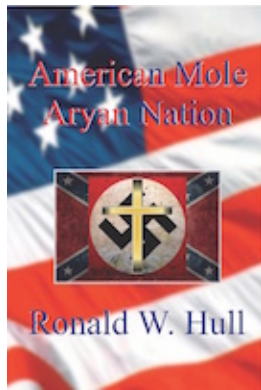


American Mole Aryan Nation



Ronald W. Hull



Jason Forsythe as Cliff Backus, an American mole, returns to the States disillusioned after his assignment in Central America, losing those closest to him. As a motorcycle nomad, Jason roams the Southwest trying to forget while finding adventures and saves a young woman from an evil gang only to lose her in a tragic accident. Jason needs a new assignment to complete his service and finds one in the militia cult of Reverend John White at Razorback, Arkansas. White's presidential aspirations must be stopped because he is unstable, delusional and fosters hatred while posing as a religious leader.

White's use of crucifixion as a punishment, sometimes leading to death that is covered up, makes it all the more urgent to bring him to justice. Jason is brought into White's inner circle and given access that allows him to sort the good from the bad. With the help of an outside source, the political blog of Spencer Howard, John White's racism and evil plans are revealed.

In the end, the awful truth of what occurred in Washington DC creating Jason and the Freedom Lancers in the first place is revealed, going right back to Razorback and the Aryan Nation.

American Mole: Aryan Nation

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American Mole

Aryan Nation

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First Edition

American Mole Aryan Nation

The End of Terrorism
in the 21st Century

Ronald W. Hull

**Edited By
Lark Pogue**

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Chapter 1

A New Identity

IN THE FOURTEENTH YEAR OF HIS SERVICE

Jason awoke in San Antonio. It seemed strange. Although he had been to the States as his alter ego, JJ Olson, several times in the preceding years, this time it was to stay and in an entirely different way. No more high roller executive moneyman, Jason was now in the seedy Rancho Inn in near downtown San Antonio within walking distance of his destination, the Alamo.

While the light crept in through the thin draperies in the rather run down motel room, and put a sparkle on some of the chrome on his newly acquired 1966 Triumph Bonneville TT, Jason was still a bit reluctant to get out of bed. His head was heavy with thoughts of what it meant to leave all that in Central America behind and try to forget Lovely and what she meant to him. He was going to go underground much further this time. Become a nomad in his 14th year of service to the United States of America.

First things first. It was time to get out of bed and get busy. Outside, the streets were bustling, but much cleaner and more orderly than he had seen in the last few days in Mexico. Still, the country was in the grips of disorder and on the edge of anarchy. Making just coming to a tourist attraction like this somewhat dangerous, although people continued to come and live it up as though the world were ending tomorrow—and it might be—for all Jason knew, based on what he had been through with both Mother Nature and man.

Jason was hungry, so breakfast was on his mind. Up ahead on the street front in an old building he saw the familiar golden arches and thought he would stop and have his first American fast food, an Egg McMuffin, for the first time in the many years since he was in high school, or maybe, Chicago; it had been that long. The coffee was good. And so was the egg and Canadian bacon. Some things hadn't changed. Although the breakfast menu was rather strange and he could've had his egg without the yolk, just by asking... strange. There were more kinds of coffee, too. That's why he just ordered it black.

His stomach satisfied and his cobwebs from sleep finally gone, Jason headed up the street towards the Alamo. A block away, Homeland Security

had set up a checkpoint, limiting access to the general vicinity of the Alamo historic district. It was to be expected since so many of the nation's rich heritage sites had come under threat from multiple sources since the great disaster in Washington DC. While passing through the metal detector, it kept going off, even when Jason took off his jacket and everything that he had on him and in it before he walked through a second time. Upon examination, it was determined that it was the metal studs on his leather pants that were setting the machine off. After a pat down, the security officer allowed Jason to continue without having to go to the only station, a block away, with a body scanner. Jason realized this would be routine from here on out in an uptight nation.

A short while later, he arrived at a long line of families, elderly couples, foreign tourists, and the occasional student, all waiting to see one of history's epic symbols, where the Republic of Texas got its battle cry and so many died in a one-sided massacre. The line moved quickly, and soon Jason was inside, listening to docents describe various aspects of the shrine and viewing the collection of guns, documents, flags and other artifacts from other places in Texas at the time because very little was left when the Alamo was first scheduled for restoration. Jason was polite and waited until all the others moved ahead of him and exited the building toward a side street where guards stood watch preventing anyone from entering the exit.

Instead of exiting, along with a few others, Jason strolled out into the beautiful grounds behind the building. His sharp eye caught several cameras, all very high-resolution, covering every inch of the space, and probably had smart software zeroing in on any possible threat so that eyesore and weary humans did not have to stare at all the monitors all the time... Only when the software detected a clear threat.

Knowing that he was being watched, Jason spent a bit of time wandering around the garden, looking at all the beautiful flowers and other exotic plants. Nothing like the Central American jungle, but still very pleasant and peaceful to walk through. There were very few people in the garden at that time of the morning. Eventually, Jason found himself sitting on the south most edge of the flagstone pool with a pleasant sound of a fountain behind him, engrossed in looking through his program.

With his right hand, Jason reached down below his right leg and felt for anything among the flagstones. He felt something hard and a bit sharp and grasped it. A key easily came out from its hiding place and was quickly deposited in his jacket pocket. It was time to leave, so Jason got up and,

while still walking around admiring the fauna and flora, walked out past the guards, waved goodbye to them and was on the street.

A half block later, Jason walked out of the secure perimeter and asked a Redline trolley driver where he could find the city bus station. The driver said, "Hop in," and three blocks later, the driver told Jason that he was two blocks from the San Antonio city bus station, "That way." Jason thanked the man and crossed the street to go to the station. Knowing that there would be high security inside, Jason removed the key while in the street and took a look at it. The key was stamped with the number, 47. He put the key back in his pocket, and a short while later inside, after scanning all the lockers, found the one he was looking for and casually took out the key and opened the locker. Inside was a large manila envelope with everything that he needed. Once outside, Jason opened his jacket and slipped the envelope inside where it rode comfortably against his chest and the many cameras didn't see him carrying anything.

Jason took the Blueline back to the Rancho Inn. Once inside, Jason opened the envelope at the little desk and removed his new identity. Following the instructions, Jason learned that Clifford R. Backus had been born in the small town of Alice, Texas. After finishing high school at St. Edward's school, he had tried college at Texas A & I in Kingsville only to drop out and end his education. Opting instead to take a mechanic's course at the ITT Institute in San Antonio. After that, Backus worked several jobs including fishing crewmember in the Gulf of Mexico, auto and motorcycle mechanic, roughneck, both offshore and around Alice, and pipe fitter. Rather nomadic, Cliff Backus never was fired but grew bored with his jobs and always moved on to others. Cliff was about to become a drifter like so many other young men in a restless, turbulent early 21st-century United States.

Placing his newly acquired citizenship papers carefully in his backpack and his Texas driver's license in his billfold where he carried just enough cash to not run out on any given day, Jason had effectively assumed his new identity. The only thing left was to remove any visages of the old JJ Olson. Jason found them all and placed them carefully, along with the paper describing his new identity, back into the manila envelope. By that time it was 2 o'clock in the afternoon and Jason was getting hungry again.

Leaving the motel once again Jason took the Blueline back to the bus station. He carefully placed the envelope with the old identity and the new identity instructions in Locker 47 and locked it. He was glad that he did not have to go through with any strict disposal protocol for those documents.

Walking this time, Jason once again moved through the perimeter security. He approached the rear exit of the Alamo and the guards there. One of the guards that he had waved to earlier recognized him because of his unique leather outfit. The mark on his hand also identified him as a visitor that day. When Jason asked if he could go back in because, "I have lost my camera in the garden," the guard shook his head in recognition and let Jason go back in to search for it.

