

The Dragon Well

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"The renegade's shame or the exile's despair" Thomas Babington Macaulay

Aunnita gazed out at the Arctic wilderness the little bungalow that she was in had heat and running water along with flushing toilets it sounds strange in the Twenty First Century to harp on flushing toilets but things were what they were, "Don't suppose that the migrating wildlife cares much for your oil drilling," she uttered it with obvious superior contempt.

Santigo frowned as he looked up from his desk of papers and plans and whatnot, "Are you here sent from the government to bust my chops about the drilling everything that is being done here in the Alaska wilderness is above board on the up and up."

Above board huh Aunnita shook her head, "Look I'm not going to even try to explain how all of what you and the company you work for is doing to the delicate ecosystem you just can't seem to comprehend the damage. So long as you make a dollar your big and powerful oil company that you work for can buy off any problems."

Santigo got up and got himself a hot cup of coffee he gestured to her if she wanted some and she nodded, "Look you are getting mad at the wrong guy I'm a lowly engineer barely getting by and on top of this do you really think I wanted to be out here. I mean look at it there isn't a big town for hundreds of miles if you can call anything in Alaska a big town. More like big village..."

Aunnita sipped her coffee, "You know that I am an ecologist I care about the environment profit shouldn't be the motive for looking the other way and letting the greedy companies just come in here and destroy all this beautiful natural habitat."

Santigo found his seat again he studied the woman who was wandering around his office she was good looking curvy not anorexic looking just the opposite she had a few pounds in all the right places long dark hair looked raven blueish in the run light as it came through the window, "So I'm suppose to work with you for awhile you are suppose to have access to all the data and reports and memos even the secret memos I've been told."

Aunnita nodded her head as she sipped her hot coffee it was really hot burned her lips she sized him up he was a nice looking man a bit too thin she thought but he was tall so it kind of balanced out he wore glasses and his hair was thick and not kept so well obviously a bachelor he probably wore the same shirt for more than one day, "There has been some strange anomalies in the core reports what might have caused them?"

Santigo raised his eyebrows, "I'm not that kind of engineer I deal with the machines and the computers monitor the robotic progress as the drilling continues basically I'm an over paid babysitter for a bunch of electronic whatnots."

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Aunnita pointed to a section on the computer screen, "Thereâ whatâ s out there?"

Santigo looked to see what she was pointing atâ then he keyed in some commands that brought up a more detailed screen, "Hmmmâ just looks like more piping and drilling machinies," but then the screen started to light up red on the area in question, "What theâ thatâ s not suppose to be doing that."

Perhaps it was more than a coincidence that Santigo and Aunnita met the way that they didâ but sometimes fate has a way of taking hold of a person and turning their life around. Some times the hold-- is for the betterâ fact isâ it is the caseâ but on the other handâ some timesâ it is for the worse. In this caseâ fate had not made up its mindâ whether the two of them were meeting for good or for evilâ such things were not the will of mankind but of the will of God Almighty.

The area that was under questionâ in real lifeâ seemed more complicated than just the flashing beaconâ there was a lot of equipment on the siteâ they entered in through the side doorâ it was locked but Santigo had a pass key for all the facilities. It was dark and they made their way through the structure with big flashlightsâ finally they came across the main circuit breakers and Santigo managed to get some of the main lights working.

Aunnita was taken back with a strange feelingâ it wasnâ t that she was afraid of the darkâ Heavens noâ she was a grown womanâ too big of a girl to be shaken by the unknownâ after allâ sheâ d been in all sorts of situationsâ being an advocate for the environmentâ but there was something different about this siteâ something spiritually unmoving. Finallyâ they found the main control roomâ the two of them began to bring the computers onlineâ after a few momentsâ it was safe to say that--something was very wrong with the facilityâ and not from a structural point of view. The stationâ s logs had indicated that a crewman had logged into the facility some six months agoâ but had never logged out.

