, the author was a member of the USAFSS serving in Japan, Philippine Islands and Turkey. This book is a fictionalized account of the author's experience while a member of this elite organization. Most of the members were teenagers when they started working at one of the most important jobs there ever was, Silent Warriors. For many years the existence of the USAFSS was classified and mostly unknown.

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Second Edition

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Dedication

Dedicated to the men and women of the United States Air Force Security Service, who without recognition, faithfully served their Country in Silence. It was an Honor and Privilege to have served with you.

Joe Hornsby

Chapter 1

In the Beginning

We made a point of arriving early at the Airport. For weeks, my thoughts had been under attack with nothing but never ending consideration of the pros and cons of this trip. Did I want to go or not? It had been a long time since I had traveled overseas. I knew my wife did not want me to go. In fact, on numerous occasions she had made that abundantly clear. In my own mind, a great deal of indecision remained. Frankly, I was not sure I did either.

My wife pulled to the curb and stopped at the international passenger drop off. For the first time since we had left home, she turned and asked if I really wanted to do this. I sat there for a moment considering her question. No damn it, I am not sure but I feel an urgency to do this. She said nothing else as I stepped out of the car. A porter stepped up, picked up my bag and headed inside. For a moment, I watched as my wife drove off. Finally, I turned and followed the porter inside.

There had been many discussions about this with my wife. Although I must admit, the complete story, had so far, been hidden from her. There was no reason, now, to reveal the complete story. To do so could possibly damage our relationship. She was lead to believe the only reason for going was to visit, one last time, the place that had such a dramatic impact on my life.

After checking in, and clearing security, made my way to the Continental Airline first class passenger lounge. Upon entering the lounge, I was warmly greeted by, Brenda, an old friend from previous trips.

How nice to see you again Mr. Davis. It has been a long time since you flew with us.

Brenda, how are you? Yes, it has been a long time.

Mr. Davis yesterday, we were notified, by flight operations, you would be flying with us today. I made sure your favorite liquor was on board the aircraft. Your favorite seat, 1A, has been reserved for you. I also made sure the seat next to you would remain vacant. The flight will depart on time and you will board in about one hour

Mr. Davis, are you going on business or is this a Holiday?

Brenda, this is a personal journey, returning to a very special place. I have not been there in many years. My purpose in going, is to try to find and reconnect with someone, that many years ago, I was in love with. My fervent hope is I will be able to do so.

Take off was uneventful. After the seat belt sign was extinguished, the flight attendants circulated through the cabin. Without asking, they brought me a double Glenlivet Single Malt Scotch with a little ice and a splash of water along with a bowl of Cashews. Obviously, Brenda had taken care of me.

Once again, Joe's mind was flooded with memories. No matter how hard he tried, his mind would not release the possibilities that lay before him. The possibilities were endless; rejection or perhaps not finding the person he desperately sought to see once more. Without realizing it, he fell asleep, and the dreams started once again.

We had finished the third mid-shift. Some friends asked if my intentions were to attend roll call. Thought about it for a few moments and agreed to go for one beer. I had not seen Kiko since we started working Mids and I wanted to spend the day with her. I knew she would be expecting me, and our time would be limited.

Upon arrival at our house, I found Kiko still sleeping. Quickly I undressed and slipped into bed with her. She snuggled up to me and said you smell like beer. Feeling a little guilty, for not coming straight home, I explained I had gone to roll call and had one beer.

She turned to me and we quickly began a morning of incredible passion. It was as if she had become possessed. About 2:00 PM, she turned

to me and said 'I'm Hungry. Let's get dressed and go eat. I have to be at work at 5:00.

We arrived at the Stand Bar just before 5:00. I mentioned on the way that it was getting very cold and looked like it might snow. Much to my surprise, Roll Call had cleared out and there were only three people sitting at the bar.

I joined them and inquired where everyone went. Turned out Armed Forces Radio was predicting a Blizzard. As a result, almost everyone had returned to the hill. I was determined to avoid becoming stranded by snow. I made a mental note to leave early.

A couple of others walked in a short time later and we all sat together. Cowboy and the few girls that were there all gathered around. It was a quiet, but interesting, evening. Conversation covered a wide range of subjects, ranging from having a moose, local girls marrying G.I.'s, Japanese Culture and History. Every time marriage entered into the discussion, I looked at Kiko to gauge her reaction. Every time it was the same. Her head would drop and an intense look of sadness would come over her face. She knew if we were married, my Security Clearance would be immediately cancelled. Without a code word security clearance, I would no longer be allowed to work in Security Service. She understood that no matter what I thought of her, I was not willing to do that.