While the guard watched from the exit, Jason went frantically around the whole garden area looking here and there for a few minutes. Finally, he just sat down on that same spot at the rim of the flagstone pool and carefully slipped the key into the same hiding place clearly out of sight of the guard at the gate. He returned to the exit shaking his head, "No."

While he only shook his head in agreement, the guard's eyes said, in so many words, "I told you so," because he had seen it happen so many times before.

Relieved and hungrier than ever, Jason followed the cascading fountain down to the Riverwalk. Once there, he found the walkways teeming with tourists that had arrived for the afternoon and the sound of jazz and mariachi music in the background. It was time for him to relax. Soon, Jason was sipping a tequila sunrise and eating nachos by the river's edge just watching people go by. After a fajita dinner and more drinks at more bistros along the river, Jason settled into a small jazz venue and stayed there until the band left, the crowd thinned out, and he walked back to his motel room, glad to be back in the United States once again.

Chapter 2

Essential Modifications

Slightly hung over, it was time to get out of bed to begin exploring the city and see what the non-tourist part of town was like. Still, Jason didn't leave the motel room until about 10 am. He had no place in particular to go and only one or two things to do.

Like all major metropolitan cities, once he left the central, older part of town, San Antonio sprawled out in all directions filled with shopping centers, subdivisions, service stations, office buildings, schools and churches, into several suburbs, each with its unique character. First, Jason had to find another motorcycle shop, and then, look into the seedy side of town. Talking with the motel clerk and a map of the city that the young Indian man just happened to have, along with the use of the man's smart phone, Jason learned where he would explore that day.

Parking his bike in the street in front of the golden arches from the day before, Jason tried the sausage and egg burrito, something he had never even seen before, and found that it was equally as palatable as the egg muffin, although spicier. Pouring a large coffee's scorching contents down his throat, Jason once again, had the energy to explore the unknown, out there.

There were four motorcycle shops out past I-410 north on 281. That's where he was headed. The Indian motel clerk told him that Classic Motorcycles was his best bet, but Jason cruised by all the others just to see what they looked like. Classic, without a big show room right off the freeway with a pretentious line of sparkling new bikes, but on a side street with the look and feel of a place where motorcycles were built and lovingly maintained, caught his eye. Jason pulled in. Choppers and café racers were all around. Everything seemed to be a bit modified. Jason was in the right place.

Although there were others around, no one paid much attention as Jason walked through the front door past a lot of motorcycle accessories to a greasy counter with a heavyset man with a gray beard and a definite look of a motorcycle gang member. His gravelly voice matched.

"That's a nice little relic you have out there. Saw you pull in. What can I do for you?"

"Well, I picked that bike up in McAllen and am thinking of touring the Southwest with it this winter. It's been several years since I have been on the roads here in the States and I see that many cars are self-driven. Are there any accessories that are essential and useful for camping out and safety?"

"Been out of the country, huh? Where? Things have changed on the roads recently."

"Central America."

"Hablas español?"

"Sí."

The man immediately introduced himself as Jimenez "Jimmy" Ortega, the owner of the shop, and began conversing in Spanish with Jason.

"So, you need some accessories for that underpowered thing you've got. Well... To keep you safe, I'd suggest a helmet first. I know it's the law here in Texas that we can kill ourselves without a helmet, but the one that I'm suggesting has a lot of whizbangs that I think you'll like."

Jimenez walked around behind the counter and grabbed a helmet from the display and brought it back to show to Jason. "This one is a Krantz, German name but made in America—Delavan, Wisconsin. It not only will protect your head in the event of a crash—and you will be in a crash, it's only a matter of time—it has multiple visors that are voice controlled, right and left signal lights on either side that match the ones on your bike, likewise voice controlled." Protect you from accidents and incidents that are bound to occur. The camera records, in a loop, one hour of high-definition video that can be uploaded, and once again, view with your voice, to the cloud of your choice for safekeeping should you need it. It's a dangerous world out there and these cameras are saving our asses every day."

"Have you got something smaller? That helmet seems to have too much crammed into it for this little old head to gather." Jason shook his head in denial.

"Well, Krantz also makes some cool wraparound sunglasses that do pretty much the same thing."

"Now you're talking... I'll take a pair of those. Anything else?"

"Well, I've saved the best for last. That classic motorcycle you have will need an upgrade to help keep you safe, save you time and aggravation, and take a load off your mind. We have a modification kit from the Silicon Valley company, Razor Light, that we install. What it does is mount cameras both front and rear on your bike, and a panel above your analog

gauges that is split. On the left side you will see data that is useful, a virtual Internet connection with everything you need for traveling, and on the right, your rearview in high definition, doing away with the need for mirrors and also gathering another hour's worth of video continuously for uploading to the cloud.

"The system includes a self driving module that will keep you on the straight and narrow using GPS like most of the cars are using today. This sucker will actually keep you out of accidents and allow you to sleep while you go down the road if you like. Like the old cruise control, all you have to do is move the handlebars or hit the gas or the brake, and you will immediately gain complete manual control of your bike. Believe me, on long rides, this baby is a necessity."

"I'll take one of those. How long will it take to install?"

"We usually turn those installations around in a day, but I will need a half day with you so that you can get proficient on all the things this wizard can do for you. Believe me, it's a lot! Oh, and one more thing. We'd better check to see if your valves can take unleaded gasoline. If those valves and seats haven't been hardened, you're in for engine failure down the road. I'll check for free, but if your 650 hasn't been modified, it will cost you. So far we are looking at about \$3500. Have you got that kind of cash?"

"I do." Jason's, matter-of-fact way of saying it, reassured Ortega that he meant business.

"Okay then, we'll get started right away... In a couple of hours... I've got one bike out there in the shop that we are finishing up on, but yours will be next."

"Anywhere I can stay around here... Get something to eat while I'm waiting?"

"Two blocks back to the 281 Frontage Road you'll find a couple of motels and restaurants. I would recommend MiniHotel 35. They are clean, efficient, and don't mind bikers. I won't recommend a restaurant, because I don't know what you like, but there are a few within walking distance that you might want to try."

Taking his saddlebags off the Bonneville after he rode it into the shop, Jason slung them over his shoulder and headed out to the frontage road. He would be back by closing to check on progress and get the manuals on his equipment so that he could study them before trying everything out.

Chapter 3

Meeting the Locals

It wasn't long before Jason walked up to the office of the MiniHotel 35 and it was pretty much the way Jimmy had advertised it. He noticed that there was special parking for motorcycles and there were a couple parked there even in the middle of the day. It didn't look like he would be able to bring his bike inside, though. *I'll have to get some way of keeping it from getting stolen*, Jason thought to himself as he entered the lobby.

There was no trouble getting a room because the place looked empty that time of the day. Jason checked in and dropped off the heavy saddlebags, glad to be rid of them. He didn't stay in the room, but immediately went back outside to see what there was by way of something to eat.

Looking up and down the street from where he was, there was a Japanese restaurant, what looked like a Chinese buffet across 281 in a shopping center, and the nearby, Longhorn Corral, something that looked like a chain that Jason had never heard of. Thought he'd try that.

There were five bikes parked outside along with some cars, so that was a good sign, even in the early afternoon well after lunch. As he walked through the door, Jason attracted some attention from the guys at the bar and those at the few occupied tables scattered about. He immediately noticed three girls waiting tables in very short denim skirts, cowboy boots, plaid shirts opened in the front to the waist, and white cowgirl hats. Obviously a dress code designed to attract men to the place. Jason didn't mind.

He headed for the unoccupied side of the place toward the back wall and sat down at a table with his back to the wall where he could get a better view of the room. It was only a minute or two when a beautiful young blonde with electric blue eyes came sauntering over to his table with the menu in hand and a big smile on her face.

"Howdy, stranger, I'm Kaylee. Can I get you a drink? Mighty hot out today."

"Dear. Whatever the house is drinking. And, while I haven't seen your menu, just bring me a hamburger with fries, medium well."