Neither of them could find a logical explanation for the problemâ was he still thereâ in the facilityâ if soâ there was no food and there could be no real reason why he would still be inside the facility. The main control room had cameras that could be activatedâ so the two began a systematic search of the rather large facilityâ searching each corridor and hallâ each roomâ there seemed to be nothingâ but thenâ during a routine sweepâ they came across somethingâ not right. There was the crewmanâ sitting at a deskâ his back was to the camera so they could not see his face. Santigo used the communications system to try and hail himâ but it didnâ t workâ oh the system was working just fineâ it was the fact that the man didnâ t answerâ he just sat there.

The obvious thoughts that ran through the twoâ s headsâ was that something had happenedâ and he couldnâ t move and froze to death. It was after allâ the most reasonable thingâ maybe it was a heart attackâ he poor bastard had been working in the remote facility all by himselfâ and he had a heart attack. It was possibleâ the guy looked rather over weightâ but that was just picking on over weight people. But stillâ the obvious thing was thereâ here was this guy that had been forgottenâ how sadâ Aunnita thought to herselfâ to be un-missedâ not even noticed that you had been missingâ for over six monthsâ good Lordâ how awful.

They made their way through the facility and finally came to the room that the dead guy was inâ there was no doubt about the coldâ Santigo slowly approached the bodyâ Aunnita was amused at the seemingly cautious way in which Santigo was approaching the body. It was at that point that she realized that he was as creeped out as she wasâ he was better at holding it in than she was. Finally Santigo touched the manâ s shoulderâ it was cold and hardâ then he swung the guy aroundâ but that action came much too their surpriseâ there was some kind of organic material covering his whole faceâ and it seemed to have actually eaten into his faceâ there were strange frozen pustulated secretions coming out his mouth and ears and nose. This poor bastard was a mess. And then it hit the both of themâ this guy may not have died of a

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heart attackâ at least not from the original conditionâ maybe laterâ was this stuff contagiousâ damnâ Santingo had touched him. A chill moved up Aunnitaâ s backâ noâ it wasnâ t from the coldâ it was unexpected.

Taknokâ s face seemed strained as he heard Santingo and Aunnitaâ s report about what they had found, "According to our recordsâ no one has gone missingâ are you sure of what you have found?"

Santingo glanced at Aunnita then back to the screen, "We have footage of the poor bastard. Canâ t tell you more than thatâ we were really hoping that headquarters could shed some light on the situation..."

Aunnita cut in, "Basicallyâ what we want to knowâ what I want to knowâ is what was the guy doing there in the first place and what happened to himâ was he exposed to some toxins or something?"

Taknok looked off for a momentâ there were others in the room that they could not seeâ then he began to feed them a bunch of bullshit, "You got nothing to worry aboutâ headquarters will take care of everything."

Santingo said, "Soâ it is safe for us to remove the dead body? I meanâ the guyâ s been there for six monthsâ he doesnâ t look too good."

Taknok shouted for a second, "No! I meanâ noâ donâ t do anythingâ weâ ll send out a special team to handle everythingâ the fact of the matter isâ the two of you are through. Youâ ll be getting new assignments in a few days. Until thenâ just try and wrap everything up."

Aunnita voiced, "How can you say thatâ Iâ m an ecologist and I work for the governmentâ you donâ t control my assignments."

Taknok stated, "Weâ ve been in contact with the governmentâ talked to you superiorsâ for the time beingâ youâ ll be taking orders for usâ but just until you get out of Alaskaâ then youâ ll be back on track."

Aunnita uttered, "Back on track?"

Santingo decided to cut in, "Will doâ weâ ll wait for further instructions. Looks like a big storm is coming inâ so Iâ m guessing no one will be out here to take care of things until it passes."

Taknok nodded, "Our thoughts exactlyâ but until thenâ the two of you try and stay warmâ Taknokâ out," and the screen faded off.

Santingo went to the refrigerator and got out two frozen mealsâ he placed them in the oven. Up on the top of a cabinet was a tall bottle of boozeâ he got it and two glassesâ poured them both a drink and sat back down, "I donâ t like this..."

