

The
**ENIGMA
DRAGON**

- A CATS TALE

BREAKFIELD & BURKEY



PROLOGUE

TRACKING DIGITAL BETRAYAL

TWO YEARS AGO

Beaten as he was, he could barely stand. Trembling fear was the only reason he didn't collapse in front of them. It was supposed to be a simple drop off, routine like the others, only this wasn't like the others. It was a trap, and he had walked into it only thinking about where to get his adult male entertainment that evening. It was evening now, but entertainment wasn't at top of his list at this point, only surviving.

His captor snarled, "You were supposed to bring the package straight here, unopened! Did you think we would not notice, western dog?" The brooding man stalked around the prisoner once then hollered, "Beat him again! I want to see him on his hands and knees whimpering, begging! His betrayal will earn everything we can deliver!"

Several heavy, flexible rubber hoses rained down on his shoulders, back, and arms which did indeed force him to his knees. The blows were designed to cause heavy bruising, swelling, and bleeding just under the skin, but not break any bones. The prisoner felt his strength dissolving under the pummeling.

Finally, through his sobs he cried, "I was phoned to pick up this package and deliver it here. Once delivered I would get a deposit into

my account just like the other times. Someone must have gotten there ahead of me and tried to help themselves. I swear that's the truth!"

The captor demanded, "You think we believe you? How could that be possible when no money was missing?"

The prisoner was bewildered and sobbed as he asked, "What do you mean? If no money is missing, then why...?"

A new confident male voice of authority, outside the circle of punishment, answered, "Because of the tracking device inside the package.

"You are all under arrest. Put down your guns and raise your hands over your heads. We are the..."

The man never finished his sentence as a short burst of an automatic weapon cut across his path. The bullets caught him just below his waist line, filling the area around his body with a blood rain. Gunfire then erupted from both sides. Men dropped to the ground and took cover behind the makeshift shield of those already dead. The body armor of the U.S. security troopers kept most of them from being killed outright, while the cruel captors weren't so lucky.

The gunfire ceased, almost as quickly as it had begun. One of the U.S. security troopers, after checking on fallen team members, went to see what the captive's status was. As he turned the captive over, it was obvious he'd been caught by a stray bullet in the fire fight and would never be able to answer any questions.

The trooper, in a fit of disgust, bitterly remarked, "Hell! After all that monitoring and tracking of this weasel, he had to go get himself killed before we could find out who hired him. Bastard! Running guns into my country to outfit a bunch of Muslim extremists! The only good news is that we won't have to feed and clothe him while he waits for trial."

A team member hollered, "Rogers, we are missing two insurgents! Looks like they slipped away during the firefight!"

Rogers quickly shouted, "Alright, men, let's pursue and trap them between the secondary line and us. Watch where you fire, since we have our people on the other side. Move out!"

Rogers continued, “Carl, you and Lee maintain a perimeter here in case they double back. Come on, people! With even two of these guys loose, they get a foothold to rebuild.”

Carl finished dressing the wounds of a downed team member and stood up to check on the fallen suspects. Lee and Carl checked each body for some type of identity papers.

After checking the last body, Carl looked at Lee and spit before he said, “Here they are! Afghan troops who were brought to the U.S. for intensive counter-insurgency training by our Army Special forces. They came in, earned some trust, and then simply vanished. They had planned this all along. Suck up to the U.S. military in Afghanistan, plead for better training to protect themselves from the Muslim extremists and insurgents in their country, and all the while it was a ruse to get their military on our soil. Might have worked too, if we hadn’t intercepted their cell phone calls. They were clumsy, and we got a lucky break, digitally tracking them.”

Lee shook his head and asked, “What I don’t know is how they got all those weapons after leaving the Army compound. There were no weapons missing from the base, so someone must have smuggled them in anticipating this kind of scenario. It always seems like the bad guys have way more friends than we do.”

Carl nodded his head but offered no response.

