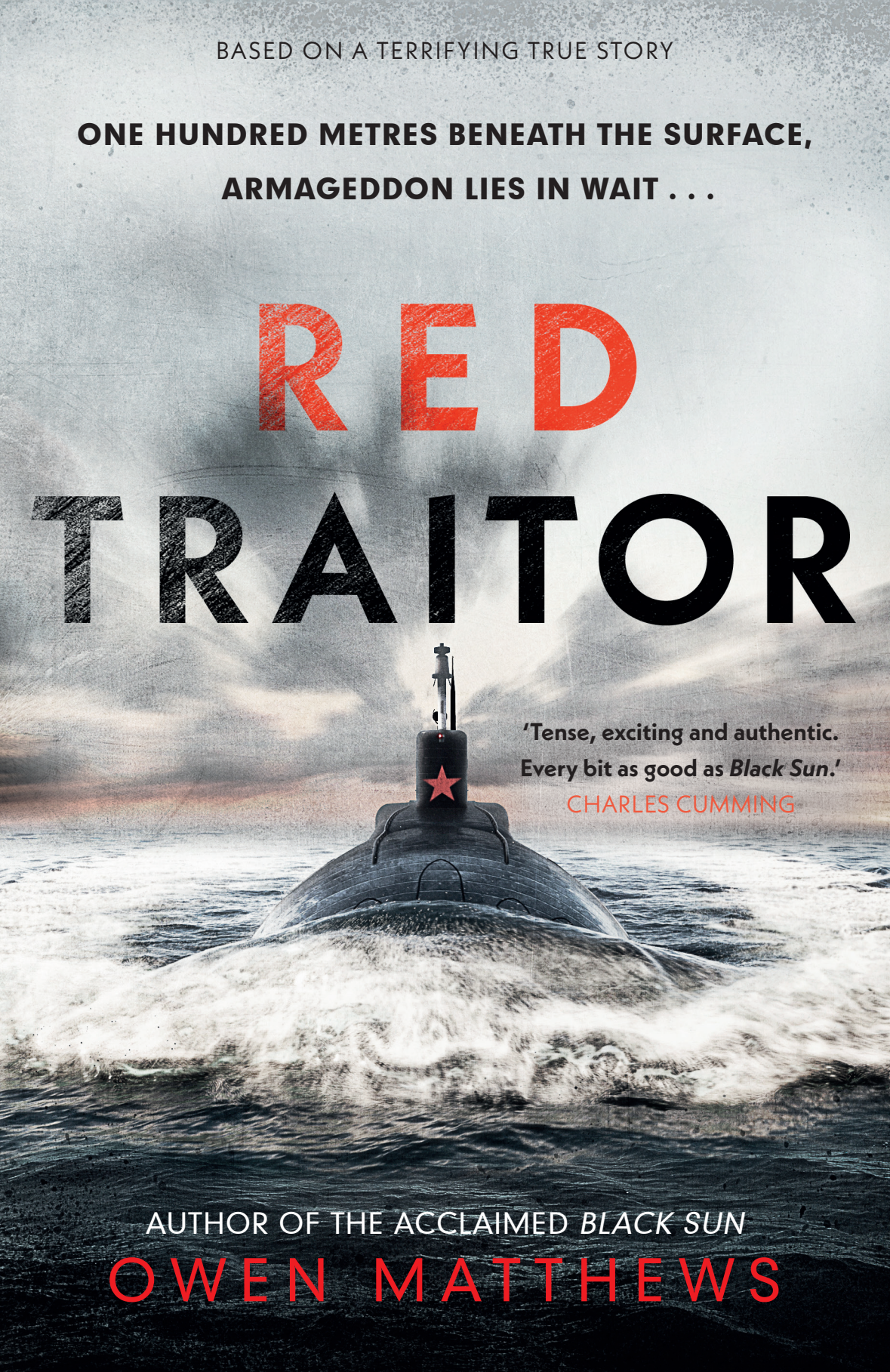


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# RED TRAITOR

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*For Xenia, Nikita, and Teddy*



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# PROLOGUE

## ARKHIPOV

*Severomorsk Naval Base, Headquarters of the Red Banner  
Northern Fleet of the USSR  
Dawn, 4 July 1962*

Breathe. Breathe, Vasily. Captain First Class Vasily Arkhipov fought his way out of his nightmare like a drowning swimmer struggling for the surface. Gasping down air, he forced his eyes open. Pale Arctic summer sunlight streamed through the thin curtains. He flexed his hands, cramped from clutching the damp sheets tangled around his body.

He inhaled, slowly. No submarine stink here. No smell of unwashed men and strong tobacco, no taste of sweet Navy tea in his mouth. No tang of molten solder, polymer sealant, hot oil, battery and reactor-coolant fumes choking your nose. No invisible poison in this air.

Arkhipov leaned over, fumbled for his watch, squinted to focus on the luminous dial. He followed the second hand as it ticked toward 0515. One year and one hour, precisely, since the reactor accident.

Eons had passed since that distant and only half-remembered horror. But there were times—more or less every night that Arkhipov refused to take the knockout pills the docs had given him—when he was still in the middle of it, time snagging back on itself and entangling him like seaweed.

It never felt like a nightmare. Not really. Rather, Arkhipov had the sensation of waking in a parallel and absolutely real world, located somewhere on the other side of sleep. A clamoring place of panic and

screams. A familiar place of mayhem, steam heat, and fear, stuck on an endless loop like a scratched record. In Arkhipov's waking world the dead were invisible. But he knew they were not absent. His restless dead were always present, always busily locked in their agonies, always ready to come and assert their claims.

