

Chapter 1

April Fool's Day, 1984

*“On April Fool's, a decade hence,
A hole appears within a fence.
I will be called to patch it.
The part which leaves is very great.
Then I will learn about my fate.
I must work hard to match it.*

- *Predictive poem*
- *By Lyn Buchanan*
- *April Fool's Day, 1974¹*

April Fool's Day seemed somehow appropriate as the day to report to my new military unit. No one had told me where it was. In spite of a very shallow and clandestine briefing at a Czech restaurant in Germany, I wasn't really sure of what the unit did, or for that matter, what I would be doing in it. To top that off, I had been given two different sets of orders: one “official” set, printed on paper, and a totally different set, given verbally. The official orders said that I was to report to HHQ Co, 902 MIBn, INSCOM, Ft. Meade. Translated into human speech, that stands for Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 902nd Military Intelligence Battalion, Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM), located at Fort Meade, Maryland.

However, the verbal orders I had received said that I should not go anywhere near the 902nd. Upon reaching Fort Meade, Maryland, I was to check in at the military Guest Quarters and call a certain phone number to let a special agent know that I had arrived. Under no circumstances was I to report in to the 902nd, as my written orders stated. In effect, I had been instructed to go AWOL the first day of my new assignment.

¹. Since youth, I have written short poems. Over the years, I found that most have been predictive, often giving exact events, dates and locations, but always cryptic at the time. Most have been pretty accurate.

My wife, Linda, my seven-year old son, Lael, and I arrived at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport late in the evening of April 1, 1984. It is customary for a soldier and his family to call the unit to which he is reporting, and have a staff driver pick them up. I couldn't do that, due to the verbal orders. We took a cab from the airport to the Fort Meade Guest House. The desk clerk asked for my orders and said that he would call the unit and let them know I was in. He was somewhat perplexed when I asked him not to.

In the room, I pulled out the napkin which had been given to me in the Czech restaurant in Germany. The hand-scrawled phone number on it was for a private residence in the Fort Meade area. A man's voice answered, and said that we should all wait in the parking lot in front of the Guest House. He would come right by.

When we arrived in the parking lot, a dense, misty fog had rolled in, making the whole scene look like something out of a Hollywood spy movie. The Guest House is far removed from the other base facilities, so the darkness was oppressive. All we could see through the swirling fog was the fuzzy, eerie glow of the Guest House's neon sign at the edge of the parking lot. We stood quietly, feeling the small dots of mist sweeping against our faces in the moist, night breeze. With the fog, the world had gone deathly quiet, and nothing could be heard except our own breathing and the electric crackle of the neon sign's transformer. Even Lael, an active and impatient seven-year old still on Germany time was subdued by the surrounding mystery.

I looked at my wife and marveled at the courage of this woman who would accompany me anywhere in the world, on nothing more than faith that I would do the

right thing. I wondered how she could keep that faith even at times like this, when she knew that I had absolutely no idea of what I was getting us into. She looked back at me and gave the slightest of smiles. The silent mist swirled and we shifted from one foot to the other and waited.

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Flashback

The events which led up to receiving our mysterious new assignment at Fort Meade were, well, odd. I had been working at the US Army Field Station in Augsburg, Germany for a little over two years. I had originally been assigned there as a Russian Linguist, but through some devious manipulation, had worked my way into the Computer Operations and Coordination section.

At that time, the coordination of the computers at the Field Station was a large task, since we had almost a hundred different computer systems with several different countries of origin. The computer systems did not “talk” to each other, and there was constant conflict between the data fields, the computers, and the people and countries who ran them.

I had been there almost a year when I one day received the order to design a program that would tie the Field Station’s many computer systems together into a single reporting entity. Another sergeant - I’ll call him Doug - felt that he should have gotten the job, and was very hostile toward me for the selection. During the following two months, Doug repeatedly got into my programming code and placed “bombs” there, as his means of revenge. I had confronted him several times, but it only fanned the flames. In frustration and as a total last resort, I went to his superiors and reported him. He was

threatened with disciplinary action if he did it again. There were no more interruptions from Doug and in another month I had the program running and tested.

