

Don Peters' watch showed 4:45 A.M. as his bread truck closed the distance to Fort Bright, Ohio from Tom's Bakery in nearby Akron. Five knocks on the back of the cab by Don indicated to those seated in the back of the truck that their destination was five miles away, and final instructions would be given by the one in charge of this operation. With the roar of the engines in his ears, Don could not hear the low voices inside the back of the truck, but figured the plan would be reviewed for the last time, final questions would be answered, and prayer would be given. He said a silent prayer for a spirit of calmness to come over him in spite of the danger involved if a slip up were made. His was the easiest job. Just do the same thing he had done every morning for the last three years, which was to deliver fresh bread, rolls, and buns to the dining hall at the fort. The sweaty palms on the steering wheel revealed to him that today was more than just an ordinary delivery. This was for "*The Cause*". "Freedom, justice, security, and defense of our families against this wicked, tyrannical government," was how Colonel Adams had so eloquently stated what "*The Cause*" was two Monday nights back, and when carried to the fullest degree could also justify stealing ammunition and arms from this same government.

"Remember, you three were chosen because you are the best trained for this type of mission," whispered Captain Dalton in the back of the bread truck. "The rifles we will procure this morning will complete the arsenal we need in order to overthrow any state we choose. It goes without saying that you will adhere to our number one rule, if captured: Keep your mouth shut. Is that clear?"

Nods could be seen in the glow of the lone flashlight.

"Any other questions," was stated so matter-of-factly by the captain that the cut of the words meant that all other questions should have been asked a long time ago. "If not, let's pray."

The four men formed a tight circle while on their knees, and placed their arms around the backs of the two immediately closest to them. Four men, along with the driver of the truck, placing their lives and futures in the hands of each other, united their minds in prayer as Dalton led aloud.

"We ask Thee, dear Yahweh, to protect us from our enemies. As we give our lives to free our country from the wicked conspirators who have sapped the very freedom that Thou hast given us, we humbly ask that Thou wouldst blind their eyes to our movements. Help us to further the cause of liberty that would bring Thee to come and rule this nation whilst sitting on the throne of David, Thy servant. In Thy name we pray." The others joined their leader with, "Amen."

Two knocks. Two miles to the base.

The four slid themselves onto the racks of bread which lined the sides of the large semi trailer. If the truck was casually checked, they would not be seen. Don knew a simple opening of the doors of the trailer was the most that was ever expected of him by the guards at the east gate. Even now, they merely stopped him to beg donuts or pastries from him. In that regard, he was ready for them today.

Don had known the two guards at this gate for over a year, and the only time his truck had been thoroughly inspected was when a visiting general and a camp escort of a colonel and two majors stood by the watch proper inspection procedures at the

checkpoint. He knew to abort the mission if he saw an entourage standing next to the gate.

Nearing 4:52 A.M., a final knock was given. The bright lights of the east gate post were now in view. The heads of two lone soldiers could be seen in the tiny checkpoint building to the left of the gate entrance. No general, Don thought.

As the truck pulled closer to the entrance, one of the soldiers stood, stepped through the doorway, and raised his hand in the standard halt position. The truck eased to a stop in front of the lowered barrier arm. The bright-faced corporal approached the left front window of the truck as Don rolled down his window.

“Morning, Don. Got any of those little sugar-coated donuts today?”

“I thought about you as we loaded the truck this morning, Wade.” The delivery man smiled. “Here’s a whole two dozen.”

The trucker handed down a bag to the soldier. “Thanks, man. You made my day.”

Don handed down another bag.

“Take this home to the family when you get off.”

“Hey, thanks. You want some coffee?”

“Sure, if you can spare some.” Don remembered how strong the corporal made coffee, but decided to be agreeable this morning.

The soldier turned to the young private still seated at the desk, raised his hand to his mouth as if holding a cup, and then pointed to Don. The private grabbed a plastic cup, poured the coffee, and brought it out to the truck where Don and Wade were still conversing.

“Don? Ya’ got anything for a poor PFC?” interrupted the private while handing the cup to the trucker.

“I have to have more than a cup of coffee to trade me out of my chocolate covered long-johns, Pete.” Don held up a package of six delicious looking crème filled pastries and smiled.

“I got a USA Today paper, and I’ll throw in another cup of Wade’s favorite coffee when you leave.” The youthful face showed the fact that early morning guard duty meant a late breakfast at the mess hall, which made him all the more hungry.

“Aw, cut the bleeding heart routine, Pete.” Don tossed the package at the soldier who carefully caught it with both hands. “I’ll be back for my paper in half an hour. Make sure it’s this morning’s edition, or no more goodies for you tomorrow.”

The corporal lifted the long red and white arm as the truck drove under it and Don added, “Forget the coffee. I’ll get more at the mess hall.”

In the side mirror the pair could already be seen with their mouths full of sweets.

Sliding off the bread racks, one of the men gave a sigh of relief that not even a glance was given into the back of the truck. The captain slightly opened the side door of the truck located a few yards behind the driver’s door and peered out at the shadowed buildings of the compound. Having memorized the layout of the camp well in advance of this mission, he knew when the exact moment of their jump would be.

The truck came to a stop sign, turned left and continued toward the dining hall. Don stayed in first gear for an extra ten seconds, giving the four patriot commandos the time and acceleration allowable for someone to safely jump from a moving vehicle.

Almost immediately the four were against the large munitions warehouse as the truck was heard shifting into second gear.

Without a sound, one moved to a side door and, removing a lock pick set, gained entrance to the warehouse in less than thirty seconds.