The clock in the control room of Northern Fleet submarine K-19 had been electronic. It purred rather than ticked, the hands sliding over the minutes and hours smoothly, watch after watch. Arkhipov's dream always began in that last moment of calm. The eerie silence of K-19, its futuristic smell. The metallic odor of the new instruments in their smooth, green-painted steel cabinets full of dials, glowing like a thousand eyes. And the quiet of the ship. Instead of the continuous, headache-making thud of a diesel engine, K-19's brand-new nuclear reactor emitted a low thrum, deep and powerful. The Soviet Navy's newest missile submarine cruised ninety meters below the surface of the North Atlantic as smoothly and quietly as a spaceship.

He would try to will that sliding second hand to stop. Arkhipov always knew what was coming but was powerless to speak, to warn the comrades as they settled sleepily into their stations at the beginning of the fateful morning watch of 4 July 1961.

A blankly dreaming instrument panel spread before the commander's station. Arkhipov had just taken his post in the skipper's leatherette chair. Officer of the watch, commander of the ship while his superiors slumbered. An awesome honor and responsibility, as the Political Officer never tired of telling him. In front of him, Postev, the lieutenant in charge of propulsion, was slumped at his station in his spotless engineer's overalls, fighting sleep.

Pay attention, Postev, Arkhipov wanted to shout. Wake up! But his dream self remained relentlessly mute.

Within hours, Arkhipov knew, Postev's young face would be scorched scarlet, the skin peeling as if scalded. The lieutenant would be screaming, and Arkhipov would be trying to hold him down while the medics struggled to cut through the thick rubber of his thermal suit to get a morphine syringe into him.

Wake up!

The dream would always fall into a familiar groove. The intercom light from the reactor control room blinks on. Red. Something urgent.

## PROLOGUE

Arkhipov snatches up the telephone in the communications panel and presses a switch.

“Sir? You’d better come. Quickly.”

A rising edge of panic in the duty sergeant’s voice.

Arkhipov and Postev sprint toward the reactor control center. The companionway is lit scarlet by red emergency lights spilling through the doorway. Yury Postev crouches forward, his face just inches from a dial labeled Reactor Coolant Pressure. The needle is vibrating violently, almost at zero. As Arkhipov watches, the needle settles on its restraining peg and goes still.

A klaxon sounds. Arkhipov feels a sickening tightness in his bowels.

“Shit,” says Postev, glancing over to another panel. Swearing on board is strictly forbidden. For officers, especially. Postev looks over his shoulder and hisses to Arkhipov. “Sir—we’ve lost coolant pressure. Both coolant pumps are out of action.”

Before Arkhipov can reply, the whole control panel blossoms with scarlet warning lights. A large panel over the controls blinks on, illuminating the words Safety Control Rods Activation Mechanism—SCRAM. The reactor is shutting itself down automatically. One by one, a few of the indicators go green.

“Did it work?” Arkhipov asks. The lieutenant doesn’t immediately respond as he swings from one instrument to the other, cursing as he goes.

“Postev! Is the reactor shut down?”

In reply the young officer simply straightens, white-faced, and points at a large dial marked Core Temperature.

“Control rods are down. Reactor successfully SCRAMed, sir. But look.”

The reactor’s temperature is climbing perceptibly.

“Residual heat, sir. The core will keep cooking at low power for about a hundred hours till it’s finally burned out. Without coolant, it’s going to melt down. Burn through the hull.”

“How long?”

In the four minutes since Arkhipov has been in the reactor control room, the dial has moved from 250 to 325 degrees Celsius, and is rising fast.

“Don’t know, sir. A few hours.”

Arkhipov hurries forward to the command deck. He struggles to keep his voice loud and steady. He sees his own fear reflected in the eyes of the men as they turn to him, the senior officer on the bridge.

Eyes that will remain on him, always.

Back in fitful sleep, Arkhipov turned restlessly in his bed. Under closed lids his eyes flickered, and his fists clawed at the sheets as though he were desperately seeking to escape. But the bedding only wound itself closer around him, tight as a shroud.

## MOROZOV

*Pioneers' Ponds, Central Moscow*  
*Dawn, 4 July 1962*

Under the windows of Colonel Oleg Morozov's apartment, the surface of Pioneers' Ponds spread like a black mirror. Up above the rooftops a pearly gray was beginning to light the eastern sky. But down at water level darkness lingered, disturbed only by the single Cyclopean headlight of the first tram of the day as it rumbled down Malaya Bronnaya Street. In the apartment buildings that surrounded the park one or two lights flicked on.

Morozov's uniform tunic hung over the back of a chair. On the desk that faced the window were a metal table lamp embossed with Soviet hammers and sickles, a copy of *Novy Mir* magazine, a stack of official reports carrying the stamp of the Soviet Ministry of Defense. Next to them stood a sawn-off brass artillery shell case full of cigarette butts and a Wehrmacht pressed-steel gasoline lighter. On a silver tray under the lamp lay a tiny curl of paper no bigger than a cigarette paper covered in tiny, almost undecipherable, typed script.

On the sofa, under a cocked lamp, Morozov hunched over, scribbling notes from a book held in his lap. His concentration was intense, interrupted only by the occasional whirl of the building's elevator and a faint stirring from the bedroom which made him freeze, listening. At length he snapped the book shut and reread the notes he had been making.