"Okay, sweetie. I'll be right back." Jason swore that she was flirting with him, flashing those long eyelashes, but then, it was probably just a requirement of her job. That shirt must have been glued in just the right places every time she bent over to serve him or he would have been surveying her nipples instead of those eyes. And then, as she turned to leave, that shirt came open and a full boob with a perky little pink nipple was plainly in view. *Oh*, Jason thought, *maybe this place does a little extra business on the side?*

Kaylee came back shortly with a Coors in a bottle and a glass on the side, as well as a glass of ice water. Once again, she gave Jason a little peek and a wink to go along with it. Jason was beginning to like this place. He leaned back in the chair and enjoyed his beer.

It wasn't long before Kaylee returned with a large hamburger complete with sides including French fries and onion rings. Once she got him some salt from another table, she asked, "Would you like anything else, Hon?"

Jason had been picking the jalapenos off the burger, noting that it was medium rare rather than medium well. He looked around, and replied, "No. But I will have another beer."

"Coming right up." Kaylee sparkled and twirled around so that her short skirt revealed her thong.

Jason ate slowly and cased the place. He saw that the other two girls were spending a lot of time with the guys at the bar. Those guys were wearing colors with, "Blue Knights," on the back. Kaylee was serving the tables, and one by one they vacated until the place was nearly empty. About the time that Jason was thinking about another beer, Kaylee came by, brought him one, and then sat down at the table with him. *Part of normal business?* Jason wondered.

With a big smile on her face, Kaylee asked, "You're not from here, are you? Where you from? We don't get many strangers here. So, I just had to ask. Besides, you're cute!" She giggled and winked.

"Well, I just came up from a long stay in Central America. I'm Cliff, Cliff Backus. I'm getting my bike modified for the States and just happened into this place and the likes of you." He winked right back at her.

Kaylee turned her head a bit toward the bar to indicate for Jason to look. "You see those guys at the bar? They're members of the Blue Knights motorcycle club. Big here in San Antonio and fairly well own this place. That's why we don't get many strangers. You must be very brave to come in here." Her eyes were big as saucers when she said it, as though she were flattering him.

Jason was unmoved on purpose. "Not really. Come to think of it, I'd really like to meet them. Could you arrange it for me?"

"Sure, Honey. Whatever you like." Kaylee rose from the table and Jason followed. They approached the five guys wearing colors at the bar. As they approached, all eyes were on them coming.

Kaylee spoke first. "Hey guys. I'd like you to meet Cliff. He says that he just came up from Central America and is getting his motorcycle modified over at Jimmy Ortega's." She turned to Jason and asked, "That's right, isn't it?"

Jason nodded, "Yes," in agreement.

"This is Spike, he's CEO and founder of the club. You're lucky to meet him. He doesn't come in very often anymore." Jason shook the weathered hand of a craggy faced man that looked to be in his 70s but still was in fairly good shape. "Spike is retired Marines and City of San Antonio police." She then went around to all the other guys with rapid introductions, Pete, Charles, Jake and Jerry, that Jason didn't quite get, they all came forward so fast to right knuckle him.

Spike spoke first. "Those are some pretty fancy leathers you have there. I don't think you got them around here."

"I got them in Cancun on my way back. I've been in San Antonio before. I'm just getting reacquainted."

"That's why I didn't recognize them. Some pretty sweet duds, I must say. Take care of them; you won't get anything like that on this side of the border. How are things down there, anyway? We don't hear much now that everyone can get their drugs from the local drugstore over-the-counter. Although it was a bitch sometimes, I kind of miss those days. Now, it seems like all the clubs are trying to reposition their territory and hold off all the wildcat anarchists."

"Actually, I left Costa Rica. I was staying on the beach down there in paradise with former military expatriate friends when that damn tsunami hit, killing my friends and wiping out what little I had down there. So, I decided to come back here and start over." Jason could hear Kaylee's sad sigh when she heard him tell it. She had tears in her eyes but didn't say anything.

"Well... We are known as the good guys among motorcycle clubs. We try to keep the peace as best we can, but as long as there are Banditos, Warlocks, Outlaws, and Hells Angels around, each of them trying to carve out more territory, it gets harder and harder to keep the peace. You're

welcome to hang with us if you like, but we really have to get to know you very well before we can let you into our ranks. Do you get my drift...?"

"I get your drift. Thanks for your offer, but I don't think I'll be staying in town very long. I'd like to explore the Southwest this winter and do it alone." Jason could see Kaylee's eyes drop a bit when he said that. "While I'm here, I'd like to buy you all a round of drinks before I have to leave here at four to check on my bike."

The bartender brought out a couple of pitchers of beer for the guys and Jason settled in to conversation with them at the bar. Kaylee wandered off to clean up the tables and other tasks. The clock on the wall was nearing 4 pm, so Jason finished his glass, said goodbye to the guys and headed out the door. He was halfway to the MiniHotel 35 when he heard Kaylee running after him. "Hey, Cliff, wait up. I just got off my shift and have to go to class. I have to work again later this evening. Will I be seeing you?"

Jason walked Kaylee back to her car, a new Lexus hardtop convertible. Not something that a college girl would tend to afford. He politely opened the door for her, leaned over, and said, "I'll be back tonight. We can talk more then."

Kaylee looked back up at him with those big blue eyes and said, "I'd like that." Left Jason wondering as he walked past the MiniHotel 35 and back to Classic Motorcycles to check on the progress of the renovation.

Chapter 4

Connecting for Real

Jason arrived at Ortega's shop to find that his bike had already been partly disassembled and parts were being fitted and installed. Jimmy summoned Jason over to show him something of interest. "See here, right on the frame underneath the gas tank? That's where I'm going to put your tracker chip. It's part of the Razor Light installation. I put these chips on different places on different bikes so that thieves won't know where they're located to remove them."

"With this little chip, you will know where your bike is at all times even if you're not with it. Do you have a smart phone?"

"No, I don't. Had one on my last job and hated to get those calls all the time. Know what I mean?" Jason wasn't lying.

"Well, I guess I do. Anyway, it's all operated off Razor's website anyway, so you could use someone else's phone or other web device to sign into My Razor Light. You do know how to use the Internet, don't you?"

"I think I do, have once or twice." Jason smiled wryly and lied.

"Well, it's easy. Before you leave here I'll show you on my phone and on our computers. This little chip is invaluable. Motorcycle thefts are way down and the thieves are being caught in the act left and right, thanks to this little bugger. It's a dog eat dog world out there, and a man's gotta have all the protection he can get."

They took a little time going over the manual information and got on the computer to set up a My Razor Light account for Jason so that he could go there and find out everything he ever wanted to know about the Bonneville and where he had been in case he couldn't remember.

By 5 o'clock, Jason returned to his motel room and watched the news, something he hadn't done in a very long time. It seemed like politics was still a mess as he remembered it, although the actors that he remembered were nearly all gone with notable exceptions. There was the usual turmoil that never seemed to go away since the blast put the country on edge—so hard to recover from. He turned on a movie and watched it until 9 pm, took a shower and trimmed his beard, and then headed back to the Longhorn Corral.

This time there were about 20 motorcycles out front and another 20 cars. The place was hopping with hard rock music occasionally slowed down a bit with a bit of country. There wasn't a free table anywhere, so Jason looked for an opening at the bar and finally saw one.

Jason didn't see Kaylee anywhere but there were about 10 girls in uniform rushing about keeping up with customer orders. As he approached the barstool that seemed to be free next to a member of the Blue Knights, a beautiful young lady in shorts and tank top took the seat and the guy, who Jason didn't recognize, put his arm around her.

So, Jason stood by the bar near the end where the cowgirls were coming to pick up drinks to take to the customers at the tables, and waited, wondering why he was even in the place.

And then, he saw someone waving at him on the other side of the bar to come over. Skirting around the bar and approaching the guy on the other side, he recognized him from the afternoon, but couldn't remember his name. The man was with three other guys he didn't recognize and he wasn't sure exactly how to approach until the guy that had waved him over stuck out his fist for a bump and started talking loudly to the three other guys huddled around him to get above the loud music.

