

# BROTHERS THROUGH HONOR

## Prelude

Truly honorable men are brothers more truly than actual siblings, even though they may be deadly enemies. This is a story about two boys who grew up in rural Southern California. Because there were no other children for miles in any direction, the two boys spent every waking hour together until school began, then remained as brothers their entire lives. This would not have been so unusual but for the fact that one of the boys was a Japanese immigrant and they graduated from high school in 1941.

Some of the US Naval vessels named in this story are real and did participate in some of the actions that are depicted. This was done to honor the brave men who sailed in those vessels, especially those who gave their lives for our country. However, all actual references to vessels in this story are fictitious. Also some names of actual military personnel were used to honor those individuals. Again, all references to any of those individuals in this story are fictitious.

Many times lives are changed drastically because of a sudden, unexpected event.

*I pulled the Packard to the side of the road and before I could even take the car out of gear, a large man with a gun was shouting in my ear, "Get out of the car, now!" As I opened the door and started to get out the man struck me with his pistol, making me see stars and almost knocking me out. I had no control. My survival instinct and my training took over. I dropped to the ground and came up with a straight punch to the man's groin. As he started to double over I clasped my hands behind his head and brought my knee up. The impact to his forehead made him drop like a stone. I looked up over the roof of the car to see another man raise his arm to aim a pistol at me. Mat chopped the man's gun arm with a devastating blow, breaking the man's arm. Then he swept the man's feet from under him. As he was going down, Mat delivered a chop to the back of the neck that rendered the man unconscious.*

*Some time passed, seconds or minutes. I leaned over the man I had knocked out to check his breathing. His suit coat was open and I could see something glitter. I picked up the object. It was a large wallet with a big gold star that said Los Angeles County Sheriff. "Oh my God, what have we done?"*

## Chapter 1

My name is Richard Taylor. I was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1923. My folks, my grandparents and I moved to El Monte California in 1926. Dad brought us to California because he got a job as General Manager for a Los Angeles drug company that, after 1933, became a Liquor and Wine Distributor. My Dad had a degree in chemistry as well as a minor in business with marketing. That, along with his experience as a Department Head at General Mills in Minneapolis, got him the job.

My world, up to the time I was six, consisted of my father and mother, my grandfather and grandmother, Caesar Chavez and his two sons, Mat Kenzo and his family. Mat was the only kid my age for miles in any direction. His family emigrated from Okinawa in 1924 and owned a small truck farm just east of our five-acre horse boarding and riding stable. Mat's family were originally rice farmers from Southern Kyushu. His grandfather and granduncle moved to Okinawa in the late 1800s to take over a farm purchased by the family. The Kenzo family got along well with their Okinawan neighbors but rigidly remained Japanese.

My Mom and Dad spoke to me in English, Caesar Chavez and his sons spoke to me in Spanish, my grandfather and grandmother spoke to me in Danish and Mat and his family spoke to me in Japanese. Up to the time Mat and I first went to school, we thought each family had their own language. We were most surprised to find that the other kids in school, except for the Mexicans, spoke only English.

My family's income came mostly from my dad's job at the distributorship, but the KC ranch, our horse boarding and riding stable, also made a worthwhile profit. The stable was run by my Mom with the able help of Mr. Chavez and his teenage sons. Mr. Chavez worked six days a week with his sons helping on Saturdays and during the summer. My parents were quite good to the Chavez family and were rewarded with honest, loyal employees.

The Kenzos were excellent neighbors even though the two families did not mix socially. Mat's mother did not speak English. My father and Cato, Mat's father, however, formed a deep and lasting friendship. They spent long hours talking and from time to time they would help each other on the properties. They also made trips together to buy or sell for the farm and ranch.

The families had an understanding. When Mat was at our home he was expected to conform to our ways, our customs and he was spoken to only in English. That was easy because, of course, my parents spoke no Japanese. When I was over at Mat's I was expected to conform to their customs and addressed only in Japanese. Mat was treated as family when at our house and I was treated as family at his, even in matters of discipline. I can remember getting my butt smacked more than once by Mrs. Kenzo and Mat getting whacked by my mother.

Academically our upbringing was of great advantage. By the time we went to school, we both spoke Japanese, Spanish and English and I spoke some Danish. Both my grandparents passed away when I was seven and my dad and mom hardly ever spoke Danish. We both also became proficient in our fathers' hobbies. My father, besides being an accomplished horseman, was also a radio ham. He had an old house trailer behind the hay barn packed full of the latest ham radio equipment. Mat and I were allowed free access to the "Radio Shack" as my father called it, and we were both proficient in Morse code by age six although our spelling was not so good.

Mats' father's hobby was more of a life discipline than a hobby and was a profound influence on my life. Mr. Kenzo came from a town in Okinawa by the name of Sheri, the town where the great Karate master Golchin

Funakoshi came from, and Mr. Kenzo trained under the great master. When Mat's family came to the United States in 1924 for political reasons and to claim an inheritance, Mr. Kenzo had an invitation to teach Karate in the most famous Shotokan Karate School in Japan.

By the time Mat and I entered high school we probably were the most proficient karate kids our age in the country, and I may have been the most proficient of any Caucasian in the world. Part of our training as men of “Tao” prevented us from flaunting our talents and no one outside our families knew of our karate accomplishments until years later. I am convinced that striving to be men of “Tao” was the reason both of us passed through our school years without having any real confrontations with anyone.

Mat and I both had fantastic childhoods right up to when we graduated from high school. We both got As and Bs and both lettered in baseball and football. I was an all CIF pitcher and Mat was an all CIF running back. In our senior year we both signed letters to attend UCLA on football scholarships. We had the world by the short hairs until that fateful night.

Although Mat was very social and had a lot of friends I don't think he ever considered having a boy/girl relationship with any girl but a Japanese. There were no Japanese girls at our school. A wonderful thing happened, however, in our sophomore year. Mat saw a beautiful Japanese girl while attending a football game at Long Beach High School. Of course Mat did not approach the girl but asked questions and found out her name was Kasaco Sasushi and that she was a sophomore at Long Beach High. When we got home Mat excitedly told his father about the girl and asked his father if he would make inquiries about the girl and her family. It didn't take long. The next day when the Ishee manure truck came to collect horse manure from us, Mr. Ishee called on the Kenzos for tea and it turned out that Mr. Ishee knew the girls' family very well. They owned and operated a truck farm in Bellflower, a small town about 10 miles from us toward Long Beach. Mr. Ishee said he would gladly arrange a meeting between the two families. It was arranged that the Ishee family and the Sasushi family would come to the Kenzo home the following Sunday. Friday Mat informed me that I was invited to attend the Sunday affair but that he and his family would understand if I didn't come because I was expected to wear a black suit with a white shirt, black tie and black shoes. Dad felt I should go, and that I could use the clothes anyway, so Saturday morning my mother and I went to L.A. on the Red Car. Before the war, Los Angeles had a rail system that connected most of the county. I got a haircut and was outfitted in the prescribed dress at Sears and Roebuck. It was the most money anyone had spent on me at one time, almost \$25.00.

The Ishee family knew about me but when the Sasushi family's big black Chrysler pulled up in front of the Kenzo house and they were greeted by Mr. Kenzo, Mat Kenzo and a Caucasian boy? They kept their composure but I could see they were shocked. And then their eyes got as big as saucers when Mr. Kenzo introduced me as he would a junior male family member and I spoke and conducted myself in perfect Japanese protocol befitting a junior male, including the presentation of my engraved calling card to Mr. Sasushi. All the men of the three families congregated at a table under a large walnut tree while the women introduced themselves and set about serving Lucky Lager Beer, homemade sake and yellow fin tuna sliced thin and served raw with wasabi sauce. After about 30 minutes of drinking and conversing about who knew whom, and who was related to whom, Mat stood up and with his head bowed and in a meek voice, requested permission to address Mr. Sasushi. Mr. Sasushi gave a nod of his head and Mat continued in a slightly stronger voice. He asked for permission to call on Kasaco. Mr. Sasushi stood and said he would be honored to have Matsu Kenzo visit his home. If he wished he could also bring his friend, Richard San.

Over the next two years Mat and I made many trips to Bellflower, first on the Red Car and then in either Mat's father's Model (A) truck or in my father's '35 Plymouth. All of these trips were made more enjoyable for me because of Kasaco's grandmother. She was enthralled with me, I think, because I was the only Caucasian with whom she had ever conversed. She asked many questions and told many stories of old Japan. After the first year, Kasaco was allowed to go to the movies and even to a school dance with Mat, my steady Mary Alice and I, as long as Kasacos' grandmother came with us. Actually all of us enjoyed the old lady and she spent a lot of time looking the other way.

## Chapter 2

You have heard about the “yin yang.” Well, 1941 was the year of the “yang” for Mat and I. For weeks the Taylor family, the Kenzo family, the Sasushi family and the Bodel family (Mary Alices’ parents) planned Friday night May 20th 1941, the night of the El Monte High School Senior Prom. Mat and I, in my Dad’s new 1941 Packard, picked up Mary Alice and Kasaco at Mary Alice’s house. Kasaco was allowed to spend Thursday and Friday nights at Mary Alices’ house under the supervision of Kasacos’ grandmother. It had been agreed that Mrs. Sasushi would not attend the prom but was to attend the prom party at the ranch and then she and Kasaco would return to Mary Alice’s house with Mary Alice and her parents. The first part of the evening was wonderful. We all had a great time at the prom and Mary Alice and I were voted King and Queen. We dropped the girls off at the prom party at 11:00 before picking up Kasacos’ grandmother at Mary Alices’ house. Our parents went all-out. They hired a swing band, decorated and had lots of food and soft drinks. Most of our senior class and lots others were there by the time we dropped the girls off. We were to return with Mrs. Sasushi in 20 to 30 minutes. We didn’t make it.

Mat and I swung out of the KC ranch yard onto the dark Eucalyptus tree lined road that ran along the wash and past the Bolen Dairy. The darkness and the fact that we were seemingly the only car on the road contributed to the trauma when suddenly our ears were split with the screech of a siren and the world lit up with a spotlight and flashing red lights. Immediately I pulled the Packard to the side of the road and before I could even take the car out of gear, a large man with a gun was shouting in my ear, “Get out of the car, now!”

As I opened the door and started to get out the man struck me with his pistol making me see stars and almost knocking me out. I had no control, my survival instinct and my training took over. I dropped to the ground and came up with a straight punch to the mans’ groin. As the man started to double over I clasped my hands behind his head and brought my knee up. The impact was to his forehead and he dropped like a stone. I looked up over the roof of the car to see another man raise his arm to aim a pistol at me. Mat chopped the man’s gun arm with a devastating blow, breaking the arm, and then swept the man’s feet from under him. As the man was going down, Mat delivered a chop to the back of the neck that rendered the man unconscious.

Some time passed, seconds or minutes. I leaned over the man I had knocked out to check his breathing. His suit coat was open and I could see something glitter. I picked up the object. It was a large wallet with a big gold star that said Los Angeles County Sheriff. “Oh my God, what have we done?”

Mat was the cool one. He answered, in a calm voice “Richard San, these men attacked us and we didn’t know for sure they were police. What we must do now is get them to a doctor as soon as possible.”

It seemed I was moving in a dream. Somehow we managed to get the two men in the back of the Packard and sped off toward Dr. Shannons’ Office on Peck Road. We got Doc. Shannon and his assistant out of bed and they with our assistance got the,still unconscious men out of the Packard and on gurneys. Dr. Shannon quickly determined that both men should be transported to a hospital. He didn’t think either had skull fractures but he couldn’t rule that out. He called for an ambulance and then called the Sheriffs’ Office. The Doctor wanted us to wait for the police. He had no idea we had anything to do with the officers’ condition. We told him we had to leave and we could be reached at the ranch.

As we drove up my Dad and Mr. Kenzo were standing out front smoking. The relieved looks on their faces soon disappeared when they saw our distress and heard our story. First we told the story in English, and then Mat repeated it in Japanese. After a moment’s silence, my Dad said “Our company lawyer is an L.A. ex-prosecutor and a

friend of mine. I am going to call him. Richard, if Mr. Kenzo agrees, I want you both to stay in the barn and if the police show up, slip out the back and hide in the wash. I am afraid of what might happen to you in custody under the circumstances. We'll flick the barn lights on and off when we want you to come back." When my Dad got back to the house, he had my mother tell all the party guests that due to a family emergency that would be explained tomorrow, they should all go home. Mary Alice's parents left with a very confused and upset Mary Alice and Kasaco.

Dad got Frank James, his company attorney, at home and explained the situation. The attorney said to stand by the phone. In 28 minutes he called back. "Okay, if the police come, tell them that the boys are under arrest and are released to my custody and will appear before Judge Slick at nine tomorrow morning. If they call downtown, that will be verified. Be sure you tell them in front of as many people as possible. I will be out there as soon as I can get there. I'm hoping the boys will not have any contact with the police before I get there."

Dad was crossing the yard toward the barn when two squad cars pulled up. Just as we were told, Mat and I slipped out of the back of the barn, across the road and into the wash. There were dozens of places for us to hide. Without dogs it would be impossible for the police to find us tonight even if they tried.

Dad walked up to the first squad car and told the officers right off what the lawyer had told him to say. The officers were not happy but they left. To be on the safe side, the signal for us to return wasn't given until Mr. James arrived. The rest of the night, to which we had been looking forward for so long, was not pleasant. I called Mary Alice and Mat talked to Kasaco. Mary Alice was bewildered and didn't know what to think.

My mother was in shock but, all in all, she did very well. She got us all coffee and something to eat while Mr. Kenzo, my Dad, Mat, Mr. James and I sat at the kitchen table and discussed the situation. After what seemed like hours of questions and discussion, Mr. James said "I'm not going to minimize this to you. You know you are in the right but two L.A. Sheriffs are in the hospital and there is going to be hell to pay. Judge Slick is a friend of mine and he has agreed to see me at 7:30 tomorrow morning, or I should say this morning. You all must be there promptly at 9:00 or a warrant will go out on Mat and Richard and I will go in the slammer for contempt of court and could be disbarred. My Dad said, "If we are not there you will know we are dead." He wasn't joking.

At 8:30 we were in the hall outside Judge Slick's courtroom and informed the court clerk. At about 10 minutes to nine Mr. James came out and motioned us over to the end of the hall. "Here's the story, we haven't much time so listen carefully. The most important objective we have is, at all costs to keep these boys out of the custody of the Sheriff's Department. The boys' first stop would be the county jail and that could be their last stop. The second objective is for the boys not to have any permanent criminal record. Do you agree?" We all agreed. "Well I think I have accomplished that, but not at a small cost. If the boys will agree to join the U.S. military service today for a period of not less than four years, Judge Slick will accept a plea of "Nolo Contendre" and will expunge their records in four years provided they are honorably discharged or are on active duty in good standing. I know this is tough, but under the circumstances, it's much better than I had hoped. The Sheriff Department only agreed to the deal because they are embarrassed. The two officers mistook the boys for two Mexicans who stuck up Crawford's Market and escaped in a black Ford, not a Packard, then they got the hell kicked out of themselves by two unarmed 18 year old boys. They want blood but they don't want this story getting around, which is part of the deal. Dad said "We agree. What do we do now?" Mr. James said "Let's go see the judge

## Chapter 3

Per the court instructions, Mr. James met us at the Federal Building downtown where Mat I got a quick physical and were sworn into the U.S. Navy. By four o'clock our two families saw us off. Mat and I boarded a train with a bunch of other recruits heading for the U.S. Naval Training Center, San Diego. The four hour train ride was the first time I had any time to reflect on the happenings of the last 24 hours. Relaxing in the train chair, I thought I might be in a bad dream and would wake up and find I was an 18 year old high school graduate with a beautiful girl friend and a football scholarship to U.C.L.A. I did wake up, but the bad dream was reality.

We were picked up at the San Diego Train Station by a bus and taken to the training center. When we got off the bus, angry men in Navy uniforms were shouting profanities at us and directing us into a barracks. A man in khaki was standing in the largest aisle down the middle of the brightly lit building. He beat on a trash can lid with a night stick and got our attention. "Hello, you miserable filthy civilians. I am Chief Mahoney. In a short while you are going to hate me almost as much as I already hate you. You are the scourge of my life. I could be in the fleet, on liberty in Pearl right now, but no, I had to be assigned the worst job in the Navy, that of the hopeless task of making sailors out of miserable misfits like you." At this time Chief Mahoney spotted Mat and said "What, are you doing here, chink?" "Pardon me," Mat responded. "Pardon me Sir, you slant eyed gook. What are you doing here? This barracks is for whites." Mat, with perfect control responded "I don't know Sir, I have just done what I have been told." The chief seemed satisfied and said "Okay, you grab a bunk for tonight and we will straighten out the snafu in the morning. Now hear this, you all have ten minutes to do whatever filthy civilians do before they slither into their fart sacks. I will be in my quarters at the end of this building. If I hear so much as a whimper from one of you Mommy's boys or any noise at all, I will come in here and beat the shit out whoever is making that noise with this night stick and if I can't find who made the noise I will just beat the shit out of the first miserable son of a bitch I come to. Is that clear?" There was a weak response from some. "What?" The chief shouted "I had better hear a loud 'Yes Sir' from each and every one of you miserable shits. Now let's hear it." There was a resounding "Yes Sir." We were all in our bunks in less than ten minutes and there was absolute silence. In about five minutes (actually it was 4:30 AM) I exploded out of a deep sleep when all my mother's pots and pans were dropped on the floor next to my bed, and someone turned a search light on right in my face. It was a bank of florescent lights right over my bunk and the chief beating on a trash can. He was shouting at the top of his lungs "Drop your cocks and pick up your socks!" Then he and two other men in blue uniforms ran at the nearest bunk, and tumbled it and both occupants over onto the cement floor. Before the chief and his two helpers could make it to the next bunk, every bunk in the building was empty. "Muster in front of this building in 10 minutes, bring all your belongings, do you understand?" There was a loud "Yes Sir." We all lined up in front of the barracks and when Mats' name was called he was instructed to step forward. In a loud whisper I said "I'll see you." He responded, "Sayonara."

I didn't see Mat again until our first boot liberty two and one half months later. Now I was on my own with no one I knew, let alone a friend. Our first stop after muster was the chow hall. We were marched about a half mile to a large building. I could smell the food and coffee and realized how hungry I was. I was handed an aluminum tray filled with a gravy like substance with some kind of thinly sliced meat spooned on toast and some fruit cocktail. The gravy and meat on toast, I later found out was creamed chipped beef on toast, one of the Navy's most famous standard fares, officially known as: "Foreskins on Toast." It was delicious and I had seconds plus three glasses of milk. The rest of the day my group went about doing what all recruits do their first day. First a haircut, then issuance of our gear. Our gear included all we would use and all we would wear from now on including razors and toothbrushes. We packed and sent home everything we came with, including watches and rings.

The next three months of boot training though tedious and somewhat boring were very easy for me and I got the highest marks of not only my company, but of my battalion. The week before our first boot liberty I phoned home and my Dad told me that he and Mom plus the Kenzos were going to drive to San Diego and spend the day with Mat and I. I asked if they knew Mat was placed in a nonwhite unit and was being trained as a cook or a steward. He said that Mat had written his father and said he was trying to become the best cook in naval history.

As I showed my I.D. and Liberty card to the Marine guard, I could see Mat and his Dad standing next to our Packard. Mat smiled as I walked up and I knew everything was okay. I had felt very guilty that Mat, the most accomplished man I had ever known, and maybe the most accomplished of his age in the country, had been separated out and sent to what was considered an inferior group just because he was not a Caucasian. Mat was a man of Tao and because he conducted himself thus he was the most respected and most admired of all his fellows and seemingly of his superiors as well. He had been made 1st Company Recruit Commander and then Battalion Recruit Commander. It was a wonderful day. We went to an ocean side park, ate Ahi, fried chicken and drank sake and Lucky Lager Beer. Somehow Mats' strong example and our training as men of Tao lifted my spirit and I became positive and optimistic about our future. I went back to my barracks that night in a better frame of mind than I had been since our encounter with the sheriff's deputies.

Three days before Boot Camp Graduation at 1600, just as I returned to the barracks, the PA squawked and I was called to the Master of Arms Office. When I got there, there was a full Commander sitting at the Master of Arms desk. Mat was also there, standing at attention. I snapped to and announced, "Recruit Taylor, Richard R. reporting, Sir." "Very well," said the commander, "stand at ease. Men, you are hereby informed that you will not be granted boot leave. Your enlistment was as the result of a court order. You have been assigned to a ship and will be transported to your duty station at 1600 hours this coming Friday after the graduation ceremonies. This is not a consequence of either of your levels of duty at this station. As a matter of fact this command recommended you both be granted your full boot leave befitting recruits who graduate with honors. That recommendation was not accepted. Report here with all your gear at 1600 Friday. That is all, dismissed."

As we turned and passed through the door to the passageway I heard Mat swear for the first time. Then he said in Japanese "Until the next time we meet, my dear friend." I answered also in Japanese, a little too loudly. I could see from the shock on the Commander's face that he heard me.

The next morning Chief Mahoney informed me I was ordered to report to Commander Niece at the NTC Command Center at 800 hours. When I got there, the same Commander from the Master of Arms Shack was there with two other officers, a Lieutenant and a Captain. I reported and was told to sit down. The Captain addressed me. "Recruit Taylor, I am Captain Peterson and I am looking at your induction records. I see that you speak some foreign languages, Spanish, Danish and Japanese. Are these records correct?"

I answered "Well sir, I can understand Danish if it is spoken slowly and if it isn't too complicated and I can read it, but I am not really fluent." "Does this mean that you are fluent in Japanese?" "Yes sir" I replied. "I don't see any mention of any but a normal high school education. How did you learn to speak Japanese?" Right at this moment a Japanese man came into the room. "Recruit Taylor this is Mr. Osheme, an employee of the U.S. Government."

Mr. Osheme bowed to me so I stood up and bowed. He then addressed me as an equal in Japanese. Because he was older and I did not know him, I addressed him as my senior and introduced myself. Still in Japanese Mr. Osheme asked me several questions about where I was from, my family (only as far as was proper from a stranger) and how I came to speak Japanese and know Japanese culture. After I answered Mr. Osheme said to the Captain

“Captain Peterson, this man speaks as good Japanese as I do. He not only speaks the language but he has the manners and demeanor of aristocracy.” He turned to me and said in Japanese “I know you are a student, of what discipline?” I answered in a meek voice with a bowed head “I strive someday to be a man of Tao however I am a very poor student.” “Who is your teacher?” I replied “Master Cato Kenzo from the dojo of Master Gichin Funakoshi, your honor.” Mr. Osheme spoke to Captain Peterson again. “I can tell you he is fluent in Japanese and much more. He can tell you how he came by all that. The Captain addressed me again “Well Recruit Taylor, how did you come by your Japanese?” I told him how I had grown up with Mat and also that Mat was a recruit at NTC. The Captain then looked at me and tapped on the desk in Morse “w h a t a m I s e n d i n g?” “You are sending Morse Code, Captain.” “Yes young man I am, I guess the part in your record that says you are an accomplished radio ham is also correct?” “Sir I don’t know about accomplished, but I can operate a radio.” Captain Peterson was silent for a Moment then he said “That will be all for now Recruit Taylor, you are dismissed, report back to your company commander.” “Aye, aye, Captain” I said as I spun on my heel and marched out the door. The graduation ceremonies were over by 1400 hours so Mat and I had some time to spend with our families. The Kenzos brought Kasaco and her grandmother for the visit. With the crowd of visitors, recruits and others around them, Mat's Father addressed Mat in English while his mother hugged him and spoke to him in Japanese but in lower tones. When Kasacos’ grandmother saw me, however, she called out in Japanese and threw her arms around me. That did get some puzzled looks and some astonished looks when I returned the greeting and then went on with the conversation in Japanese.

In all too short a time Mat and I were forced to say our goodbyes and trudge off with our sea bags toward the Master at Arms Office. A Boatswain’s Mate Second Class, the Duty Master of Arms, had our orders on his desk. “What the hell did you guys do?” he asked as he handed over the brown envelopes. “Why do you ask?” “Because there’s two S.P.s out in the back with a jeep who say they are supposed to take you two to where ever you are going.” You guys getting sent to the brig before your first real liberty? That must be a first.” A Second Class AM wearing a duty belt and an SP arm band came into the office. “You Taylor and Kenzo?” “Yes,” Mat said. “Okay, come with me, I have orders to take you to San Diego and put you on your ship.” After we were on our way in the Jeep, the other S.P. offered me a cigarette. He asked “You boots part of that graduating class, today?” I answered “Yes.” “Boy, you must have really pissed off some brass. I never heard of not getting boot leave and then being escorted to your first ship under guard.”

After about an hour we pulled out on a pier where two destroyers were tied up. The second ship was an old four-stacker. The Talbot, DD114. The Seaman guard at the bottom of the gangplank asked “Are these boots under arrest?” “No,” answered the AM S.P. “We were just told to see that they came directly to report in.” “Okay, go up the gangway and present your orders to the O.D.” I felt something stir in the pit of my stomach when I made my first salute toward the flag on the fantail and then saluted the officer at the head of the gangway and called out “Taylor Robert R. Seaman second class request permission to come aboard, Sir.” “Permission granted,” said the officer. When we came on deck I saluted and stated, “Taylor Robert R. Seaman Second Class reporting for duty, Sir.” Mat quickly went through the same routine. We presented our orders to the Ensign who we assumed was the O.D. “Stand fast, someone is coming to get you.” We stood at ease for about 10 minutes. Out of a door behind the O.D. stepped a Marine Captain. He looked familiar to me. “Kenzo, Taylor, come with me” he said. The Marine officer returned through the door and we followed. He went down a ladder and then another and then forward. At the end of the passageway was a door marked “Brig.” The Marine Officer took out a key, opened the door and entered. As we passed through behind him Mat said to me in Japanese. “What is happening, are we going to be incarcerated?”