## PROLOGUE

Morozov swore softly before crossing the room and crunching the paper into a ball and placing it in the ashtray. He flicked the German lighter and set fire to his notes and to the tiny strip of paper.

Once both were burned to ash, he leaned across the desk to open the window, flooding the room with chilly early-morning air. Morozov wore only a shirt with uniform breeches, and the dawn breeze bit fresh and clean through the smoke-filled study. But he sat on, oblivious to the draft that stirred the papers on his desk, holding a lit cigarette in his hand and watching the smoke stream out into the breaking day. At length he shrugged into his uniform tunic. The jacket was still snug on his muscular shoulders, but Morozov had to breathe in to button it down the belly. He moved into the hall and pulled on a pair of boots and a raincoat. Taking care not to wake his sleeping family, he closed the front door silently behind him.

Morozov was alone as he crossed the Ponds. Or almost alone. A street sweeper with a threadbare birch-twig brush worked his way down the sidewalk. On the corner of Yermolayevsky Lane, an elderly man paraded a wiry terrier. The pay phone on the corner was deserted.

The Colonel picked up the heavy Bakelite telephone receiver, deposited his two-kopeck piece in the slot, and dialed. He waited as the phone rang on and on.

“Yes?” A woman’s voice, thick with sleep, answered. “I am listening.”

Morozov hesitated before speaking, listening to the soft breathing on the other end of the line.

“Daria Vladimirovna? Forgive me for calling so early. I wanted to catch you before you left for work.”

“There is no Daria Vladimirovna here. You have the wrong number.”

“My apologies, citizen.”

Morozov replaced the receiver and hurried back home before his wife and daughter awoke.

The dog walker kept up his trudging pace. But instead of making yet another circle of the pond, he continued straight toward the Garden Ring. As he approached a parked Volga sedan, a heavysset man got out of the passenger seat to make room. The dog’s lead was taken from the old man’s hand. As he settled into the car, the driver deferentially held out the receiver of a radiotelephone.

“Sir—the Ears. They’re standing by.”

The man grunted in acknowledgment and spoke into the receiver.

## RED TRAITOR

“Hear me there, boy? Need a recording of the pay phone on the corner of Malaya Bronnaya and Yermolayevsky. Call made today at 0548. Bring it to my office. Half an hour.”

Half a mile across town, in the basement of the Central Telegraph office on Gorky Street, a young KGB lieutenant tore off a sheet of notepaper and set off at a trot down a subterranean corridor. He entered a low room filled with ranks of reel-to-reel signal-activated tape recorders, some turning, most not. Finding the right machine, he flicked the stop switch and marked the place with a white wax pencil. Then he pressed rewind and waited until the magnetic reel ran all the way back and its flapping end spun free. Cradling the reel to his chest, the officer sprinted from the room.

### KUZNETSOV

*Sagua la Grande Air Base, Cuba*

*Dawn, 4 July 1962*

A dawn breeze off the sea woke KGB major Vadim Kuznetsov, bringing with it the corrupt, sweet smell of clear-cut undergrowth. Stirring jungle trees hissed like surf, and a cacophony of birds and insects started up a clamoring morning chorus. Kuznetsov kicked off his sweat-soaked cotton sheet, groped under the bed for his thermos, and thirstily swigged cold lemon tea.

In Cuba for nearly nine months and he still couldn't get used to the cloying heat of the place, its indecent fecundity. And he still couldn't get used to the rum. Unlike vodka, it didn't taste like it was bad for you. Just a warm, sweet buzz as it went down with no warning of the revenge it would take in the morning. Sweet but dangerous. Just like Cuba itself, he heard himself quipping. More or less nightly.

Kuznetsov reached up to switch on the squeaking ceiling fan and flopped back down on his cot. The State Security apartment building was newly built of prefabricated concrete panels, as haphazardly fitted together as any structure in the Moscow suburbs. The furniture was Romanian, apparently a gift from the fraternal Securitate secret police to their Socialist brethren in the Caribbean. The red pine was already

## PROLOGUE

splitting from the damp. There was only one air-conditioning unit in the whole military base, a hulking Carrier unit in the villa of a Batista-era plantation owner which now served as the officers' mess and bar.

The bar. Kuznetsov ran a sweaty hand down his face and beard. Last night. Whose idea had the goodbye party been? Not his. One of the Cuban Air Force colonels, doubtless. Kuznetsov remembered guitars, scratchy Cuban Revolutionary songs on the record player, a fog of cigar smoke, a new batch of suspiciously pretty waitresses. Did he even . . . dance? Local girls were off-limits for Kuznetsov and his fellow KGB officers. So he'd drunk too much instead. As usual. And maybe danced. Just a little. But only to show fraternal solidarity.

Kuznetsov's suitcase stood, packed, by the door. A day's ride in a bouncing Volga sedan would bring him to Havana in time to catch the evening flight. This time tomorrow, after stopovers in Madrid and maybe Frankfurt, he'd be in Moscow. Kuznetsov had been surprised, when he first came to Cuba, by how much he missed his hometown. Missed Moscow's solidity, the city's trundling pace, the dour lack of color and of histrionics. Now he was surprised by how much he didn't want to return, even for a couple of weeks of consultations with his bosses in the Lubyanka. Kuznetsov remembered some foolish song he'd heard the Soviet air crews singing: "It's good there, where we're not at."