Aunnita spoke, "Notice how Taknok kept looking back of himselfâ to someone not in the field of vision on the screen and notice how his voice never indicated that the company didnâ t know anything about the poor guyâ s death?"

Santingo put forth, "The company is lying to usâ they knew about this guyâ maybe even his death. But why cover it upâ why not go and get the body and do the right thingâ let him rest in peace?"

Aunnita stated, "You wouldâ if you had nothing to do with his death. Butâ if you knew what was going onâ and it was illegal or even worseâ part of a government coverupâ for something top

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secretâ maybe even National Security."

Santigo said, "The words--National Securityâ is just an excuse to violate everyone Constitutional Rights! What if this poor guy was down thereâ doing his jobâ got exposed to somethingâ something nasty and deadly that the company and the government were experimenting onâ or maybeâ he was in the wrong place at the wrong time..."

Aunnita stated chillingly, "You meanâ just like us?"

The snow was now falling at an increasing rateâ the storm was just starting to come inâ and Santigo and Aunnita found themselves by the area where the dead man was discovered. Instead of the company sending help after the stormâ they had managed to send a killerâ an assassinâ no doubt to silence them. A cleanup crew was at that moment going through their records and filesâ pulling computersâ when it all was overâ there would be no record of anything. Soâ what was all of that worth killing for? It had to do with the last well drilledâ something came upâ something that had nothing to do with oil or the companyâ s idea of profits.

From what the two were able to gatherâ just before the assassin cameâ from reading encrypted recordsâ records that were now being either destroyed or more than likely taken to some remote place where the company could start over. This whole thing had to do with a new type of fuelâ not oil and not natural gasâ something different. The substance that was covering the poor guy they foundâ had properties that was not from this planetâ maybe a more accurate description would beâ not from this region of space and time.

What had been going on was testingâ the cold and the remoteness of the area made a perfect place for scientist to test the substance. The substance produced energyâ but did not deplete itselfâ in factâ it did just the oppositeâ every time energy was usedâ it grew back more potential to produce energy. The problem was twofoldâ how to control it and the fact that it was highly toxic to living creaturesâ to all life.

Thereforeâ containment was of the utmost importanceâ the substance was semi-organicâ but not from this planetâ or if it was from this planetâ not from this dimension of time and space. The encrypted records seemed to suggest that a crew was drillingâ machines were going and everything seemed normalâ until they hit a pocketâ that did not register on any of their detection equipment. There was a hard surfaceâ and it appeared to be synthetic in natureâ when the crew broke through itâ this ethereal substance came forthâ scientist didnâ t know what to make of itâ and quickly found out that it was toxic to all living tissuesâ animal life and plant life.

It was simply by accident that the scientist discovered that the stuff had some properties that pointed to a new energy sourceâ it was decidedâ at the highest levelsâ to keep a lid on the whole thingâ the greed of the companyâ imagine thatâ finding a perpetual power sourceâ it was not radioactiveâ so under the proper conditionsâ it could be used to power cars--planesâ boatsâ all manner of electronic devicesâ with no radiationâ imagine batteries that lasted foreverâ power sources for robotic limbs for amputeesâ the list went on and on.

Yesâ this was a big breakthroughâ but it wasnâ t the first time that a companyâ or the governmentâ made use of off world technology and outwardly discoveriesâ trying to backward engineer a product or solution. The stakes were highâ and there were billions to be madeâ hellâ trillions maybe. And now the government and the private sector found themselvesâ strange bed fellows. Soâ this poor guy somehow got himself exposed and forgotten about for over six month. Now a new cleanup crew was thereâ making sure this timeâ that no evidence would be leftâ not recordsâ no matter how deeply encryptedâ would be foundâ this whole thing was a dragon well. It was to be kept under the deepest and

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most closest guarded secret. Money was to be made and power was to be coveted.

The cold was starting to get to Santingo and Aunnitaâ the storm was now just upon themâ the assassin was doing everything in his power to kill them and they were collectively doing everything in their power to escapeâ they both took a brief moment to pray to God for deliverance. And the Good Lordâ Jesus Christ heard their prayers and beholdâ a way of escape.

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