The Marine Captain turned and in perfect Japanese said “What has been done to you lately has not been for punitive reasons.” I was so startled I banged my shin against the water tight door frame. The Captain continued in Japanese. “Sit down men and I will tell you what is going on.” He addressed us harshly as a superior would an employee or an officer would a junior. I said, “Sir, I have seen you before, you were in the room when I was questioned by Captain Peterson, only you were in a Navy Lieutenant’s uniform then.” “That is correct” he said. “As a Marine Captain in Naval Intelligence I am authorized to wear any uniform I find necessary to carry out my duty. My name is Captain William O. Lawrence. All you have to know about me right now is that I went to school in Tokyo, first grade through high school before returning to the United States where I attended A&M College in Texas. I have volunteered for a vital mission and you are being invited to also volunteer.” The brig was a six by twelve room with a steel table with benches and two lockers. One bare light illuminated the compartment. The Captain sat down at the table and motioned for us to sit across from him. He now spoke in English. “Men on behalf of the Navy and on behalf of myself, I apologize for the way you have been treated. I also apologize for the way it is going to be necessary to continue to treat you. This is all necessary for security reasons which you will soon understand.”

“First of all, let me be absolutely clear on this point. If one or both of you do not volunteer for this mission, it will not reflect on your record in the slightest. You have reported for general duty aboard this ship and your fulfillment of those duties is all that is required of you in order for you to eventually receive an Honorable Discharge. Is that clear?” We both answered “Yes Sir.” “I can tell you this now. The mission you will be asked to join is of vital importance to our country and should you accomplish it, the Navy and the Country will be in your debt. That being said, I should also tell you, it is a very dangerous mission. It can’t be said for sure but I would say anyone on this mission has about a 50/50 chance of coming back. This is what I want you to think about tonight and I’ll ask for your decision in the morning. You can turn down this mission now and just proceed with your duty aboard this ship. You will have to sign a paper stating that you are aware that what you have been told up to now is “Top Secret” and any unauthorized disclosure of same would be an act of treason. If you should decide to be briefed on the mission and then not volunteer, you would be under guard without liberty until such time that the information you have can be of no value to the enemy. Is that all understood?” We responded again with a “Yes Sir.” “Okay, I am going to leave you now. In about a half hour someone will come for you and take you where you can shower and then take you to chow. You are to have no conversation with the petty officer who will come for you or with anyone else. Is that clear?” “Yes Sir” we responded. When the Captain left we opened the lockers and found hammocks that we strung from hooks on the overhead. When we got back from chow, we discussed our options. Mat said he felt loyalty to his new country required that he volunteer. I said I had to go along to keep him from getting his ass shot off. After that, it didn’t take us long to get to sleep.

I was always afraid of it happening and now it did. I fell off the corral fence into my mother’s washing machine. As I was being thrown upward I somehow caught the string to the light switch. I realized I wasn’t in the washing machine, our hammocks were pitching and swaying violently. The Talbot was underway in very rough seas and the brig was almost in the forecastle. By holding to the bottom of the hammock I was only pitched onto the deck three times before morning.

At 0600 the Captain was back. We were sitting at the table, clinging to it. The Captain said “I apologize one more time. I hope you got some sleep in those sling shots. What have you decided?” Mat stood, “Sir, Seaman Second Class Taylor and I would like to volunteer for the mission.” “Very well” said the Captain “however I do not accept that as a final decision until you have been briefed. Please dress in dress blues. I will wait in the passageway. We will go to chow and then the briefing.” The Captain led us not to the enlisted chow hall but into green country, not to just the Officer’s Mess but to the Captain’s Mess. Thinking there had to be some mistake we were directed,

nevertheless, to sit at a table with a white table cloth and were given a choice of breakfast entrees. Captain Lawrence told us to give the stewards our orders. As I was giving mine, someone called out, "Attention on deck" A full Commander came in with an "At Ease." Captain Lawrence addressed the Commander, "Captain Edwards; these men are the men who have been asked to volunteer for the mission." Because the Commander was addressed as Captain, we knew he was the Captain of the Talbot. "Have they been briefed yet?" Captain Edwards asked. "They have only been informed that it is a vital mission and very dangerous. I told them I believe that anyone on the mission will have only about a 50/50 chance of getting back." "And what was their response?" "They both volunteered sir but I did not accept their offer and will not until after they have been briefed."

"Excellent" retorted Captain Edwards, and then he addressed us. "Men, details of your mission are on a need to know basis and I don't know the details. However, I am authorized to tell you this. If you volunteer for this mission you will be doing our country a great service and in partial recognition you will be designated "Mid Shipmen" upon your training completion and you will be commissioned Ensign in 12 months. If you end up not volunteering, you will not be having any more meals in the Captain's Mess," he chuckled "but I will be glad to have you as ship's company. Please order anything you like and enjoy your meal." We both answered "Thank you Captain," and took him up on his offer. We both had steak and eggs.

## Chapter 4

After the dishes were cleared away and a fresh pot of coffee was set down, the stewards left the mess and closed the door. Captain Lawrence said, "Because of the Captain's gracious hospitality, we have complete security here." He took out a lined pad and pen and set them before him. "Now this is very important." He spoke in Japanese. "Kenzo, you were born in Okinawa, but you are Japanese. The operation we are planning is against Japan. We believe the Japanese Government is planning an attack on the United States. If that should happen, all American citizens of Japanese descent serving in the U.S. Military will have the opportunity or may be required to transfer to units serving away from the Pacific. How do you feel about combat with Japanese who may even be close relatives?"

"Captain Lawrence, my family has discussed this because we also believe there will be a war. Since Tojo has gained control of the Army in Japan and the Army has gained virtual control of the government, war is very likely. The foreseeing of this is why many Okinawans and some others have left the Japanese Islands. All of that notwithstanding, my father and I took an oath upon gaining permanent resident status and I took an oath when inducted into the U.S. Navy. I would be without honor if I didn't do all in my power for the country for which I have sworn allegiance."

"Very well, Kenzo San, well said." Now in English, he addressed me. "Taylor, do you have any reservation about fighting Japanese?" "No Sir" I replied. "Ok, if I tell you any more you are committed to either go on the mission or be under guard until the information is no longer critical. Do you wish for me to continue?" We both answered, "Yes."

There was a pause while the Captain gathered his thoughts and then he said "As I told you, our intelligence believes that Japan is planning an attack on the United States. We believe this attack may come from the Marshall Islands. We plan to send an expedition to the Marshalls to find out what and how much of a build up the Japanese have put there and if possible what their exact plans are. Believe me, we didn't have any idea of recruiting a couple of 18 year old boots for this mission, but you two have such unbelievable qualifications we couldn't pass. I must tell you however, other teams are training for this mission. I could have had one of those teams. I believe we three have the best chance of success. The brass believes we are at a disadvantage going against the other teams. They are trained special forces. We start with what you have brought with you. The mission will commence in 90 days. You are looking at 60 days of vigorous training and a mission that will probably kill all three of us. Do you still wish to volunteer?" Almost without hesitation we both answered, "Yes Sir." "Very well, tonight and for the next two days you will be quartered in an officer compartment. Your meals will be served in your quarters and you will have a vast amount of material to study. As in all phases of your training I will be with you as your commanding officer, but also as a fellow student." The next two days we spent 10 hours a day studying and memorizing material about the Marshall Islands with particular emphasis on the Enewetak Atoll. We also studied material about Japan and its military.

At 0500 the third day Captain Lawrence woke us up and told us to get all our gear together, that we were leaving the ship. When we came on deck we were in calm seas and there was a whale boat in the water. Captain Lawrence dropped his bags over into the boat and we were instructed to do the same. The three of us then scrambled over the side on a cargo net and into the boat below. The sailor on the bow of the boat, (the Bow Hook) let go the painter line and we motored away from the ship. In minutes the ship was lost in the haze and darkness. For the next half hour all we could see was fog and water and all we could hear was the put-put of the diesel and the lapping of the sea against the bow. I turned to Mat and started to speak to him in Japanese. The Captain poked me

hard in the ribs and said “Don’t ever speak Japanese again where anyone but Mat or I can hear you.” “Aye, aye Sir,” I said, with an edge on my voice. Just then I heard the thud of a wave lapping on a beach and I could also hear the seemingly more distant sound of a breaker hitting rocks. Some morning light was now filtering through the fog and I could make out a dark mountain dead ahead and the white foam and gray sand of a beach. As we approached the beach the Coxswain instructed us all to move to the stern of the boat. With a surge of the engine he crested on a wave and we were beached. The Bow Hook jumped onto dry sand and held the boat fast as we disembarked. Then as the highest wave in the next set lifted the stern of the boat, the Coxswain signaled with his bell for the Engineman to gun the engine in reverse and as the Boat Hook bellied up on the bow the boat retreated into deep water, turned and was gone. “Mr. Lawrence,” Mat said, “May I ask where we are, Sir?”

“We are on the island of Santa Catalina 26 miles off the coast of California, on a top secret base where we will spend the next several weeks training. Stay very close to me, there are sentries about who will shoot to kill. Stop and do not move when we are challenged. The sign today is: 'K9.' The counter sign is 'Fala.' I will do the talking.”

We started up an arroyo and got no more than 30 feet when a voice called out. “Halt, who goes there?” “K9,” the Captain spoke out. The voice answered “Fala, advance to be recognized.” We approached slowly, careful not to make any sudden moves. A Marine in battle dress with a rifle at the ready stepped in front of us. “Captain Lawrence?” The man in battle dress asked. “Yes” answered the Captain. “May I see your I.D., Sir?” Captain Lawrence held up his hand with his I.D. “Very well sir, Thank you Sir, please follow me.”

As we fell in behind the Marine, another Marine with a Thompson submachine gun fell in behind us. After a 30 minute walk, mostly up hill, we came to a small valley cradling a bivouac covered with camouflage netting. We stopped in front of the largest tent and the marine who was in the lead went in. After a moment, he came out and said that Major Hansen would see us. Inside the tent, a Marine Major was standing in front of a desk.

Captain Lawrence snapped to and said “Captain Lawrence, William, O. reporting with detail as ordered, Sir.” “Very well Captain,” the Major said as he took the three brown envelopes containing our records from the Captain.

“At ease Captain, at ease men. Please sit down. I am Major Hansen, Commanding Officer of Base Zebra 4. Would you all like some coffee?” We gratefully accepted. After a moment, the Major began speaking, “I wish to emphasize some of the general orders you are under while on Zebra 4. First and foremost are matters of security. Any and all missions that any personnel aboard this base have any knowledge of, are not to be discussed outside their task group and then only by order of their commanding officer. You are ordered to report to your immediate superior any attempt by anyone to discuss any mission. Is that clear?” We answered, “Yes Sir.” He went on. “We are not much on social life here. Unfortunately, for security reasons, there is no liberty for anyone. Sundays, units that are on schedule are allowed off from 1200 hrs. The beer pub is open during those hours, and a football game usually develops down on the beach. Also, the pub is open from 2000 to 2200 every night and there is almost always a movie, weather permitting. Believe me, compared to the rest of your time on this base, you will look forward to Sunday like it’s a 30 day leave.” The Major paused and took a long pull on his coffee and lit up a Lucky. Then he continued. “Men, if your superiors didn’t think you were the cream of the crop and that you are dedicated you wouldn’t be here. But, I have to tell you, only 48% of the people who come here complete training. It will be no blemish on your record if you don’t make it through.” He took another pull on his coffee. “Welcome to Base Zebra 4. On behalf of your country, thank you for volunteering and good luck. Any questions you may have, you can ask in your first class today. This will be a good day for you. You will be sitting on your butts except for the 2 hrs. P.T. That is an “All Hands” every day. The Sergeant outside will take you to your quarters, which will be in the same tent, all three of you, and then after chow he will show you where to report to your first class.”

It was obvious from the chow that everything short of liberty was being done for our morale. It was fantastic. Steak and eggs served to order with seconds and with all the milk you could drink. No shit-on-a-shingle (gravy hamburger on toast) or foreskins-on-toast (chipped beef on toast in white gravy) would ever be seen on this base.

## Chapter 5

The three of us were the only ones in our first class and we soon realized why. We were shown travel films and stills of places where the Talbot would be making ports of call. We were instructed to write letters home describing liberty in those ports. We were even supplied pictures and post cards. We also wrote letters as if we were at sea describing imaginary happenings and so forth. We were told to leave the dates off. They would be forged by the senders to correspond with the movements of the ship. We also signed off blank sheets of paper so entire letters could be forged. As far as anyone in the world knew, except for a few people, Mat, I and the Captain were still on the Talbot. At 1400 we went to P.T. I thought full dress football in August with the El Monte Lions was hell. It wasn't anything compared to this. Beside the aerobics, they started us on Yoga. We slept like rocks that night and were sore as hell in the morning.

At 0730, on the way to our first class of the day, Captain Lawrence informed us that the instructor was a Korean gentleman by the name of Ji Hyun. He said that we were permitted to speak to Mr. Ji Hyun in Japanese because he was much more fluent in Japanese than in English. When we reported to Mr. Ji Hyun it was obvious he had not been told anything about us. His look of surprise at seeing Mat was nothing to the astonishment he showed at what happened next. He greeted us in labored English, told us his name and then said in Japanese "Yoku go o seisu" he was about to translate (Gentleness controls strength) when not the oriental but the white Captain spoke up in perfect Japanese. Captain Lawrence bowed and introduced himself in correct Japanese protocol taking the role of a junior to a senior. Then he addressed us in the gruff commanding voice of a senior officer and instructed us to introduce ourselves. Also in Japanese protocol, we bowed and introduced ourselves as juniors. Mr. Ji Hyun said in a bewildered fashion, "I don't understand." The captain responded, still in the submissive "Most honorable master, we are of course not permitted to explain. With your permission we will convey our meager qualifications so you may be most proficient in your instruction. I attended school in Tokyo through high school where I passed my Judo classes. I also attended Kodokan Judo Institute as a part time student for two years. I, of course, know your name from your victories in the 1934 contests and I am unworthy but most honored to be your student." He then addressed Mat and I in the gruff commander voice "State your qualifications to Master Ji Hyun."

Again it wasn't the oriental who responded but the other white man. In the submissive, I told of my 13 years Karate training and that I wished someday to be a man of "Tao." By this time Ji Hyun was letting some of his astonishment show. Then Mat gave his report. After some moments of silence, Mr. Ji Hyun spoke, assuming the gruff commander tone. "Men of Tao are most honorable credit to their ancestors. I am glad to have you as my students and with what you already know I am sure you will leave with some new Kata (form) that will be of benefit."

Over the next three weeks we did learn quite a bit from Master Ji Hyun especially Mat and I. The combination of Judo, the concept of gentleness overcoming strength, worked well with our Karate skills and we did develop some new Kata. Also these three weeks were packed full of other learning. We became proficient and drilled in Escape and Evasion (being able to avoid and hide from pursuers in terrain where there was seemingly no place to hide), Weapons & Explosives Training (both Japanese and American), Japanese Military modus operandi, Guerrilla tactics and the one class we all looked forward to each day, Combat Diving. We used new equipment that allowed us to breathe under water from a tank and to swim freely. It was like flying. We also had a radio operator class but since we three were proficient in Morse and could take apart any radio and put it back together again, we tested out of that class the 3rd day.

Starting with the 4th week after a most enjoyable Saturday and Sunday off duty, we began the tactical exercise part of our training. All day Monday was spent planning. We were shown maps of an island called Santa Cruz, 46 miles from us on a compass heading of 350°. On that island were 60 Marines who knew we were coming. Also there was a radio shack that would be transmitting some time every day. It was our objective to find that radio shack, take code books and destroy it. Getting to the island and accomplishing our mission was our problem. When we were alone, Captain Lawrence, Bill, as we now called him when no one was around, asked for suggestions. We thought for a while and then Mat spoke up. "I believe we should solve the following problems: 1. How do we get to the island? 2. How do we find the radio shack? 3. How do we avoid the Marines? 4. How do we accomplish the mission and get out?"

Bill said "That's good. Let's do that by the numbers." I said, "Ok, number one I suggest we steal a barrel of fuel and hide it down by the dock. Tomorrow morning when the launch comes in from the supply ship like it does every morning, we take it and go. Those launches are seaworthy enough to go 46 miles and they will do about 15 knots. The fog will be in so if we get 100 yards, we are gone. We should also hide all the gear we are going to need down there so we can get under way in a matter of minutes after we take the boat. With your permission I will make a list of any extra gear I think we will need for your approval, at least 4 good radios and parts will be at the top of my list." Bill said "What do you think?" Mat said it sounded good to him. Bill then said. "I approve of the plan but with a change. As soon as we get out of sight of the beach, we will turn due east for 10 miles and then due south until we make land on the eastern side of this island. We will beach the boat in a cove over on the east side of this island and hide for two days. With any luck, the people who will be looking for their boat will assume we got through or were lost at sea."

"Now how about number two? How do we find the radio shack? Santa Cruz is a big island and we can't go traipsing around with 60 Marines looking for us." This time Mat had the idea, "What if we don't land on Santa Cruz at first. What if we land on Anacapa, the neighboring island to the east? First we make sure no one is around, then we set up a listening station on the south side of the Island and another on the north side of the island. From these we will be able to triangulate the position. Bill said, "That's a good idea, we will do that except we will listen on one radio while we are underway. If we can determine our exact position by sexton when we get a signal we will not have to set up a listening station on both sides of the island."

"Now for number three, how do we avoid the people who are expecting us?" Bill asked. Then he went on himself. "I believe the first thing we do is not show up for about two weeks. They will think we are lost at sea. Then I believe we should make slight penetrations, making sure we are not detected, until we know where the enemy's sentry and lookout locations are and have laid eyes on the objective. We will hide the launch on Anacapa, and hide there for about 2 weeks. Then we will cross the eight-mile channel to Santa Cruz by rubber boat where we will find a good hiding place from which to reconnoiter. As to number 4, I think we should plan that after we see the lay of the land but basically two of us will go in for the attack while one of us creates a diversion to cover our escape." "Is there any more discussion at this time?" Bill asked. We both answered in the negative. "Okay," he went on, "if you think of anything, even if it seems stupid, tell me, Okay?" "Yes Sir," we both answered.

Over the next hours we gathered all the gear we thought we would require except for the fuel. At 0400 we stacked the gear on the dock next to other supplies staged for transport out to the supply ship.

## Chapter 6

At 0600 the launch came into view through the fog. After the Ensign from the boat got up the hill and the three man crew got about one-fourth unloaded, we walked out on the dock. Bill, in his Marine fatigues with his captain bars showing, spoke up to the crew. "Your ensign has given me permission to order you to load this special gear and take it out to your ship, immediately. You are to return and finish unloading as soon as possible. My men here will show you what has to go and help you load."

The boatswain's mate said "Aye, aye sir," and we loaded the gear. At Bill's signal Mat had the one man in the boat and we had the two men on the dock down, bound and gagged. They never knew what hit them. In 5 minutes we were in the fog and out of sight of the beach. Bill had us save all the ice but we threw two-thirds of the perishable food overboard. We did this on the 300 degree heading hoping that some would be found perpetuating the idea we were on our way to Santa Cruz or lost at sea. With as much ice as we kept, if we could get what was left in the shade, we would eat like kings for several days. After 30 minutes in the fog we turned starboard and steered 45 degrees for 90 minutes, then starboard again to 135 degrees for 90 minutes and then starboard once more. Now the fog had lifted so that there was about three miles visibility and we were anxious to get ashore and hidden. We were very lucky. There was a small opening in the face of the cliff straight ahead. It led in to a small cove about 20 feet in and then curved to the right enough so that when we beached as far to the right as we could, we were not visible from the sea.

About 10 ft. from where we beached the boat, across a strip of sand was a small stream coming steeply down the middle of an arroyo. The water was fresh and very cold. Bill said, "This is great, we not only will not have to use any fresh water but we can add to our stores." Bill then said, "Richard, you and I will camouflage the boat and then find a place to store our gear and provisions while Mat, you climb this hill and stand the first watch. I think the only chance of discovery is from the sea but don't bet on it. Keep a sharp watch 360 degrees."

"Aye, aye sir," Mat said, and started up the hill as Bill and I spread a tarpaulin over the boat. We considered spreading some tumble weeds over the top but decided that would stand out more than just the drab brown of the tarpaulin. We then started up the steep arroyo. At about 400 feet up we suddenly came out onto a half acre plateau. We could now see the origin of the stream. It was a pool at the base of a cliff and it, in turn, was fed by a 100 ft. water fall. The fall was coming out of the side of the cliff about a third of the way down from the top. We stood there in awe. It had to be the most beautiful place on earth with the green grass, cottonwood and eucalyptus trees, the stream, the pool and the falls. Bill said "Well, that explains why the water is so cold. It is spring fed. Let's go down and bring the perishable food up. Hell, it will stay fresh up here without ice." As we turned to go back down, a deer flushed from a thicket and was off up and over a hill. Bill looked at me and said "One would be tempted to get lost right here for the rest of his life, wouldn't one?"

"Yes sir," I replied. After we stored the nonperishable provisions up in the rocks and hauled three loads up the hill, we tied the boat, fore and aft, with "v" lines. Next Bill and I hiked up past the plateau and mapped an escape route. The plan was that if we were discovered we would take off overland, make Avalon, the town on Santa Catalina, steal more gear, another boat and restart our mission. That night we ate T-bone steaks and drank Lucky Lager Beer, courtesy of the stores we stole with the boat. We felt safe building a fire up on the plateau but it was too cold to sleep up there so we slept on the beach by the boat.

The next morning there was no fog, in fact, there wasn't any dew and the wind was coming out of the east. By 1100 hours, surf was pounding the island from the east and 15 ft. waves were surging into our now turbulent cove.

We retied the “v” lines, moving the boat to the middle of the cove which made it visible from the sea but was necessary to keep her off the rocks. The good thing about the Santa Ana storm was, the people looking for us would have a strong idea that we and the 20 ft. launch could not survive such a tempest. The storm raged for two more days and then on the next day the fog was back in the morning and the sea was calm. Bill said that if the weather held we would leave the next morning, as soon as the tide was deep enough for the boat to get out of the cove. He said he would rather go at night but if it clouded over or we got under a fog bank and he couldn't get a sexton shoot, we could miss Anacapa Island. We spent the rest of that day storing our gear, our provisions and the extra fuel and getting the boat ship shape. The tide was high enough at 0530 the next morning for us to get under way. Because of the fog, we only had to go east about a mile before we set a course for Anacapa.

We maintained about 12 knots in a calm sea, saw a couple of freighters but no Navy craft. At 1125 we spotted Anacapa Island. We were able to shoot the sun but we didn't hear Santa Cruz radio so we didn't get a bearing. We steered for the middle of the south shore of West Anacapa Island. The coast was entirely sheer cliffs down to the water but we finally found where we could land and I could get up on the island. According to plan, I went ashore with two day's food and water and a radio. The rough terrain kept me from reconnoitering much but it also made it unlikely anyone was around. I climbed up the side of Summit Peak about 300 feet and found a place where I could see most of Santa Cruz. Meanwhile, Mat and Bill took the boat south around the west end of the island and then north and west along the north coast to a place where they could land and Mat could establish a listening post. Bill was then to spend the night on the boat anchored in Frenchy's' Cove at the east end of West Anacapa. The next day he would come and pick me up where he left me if I had gotten a signal or leave me more provisions if I wasn't there to meet him. As it turned out, I got a signal on a bearing of 273 degrees 5 minutes after I set up and started listening. Having gotten the bearing I moved my camp nearer the water and reconnoitered along the thin beaches, the rest of the day and next morning making sure there wasn't anyone around. I didn't find sign of anyone. At 0900 Bill showed up, I told him the good news and after we loaded my gear, set out to go around to the other side of the island. At 1400 we got to where Bill had dropped Mat off. Mat wasn't there. We waited until 1800 then made our way south to Frenchy's Cove and anchored for the night.

At 0800 the next morning Mat was at his drop off point waiting for us. He had gotten a signal at 0145 that morning on a bearing of 270 degrees. This put the radio shack at the north east end of Prisoner's Bay on the north coast of Santa Cruz Island. That night we went ashore at Frenchie's cove, got up a ravine, built a fire and had a hot meal. We made a plan of attack and changed our plans to hide the launch in a cove on the north side of Santa Cruz. Late the next afternoon we went back around West Anacapa, out to sea about 10 miles and then west to the west end of Santa Cruz Island. We then motored northwest through the channel between Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Island and east along the coast to a place called Fry's Cove where we spent the night. Fry's cove was a fair anchorage except, at about 2100 an offshore wind came up that, by 0300, was doing about 60 knots. Fry's cove was formed by a V-shaped split extending from the seaward side of the island. That slit acted as a funnel through the island, accelerating the inward flow. We were blown off our anchorage and had a hell of a time staying off the rocks until we could re-anchor. We spent the next half day scouting around the cove. Finding no evidence of human life, we decided to hide the boat there. That afternoon at high tide with the use of a block and tackle we winched the boat up behind a big bolder on the beach and covered it with the tarpaulin.