"This is the guy I was telling you about. Says that he came up from Central America. Lived through the tsunami down there. Dude, what'd you say your name was!" **Jason** had to practically shout to be heard above the music and other noise.

"Cliff... Cliff Backus!"

"Well, in case you don't remember, I'm Pete, Peter Elliott. This is Keith Roberts, Tommy Brown and Hank Richardson, some of my bike buds here. What are you drinking? I owe you one."

"Same as you. I like everything with American stamped on it."

Everyone laughed at that. Pete replied, "I can't guarantee you that. Everything seems to be made somewhere else these days. Tell these guys more about what happened to you down there in Costa Rica. I'll get a beer."

Jason commenced a story that was close to his real experience but didn't blow his cover in any way. It was convincing enough so that the guys were all ears listening to someone who had been there first hand. In time, they saw a table that went empty and convened there. They were familiar with all of the waitresses and the girls didn't disappoint the guys one bit even though there were house rules about touching and things like that. The view was always interesting.

Around 10 o'clock, Jason saw that Kaylee had returned to work. Once in a while. He saw her flashing a smile his way but she stuck to business, taking care of other tables that she had been assigned to. Since it was a Wednesday night, the place rapidly thinned out by midnight, including the guys at his table. Pete was the last to leave, saying that he had to get home to his wife and kids. Jason nursed a beer, thinking about what his next move would be, just listening to the music and watching those girls play the crowd.

With the customers leaving, the cowgirls congregated by the bar. Some of them made glance toward him after talking with Kaylee. But she didn't come to the table at all. It bothered Jason a bit because she had told him to come. Finally, the lights flashed, signaling closing, so Jason got up and walked out of the place. Just before that, he had seen Kaylee go into the kitchen, cleaning up tables. Feeling a bit melancholy, he headed back to the MiniHotel 35.

As soon as Jason got in his room and had taken off his leather jacket to get comfortable, he heard a loud banging on the door. "Cliff, Oh Cliff, why didn't you wait for me! Let me in! Let me in!"

Jason opened the door and Kaylee burst in, jumping up and gripping him around the waist with her legs and showering his cheeks and ears with kisses. He was so unnerved that he fell backward over the bed and she was on top of him, straddling him and pulling at his clothes.

Catching his breath, Jason called out, "The door... the door is open!"

Breathing heavily now and pushing his T-shirt up his arms and over his face, Kaylee breathed, "I don't care, let them see and hear. I don't care. I've been waiting all night and I can't wait any longer. Here, let me help with your pants."

Jason watched from below as she ripped off that plaid shirt and worked his tight leather pants off at the ankles. Just then, a couple came by in the hallway and Kaylee turned and waved at them. He heard them giggle as they headed down the hall. Then, she was pulling off his shorts when she made a discovery. "Oh my God! What happened to you! I was going to ask you if you had any STDs, but from the looks of that you have something much worse! What happened?"

"It's a long story... But everything's okay."

"Well I'm glad for that. I guess that means we don't have to put a raincoat on it. I get myself checked out regularly and I'll assume that, since you said you only had one girlfriend down there and this little problem was fixed by some pretty fancy surgeon, I'd say you're good to go... I guess I'll

have to kiss it and make it all better." Kaylee made good on her promise and Jason soon found out that she was truly blonde all the way to her roots.

Kaylee kept him up half the night asking for and getting multiple orgasms. The girl just didn't want to quit. In between, she confessed, "I'm an exhibitionist and a bit of a sexual addict. That's why I work at the Longhorn Corral. There's always some new guy around that I can latch onto for a one night stand. But you're different. I saw it right away. I don't believe you are a mechanic and roughneck like you say. You're much smarter than that. Are you a spy?"

That question caught Jason off guard, but he had to answer. "No, I'm not a spy. I'm not here spying on the Blue Knights. I'm just passing through, want to be a drifter. My last job down in Central America was very tough and I don't want to do that kind of thing anymore. I don't have to. I've got a little money saved up so I don't have to bum my way as I go."

"Well I'm a senior in psychology at UT San Antonio. I want to be a sex therapist so I thought I would get to know the field. And the truth is, I'm loving it. My daddy's real rich and has a big spread up in Bandera. I used to love to ride bareback naked amid all those exotic animals that he has on his ranch. Loved it when those ranch hands got a peek at me." She giggled. "Anyway, I don't have to work at Longhorn like the other girls. I'd like to call it my internship." She laughed.

Morning came and Kaylee woke early saying that she had to get off to her morning classes. They took a quick shower together, and, to Jason's surprise, Kaylee ran naked out to her car and changed into her school clothes in the **tiny** back seat. Something she seemed to be expert at doing. Jason got dressed and followed. He bent over to give her a kiss before she drove off.

"Will you be here again tonight? I don't usually do two nighters, but you're special." Kaylee's eyes misted over.

"I don't know. Probably depends upon my bike and whether it's done or not. Sorry, but I can't say."

Another peck on the lips like a married couple heading to work for the day and Kaylee drove off leaving Jason to wonder what he was getting into as he headed back to the MiniHotel 35 for its free breakfast of assorted rubber protein, genetically modified fruit, and engineered cereals. The coffee wasn't near as good as Mickey D's, but Jason needed several cups to clear his head of his thoughts of déjà vu. Not this time. He would get the hell out of there before something happened.

Chapter 5

Territorial Imperative

After breakfast, it was either the lack of sleep from the night before or depression, but, while trying to watch the news on TV, Jason slept until 11 o'clock. Thinking that he needed to check on the progress of the renovation, he got up and walked over to Classic Motorcycles to see how things were going.

When Jason got there, to his surprise, his bike was out front and out of the shop, ready to go. Jimmy met him with a big smile and, "Good morning, Cliff. The installation went smoothly, much easier than some of the others that we've done. I've already checked out all the components and sequences and everything is working quite well. We beefed up your battery and we have a fold up solar array that will charge your battery practically anywhere if it gets low." He went to the back of the bike, lifted up the rear seat and deployed the solar array. All you have to do is flip this switch and your battery is being charged as long as there is full sun on the panels."

"Why don't you hop on behind me and I will take you out and show you how everything works. You can watch me over my shoulder as we go. Here are your sunglasses. Try them on for size and fit and see if you can make the functions work like I told you." Ortega reached to his denim vest pocket where those sunglasses had been hanging on one temple and handed them to Jason.

Jason hopped on his bike behind Jimmy and Jimmy took him down some side streets going through all the functions that the system could do. And then they stopped, and Jimmy rode behind Jason for a ways while Jason went through all of the same functions. It was a bit after noon when they got back to the shop and a mobile lunch wagon was outside selling tacos, tamales, and the like. Jimmy grabbed some for them, "On me," and they sat down at a table outside the shop with a beer to wash it down.

Jason was glad that the bike was done, but he didn't have the cash with him. He told Jimmy. "Say, I'd like to get going, but I have to go get the cash to pay you. What's the bottom line?"

"I don't know, exactly, but it's approaching four grand. I'd like you to take the bike out for test a run somewhere for a day, and then come back tomorrow. Then, we'll settle up if that's all right with you. I believe I can

trust you to come back with the cash. Besides, I know how to track you if you don't." A big shit-eating grin came over his generally jovial face.

Jason had to laugh. "You got me there! Yes, I would like to try out all this junk before I commit to using it in the long run. I am itching to try everything out and see how it works without you looking over my shoulder!" Again, they both chuckled.

With a little tweaking of the sunglasses and the cameras turned on, Jason pulled out from Classic Motorcycles and headed south on 281. Before long, he found himself on I-37 crossing I-10 on his way to Corpus Christi. Not wishing to stay on the freeway, Jason dropped down the nearest exit and entered an older decidedly Hispanic, neighborhood and cruised down, what appeared to be a main drag, but there was little traffic in the middle of the day.

