

OPERATION V2

EXTRAORDINARY SECRET MISSION OF AN ORDINARY SOLDIER

Chapter 6

MISSION TWO

Starting with this second mission, the missions became even more dangerous than before because the men in the field had no one to watch their back and the landscape was still mortally hostile for several reasons. First, there were still land mines planted in many places including on the roadways by the Germans to destroy the invading British, American and Russian forces. The allies hadn't had time to locate and remove all these highly explosive devices yet. Second, there were hundreds of Nazi snipers with deadly skills still hiding in outlying villages, buildings and rubble who swore an oath to their Fuhrer Hitler to give their lives to kill their enemies. Many of these snipers were out of contact with news of surrender and therefore still believed they must kill any British, American or Russian soldiers on site. Third, the Fuhrer himself made a plea to the remaining brainwashed German civilian men and women of all ages and even to children to take up arms against the evil invaders. And that they must fight to the very last person to drive the invaders out to protect their families and homeland. Hitler struck fear and desperation into the hearts of these naïve, frightened people who believed they must fight until their death. They didn't know that their leader didn't stand and fight as he persuaded them to do but instead had subsequently committed suicide taking the coward's way out leaving them to do his dirty work and be killed for nothing. And fourth, but not least, even though the Russians were ostensibly allies, they desperately wanted the very same scientists that America wanted and if Jim or any one of the V2 team members were caught with one, they could have

been captured too or quite probably much worse, including torture for information and ultimately death. The Russians liked to shoot first and seek forgiveness later.

The reasons the Russians were so overzealous and quick to kill were not condoned but understandable because: first, Nazi Germany violently invaded Russia (actually all the countries of the Soviet Union); second, they brutally killed an estimated 20,000,000 to 27,000,000 Soviet people of which more than half were civilians; and third, they destroyed thousands of farms and mercilessly killed the farmers and families. All these reasons manifested in a ferocious drive for revenge. It's been reported that after Nazi Germany was driven back, the Russians invaded Germany and they in turn drove out or killed thousands of farmers and families and took possession of the farms to replace the one's the Germans destroyed in Russia. And so there was good cause for concern about danger and in fact many close calls did occur for the V2 team in this dangerous place.

Jim was given orders one afternoon to bring back a scientist known by Army Intelligence to be in a village on the sector border between the Americans and Russians. The village was occupied by Russians and Americans and it was believed that the Russians may be holding the scientist against his will. Jim was given a hastily prepared handmade map to the location. He set out alone from nearby Fulda, Germany, heading in a southerly direction toward the distant village not knowing what he may encounter along the way or at his destination. He wondered if the scientist was in fact being held against his will and, if so, what perilous situation he may be faced with. But he would deal with that when he got there. In any case, his mission was to bring the scientist back.

Later that day while in route, the sky began to darken as a thunderstorm approached. Jim already felt the strong swirling winds and realized that he had no choice but to seek shelter. With the storm rapidly approaching the best he could do was an abandoned, bombed village within sight just ahead. He slowed his jeep as he approached the outer limits. It was quiet – too quiet. He tightened the chin strap of his helmet and pulled his Tommy Gun close. He looked for signs of life but knew in situations like this if anyone were still here they would be in hiding and they would see him before he saw them. But then concerns for his safety waned for a moment. There was something familiar in what he saw. While looking around at the destruction, it occurred to him for the first time that this

small farming town was similar to his at home. And his next thought turned as dark as the approaching storm. In a different time and place, this could have been his hometown because from what he saw it's entirely possible for an unstoppable enemy such as Nazi Germany to inflict this kind of devastation in the U.S. just as they did in Europe. He couldn't imagine what would happen to the people including family and friends of his town and where they would go even if they survived a bombing like this. A drop of rain touched his cheek and broke his trance and before dwelling on such a horrible specter any longer he refocused on the urgency at hand and found what appeared to be a residential structure only partially demolished. He parked his jeep, grabbed his gun, and began conducting a thorough search of the building very cautiously to ensure his safety in the same way he had when seeking weapons in his first mission. The only difference in this case was the noise of the rain was creating a background din that could conceal an attacker's movements. The inside of the building was quickly becoming darker and more shadow filled which also made it more difficult to see clearly. He strained his eyes to distinguish images in the rooms and on the walls hoping that he could identify any threat quickly enough to react. As he stepped ever so slowly through the debris laden halls and rooms he had his Tommy Gun at the ready. It was cocked and set on automatic fire, under his right arm with his right finger near the trigger and his left hand on the fore grip under the barrel. He held the fore grip very tightly because if he had to shoot with the Tommy Gun set to automatic mode, it could fire 700 rounds per minute and the recoil would cause the barrel to climb upward away from the target. However, if he held it on target, even a short burst of 20 rounds of .45 caliber bullets would rip an enemy to pieces.

But possible combatants in front of him were not the only dangers. He had to listen for any movement behind him and look back frequently. He could have missed seeing or hearing a Nazi or civilian in hiding and if so he could be attacked from behind. In that case he would be forced into hand-to-hand combat. And although he was six feet tall, broad shouldered with a flat stomach and very strong arms and hands, owing in part to working on the family farm from eight years old and in part to excelling in boot camp, he would still be at a disadvantage if jumped from behind. The life and death struggle would be even worse for him if the attacker had a bayonet or dagger or a member of the Nazi SS had a garrote. This was one of those times when a partner on the mission would have been invaluable.