That night at 1200 hours we set out in our rubber boat with 4 days rations and our gear, east along the shore to Prisoners Bay. We rowed slowly and in silence thankful for the dark moonless night. At 0336 Mat spotted a flash, probably a Zippo lighter just 50 yards off our beam. We marked the spot and continued on, keeping low and silent. At 0430 we spotted a sea cave we thought, hoped, would not fill at high tide. We pulled the boat up in the back of the cave. It was cold as hell and of course we couldn't make a fire but in our wet suits and with the raft to lie in we

were comfortable enough to sleep. We hid in the cave the next day until dark. We slid out of the cave in our black dive outfits. The place was lousy with seals and sea lions and I think even they thought we were just three more of the herd. We swam along the kelp line up toward the west end of Prisoners Bay watching for sentries. One at a time at three hundred yard intervals we crawled through the surf, across the beach and into the rock cover. We kept watch from those positions until one hour after the watch change, thinking our best chance of spotting their positions was when they changed the watch. We and about forty seals met in the kelp off the middle position at 2140. Mat, who dropped off in the first position, said he marked three sentries, one directly in front of his position twenty yards into rocks and fifty yards from the water's edge. The two others were on high points about fifty yards on either side of him and from thirty to seventy yards up from the water. I had the middle position and I reported two sentries, one each about twenty to thirty yards on either side on high ground about forty to sixty yards up from the water. Bill said that he stayed in the water because he spotted a small building on a point about a half mile from the end of the bay. He said he watched as men came down a path to the shack and then went to the sentry positions to relieve the 1600 watch. He said he then watched as the 1600 watch came in to the shack and then went up the trail behind the shack. He counted both groups as 12 men. He went on, "I have a plan, let's go to the cave."

When we got back Bill said, "This is what I think we should do. At about 0300 tomorrow morning two of us crawl up beside that trail about 50 yards in from the end of the peninsula. As the 2400 watch passes by going up the trail, we count off to the last two men. If they straggle behind the rest, we'll take them, if not, we'll fall in line at a distance and hope no one is counting. Then at 0500 our third man will lob a smoke grenade into the watch shack and inform anyone in there that they are dead in accordance with exercise Rubber Duck. Then he will set off about five 3-minute flash bang grenades and get out of there."

When the sun broke through the next morning it was sunny and warm. A patch of rock outside our cave was exposed to sun light but not visible from almost any angle for three hours. I spent an hour soaking up the sun's warmth, it was like pure energy, and then I relieved Bill early so he could have a turn. We spent the rest of day and evening checking our gear, doing stretch exercises, eating and sleeping. Mat and I drew straws to decide who would go with Bill on the attack. I won and Mat was to create the diversion.

At 0200 we slipped into the water and made our way up the kelp line, again accompanied by our friends, about 40 seals and sea lions. When we got within 50 yards of the peninsula, Bill and I swam in toward the spot we planned to climb up. Just as I started to surge up on a rock, Bill grabbed me and pulled me back. He pointed up. Not 15 feet above us I saw the red glow of a cigarette. I could just make out the shape of a Marine helmet against the sky as the figure turned and disappeared. Bill whispered "He must be a sentry. Let's climb up very carefully and see if he is still in sight." It took us 5 minutes to climb the short 15 feet. As we peeked over the top we saw the Marine sitting on a rock across the trail. Bill whispered again, "Let's lie back in these rocks and see what happens when the 0400 watch comes down the trail." At 0319 the first two of the 0400 watch came down. This is where we got extremely lucky. The sentry called out to the two men, "Halt, who goes there!" One of the two men called out "Thin!" The sentry answered with "Man!" then he said, "Advance to be recognized." The two men came down the trail and the sentry waved them on. Bill tugged at my arm and we slid down about 3 feet from the top. He whispered in my ear "We go back in the water; we get back up on the rocks 25 feet out. If the last two of the 12 coming off watch are alone, we take them. Then we take the sentry. If we don't take the last two coming off watch, we approach the sentry, give him the password and then take him." We slid back into the water and made our way out the peninsula, crawled up and hid by the trail.

As it turned out, one of the 2400 watch was a straggler and he was a full 5 minutes behind the last group of 3. We jumped him and Bill said to him in a whisper "Make no noise. You are dead in accordance with operation

Rubber Duck. Do you have orders concerning that?" The man answered that he did. "And what are those orders?" "I am to not move or make any sound for eight hours or until ordered by an officer." "Very good" Bill said. "Now I can gag and bind you or if you would like to tell us exactly where the radio shack is, we will take your word that you will not give an alarm." "Are you an officer, sir?" the man asked. "Yes," replied Bill. "Captain U.S. Marine Corps." "Well sir, I didn't know whether to answer "fuck you" or "fuck you sir" but I ain't telling you nothing and besides dead men can't talk." Bill chuckled "You are a good Marine, lad. We will not tie you and I will put in my report that you would not cooperate even under threat." "Thank you sir," he said. "I'm going to catch hell as it is."

I put on the number 12 man's helmet and proceeded up the trail toward the sentry with Bill staying back far enough, hopefully, not to be seen. I saw the sentry sitting on the same rock. He challenged and I answered, "Thin" and he countered "man." I walked straight up to him and asked, "You got a light?" He said "Sure" and when he put his hand in his pocket I put my sheathed knife against his ribs. Then I said, "You are dead in accordance with operation Rubber Duck." He said, "Oh shit." I said, "Do you have orders concerning Rubber Duck?" "Yes," he said, "I'm dead for 8 hours or until ordered by an officer." Just then Bill came up.

"Everything OK?" he asked. "Yes, he knows the drill and is complying" "Ok, we're late so get going, I will have a short talk with the dead man and then follow. Keep your eyes open for the radio shack." I proceeded on up the trail for about 100 yards. As the trail came around a bend and flattened out I was challenged again. I used the same routine with much the same results. From here I could see camp lights up a canyon about a half mile. When Bill caught up we decided he would follow closer from here on in. I didn't encounter another sentry until just outside the camp. At this point there was a sentry beside the trail and at least two men at a machine gun dug in up about 20 feet from the trail. I had to think fast. I couldn't turn so I gave the password as loud as I could without being conspicuous so Bill would hear and just kept walking. The sentry waved me through. I got off the trail about 30 yards on, almost in the camp and waited to see how Bill would do. He did the same as I and was with me in less than 4 minutes. "You did well, there, Richard." He looked at his watch. He said, "Mats' action will be in 7 minutes so we have to just walk right straight in. I'm not so sure that isn't the best plan anyway. That third tent with the line going up the hill must be the radio shack. Let's go." We walked briskly right through the middle of the camp like we knew what we were doing, up to the radio shack tent and through the door. There were two Marines in the shack. I immediately jumped the man that was standing and Bill hit the one seated at the radio. We had our hands over their mouths and our sheathed knives at their throats. We both said in unison, "You're dead in accordance with Rubber Duck. What are your orders concerning Rubber Duck?" They both, after using some choice profanity, said they had the proper orders. We released them and told them to lie on the deck and they did. I took the code book off the table in front of the radio and Bill took another from the safe that was standing open. Bill then said to the dead men, "In about 3 minutes two flash bang grenades are going to go off under this table. They will simulate blowing up you and this shack but they are harmless except to your ears and your eyes so put your hands over your ears and close your eyes now and stay that way. Do you understand?" They said they did, and they did.

We were between the edge of the camp and the machine gun emplacement when Mats' flash bangs on the dock went off. I was surprised how loud they were even up here and they lit up the whole sky like lightning. Bill yelled to the sentry 25 yards down the trail, "What the hell was that." He answered, "I don't know." Bill then shouted as if he was taking command. "You up at the gun, get some flares up and don't let anyone up the canyon without being recognized." We then, with pistols drawn, ran past the emplacement and down the trail. We were almost to the second sentry when the flash bangs in the radio shack went off. Minutes later we were where we had left our gear. We got our tanks on and slipped into the water. A search light on the dock was sweeping around, several lights from sentries along the shore were searching and we could see two boats with lights ablaze. We submerged and swam by compass out into the kelp where the sea lions and seals were raising hell. We lay in the kelp for two hours until

things quieted down and then we made our way back to the cave. Mat was leaning up against our sun bathing rock when we crawled out of the water. He said in a loud whisper “All clear around here.”

When we got in the cave, Mat said, “What do we do now?” Bill said, “I’m glad you asked. We radio in that we have successfully completed our mission, they call an end to the exercise and we go get in some warm fart sacks.” “All right!” we both exclaimed. We set up one of the radios on the top of suntan rock and called in. We got a signal back immediately. We were informed that the exercise was, as of right now, over and we were ordered to proceed at once to the dock in Prisoner’s Cove where we would be picked up. We packed up and got to the dock in 35 minutes and were astounded to find a whale boat waiting for us. We were further surprised to read the name on the boat, U.S.S. Talbot. The same boat crew who put us ashore on Santa Catalina over 2 months ago greeted us, helped us with our gear and took our rubber boat in tow.

## Chapter 7

When we came alongside the Talbot, the Boat coxswain said we were to leave our gear in the boat and go right aboard. We climbed aboard on a cargo net where an ensign asked us to follow him. He put us in an officer's cabin, starboard side, forward on the 2nd deck. He said we were to sleep and be cleaned up and dressed for dinner in the Captain's Mess by 1800 hours. He said a shower was forward in this passageway and that someone would come for us at 1800. He said we were not to go anywhere except to the shower or communicate with any of the crew. After he left we found hanging in three lockers, three officer dress blue uniforms, one with lieutenant bars and stripes and two with no markings. The shower was heaven and we all committed the mortal sin of a sailor at sea, that of using more than one's share of fresh hot water. We slept like rocks and it was lucky that rough seas at about 1700 woke us up. I felt awkward in my new officer duds. Not just because they weren't a great fit but because I still considered myself an enlisted man.

Precisely at 1800 there was a knock on the door. I opened it and was greeted by a salute from a Marine sergeant in dress uniform. The sergeant said, "Captain Edwards presents his compliments, sir, and requests your presence in the Captain's mess." Bill spoke up, "Very well Sergeant, lead on and we will follow" "Aye, aye sir," was his response. When we entered the Captain's Mess there were 4 officers sitting at a white table-clothed table. They stood and Captain Edwards proceeded to introduce us. He said, "Gentlemen I would like to introduce Marine Captain William Lawrence and two of his command. The introduction of these two men is unique because as of this date, these two men are no longer enlisted personnel. As of this date Mr. Taylor and Mr. Kenzo are Midshipmen. Gentlemen, I am pleased to present for the first time Midshipman Richard Taylor and Midshipman Matsu Kenzo." He then introduced the other three officers. Then he went on, "Not very often do midshipman ratings come through aboard ship, unlike the old days when midshipmen served in combat, but the custom is, when it happens, for us to toast the new cadets. Therefore, you each have a ration of as close as we are allowed to brandy, some grape juice, to enjoy before dinner." "Captain Lawrence, please make the toast."

Bill said, "With pleasure, Captain, Here's to our two new Cadets, Midshipman Kenzo and Midshipman Taylor. May they both have long and productive lives." All seven of us downed our glasses. Captain Edwards then said, "Now it is customary for the new officers to say something. You first Mr. Kenzo."

Mat stood and said "If I were able to change any part of my life, I would not. Although unworthy, I am honored to be an officer in the United States Navy. If I am able to measure in some small way against those before me, my life will be complete." Mat sat down. There were several voices saying, "well said." "Okay, Mr. Taylor," said Captain Edwards.

I stood, not really knowing what to say. "I was lucky enough to be born in the United States so like us all who are that lucky I don't appreciate being a free legal resident like Mat does but I am very thankful for this opportunity and I will try to be a good officer. Thank you all for wishing us a long and productive life. May God bless the Talbot and all who sail on her." I sat down to applause.

Captain Edwards stood and said "Gentlemen, we have roast beef, rare if you wish." During the course of the meal, Captain Edwards told us that a waiver had been granted to allow us to serve in combat if necessary as midshipmen. It seemed the Navy Department had some rule about midshipmen being in combat. Then he went on to tell us we were on our way to Pearl Harbor where we would be granted a few days liberty before going on to our mission. He said the Talbot would be picking up three other teams in Pearl and that the Talbot would deliver all of us to missions in the Marshals.

We spent the next 5 days studying, doing kata and calisthenics in an area forward of the main battery that was secluded for us. The weather was great and it was a very pleasant time. We took our meals in the Officer's Mess which was the only time we had contact with the crew and then it was only to ask to have something passed. The crew was still under instruction not to converse with us and we were under the same instructions. The 5th night out we were invited to the Captain's Mess again. During the meal Captain Edwards said that he had received orders concerning our liberty in Pearl. We were to be granted liberty but we were to take that liberty in a group and we were not to converse with anyone outside the group. A ship's officer would go ashore with us and would conduct any necessary conversation outside the group.

The next morning the USS Talbot DD119 tied up at Pier 10, Pearl Harbor, and at 1000 hours Mat and I got our first liberty. Bill booked us into the Royal Hawaiian in a suite overlooking the beach and off in the distance, Diamond Head. The next two days we devoted ourselves to doing as little as possible, eating steak and drinking Primo beer. Mat and I spent most of each day learning to get up on a surf board. Other than that, we all got sunburned, we had a good rest and because we were where we would have been had we remained as ship's company on the Talbot, Mat and I were given permission to call home. I sent a telegram to my folks telling them when I would call and also asked them to call Mats' folks telling them when he would call. It was great hearing my parents' voices, even if a lot of it was my mother crying. I asked about Mary Alice and they said she had gone back East to college. Not knowing if she had answered the letters I wrote back on Base Zebra 4, I quickly changed the subject. Mat said his call was great made better because Mats' Dad had invited the Sasushi family and he was able to spend some time on the phone with Kasaco. At 0100 hours the morning of the third day in Honolulu we reported back aboard the Talbot and were underway by 0230.

The next several days we spent with an officer we believed to be from Navy Intelligence, who knew a lot about the Eniwetok Atoll. We were given a map of the Japanese camps on Eniwetok, Japan and Perry, the Islands that made up the Eniwetok lagoon. The first objective of our mission was to land and get hidden. This was not going to be easy because the atolls are flat with the only cover being palm trees. The most interesting possible hiding place was a Japanese freighter wreck that was hung on a reef at the south end of Eniwetok.

The night of our 8th day out of Pearl we were again invited to the Captain's Mess. After our meal we were told we were to disembark the next morning at 0100. We were told we would be put in a high speed launch 100 miles from Eniwetok. At about five miles out we would disembark the launch and make the last five miles in a rubber raft equipped with a special silent electric motor that could do about five knots. We were given call signs from Japanese ships and were to report at different times of day depending on the date. We were to use Japanese Morse plain-language routine ship traffic that was really code devised just for this communication. We were also equipped with a "Zip", a new secret device that would transmit ten minutes of code in three seconds. We were instructed not to use the Zip unless in an emergency. In one week, if all went well, the same launch would pick us up at 0200 hours the night of December 10th at the same coordinates where it left us.

We couldn't sleep so we spent from the time we were dismissed until 0100 the next morning going over our gear. When we came on deck the launch and raft were trailing on a painter line alongside and two crew members were in the launch where we handed down our gear to be stowed. Then, dressed in our black wet suits with side arms and Remington Bolt Action Sniper rifles slung over our backs, we scampered down a cargo net into the launch and sped away into the black night toward our mission.

## Chapter 8

Of course, a moonless night was chosen but what we didn't figure on was the high degree of phosphorus in the water. Our launch was leaving a bright white wake as far astern as we could see, that would be a clear indication of our passing to anyone who saw it. Also, as we came on schools of fish they scattered in all directions leaving a bomb burst of white phosphorus trails with us at the center. All of this phenomenon in other circumstances would have been very pleasant. After three hours and ten minutes of a kidney-loosening and fingernail-biting ride, we arrived at the coordinates where we transferred ourselves to the rubber raft. We felt much more comfortable about our stealth in the raft. The electric motor did leave a wake but not nearly as pronounced as the launch. It was unbelievable how lucky we were with our navigation. The first indication we had that we had reached the islands was the sound of the surf and the first sight we had was of the ship wreck where we planned to hide. We killed the electric motor and drifted up alongside. There was a gangway we tied up to and we crept aboard, not expecting anyone to be there, but being very careful. After about 20 minutes of searching we met back at the gangway. None of us saw or heard anyone aboard.

Bill said "The first thing we have to do is find a place to hide the raft, our gear and ourselves." We found a large air duct starboard side forward that was fitted with a ladder. We went down the ladder into the pitch darkness. We decided to hazard a light just for a moment. The second of light revealed the deck below us was covered with water, we didn't know how deep. When we got to the bottom we found ourselves standing in about two feet of water on a deck that was slanting down to the stern at about 20 degrees. The water was surging so we were pretty sure there was a hole open to the sea. This precluded us using a light. We attached a line to the ladder and crept forward. As we progressed, the water became shallower until we were on dry deck. After we went another 15 feet we came to the bulkhead that divided the number two hold from the forward hold, or the number one hold. Bill said "OK, it's high tide and where we are standing is dry. Let's get our gear and the raft and stash it all down here. We will hide down here until daylight when we will see what we will see." It was 0700 by the time we deflated the raft and got it and all our gear down the ladder. By 0730 there was a flickering faint glow in the hold and we could see the hole that was causing the surge. It was at the stern end of the hold under water about six feet at near high tide. We figured it would be about one to three feet below water at low tide. There was a water tight door in the bulkhead at the forward end of the hold where we were. It was only dogged with one latch, and with a piece of pipe and four-foot leverage we were able to unseal the door and open it. We stepped through the door to the forward hold into bright sun-light. Unlike the number two hold, the cargo hatch cover was completely gone. We retreated back into the number two hold and secured the door.

We sat down on the cool deck and ate our morning meal of K Rations. As we ate, Bill invited suggestions as to our next move. Mat said that he thought we should go out through the hole and inspect how the ship was aground and if the hole in this hold was the only hole. Bill and I agreed.

Bill said "Mat, get into just your trousers and go topside. Of course, be very careful not to expose yourself especially on the island side of the ship. Find a good place to keep watch. If anyone approaches, hit a pipe hard one time. We will hear it, hopefully they will not. If they get on us in this crystal clear water, it will be like being in a fish bowl. Come back in 30 minutes, we will be back by then." Bill and I put on our tanks as Mat went topside. Once we got outside the ship the visibility was almost as good under the water as above. The hole we came out of was the only hole but it extended aft into the engine room, 10 feet and the jagged piece of reef the ship had struck extended a good 20 feet into the engine room. The stern rested partly on the reef and partly in the sand on the shore side of the reef. It was obvious that this wreck was planted to stay a long time. Bill motioned me to follow and he reentered the ship but into the engine room. We surfaced next to a wide catwalk against the forward bulkhead. The

catwalk was about three feet above the surface at the low end and about three and a half feet where it connected to the forward bulkhead. We climbed three steps of a ladder and were standing on the catwalk. Other catwalks extended off this structure into the water over the engine room. As our eyes became accustomed to the eerie reflected light, we could see that the engine room crew didn't make it out. The fish hadn't left much except the bones and clothing. "They must have been steam cooked within seconds of the ship going on the reef," I said. "Yeah, the poor buggers," said Bill "but it shows one thing. The Jap's haven't dove or come in here from topside or they would have removed the bodies. Let's go back and meet Mat and then move everything in here." It was after dark by the time we got everything moved. We ate a box of rations and lay down to sleep. The grating of the catwalk was uncomfortable as hell but I was asleep in two minutes and I don't think I moved until Bill woke me for the four to eight watch.

## Chapter 9

Our watch position, Mat established, was on the tip of the bow on the main deck. One could sit hidden by the gunnels and peer out through port and starboard chinks. (A chink is the opening in the side of a vessel through which a line, a cable or a chain is passed.) At 0745 I crept back to the air vent, down the ladder into the number two hold, and then swam around and up into the engine room. We were doing this free dive now, to conserve our tanks. We only had a total of about two hours of air in each of our tanks. I went back out through the hole while Mat and Bill looked for a way to get topside from inside the engine room. Keeping below the gunnels and looking out 360 degrees every three to five minutes, I started exploring the portion of the main deck superstructures that were not under water. This included port and starboard forward sleeping compartments, the galley and the galley storage compartment and on the 02 deck, the bridge, captain's quarters and other officer quarters. I didn't go on the flying bridge from the bridge because the only way was on outside ladders. Just aft of the captain's cabin passageway was a companionway leading up into the radio shack. All of the radio equipment had been removed from the shack but the aerial was still rigged and seemed to be in good condition.

As I returned below I was more thorough, being careful not to leave signs of my search. In the captain's cabin in a locker that was evidently missed by scavengers, I found a large thick quilt and in the galley store room I found several sacks of rice. I assumed the bags were too heavy to haul to where they had abundant supplies. As I stepped out of the galley into the fore aft starboard main deck passageway I was startled when a door creaked open and Bill stepped into the passageway. He said in Japanese, (we were speaking only Japanese now on the chance we would be overheard) "Dr. Livingston, I presume? Mat and I have found another way out of the engine room through the door into a void area that extended around the smoke stack. The light from the door shined on an open hatch Mat was extending out of. Bill shined his flash down the companionway ladder where Mat was standing on the third step, steps above water. We went down the ladder and dogged the hatch above us. We then dove 30 feet to where a door led out of the smoke stack sleeve into the engine room. We popped to the surface and swam to our catwalk. As I climbed up on the catwalk I noticed a large wooden platform was now situated on the catwalk giving us a much more comfortable place to sit and lie down. "Where did you find this?" I asked. "It was floating right under this catwalk. It's the side of a packing box that held an airplane engine."

As we ate our mid-day meal, I made my report of what I had discovered topside and they told me of their discoveries below decks, mainly, the way out through the smoke stack sleeve. We decided our next order of business was to hook up to the ship's aerial. The way we decided to do this required being exposed so we rested the rest of the day with one person on watch. At 2200 hours I left my watch post on the bow and crept aft entering the main deck superstructure through the starboard door, forward and up the companionway to the bridge and then aft to the companionway up into the radio shack. Meanwhile Mat climbed a ladder inside the stack sleeve to a hatch at the top that opened onto a three foot wide deck with a three-foot gunnel surrounding the smoke stack. The sky wasn't completely dark, with a sliver moon, and I could see Mat as he peered over the side of the stack sleeve. I crouched and ran to the side of the stack and tapped it to let him know I was directly below him. Mat passed me a small line and with the bitter end I ran back to the radio shack. I climbed up a ladder to the roof of the shack and then up the aerial mast to almost as high as the top of the smoke stack. I then took up on the line and pulled our aerial wire over from the top of the smoke stack. I secured our aerial wire to the mast and spliced it into the ship's aerial that extended up another 20 feet. Just as I started down I was so startled I almost fell. Someone was laughing.

I looked toward the sound and not 80 yards off toward the island was a boat with three people coming our way. I got down the mast as fast as I could while keeping to the seaward side. I went quickly below and met Mat and Bill at the door to the smoke stack sleeve. Bill whispered, "Let's watch and listen. I don't think they saw you but we

must know.” We watched through a chalk as the three came along side. They tied up to the gangway but did not come aboard. Instead they dove from the gangway platform with Hawaiian sling spears. In less than a half hour they had speared several fish and cast off for the island. When they were 100 yards off we went back down into the engine room. We discussed the episode while we hooked up the radio.

Using a Japanese ship’s call we got an immediate blood curdling response. It was short and deadly. Decoded it read, “Jap’s attacked Pearl – US at war – can’t pick you up – God bless you.” I said, “Oh my God, we are dead.” Bill immediately retorted “Stow that shit. We are far from dead.” He paused for a moment and then went on. “Our mission is now changed. Our new mission is: inflict damage on the enemy and survive.”

I had never seen Mat cry, not even at nine years old when his dog he loved so much was killed in front of us by a pack of wild dogs. I cried, but he didn’t. Now, tears were streaming down his face. He turned away and didn’t make a sound for a good five minutes. Bill finally said “Dai jo-bu deska?” (Are you alright?) Mat snapped to attention and responded in the military subordinate. “Hai! I am ready to kill the enemy, Sir.”

## Chapter 10

Bill said, "There is no denying our situation is precarious, to put it mildly, but if we are careful we can do a lot of damage to the enemy. I have the first watch. Mat, I will see you in four hours. Get some rest, we have a big day in front of us tomorrow."

At the morning meal Bill said, "Our first task is to secure this hiding place and set it up so we can live here for a long time. We could live on fish and seaweed but rice would be a welcome addition to our diet. We will empty our water proof bags and stow all our gear. Next we will take two of the bags topside and get one bag of rice and that quilt from the captain's cabin."

We took the bag of rice from the rear of the stack. We closed the storeroom watertight door which was the way I first found it and also it kept the ship's rats out. We were back on our catwalk by 0900. Mat said, "I have an idea for a way to reduce the heat and humidity in here. Besides making it more comfortable, if we don't do something about it our gear is going to get mildewed." Bill said, "Ok, let's have it." "Those pipes leading up the bulkheads and ending at what looks like a few feet above the water line, I believe are bilge pump outlets. If we cut one pipe port and one starboard we will get some cross breeze. Also as the tide changes the water levels will suck in and blow out a lot of air." Bill said "Sounds like a good idea, how do we cut the pipes?" "That's the easy part," said Mat. "There's a rack on the bulkhead about 20 feet below us, 13 to 15 feet under the water. It holds two acetylene tanks. I am sure that if we look we will find torches." Bill said "Ok, Richard, you go on watch while Mat and I see if we can find a torch. If we do, we will bring up a tank so we can cut tonight."