It wasn't long before he passed a bar with several motorcycles parked outside and some guys standing out there drinking beer. And, it wasn't long after that before he saw, in his newly acquired rearview monitor, bikes coming up on him—*fast*. Keep cool, he told himself, and maintained the same leisurely pace. Just as those bikes were catching up, up ahead, he saw others coming down the street the other way. Jason wasn't sure what would happen next, so he waved at the oncoming bikes.

There was no median on that street, so those guys, instead of waving back, moved over on his side of the street and headed directly for him, while the bikes behind him caught up all about the same time. Jason had already slowed, and soon found himself hemmed in with a bike on his right side, one directly behind him, one directly in front of him that had come so close as to touch front wheels and another coming from the other side alongside to his left, along with several other bikes that came up from behind. He was totally hemmed in. All he could think of to say was, "Buenas tardes," as loud as he could above all the idling motorcycles to the obviously Hispanic riders.

The scarred face guy on his right sneered, "Look what we have here, some Yankee gringo spouting Spanish in fancy leathers on a classic bike. Don't you know that you're in Bandito territory?"

Jason answered, "Well, no, I didn't, I was just out cruising around getting to know San Antonio a little better."

"Well, you should have known the territory before you came down here and messed with us. We take tribute from anyone who wants to travel on our streets."

All the other bikers backed him up with a great big, "That's right!"

"How much?" Jason wondered if he had enough cash in his billfold to get out of this one. He was screwed.

"Not much, just your bike. We'll let you walk out of here and take the bus without a scratch."

Jason sized things up and decided what he would do. All he said was, "Okay," and dismounted right leg first.

That right leg went high over his head and directly into the chest of the surprised rider on his left who wasn't expecting anything since the chief honcho was doing all the talking on the other side. The blow knocked him off his chopper and Jason was in the seat with it idling.

Obviously a modified Harley, Jason hit the throttle, hard, and was out of there before the startled Banditos gathered what was happening. He had a half block on them before they started coming for him. Retracing the path he had taken, Jason hit the on ramp to I-37 and had crossed I-10 before he saw them in the review mirror over a half-mile behind. Knowing how patrolled the Interstates were, he took a chance on the cameras aimed at him and ran about 90 mph until he couldn't see any of them following anymore.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Jason dropped back down to the posted 80 mph and joined the sedate automatic, computer-controlled traffic all the way back to Classic Motorcycles. Jimmy Ortega was surprised to see him pull up in front of the shop in that wild modified machine. He came out from behind the counter to take a look.

"Don't tell me that you traded bikes already, Cliff! Where in the hell did you get that chopper?"

"It's a long story, Jimmy, but the short of it is that I was hijacked by Banditos and I escaped by stealing this one. Fair trade." Finally, Jason could smile.

"The good news is, Cliff, we know where your bike is. You are very lucky. You could have been beaten up or even killed. Those guys are nothing to mess with. But you're in luck. I was once one of them. After that stand-down in Waco that time with several of us killed, I decided to hang up that life and opened this shop as far from their territory as I could get. But I still know them, at least most of them, and I think I know where your bike is and who's got it. Let's give him a call. But first, I'm going to have you find your bike."

Jimmy took Jason inside to his countertop computer. "Here, Cliff, go ahead, find it."

Jason pretended to fumble a bit, but after searching and finding the Razor Light website, he fumbled around again and finally, logged into his account. He clicked on the link, Find My Vehicle, and a map with an address immediately popped up on the screen—7301 Alhambra.

Jason took one look at the street and said, "That's the street I was on. It's still there."

"And that's the address of the Banditos' headquarters. So, that bar you're talking about is their hang out on the same block. I know who to call now. Ricky Romero and I go way back. Here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to call Ricky and make him an offer that he can't refuse. He'll negotiate with me where he wouldn't with you. All you have to do is just watch and listen. Let me handle it for you. *Okay?*"

With nothing left to lose, Jason just shook his head, "Yes."

Ortega turned on the speakerphone and dialed the number from memory. Some guy answered in Spanish and Jimmy answered back in Spanish, "Is Ricky there? Tell him that Jimmy Ortega wants to talk to him."

Moments later, the guy with the same voice that had challenged Jason earlier came on the phone along with his scarred face, speaking English. "Jimmy, old buddy, what can I do for you today... Long time no hear, no see..."

"Sorry Ricky, but I'm calling on business. You have one of my best customer's bike and I want it back without a scratch—*immediately!*"

"Oh, we do? What do you mean? We haven't got any bike of yours?"

"Quit fooling around with me, Ricky. I can have the San Antonio police and even SWAT, if necessary, down on you because I know that you have the bike and there's no place you can hide it that they can't find it with my help."

"Okay, so you got me by the gonads. Why would you be protecting a gringo Yankee pretty boy with a classic bicycle?"

"I'm doing the asking. You don't want the police down on you. I've got a deal that will make it easy for you. We've got the chopper right outside. Looks like it's worth a lot more than that Bonneville TT that you seem so fond of. Tell you what I'll do. You take that bike, and I'll take the chopper and let's meet at the old Coliseum parking lot in 20 minutes. Once there, we can chat about old times. Just you, none of your compadres, and I will come alone as well. Got a deal?"

"Do I have a choice? Deal."

Both men hung up without saying another word. Jason was impressed. Jimmy gave Jason a high five and was out the door. A minute later, he had

started the Harley and was on his way for the swap. Jason and the other guys in the shop that had heard the conversation just stood there in amazement. And then, they drifted back to what they were doing. Jason went over to the vending machines and got something to snack on while he waited.

Jason couldn't believe it. "No, I'll pass on that. But I will give you food. Just don't come sneaking back into my camp again or this little gun will blow your head off."

Jason gave the man half of the food that he picked up that day, knowing that this man on his way to death was not doing very well begging for food. He decided right then that he was not going to stay but would leave in the morning for home.

Chapter 56

Revelations

At dawn, Jason packed up and headed east on US 50 again with a purpose that defied the blinding early morning sun. This time, the farmland gave away to rolling hills and more and more woodlands with small towns wasting away along with their inhabitants. But as he burned the daylight Jason began to realize how homesick he was when he could see that arriving at Grandma Gail's mountain retreat was only a day away. He didn't need Razor to find his way. It was all familiar territory now.

The ride became a blur of blacktop and spring green, as Jason pressed on as hard as he could through occasional rain showers, curves, steep upgrades and steep downgrades until he pulled over off the road near Keyser, West Virginia for the night. Jason made camp in the woods with the smell of springtime all around but he didn't even notice. After grabbing something to eat and making his bed on the damp ground, he tried to sleep, but couldn't until the wee hours when he finally fell off for a couple of hours before waking at first light and starting out again, eager to reach Mountain Falls.

Soon, Jason was in familiar territory. Not much had changed as he turned off US 50 on Virginia 600. That was good news, but it hastened his apprehension of what he would find when he got to the Forsythe Homestead just ahead. He kept picturing his grandmother, hoping she was still strong after all these years. She had been strong and healthy when he left. She would be in her mid-90s now.

Crunching down the gravel driveway to the front porch, Jason was amazed that the place looked almost exactly like he remembered it. There were a few young trees that he didn't remember and the place was still groomed nicely. Otherwise, it retained its stately rustic look, clinging to the hillside. Jason parked the Bonneville and, instead of bounding up the front porch, he sneaked up gingerly so as not to disturb his elderly grandmother and knocked on the door gently while peeking in a window or two. Seeing familiar objects and furniture but no one moving inside. *Oh well*, he thought, *she must be gone somewhere*.

Jason left the porch and went down around the house to the hiding place. The special rock in the stone foundation that could be easily removed to reveal the keys to the place. Jason pulled out the rock and the keys were there. He quickly grabbed them and put the rock back in place. But, he didn't immediately unlock the back door to the basement.