Now I had to make the necessary demonstration briefing to the commanders of the various US military branches and the military commanders of more than a dozen different NATO countries which had personnel at the Field Station. When the day came to make the demonstration, I arrived early, checked and re-checked the program for errors or flaws. There were none. I ran it through all the testing procedures and made certain the presentation would go smoothly. Everything checked out perfectly. Right before presentation time, I went to the bathroom to make certain my hair was combed perfectly and there were no scuffs on my spit-shined shoes or wrinkles in my uniform. At the appointed time, the commanding officers of every military unit attached to the Field Station began to assemble for the briefing on the new computer program.

I went through the initial song and dance about the need for such a program, what problems it would solve, what benefits would be reaped, and so on. I then turned and hit the computer's ENTER key to begin the demonstration. The computer screen went blank. Something had gone wrong. I turned back to the chuckling audience and searched for something to say when I saw Doug standing in the doorway. He grinned menacingly and pointed a finger at me. "Gottcha!" he mouthed, and turned to leave.

Something happened then, which had not happened in years: uncontrollable rage. Earlier in life, I had been one of those "poltergeist" children. I had learned in my early teens that when I allow myself to get truly angry, things around me go crazy. As Doug turned to leave, things did exactly that.

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Flash farther back

When I was about twelve years old, odd things began to happen in the form of objects around me moving or bumping, or suddenly falling for no apparent reason. It was bothersome to others, but to me, it was odd and very interesting. It felt like it was something I was doing so I began trying to learn what it could be. I learned that I could sometimes cause a few small things to happen - simple things – at will. They were not enough to really impress anyone, especially me, but they were enough to spur me onward. I devised some mental exercises to help me “flex my mind muscles”. I developed a “little voice” which would give the orders and help keep things organized. I understood completely that it was just a device of my own making, and not a real voice. It was not an entity of any kind, a spirit, or even an altered ego. I was not really hearing things. It was just a “gimmick” I had devised to separate my regular thoughts from those that were supposed to make the weird things happen. I was never afraid of it, and actually thought of it as a really neat plaything. I had complete control over it.

Through this and some other exercises that I devised, I learned to make bigger things happen, and could make the smaller things happen more easily. But as I got better, things that happened “by themselves” got stronger, too. I practiced and learned more control, so these spurious incidents became less frequent, but when they did happen, they were much more noticeable. A couple of times, the “small voice” had done something by itself to get me out of a fight or embarrassment, but for the most part, the unbidden incidents were just funny little things. In fact, they were usually harmless, pranks, at the most. They happened without my volition, and I would often see the humor in them and appreciate the unexpected cleverness behind them.

Around age fourteen, though, hormones start rising and teenagers begin to compete for the attention of young girls. Charlie Brown's and my life have many comparisons in this area. One day I was showing off, trying to impress the cute red-headed girl who attracted me so. I succeeded by showing her one of the "tricks" I had learned to do with the little voice inside my head. It did impress her, all right. In fact, she was so impressed that she went home and told her father - the Pentecostal minister. The following day, he and two of his deacons met me after school and asked me for a demonstration. As soon as this demonstration succeeded, too, they all slammed their hands onto my head and pushed me down to the sidewalk, screaming to God to cast the Devil out of me.

I was brought up in "Deep East Texas", otherwise known as the "Bible Belt". There, if the preacher said something, then God must have said it, too. The trick I had thought of as neat was suddenly and forcefully turned into a sin against God. I was scared to death and so shaken from the incident that I had nightmares for a month.

What had been nothing more than an amusing and interesting plaything now had its roots in ominous evil. It still didn't feel wrong, but what if the Devil had just been tricking me? What if He had just been preparing me for doing some great and sinfully evil deed? What if the Devil had dark and occult plans for me and I hadn't been Christian enough to know it? What a stupid and horrible Christian I had become! What a depraved sinner I had turned into! I decided that I would stop doing my neat things, and thanked God for warning me of my sins in time.

I now know that the subconscious mind, once given its freedom, doesn't give up that freedom without a fight. I didn't know that back then. At the time, to my guilt and

horror, it seemed that the more I stopped doing my purposeful “neat things”, the more the unbidden things increased. Of course, to my mind at the time, it was simply Satan fighting back. It had nothing to do with conscious and subconscious talents. To my fourteen-year-old mind, it meant only that God and Satan both were testing me. I was in a huge tug-of-war between them, and it required even more diligence of me, or my soul would burn forever in Hell.