When I came off watch, they had not only found a torch but they had found a tool locker with a bunch of tools including welding masts and welding rods. They also found a small alcohol stove. Bill said, "I don't see any reason we shouldn't all go on deck and enjoy the cool evening breezes, until it gets dark enough to work." We cleaned the stove and put fresh alcohol in it, wrapped it in a water tight bag and went topside. Bill and I kept a sharp watch while Mat set up the stove in the stack sleeve and brewed us up a batch of rice. I never knew just rice and salt could taste so good. After days of K rations it was like a four-course dinner at the Waldorf.

When we got through eating, Bill said, "Here's the plan: Richard, you go get your tank. Don't use air unless you have to but get in the water on the seaward side of the ship. Mat, you go below and cut the pipe on the starboard side, away from the island. Take this line with you and keep it tied to your waist. If you feel a tug, extinguish the torch and keep quiet. Richard, I want you to watch the side of the ship where Mat will be cutting and determine if the glow is too noticeable to do the same on the island side of the ship. If our friends from the island come calling, swim out into the darkness and wait for them to leave." I was in the water for about 30 minutes when Bill motioned for me to come back aboard. "Did you see any sign of the torch?" he asked. "No," I said, "I think we are safe to do it on the island side." "Ok," he said. "Go below and tell Mat to cut the other side." After both sides were cut we rigged tarpaulins so no light would shine out. The environment improved immediately.

I took the alarm line with me and went on the 2400 to 0400 watch. We had moved our night time watch position to the top of the smoke stack. Unlike the other nights, the islands were completely dark. Obviously they knew they were at war. There was a quarter moon and with binoculars I could make out several buildings on Eniwetok and I saw sentries walking the beach twice. I noted the compass bearings and times of the sentries. During my watch a Japanese freighter came into the lagoon, unloaded for about one hour and 40 minutes and left. No other ships were in the lagoon and I sighted no others.

In the morning after our very good breakfast of fish roe and rice, we discussed how and when we would first strike the enemy. We concluded we shouldn't do anything against the islands before the dark of the moon but we would try something against the next cargo ship, if it came in before the dark moon. The plan was for one of us to go under the ship with scuba and attach 2 magnetic bombs to the hull with 4 hour fuses. Hopefully, by the time the bombs exploded, the ship would be at sea and they would believe they were attacked by a sub.

During the next two nights (we had now switched to sleeping in the daytime) we did several things to improve our quarters and equipment. We found some surgical tubing and made some really wicked Hawaiian sling spears that would kill any fish or man. We also fashioned a still from steel barrels that produced about 3 gallons of fresh water per day. We set the still up in the stack sleeve in a way that we could drop it through the hatch and it would sink out of sight all in about 30 seconds.

I was chosen for the ship bomb mission. Not because I was best qualified but because I was the most expendable of the three of us. Bill was the leader and Mat was Japanese and might have a chance to strike or escape that would not work for a Caucasian. On the fifth night at 0120 a freighter came in and dropped anchor. I was in the water by 0145 and by 0300 I was 100 yards from the freighter. I dove and went the last 100 yards at a depth of 40 feet. I was under the ship at 0315, placed the charges and was on my way back. At about 0330 I was on the surface again swimming as fast as I could. The moon was more than two thirds but I was lucky I had a thick cover of strata cumulus. I pulled myself up on our gangway platform at 0446 and just as I stood up the whole area lit up like day and I was knocked off the platform into the water. I got under the platform as the whole area was pelted with flaming debris. It became dark again and I could see the bow of the freighter illuminated by fire, sinking.

I went up the gangway and was greeted by Bill. "I guess those fuses are give or take an hour or so." "Yah, if they had gone off a half hour sooner, I would be out there with blood coming out my ears." I said this in English. He went on in Japanese as if he had not noticed my slip. "That freighter must have been carrying munitions, she blew clear in half." "I wonder if they will think it was a sub?" I said.

"Don't know, there isn't much water in this lagoon for a sub." Bill went on "Let's keep a close, all hands, watch and see what happens." Just at dawn Mat reported through a pipe we hooked up with a whistle there were three Japanese ships about five miles out and two biplanes were up. They were looking for a sub. Just then Mat reported again. "That was the good news the bad news is there's a launch with a squad of Japanese Infantry heading toward us."

We met back at the door to the stack sleeve. Bill went through a check list and we secured for hiding. We secured the door to the sleeve with four dogs, as we originally found it, and we dogged it with a pipe. Then we dropped the still down the hatch, went below and dogged that hatch with leverage from a pipe. We all sat back to back on our airplane box platform so as not to be seen by a diver from below. Through the ports we had cut, we heard the officer bark commands as they came along side. He told them to search the ship and he told an individual, a diver, to go over the side. We heard noises as they thumped about the ship, opening doors and hatches and calling back to the officer as they cleared portions of the ship. Then a flash brightened the water below us.

For the last three days we had been feeding barracudas and the first thing the Japanese diver saw in the engine compartment was three of the biggest snakes (Great Barracudas) in the lagoon. Great Barracudas seldom attack humans, but they have, and they can take a leg off. After a perfunctory glance the diver left. An hour and 20 minutes passed when someone blew a police whistle and we could hear them leave the ship. Bill said, "Be very quiet, they

could have left someone aboard. We will stay here for two hours and then we will carefully search the ship.” By 1200 hours we determined that we were the only humans aboard.

We monitored the radio as much as we could and although it was hard to pick out fact, we pretty much determined that we had taken staggering losses at Pearl. We took no little satisfaction that we had one Jap ship to our credit. Through analysis of all our observations we developed a schematic of the buildings on the south end of Eniwetok and we had a pretty good schedule of the comings and goings of sentries. We also observed the Japanese had a real propensity for putting people in the trees along the beaches. They did not patrol nearly as much that portion of the island coast that was coral. I guess they were not concerned with swimmers and they knew no craft could get through the coral, especially on the seaward side with the crashing surf. We began planning an attack on a dug out building that was set off by itself at the south end of Eniwetok. We believed it must be munitions storage. We had a concern about the closeness of the building to our ship should we be able to blow it up but decided not to worry about that.

## Chapter 11

At 2400 hours on Jan 3, with a high tide and a dark moon, we set out from the wreck toward the south end of the island. Between us and the beach was about 80 yards of coral. Even at high tide, some coral jutted out of the water when a wave would ebb. At about 0100 we let a wave carry us over the last of the coral and onto the beach. About 12 feet from the water's edge was a 10-inch deep cut in the sand where water surged from the lagoon to the open sea and back on the tides. Bill and I lay in the cut, rifles at the ready. Mat, dressed in a loin cloth that hid a pistol, a hammer and a half pound of plastic explosive, and carrying a Hawaiian sling, walked across the open sand to the trees. When Mat got through the 40 yards of palms to the building, he took cover and watched for 10 minutes. As best he could tell, there was only one sentry walking a post 10 feet in front of two large double doors. Mat walked out into the clearing in front of the building and approached the sentry. He called out "I will trade a fine fish for a cigarette." The sentry brought his rifle to the ready and commanded Mat to halt and give the call sign. Mat took another two steps saying "I only wish one cigarette, please." As the sentry brought the muzzle of his rifle to bear, Mat released his sling spear. The three pronged projectile struck the poor man in the neck just below the chin and before he could get out more than a groan, Mat was on him, killing him with a knife thrust to the heart.

The double doors were padlocked. Mat took his hammer and hit the lock open. A second of light from his flash revealed we were correct. This was an ammo dump. He placed the charge and set the timer. He then drug the sentry into the building and closed the doors.

He was back on the beach in four minutes. The tide was just starting to go out. We went with it through the coral bed and then against it back to the wreck. As we were swimming Mat said, "I hope that fuse is better than the ones you used, Richard. I only set it for 30 minutes. The blast may kill us anyway. It looked like there was enough in there to blow this half of the Island to Japan." We came back into the ship through the hole. Just as we got up on the catwalk, even though the only light coming in had to come through 4 feet of sea water, the engine room lit up. In a split second there was a devastating concussion. We were all deaf for several minutes. The first thing I heard was Bill saying, "Don't light the lamp there may be holes in the bulkhead." We went topside through the sleeve but when we got to the hatch in the main deck, it was open. The deck had buckled and this hatch would never shut again. We peered through ports of the main deck cabins. There were fires all over the island. Two buildings and several tents we could see were aflame. I said, "You know, we may be America's most devastating weapon. The war isn't a month old yet and we have killed at least 100 of the enemy, sank a ship and severely damaged a major installation."

Bill said, "A big head is an easy target. We have been very lucky. I can tell you this, however, with certainty; our friends from the island are going to be back. This time, if we are on this wreck, they will find us. This is what we are going to do right now. Mat, take Richard and refit the chunks you cut out of the bilge pipes. Spot weld them in and then cover the cuts and the welds with grease. Next I want every bit of material that is not natural to the wreck, removed and the aerial restored as it was. Put the rice, the quilt, and the hammocks back where we found them. Everything else, the still, the spears and all our other gear, are going into a temporary hiding place. At the stern of the wreck between where the ship rests on the coral and the sand is a space hidden from view unless you dive down there and look in through the propellers. When they come, we are going down there. We will pray that no diver comes down and that they don't notice our bubbles."

Bill stood watch while Mat and I put the ship items back and took all our gear down to the hiding place. When we got done, the sun was up and we could see daylight through the engine room bulkhead. Several rivets were popped out and there were two partings between metal plates. We went through the hole and came back into the

number two hold. We could also see daylight through breaches in the port side of hold two. When we came on deck, Bill came down from the stack. We carefully peered out the main cabin port holes at the devastation we had wrought. For 50 yards around where the ammo dump building had been, there were no trees and instead of the building, there was a 100 foot wide crevasse. Bill said, "From on top of the stack I could see them going crazy all over the three islands. I think we killed and wounded a bunch in the tents. You can see they are still taking stretchers out of that area." Mat said, "I didn't see any sand bags around that building and it was only dug in about three feet. It was an accident waiting to happen. The commander of the base should stand court-martial." "Very true," Bill said, "but more likely he will kill himself."

All at the same time we spotted a launch coming our way at high speed. It must have come from Perry Island. We dropped down the hatch in the stack sleeve, surfaced in the engine room and then dove down and out the hole and back into the number 2 hold. We got our tanks on and dove to our hiding place just as the launch came roaring up. At once, two divers with flashlight and no air went into the number two hold and then after about five minutes came out and back into the engine room. They stayed in the engine room for over ten minutes. When they finally came out they surfaced and swam out of site around the bow of the ship. After almost three hours, the launch left. Per plan, we assumed they left people on board. We left most of our gear where it was and went back up into the engine room. We sat and laid on our platform until 0400 the next morning. Mat was the first one up the stack sleeve. He barely broke the surface and he dove back down motioning us to follow. When we came up he said, "There is someone up there, I could smell cigarette smoke." Bill asked, "Couldn't it have been from their visit?" "No, it was very strong. I am sure someone was smoking in the passageway just outside the open door to the stack sleeve."

We spent the next week in the engine room. By the third day we were out of K rations and on the fifth day we ran out of water. The last two days we had nothing but raw fish. At 0900 the morning of the seventh day we heard a craft pull alongside. "Let's go up, I want to hear what they have to say," Bill said. We went through the hole, into the number two hold and up the ladder in the air scoop. About half way up, we could hear pretty well. The boat crew was chiding their comrades for being able to do nothing for a week but lie around in the sun. Then an officer spoke and the conversation got serious. "Per your signals, you have nothing to report, is that correct?" Someone responded crisply in the subordinate. "Yes, sir, that is correct. We kept a close watch and listened with an ear to a bulkhead at all times. We saw and heard nothing." The officer then barked an order. "Tell your men to secure this position and get in the launch." We heard someone of the watch party ask "Have they found anything out yet?" One of the boat crew answered "They think it was one of the Korean workers or comfort women. They are killing some every day until someone tells or someone steps forward." We kept quiet and listened for two hours after they left and then we crept back down, went out the hole and back into the engine room. At 2200 hours we came back up the stack sleeve and searched the ship.

We were alone. I found a pool of warm dirty rain water trapped against the radio shack bulkhead. We all agreed it was the best tasting water in the history of man. We were relaxing for a moment by the water and Bill said, "At least I think they are convinced that no one is hiding on the wreck." "Ok, Richard, you stand watch while Mat and I go down and get all our gear." By dark, our gear, the hammocks, the sack of rice and the still were back. Water was distilling and rice was cooking. The breaches in the engine room bulkhead made the area much more comfortable but disallowed the use of any light.

I had the four to eight watch the next morning. At 0600 I could see a bunch of people being herded down onto the beach by a platoon of soldiers. There were also a lot of other soldiers standing around. The people, about 100 men and 30 women, were lined up in one long line facing the ocean. The line was formed for about five minutes when an officer and a sergeant came up behind the first person in the line, closest to me. The sergeant had a wooden box in

his hand. He shook the box, looked down into it and called something to the officer. The officer marched down the line to the fifth man, turned and shot the man in the back of the head. I was so shocked I dropped my binoculars. A man down the line broke for the water and was cut down by rifle fire before he got wet. As I brought my binoculars to bear again the officer marched two more spaces down the line turned and shot that man. He then marched to that part of the line where the women began. The sergeant shook the box, looked in, and called something out. The officer took a step, turned and shot the second woman. He then went in front of the line and addressed the survivors through a megaphone. I couldn't hear but I could imagine he was telling them they would all be there tomorrow morning if the saboteurs were not apprehended. I made notes of everything and described the officer and the sergeant the best I could from seeing them through binoculars at over 500 yards. This same happening occurred two more mornings and then stopped. Either someone confessed or they felt they couldn't spare any more workers or comfort women.

Four days later at 2200 hours a Jap freighter the Yamataka Maru dropped anchor in the lagoon. We figured if we attacked her, the Jap's would know for sure they had enemy people on their island. We also concluded that if we could be successful once more, even if we got caught it was more than worth it. Since I was the designated ship sinker, I was in the water by 2230. This was a bigger ship and was anchored in the deepest part of the lagoon and about half the distance from the wreck as the first ship. Even though there was a moon and no clouds I was able to get down about 70 feet and I felt pretty good about my stealth. I set three charges and fused them in tandem. This time, I set the timers for 10 hours. It was all very easy and very fast. I was back aboard the wreck by 0110. We were all greatly relieved when at 0340 the Yamataka Maru, having finished off-loading, got under way.

Mat and I were monitoring the radio at 1128 when we heard a plain language S.O.S. from the Yamataka. Mat said, "Oh my God, I think we got her." She was reporting she had been torpedoed and was sinking. She gave her location as 11 25 50 north by 162 22 64 east, which we reckoned was out about 70 miles. We went through our hide routine and put all our gear down under the wreck in our hiding place. We left it all down there and remained ready to go down ourselves for two days but no search party came.

The day after the sinking of the Yamataka, while we were eating our delicious breakfast of cold rice and raw fish above decks where we could keep watch, Mat said he had a plan. Bill said, "Ok, Let's hear it." Mat took a big breath and put forward a plan that would most likely result in his torture and death. "I believe we should risk a transmission. We should ask if the Yamataka truly sank and if she did, do they have a list of hands lost. If they do, I will take the identity of one of them and wash up on an Eniwetok beach." Bill and I couldn't fathom what we were hearing. And then, after some moments, we could see it as the unbelievable opportunity it was. That night as the Island was broadcasting; we sent a 13 second decoded zip message. The next day we got a reply. It read, all indications are that the Yamataka sank. No U.S. sub has taken credit. No info on lost or saved hands. Ship general information and crew manifest follows:

A search of the names revealed three who were from Okinawa and one who was from the town of Sheri. That man's name was Gichin Funakoshi, a 22-year-old officer who was listed as the ship's Fourth Officer. Obviously he was a relative of the great master. Mat felt that because of his knowledge of the Funakoshi family and the town, although all that knowledge was second hand, this was the man he could best represent. We risked one more speed message asking any available info about Gichin Funakoshi. We got back more than we expected. Gichin Funakoshi was a great nephew of the Great Master. The Funakoshi family was known to be against Tojo and the war but was also known to be loyal to the Emperor. All of the young Funakoshi men were serving in the military or in the Merchant Marine. In the Merchant Marine they were allowed to become officers, but not in the military. Young Gichin enrolled in the Imperial Japanese Merchant Marine College at Yokosuka at age 16.



## Chapter 12

Mat didn't eat or drink for the next two-and-one-half days. We found a pair of trousers and a shirt that were left aboard by the Merchant crew and they fit pretty well. We also found an empty Japanese cigarette package that was left by one of search crew. We put the package in the shirt pocket. We then burned the name off one of the wreck's life preservers we had found with alcohol. The fourth night after the sinking of the Yamataka Maru we set out to sea in our rubber boat. We welcomed the dark, cloudy skies but the sea was rough as hell. It took us four hours to get two-thirds of a mile off the seaside of Eniwetok. We were very concerned with getting back to the wreck before dawn. At about 0200 Mat went over the side and started swimming for the beach. Bill said, "God, I hope he didn't overdo it. I hope he has enough strength to make it to the beach." We got back to the wreck ten minutes before sunrise.

Mat washed up on the beach at 0530 and was spotted by a sentry almost immediately. He didn't have to fake his condition, he was unconscious. He was brought under guard to the island hospital. When he awoke he was hooked up to a saline bottle and a doctor was standing over him. He looked up and said, "Where am I?" The doctor answered, "Eniwetok Island." Mat said, "My grandfather and his brother have brought me here to serve the Emperor." He then went back to sleep.

When he awoke again the same doctor was there. He said, "Are you feeling better?" Mat said, "Yes, much better." "Would you like something to eat?" "Yes, thank you sir," Mat replied. They brought him noodles, rice and squid. He ate it all and felt sick but he held it down. He was on his second cup of tea when an officer came up to his bed. Mat sprang out of bed and almost collapsed but managed to stand at attention. The officer asked, "Are you Japanese Military?"

Mat answered "Sir, I am a second lieutenant officer in the Imperial Merchant Marine. I am Fourth officer of the Yamataka Maru out of Yokuska. Please sir, can you tell me anything of my ship?" The officer looked at Mat for a long moment and said, "You don't know?" "No Sir, I was on my way from the bridge to the flying bridge and the next thing I remember I was in the water clinging to a life vest." "How did you get here?" the officer asked harshly. "Sir, I came onto a large timber so I was able to get out of the water some of the time. I knew I was east of these islands and when I could, I swam or paddled west. Sir, on the second day my grandfather gave me a bird to eat and now he and his brother have brought me here." Mat felt all of this as if it were true. Tears were rolling down his cheeks. "Sounds like you are Shinto, correct?" "Yes sir," he replied. "Please sir, do you know of my ship?" "Your ship sent an S.O.S., reporting she had been torpedoed and was sinking. As far as I know, you are the only survivor." Mat bowed his head and said, "May my comrades be greeted by their honorable ancestors and rewarded for their service to the Emperor." The officer snapped to with a "Hai!" "What is your name?" With this question he changed his tone and much more friendly. Mat in the subordinate bowed as he replied "Gichin Funakoshi, sir, and what officer do I have the honor of addressing, sir?" "I am second lieutenant Jigoro Matsuoka. I must write a report, do you feel up to answering questions?" "Oh, yes sir, I am at your complete disposal sir. You have a good name sir, are you related to the honorable statesman, Yosuke Matsuoka?" "I am honored to be a distant relative, yes, and you also have a famous name. Are you from Okinawa?" "Yes sir, the town of Sheri." "Then you are named after the great Karate master, Gichin Funakoshi. How are you related?" "I have the honor although unworthy to be the Master's grandnephew." "You are obviously educated and you present yourself well," the officer went on. "What education do you have and do you have any skill that could be of use here in the service of the Emperor?" Mat took a chance and made up some stuff. "Sir, you and your superiors must judge how I can be of use. I, of course, am at your complete disposal. Sir, I graduated eighth grade at the Sheri School where I was found to have a talent for language. At 16 I was enrolled in the Imperial Japanese Merchant Marine School at Yokuska. While in Yokuska I graduated

classes in conversational English, conversational Spanish, radio communication and I attended the Yokuska Gichin Funakoshi School of Karate.” As he finished writing all of this, Second Lieutenant Matsuoka looked up through the top of his glasses and asked “Tell me Lieutenant Funakoshi, why you chose the merchant Marine instead of the Army or the Navy?” “Sir, I felt I could best serve the Emperor as an Officer in the Merchant Marine rather than an enlisted man in the military. My family’s views against the policies of the honorable Tojo are well known. Many of my family are in the military but they can’t become officers.” As Lieutenant Matsuoka stood up and closed his notebook, he said “Lieutenant Funakoshi, in your case, I believe the most honorable Prime Minister has made a mistake.” Mat said, and really felt, “You honor me and my ancestors with your kind words, Sir.” Lieutenant Matsuoka spun on his heels and left the room.

The next morning as Mat was finishing his breakfast Lieutenant Matsuoka came into his cubicle. Mat snapped to attention. Lieutenant Matsuoka said, “Please, Lieutenant Funakoshi, be seated and finish your breakfast.” Mat went to the door and asked an orderly to bring more tea and a clean cup. Then Mat said “Please Lieutenant Matsuoka, will you have some tea?” The Lieutenant accepted and sat down. “Lieutenant Funakoshi, we are of equal rank and age. I would be honored if you would address me as Jigoro San and I would be doubly honored if you will allow me to address you as Gichin San.” Mat said “Again you honor me. By all means, you may address me as you wish.”

Lieutenant Matsuoka said “Gichin San, I am a junior aid to Colonel Matsu Suzuki, the commander of this base. Two weeks ago this base sustained a horrific blow. Somehow our ammunition dump blew up. The devastation on the island was very bad. An inquiry directed by the Colonel and conducted by his staff has found no conclusive cause of the explosion. They however concluded that the construction of the ammo bunker was grossly negligent and was the cause of much of the devastation. The Colonel had assigned the construction of that bunker to an engineering officer and did not check his work. The Colonel feels he must commit seppuku to regain his and his family’s honor. Gichin San, Colonel Matsu Suzuki was a student of your great uncle, Gichin Funakoshi, and is a man of “Tao.” Mat said in English, “Oh! My God.” Jigoro looked puzzled and said “What did you just say?” Mat with complete composure said, “I said “Oh! My God, I told you I studied English. There are no words in our language to express my feeling. The words call on the supreme God. I feel so much for your honorable Colonel.” “Gichin San, the Colonel believes you have been sent here for him. Gichin San, are you a man of “Tao?” “Jigoro San, I am of that discipline but am yet unworthy.” “But you are of that discipline, how many years?” “Since I was three years old.”

“Gichin San, my Colonel has been in meditation for four days. He has turned his command over to his first officer. He wishes to see you. I have brought an Army Officer uniform Lieutenant 2nd grade. He has authorized you to wear it. We have no Merchant Marine uniforms. Please dress and come with me now.”

A Lieutenant Colonel ushered them into the Colonel’s quarters. The Colonel was in Shinto ceremonial robes in meditation before a Shinto altar. After several minutes, the Colonel turned and addressed Mat. “You are named after my master Gichin Funakoshi. The doctor who attended you said that the first thing you said when you came to in the infirmary was that your grandfather and his brother had brought you to this island. I believe that is absolutely true. As a man of Tao, you are my brother and you have a duty to perform.” “Honorable Colonel, I am of your discipline and I strive to be worthy of Tao, but I have far to go.” “Yes and I also have far to go. I will become a true man of Tao and regain my honor at sunrise tomorrow. I will also show the criminals and terrorists of the Dragon societies and the Yakuza that we men of Okinawa can be brave and loyal without being killers of the innocent. You are of Okinawan heritage and I am Japanese, but you are more my brother than any of them. As your brother I am asking you, and as your commander I am ordering you, to assist me tomorrow with the sword.” “Then Sir, I can do

nothing but comply. May I stay with you tonight in meditation and prayer?" "Lieutenant Matsuoka, bring my brother Shinto robes."

Through the night Colonel Suzuki spoke of his life and his family. He asked Mat about his life growing up in Sheri and his education in the original Funakoshi dojo. By this time, Mat was astounded with himself and how easily he had become Second Lieutenant Gichin Funakoshi and with the deep emotion he felt for his part. He told the Colonel several stories that he remembered from his father and made up some of his own. The Colonel asked if he had ever been instructed by the Master personally. Mat answered that he had, once when the Master was home on a visit when he was five years old, but that he was in a class with several of his cousins. Finally, Lieutenant Matsuoka came into the room and said "Colonel as you instructed, I have your dress uniform ready and it is 0500 hours." "Very well" replied the Colonel and then in traditional command voice he ordered Lieutenant Matsuoka to take Mat to a place where he could refresh himself before it was time for him to assist him.

Mat stood and addressed the Colonel, "Sir, could you grant me a request?" "What is it?" he snapped. "Please, sir, could Lieutenant Matsuoka wait two minutes for me outside so I can tell you something of up most importance?" The Colonel addressed Lieutenant Matsuoka "Lieutenant Funakoshi will join you shortly." When Lieutenant Matsuoka was gone, Mat stepped to the altar and picked up the sword he would use later. As the Colonel looked on in astonishment Mat cut a strip from his robe and tied it around the base part of his little finger on his left hand. He then placed the sword over the second knuckle and using the post of the altar for a brace leaned on the sword and severed his finger. In a daze, Mat stretched out his right hand with the bloody finger cradled in his palm. "Colonel Suzuki please accept this, first as a token of my regard for you and secondly as my apology to you. Today you will know all about me. I hope after you know you will still believe I am a man of honor and worthy to assist you." The Colonel with tears in his eyes cleared his throat and said, "My brother, you are truly a man of Tao. You will never know how much what you have done means to me. You are truly sent to me by my ancestors. I will go to them knowing my honor and theirs is restored."