Instead, he headed for the shed, hopeful of seeing his 69 Camaro still there on blocks with thoughts of putting it back together and getting it running for his return to New DC. *I'll live here. This is the place for me. Just have to get the Camaro running and everything will be great.* At least that's what Jason was thinking. He unlocked the side door to the shed. The car was gone. Everything else was neatly in place, but the car was gone. He'd have to wait until his Uncle Jim or Grandma Gail came back to find out what happened to it.

Entering the house, everything seemed to be the same but the kitchen wasn't stocked with food, so it looked like no one was living there. She must be dead. The place was too clean—too un-lived in. Jason wanted to cry, but he was too old for that. He should have expected it. He was gone too long. He hung around for a while, looking at the old pictures and other memorabilia from his happy childhood there, and decided he would move on. Something pulled him back to Reston. To his family home. He had to see it again, one more time, before he checked in. And then I'll come back here.

First, Jason had a mission. He walked the familiar path to the Forsythe family cemetery with the rustic fence surrounding ancestors going back to the Revolution. Jason approached the familiar double gravestone where his grandfather Charles had been buried and saw that there was carving on the other side. There were some wilted flowers at the base, indicating someone had been there recently with fresh flowers.

When he got close enough, he read the inscription. Gail Woodworth Forsythe, Loving Wife, and then read the dates of her birth and death. Jason was shocked that she died within three months after he left there to go into the service. *Why?* He wondered. *She was so healthy.* He would have to find out. Uncle Jim would know.

Soon, Jason was taking that familiar route home and coming into territory that he had been in several times during his time working for Iggy Sanchez. He was traveling streets well known, looking even better than they had just a few years before. Traffic was much lighter and the cars that he saw were all electric and self-driving. Their passengers busily working their smart devices, talking, watching holos or gaming in the backseat as

they zipped along. No inattentive drivers to worry about. It was strange, but to be expected.

And then, about 11:30 am, Jason turned the corner to his family home's street expecting to see the house the way he had seen it six years before, when he saw something entirely different... his 69 Camaro in the driveway! And there was a dark skinned, handsome young man hand washing it.

Jason rode up behind the car, dropped his kickstand, and raised his sunglasses. The young man looked at him with a puzzled look on his face.

"That's a real nice Camaro you have there... a 69?"

"That's a really nice motorcycle... a Triumph Bonneville?"

"I had one just like that when I was your age. Where'd you get it?"

"My uncle gave it to me. I've had it here for my high school graduation. But I'm going to have to put it in storage again because I'm entering the service."

"Is anyone in the house?" Jason caught himself asking questions that might be offensive. He wanted to take that one back.

"My Mom. Why is that any business of yours?"

"Well, it's just that I used to live here and, passing through, thought I'd check in on the place."

"Oh, I didn't know that. I'll get my mom; she's inside working at home for the government. I guess she can give you a few moments from her busy day on the computers." The young man turned and walked a few steps to the front door, opened it and yelled out, "Hey Mom, there's a guy out here that wants to see you! Says he used to live here!"

A few moments later, the garage door started opening and Jason could see that there was one of those self-driving cars in one bay and an empty space directly in front of the Camaro. In the darkness alongside the Star Car, Jason could see a woman coming wearing blue jeans and a light beige sweater. He immediately recognized an older, but even more beautiful, Shauna, emerging into the light. She gasped when she saw him. He was older and had a beard, but she would know Jason anywhere.

Without a word, Jason sprinted past the Camaro and, to the young man's shock, folded his arms around Shauna and, lifting her feet off the ground, spun her around in the joy of finding someone he loved in the house. Both of them were crying while she was trying to speak.

"Oh, Jason... Jason... I thought you were never coming back. Jim wouldn't tell us anything. There was no word. I couldn't even tell you... I couldn't tell you that you had a son. This young man you've been talking

to..." She turned in his arms and pointed to him. "That's your son, Jason Jr. He's about to go into the service just like you. Hard head. He's already broken several hearts like you broke mine." She laughed at the thought, knowing that the hurt was over. Her man was back. She couldn't contain her joy.

Jason took Shauna's hand and strode over to his son who was standing in amazement of what had just happened. He grabbed the young man's hand and shook it then pulled him close and hugged him. All he could say was, "Man, I didn't know... I didn't know. I should've been here for you..."

"It's okay. I knew you were out there. Uncle Jim told me. We were expecting you in a couple of years. But I'm sure glad you're home now, 'cuz I would've been gone for 20 like you and never have seen you. Both men teared up and hugged one another again. Shauna put her arms around the both of them.

Finally, when all the hugging and crying was over, Shauna said, "Come on inside and stay with us a while. I know you weren't planning to stay here. But I've got another surprise for you later if you'll stay for dinner."

"I'm full up with surprises right now. I really had nowhere else in mind to go anyway. I can't wait to have dinner with my family again. But, if you don't mind, I'd like to stay outside here with my son and help him wipe down his car. Maybe he'll let me take a ride in it later." Shauna understood and returned to her work inside.

In a few minutes with the top down and Jason Jr. driving, Jason had him take them around on a beautiful spring afternoon. When they passed the high school that both of them attended, Jason found himself describing what it was like that day in the physics class when the windows blew in and he ended up driving Shauna home because there was no other way for her to get there. Later, he told Junior about how he had rescued Shauna and brought her home with him. He felt very relieved telling it for the first time since those awful times.

Finally, when he thought of it just before they arrived back at the house, Jason asked, "Son, do you know what happened to Grandma Gail? Is she dead?"

Junior got a look on his face of concern, but he had to tell. "I never knew her. I was too young when she was murdered. We go up there sometimes to stay in the summer. That's where I spotted this car in the shed and asked my uncle if I could have it. He was reluctant because it belonged to you, but he finally gave in. He's a real softy behind his military

gruffness. That's why he let me join the service before you came back." He shook his head. "Sure glad you came back early." A smile returned.

"She was murdered?"

"That's all I know. You'll have to ask Mom or Uncle Jim. The case was never solved. Do you want to drive?"

"I sure do." They switched seats and Jason drove them back home. The car was smooth and powerful. It seemed more powerful than when he drove it. He suspected that some modifications had been made because it cornered so well and braked much better than he remembered when driving the streets 18 years before.

Soon, they were back home and Jason, Jr. told his father to drive the car directly into the empty space in the garage. There was another Star Car in the driveway behind Shauna's in the garage. *Somebody else must be here*, Jason thought.

"Mom, we're back!" Junior called out as Jason followed him through the garage door into the kitchen to the familiar smells of cooking. Jason was curious what the place looked like inside after all these years. The first thing he noticed were the shiny new cabinets in white and the gray granite countertops that had been already aging yellow Formica when he was last there. And then, at the breakfast bar at the end of the kitchen that formerly had a wall that was now open, he saw a ghost sitting with Shauna, both with a glass of wine in hand.

"Gayle! Gayle, is that you? I thought you were dead! What happened? What happened? How did you survive?" Too many questions raced through his mind for Jason to raise them all before he was hugging his sister and spilling her wine. Once again, the three of them were crying with Jason, Jr. watching in utter amazement.

Finally, after all the hugging, kissing and crying, Gayle answered. "Oh, Jason, it's a long story. And even some of that I don't remember. But I'll tell you. I'll tell you all of it. And I hope you'll tell me what's happened all these years to you. But first, let's have some more wine and we can begin to catch up with one another over dinner." There was such a glow of relief on her face as she sat back down on the stool, matching the look of Shauna who got another glass and poured them all another one for the toasts to come.

"One more thing..." Gayle raised her glass to touch Jason's. "I have a son, Jonathan... Jonathan Chambers, Jr. He also just graduated from high school with your Junior. But he's not here. Last week, he left for West Point to go through his basic orientation before becoming a freshman plebe in the

fall. So you also have a nephew you didn't know about, too." The surprises were overwhelming. Jason could hardly believe what he was seeing and hearing.

They drank and ate and talked well into the night, but still hadn't covered much of the catching up they all had to do. Jason slept alone that night in a guest/office bedroom. Junior was in his. But it was comfortable. Dreamless and wonderful sleep that he hadn't had in months. The smell of bacon coming from the kitchen woke him up. Jason was home.