He reached for his watch—a chunky Raketa chronograph he'd won in some bet from a drunken MiG pilot. The commander's office would soon be open. It was time to retrieve the progress reports he'd spent the last week diligently typing up for his bosses in Moscow from the fire-proof safe in his chief's office.

Giving up any hope of getting back to sleep, Kuznetsov rose and dressed. He was particularly proud of the beige cotton tropical suit he'd bought in a commission shop in Havana, made by Haspel in New Orleans. It made him look like a capitalist exploiter, his fellow KGB men had joked. Hardly suitable for the corridors of the Committee for State Security in Moscow. Fuck them. Kuznetsov liked the look of himself in his suave suit. He *enjoyed* looking like a foreigner. As he buttoned his shirt, Kuznetsov looked out over the newly built base. When he had arrived the previous winter, the place had been a sea of uprooted tree trunks, mud, and ruts that harbored angry, homeless snakes. Now the ground was raked flat, crisscrossed with asphalt roads and rows of prefabricated huts and hangars.

In the middle distance, rising slightly above the tree line, was the camouflage-painted outline of a radar station, the antenna pointed like a cupped ear toward the northern Caribbean—and, just ninety miles away, the United States of America.

VASIN

*Frunze Embankment, Moscow*

*Dawn, 4 July 1962*

Vasin woke hungover, his neck smarting from sunburn and his face rubbed raw by the sofa cushion. His wife, Vera, had chosen the garish East German sofa bed, the newest and most expensive one available. But the bristly nylon plush tortured Vasin nightly.

Vera's voice—pitched to the note of high sarcasm she reserved for waking him up—called from the kitchen.

“Sashaaaaa? Phone for you. The *kontora*.”

The *kontora*—literally, the office. Also, a not-so-respectful nickname for the KGB. Vera followed her husband with her eyes as he staggered down the corridor, stumbling into the walls as he came.

“One moment,” she said into the receiver. “The Comrade Colonel is on his way. He has been *very busy* this morning.”

Instead of handing Vasin the receiver, she put it down on the counter just as he reached for it. Then she pushed past him toward the bathroom, primly hugging her silk Chinese dressing gown closed as she went.

“Vasin speaking.”

It was his boss General Orlov's most venomous secretary, summoning Vasin for an unscheduled meeting at the Lubyanka in tones of icy formality. Vasin stammered his acknowledgments, glanced at the kitchen clock, and swore under his breath. Forty minutes. On the smart new stove an unappetizing breakfast of burned buckwheat porridge smoldered in the pan. No time. He urgently needed a shave and a shower. At the instant the thought entered his mind, he heard Vera noisily bolting the bathroom door and turning on the water as if commanded by his brain waves.

## PROLOGUE

“Vera? Can I get in there for a second?”

Silence. Vasin knocked on the door irritably.

“I need to get ready for work.”

The water stopped running and Vera slid back the bolt. She gave her husband an indignant look before flouncing past him into the bedroom and slamming the door.

The Vasins’ smart new apartment, three whole rooms on the Frunze Embankment, looked out onto an apple tree-lined boulevard and the Moscow River. It was the stage on which the tragicomedy of Vasin’s family life played out, with pathetic variations, every morning and evening. Nine months before, he’d returned from his previous assignment covered in glory. The *kontora* had rearranged his life to reflect Vasin’s new status as General Orlov’s favored pet. A new apartment, a new car, a promotion—and, in a voodoo flourish, a new wife. Of sorts. Somehow, since his return, Vera had become another person. Or to be more accurate, she treated her husband as though *he* had become another person. Someone important. Someone dangerous to her. Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Ilyich Vasin of the Committee for State Security—a man to be respected. And kept at a distance.

Vasin and Vera had quickly slipped into a stilted, unforced domestic theatricality. They spoke as if in front of an audience of unseen listeners. When they did speak, that is. Vera’s initial respectful wariness had soon worn away to be replaced by a brooding, injured insolence. Their life had become a relentless mime play of unspoken reproach.

Vasin’s fourteen-year-old son, Nikita, also had found himself pulled into the orbit of his father’s mysterious new eminence. He was signed up for the elite Young Pioneer camp, Artek, and his schoolmates viewed him with new respect. Nikita treated his father differently, too, his habitual shyness shifting into a nervous awe. And the new respect with which his schoolmates and teachers treated the boy had only increased the poor kid’s bashfulness.

There was not a moment of Vasin’s waking or sleeping days—neither at home, nor in the clunky little car that he acquired with his promotion, nor in the newly built wooden dacha in the village of Vnukovo—where Vasin was not surrounded by reminders of the power of Lieutenant General Yury Orlov. He felt as trapped as a dragonfly in glass.



PART ONE

# THE RESTLESS DEAD

Whether you like it or not, history is on our side.

SOVIET PREMIER NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV, 1956



*KGB Headquarters, Moscow*  
4 July 1962

The summer sunlight slanted through the heavy net curtains of General Orlov's office. The room was uncomfortably hot and smelled oppressively of floor polish. Vasin glanced around the table at the colleagues who had, like him, been abruptly summoned. Pushkov, the veteran KGB *rezident* who had won notoriety in the service by organizing the poisoning of Ukrainian nationalists and other collaborators after the war in Paris and Berlin. Ignatenko, the pudgy communications man with permanent dents in his flabby temples from his hours spent in headphones. Vasin's team of crack spy catchers, all melting in their chairs like ice cream on a hot sidewalk.

Nobody spoke.