When Mat staggered out of the Colonel's quarters Lieutenant Matsuoka was shocked. Mat was as white as a sheet and he was holding his left hand in a wad of blood soaked white robe. Lieutenant Matsuoka exclaimed, "Gichin San what in the world has happened?" "Jigoro San, I was required by honor to present our Colonel my left little finger as a token of my regard for him and to beg for his forgiveness when he becomes knowledgeable of my unworthiness. Please, Jigoro San, take me where I can get some cool water and a clean uniform. I am very weak and I must regain enough strength to perform my duty."

Mat was still in a daze when Lieutenant Matsuoka led him into a small rock garden where Colonel Suzuki sat cross legged on a mat. Present around him were about 20 officers. Mat took his place to the left and slightly behind Colonel Suzuki. Colonel Suzuki spoke. "Because of my negligence the lives of many heroic Japanese men have been lost. I have failed in my duties. This morning I will regain my honor and the honor of my ancestors. Comrades, I am extremely fortunate. My ancestors have sent me a brother to assist me in regaining my honor. I present to you Second Lieutenant Gichin Funakoshi of the Imperial Japanese Merchant Marine. Lieutenant Funakoshi is named after and is a close relation to my master Gichin Funakoshi. Young Gichin Funakoshi is a man of Tao and I revere him as a brother. It is my wish that after I have gone to my ancestors you will find good use of my brother in service to the Emperor." With that Colonel Suzuki ripped open the front of his tunic. He then reached forward to a ceremonial knife and wrapped the top third of the blade with white paper. While he was doing this Mat picked up the sword and bathed it in water from a beaker. The Colonel placed the point of the blade at the left side of his lower abdomen. He hesitated but a split second before he thrust the blade deep into his stomach. It was his intent to draw the blade to the right and disembowel himself but a split second after his thrust Mat struck his head from his body.

Mat took comfort in the fact that his skill with the sword confined the excruciating pain the Colonel Suzuki inflicted on himself to less than two seconds.

There was complete silence in the garden. With the Colonel's blood spattered in various amounts on all present, they all sat in reverent meditation for at least ten minutes. Finally, one by one all left the garden until only Lieutenant Colonel Tanaka, who had been the Colonel's first officer, Lieutenant Matsuoka and Mat remained. Mat had slumped to the deck and was sitting cross legged, still holding the sword. The Lieutenant Colonel addressed Mat in an uncharacteristically soft tone of voice for a senior to a junior. "Lieutenant Funakoshi," Mat looked up and responded the best he could. "Yes Colonel." "Lieutenant Funakoshi", the Lieutenant Colonel went on, "You served my Colonel well today." Then suddenly his voice changed to the command mode, "Lieutenant Funakoshi, report to the base hospital, get treatment for your hand and loss of blood. You are to be strong enough for duty tomorrow." Mat did his best to snap to attention and responded with a "Hai" and a bow. He would have fallen down except Lieutenant Matsuoka braced him and then assisted him to the hospital.

At 0530 the next morning Mat was awakened by a hospital nurse who presented him with a fresh set of clothes, this time, combat dress for a second lieutenant. The nurse informed Mat that Lieutenant Matsuoka was waiting for him in the Officer's Mess. Mat asked for directions, dressed and was in the mess in 12 minutes. Lieutenant Matsuoka was sitting with a young officer. When he saw Mat he stood and addressed Mat formally. "Ohayo gozaimasu Shoi Gichin Funakoshi." Mat responded, The officer with Lieutenant Matsuoka was a Full Lieutenant. Lieutenant Matsuoka bowed and said "Lieutenant Funakoshi, may I present an upper classmate of mine, Lieutenant Katsura Taro?" Mat snapped to and said, "I am honored to meet you. As with my friend Lieutenant Matsuoka, are you also related to a famous person, the honorable Prime Minister who bore your name?" Lieutenant Taro bowed and said he had the honor of being the forth grandson to the honorable Prime Minister. "Your grandfather holds a special place in the hearts of Okinawa's people. He was fair with us and open handed." "You honor my family" Lieutenant Taro said. "All on this island have heard how you honored our Colonel. I wished to thank you and to present myself to you. If ever I can be of help to you, I am at your service. I know Lieutenant Matsuoka and you have urgent business so I will take my leave." With that he marched off.

"Gichin San, everyone on this island is talking about yesterday. We all take pride in our Colonel and believe, like he did, that you were sent here to assist him with the sword." "Gichin San, I will not be on Colonel Santana's staff. My last official act as a staff officer will be to escort you to an appointment with the new commander at 1100 hours." "Why have we met so early?" Mat asked. "Gichin San I wished to warn you about Colonel Tanaka. I have no reason to believe he is not the most honorable of officers and he seemed to be very loyal to Colonel Suzuki even though Colonel Suzuki was from Okinawa." Then why the warning?" Mat asked. "Colonel Tanaka is from Kobe where his family is involved with many businesses. Gichin San, as you no doubt know, to be big in business in Kobe, one has to be big in Ichiwakai. There is no way to know, but most people believe the Tanaka family either controls the Ichiwakai or is very high in that secret society. No one has to tell you that the men of Tao and the Dragon Societies are and always have been mortal enemies." Mat said, "Jigoro San, I thank you for your concern. I have to assume Colonel Tanaka's loyalty to the Emperor will cause him to judge me strictly on my duty." "Gichin San, I have done my duty, your response is good. Let's eat, and then I will let you go until 1045 at your hospital cubical."

At 0900 hours Mat made his prearranged signal to Bill and me. We had agreed that as a signal, he had made it and was successful in his masquerade, at 0900 hours or 1400 hours, he would walk a number of steps between two trees visible from the wreck. I was somewhat astounded and elated to see Mat dressed in an Army officer uniform doing just that on this, the fourth day after his departure.



## Chapter 13

Precisely at 1100 hours Mat was summoned into Colonel Tanaka's office. Mat braced at attention. The Colonel left him that way for a full five minutes and then looked up from his desk and barked, "At ease Lieutenant, sit." Mat sat down. "Lieutenant Funakoshi I have felt that Okinawa men should not be allowed into the officer corps and for the most part I have not changed my mind. What is perplexing is that the two men I have most recently seen prove themselves worthy to be Samaria are men of Tao, Colonel Suzuki who is Japanese but is a man of Tao and Lieutenant Funakoshi who is Okinawan and is a man of Tao. Lieutenant, the Emperor has need of your service on this island. We lost our communication officer in the ammo blast and we also have no one in this command, beside myself, who is fluent in English. Lieutenant Funakoshi, I leave it up to you. I can put you on a merchant ship within a month or you can choose to remain in my command. If you remain, I will do all in my power to obtain your Army commission. I believe with the influence of my family an exception will be made and you will be commissioned. Either decision you make, you will be treated by all in this command as Samaria."

Mat said, "First Colonel, I must congratulate you. I see you are promoted full Colonel." "Thank you. Actually, Lieutenant Funakoshi, I was promoted three weeks ago but under the circumstances I felt I should not acknowledge until today." "I understand," Mat said. Mat went on, "Colonel you honor me and my ancestors. I will be most happy to serve the Emperor under your command in whatever rank or duty I am assigned." "Good, report to "C" Company Commander, Captain Fuke, he will arrange for you to draw clothing, assign you quarters and put you to work. You will continue to wear the uniform of 2nd Lieutenant and will be accorded all that is due that rank. You, however, are not military and are junior to a private in matters of war. You will be working in communications but you will not handle military code or classified material until your commission comes through or you are ordered by a superior officer. You are dismissed." Mat snapped to with a "Hai," did an about face and marched out.

Mat found Captain Fuke just down the hall. Mat presented himself to the sergeant at the desk outside the Captain's office and asked to see the Captain. "Is the Captain expecting you, sir?" "I don't know," Mat replied, "Colonel Tanaka ordered me to report to the Captain." "Yes sir, I will inform the Captain." The sergeant came right back out of the Captain's office and said "Please, go in sir." The second Mat saw Captain Fuke he recognized him as the officer who shot the workers and comfort women on the beach. Mats' first instinct was to kill the man, but he quickly got hold of himself and resumed his part. "Lieutenant Funakoshi reporting for duty, sir." "Yes Lieutenant, our Colonel has told me of you and of course the whole island it talking about you." The Captain remained seated and looking up at mat through thick gold framed glasses, he said, "Tell me Lieutenant is the severing of one's finger a ritualistic act often performed among disciples of Okinawans' primitive secret societies?" Mat looked the Captain straight in his eyes for a long moment, until he could see the beads of sweat start to pop out on his forehead. Then he said in an even, low voice not wavering his gaze. "Captain since Okinawan secret societies are secret, I would not have the slightest idea." Captain Fuke then made a movement in his chair in an attempt to regain control. "Lieutenant Funakoshi, do I detect an impertinent attitude toward this officer?"

"Not at all sir. If my attempt at answering the Captain to the best of my ability sounded impertinent, I am so sorry." "Very well then, but you better know I only tolerate maximum performance from my officers and men and I do not tolerate impertinence at all, is that understood?" "Absolutely sir" snapped Mat. "I am assigning Sergeant Oshema as your aid. The Sergeant will help you get established as Communications Officer. The Sergeant is cleared to handle military code and secret documents where I understand you are not." At this point, there was no doubt in Mats' mind that this officer was contemptuous of Okinawans in general and of Lieutenant Funakoshi in particular. "Beside your duties in communications," the Captain went on, "you will report to Captain Kano, our Judo school instructor. Captain Kano is interested in Karate and would like to investigate your knowledge. You will find

Sergeant Oshema in the communications tent. You are dismissed.” Mat braced, saluted, barked a “Hai” turned and marched out of the room.

Mat found Sergeant Oshema in the radio tent as the Captain said he would. For the second time that day Mat was almost overcome with anger and hate. Sergeant Oshema was the sergeant who marched behind Captain Fuke and called the dice numbers that determined whom the Captain would shoot. Mat addressed Sergeant Oshema in the traditional superior to subordinate tone. The sergeant jumped to attention and saluted and snapped out a “Hai.” “Sergeant, I am Lieutenant Gichin Funakoshi and I have been assigned as the new communication officer. You have been assigned as my aide.” “Yes sir,” the sergeant snapped. “Is there an office designated for me?” “Yes sir, in the smaller tent next to this one.” “Very well, Sergeant, you lead, I will follow.” The sergeant led Mat next door to a twelve by twelve tent put up on a deck about three feet off the sand. In the tent were two desks, three chairs and a filing cabinet. Mat sat and left the sergeant at attention. “Sergeant, did you know you were to be assigned as my aide.” “Yes sir,” the sergeant replied. “Sergeant as your immediate superior my first order to you is that you will report only to me unless you have direct orders to do otherwise from an officer senior to me.” Mat could see from his hesitation and confusion, he had orders to do just that. “Sergeant, you are to meet me in this office at 1600 today with a roster of all personnel in this company in order of their rank and a job description for each. Do you understand?” “Hai” the sergeant responded.

Mat got directions and found Captain Kano in his quarters. Mat braced and reported as ordered. The Captain immediately told Mat to sit down and then asked if he had eaten lunch. Mat said that he had not and the Captain suggested they go together to the officers’ mess where they could eat and discuss their mutual interests. Mat accepted and thought to himself, one out of three isn’t so bad. It turned out that Captain Kano had a good knowledge of Karate and Mat and he sat until 1400 hours deep in discussion of the varied disciplines. During the discussion the Captain mentioned that Sergeant Oshema was an advanced judo master and Captain Fuke thought it would be a good idea for the Sergeant and Lieutenant Funakoshi to do a demonstration of how the two disciplines might fare against each other. “You mean a match? Persons of my discipline do not engage in contests.” “I know that, Lieutenant. This would not be a contest, it would be merely a controlled comparison of kata. The Captain suggested the demonstration could take place in the dojo at 2200 this evening. The Captain stressed, however, that his was only a suggestion and not an order. You are not required to do the demonstration.” Mat said, “Oh, by all means, if you and the Captain believe a demonstration will benefit your class I will be honored to participate. I will be at your dojo at 2130 hours. I have no appropriate dress, however.” “I will have dress for you, Lieutenant.”

Mat was sitting at his desk when Sergeant Oshema came into his office. The sergeant braced. Mat barked, “Report, Sergeant.” It was obvious after just a few minutes that Sergeant Oshema didn’t know much about the duties of the individuals in the Communication Platoon. Mat stopped the sergeant in midsentence and said, “Sergeant, I must be mistaken; I was under the impression that you are and have been the first sergeant of this platoon. Am I wrong?” “No sir” he replied. “How long have you been first sergeant?” “Nine months, sir.” “Is there a document stating the mission of this platoon and a chain of command chart?” “I am not sure, sir.” “Sergeant, I would demand this at 0800 tomorrow morning, but I know you have been assigned a task tonight by Captain Fuke so be in this office at 1300 hours tomorrow with the subject documents if they exist. Be prepared to suggest changes to those documents or to create them from scratch if they do not exist. Also Sergeant, set up appointments with all squad leaders at one hour intervals commencing at 0800 hours day after tomorrow. Set appointments with highest ranked personnel first progressing to the lowest rank. You are dismissed.” The Sergeant snapped to, saluted and left.

## Chapter 14

The dojo located at the other end of the island from the ammo dump blast seemed to be undamaged. Captain Kano met Mat at the entrance and led him into a large room, at least 60 by 40 feet. At one end of the road was an altar upon which sat a four foot high Buddha. The wall of the other end of the room was centered with a 10-foot Japanese flag. Mat saluted the flag and then bowed to the Buddha. Captain Kano said, "So you may understand where I stand on certain subjects, I will tell you, I am Buddhist of the Nichiren." Mat said, "You are of a most honorable order."

Captain Kano first acknowledged Captain Fuke and several other officers, then addressed the class in general. "This is not a contest or a match. It is a demonstration by Sergeant Oshema and Lieutenant Funakoshi of Judo kata and Karate kata." Had Mat not been in pain from his throbbing left hand and weak from loss of blood he may have perceived what was coming. Captain Kano motioned Sergeant Oshema and Mat to the center of the mat. They both bowed to the Captain, then to the altar, and then Mat bowed to the sergeant while the sergeant leaned over, grabbed Mats' left sleeve, pulled him off balance and with his hip executed a perfect Nagewaza (throw) driving Mat down on the mat with enough force to knock the air out of him and render him unconscious. Mat awoke gasping for breath, and the first person he saw was Captain Fuke. He had a satisfied sadistic smirk on his face. Mat was furious but he forced himself to remain calm. Captain Kano was kneeling next to him. "I am so sorry, Lieutenant Funakoshi I had no..." Mat cut him off. "Not at all Captain. The sergeant executed a perfect throw and demonstrated how persons of his kind can catch an opponent off guard." (The last wasn't lost on the Captain or others within hearing) "Let us continue the demonstration." "But Lieutenant I must protest, you were knocked unconscious, you could have a concussion. It would be dangerous for you to continue." "Captain, with respect sir, I merely had the wind knocked out of me for a moment." He then said in a low voice that only the Captain could hear, "Please Captain." The Captain stood up and said, the demonstration will continue. He then again waved Mat and the Sergeant to the middle of the mat. Mat allowed the Sergeant to again get hold of his left sleeve but this time Mat came with the pull and as Sergeant Oshema began to turn to get leverage, Mat struck him with a hand sword blow. Had the blow struck on the neck, it would have killed him. As it was, the blow tore his right ear half off his head. The Sergeant got up, bleeding and furious. His rage made him disregard all his kata and he charged. Mat made a slight fake to the right, stepped to the left, swept the Sergeant's legs from under him and delivered a short, levered punch just below the right rib cage. The Sergeant lay on the mat gasping for breath and vomiting. Mat looked straight at Captain Fuke and said in a calm but loud enough voice. "Officers, I am so sorry. I did not properly instruct my aide. The Sergeant obviously did not understand our purpose here tonight. I am sorry we wasted your time. I hope my aide and I will be given another opportunity after I have properly instructed him. By your leave, sirs, good night. With that Mat walked out of the dojo."

Mat only got about ten feet out of the dojo when he was called. Mat turned. It was Lieutenant Matsuoka. "Lieutenant Matsuoka, were you in the dojo?" "Yes, I should have warned you also about Captain Fuke. I believe he is not an honorable man and the Sergeant is his dog. Are you OK?" "I don't believe I have anything broken, I feel like someone has beaten me with a baton and my head is throbbing." "Are you going to the hospital?" "Yes, but only to sleep, I didn't get a quarters assignment today." "Gichin San, (Mat noted the Lieutenant addressed him as a friend) there is an empty place in my cubicle, stay there tonight and we will get you assigned tomorrow. Let's go get your things." "All I have is under my arm, and what I am wearing I must return to the dojo tomorrow."

Right outside the tent where Lieutenant Matsuoka and Mat rolled out their sleeping mats, was an onsen (steam bath). Mat spent two hours that night and an hour in the morning in the onsen so that he could walk and not grimace

from the pain. Mat concluded that if he had landed on any but a thin board deck with a thick mat, the throw Sergeant Oshema executed on him would have killed him.

After his soak, Lieutenant Matsuoka, whom Mat was now addressing as Jigoro San, accompanied him to the Quarter Master and drew a full kit for a 2nd Lieutenant and got Mat assigned to Lieutenant Jigoro's tent. Precisely at 1300 hours, Sergeant Oshema reported. Mat could see he was in pain and Mat was ashamed of himself for the pleasure it gave him to leave him standing at attention. After a moment he relented, put the sergeant at ease and invited him to sit. The Sergeant, with a look that could kill, said that by the Lieutenant's leave, he would stand at ease. Mat retorted in the gruff superior voice, "Stand at ease, Sergeant, report!" "Sir, to the best of my knowledge there is no written job description for personnel in this platoon. Sir, I have this organization chart but it is not filled in with any names." "Very well, Sergeant, report back to me at 2000 hours tonight with a written mission for this platoon. Also write up the responsibility of each squad toward that mission. You are dismissed." Again Mat was ashamed at the pleasure he got from seeing the pain in the Sergeant's face when he attempted to snap to.

Mat spent the early afternoon writing a report to Captain Fuke. He did not state in the report that the communication platoon was disorganized, but he did state what he was doing to organize it. At 2200 hours Sergeant Oshema reported. The mission statement the Sergeant wrote and the assigning of responsibility to the squads was pretty good. Mat made some minor corrections and then he ordered the Sergeant to report back in the morning for interviews of the squad leaders. When Mat got back to his tent, Jigoro was waiting. Jigoro suggested they take a soak in the "onsen" and then dress for dinner and go to the officer's club. The officer's club was something else, the food was fantastic and they were served by Korean pleasure women dressed as Geisha. For a long time, Jigoro sat and told Mat of his family and his childhood. He spoke of things that would only be discussed between close friends. It came to the surface of Mats' thoughts that he had deep affection for this man, and that he may very well have to kill him. This put Mat into a deeper depression than he had ever felt before. Mat and Jigoro got back to their tent after 0100.

## Chapter 15

It was 0700 and Mat was on his third cup of tea when Captain Fuke entered his office unannounced. Mat jumped to attention and braced. Mat snapped off “Good morning Captain Fuke, how can I be of service to you?” “You can explain why, according to your report, you have taken it on yourself to completely reorganize this platoon without bothering to council with your commander.” “With respect, Captain Fuke, I am not reorganizing this platoon. I am organizing it because it was without any semblance of organization according to Army regulations. I am taught to be loyal to my superiors. Had I reported this platoon didn’t even have a mission statement written, or a chain of command chart, that report may have reflected adversely on my superior, sir!” The Captains' veins were bulging and his eyes were about to pop out of his head. He screamed, “You are being insolent.” Mat said, in a calm voice, “Sir, I do not mean to be insolent, you are my commanding officer and I am at your service. If I have taken any action you do not approve of, I will, of course, reverse that action and take whatever action you command, sir.” With that, the Captain stormed out of the tent, almost knocking down Sergeant Oshema, who was just coming in.

At 1600 hours Mat and the Sergeant finished with the last squad leader for the day. Just as the one left, a soldier entered the tent with a message for Mat to report to Colonel Tanaka at once. Mat’s heart came up into his throat and he was sure the sergeant could hear his pulse pounding. Then Mat's brain kicked in and he realized that if he were in real trouble, a guard would be escorting him. Mat dismissed the Sergeant and was in the Colonel’s outer office in five minutes. The Colonel’s aide saluted and told Mat to go in. Mat snapped to and barked, “Lieutenant Funakoshi reporting as ordered, sir.” The Colonel put Matt at ease and told him to sit down. The Colonel then offered Mat a cigarette and Mat, not sure if the real Funakoshi was a smoker but remembering the package he washed ashore with, accepted. Mat not being a smoker almost choked on the harsh Japanese tobacco. The Colonel leaned back in his chair, looked Mat in the eyes for a moment and then, as if he had made up his mind about something, he spoke. “Lieutenant Funakoshi, Colonel Suzuki had complete trust in you so I am going to trust you. I have a problem that you can help me with.”

Mat said, “Of course, Colonel, I will do anything you ask.” The colonel went on, “This is a very delicate matter and broaches military protocol. I am ordering you not to speak of this to anyone and to take no action concerning what I tell you except under my direct orders. Do you understand?” Mat snapped a crisp “Hai.” “Lieutenant Funakoshi, Captain Fuke comes from a very influential family and I am obligated to him. My obligation is very deep and I intend to honor that obligation up to the point but not past the point that obligation interferes with my military duty or the welfare of this command.” I do not consider Captain Fuke to be Samurai; in fact, I believe he is without honor. What I need from you is for you to get the Communication Company up to standard and in the process placate Captain Fuke and, if possible, even make him think you respect him. Captain Fuke was just in this office in a tirade saying you had shown him disrespect by taking it on yourself to reorganize the company. Now here is what I am going to do and what I am ordering you to do. I have been told that the request I submitted for your commission will be approved. I am not going to wait for that approval to come through. I am going to give you compete authority as an Imperial Army 2nd Lieutenant as of now. I am going to instruct Captain Fuke to inform you of same. I want you to accept this honor from him as if he was the giver of that honor. Do you understand?” “Hai, I will do exactly as you have instructed, Colonel.” “Very well. Of course, the Captain is not to know, but you may contact me anytime without informing the Captain if you are sure that doing so is necessary for the good of this command. You are dismissed.” Mat answered “Hai”, saluted, spun on his heel and left.

The next morning a messenger arrived before Mat left his quarters. The message was from Colonel Fuke. It was a one liner: “Report to my office at 1000.” Mat left his office at 0945 and was in the Captain’s office with five minutes to spare. Precisely at 1000 hours Mat was ushered in. Captain Fuke was sitting at his desk and didn’t

acknowledge Mat for a full five minutes. Finally, without lifting his head more than a degree, Captain Fuke looked up at Mat through the top of his gold rimmed glasses and without returning Mats' salute, said, "At ease, Lieutenant, please sit down." After several more minutes Captain Fuke looked up again from his papers, leaned back in his chair and began speaking. "Lieutenant Funakoshi you have had a poor beginning as an officer in my command and I must tell you that under other circumstances, you would no longer be in my command. That having been said, this campaign is in dire need of officers with your unique qualifications. For that reason I have decided to wipe your slate clean. You are starting new as of this moment."

Mat said, "Captain Fuke, I don't know what to say. I thank you so much for this opportunity and I will do all I can to be worthy." "Also, Lieutenant Funakoshi" The Captain went on, "you are as now to assume all the duties and authority of a 2nd Lieutenant of the Imperial Army. This means that you are authorized to handle classified communications and that you can command during battle." Mat said, "Captain Fuke, I am overwhelmed, and I pledge to you that I will do all in my power to be worthy." Captain Fuke went on, "You are to continue your reorganization of the Communications Company but you are to set nothing new into place without my approval, is that clear?" Mat snapped a "Hai." "Now go at once to your office and arrange things so you can be absent for the next two days. Then report to Captain Tetsuo Maekawa, who you will serve under during battle. Captain Maekawa commands gun bunker number one on the south end of the island. You are to establish a battle communications center in that bunker and be in reserve to command any of the three firing positions in that emplacement. You are dismissed." Mat snapped to with a "Hai," and left. Mat got to the number one bunker at 1315 and the first person he saw was Jigoro. There were others around so Mat addressed Jigoro formally. "Ohayo gozaimasu Shoi Jigoro Matsuoka."

Jigoro answered in kind and went on, "Lieutenant Funakoshi, I am glad to see you, but what are you doing here?" Mat replied, "I have been assigned military duties and this is to be my battle station. I am to report to a Captain Maekawa" "That is excellent, Lieutenant Funakoshi. Come with me and I will introduce you to the Captain. As they entered the bunker Jigoro said in a low tone, "Gichin San, Captain Maekawa is a fine officer, you will like him." The pill box bunker was divided into four sections. One 149.1 mm caliber howitzer was mounted on risers in each of the three compartments facing the ocean, bay and beach. The risers were necessary because the gun slits, through 2 feet of concrete, were cut at a 30 degree down slope and the howitzers could only depress five degrees. The configuration allowed the howitzers to train on the horizon down to five feet in front of the bunker. Also in each compartment was mounted a model 92 7.7 mm heavy machine gun capable of firing 450 rounds per minute. The rear compartment was where the outside door was located and where the command center was. That was where Mat was to set up his communication center. This area also housed ready ammunition and reserve gun crews. This was thought to be a very strong installation and had withstood the ammo dump blast with damage only to the antiaircraft gun and machine guns on the roof even though the dump was less than 200 yards from the bunker.