Moving quickly and quietly past tall stacks of ammunition and explosive hardware, the four passed undetected through the facility, stopping at the spot where their black crystal-covered flashlight revealed the words *M-16, AUTOMATIC*.

---

Four privates were always at the dining hall at 5:00 A.M. to share the duty of unloading the bakery truck. Equipped with dollies and carts, the entire procedure took approximately twenty minutes. Then the process of loading the empty truck with the unused two-day-old bread took another five minutes. Don passed the time jawing with the head breakfast cook, Sergeant Flanagan, and his crew. This was the time when Don would find out how the Cleveland Indians fared the night before, or the Cavaliers, or Browns, depending on which season or type of sport was being played.

“They never shudda traded Jackson,” inserted a corporal from one end of the long table. “Lookit the year he’s having, and the guy they traded for is always on the disabled list.”

“It’s the pitchin’,” offered a private. “They don’t have a good stopper that can pitch every four days.”

“A team nowadays can’t win without a good closer,” harped another PFC, knowing full well the Indians have never boasted a quality reliever since Jose Rodriguez.

“Bob Feller and Bob Lemon never needed anyone reliev’in’ them.” Flanagan raised his gravel voice to make his weekly point. “Those guys were real men. They could pitch twelve innings and then turn around and pitch two days later.”

As the discussion turned to a debate as to whether yesterday’s players could hit, field, or pitch in today’s games, Don Peters sat quietly, sipping his coffee, and reflecting inwardly. He wondered as he sat with these, his acquaintances, as to what they would think of him if he were caught stealing automatic weapons from the fort. *Why automatic weapons*, he thought. *Had the militia other weapons, and was simply filling a need caused from the growth of the group in the last few months? What were some of the other weaponry at Colonel Adams’ disposal?* He would probably find out sometime this week when he went to the special training classes each new member of the group went through. That is, if he were not caught today. One slip, one misplaced circumstance, and he would end up spending years at a federal penitentiary. All the good he felt he had done in his life would mean nothing in that hour. His family and friends would find out. Would his wife stay by his side, he wondered? Of course she would, but she would live ashamed of him for the rest of her life. How could he fully explain all he had learned from the Monday night meetings with Colonel Adams and the militia? After all, the government through the IRS steals from us unconsciously, he was taught. We are simply taking back part of what they stole from us.

He looked around the table at the faces of these men as their conversation turned to the faults of the current Indians’ coach.

*These men are not socialists*, he thought. *They are not cognizant of any communist conspiracy to take away the rights of Americans.* How could he justify himself to the world, or to his church, or to his wife and friends? He had new friends now, though, and they believed that stealing for a righteous cause was just. But where would he draw the

line? Would he be called on someday to kill for “*The Cause*”? Was he in all reality a part of an American terrorist organization?

He was suddenly brought out of his thoughts with, “You’re a Tigers’ fan, Don. Be objective. Wadda you think the Indians ought to do to salvage the season?”

“Hire Jim Leyland,” was the trucker’s quick response which brought laughs and sneers around the table at the thought of Detroit’s skipper coaching their sacred Indians.

“That’ll be the day,” quipped Flanagan as he turned to see the loading crew coming through the dining hall pushing empty carts, indicating that their early morning duty had been finished

---

The four intruders were mere shadows as they silently moved ten cases of weapons next to the door they had entered just twenty minutes before. Five slow, noiseless trips had been made into the interior part of the warehouse. The captain knew that every covert operation had its most overt time; the time when a chance passerby could see them. That time was coming in a few minutes for them all.

As he peered out the slightly opened door, he listened for the footsteps of a roaming guard while looking for the truck’s headlights. He also approximated the time it would take to load the truck when it stopped for them. Twenty-five feet around the truck, five times, would necessitate their being in the open for about forty-five seconds. No amount of training or planning could keep someone from coming around the corner of the warehouse in the time it took them to load the cases onto the truck. Up to this point there was little risk involved, only the confidence in their abilities of stealth.

Now came the risk.

As the lights of the truck came into view, already two of the cases were being carried across the road to where the truck would stop. By the time Don applied the brakes, two more were being carried. The captain silently opened the same side door from which they had jumped and started loading the first six cases as the other four cases were being carried directly to the open door.

Don’s eyes darted back and forth from building to building and then to the side mirror to see the progress of his companions. Lights flashed ahead of him as he saw headlights turn at the corner and approach his truck. In the side mirror he saw the side door of his truck closing as a jeep pulled up along side him.

“Anything wrong?” a corporal called up to his cab.

Don revved the engine in neutral and purposely ground the gears by placing the gearshift halfway into second gear, which made a loud grinding noise.

“I seem to be having trouble getting in to first gear. This stupid truck was supposed to be worked on last week.” He tried the gearshift again and it finally slid into place.

“You want one of the guys at the motor pool to take a look at it?”

“No thanks. It seems to be OK now. Besides, I need to be at my next stop in twenty minutes.”

“Well, I’ll follow you to the gate, and make sure you make it that far.”

The jeep swung around behind the truck and only the glow of its lights could be seen in Don’s side mirrors. His heart pounded as he let out the clutch and accelerated the

engine. The truck came to a halt at the STOP sign and turned right heading back toward the east gate. Stopping only long enough to receive his promised newspaper and turn down the cup of coffee, Don waved to the two guards at the checkpoint, and then to the kind soldier who followed him in the jeep. The corporal returned the wave with a thumbs-up sign and quickly wheeled around and headed in the opposite direction.

Inside the truck, the captain shook hands with his three companions, congratulating them. “Men, many people’s lives will be saved from tyranny because of your boldness today. On behalf of Colonel Adams and the Northern Ohio Christian Militia, we thank you.”