Pushkov took a slim file marked TOP SECRET from a neat pile in front of him and used it, irreverently, to fan his face. There was a thumping clamor as the boss bustled in, flushed and irritable, as though it were they who had kept him waiting, not the other way around. Orlov took his place at the head of the table.

"Schultz has something for us," grunted Orlov without preamble. Ignoring the men in the room, he fixed his attention on the papers he had brought with him and began reading them with aggressive attention.

Vasin might have guessed. Boris Ignatyevich Schultz, the chief watcher on Vasin's surveillance team. Also—Vasin's instructor at the KGB school. Also—the best surveillance man in the business. Typical of Schultz, after all these fruitless months, to catch some kind of breakthrough on his night shift. And bloody typical of Schultz to call the head of the Special Cases Department—Orlov—rather than report to Vasin, his immediate superior.

Schultz was a skinny, stooped man with a cadaverous face and a dapper clipped mustache. He entered the conference room and winced at the sight of his colleagues as if at a roomful of particularly unpromising student spies. A young sergeant followed in his wake, lugging a bulky reel-to-reel tape recorder in both arms. As the kid busied himself with plugging in the machine, Schultz settled his lanky body into a chair next to Orlov's, folding into himself like a telescope.

"Telephone box on the corner of Malaya Bronnaya Street." Schultz's voice was reedy but commanding. "This morning. Just before six. Listen."

Schultz turned the dial that set the machine in motion. An electronic purr, then the rattling clicks of the number being dialed and connected.

"Yes? . . . I am listening."

"Daria Vladimirovna? Forgive me for calling so early. I wanted to catch you before you left for work."

Colonel Oleg Morozov's voice was unmistakable.

"There is no Daria Vladimirovna here. You have the wrong number."

"My apologies, citizen."

Schultz switched off the machine and made a grimace that might have been a smile. Vasin felt his pulse quickening.

"Morozov made no follow-up call, Boris Ignatyevich? To another number?"

"No follow-up call, Colonel Vasin." Schultz eyed his former pupil down the table with the tiniest nod of approval. Vasin, perhaps you are not such a total idiot, the old man's look said. Vasin pressed on.

"Our target gets up at dawn to make a single call to a wrong number from a phone box. A number he has never called from home, I presume? A number . . ."

"So who picked up?" Orlov spoke over Vasin. "Do we have an address? Have we got her in custody yet?"

Schultz made a small moue before answering.

"Comrade General. The number is listed to Dmitry Ulyanov Street Forty-Two. The Hotel Ulaanbataar. That line is installed in the loading bay of the kitchens, in fact. But . . ." Schultz, with the invincible confidence of the elderly, raised a hand before Orlov could interrupt him. "At six in the morning the place is full of deliverymen. At least eight trucks came in between five thirty and six thirty, according to the

## THE RESTLESS DEAD

watchman, each with one driver and at least one loader. Many kitchen staff and members of the hotel administration passed the area. We have not been able to find any witnesses who saw anyone using the phone.”

“An untraceable contact. A cutout.” Orlov clasped his hands together and flexed his shoulders as though limbering for a boxing match. “Which means what, Schultz? Tell us, please.”

“We have him, General. Morozov has contacted his controllers at the CIA. Activated himself. Or is acknowledging a contact. Over the past nine months of surveillance in Moscow, he has not put a foot wrong. We assume that Morozov has been under orders not to break cover till he has something important to report. So now . . .”

“Now we must do *what?* Colonel?” Orlov’s head snapped toward Vasin. The other team members followed the General’s lead, obediently looking to him for an answer.

“Now we arrest him, sir.” Vasin straightened in his chair.

“No, Vasin.”

Of course. Vasin should have known better. There was never a correct answer to the boss’s rhetorical questions.

“Sorry, sir. First we must find out who he is working with.”

“That is correct, Colonel Vasin. When you pull a weed, you do it by the root, not the leaves.”

In the security forces of the glorious Soviet Motherland, everything must be connected to something else. Inside one spy must be the lead to another spy lurking inside him, like an endless set of matryoshka dolls.

Alone with Vasin after his colleagues shuffled out, Orlov made no move to rise. The General instead sat like a malevolent fungus, glaring down the conference table at his protégé. His small eyes danced with barely suppressed glee.

“Thank and praise the Lord God Almighty.” Orlov’s voice was a deep, emphatic hiss. The General had once studied for the priesthood, Vasin remembered, and kept his face blank. “The *Director* has been asking about PLUTO.”

PLUTO—the suspected traitor in the heart of the Soviet security establishment. Orlov’s obsession, and Vasin’s daily nightmare. At the

end of his last assignment, in the secret nuclear city of Arzamas-16, Vasin had invented an American spy. The case had been a mess, and Vasin had to bend—break—many rules to stop a misguided zealot obsessed with a nuclear holocaust. He regretted nothing. But to get out with his skin intact, Vasin had made the lunatic an American spy. It had seemed so neat, back then, to pin an invented sin on a dead man. More, Vasin had emerged with glory. Special Cases' new top spy catcher.

But now that Vasin's spy report had been duly logged, his fantasy had become official fact. And spies, real or not, need a handler. Which was why General Orlov had chosen Vasin to track down PLUTO. Connect your imaginary spy to a real one: the insoluble puzzle that Orlov had handed to his new favorite. Go on, Vasin, join the damn dots. Good luck. So for the last nine months Vasin had been chasing this ghost, chasing rumors, watching for the slightest hint that Colonel Oleg Morozov was in fact the fabled PLUTO.