Mat and Jigoro snapped to in front of Captain Maekawas' desk and waited for recognition. Within seconds the Captain looked up and barked, "Report." "Captain Maekawa, I have the honor to present to you Imperial Merchant Marine Lieutenant Gichin Funakoshi who is now an acting Lieutenant in the Imperial Army and has been assigned to this bunker as a battle station.

Captain Maekawa barked, "Very well, Lieutenant Funakoshi, you have been ordered to establish a communication center in this room. As you can see we don't have much room in here. Will two square meters suffice?" "Captain, I will make do with that space," Mat replied in the submissive. "And how many men will be necessary to operate the communication center?" "Two enlisted operators besides me, Captain." "Very well Lieutenant Funakoshi, give me the names of the two enlisted men you choose by 0800 tomorrow morning and they

will also be assigned battle stations in this bunker. You and your men, besides manning the Communications Center, will be reserve gun crew. You will report here at 1600 hours every day for training and drill. Do you, by any chance, have any knowledge of the 149.1 mm Howitzer or the model 92 7.7 mm heavy machine gun?" Mat of course had extensive training in both weapons at Zebra 4 so he took a chance. Mat replied "The Imperial Merchant Marine School at Yokuska did have some courses on naval armaments but almost nothing on field weapons. I, however, on my own did some studying on field weapons, and the weapons you mentioned in particular." "Very well Lieutenant that will be helpful," replied the Captain, and he went on. "Would participating in a drill right now with Lieutenant Matsuoka conflict with your other duties?" "Not at all, Captain, I am at your service." "Very well, Lieutenant Matsuoka, go into the Battery (A) compartment and review with Lieutenant Funakoshi the firing procedures. Then, with you as the Battery Officer and Lieutenant Funakoshi as the first gunner, mock fire both guns and then live fire both guns. Fire 10 rounds with the machine gun and two rounds with the Howitzer. Then report back for a critique. Mat and Jigoro snapped to and with a "Hai" went through the marine style steel door into Battery (A).

When Jigoro closed the door behind them the compartment was in semi darkness with only the light from the gun slit and a single overhead red light. Jigoro, in his capacity as gun officer, barked at Mat to report. Mat snapped to and recited the specifications and firing procedure of first the howitzer and then the machine gun. When Mat finished, Jigoro, keeping to his military decorum, barked, "Satisfactory." Then he called three enlisted gun crew into the battery. He ordered one to assist Mat as feeder on the machine gun. Jigoro then gave Mat a series of orders starting with the checking of the barrel and ending with the command to release the thumb safety and mock fire the weapon. Then, after ordering the other two men of the gun crew to assist Mat as head gunner on the howitzer, they went through much the same motions. This completed, Jigoro picked up a phone and barked an order. As a siren alerted the island that there would be practice fire, Jigoro scanned the intended range to make sure it was clear. Jigoro then barked the same sequence of orders for the machine gun except this time it was for a live firing. Mat was instructed to aim at a sand mound about 100 yards from the bunker. When ordered, Mat put the ten rounds in a pattern of five feet. Again Jigoro barked, "Satisfactory." Jigoro then ordered the man that helped Mat on the machine gun out of the battery compartment. For safety reasons, only the cannon gun crew was allowed in the battery compartment during live fire except in real battle. Jigoro barked another order over the phone and one of the loaders opened a small, steel-dogged door and was passed through from the magazine one howitzer live shell. As that loader turned and slid the shell home in the breach of the howitzer, the other loader closed and dogged the small steel door and yelled, "One." The other loader yelled, "Two," then Mat closed the breach, cocked the firing pin, trained and elevated the gun to the prescribed settings and yelled, "Three." Jigoro then yelled, "Fire," and Mat jerked the lanyard. The sound and concussion, even with his ears stuffed with cotton, almost knocked him out. As quickly as the gun recoiled, a gunner jerked open the steel hatch leading to the magazine, grabbed a new live shell, slid it into the open breach and slammed it closed. Jigoro yelled, "Fire" again and Matt again jerked the lanyard. An audible click was heard but the gun did not fire. Jigoro yelled, "Misfire."

S.O.P. for this situation, not in battle, was for the crew to immediately bail out of the bunker through the gun slit and get clear. Then if the shell that misfired was hot, any shell loaded in the breach just after firing would be hot, after a half hour someone would have to go back in the bunker and eject the live shell. The manual called for the gun crew captain to order a crew member back into the bunker but S.O.P. was for the captain to go himself. After the time had passed, Jigoro got up from under the tree where the crew was resting and approached the front of the bunker. Mat waited until Jigoro was head and shoulders into the gun slit and then he sprang forward and was through the gun slit and in the bunker almost as quickly as was Jigoro. "What are you doing?" Jigoro yelled. Mat cried out, "Four hands have a much better chance than two. We live or die together, my brother." With that, Mat jerked open the breach hatch and pulled the shell toward him. As the better part of the shell cleared the breach, Jigoro grabbed it in a bear hug and as soon as it cleared, turned and rolled the shell out the gun slit. As the shell fell

on a tarpaulin placed on the sand for that purpose, Mat and Jigoro hit the deck of the bunker. After some moments without an explosion, Mat looked at Jigoro and said, "You don't look like one of my ancestors so I guess we are not dead." Jigoro said, "I can tell you are not one of your ancestors because you don't have hair all over your body." They both spent the next minutes in hysterical laughter.

## Chapter 16

That night Jigoro and Mat spent some time in the Officers Club and got back to their tent after 1200 hrs. When Mat got to his office the next morning a messenger was waiting for him. He was to report to Colonel Tanaka. As soon as Mat arrived he was ushered into the colonel's office and as soon as Mat entered, Colonel Tanaka rose from his chair and greeted Mat. "I am sure you understand, Lieutenant, that what you did yesterday was foolish and in fact could be a cause to have you brought up on charges." "My answer would be, Colonel Tanaka, that I believed Lieutenant Matsuoka to be of much more value to the Emperor than myself and therefore the chance I took was justified." "Well said, Lieutenant, you are worthy of Tao." The Colonel went on, "I have good news. Your commission is approved. You are now officially 2nd Lieutenant in the Japanese Imperial Army, congratulations." Mat snapped to with a salute and a "Thank you sir." The Colonel went on, "At your convenience, Lieutenant, in the next 24 hours, report to the records center to be photographed and finger printed for your ID and for Army records in Tokyo." You are dismissed." Mat snapped to with a "Hai" and left.

Mat realized as he walked back to his office that he must immediately strike the most effective blow possible and make his escape. If his records were sent back to Tokyo with the next air dispatches it would be certain he would be discovered. Before he went to noon chow, Mat took a walk between the prescribed palm trees which was the signal that he would return to the wreck.

That night when Mat got to his quarters he told Lieutenant Matsuoka that he was going for a swim and did he wish to join him. "No, Gichin San, didn't you get enough swimming after your ship sank?" "I have always been a swimmer, Jigoro San, if I don't swim some each day or at least every other day I feel the lack of the exercise "Well, Gichin San, be sure to check in with the sentries so you don't get shot." "Thank you, Jigoro San, I will be sure to do that." Dressed in a loin cloth and carrying a towel Mat went down to the lagoon beach. He called out to a sentry and approached him. "I am Lieutenant Gichin Funakoshi. I would like to take a swim if it is permitted." "It is permitted sir, but there are barracuda and sharks in these waters." "I am an experienced swimmer, Corporal, but I thank you for your concern. I will call out today's password when I come back which I believe is Green Tree. Is that not correct?" "Yes sir, that is correct." With that Mat dropped his towel and went into the water. He swam straight out until he believed he was out of sight and then he turned left and swam for the wreck. The trip took him about 20 minutes.

When Mat came up in the engine room he was quick to tell us he had only minutes. Bill asked, "What the hell happened to your hand?" "It's a long story," Mat said, "and we don't have time now." In the next ten minutes, as Bill and I sat in wonder, Mat told us some of what had transpired and that he now had to do whatever he was going to do and get out. He went on, "This is my plan. Tomorrow night the moon will be completely black. I have seen a code machine. It is only the size of a portable typewriter. I plan to bring it and code books here tomorrow night. I believe I can do this without the enemy knowing the machine or I am missing. There will be an explosion with bodies or parts of bodies and with luck they will believe I was in that explosion." Bill said, "OK, this is too good a chance to pass up, but for it to work we must get away with the code machine and code books. Go for a walk between the two trees as many times as you can tomorrow. We will flash you one time with a mirror from the chalk at the forward lookout position. If you see that signal, discontinue your walk immediately. That will let us know you saw the flash. Then go ahead with the operation. If you don't see the signal, do not proceed but rather return the next day and go through the procedure again. There is no point in starting the operation until we arrange a pick up, and have a chance of getting away with the goods." Mat said, "Yes sir, I understand. Please give me four of the plastic charges with timers." Mat placed the charges under his loin cloth hiding them as best he could.

Mat came close to the beach to find the same sentry. He first saw him because of the glow of a cigarette. Mat stayed down in the water until he was only ten feet from the sentry. He then shouted the pass word startling him so severely he dropped his rifle. Mat came out of the water shouting "You descendant of a monkey. You have put yourself and all of the Emperor's forces on this island in danger with your stupid dereliction of duty. First you smoke to let any approaching enemy know where you are and then you are so inattentive that I was able to get close enough to kill you with a rock. You are a disgrace to your uniform. What is your name?" "Corporal Yashumi, sir." "Corporal, turn your back to me, I don't want to look at you. Corporal Yashumi, as soon as you get relieved you are to report to your watch commander your gross negligence of duty. Do you understand me?" "Hai" snapped the Corporal.

By going in an indirect route Mat was able to get back to his quarters without getting close enough to anyone that they might question the bulges under his loin cloth. Mat found Lieutenant Matsuoka asleep and he was able to cover up immediately on his sleeping mat and hide the plastic charges in his bedding. His training had taught him never to hide anything incriminating where the hiding place itself would give him away. He resolved to move the explosives first thing in the morning.

At 0500 in the morning Mat left his tent with the explosives in the bottom of a bag of papers and manuals having to do with his platoon. He walked along the beach and came up on the officer's mess from the rear. At the back of the mess, which was a tent right on the sand, was a storage building that was up on a three-foot platform. Mat looked around and then ducked under the building. He hid the explosives and fuses on the side of the second support beam from where he went under the building. After Mat finished his morning reports he told Sergeant Oshema he was going for a walk on the beach. Mat saw the flash signal as soon as he started walking between the designated trees. The operation was on.

At 0300 the next morning, Mat quietly dressed and crept out of the tent carrying a nap sack containing the water proof bag he brought from the wreck. His first stop was the NCO tent where Sergeant Oshema quartered. His intent was to have the fire watch wake the sergeant and give him a note ordering him to summon Captain Fuke to the radio shack immediately to decode a class "A" urgent communiqué from Admiral Yamamoto. To Mats' surprise, the fire watch reported that Captain Fuke had come for the Sergeant only minutes before and said they could be reached at the radio shack. Mat didn't know how this was going to affect his plans, but for now, it seemed to help.

Mat retrieved the explosives from under the supply shed behind the officer's mess leaving one charge timed to go off in 45 minutes, at 0400 if it didn't malfunction. As Mat approached his office tent, he could see, that even though the island was in black out, lights were on and persons were moving around in the tent. Mat crept up behind the radio shack and into the small shed that stored the generator and a 100-gallon drum of gasoline. Mat as quietly as possible removed a fuel line hose from the drum, set a charge for 20 minutes, dropped it and the other remaining charge into the drum and replaced the hose. Mat then crawled up next to the office tent where he recognized two voices. Those of Sergeant Oshema and Captain Fuke. Captain Fuke was saying, "I am now convinced there is no evidence in this office but I am certain enough from the information I have from Imperial Merchant Marine Headquarters that, that son of a hide tanner is not Lieutenant Gichin Funakoshi. Go to the Duty Officer and get a squad and I will meet you at the dog's quarters. We will arrest him and by sun rise, I assure you we will have full information as to who he is, how he got here and his mission." Mat could see the shadow of Sergeant. Oshema as he snapped to and heard his "Hai." He rushed out of the tent and never knew what hit him. Mat struck his head from his body with a swipe of his sword. The Sergeant fell to the sand with little or no sound. Mat stepped up on the tent platform and entered the tent with his bloody sword in one hand and his pistol in the other. Captain Fuke turned and saw him and almost fainted. He stammered, "What are you doing here Lieutenant Funakoshi?" Mat said "Why do

you call me that, Captain Fuke? You know very well I am not Lieutenant Funakoshi. Please let me present myself. I am United States Navy Midshipman Matsu Kenzo, and this morning I have the great pleasure of being your executioner.” Mat hesitated long enough for the Captain to realize what was going to happen, but lunged, driving his sword through the base of the Captain’s throat before he could scream. Mat then turned off the lights and went outside and drug the Sergeant’s body into the tent. He then went into the radio shack and performed the unpleasant task of killing the two ordinary soldiers on duty. They snapped to attention when he walked in and Mat cut them down where they stood. He placed the decoder machine and the code books into the water proof bag and headed for the beach.

Mat stopped in the trees before he got to the beach. It was dark but not completely dark. He couldn’t be sure but he didn’t think anyone was in the trees right around him and if the sentry was walking according to his pattern, he would not be by for five minutes. Mat crawled onto the white sand beach. The next five seconds were the luckiest of Mats’ life. He had only crawled six feet when a shot rang out and a bullet impacted an inch from his ear. Mat rolled to the left and just as he did the sky lit up with a massive explosion silhouetting the shooter in a tree not 20 feet away. Mat fired his pistol twice and saw the figure go limp in the tree. The whole area was lit up like daytime. Mat got to his feet and ran for the water. Anyone who looked would have seen him swimming out as the massive fire that was the radio shack illuminated the entire island. Mat was 25 yards out when the Officer’s Mess went up.

It took Mat over an hour to get to the wreck and twice he had to dive to avoid search lights from searching patrol boats. Mat was getting ready to dive down to go through the hole in the engine room when he heard Bill’s whistle. “Swim around to the gangway, and get in the rubber boat, we are leaving at once.” Then Bill was beside him with fins on. He took his load and in only three minutes they were around the wreck and in the boat. For the next hour we laid in the bottom of the boat and steered by compass, all the time illuminated by the fire. Why we were not spotted, I will never know. We were only a mile out when the sun came up. We were motoring almost due east, so maybe the sun helped us not be spotted. We began to breathe easier when we got about three and a half miles out. I asked Bill, “What’s the plan?” Bill said, “We are to be picked up by a sub. Our instructions are to stay on a course two degrees over due east. We are to shoot the sun and stay on that line as closely as possible. If we are not picked up today, we are to show a light for 30 seconds at eight minutes after the hour through the night.” Just then the electric motor quit. Bill said “I was expecting that, I’m surprised the battery lasted as long as it did. Well, boys, dump the motor and the battery and get on the oars. We have to continue to make headway and get as far from the island as we can.”

At 1000 hours we spotted smoke on the horizon to the east and soon we saw a ship. It was a Japanese destroyer and it looked like it was heading straight for us. Our luck was holding, however. At about three miles the destroyer made a sharp turn to port and went off to the south. She then made another sharp turn to starboard and resumed her westerly heading. We surmised she was on a zigzag course.

## Chapter 17

At 0030 the next morning I was on the helm when I saw a light low in the water at about 50 yards. It was sending Morse. It said, “What is your name?” I picked up the flash and answered, “Richard Taylor, USN.” At about 20 yards out a large object suddenly appeared out of the deep. I recognized the boat as an S1 Class submarine and I could make out the letters on her conning tower, S-38. Bill and Mat, with renewed strength, pulled on their oars and we were alongside in less than 40 seconds. Three sailors were on deck in black sweaters black watch caps and pointing sub machine guns at us. One of the sailors told us to get aboard and below at once and that they would take care of our gear and would scuttle the boat. Bill insisted on keeping hold of the water proof bag with the decoder

and the code books. One of the sailors looked in the bag while the rest frisked us. They let Bill keep the bag and we scrambled below. The submariners who greeted us at the bottom of the ladder were not much on ceremony. Holding us at gunpoint they shined lights in our faces and compared what they saw with pictures. When they were satisfied they put away their guns and shoved us into a small six by eight compartment that consisted of two double bunks with lockers under them. There was almost no deck space so we all got into the bunks. The boat was submerged and under way in less than three minutes.

Twenty minutes passed, and then a man came into our compartment. We could tell he was an officer only by his hat. He wore dingy dungarees like everyone else we saw. "Good morning, gentlemen, I am Captain Romano, welcome aboard." Bill spoke up. "Thank you for picking us up Captain. I am Marine Captain William Lawrence and these are my comrades, Midshipman Taylor and Midshipman Kenzo." "We understand you three have been a real pain in the ass to the Japs in this neighborhood," the Captain said. "We believe we can credit two sinkings to you. Can you confirm that?" Bill said, "Sir, we were in the right place at the right time and yes, we sank two Japanese cargo ships with magnetic mines." "That's amazing, said the Captain, we only have four sinkings to our credit and we are pretty proud of that. I am not going to apologize for the accommodations, although I realize they are not very comfortable. I must ask you to stay in the compartment as much as possible, and, of course, you will not speak of your mission to any of the crew. Down this passageway is the head. If you don't know how to work a submarine toilet, get a crew member to show you or you could end up with a face full of shit."

"Someone is very interested in what you have in that bag. We are ordered to rendezvous with a destroyer tomorrow night and she will rush you to Pearl. Someone will come for you for chow and tonight, conditions permitting, you will join my XO and me for supper. Officer dress for mess is what you have on including skivvies and shower shoes if that's what suits you. You must, however wear an Officer Summer uniform hat. I know you are traveling light so if you will give me your hat sizes I will try to scavenge you some hats. Do you have any questions or requests I might help you with?" Bill said, "If I could get some writing material, I would appreciate it so I can write my report. Other than that, I believe we are just fine and thank you." We gave our hat sizes and the Captain left.

That night we met the XO, Lieutenant Commander Harrison. The meal was nothing special but we thought it was delicious. We had beef stew with big chunks of potatoes and no rice. The conversation consisted mostly of the Captain and the XO filling us in on what had been happening in the war.

At 2000 the next night, after running submerged for 28 hours, we surfaced. Captain Romano came into our compartment. "Well, gentlemen, this is where you get off. As soon as the deck crew is on station you will come up into the con where you will be put into a preacher's seat and swung aboard the destroyer. I must tell you, should enemy contact be made during the transfer, all lines will be cut, this boat will crash dive and the destroyer will go to 30 knots on a zigzag. There is a rubber boat attached to the preacher's seat that will inflate if you go in the drink. Do you all volunteer?" He didn't wait for an answer. "I knew you would, thank you, see you topside."

## Chapter 18

Bill was first up the ladder and when he got to the top, he shouted down at us. "You will not believe this." "What?" I shouted. "It's the Talbot." "No shit?" Mat and I responded in unison. Captain Romano asked Bill as I came on deck, "What's the significance of that particular ship, Captain. Lawrence?" Bill said, "Believe it or not, that is our ship, we are ship's company aboard that ship." "Well then, welcome home, lads. Mr. Lawrence you are first in the chair." As the preacher's chair swung out over the choppy sea, someone put a record of "Man on the Flying Trapeze" on the Talbot's P.A. We were all aboard the Talbot in ten minutes and the sub was submerged and gone in 15. A Marine sergeant escorted us to the bridge to greet Captain Edwards. We were surprised to find he was as surprised to see us as we were him. He knew only there were three persons and he was to get them and what they were carrying to Pearl as fast as possible. The rest of the night we spent in our officers' quarters, a compartment with three bunks, a writing desk, two chairs, three lockers and a porthole. It was like being in the Waldorf after our stay on the wreck and our night on the sub.

At 0800 the next morning there was a knock on our door. Mat opened the door and was saluted by a Marine sergeant in dress uniform. "Good morning sir, I have a message from the Captain." Mat could not return the salute because he was uncovered but he acknowledged with a "Very well Sergeant" and I thank you. Mat handed the note to Bill. After reading the note, Bill said, "Well we are invited to dinner this evening by the Captain. He says he has news for us. The uniform is summer whites and we are to see the Captain's steward about that at 1400 hours." As it turned out the Captain's steward was an extremely talented young Creole by the name of Hebert. Besides being a gourmet cook, Pacific Fleet middleweight boxing champion and an accomplished banjo strummer, he was an outstanding tailor." In less than an hour he had all of us fitted in dress whites that looked like they had been made for us. We had our Midshipmen collar insignia's but there were no midshipmen shoulder bars on the ship. Chief Steward Hebert said he would make the shoulder bars and have them to us by 1800. He did and one could not tell them from the manufactured item.

Precisely at 1940 a Marine sergeant came and escorted us to the Captain's mess. The table we had eaten at before was extended and 10 place settings were set. Captain Edwards greeted us and directed us to sit to his right taking all but one of the settings on that side of the table. Obviously, we were the guests of honor. When we all got seated a steward poured all of us a glass of lemonade. The Captain stood and spoke.

"Gentlemen this is a very special occasion. First let me present our honored guests, Captain Lawrence, Midshipman Taylor and Midshipman Kenzo. My next duty is to give our honored guests some bad news and some good news. The bad news first. The Navy department has determined that you Mr. Kenzo and you Mr. Taylor will never be promoted Ensign and you Mr. Lawrence will never be promoted Major. Why? You might ask. Because as of 2400 hours this date Mr. Kenzo and Mr. Taylor are promoted to the temporary rank of Lieutenant USN and you Mr. Lawrence are promoted Lieutenant Colonel USMC." We were stunned. "I understand that the decision to award these ranks meritoriously was made because of action that resulted in two enemy ships being sunk. That having been said, I now will read special orders to all in this room. 'From BUPERS to COMMANDER Edwards Robert G., Commanding Officer of USS Talbot DD114. Subj: Top Secret Mission (Look See). In accordance with special order S9962 of this date from the Secretary of the Navy, all reference to said mission or any personnel connected in any way to said mission is strictly prohibited. A presentation of meritorious rank may be performed in accordance with Navy regulations with a small group of ship's officers but that presentation and any further reference to subject mission or personnel is strictly prohibited and must be held Most Top Secret.' The rest of the order concerns only the subject personnel which I will convey to concerned on a need to know basis." Then the Captain raised his glass

and said, “Men a toast to our honored guests and congratulations on a job well done. Under the circumstances I will not ask our guests to speak. Please enjoy the meal.”

After the meal of roast beef that was the best we ever ate, the Captain requested the ship’s officers retire so he could deliver the rest of the special order. After the other officers retired the Captain went on. “Gentlemen, I will allow each of you to read this order for yourselves and initial it so there can be no misunderstanding but it directs as follows: You all will remain sequestered from the crew until we get to Pearl. When we dock, the ship’s log will show you on liberty but you will be in air transport to the States where you will be debriefed. When you leave the ship, you Mr. Kenzo will leave in the uniform of a 3rd class Steward’s Mate, you Mr. Taylor in the uniform of a 3ed class Yeoman and you Mr. Lawrence in your Captain’s uniform. The secret orders you will have in your possession will refer to you in those ranks. The bag you brought with you is to be turned over to special personnel who will meet us when we dock in Pearl. Our ETA in Pearl is 1400 hours tomorrow. Do you have any questions?” We had a thousand but didn’t feel the Captain could answer them so we just thanked him and bid him good night.

## Chapter 19

Mat and I took a base bus from pier ten to the gate where Bill was waiting in a cab. We took the cab to John Rodgers Airport that was in the process of becoming Honolulu Naval Air Station. Four Naval aviators were waiting for us at the tower. One of the aviators was a Navy Lieutenant. He asked Bill if he was Captain Lawrence. Bill answered "Yes and these are my men, Third Class Petty Officers Kenzo and Taylor." "Very well" the Lieutenant responded. "I'm Tom Thompson, this is my copilot Chief Andrews and these two others are Third Class Petty Officers Davidson and Chance." We all set out across the tarmac toward a PB4Y that was sitting about 75 yards away with its engines idling. As we walked Bill asked, "Lieutenant Thompson, was this field hit in the attack? It doesn't look like it's too beat up." "It wasn't hit as bad as Hickam or some of the others but there was considerable damage. They were able to patch the field up pretty well with this new stuff they call Marston Matting. It's a steel mesh and they say we are building bomber fields all over the Pacific with this stuff and doing it in a matter of days, not months." Then Lieutenant Thompson went on. "I know I'm not supposed to ask you anything about who you are or what you are doing so I won't but you all must be some important dudes. As far as anyone knows, including our squadron commander, we are on Pacific Patrol and here we are flying all the way to US Naval Air Station, Alameda, California. He kept talking as he swung up into the aircraft. We all came up and he continued, only he was shouting to be heard over the twin engines. One little thing else you should know. This aircraft has a range of 2800 miles and our flight plan is about 2600 miles. We have some extra fuel aboard and we can call on ships at sea if the weather permits a landing but if we get blown off course, can't get more fuel or have a mechanical, well, do you like to fish?"