I quickly learned that getting angry was almost certain to bring on an unbidden incident. These incidents were usually bad things, in hindsight, and I was always sorry for them later. Yet, at the time they happened, it seemed like it was for saving me from some bully or for helping someone else who was in need. The things that happened always gave me some instant satisfaction because I was suddenly able to take control of bad situations and turn them to good. But later I would see how the Devil had tricked me again and then the guilt would set in.

About two months after the incident with the minister and his deacons, the problem still weighed very heavily on me. Then, another incident happened which was to make me spend the next thirty one years fully dedicated to blocking these sinful abilities. I was riding my bicycle home from school one day when a kid who was always bullying everyone rode up behind me. As he sped past, he hit my handlebar, and I went spilling forward onto the ground. My face and arm went straight into some sharp gravel. The boy had nothing against me, personally. He only wanted the sport of hurting someone, and I happened to be handy. I never could stand him, and now, dislike turned to instant hatred. I was hurt and my face and arm were bleeding. I looked up at him as he rode off laughing and heard the little voice in my mind say, “Die!” A sudden very

heavy, tiring calmness spread over me. I watched spectator-like as he swept sideways off his bicycle, which continued a short ways down the sidewalk without him. He flew over the hood of a parked car and landed in the street. An oncoming car screeched to a stop with the boy's head already under its bumper and its front tire just inches from his face. If it had not stopped, he would have been killed. I would have been responsible. The minister had been right. Not only was what I had been developing evil, but now, I was evil, too. I vowed never to use this ability again.

That plan did not work, of course. Over the years, with some very notable exceptions, I controlled the uninvited occurrences by doing anything possible to never get angry. Several spontaneous things did happen both with and without the anger, and of course, no one can go forever without getting upset over something. For thirty one years, though, I never again heard the voice say, "Die!"

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Flash forward

That is, not until that day in Augsburg. Doug had ruined my program and made me look like an idiot before my commanders, their commanders, foreign commanders, everyone. I was instantly and uncontrollably furious. I heard the voice and quickly turned my attention back to the computer, but could not control the rage. For the second time in my life, it had said, "Die!" And for the first time since I was fourteen, I felt the very heavy, tiring calmness spread over me. Computers throughout the entire Field Station went dead.

During the days that followed (a length of time still classified for obvious reasons), the United States and the other NATO countries that had facilities at the Field

Station had no electronic intelligence effort along the East German border. Field Station personnel went to work and back according to their regular schedules and kept up the appearance that all was business as usual. We had to fool the Soviet's spy-in-the-sky satellites which kept constant watch on us.

I knew inwardly that I had caused the problem, but I wasn't about to tell anyone. For one thing, everyone would have thought I was crazy and laughed at me. I quickly reasoned it all away and convinced myself that I had been wrong. After all, this kind of thing can't happen. I had believed things like that when I was a kid, but that was just spooky kid stuff. Such thinking had been stupid. This was just coincidence. So I went to work like everyone else, played cards and worked crossword puzzles, caught up on my reading, and waited for the Field Station to get up and running again.

The software analysts checked to see whether my program had caused the computers to crash, but quickly determined that it had not. Except for the "bomb" which Doug had planted for my single program, my code was squeaky clean. In fact, the final report of that investigation said that it was the computers crashing which had caused my program to fail. Further analysis showed that unattached and unassociated computer systems had been affected, as well. Those were systems totally unconnected to my program. It seems that even stand-alone intelligence computers around Europe and all along the East German border had crashed at the same time. The cause had been something much bigger. The question of an act of terrorism using an electromotive pulse (EMP) arose. The analysts decided that no such EMP had been used, since non-intelligence computer systems sitting right beside the affected ones had remained intact. An EMP would have taken everything out. They checked for viruses and found none. In

the end, the whole incident remained an awful, unexplained, one-time event without explanation. It is considered to this day an unexplained and isolated “short-lived” phenomenon.