Finally, Kiko suggested it was time to go back to the Hill. Otherwise, I might be unable to return to base. We talked quietly for a few minutes and then I got up to leave.

She walked me to the door. We opened it and found snow on the ground with more coming down at a rapid pace. We stepped outside and she put her arms around me and asked if I would be home tomorrow?

I do not know. It all depends on the snow.

She gently kissed me and said to be careful.

I stood in the doorway and buttoned up my coat. Looking down the Alley all of the neon bar lights were hazy due to the driving snow. There was

no one else in sight. I began to walk down the Alley, enjoying the cold air and snow. It was completely quiet. There was no sound of laughter or music drifting outside from any of the bars. The only sound I heard was the crunching and creaking of the snow under my Machi Boots.

The next morning my roommate shouted at me to wake up and look outside. As far as the human eye could see lay an incredible sight, snow! Snow everywhere, piled up in huge drifts. It was still coming down. That day was the beginning of our three-day daytime shift. Immediately, my primary concern was, would the snow stop and allow a return trip to spend the night with Kiko. So much for my Alaska snow concerns.

The morning started out, as just another normal day. Shower, shave, breakfast and go to work. The only problem was the snow. We walked to work. The snow was piled up and still coming down hard, making getting to work difficult.

We always tried to get there early on the first day shift and relieve the people that were just finishing their third Midnight shift. Those three mid shifts were a real bear, especially if they had been busy.

The workday started as it usually did. We would be briefed by the people we were relieving about any unusual activity or equipment problems. Almost immediately, our targets would start changing frequencies, as the atmosphere warmed. That was an extremely busy time. We had to stand by and be prepared to change frequencies on our equipment as quickly as possible. That was a challenging process as some of our equipment was very complex. Generally, it worked out fine as we had been trained by some of the brightest and most competent NCO's in the Air Force. We seldom saw an officer. Our command and its success was the direct result of our NCO's, not officers.

In fact seldom was an officer seen. They were there but usually they were Junior Grade and were very dependent upon the NCO's. They used to say, the most dangerous thing in the Air Force was a 2ndLt. Announcing, 'I have a good idea'. Some of the older hard ass NCO's used to tell the junior officers to stay in their office and out of the way. He would then promise to make them look good and keep them out of trouble.

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The process worked well as we were very good at what we did. Myself, and my contemporaries generally believed the reason we never saw an officer, in our work area, was because they were intimidated by our equipment. Much less what we were doing.

After the morning was going well my immediate Supervisor, S/SGT Buzz Hundley, came over and said he wanted to talk to me. We walked away to apparently avoid being overheard. He told me a new section was being set up at Clark AFB in the Philippines. He went on to say eight experienced operators, from Misawa, were being sent there to get it up and running and to train new arrivals from Technical School at Goodfellow AFB. He went on to say I was one of the eight.

I immediately felt like someone had sucker punched me in the belly. He went on to say, orders were being cut and I would likely leave in three to four days. Three days later, I was on a train, with one other transferee, headed south to Tachikawa AFB. When we arrived, we boarded an Air America flight headed for the 6925th RSM at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines.

Clark AFB and the 6925th was without a doubt the worst duty station I had in my brief Air Force career. Repeatedly I wrote to Kiko to explain in detail what happened. Every letter I wrote was returned saying it could not be delivered. Finally, I gave up.

After my 18 months at Clark, I accepted a remote assignment to Trabzon Turkey. By then I was thinking seriously of making a career of the USAFSS.

Ultimately, I declined to re-enlist, returned to Dallas and went to work for an Oil and Gas Drilling contractor. That turned into a 47-year career with a tremendous amount of International travel. Sometime thoughts about Kiko came to the forefront. Each time fueled by a desire to know what had happened to her.

Eventually I married a beautiful Lady named Linda. Now 52 years later I still love her deeply. We have two grown kids and a wonderful grandson. Those 47 years of work flew by and before I realized it, I was 70 years old

and still working. Finally, with family encouragement, submitted a notice of retirement.

Just before retirement, the memories of Misawa came flooding back. Finally, I admitted to myself that total peace required a return to Misawa; too face all of the unanswered questions.

Mr. Davis, please wake up and return your seat back to the upright position. We are on final approach to Tokyo. The tragedy of this entire episode was that I had been in Tokyo numerous times on business and had never taken the time to go north.

After clearing customs, I took the train downtown. Once I arrived downtown, I transferred to the Bullet Train. In less than four hours, I would be in Misawa.