After flying about four hours, about 800 miles out, Tom, as we all were invited to call him, came back and told us we were over calm seas and were going to rendezvous with a tanker full of avgas. In 14 minutes we did just that. The merchant tanker that pumped us over our fuel not only dropped out of her convoy but heaved to, dead in the water to accommodate our fueling. It was hard for us to believe the Navy was putting so many people and assets at risk just to get us home.

It was fortunate we made the fuel stop because about 1000 miles off the mainland we saw a wall of at least 35,000 foot tops ahead of us. Tom with the able assistance of Chief Andrews made a calculated decision, based on what weather info they could get on the radio and weather patterns, to vector north. It was the right guess. In less than an hour we turned to a heading of about 45 degrees and in about another hour we came to 90 degrees and then after shooting our position, set a straight course for Alameda.

The entire flight, although with some anxious moments, was pleasant enough. But after 16 hours we were very ready to arrive at our destination. At 1200 hours we came in over Pacifica just south of San Francisco, over some coastal hills and wet again at San Bruno and over San Francisco Bay. We touched down in the Bay of Alameda at 1255. We taxied up on a sea plain ramp and onto a tarmac. We couldn't believe what we saw. There was a group of officers and men to greet the aircraft and one of them was an Admiral. Bill was the first to swing down from the forward hatch and was immediately greeted by the Admiral. Bill snapped to attention and saluted. The Admiral returned the salute and asked if he was Captain Lawrence. Bill replied that he was and the Admiral introduced himself. "I am Admiral Griffith, Commander 12th Naval District. I received orders concerning you and your men this morning directly from the Navy Chief of Staff. What did you guys do, capture Tojo?" "Nothing like that, Admiral," Bill said. We were all on the tarmac now. The admiral went on. "Whatever you did or are doing I know it is most top secret and these are my orders: I am to inform you that your immediate destination is changed. You will be going to the new destination in the aircraft in which you just arrived. Your pilot is not to file and will only know your destination after you are airborne. This is Chief Hanson, my Leading Chief. Lieutenant Thompson and Captain

Lawrence, I would be pleased if you would join me in the Officers Club for lunch while Chief Hanson will host the rest in the NCO Club. I am informed that barring problems, your plane will be ready for takeoff in two hours.” Mat and I and the three petty officers from the plane stacked up on a jeep with Chief Hanson and were off to the NCO Club. Chief Hanson was a nine striper. A Nine Striper is one who has completed 9 four-year tours and had shipped over for the 10th. He was a gracious host and the two hours went by in about five minutes. We had a great lunch, including for Mat and I and the Leading Chief, about 4 rounds of beer. The crew members, of course had to abstain.

By 1500 we were at 500 feet heading out over San Francisco. Tom came back and opened the flight orders. He read the orders and called on the intercom to the Chief. “Chief after we are wet for 15 minutes, come port to 180, we are going about 400 miles and should be VFR all the way.” Tom took the phones off and asked “You ever heard of a place called Avalon on Santa Catalina Island?” We all laughed and Bill said “Yea, we have heard of the place.” Tom went on, “Well here’s the scoop: We are to land at Avalon where a Navy PT boat will pick you up.”

We touched down about a mile off Avalon at 1740 hours. The PT was next to us in five minutes. We all thanked Tom and his crew, bid them good luck and were on our way. The PBY made a run on us and went over at about 50 feet tipping her wings as she ascended into the darkness to the north. The skipper of the PT was a LTJG by the name of Bruntski. After introductions, Bill asked where we were going. The LTJG said he was to tell them they were going to their old Island home. We were headed for Base Zebra Four.

## Chapter 20

A Marine sergeant was on the dock waiting for us and went with us up to the old camp and put us in our same old tent. The sergeant said we were to report to Colonel Hansen at 1200 hours the next day but had no duty until then. We all took illegal showers, half hour under hot fresh water, got in our racks and died.

The next day at 1100 hours a private brought camp uniforms, dungarees with summer uniform hats, for all of us. Bill's had braid depicting the rank of Lieutenant Colonel or Commander and our hats depicted junior officer grade with a gold band. Mat said "Well, I guess we are officers again." At 1200 we reported to Colonel Hansen. After congratulations on promotions were exchanged all around, the Colonel took all of us to the new Officer's Club. At lunch, which included drinks, Colonel Hansen informed us that after about a two-day debriefing we were on R&R for the next two weeks. We had to stay on or around the base, however. At the end of the two weeks, the Talbot would be docking in San Diego for refitting. They were making her into a high speed attack transport. This refitting would take about 45 days. During that time, we would all be on leave. We were to assume our identities as Talbot ship's company. After our leave, we were to make our way to Long Beach, California, where transportation would be provided back to this camp.

"When you get back to this camp, you will receive intensive schooling. I can't tell you what your new mission is going to be, because I don't know, as I don't know about the mission you have been on. All I know is you must have done a hell of a job. People all the way up to the Chiefs of Staff know about you and are very concerned about where you are and what you are doing. You will be receiving written orders but I am to emphasize in the strongest way that any information about where you have been or what you have been doing is strictly top secret. Say nothing to anybody, report anyone who questions you and if you have to tell your family anything, lie. During these two weeks of R&R here, your only duty will be the debriefing and to review the letters you wrote or the letters that were forged to seem as if they were from you so you don't get tripped up. Don't worry, none of the forged letters proposed marriage. Or I don't think they did."

The debriefing, although tedious, was routine. They wanted to know details about the ammo dump demolition, so some time was spent on that. The next two weeks, although we were on R&R, seemed like six months. When we thought there was no chance of getting home, we were not so home sick but now that we were to get 40 full days leave, we couldn't wait. The day before we were to go on leave, we were issued sea bags containing worn dress and undress uniforms and other collectibles from the Talbot and the ports she visited.

On the last day before our leave we also got a visit from a Mr. Smith from the State Department. We didn't know who he was but we could tell he was heavy. He had some very disturbing news. He told us about the internment of Americans of Japanese descent. He told us that Mats' family had been interned. We had heard of such internment but nothing in Mats' letters from home had any indication and not for a second did we think they would take Mats' family. We were furious. How could a country reward one of its most outstanding war heroes by putting his family in prison? Bill and I couldn't believe it when it was Mat who came to the defense of the government. "You know what Japanese saboteurs did in Hawaii," Mat said. He went on, "The government just couldn't take the time to sort us out. It was a necessary injustice to most Japanese Americans but if it thwarts the few saboteurs among us and helps the U.S. win the war, I have to accept it." Bill said, "Still, I am coming to El Monte with you two and we will see about this."

Then we got another shock. Mr. Smith broke into perfect Japanese. "Dama," he said to Bill, which means, "No, you can't do that." Then he went on addressing us as subordinates. "Captain you are ordered to go to your home in

Texas. We have already taken steps to see to the wellbeing of Mats' family." Mat asked, "What about my girl's family?" Mr. Smith said he didn't know about that and what is the girl's family name and where did the family live? "Her family name is Sasushi and the family owns a truck farm in Bellflower California." Mr. Smith said he would do something about it and would report back to Mat within 14 days. Then he said "Mr. Kenzo, your analysis of this unfortunate situation is 100% correct and your attitude is appreciated and noted. It was several months after the war began until I could get home from my government post in Tokyo. I found my wife and five-year-old child had been interned. I am proud to say I came to the same conclusions you did, Matsu Sama (a term of respect), but it took me longer. It is most unfortunate Tojo and his party have caused such turmoil. I lived in Tokyo for 12 years and many of my closest and most honored friends are now my deadly enemies. I could have gotten my family out of the camp but my wife wished to stay and continue to help her people. We make our family home in the camp now and I am an adviser to those assigned to oversee the camps. We live in the California Desert camp where your family lives and probably where the Sasushi family lives." Mat asked, "May I visit them?" Smith said, "Of course and you will come into the camp as a VIP.

## Chapter 21

At 0900 the next morning we were put on the Navy Dock in Long Beach. We all took a cab to Locus Street. where we got on a bus to downtown Los Angeles. The bus stopped at Lakewood Boulevard and Carson, next to the Douglas field, and Bill got off to catch his hop to Texas. Mat and I took the bus on into L.A. and then caught the red car to El Monte. We piled out of a cab at the ranch at 1300 hours. My mother saw us from the house and was on us before the doors of the cab were shut. She cried profusely as she hugged and kissed both of us. When we got into the house Mom called my Dad at work and he said he would be home in less than two hours. The next minutes were a might awkward because Mom didn't know how much we knew about the internment of Mats' family. Mat put her at ease telling her that he knew the situation and was dealing with it. "Maybe you don't know all of what is happening," Mom said. "Many of the Japanese families have lost their land. Bill acted quickly and effectively. We have the deed to the Kenzo property and Mr. Chavez and his son are working the land. All of this we hold in trust for the return of your family." Mat was overwhelmed and all he could do was hug her and thank her. This was the third time I saw Mat shed tears.

Mat and I met my Dad as he pulled into the yard and the greeting was as you might imagine. When we got in the house we found Mom had put out Tinny Tot sardines, blue cheese, crackers and Lucky lager beer. First, Dad told Mat all about how he and Mat's Dad had arranged things so that the Kenzos would not lose their land and how well the Chavez's were taking care of the property. Then he got a big grin on his face. He said "Guess what? We had plans to visit your family tomorrow; in fact the trunk of the Packard is already packed with goodies and I have been saving these." He pulled out a book of gas ration stamps. "I can't wait to see their faces when they see what else we are bringing them."

Of course my Mom and Dad wanted to know all about our adventures and I felt very uncomfortable lying to them. I told them I hadn't heard from Mary Alice in some time and they uneasily told me that she had gone away to Duke University and had no contact with them in over a year. They were relieved to see that I was not grief stricken. At about 2200 my Dad suggested we all turn in because tomorrows' drive to Manzanar was over 200 miles. Mat asked, "Where is this place?" Dad said it was out in the desert between Lone Pine and Independence off Highway 395. That night Mat and I slept in the bunk beds we had spent so many nights in as we grew up. Everything was the same except it all seemed smaller.

After we were driving for about an hour, Dad said "I am sure Mat will be able to get into the camp, but the rest of us probably won't. We have always seen them at the visiting center." Mat said, "Mr. Taylor, would you stop at the next gas station, I need to make a phone call."

When Mat came back to the car he said to me in Japanese, "I called security at Manzanar to see if Mr. Smith did anything for us. I was told to present my ID at the gate and we will all be escorted to my family's residence." Mat then said in English "Mr. Taylor when we get to Manzanar please don't stop at the visitor center. Just go to the main gate and we will be permitted to drive in." "No kidding," Dad said. "How in the world did you arrange that?" Mat said "It's a long story that I will tell you when I can." Dad took the hint and dropped it.

It happened as advertised, as soon as Mat presented his I.D. we were all asked to show ours and then we were instructed to follow an Army 2nd Lieutenant in a jeep. We drove through an area where there were hundreds of large Quonset hut buildings we later were told were divided into partitioned rooms they called apartments. Each family had its own apartment. When we came to the end of the stone-lined road through the Quonset huts, we turned left and then right onto another stone-lined road that lea between several Quonset huts. We stopped in front

of one of the huts and there was a hand painted sign over the door that read, "Cato Kenzo and family," and below that hung the traditional red white and blue banner with the star depicting that a family member was on active duty in the U.S. military.

We all stayed in the car while Mat went and knocked on the door. It was Mr. Kenzo who answered. He stood there for a second as if he didn't recognize Mat and then he let out a yell that was very out of character for him. They disappeared into the hut. In about four minutes Mat's mother burst out of the hut at a full run with her arms wide open, yelling, "Richard San, Richard San." I was only half out of the car when she grabbed me and hugged me. Then she addressed Dad and Mom in the car "Dozo Yoroshiku. You come house." This, as she gestured for us all to come into the hut. Inside the Quonset hut the Kenzos had done wonders. The cement deck was covered with a mat woven from died sheet material and the entire hut was partitioned off with framed paneling made of paper. The main room, the room we first entered, had a large wood stove for heating and cooking in the center. To one side was the beautiful ten-inch high table from the El Monte house. We all gathered on mats around the table for sake and beer that we brought in from the car. There was much excited conversation, mostly in English. I sat next to Mrs. Kenzo and interpreted. To my surprise Mrs. Kenzo was learning some English. Mat asked Mr. Kenzo if he was in contact with the Sasushi family and were they OK. Mr. Kenzo said, "Oh, yes, they have been to our home many times and there is so much to tell, I was just going to tell you, the Sasushi family is moving out of the apartments into the Quonset next door, tomorrow. I will take you to them right now if you like." Mat said, "Please father." Mat and his father excused themselves saying they would return shortly and left. For the next hour I asked Mrs. Kenzo questions and interpreted the answers to my parents.

The second one through the door into the Quonset hut was old Mrs. Sasushi. She was crying as she greeted me. "Konnishiwa Richard Chan Genki." This time I got tears in my eyes. The old lady used the suffix Chan after my name which is only for family. I in turn greeted her as "old grandmother." Then the room was full of joyful greeting in English and Japanese as Mat, Kasaco and Mr. and Mrs. Sasushi all came in. As the conversation continued, the mystery of why the Sasushi family was singled out to be moved into a much preferred Quonset was discussed. No one came up with anything close to the answer, but I could tell my Dad was suspicious that Mat and I were involved in much more than we were telling.

Mat stayed in the camp while I returned with my parents to the ranch. The next day I took a phone call from a young lady who said she was a student at UCLA and wished to get some riding lessons. She apologized for the short notice saying she had originally planned to go home on spring break, but was now not going to do so. I told her that wouldn't be a problem and that she could come the next day. At 0800 the next morning, a taxi pulled up in the drive and a young brunette woman in riding attire stepped out. She turned from paying the cab just as I came up, and suddenly I was hypnotized by two of the biggest, deepest blue eyes I had ever seen. I stammered out something like, "Are you the person who called about riding lessons?" Somehow, she understood my question and said she was. I was dumb struck but my mother saved the day. She called from the house to bring the riding student in to sign liability papers. We entered through the back door, into the kitchen. My mother said, "Please sit down child, I was just going to put Richard's breakfast on the table, will you have a bite before going on your ride? What is your name, dear?" The young lady answered, "Suzanne Jorgensen." Just then my mother set a plate of aebleskivers (a Danish breakfast pastry) on the table. "Oh my goodness," the girl exclaimed, "Aebleskivers, I haven't spoken to anyone who even knows what aebleskivers are in months." My mother said "Well of course, with a name like Jorgensen, you have to be Danish. Where are you from?" The girl, answered, "Minneapolis." Mother said "That's where we came from, as well, years ago when Richard was just a baby and, of course, we are also Danish. I'm sure our families are acquainted at some juncture or maybe related. Are you first, second or third generation?"

“I am first generation and second generation. My grandfather on my father’s side came from Denmark and my mother came over as a little girl.” Mother said, “Oh, you have that in common with Richard. His father came over as a small boy and I was born in Minnesota. The meal went on, Mother monopolizing the conversation with questions about Minneapolis and did Miss Jorgensen know this family or that family. It was a good thing Mother did carry on the conversation because I was still dumb struck. I could not take eyes off this young lady. Her eyes, her hair, her build, her smell, her voice, how she held herself. Finally, my wits came back enough to cram a couple of aebleskivers in my mouth as I excused myself to go saddle the horses.

Miss Jorgensen and Mother came out of the house and across the yard just as I was leading Pauline, a 15 hand sorrel five-gaited mare, and Scout, my old 12-year-old gelding, out into the yard. Mother said, “Oh, Richard, good, I see you saddled Pauline with my rough side-out saddle.” She turned to Suzanne and said “Suzanne, dear,” (no more Miss Jorgensen for mother, it was like she had already welcomed Suzanne into the family), “you will just love that saddle, with Pauline who is a wonderful five-gaited mare, it will be like floating on a cloud.” With that she turned and set out back across the yard to the house, leaving me to fend for myself.

By this time I had regained my composure enough to almost speak in a normal voice. “Miss Jorgensen,” I started to say, and she put her hand up and stopped me. “Please, Mr. Taylor, we are going to be spending some time together. Please address me as Suzanne and with your permission I will address you as Richard.” At this I loosened up a little and said “Young lady, I will be most happy to address you as Suzanne and you may address me any way you wish including, “hey you.” I went on. “Now let’s get on with your lessons. Have you done any riding up to now?” She said she had never been on a horse. “Okay,” I said. “Let’s start with the basics. Firstly and the most important thing you should know about horses is that unlike in the movies or books, any time a horse gets the idea he can get away with kicking your head off, he will do it. That does not mean that you can’t show them affection and they will sometimes seem to be returning affection. But if they lose respect for who is in command, they will immediately take advantage.” “I understand,” she said. I went on through the basics, neck reining as opposed to squaw reining, etc., and in 20 minutes we were mounted. Usually it takes at least an hour in the riding ring before I will venture out on the trail with a new rider, but Suzanne took right to it. I didn’t have to tell her anything twice. Within 20 minutes we were heading out into the wash and she was sitting her horse, reins in her left hand, her right hand at rest on her leg, her heels down and her toes up and her back straight. She looked like an experienced horse woman already. Over the next mile we put the horses into a single foot gait and then into a slow canter.

In about 30 minutes we came upon the Blue Diamond Rock Crusher. This was a place where Mat and I spent much of our childhood. The facility was no longer in use and what was left was a wonderful place for all of the kids in the area. The pit that had a track running down into it with an old steam shovel still on the track had filled up with water and it made a super swimming hole.

After riding around the crusher, we continued southwest down the wash to the Garvey Bridge that spanned across the wash. I didn’t want to get under the bridge because the spans were covered with the filthiest of writings and pictures and most of the time there were winos and tramps in residence. I asked Suzanne if she was hungry. She said she was, so we turned south and came up out of the wash on the Whittier side of the Garvey Bridge where there was a little sandwich and beer place called Duffy’s Tavern. Besides being able to drive up in front of Duffy’s off Garvey Ave, Alice, the woman who ran and owned the place, put an entrance in the back with a hitching post close by. Because of this she enjoyed a good trade from equestrians coming up off the bridle trails.

Suzanne and I tied up and went in. There were three solders at the bar drinking beer and one couple sitting at a table eating. Alice was behind the bar and as she looked up and saw me she let out a yell and came flying out from

behind the bar and hugged me. “Oh, Richard, you have grown up, it’s been so long. Where is Mat?” I told her that Mat was also home on leave but was with Kasaco. Then I introduced Suzanne and we ordered burgers and cokes. As we slid into a booth, to make conversation, I asked Suzanne what she was studying at UCLA. She took a big breath and said “Well it’s a long story. Because I spoke Danish and English before I entered school and I so easily learned German in school, it was believed, and I believed I had a strong aptitude for languages. I have never been in the lower half of any class in my life but I may not even pass my major the way I am going.” “What’s the problem?” I asked. “I am majoring in a language that is not a Romance language and nothing in it is anything like anything I have ever heard and I am struggling. If I don’t bring my grade up by the end of this semester I am going to lose my scholarship.” “What language are you studying that’s so difficult?” I asked, with a prayer in my heart. My prayer was answered. She replied, “Japanese.” I gazed into her beautiful blue eyes and asked, “How much time do you have left on your spring break?” She answered, a little less than three weeks. “Then,” I said, “Your problem has a simple solution. I will drive you to your dorm this afternoon, you can pick up your things and stay in our guest room for the next two and half weeks. You will be well chaperoned by my parents and in fact my mother will call your mother and speak to her in Danish. You will spend every minute of every day with me and we will speak only in Japanese.”

Suzanne sat there looking at me as if I was crazy. Then, she finally dropped the bite of hamburger out of her mouth onto her plate and gasped. “What the hell are you talking about? You don’t speak Japanese?” I said in a calm voice, “The man Alice asked me about when we came in here, Mat, Mat Kenzo is his whole name. We grew up together. He learned English in my home and I learned Japanese in his. He is my best friend and shipmate.” Then, I leaned closer and said, as quietly as possible in Japanese, “Oh, beautiful lady, please spend the next two and a half weeks with me, please spend your life with me.” I could tell she picked up on some of what I said. She gasped again, “Oh, my God, you aren’t crazy and you are not kidding, you do speak Japanese, I can’t believe it.” With that, she smiled and picked up her burger.

I went to the bar to pay Alice and she would have none of it. “Richard, your money is no good here. Please come back before your leave is over, and bring Mat.” I thanked her, gave her a hug and said I would try to make it back. As I turned around, one of the soldiers, a big man with a prizefighter’s face, was standing in my way. As I attempted to step around him he moved to block me. I said, “Please let me pass.” “I need to ask you something, cowboy. I want to dance with that girl you brought in here. I was telling my friends I was sure you wouldn’t object.” I said in as polite a voice as I could, “Sorry soldier, the lady and I have to be someplace and we are leaving.” With that, the soldier slurred, “I hate you fucking draft dodging civilians,” and then he threw a right at my head. It was easy. I stepped inside the punch, coiled my left arm around his right, put my right foot behind him and with my hip as the lever point, threw him. Had I slammed him on the cement slab floor it could have killed him, instead I threw him at an angle. He still hit hard enough that I didn’t think he would get up. The other two soldiers started to come at me but stopped in their tracks. Alice was standing between us with her 12-gauge sawed-off. “Now boys,” she said, “you have two choices. I can call the cops, or you can take your friend into the bathroom, clean him up and return for a round on the house. What will it be?” One of the soldiers said “We’ll take the free beer, thank you ma’am.” Alice said, “Good. See you later, Richard.” With that Suzanne and I left. Suzanne said, “What did you do to that man?” I answered, “It’s called Judo. I didn’t just learn the Japanese language.” She said as she took my arm “If you are trying to amaze me, you are succeeding.” As we were riding along back to the ranch, Suzanne pulled her mare up beside Scout and said, “Are you serious about tutoring me for the next two weeks? I will pay you.” “No, you will not pay me,” I said, “and yes, I am as serious as a heart attack.”

Over the next 18 days Suzanne and I spent every waking hour together. On the 16th day, I asked her to marry me, and to my astonishment, she said she would. We would have done it right then, but I didn’t know what the Navy

had planned for me, and it just wouldn't have been fair to her for me to leave the day after our honeymoon with a good chance I would never come back. Suzanne's first letter, forwarded to me from the Talbert, informed me she had aced her first Japanese language test after her return from spring break.

## Chapter 22

At the appointed time, in the appointed bar on Ocean Avenue, just up from the Pike, Bill, Mat and I met. We had about three hours until we were to meet our PT boat transportation to Zebra Four. Bill told us about a Barbara he met in Austin, I told of Suzanne and Mat topped us both. Mat and Kosaco got married his first week in Manzanar and they stayed together in the apartment while Mr. and Mrs. Sasushi moved into their new Quonset. Mat said “Gomennasai (please forgive me) Bill San, Gomennasai Richard San but we could not invite anyone outside the camp to the wedding.” He then showed us pictures of a typical Shinto wedding. We recognized one of the guests as Mr. Smith.

LT JG Bruntski gave us a ride back to the base we would not soon forget. There were four to five foot seas and we did 35 knots most of the way. When we got to our tent there was a note from Colonel Hansen. We were to report to him at 0700 the next morning in dress uniform. Dress white uniforms were hung in each of our lockers. When we entered the conference room next to Colonel Hansen’s office we found, to our dismay, the 10 ft. table was covered with a white table cloth and was set for breakfast. The Colonel rose from a seat right of the head of the table and greeted us with a “Good morning, gentlemen.” He could see we were confused and he had a grin on his face as big as a slice of watermelon. “Gentlemen,” he went on, “in a moment the executive officer of COMSERVPAC, Admiral James Stacy will be joining us for breakfast. The Admiral has some business with all of you.” Just then a Stewards Mate yelled, “Attention on deck!” and a three-star admiral came into the room. “At ease, gentlemen,” was the first thing he said. “I am Admiral Stacy and I am here at the request of and on behalf of the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt. It is my pleasure and duty to inform you gentlemen you have been awarded meritorious commendations. Would you all...” there were now eight officers in the room beside us, all commanders and above, “...stand for the award.” The admiral picked up a document. He said, “Lieutenant Colonel William P. Lawrence please come forward.” Bill stepped to the front of the room. “Lieutenant Richard Taylor please come forward” I came up and then he called Mat. The Admiral then read from the document. The commendation described our action at Eniwetok and awarded each of us the Silver Star. We were flabbergasted and in a daze and were about to return to our seats when the Admiral said, “Stand fast gentlemen, that is not all. I have here one more award. Lieutenant Kenzo,” the Admiral stepped in front of Mat. “Lieutenant Kenzo, pursuant to a report by your commanding officer, then Marine Captain. William Lawrence describing your actions at Eniwetok and a subsequent Navy Department investigation and by order of the President of the United States, you are hereby awarded the Medal of Honor.” Mat almost fell down. He braced himself against the table. “I don’t know what to say sir, I didn’t do that much.”

The Admiral placed the medal ribbon around Mat's neck and stepped back and saluted. He then shouted, “Attention on deck, Medal of Honor.” Bill, Mat and I were still in a dream state when we all sat down. Admiral Stacy stood at the head of the table with a cup of coffee in his hand and said, “Now hear this, all who witnessed these proceedings are informed that all of this is top secret. Because of the information that must remain secret, you gentlemen are ordered not to display your awards or inform anyone about them until given permission to do so by COMSERVPAC or higher authority. The award recipients have expressed their gratitude but for security reasons we will not ask any of them to speak. Now let’s all enjoy this breakfast.”