I was later to learn that it was not just the Field Station and intelligence computers around Germany, but that the major portions of the entire NATO intelligence network had gone silent at the same time our station had. Even parts of the intelligence network that were in no way connected to us electronically had blown out. Many years later I learned that the affected area had been from the North Sea down to Italy. About two years ago, I learned that the incident had even affected intelligence computers in Australia. I learned at the same time that our lack of electronic eavesdropping capability had not really put the free world in danger. It seems that the Communist Block countries, the East Germans, Bulgarians, Czechs and Soviets had also lost their electronic eavesdropping equipment, too, at the same moment. During that period of time in which we had been keeping up appearances to fool their spy-in-the-sky satellites, they had been doing the same in order to fool our spy-in-the-sky satellites as they scrambled to get their intelligence networks back on line again.

I kept quiet about my suspicions that I might have, in some way, caused some part of all this. I even rationalized myself out of even thinking about it any more. Such a thing was stupid and ridiculous.

However, there was one aspect of the incident that I hadn't known about. The Commanding General of the US Army Intelligence and Security Command (USAINSCOM) was a man named Gen. Albert N. Stubblebine. Because of the General's personal interest in mental phenomena, several of the officers in his command had been

trained to spot such “human potentials”. One of those officers had attended the ill-fated demonstration. He had only a passing interest in computers, but had attended mainly to see that much brass in one place at one time. He had seen the incident take place and recognized it for what it was.

About an hour after the incident occurred, General Stubblebine was called on the carpet by the Commander of the US Department of Defense, demanding an explanation. General Stubblebine had none to give. He vowed to get to the bottom of it. By the end of the business day, the officer who recognized the event had turned in a full report of what he had seen and suspected.

About two months after the event took place, General Stubblebine came to the Field Station to install a new Field Station Commander. The necessary “GI parties” and white glove inspections had taken place and the Field Station sparkled from stem to stern for the Commanding General’s visit and ceremony. I had no direct part in the ceremonies, so I arrived at work at my normal time. My department director met me at the door and told me to go back home, put on my class-A uniform and report to the Field Station Commander’s office.

“Uh, sir,” I said, “I’m a sergeant, now. Can’t you get some private to serve donuts?”

“You’re not serving donuts,” he answered. “The Commanding General wants to see you personally right after the installation ceremony.” He added, “You must have REALLY screwed up big time.”

About one o’clock in the afternoon, I was still sitting in the Field Station Commander’s outer office when the General and the new Commander walked in. We all

snapped to attention, and the General, with the new Commander following the proper number of steps behind him, proceeded past everyone. The General stopped directly in front of me, looked at my name tag and said, “You're Sergeant Buchanan?”

“Yes Sir!” I responded automatically.

“Follow me!” he growled as he grabbed me by the arm and shoved me in front of him. I walked into the office in front of the General, aware of the breach in protocol, but helpless to do anything about it. As the new Field Station Commander entered behind us, the General turned to him and said in a very officious tone, “I need to talk to Sergeant Buchanan. Wait outside.” The new commander, forced now to end his grand entrance by standing idle in the hallway, gave me a look which very clearly said, “Whatever happens, soldier, you're name is on my shit list in black, permanent ink!”

I stood at attention as the General closed the door, turned to me, got right up in my face like a drill sergeant, and with a deadly monotone voice asked, “Did you kill my Field Station **with your mind**”?

I knew I could lie my way out of this situation, but something within told me that he would not be asking the question if he didn't already know the answer. I knew I had better tell the truth. I was envisioning how long it would take to pay for a field station on a sergeant's salary when I heard myself answer very meekly, “Yes, Sir. I did.”

The General stood for what seemed like hours, staring me straight in the eyes. I stood trying to remain stone-faced and not to flinch in light of what I had just said. I had given them the scapegoat they needed. I was facing impending financial destruction for the rest of my life, and probably some serious jail time.

Finally, a broad grin spread across the General's face and he said,

“Far fucking out!”

We talked for a few minutes about what I had felt and sensed during the incident and he finally said, “I have a very special job for you. Are you interested?”