"So now, finally, I can tell the Director that we have a breakthrough. Uncovering PLUTO will lead us to the next link. We find out what information he is passing to the Yankees. We find out who is supplying him that information. But most important, we find out who Morozov's *krysha* is. You understand me, Vasin?"

*Krysha*—literally, a roof. Criminal slang for protector. Vasin felt the world swim before his eyes. Yes. He understood exactly what Orlov meant. Or rather, *who*. The next link of the chain of treachery that Orlov imagined led ever upward, right into the very highest reaches of Soviet power.

"Morozov's *protector*, sir?" Vasin's mouth had gone dry. "A senior officer with whom he may be personally associated?"

"Precisely, Vasin. Perhaps Morozov is somebody's family friend. Perhaps he goes to barbecues at the dacha of some big pine cone. Goes on hunting parties with the top brass. Have you come across anyone like that, Vasin, since Morozov has been under your expert eye?"

He felt Orlov's eyes drilling into him. Oh yes—both men knew precisely who Orlov had in mind. Colonel Morozov's old pal, his dacha and hunting-party host. His personal friend and mentor, his boss and protector. None other than General Ivan Serov, head of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army. Better known as the GRU, the KGB's chief institutional

rival. Serov—Orlov’s great bureaucratic adversary. And, for reasons Vasin could not begin to understand, Orlov’s personal enemy.

Vasin saw his boss’s logic clearly enough. Use Morozov to get some dirt on the man’s protector, Serov. Maybe some fatal dirt. What a thing it would be for Orlov to have the head of the rival service on the hook.

A few months before, Vasin had watched a new American film—part of a closed session for the exclusive benefit of *kontora* officers only, rather than for the general public—about a mad nineteenth-century sea captain who chased a phantom white whale around the seas of the world. Orlov was that captain, Special Cases was his ship—and his unfortunate first mate, destined to pursue the skipper’s obsession to the ends of the earth, was Vasin.

“We *have* observed such an association, sir. As you know.” Vasin’s voice had become a whisper. “You believe that Comrade General Serov may be involved in the activities of the traitor Morozov?”

“If not involved, then perhaps Serov has been misguidedly covering for his friend? Either could be plausible. Our business admits no loose ends. You find a guilty man, Vasin.”

Vasin summoned the courage to speak into Orlov’s scorching gaze.

“You mean—find *Serov* guilty, sir?”

For a moment Vasin feared that his chief would swell and burst like an overripe puffball. But no. Orlov, always unpredictable, instead leaned back in his chair and raised his palms to the heavens with something like a chuckle.

“We follow the evidence, of course. The evidence of our own eyes and ears. The evidence in Morozov’s eventual confession. Vasin. You have two loose ends to tie, one at the beginning of the Morozov story and another at the end. This began with your story about the traitor in Arzamas . . .”

Something in Vasin tightened whenever Orlov referred to the Arzamas spy being “his” story, “his” case. There were moments when Vasin wondered if the old reptile suspected that the espionage charge had been a figment of his imagination. But his boss continued smoothly, counting off the points on his hand.

“In turn, that led to a quest to find your spy’s controller. As soon as we catch Morozov, prove that he is PLUTO, then we find who is next. Who he is linked to. Upward, downward, sideways.”

Orlov stood, walked down the length of the table, and put a confident hand on Vasin's shoulder. The General's voice was low and soft in Vasin's ear.

"My Sasha. Two loose threads, one man. God's sake, Vasin. I gave you good people. Time to bring this the damn case home. Quickly."

## 2

*Defense Ministry, Moscow*  
*12 July 1962*

Captain Vasily Arkhipov sat alone at an empty table in the corner of the Defense Ministry cafeteria. His briefcase was squared in front of him, alongside a cooling cup of Cuban coffee. He rested his hands on the case. Barely a tremor. He exhaled deeply.

Across the room he spotted the old comrade he'd been waiting for. Like Arkhipov, he wore the uniform of a naval captain, first class. But unlike the sunburned Arkhipov, Timofey Zviagin was deathly pale, his head and face entirely hairless. Arkhipov stood, and the two men embraced tightly.

"Brother! How the devil are you, Tima?"

"Been better."

"Docs say what?"

Zviagin shrugged, held his friend's eye for a long moment.

"It's in remission, they promise. But they keep pumping me full of poison just to make sure."

In his dreams, Arkhipov saw his friend nightly. Timofey standing at his station outside the boiling steam heat of K-19's melting reactor compartment, his engineer's overalls stained with grease and his face lurid in the red emergency light. The reek of welding, a choking miasma of escaped reactor coolant. Zviagin's voice, raised in command to shut up the panicked squabbling in the line of men waiting in line for their turn to seal the welds on the emergency cooling system. Steady, Comrades, steady.

"You're looking well, Tima."

"Vasily, you never were a good liar. I'm looking like shit. So what brings you to our bureaucrats' bordello?"

## THE RESTLESS DEAD

“Assessment board.”

“Here in Moscow, not up at Northern Fleet Headquarters. Must be top level. How’d it go?”

“Admirals. Glotov. Komarov. Some Defense Ministry bigwigs. A general from Strategic Missile Forces.”

“Sounds like you’re up for a big command, my friend. Something secret. My congratulations.”

“Spit three times.”

Zviagin turned and made a triple spitting noise with his lips over his left shoulder. Protection against the evil eye. Even senior Soviet naval officers remained sailors—as superstitious as peasant women.