Lee and Carl both turned their heads in the direction of distant gunfire. They both hoped it meant the end or capture of the missing insurgents, but they couldn’t be sure.



CHAPTER 1

A SNEEZE IN TIME WILL MAKE YOU MINE!

It had begun quietly enough with the group bent on eradicating zealots and extremists from within a developing country. Their charter was to destabilize a government, move a competing organization into the vacuum that was left, and then rule the country through the new proxy government. The process had been occurring little by little, one small country at a time.

An encrypted conference call opened with all the high-profile participants present.

Without much of a greeting, the menacing Asian-accented voice demanded, “What happened to our operative? You assured this cabinet that his profile was ideal for the role, and our organization funded the operation. Now entire property contents are being viewed, it seems, by several competing governments. Tell us how we can look at this other than as a total failure on your part.”

The calm female voice on the other end of the call soothed, “My dear comrade, there are two kinds of failure in our world. The first, as I expect is the way you are looking at the situation, is like a sports game where the clock has run out and your adversary has won.

“The second, as you should be considering, is for someone to think we have failed and that the acquisition of the data center is simply the spoils of war. We used our SEP routine and wiped the machines. That’s

the intent of what the *Scorched Earth Program* should do, except we left our signature code buried in the special purpose device driver chip, built into the motherboard. In other words, we expected this compromise to occur so that our competitors would bring our technology into their data universe, or as you would call it, their network.”

The Asian male smirked softly and remarked, “I am educated and familiar enough with your western culture to observe that your actions frequently mirror Odysseus and the Trojan horse ruse he used to get the Greeks into the city of Troy.

“Instead of arguing semantics on the concept of failure, perhaps you should enlighten the cabinet on the real issue, the next stage of the plan. These plans within plans are becoming tedious as well as expensive. Our approach of controlling entire populations of a region or country in our other conquests has proven quite successful. We are beginning to question your methodology of exporting this to other countries. Frankly, the cabinet is weary of all this extra finesse you insist on engaging in.”

Losing some confidence in her position, the woman looked anxiously at her male companion for a brief moment before she carefully delivered, “I would observe that we are trying to engineer events in these other countries for activities and processes you didn’t need in place to overcome in your earlier conquests. We are trying to move some more advanced countries and governments into a model like yours, but they still have more freewill that must be subdued in order to introduce our next step of transition. Without controlled chaos being precisely introduced, at the correct time, all we will do is instigate civil war.

“You claimed that you wanted the social infrastructure to remain intact. You indicated that food production was a high value item in these targeted countries and is a necessity to supplement your current shortfall. If all you want is mass carnage and civilization to return to the Stone Age, then simply continue to fund your Muslim friends who are willing to destroy everything.”

It was now the turn of the silent man next to her to shoot an alarmed stare at his female counterpart because of her bold statement. The panicked look on his face was almost making her nervous.

It took a few seconds for the Asian on the other side of the call to respond, but finally he interjected, “We can see that you still retain that useless Western female tendency of throwing a temper tantrum when she doesn’t have her views totally embraced by the other party.”

She swallowed hard and in a thoroughly chastened voice replied, “I meant no disrespect to you, Chung-Ho, or to your cabinet. My organization is prepared to continue with our charter and will continue to cooperate with your team to reach our mutual goals. However, I would point out that we have a marked preference for our approach in this matter.”

Chung-Ho smiled slightly as he firmly stated, “Ah, now that’s more like it. Almost an apology, how classically Western of you. Your culture seems driven to point out deficiencies in others and then promptly offer to help the poor backward Asians. It is curious how your *help* always generates profits that flow in your direction.

“You should understand that we are not displeased with what you have brought us so far. This means we can be somewhat tolerant of your insubordination, but we assert that you leave that attitude somewhere else before joining a call with us. For now, you are permitted to disconnect from the call.”