I didn't have the vaguest idea what the job would be, but it didn't seem like a good time to start being choosy. I said that I was very interested. He told me that someone would contact me soon. He then reopened the door, ushered me out, and allowed the field station's new commander to have his office back.

For the month that followed, I found myself on every “shit list” one can imagine. The new commanding officer remembered my name and my face quite vividly. Everyone in my office wanted to know what had happened with the General, but I would not tell. There was some acceptance of that, but my section's director was offended by it, and let me know in no uncertain terms that closing him out of the secrecy loop was not an option. My name became indelibly printed at the top of his list, too. In time, he learned what the meeting with the General had been about, made it public within the office, and I quickly became the butt of every pointed joke and jab you can imagine.

For all appearances, the whole thing seemed to have just quietly blown over. I did not hear from the General again, so I figured that I was not to be selected for anything special. We all got back to work, and life returned to normal.

A month or so later, I received a call at home from a man who identified himself as “Joe”. He said that he and another man, Brian, would be coming through Augsburg and would like to meet with me. They had instructions from the General to talk to me about “something”. They wanted to meet with Linda and me at a local restaurant where we could talk in the privacy of a noisy, public place, away from any other military

people. I gave them directions to a favorite restaurant of ours; a Czech restaurant located fairly distant from the American sectors, and not too frequented by American military.

During the meal, Brian revealed, right in front of Linda, that he was the Director of a special, highly classified project which “collected intelligence by mental means.” He and Joe explained the concept of “remote viewing” to both Linda and me. Seeing my consternation that Linda was being exposed to secrets, Brian explained that the process of remote viewing changes people. If I became involved, I would change. The wives of his soldiers could not understand the reasons for those changes because of the security and therefore, his unit had been plagued by constant marital problems.

“I don’t want another divorce in my unit,” he said, “so this time, your wife gets to know what is going on. If she doesn’t approve, you won’t be involved.” He asked Linda whether she had any problems with me doing that kind of work. To my surprise, she said that she had always known I had talents in that area, and thought I would be good at it. In fact, she seemed eager for my involvement.

Joe wrote a phone number on a napkin and handed it to me. “If you ever absolutely have to get in touch with us, call this number.” I tore off the number and put it into my wallet for safekeeping.

Brian and Joe said that Gen. Stubblebine wanted me to go to a special course. He would get in touch with me when things were set up. The General’s words had been, “Let’s send him to that course, and then we can talk further about any possible assignment.” I realized that I would have to somehow prove myself before the assignment would be granted. I had no idea how to do that.

Then, more weeks went by and I did not hear a thing. I wasn't about to fire off

mail, nagging the General for information. So, I waited.

About a month after meeting with Brian and Joe, a message came into the station saying that I would be attending a special training course. The message did not say what kind of course it was, nor did it ask permission for my release from the unit or from duty to attend. It was signed by the Commanding General of INSCOM, and the only questions asked by my immediate command were asked to me. I did not know what the course was about, and if I had known, I probably could not have told them. They thought I was keeping secrets from them, and there I was, back on the shit lists again.

On the appointed date, I drove to the Munich airport and waited for the plane. As I was going through the boarding gate, I heard my name being paged over the intercom. I started to go back for it, but an overpowering feeling kept me from doing so. I was afraid that I would miss the plane and wind up being AWOL at the course. I boarded, and imagined and worried all the way to the States, ran over every possible scenario in my mind. What could the call have been about? Had Linda or one of the kids been in an accident? What could have gone wrong. When I got to the States, I called, and found out that Linda knew nothing of the call. It was only after returning from the school that I learned the answer. The Field Station Commander had learned what the school was all about and decided to not grant me permission to go. He had tried to track me down and even had me paged at the Munich Airport, to stop the trip from happening.

I arrived in Washington and met one of the other people who was coming from overseas to attend the course. His name was Bob (not his real name, but close enough) He was an Intelligence Field Office Interrogator, working in one of the Field Offices in Europe. He would not tell me his rank, but I was later to find out that he was a Warrant

Officer. He knew the D.C. area, so we rented a car and drove to Arlington Hall Station, where the INSCOM Commander's office was located. We found about twenty people preparing to board a bus. We reported to the office and the General's secretary was surprised to see us.