“But you must be happy, right, Vasily? A fancy new command could be a new start. Nothing less than a hero veteran of the K-19 disaster deserves, right?”

“You’re the hero of K-19, Tima. You should have got the new command.”

“Don’t mock an invalid. But you’re keen to go back out to sea, right?”

Arkhipov shrugged and looked down at his hands in silence as his old shipmate gave him a searching look.

“Vasily—I hear things, at my desk upstairs. Read things. Your cruise won’t be on a nuke, if that’s what you’re sweating over. I can promise you that. After the accident . . . after K-19, they’re overhauling every nuclear submarine in the fleet. Every one, confined to base. Even the newest Project 658-class boats are having their reactors rebuilt. They tell me even our old K-19 will be fit for sea again one day. But not soon. So relax. It’s still just the old diesel-electric subs allowed out on long-range patrols till next year at least. Take that from someone who knows. So no need to worry about . . . Remember what that crazy Uzbek cook called the reactor? ‘Satan in a tin can.’”

Arkhipov smiled crookedly. Of course he remembered the cook. K-19’s doctor had jammed a massive dose of diazepam into his arm to shut the man up when he wouldn’t stop screaming during the accident. Panic in a drowning submarine a thousand kilometers out in the North Atlantic could be as fatal as sinking to crush depth.

“Don’t mind either way. Satan or no Satan, a boat’s a boat.”

Arkhipov’s friend nodded sarcastically.

“Like I said. You’re a bad liar, Vasily. You said a general from Strategic Missile Forces was at your board?”

“Yeah. What was that?”

“They say anything about a special weapon, deployed on your new mission?”

“Special weapon?”

Timofey puffed air.

“Maybe just a rumor. Nothing to tell you as yet. How about a cognac? Doc says I shouldn’t—but fuck it, right?”

Arkhipov watched Zviagin’s bald head weave its way across the cafeteria counter. He looked down at his hands once more. Steadier.

3

*Pioneers’ Ponds, Moscow*

*12 July 1962*

Morozov walked out of his apartment building at half past ten into the rising heat of the Moscow summer morning. He carried his jacket slung over one shoulder and a canvas shopping bag in the other hand. Ignoring an elderly man feeding ducks by the pond, Morozov hurried toward the Mayakovskaya metro station. A young woman who had been checking her makeup in the window of a bakery spotted him, made a final adjustment to her hat, and set off in front of Morozov. Thirty yards behind, a lanky student also kept pace.

At Belorusskaya Station, Morozov trotted up the steps that led to the wide corridor that connected to the Circle Line platforms. In approved *kontora*-style, his two watchers bracketed their mark as he walked. He boarded a westbound train and exited at Kievskaya Station, making for the interchange with the Arbatsko–Pokrovskaya line. KGB junior lieutenant Mikhail Lyubimov, new out of the Dzerzhinsky academy and with Boris Schultz’s training seared freshly into his mind, was growing nervous. This second change of trains made close surveillance risky—the mark was more likely to notice familiar faces on two successive trains. Lyubimov risked glancing down the carriage at his female partner, Tatiana Dulatova, who had taken up position in the far corner. He was too far away to catch Tanya’s eye. A mistake, putting a pretty girl in the lead. Too conspicuous. The whole team knew by now that the old goat Morozov had a keen eye for the ladies.

## THE RESTLESS DEAD

The doors opened at Arbatskaya Station and Morozov was out ahead of both of them. Tanya, desperate to keep ahead of their mark, broke into a run, pushing past the commuters in a flurry of apologies. Again, a blunder. Lyubimov cursed his partner, struggling to keep his eye on Morozov's balding head thirty yards in front as the crowd slowed to a slow shuffle in front of the escalators.

"Keep your eye on the people on the escalator as they come up into your eye line," old Schultz had taught him. "You won't see through the backs of people's heads right in front of you, however hard you stare. Eyes only on the . . . ?"

"Only on the escalator, Comrade Colonel," the class had repeated.

But Lyubimov's eyes weren't on the escalator. They were on the steel barrier that separated the streams of passengers, looking for a place to duck under and jump the line. That was how he found himself face-to-face with his target, heading back toward the platforms. Morozov had ducked the barrier himself, donned his uniform cap and tunic, and switched direction. A primitive dry-cleaning trick, but an effective one.

Tanya would be near the top of the escalator by now. Lyubimov was on his own. Lose the mark, or get spotted? A calculated risk, and a dangerous one. He had to wait before Morozov was well out of sight before swinging athletically over the steel barrier and hurrying after him. But the kid was lucky. Morozov had just missed a train. His young shadow squeezed in almost alongside him on the next one. Lyubimov stuck with his target back to Kievskaya, and on to Oktyabrskaya. Four train changes now. By now Lyubimov had taken off his own jacket and pulled a summer cap low on his face, praying that the Colonel still hadn't noticed him. The young agent felt a heady, nauseous thrill. His first real chase.

"Press kiosks are your friend," Schultz had once intoned in his thin, whining voice. If you were checking for tails, that is. The ubiquitous kiosks often stood directly opposite the street entrances of metro stations, their row of angled vertical windows giving a helpful panorama of everyone who emerged. And sure enough, on exiting the Oktyabrskaya metro station, Morozov did indeed linger. He pretended to browse a selection of magazines for a full five minutes, forcing Lyubimov to take up a risky position in plain sight at a nearby trolleybus stop. That wily bastard Morozov knew every trick in the KGB countersurveillance

book. But then again, Lyubimov remembered, it was his own teacher, Schultz, who had literally written the book.