Marge sat and drummed her chubby fingers, the office light bouncing off her jeweled rings, as she fumed post call. As a successful American business woman in charge of a global organization like ePETRO, it incensed her to be dismissed from the call. Her girth pressed against her stylish shirt and jacket with sweat beginning to seep through the lower back area as she shifted in her chair to ease her tenseness. Her greying hair, though professionally cut to a medium, low maintenance length, lacked the shine associated with a healthy lifestyle. Once a very attractive woman who could manipulate men with a wink or a kiss, she tended to forget her age. Her lips were outlined with a brown line and filled in with a deep red lipstick which drew the eye to her full cheeks and sagging jowls. Though sitting, she had a tall upper

body with a total height that reached just over 1.8 meters to hold her close to 118 kilograms.

Her somewhat younger companion struggled to suppress a smirk at her annoyance and finally stated, “Well done, Marge, at containing your feelings and maintaining a near perfect center during the discussions with his High-End-Ass.”

She shot her minion a venomous look and assessed the poor male specimen who faced her. Marge reflected on the man she had hired, who topped 1.9 meters, but now sported a pear shape which spoke of indulging eating habits. Mike Patrick’s once thick dark hair showed highlights of grey and was shapeless even when combed. His rich baritone voice, once his major asset, seemed less commanding, especially when looking at his reddish nose and puffy complexion, a side effect of his continuous drinking. The Texas-born oil field wildcatter, now successful business executive, had lost some edge with the wining and dining of ePETRO’s global clients. Marge had put Mike in charge of this London office and frankly could do everything from her New York location, except look at how he handled the business. She would be returning soon to the states in a day or two to run the rest of her company.

In an agitated voice she stated, “Chung-Ho is so fricking smug after inheriting power over his country from his ‘Daddy’ and the nuclear technology we helped him get! We’ve built all his cyber-assassin technology and trained his team of hackers on the subtleties of digitally pounding his enemies and even brought that Muslim Extremist scum into his Monday morning call for global destabilization. Now, we get treated like second class servants!”

Mike chuckled slightly as he suggested, “Well, I for one am glad you stood up to him and gave him a good strong listening to when he told you to remember a female’s place. Of course, this might be best interpreted as no back-sassing, ma’am.”

Marge studied him a moment while grinding her teeth and in a strained tone offered, “At least he spoke with me, Mister Persona non grata! Did you hear ANY warmth in his voice for you, my dull friend?”

He rocked back in his chair, clucked his tongue, and in an annoyed tone flatly stated, “Well, it looks like the little ‘ole fat boy was right

about western females throwing a temper tantrum when they don't get their way. But that's okay, I'm used to it. So, how about we plan our next move?"

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Breakfield and Burkey started writing non-fictional papers and books, but it wasn't nearly as fun as writing fictional stories. They found it interesting to use the aspects of technology that people are incorporating into their daily lives more and more as a perfect way to create a good guy/bad guy story with elements of travel to the various places they have visited, either professionally and personally, humor, romance, intrigue, suspense, and a spirited way to remember people who have crossed paths with them. They love to talk about their stories with private and public book readings. Burkey is also conducting regular radio interviews with other authors, which is interesting. Her first interview was, wait for it, Breakfield. You can often find them at local book fairs or other family oriented events.

The original series is based on a family organization called R-Group. Recently they have spawned a subgroup that contains some of the original characters as the Cyber Assassins Technology Services (CATS) team. The authors have ideas for continuing the series in both of these tracks. They track the more than 150 characters on a spreadsheet, with a hidden avenue for the future coined The Enigma Chronicles tagged in some portions of the stories. Fan reviews seem to frequently suggest that these would make good television or movie stories, so the possibilities appear endless, just like their ideas for new stories.

They have completed book video trailers for each of the stories, which can be viewed on YouTube, Amazon's Authors page, or on their website, www.enigmabookseries.com. Their website is routinely updated with new interviews, answers to readers' questions, book trailers, and contests.. Reach out Authors@EnigmaSeries.com, Twitter @EnigmaSeries, or Facebook @TheEnigmaSeries.