“You're here! I thought you weren't going to make it.”

We followed instructions and loaded our overnight bags onto the bus for a trip to the Monroe Institute, about a half-hour ride south of Charlottesville, Virginia. Other than Bob, myself and one other sergeant, everyone to whom we were introduced was a Major, Lt. Colonel, Colonel, or of such high rank. The other non-brass person was a female sergeant named Dawn, who was from Greece, and who had been “gleaned from the ranks” by Gen. Stubblebine on the same trip where he had talked to me.

The General's secretary had handed me a copy of a magazine article about the Monroe Institute. This was to be an “out of body” training course. My reaction to that was one of virtual disbelief. I had read of such things years before, but to think that there was a school which taught it? No way! What would we do? Chant? Call to the spirits? Use Tarot cards? Sit in a circle and cast bones?

The first day of the course, we received the orientation lecture. We would be using a sound system called “hemisync”, which had been developed by Bob Monroe, the founder of the institute. The sounds played into each ear were of a slightly different frequency. As your mind tried to make sense of the two, it would have to create a “beat frequency” within itself. The main frequencies were computed in such a way that the beat frequency thus set up in the brain was the brain's normal frequency for the out of body experience.

They had tapes causing other beat frequencies, such things as those for concentrating very deeply, playing better golf, staying more energetic, not being hungry (so you can lose weight) and a myriad of other very practical uses. But we were to use it to go out of body? “You’ve got to be kidding me” I thought.

Then there was the follow-on thought: “Uh, oh! My success in this course determines whether or not I get the assignment.” I had to pass a test. I was not prepared for this kind of stuff!

The first afternoon, we all went into the “chec units”, which are simple enclosed cubicles the size of a bed. There were speakers on the walls and earphone jacks, so you could listen to special sounds being played as you lay there. Four or five times a day, we would lie down in darkness in the “chec unit” and listen to tapes of these special sounds for an hour or so. Afterwards, we met in the big room downstairs and sat in a circle, so we could discuss with the group what had transpired within our minds as we listened. Well, I could not think of anything really earth shattering that had transpired in my mind, so I kept quiet. Keeping quiet was no way to pass a test in the military, but to open my mouth would have proven that I had failed.

That night, more tones were played to us as we slept. The following morning, we had breakfast, went to our “chec units” and listened to more tones. Nothing happened again. Later, in the group, the others were making quite a fuss about their experiences. Again, I kept quiet.

That afternoon, after lunch, we returned to our “chec units” for more tones. I was restless and bothered, and frankly, worried that I had already totally failed whatever test was being given to me. I would probably never hear of the possible assignment again. I

lay in the bed, lights off, listening to the tones, and told myself to relax. I shifted to a better position and again told myself to relax. I turned over and told myself to relax yet another time. I didn't relax. Nothing worked. Finally, I decided that no matter how uncomfortable I got, and no matter how nervous, I was going to just be still and listen to the sounds. I finally managed to lie still for almost a minute, when my chin began to itch.

“I will NOT scratch.” I thought, knowing that if I did, I would be in motion all over again.

It itched again.

“No!” I thought.

It itched.

Finally, in desperation, I allowed myself one single scratch. I raised my hand to scratch my chin and felt the oddest sensation: it felt like my hand had a glove on it. The feeling was so odd that I opened my eyes and looked at my hand. My hand, right near my face, had a slight glow to it. I then looked further down and saw in the semi-darkness, the same arm, still lying at my side.

“This is an out of body experience!” I thought. A flood of relief swept over me. Such a thing was possible, after all. ...And it was possible for me! I would have something to talk about later in the group. I might pass the General's test. I might even get the assignment.

“This is SO neat!” I thought. I had heard that in the out-of-body state, you can put your hands through walls and things like that. I decided to put my hand through the bed. To my total surprise, it worked. I could even feel my hand going into the bed as it passed through. I tried putting it through the wall. It worked. I tried passing it through

the earphone cord and through the volume control panel on the wall. I could actually feel the back of the volume knob mechanism.