The young watcher followed at a cautious distance as Morozov made his way to the Shokoladnitsa café on the corner of Kaluzhskaya Square. The place was crowded to capacity as usual, with a line of hopeful customers snaking out the door. Morozov walked blithely past the queue, scanned the large, table-filled space, and squeezed between the diners to join a young, dark-haired, strikingly beautiful woman at a corner table. She wore the olive-green uniform of an Army lieutenant and stood as Morozov approached. They did not salute, embrace, or shake hands. Their body language seemed formal. As Morozov began the long process of attracting a waiter's attention, Lyubimov slipped outside to a public phone booth. A flip of his red KGB ID card was enough to cut short the conversation of the occupant and send the frightened man scurrying away. Lyubimov's call to Special Cases' emergency number connected on the first ring.

"PLUTO has made contact. Requesting a reinforced team of watchers. Photographer. Two cars. Crash. Repeat, crash urgency."

## 4

*KGB Headquarters, Moscow*  
12 July 1962

The surveillance report was on Vasin's desk within two hours. Schultz had trained the kid Lyubimov well, Vasin had to admit. And the old man had personally arrived on the scene in a radio car within eight minutes of his pupil's call. By the time Morozov and his coffee companion had emerged—separately, Vasin noted—into the polluted air of the busy intersection, a *kontora* team as big as an opera chorus was ready for them.

Vasin pulled out a grainy, blown-up headshot of the woman, skimmed through Lyubimov's notes, and looked up at the kid for explanation.

"She works at Gogolevsky Boulevard Thirteen, building three? What's that?"

"Defense Ministry building, sir. Part of the General Staff headquarters. Newly repurposed, we think. Used to be a department of the Army

## THE RESTLESS DEAD

Procurement Bureau. But the old institutional nameplate by the door has been taken down, sir.”

“An *Aquarium* office?” Vasin used the latest slang for the GRU, named for Soviet military intelligence’s newly built glass-fronted headquarters in Yasenevo in suburban Moscow, which resembled a vast fish tank.

“Not sure, sir.”

“Leave that to me. We’ll get someone on the inside to check it out. Meanwhile . . .” Vasin checked his watch. “You have a team to follow this woman home?”

Lyubimov nodded. They both knew the *kontora* would have no problem identifying Morozov’s woman the moment she put her key in any front door in Moscow.

Vasin dismissed the young officer and picked up the phone to make an urgent appointment with Orlov. For once, a piece of luck. After months of behaving like an ideal Soviet citizen, Morozov was finally acting like a spy.

## 5

*Defense Ministry, Moscow*  
15 July 1962

The Ministry of Defense, like the Lubyanka, housed a myriad of cafeterias, each a signifier of complex codes of status and access. Orlov’s man on the inside of the Aquarium had chosen the largest, lowliest one, located in the basement.

“How will I know this Major Tokarev?” Vasin had asked Orlov.

“Unmistakable. Old cavalry man. Mustache. No hands.”

As lunchtime approached, the cavernous dining room filled with groups of uniformed young men and a few preening women secretaries, their handbags and scarves colorful splashes in a uniformly khaki, masculine world. Vasin nursed a cup of weak coffee. A wiry, mustachioed officer in breeches and high boots peered about the room. He was in late middle age, sporting an old-fashioned cavalry mustache. Vasin gestured discreetly with his cup and the old officer raised a black-gloved hand in salute. Vasin stood to shake the man’s outstretched hand—

which turned out to be a hard plastic prosthesis set to a half-open grip. Tokarev's other hand was plastic also.

*No hands.*

"Smolensk, 1943. Tried to toss a German hand grenade out of a trench. Wasn't fast enough. Everyone wants to ask, so I save them the embarrassment. You don't have to say anything."

Tokarev sat, tucking his plastic hands under the table. His face was spattered with old pale-brown shrapnel scars, like splashed clay.

"General Orlov sends his greetings."

"Bet he does. Send 'em back, with bells on."

"You're old friends?"

"One way to put it. Saved my backside, in his time. Got captured outside Mozhaisk in 'forty-one, escaped, ended up in the hands of SMERSH. The 'Death to Spies' outfit of the NKVD? Tasked with rooting out Fascist agents. Orlov decided I wasn't one. Long story. Sent me back to the front. Helped me lend a hand to the war effort. Both of them, in fact. Good work, Colonel. One minute in, and you already know everything there is to know about me."

Vasin ignored the old man's sarcasm and nodded. Orlov sent you back, with his hook deep in your throat. Vasin knew how that felt.

"You must have been grateful."

"Must have been innocent. Orlov said you needed help."

Vasin glanced around.

"We're going to talk here?"

"Neutral ground. You would stand out at the Aquarium. I would stand out at the *kontora*."

"I need to find a woman."

*"Cherchez la femme."*

"Very funny. Colleague of yours. Spanish girl. Details are here."

Vasin slid a thin file across the table, which Tokarev didn't pick up. It took Vasin a moment to realize he couldn't, with his hard prosthetic hands. Vasin opened the file and spread out the two typewritten pages. Tokarev leaned forward and scanned the document.

Sofia Rafaelovna Guzman, born 16 March 1932, in Barcelona, Spain. Resident of the USSR since February 1938. Unmarried. Current home address: a complex of Defense Ministry communal apartments for single officers on Malaya Gruzinskaya Street. That was as far as an evening