But something bothered him. At breakfast, before Gayle left for work, Jason told everyone that he was going to check in. He would spend a week with them but he didn't feel fully at home yet. Thought that he would spend some time at the mountain retreat winding down after his service. Things were happening too fast. He wasn't quite ready.

Chapter 57

Checking In

The week went fast and there was much to absorb after 18 years of absence from the family. When Gayle was at her office as Chambers Professor of Neuropsychology at Georgetown and Shauna was working on cases for NSA from her computer, Jason retreated to the guest/office where he got on the computer and began to sort through his Hotmail email account, neglected for 20 years. It took him three days to delete all the junk from nefarious sources that had somehow made their pitch and deposited their spam on his dusty old account.

Jason had to laugh at the subjects and some of the emails from his high school days that were still there, neatly archived as far back as 21 years earlier. And then, there were the serious pleas from classmates and friends after the disaster with haunting messages... Some of which he had answered at that time, and many that he had not. For now, he couldn't answer anyone, even the most pressing, until he checked out and became Jason J. Forsythe, private citizen, once again.

Finally, the day came when he had to check in. So he got on the phone and made the call. It rang a couple of times and an unfamiliar female voice answered. "Office of the Commandant."

"May I speak to the Commandant?"

"He is not in. However, I am authorized to receive his calls."

"Pearl Harbor, 1941."

"May I have your mother's maiden name."

"Baker."

"What is your Social Security number?"

"934-55-0996"

"What was the name of your high school?"

"South Lakes High"

"Welcome home, Jason Forsythe. What's your location?"

"I'm here, in Reston."

"That's close. Should I send a driver to pick you up?"

"That will not be necessary. I have my own transportation. What is your address?"

"One Homeland Place, New Washington, DC."

"I'll be there within the hour."

Jason put on his leathers and prepared to leave. He kissed Shauna goodbye and told her, "If things go well, I should be back sometime this afternoon. But I don't know. They may require me to put in my additional two years. I'll let you know if I can. But if I can't, you can expect that's what happened if you don't see me within the next couple of days."

Shauna frowned and a tear appeared in one eye. She blinked trying to dispel it and what she was feeling. "That's okay, I'm just glad that you're here and safe now, after all the years of worry about you. Whatever happens, I'll be here for you." She was trying to be brave, but started bawling as she hugged Jason close like never wanting to let him go.

Junior was also worried about what would happen when his father checked in, but tried to keep positive when he waved and yelled, "See you later!" As Jason rode off.

Razor took Jason through the maze that was now New Washington, DC. Actually much grander and easier to navigate in the Virginia foothills than the old one, although laid out similarly.

Some distance from his destination, Jason approached a fortified, but nicely camouflaged, gate. The guards in charge took his readings and cleared him to enter, but he would have to leave his Bonneville behind. A Marine in an electric vehicle was waiting to take him to headquarters. The Homeland compound was like a park with young trees less than 20 years old, but still had the formal, stately quality of a much older place. They arrived at a small building encased in dark, reflective glass with nothing parked in front. Flags flew over the entrance.

When Jason entered the building he was met with a large reception area, beautifully wood paneled and a small desk with a beautiful young lady sitting behind it, smiling. Jason walked up to her and said, "Good morning. I'm Jason Forsythe. I'm here to see the Commandant."

The young lady's smile grew broader. "Yes, you talked to me earlier. General Forsythe is most anxious to see his nephew after all these years."

"I hope he'll be happy. I'm two years early." Jason felt a little uneasy inside knowing that he was now close to strict military authority.

"You're not the first one. But you are special." She smiled even more broadly. "He's expecting you. Please step into his office on the left."

Like in science fiction, the panel wall parted. Jason stepped in and Uncle Jim looked up from his desk and then raced around it to usher him to two chairs looking out over the grounds, beautifully spring planted with

flowers from the entire wall of the office behind the desk in glass. His uncle didn't look any older.

The General was shaking Jason's hand vigorously and announcing, "Colonel Forsythe, it's so good to see you back and looking so good. I've been following you and it's hard to believe what you've been through... Great job! I had my doubts when we took you in, but you've been one of the best of our Freedom Lancers. And, as your uncle, I'm so proud and overjoyed that you're here, finally."

Jason was a bit taken back. "Following me? I thought I had no implants and made sure that I didn't contact anyone to try to stay as anonymous as possible."

"Sit down. I'll have Mona bring in some coffee for us and we'll talk. We have our ways of keeping up. We would've pulled you out had we thought you were in any real danger. I'm sure glad you avoided that tsunami by being on the water. That one gave me chills just thinking how close you came to being caught up in that. That poor girl..."

"So you know everything?"

"Most. But I'd like you to go through the full debriefing. That might take a couple of days or more. But for now, I'd just like to talk about your experience so that I can get a feel for what you guys have been going through."

Rita brought coffee and it was premium stuff. Jason hadn't tasted coffee this good since those luncheons in five-star hotels. "I was worried that I didn't complete my full service and didn't deal with any of the real threats to the country like those from the Middle East."

"I beg to differ. You were instrumental in the demise of three dangerous cults. One of them viciously misleading and sexually abusing gullible young men and the other two bent on taking over the presidency and making things much worse than they already were. I'd say that's a great accomplishment, much better than many others, some who were hurt, some killed, some washed out, and most psychologically affected. You seem very stable to me from first impressions."

"I'm not sure exactly how I feel. I'm pretty depressed sometimes over all the people I've lost or had to abandon. But, I'm already getting over it. I've seen Shauna and Gayle again and I need to know more about what happened to grandma Gail. I've got an outstanding young son. But enough about me. What about the Middle East?"

"We've got that covered and it's going quite well. In fact, we've got one man in the tribal territories that keeps doing great service for us."

"I wouldn't happen to know who that is, would I?"

"I can't tell you, but I can tell you that he's Pakistani American, knows the dialects and has family there... All working in our favor."

"I think I know who you're talking about." Jason winked at his uncle.

"And your son, Jason, Jr. I tried to talk him out of it but he has all the right stuff and insisted on joining because he idolized you from what little he knew of you. I'm about to wind this thing down before I retire because we are finally getting a handle on the Middle East and we have severely turned the tide against all the cults that sprung up in the vacuum of leadership and economy. It's been a long climb but we're getting there. Junior will be one of the last. He's been like a son to me."

They talked until lunch and General Forsythe had one brought in. And then, they talked for part of the afternoon until another appointment sent Jason to a debriefing in another building.

It was a week before Jason was able to return to the house. Unfortunately, Junior had already left for his service. Jason decided that he needed some time to sort out his life, so he returned to the mountain retreat for the summer where he would take long hikes into the mountains and think about what he would do with the rest of his life. Shauna and Gayle promised to join him during their summer vacations and bring the Camaro back to the mountain because Junior did not have time or inclination to store it for his service knowing it was his dad's car all along. Jason knew just what to do with it.

Epilogue

Home for Good

After a summer of reflection, reconnecting with old friends and family through the Internet, highlighted by long vacation visits from both Shauna and Gayle, Jason and Shauna were married amid autumn splendor at the mountain retreat by General James Forsythe. Cousins from The Woodlands and West Point Cadet Jonathan Chambers, Jr. were present along with some of Jason's high school friends, friends of Shauna, her mother from Ohio, friends of Gayle from Georgetown. In all, over 100 people were in attendance. The couple honeymooned in Paris and then took a tour of Europe before returning.

As soon as he had time, Jason went to the Frederick County Courthouse and got court's permission to examine the evidence that the Sheriff's office had on his grandmother's murder. The district attorney and Sheriff's office had been overburdened with cases like so many in the country and had not followed through.