Chapter 2

Arrival at Misawa

While stationed at Misawa the closest train station was a few miles away in another small city. Now here I was standing in a bright modern train station in Misawa, with the bullet train sitting there, waiting on the next passenger load. At last, I was back. Finally, I snapped out of my wonderment, stepped outside and hailed a cab.

The cab ride to my Hotel was short, taking only 15 minutes. During the ride, I felt a bit like an Owl. My head was continually turning trying to see something I recognized. I saw nothing that looked familiar.

When I stepped inside the Hotel Lobby, I was immediately overcome with a feeling of peace and tranquility. The last time that particular feeling was experienced, was during my final walk down AP Alley, some 55 years previously.

The young woman behind the check in desk was very kind and helpful. Once check in was complete she summoned someone to carry my bag and show me to my room. Upon entering the room, it was wonderful to find we were on the top floor. There were many windows in a very pleasant room overlooking White Pole Road, the main street in Misawa. I stood there almost in a state of disbelief over the changes that had taken place since I was last there.

No longer was Misawa a collection of narrow streets, many of them dirt. In place of what I had known and grown to love were paved streets, modern buildings and many cars. It happened to be a Saturday and the streets were crowded with families out shopping. Perhaps some were going to a movie. For a moment, I stopped and laughed, wondering if G.I.'s still rolled their empty Acadama Jugs toward the stage.

It was getting late and I was very tired from the long trip. I took a quick shower and decided to have a drink and quick meal in the Hotel.

Upon entering the Restaurant, found it to be full. The only open seating was at the bar. There was a very attractive young woman behind the Bar. When I sat down she quickly came over to take my order. She greeted me, in English, and inquired what I wanted to drink. I sat there for a moment and then ordered a Sapporo Beer.

I sat there for a few minutes savoring my memories and enjoying my surroundings. Apparently, once again I was overwhelmed by my thoughts. I became aware of a hand on my shoulder and a voice asking if I was okay. Startled, I turned to find a rather large man, who apparently had spoken to me, without a response.

He inquired if I was all right. I assured him I was fine. He stuck his hand out and introduced himself as Jerry Miller. We shook hands and introductions were made all around. I invited him to join me. He sat down and we began to talk.

Jerry's' first question was if somehow I was associated with Misawa Air Base. He seemed to be about the same age as me, and his interest became noticeable as I began to explain what had brought me here.

Jerry, I was stationed here over fifty years ago. The entire country and its' people became very special to me. It was a time of my life that I never forgot. Finally, I decided to return one more time before I became too old to travel.

'Joe, where did you work while you were stationed here?'

Jerry, I worked on what was known as Security Hill or First Radio.

With that, he broke out laughing. Once he quit laughing he inquired when I was there.

Jerry, I arrived in 1959 and left in 1960.

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His response was one that will never be forgotten. Joe, I was also on Security Hill during the same time. I was a 29251, Morse Intercept Operator, on Trick 4.”

My God Jerry I was a 29252, Non-Morse Intercept Operator, also on Trick 4. Immediately, as always, the bond was again in place. Turned out he had retired from the Air Force and returned to Misawa to live.

We talked and laughed the rest of the evening. We discovered that we remembered many of the same people. Finally, fatigue caught up with me, along with too many Sapporo beers. We had such a great time that for a couple of hours I had forgotten the real reason I had returned.

Jerry, exhaustion has set in. I have been traveling and drinking for the last twenty-four hours. I am going to be forced to excuse myself and get some rest. His next question stopped me dead in my tracks.

Joe, like most Trick 4 people, you probably hung out at the Stand Bar in A.P. Alley.

Yeah Jerry, that is right. There are many great memories, associated with the Stand Bar.

Joe do you remember Cowboy?

Sure I do. He ran the Stand the entire time I was here. In fact, my girl friend worked in the Stand. She is the main reason I have returned.

Joe, Cowboy is still alive here in Misawa. After the Alley burned in 1966, he opened a small restaurant and bar. He is the owner and works every day. If you want, I can come by in the morning and take you there. It is close and we can walk.

For a short while, I was speechless. If there was, anyone that could tell me about Kiko it was likely Cowboy. We agreed to meet in the Hotel Lobby the next morning at 10:00.

That night was without a doubt the most restless night I had ever spent. Most of the night I sat motionless while looking intently out the windows, at

the now quiet street. As hard as I tried, it proved impossible to stop the memories that swirled in my brain like tremendous flashes of lightning.

After finishing tech school at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, Texas, I was granted a 30-day leave. Initially I was reluctant to return to Dallas because of ongoing problems with my family. My Mother died when I was 13 years old. Immediately following her death, my younger sister and I went to live with our grandparents. It was a wonderful experience.

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