After the meal the Colonel stood and said “You are all dismissed to duty except the three award winners, please stand fast.” When the room was cleared except for the Admiral, the Colonel and we three, a Stewards Mate set out fresh coffee and left the room. Admiral Stacy poured himself a fresh cup and passed the pot. “Gentlemen,” he said, “I would like to add my personal congratulations. What the three of you accomplished is truly remarkable. It also brought you to the attention of General Douglas MacArthur, which brings up the rest of our business. I have orders

for the three of you. First you, Colonel Lawrence, you are to spend the next three months on this base where you will be crammed with as much information about Japan, the political structure of Japan and the persons involved in the government and the royal family as you can absorb. After that three months, you will be assigned to the personal staff of General MacArthur. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Kenzo you will likewise be crammed with the said information for the next three months but you will remain on the base for an undetermined time being crammed with as much education that a naval line officer should have. At some time in months or years, when the General needs you, you will also join the General's personal staff." At this point the Admiral took a long drink of his coffee and said, "Do you have any questions?" We were all in a daze but Bill managed a "No, Admiral."

The next three months were just as advertised. We spent 10 hours a day in class but because of the teaching method, it was not really tedious. First of all, some of our instructors were most interesting. There were three captured Japanese officers among others. They were all honorable men and only agreed to give information not related to the war but were convinced that giving other information would benefit Japan after the war. They were not given parole and were kept under guard at all times. The Japanese officers told us happenings leading up to the war and they told us in detail about many in the royal family, political bodies and the military. Most of the military people the Japanese would not name but were given numbers. They would disclose the names only if and when Japan capitulated. Mr. Smith, who we now knew as Edgar Childers and who was also one of our instructors, was able to name several of the numbered individuals.

At the end of the 90 days, Bill left on the PT boat for his new assignment. For the next 20 months Mat and I remained at Camp Zebra 4 except for eight trips we made to various combat areas to interrogate Japanese prisoners. We made all of these trips under assumed names and in civilian clothes. We also got leave twice when the Talbot was in the states. Suzanne and I got married on my second leave. During that 20 months most of our education was toward qualifying us as U.S. Naval officers but we still had several conferences with Edgar Childers and with the Japanese prisoner officers.

## Chapter 23

Second Lieutenant Jigoro Matsuoka awoke with a start as the flap of his tent blew in, a blinding flash lit up everything and a split second later the deafening roar of an explosion assaulted his ears. "Oh, no. Not again," he screamed as he grabbed for his helmet. As he bolted out of the tent it registered that his friend Lieutenant Funakoshi was not there, but he had no time to think about that now as he sped to his battle station. After two hours at battle stations the order came to stand down to condition three. Jigoro was called to a combat officers meeting to help assess the situation. It was surmised that the attack that destroyed the radio communication center and the Officer's Mess store house was again the work of saboteurs or a commando attack that was able to come on the island, attack and leave the island without a trace. It was, indeed, possible underwater swimmers from a sub could have done the job but the dominant theory was sabotage. Jigoro's heart sank when his friend Lieutenant Funakoshi was listed among the missing and presumed dead. It was reported that Captain Fuke had come to the NCO quarters about an hour before the attack. The night guard said he overheard Sergeant Oshema say something about an important message. They both, according to the guard, rushed off to the radio shack. The guard then said that Lieutenant Funakoshi came about 10 minutes later, also to get Sergeant Oshema. Lieutenant Funakoshi, Captain Fuke, Sergeant Oshema and two operators who were on duty in the radio room were all missing and presumed to be in the smoldering rubble that was the radio room and office. According to the damage control people, the rubble would not be cool enough to go through for days and any bodies found would likely be unrecognizable. As it turned out, however, one of the casualties was identified that very morning. The Sergeant's singed head was found about 40 yards away, evidently severed by flying sheet metal and blown clear by the blast.

Jigoro asked for, and received, the duty of writing the death letter to Lieutenant Gichin Funakoshi's family. In the letter he said that he had only known Gichin for a short time but he considered him his best friend. He expressed his admiration for Gichin as the most honorable person he ever knew or knew about, including the most revered Samurai. He described how Gichin had served his Colonel Matsu Suzuki and as he wrote he saw the page was spotting with his tears. He did not leave out the part where Gichin presented the Colonel with his left small fingertip as a token of admiration and as a pleading for the Colonel to forgive him for his unworthiness to assist him in hara-kiri. He described to the parents how the Colonel said Gichin was sent to him by his ancestors and that Gichin was truly a man of tao. He finished by saying that he prayed he could die with half the honor and dignity of his friend Gichin Funakoshi.

In late 1943 Jigoro got a package from family and a letter thanking him for his letter. In the package was a black sash Gichin had worn in his uncle's dojo and a tintype photo of Gichin dressed in his karate whites. Jigoro studied the picture and determined that if he didn't know it was Gichin, he would not recognize his features. The Gichin he knew was much taller and heavier than the 11 year old youth in the tintype. Nevertheless, he put the tintype with his prized possessions and kept it with him until his death.

## Chapter 24

Several of the comfort women and several of the Korean Workers were interrogated and some executed but no saboteurs were discovered. In addition all the islands and the shipwreck at the south end of Eniwetok were thoroughly searched and researched without finding any evidence of intruders. The attacks remained a mystery.

By November of 1943 the Americans were making bombing raids on the Marshalls and Eniwetok was getting its share. Between November of 1943 and February of 1944 the attacks increased. By mid-September, no one slept above ground or outside an emplacement. By February, Jigoro and all of the troops on the islands were resigned that Japan was losing the war but they were committed to a man to fight to the death in service of the Emperor. By February 14th it was obvious that this was the end. The island was under air and sea bombardment most of the day and night. By the morning of the 17th, half of the positions on the island were knocked out. The fact that half were not was a miracle. At 0500 the morning of the 17th, Captain Tetsuo Maekawa, the commander of Jigoro's emplacement, gave Jigoro and his other two Lieutenants their last orders: "Do not retreat, do not surrender and kill the enemy until they kill you." Through that morning and that day the US Army 106th infantry landed in a hail of rifle and mortar fire. They were later joined by the 22nd Marines. Jigoro's position took hit after hit while his guns never stopped blazing. The American battle plan called for Eniwetok to be secured in 24 hours. On the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Jigoro, one other officer and three enlisted men were still alive and one machine gun was still in operation. Through the firing slit of one of the knocked out guns Jigoro saw another squad with another flame thrower getting ready to make another charge. Jigoro ordered the other officer and one man to continue firing the remaining machine gun. He told the two remaining soldiers to fix bayonets for a Bonzai charge. Jigoro with his pistol blazing and his sword raised and flanked by his two enlisted comrades were cut down 4 steps outside the pill box. The enlisted men were dead before they hit the ground. Jigoro was hit in the neck, through and through, in the shoulder, through and through and in the right hip, through and through.

Jigoro had two things going for him. His wounds were not fatal and the 22nd Marine officer that was first to come on him had orders to get a Japanese officer prisoner. Not an easy task. On Feb 17th the Japanese garrison on Eniwetok numbered 2,665 officers and men. When the island was declared secure on the afternoon of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, all but 66 of the 2,665 were dead and all the 66 were wounded. Of the 66, four committed Seppuku and an unknown number tried. Jigoro would have been one of the 4 but when he awoke in bed on an American hospital ship, he was in restraints.

## Chapter 25

Jigoro was surprised that the Americans gave him excellent medical attention, good food and seemed to treat him with respect even though he was a captive and therefore a disgrace to himself, his family and his country. After two weeks his captors even took him topside of the ship for exercise although he was under guard and wearing leg and arm restraints. On the morning of the 23rd day of his captivity the hospital ship docked in Pearl Harbor and he was taken off the ship in restraints and under guard to a prison ward of Aiea hospital. In the hospital he could have conversed with other Japanese prisoners but he didn't wish to associate with other cowards.

The second week in the hospital, Jigoro was taken to an interrogation room where he was questioned by a caucasian American civilian by the name of Richard. Richard spoke perfect Japanese and showed him respect. He told him that he understood that it was Jigoro's duty and obligation to escape and kill Americans. He said he respected Jigoro for that and was willing to negotiate as respectful enemies. Jigoro responded he would not negotiate at all. Richard said he respected him for that as well and he would continue to visit without negotiations. Richard then quoted some famous Samurai as describing honor of wounded captives picked up off the battlefield. He went on to say that anyone who didn't credit Jigoro's banzai charge as an act of extreme heroism was demented, including Jigoro himself. He went on to say that the fact that he was not killed and instead woke up alive, in restraints in custody of the enemy, in no way detracted from his honor. Richard then said something that struck Jigoro like a lightning bolt and opened up a new avenue of thinking for him. Richard asked, had Jigoro ever considered the possibility that he was spared for a reason and that he might yet do his greatest service for his Emperor and his country. Richard then went on to say that he hoped that someday after the conflict between Japan's Tojo faction and America, they could meet not as enemies. Jigoro could not help himself and he said that he also wished that. He regretted saying it as soon as the words came out of his mouth but he still meant them. To Jigoro's surprise, Richard did not press his advantage and cordially terminated the interview.

Jigoro made a complete recovery and was transferred to a prisoner of war camp. Over the next months, Richard continued to visit and always came with a gift. Soap, cigarettes, candy and the most appreciated Japanese green tea.

## Chapter 26

At 0900 hours July 3, 1945, Mat and I were summoned out of a class to Colonel Hansen's office. We were waved right into the Colonel's office and he greeted us with his watermelon smile. "Lieutenant Kenzo, Lieutenant Taylor, at ease and please sit down." He went on. "There in the corner you see several sea bags with all new tailored uniforms befitting members of General Douglas MacArthur's staff. The PT is waiting to take you to Long Beach where you will board a Pan Am Clipper to Manila where you will join the General." The Colonel then stood and while shaking our hands said "Bon voyage, gentlemen, it has been a pleasure knowing you. Oh, by the way, you may now wear your officer duds with all decorations. It's in your orders. You are, however still restricted from revealing any part of your missions up to now or future missions."

We didn't wish to attract attention so Mat did not wear his Medal of Honor. In four hours we were airborne. Although the Pan Am clipper was exclusively a military transport, the comfort and the service was fantastic. We had all we could eat and drink all the way to Pearl and then all the way to Manila. The Clipper came in low over the Subic Bay and gently sat down in the Manila Bay. We felt very conspicuous as a launch crew came into the aircraft and asked for Mat and I to come forward and disembark, leaving a Navy full Captain and a bunch more brass on board. The Navy Captain said something to the launch coxswain and then turned as Mat and I came forward. The Captain snapped to attention and called out, "Attention on Deck, Medal of Honor." Everyone on the plane stood or came out of their seats as much as possible. As Mat and I squeezed by the Captain, Mat turned and said. "Thank you Captain and thank you gentlemen." On the dock, we got into an armored personnel carrier and were accompanied by a squad of soldiers in a four-by-four with a mounted machine gun. The driver said "I know it's hot sirs, but we must close the window armor. Supposedly the city is secure but there are still some of the little buggers around and there is still fighting in the hills." Then he realized what he had said, and was embarrassed. "Begging your pardon, sir" he said to Mat. Mat laughed and said "No pardon is necessary sergeant, I am an American of Japanese descent and I am just as anxious to kill all those little buggers as you are." The sergeant said "Thank you for that, sir."

The underground emplacement where the General and his staff had temporary headquarters set up was 25 minutes away. By the time we arrived, we were soaked in sweat. It was at least 140 degrees in that armored carrier. As I was getting one of the sea bags out of the carrier, someone came up behind me and as he took the bag from me he said "Konnichiwa, genii?" (A greeting, and then addressing me as family, inquiring as to my wellbeing) It was, of course, Bill. Navy lieutenants are not supposed to hug Marine Colonels but Mat and I made an exception. After the joyous greeting Bill showed us our quarters which were lavish. He said we were to meet the General and the rest of the staff in one hour and then we were dining aboard the USS Missouri as the guests of Admiral Nimitz. As soon as we got in the room there was a knock on the door and a Philippine orderly demanded our dress uniforms. He said he would be back in 30 minutes with the pressed uniforms and that we should be showered, shaved, dressed and in the passageway in 45 minutes.

Bill introduced us to the General and the rest of the staff. The meeting was pretty cold. The General set the tone, which was all business and no small talk. The only words the General spoke off the subject of how we were to conduct ourselves on the Missouri was a short curt congratulation to Mat on his award. Of course the Medal of Honor probably didn't impress him so much since he and his father before him were recipients. The instructions to us and all the staff were explicit. We were to have as little conversation with the Admiral and/or his staff, as possible, without giving offense and in no circumstances were we to discuss anything about any planned operations. In the car Bill explained that the relationship between the Admiral and the General was strained due to the fact that the General had been made the Supreme Commander of the Pacific which made him the Admiral's boss.

As our launch approached the Battleship Missouri, a salute cannon began reporting. It finished the 21st report just as our launch came alongside the gangway. As the General took hold of the gangway and started up we heard the boatswain's pipe over the Missouri's P.A. "Attention on Deck, Medal of Honor, Supreme Commander Pacific, General Douglas MacArthur." Then as the General went over the side we heard the boatswain blow the General aboard. Then one of the staff, a bird colonel, started to go up and was asked by the boatswain on the gangway to please wait. The boatswain's pipe came on the PA again, "Attention on deck, Medal of Honor, Lieutenant Matsu Kenzo, USN" Mat said later, he almost passed out when he came on deck and the Captain of the Missouri and Admiral Nimitz were lined up with the side boys saluting him aboard.

There were 32 at the dinner in the Captain's Mess. Mat and I were the only two without braid on our hats. The head table was set for four, the General, the Admiral, the ship Captain and Mat. Protocol wise, Mat out-ranked everyone in the room except the General. The two tables at the foot of the main table were occupied by the staff officers. They were mixed, one from the General's staff, one from the Admiral's staff. By special permission from the Secretary of the Navy, 1939 Le Montrachet White Burgundy was served with prawns and then prime rib was served to order along with 1934 Le Chambertin Red Burgundy. Later, when Mat and I discussed this night we had to admit we were in a dream state and really didn't savor it as we should have.

The next morning at 0800 we attended our first business staff meeting. Each department leader came to the meeting with a report concerning his assigned specialty. Bill was the Japanese Intelligence Department head and had five other staff officers working for him. In turn, all staff officers had a personal staff of junior officers and enlisted men. The first order of business after each department leader gave his report was to assign Mat and I as staff officers in Bill's department.

After the meeting Mat and I were briefed for the rest of the day on what the staff had been working on and what it was now working on. We then found out how operation Olympic, the plan to invade Kyushu of the Japanese home islands, had been painstakingly worked out only now to be discarded in favor of the deployment of a new, devastating secret weapon called the atomic bomb. Up to the time the A-bomb became an option the military had given up any hope of a Japanese surrender. The code of Bushido forbade it and our experience up to now with even the civilians on Okinawa was that most would fight to the death. It was a conservative estimate that Americans would suffer one million casualties, that the Japanese would lose at least three-point-four million and that Japan as a country would be destroyed beyond any eventual redemption.

The reason Mat and I were brought up to the staff and the point of most of our education over the last several months was, Bill's group with us included, would be among the first Allied forces to meet face to face with the Japanese authorities.

Little Boy was dropped on Hiroshima at 0815 August 6th 1945. Although Emperor Hirohito wanted to surrender, Prime Minister Tojo and his group would not let him and in fact planned, but could not carry out, an assassination of the Emperor. Fat Man was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9th. On August 10th Bill, Mat a Philippine officer Remoras, who was very close to the General and spoke fluent Japanese, and the General were in the radio room in contact with Japanese authorities in Tokyo. It was agreed the Emperor would make a surrender broadcast to the Japanese population on the 15th and that all hostilities would cease immediately. It was agreed that Allied forces could come ashore where they pleased and would not be opposed. It was agreed that General Naruhito Higashikuni, a member of the royal family, who was now the Prime Minister, would meet with Allied officers at Atsugi Air Base on the 14th to arrange a formal surrender. Bill's, including Mat and I, were assigned to be among those Allied officers.

At 0500 hours on the 14th B-29s started landing at Atsugi loaded with fully equipped Army and Marine infantry. By 1200 hours the base was firmly in American hands and all Japanese military were disarmed. At 1230 hours the B-29 with American and Allied senior officers arrived. At the foot of the gangway was the Marine Colonel in charge with his staff and Naruluko Higashikuni and his staff. The Prime Minister and his staff were dressed in tuxedos while all the Americans were in combat dress. The Prime Minister was astounded when the first American officer off the plane was a lowly U.S. Navy Lieutenant. As the Lieutenant came down the gangway the Marine Colonel snapped to and called out, "Attention on deck, Medal of Honor." The Lieutenant returned the salute and without breaking stride marched up in front of Naruluko, and as he did Naruluko realized that the officer was Japanese. The Lieutenant then, in perfect Japanese, asked, "Are you Naruluko Higashikuni?" The question was put in the manner of a superior to a lowly subordinate. Naruluko had only been addressed so by the Emperor since he was a school boy. He answered, "Yes." Then without introducing himself or showing any other form of respect the lieutenant said, again in the superior to the subordinate, "You and your staff, follow me." Mat then marched off toward a tented conference table that had been set up on the tarmac. The Prime Minister and his staff could do not but follow.

The conference tent should have been called the command tent because there was no conference. The Japanese were told what to do, in no uncertain terms. Most of Naruhito's staff were ordered to assist the American officers in setting up a temporary headquarters at Atsugi for the General, who was to arrive on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and a more permanent headquarters in Yokohama and Tokyo as soon as they were secured. Naruluko was ordered to choose two of his staff to accompany him, Colonel Lawrence, Lieutenant Taylor and Lieutenant Kenzo aboard a Dakota (DC3 aircraft) to Tokyo. Naruluko used the Dakota's radio to arrange for our landing in Tokyo and an immediate audience with the Emperor. Bill and I were boarded with the three Japanese along with two Marine guards carrying Thompson sub machine guns. When we got seated Naruluko spoke to his aid. "I can't understand it," he said. "Don't they know I am a General? They're treating me like a hide skinner!" Then Naruluko got another shock. The American Marine Colonel sitting behind him spoke up in perfect Japanese, again using the superior to the subordinate vernacular. "General, the Lieutenant who has been instructing you is a holder of the Medal of Honor. He rates a salute from the President of the United States. He is senior in matters of protocol to all officers in this command except for General MacArthur and is only junior to him because he is also a recipient of the award. You on the other hand are a General in an army that has surrendered unconditionally." The General's face went white and he sat motionless for the rest of the flight.

Per plan, Mat went into the audience with the Emperor by himself. He was in full dress uniform, with sword and with all his medals including the Medal of Honor. He stood in front of Hirohito for a full two minutes and then he said in perfect Japanese, "Tenno, I have a message from General Douglas MacArthur. The only agreed term for surrender is that you remain as Emperor. However that term would not preclude you from being tried for war crimes, convicted and put to death. There are many in power who are calling for just that. General MacArthur feels as my family did when they left the Empire. My family's greatest fears were confirmed when your Prime Minister Tsuyoshi Inukai was assassinated in 1932 and Japan was put virtually in the hands of the Military. General MacArthur wishes for you not to consider him as your conqueror but as your liberator. He has assigned me, if you will accept me, to be your personal liaison with him. I am to convey to him your every thought and I am to convey to you his every thought. If you agree to this and cooperate in all ways, the General pledges to protect you and your family and to work with you to rebuild Japan into a prosperous and healthy country. Before you agree you may investigate me but, in short, I was born in Okinawa, I was brought up in California, USA. Make no mistake, I am an American Naval Officer and am 100-percent loyal to the United States of America, but I am Shinto and I revere my ancestors and you as my spiritual leader. If it pleases you, Tenno, I will return tomorrow at this same time for your answer." There was dead silence in the room for at least five minutes, then Hirohito spoke in low tones to an aide.

The aide spoke, "All except Lieutenant Kenzo are to leave the chamber." There was some grumbling, but they all filed out and then there were only Mat and Hirohito. "Hirohito said, "Come and sit." Mat came and sat across a desk from the Emperor. "Hirohito looked at Mat straight in the eyes and said, "Matsu Kenzo, we have been in the depths of hell. Our people have suffered so much for us and we are sure you and General MacArthur are the answer to our prayers. Tell your General that we accept your proposal with all our being. Together with the help of God we will build a new Japan and a lasting peace."

## Chapter 27

Lieutenant Jigoro Matsuoka was awakened by a guard at 0100 the morning of September 3rd 1945. He couldn't believe his ears. The guard had civilian clothes for him and said he was to be transported to Tokyo that morning. That he was to be delivered to American Occupation Command Headquarters in Tokyo.

Jigoro's ride from the Tokyo airport to Occupation Headquarters was a very sad trip. He had no idea of the destruction his homeland had suffered. It seemed there was not a building that was not damaged and many looked beyond repair. He saw where whole neighborhoods of wooden houses were burned to the ground. All restraints were taken off Jigoro but he was still escorted by two armed S.P.s.

Their taxi arrived at an office building just across from Hibiya Park and near the Imperial Palace grounds. Jigoro had learned quite a bit of English in the camp, but he was pleasantly surprised when the Navy Lieutenant he had been ushered in to see greeted him in Japanese. And then he recognized the officer. It was Richard who had visited him in the camp.

I said "Lieutenant Matsuoka, I apologize for not properly introducing myself when we met in Hawaii but I was under orders." I stood and bowed to Jigoro and as I formally introduced myself I presented my card. I did this in the vernacular one would use to a respected equal. Like a professional to a client. I then dismissed the S.P.s and invited Jigoro to sit down and offered him tea. After the tea was served, I said "Maybe I am getting my wish. Maybe this is the day we meet not as enemies." Jigoro, as before, could not help himself and responded with a "Maybe."

I went on and I could see the utter shock on his face as he heard what I said next. "Lieutenant, you have an audience with Emperor Hirohito in one hour. Before you keep that appointment I am going to tell you what he is going to require from you. If you are not going to be 100-percent receptive, then the audience will be canceled and you will be free to go." Jigoro said in a very forceful voice "I can refuse Tenno nothing, including my life." I said "I knew that would be your answer but I have my orders and I will tell you what he will ask, nevertheless. The Emperor is forming a close group around him. All in that group, like the Emperor himself, are pledging to dedicate their lives, their entire existence to rebuilding the infrastructure and the society of Japan. Some in this group are Americans. You will be required to work side by side with Americans, most of whom have killed Japanese in combat. I am one of those Americans." Jigoro was silent for moments and then he asked "Did you request that I be invited into this group." I answered, "No, it was another American officer who you will meet." Jigoro said "I can think of no qualification I have to qualify me to be part of such a group, but of course I am honored." "Very well Lieutenant, if you will join me for a quick lunch, then I will walk you over to the Palace."

A beautiful Caucasian lady came into the room and placed plates of food before the two men. "Lieutenant Matsuoka, I would like you to meet a lady you will be having dealings with, my right hand and my wife, Mrs. Taylor. When you are comfortable with American custom you may address her as "Suzanne." Suzanne turned to Jigoro and in perfect Japanese said she was honored to meet him.

Jigoro was called out of the waiting room into pretty much a normal business office although lavishly appointed. He recognized the man behind the desk as the Emperor and immediately bowed to the floor and stayed there until the man standing by the Emperor told him to rise. Then the man said "Because of your honor and dedication to the point of giving your life for your country, Tenno is going to speak to you directly." Then that person left the office and Jigoro and the Emperor were alone. "The Emperor spoke in a very calm voice as a loving father to an older son. "The sacrifices you and so many of our subjects have made for us and for the country are incalculable. We can

never pay our debt to you. What we can do, and are doing, is dedicating our lives to the rebuilding of Japan so that what remains of this generation and coming generations can live in peace and prosperity. You have been told of a group of men who are dedicating themselves with us. Our closest advisor and confidant is an American Naval Officer of Japanese descent by the name of Matsu Kenzo. He was born in Okinawa, but raised in America. His parents left the Empire because of the taking over of the civil government by the military but remain Shinto and, in their way, loyal to the Crown. This officer operated behind our lines as a spy and saboteur and killed many Japanese. We consider his acts as his honorable duty in war and do not hold them against him. Lieutenant Jigoro Matsuoka, Lieutenant Kenzo has requested that you be offered a position in the group as his personal aide. You are wondering why he has asked for you and we do not know. He has requested, and we have agreed, that you be given a liberal military pension if you do not join the group. We do not wish to impose our will on you. We are confident you will make your decision based on what is best for Japan. We wish for you to meet Lieutenant Kenzo and then make your decision. An aide is waiting outside to escort you to his office, which is in the palace. No matter your decision, you will always be in our heart.”

The aid directed Jigoro to an office waiting room just down the hall. The secretary said he was expected and to go right in. Jigoro entered an office much like the one he had just left. There was a man in U.S. Navy uniform with his back to him leaning over a credenza. On the credenza was a Banzai sword. As the man turned to face Jigoro the first thing Jigoro saw was the bloody towel wrapped around his right hand. Then he saw the left hand extended to him with the severed right little finger and then he looked into the face of his friend and saw the tears and heard, “Gomennasai Jigoro San.”

## **CREDITS**

If you enjoy this book it is only because of the guidance and help rendered by Suzanne, my loving wife, best friend and companion from November 5, 1955 to June 16, 2014, my daughter-in-law Michelle Davidson, my friend Marcy Fry and my friend Vernon Spear. To round out my good luck I was very fortunate to acquire the services of Randy Fuller an accomplished actor, columnist and narrator. Other books Randy has narrated can be found on Amazon Audiobooks.