Jason hired forensic experts who located DNA on the physical evidence and then tracked it down on the Homeland Security database. While they were surprised to find DNA of General James Forsythe there, Jason wasn't. There was also DNA from Lenny "Bruce" Hitchcock and Penelope "Nellie" Rogers, two escapees from a Waypool Prison work crew cleaning up radiation from the Washington, DC blast.

Tracing further, Hitchcock's mangled body turned up in the morgue in Jackson County, Indiana the year before, apparently the victim of being hit by multiple cars or trucks on Interstate 65. To Jason's surprise, Nellie Rogers, the very man he had encountered in the campground, was found dead there soon after and had ended up in the Lawrence County morgue. Cause of death was multiple cancers that were left untreated.

Between the inheritance that Jason received from his grandmother Gail, the money that he had invested in the Bank of Auburndale and the Cayman Islands, combined with his released salary for 20 years of service as an undercover agent for the federal government, with interest, and Jason's pension as a 20 year veteran of the armed services at the rank of Colonel, made Jason a very wealthy man at 38. After receiving some financial counsel from his very good friend, Dick Olson of the Bank of

Auburndale, Jason set up the Forsythe Foundation, benefiting those requiring deprogramming from cults, and to help nomads across the United States with opportunities for employment and housing.

Shauna worked another 10 years for the NSA. Among his many charitable activities, Jason took time out to return to his island and rebuild it as a winter retreat for the family in honor of Lovely. He also took part in the rebuilding of the Costa Rican coast, and especially, rebuilding the village of Parismina. Isla Del Hombre Muerto was no longer a place of death. The island was teeming with life as Jason's family and friends enjoyed the beauty of the place and the friendly villagers who came by often, unafraid.

When Jason was 58, his son returned from the service. Jason Jr. was traumatized by his experience in the Horn of Africa, but after a year of relaxation and rehabilitation, returned to his old, optimistic self, married a high school sweetheart that had waited through the years for him and raised a family of two, a boy and a girl, giving Jason and Shauna grandchildren to spoil. Jonathan became an Army Ranger and served in the Middle Eastern flash mini wars reaching the rank of Colonel and later, becoming a senator for the State of Virginia. He married another West Point graduate and they had three children, two boys and a girl. All supporting their father in his political campaigns.

Rob Johnson felt inadequate to do anything with the Aryan Nation after John White's public suicide. The Christian Channel immediately dropped the John White Power Hour and after some sympathy money came in, donations dwindled to nothing. Johnson closed the campaign offices around the country and tried to focus on the rapidly dwindling crew still in the compound, many fleeing for fear they might be investigated by the FBI. And, the FBI investigated. They were looking for any evidence of the alleged 27 missing that came to the compound and were never heard from again. Aside from the small cemetery on the place where they gave John White a simple and lightly attended funeral, the FBI found no evidence of any human remains anywhere else.

With no money to run the place, Rob held an auction and sold off all the equipment and gear to give the people severance. And then, in the absence of a will and only with the power given to him by John White's public announcement, he gave the compound to Arkansas as a park and conference center. The few that stayed on, led by Slim Slidell, were supposed to be caretakers. By now, Slim was totally disillusioned and drinking heavily.

On the day that Rob Johnson left, Slim called him aside and told him that he had to confess something that was bothering him greatly. Rob listened carefully to what Slim had to say and was shaken by what he heard. He finally knew why both Wally Shanks and John White had taken their own lives. The day after he left, Rob got word that Slim had committed suicide, too. He didn't return for Slim's funeral.

Rob returned to his grateful mother in San Jose who was suffering from lung cancer from all those years of smoking. He cared for her until her death and then decided to go back to school. He studied philosophy at San Jose State and went on to seminary and became a Lutheran minister, eventually becoming part of the St. Mark's congregation in San Francisco. He reconnected with his high school friend, Ali Rasheed, and married a beautiful young woman from his congregation.

Rob Johnson lived to be 109. He had two children and four grandchildren. Upon his death, he had requested in his will that a sealed letter be read at his funeral and then be turned over to the proper authorities. Ali Mohammad Jaheed was still alive and at the funeral. He was asked to read the letter. His body frail, but his voice still strong, Ali read the letter aloud to the one hundred and fifty or so in attendance:

"To the People of the United States of America:

"I, the Right Reverend Rob Christopher Johnson, Board Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, am guilty of the most heinous crimes known to man. I have committed treason, murder, and terrorist acts against citizens of the United States of America and have withheld information vital to the very security of the Country.

"As a member of the Aryan Nation and follower of the Reverend John White, I participated in and actively engaged in the destruction of three bridges in the San Francisco Bay Area. The intention of Mr. White and the other groups who participated in destructive acts during that period was to create anarchy and bring down the government to the point where the people of the United States would vote Mr. White President of United States.

"Further, while a member of the Aryan Nation, another member, Slim Slidell, confessed to me, that he, and another member, Wally Shanks, bought a nuclear warhead from a

Soviet intermediate-range ballistic missile at the Port of Houston from Pakistani nationals. Under the direction of John White, the two men drove the warhead in a conventional eighteen wheel semi truck trailer to Washington D.C., parked it near the White House, and set the timer to detonate in the morning when all three branches of the government would be in session. All three men are dead by suicide. As far as I know, I was the last living person to know their story. Now the American people know it too.

“May God have mercy on my soul and God Bless America.

With much regret and sincerity,
The Right Reverend Rob Christian Johnson"

Jason Forsythe lived to 128. A year before his death, he could be seen driving the roads around Mountain Falls, sometimes alone, and sometimes with a car full of great grand children in his '69 Camaro.

About the Author

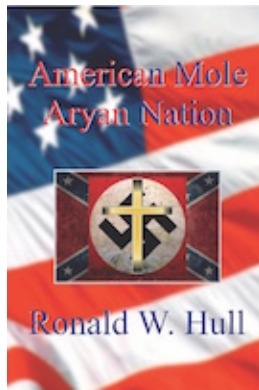


Ronald W. Hull is an engineer, educator, and author. Fascinated with history and technological development, he likes to incorporate both in his novels. Paralyzed at twenty in a surgical accident, Ron walked away from the hospital, and, with a special hand splint, began writing again and typing with one finger. After his master's degree, Ron started his career in the telecommunication industry. For thirty-nine years, after earning his doctorate, Dr. Hull worked in higher education as a professor of technology and business, and as a university administrator.

Ron Hull has written poetry all his life. He posts a poem a week on his website, <http://ronhullauthor.com/>. Ron has traveled widely and experienced many cultures. Starting with his autobiography, *Hanging by a Thread*, he incorporates his many experiences into his books. His topics are wide-ranging and global. Ron's first two books, *The Kaleidoscope Effect* and *Alone?* were science fiction novels that spanned thousands of years. *War's End* was Dr. Hull's first venture into the action thriller novel genre.

Based on the catastrophic premise of *War's End*, the *American Mole* series is Ron's first attempt at a continuing story bridging several books.

Relying on a wheelchair and specially equipped van because of the effects of aging on his severe spinal injury, Ron uses computer technology to write and research his books. He resides in Houston Texas with his longtime partner, companion, and assistant, Beh.



Jason Forsythe as Cliff Backus, an American mole, returns to the States disillusioned after his assignment in Central America, losing those closest to him. As a motorcycle nomad, Jason roams the Southwest trying to forget while finding adventures and saves a young woman from an evil gang only to lose her in a tragic accident. Jason needs a new assignment to complete his service and finds one in the militia cult of Reverend John White at Razorback, Arkansas. White's presidential aspirations must be stopped because he is unstable, delusional and fosters hatred while posing as a religious leader.

White's use of crucifixion as a punishment, sometimes leading to death that is covered up, makes it all the more urgent to bring him to justice. Jason is brought into White's inner circle and given access that allows him to sort the good from the bad. With the help of an outside source, the political blog of Spencer Howard, John White's racism and evil plans are revealed.

In the end, the awful truth of what occurred in Washington DC creating Jason and the Freedom Lancers in the first place is revealed, going right back to Razorback and the Aryan Nation.

American Mole: Aryan Nation

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