“I’ve got to learn how to do this at will.” I thought. “I’ll put my hand back into my hand and then take it out again a bunch of times. That’ll teach me how to get out of body any time I want.” I put my glowing, ethereal hand back into my real, dull, boring, lying-there-in-the-darkness hand. The tape ended at that moment, and I have not been able to get out of body again since that day. I have tried and tried, but can’t seem to make it happen.

In the discussion group which followed, I related the incident. At one point, I said something about my physical hand, which had been lying at my side, and “my real hand”, which was passing through walls and the bed. After saying that, something happened inside me which was more startling to me than I can express. All of a sudden, all the stuff I had learned in Sunday School about having a spirit within me suddenly became real. For the first time ever, I honestly realized that the “body me” was not the “real me”.

I returned to Augsburg from the course and waited for news of a new assignment to arrive. The wait was long. My direct command wanted to know what was going on, and I couldn’t have told them if I had know, myself. I didn’t know, but they did not believe that. I was once again on the shit lists.

This time, a couple of months went by. Finally, I got a call from the Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN). Some colonel there said that he had orders from somewhere that he was not able to determine, assigning me to a clandestine organization. He strongly advised against it. It would be bad for my career progression.

“So, I’m going to transcend these orders. We’re assigning you to Fort Riley,

Kansas, to a tactical battalion, there. I see you haven't had any tactical time so far. That's what you need."

I protested, but the colonel very forcibly told me that he knew what was best for me, and that I would be assigned to Fort Riley.

I realized that if I did nothing, the whole assignment would fall apart. I phoned the number on the napkin and told the unidentified man on the other end what had transpired. He said he would take care of it.

The next evening, the colonel from MILPERCEN called again. He told me that he had had a personal visit from the Commanding General of INSCOM, who had come flaming into his office, stood him at attention, and "chewed him a new one". He told me that I would be assigned to the clandestine unit... "And from now on, sergeant, don't you EVER send another general to our office... please."

The orders came through about 3 weeks later. They gave me two months to transfer out of the old unit, set up transportation of household goods, and get all the other logistics done for a permanent change of station.

Just as a way of saying, "You don't do that to me", two days before my final workday at Augsburg, I arrived about 6AM, and was greeted at my desk by a military policeman.

"Are you Sergeant Buchanan? Leonard Buchanan?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, I have a warrant for your arrest. It says here that you're AWOL".

I was caught off guard by that one. "Uh, sergeant," I replied, "I don't know how to explain this, but people don't go AWOL by getting into uniform and reporting for

military duty at 6AM.”

“No,” he answered, looking at his instructions. “It says here that you didn’t show up for your duty assignment at Fort Riley. The commander there put out the order to have you arrested.”

The Augsburg Field Station commander delighted in toying with me before finally sending a message that those orders had been rescinded and that I was not AWOL. He gave me a stern scowl and said, “I could have let you go to jail, you know.”

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Flash forward again

So Linda and I stood in the Guest House parking lot, watching the fog and mist swirl around the neon sign, waiting for a mysterious someone to appear. A large car drove in, drove past us, and pulled into a parking slot. Since it had passed us by, we ignored it, and were somewhat surprised when a very tall, slender man walked up from behind us and stuck out his hand in greeting.

“Hi,” he grinned, “My name’s Bill.”

Bill had planned to take us to dinner, but since it was very late and we were tired from the trip, he postponed it for another evening. He took a copy of my printed orders and said that they would be taken care of. He checked again to be certain that I hadn’t notified the 902nd of my arrival and cautioned me to not do so. “As of tomorrow,” he said, “you will completely disappear from the US military system. Pack your uniforms away and don’t go anywhere near your assigned unit.”

I asked what I should do next. “Well, you’ve met Joe. He’s probably our best remote viewer, and runs the computers, too. He’s retiring from service, and it’s going to

leave a big hole in the unit. You are going to be filling it. You've got a real job cut out for you. But we'll worry about that tomorrow." He pointed in a direction away from the Guest House. "If you walk across that field, the first pair of buildings you come to is where we work. They look like they're abandoned, but knock on the door, anyway, and we'll let you in. Come there in the morning and we'll talk about what you do next."

As Bill drove off into the fog, Linda and I looked at each other, each with expressions of serious doubt. We then quietly turned and went into the Guest House for a night of uneasy sleep.