



FIFTY-NINE

Throughout the conflict Elaine delivered fresh milk. Being a gatherer of gossip, she was often late, and today was no exception, arriving as John and Vanessa were about to set out on a walk to the harbour front. With little else to do, many of the locals had taken to this as a form of recreation and opportunity to visit.

“Good day, John. Miss Grieves.” Vanessa tried returning the greeting but Elaine gave her no opening. “Did you hear the fuss about Gordon Sinclair, then?”

John felt his heart sink. “No.”

“He’s under arrest, you know. Old Sinclair, mind you. They flew right out and arrested him.”

John cut in. “Who flew out?”

“The Special Forces people. Cruel buggers they is. Shot the old man’s dogs. Tore the place completely apart. Rumour has it they were looking for the radio. Why out there is beyond me.” She leaned in close, lowering her voice. “We all know the hidden radio transmits from in town.” Standing back, she resumed her usual loud voice. “He’s to be deported to Britain.”

“Arrested for what?” Vanessa asked.

“That’s just it. Nobody knows. I tell you, John, it’s a strange business the way these people carry on. I’ll be glad to see the likes of them driven into the sea. The Navy’s on San Carlos Waters, you know. Have to go.”

Vanessa spoke first. “Gordon Sinclair. I didn’t think it would come to this.”

John thought the timing of Sinclair’s arrest too much of a coincidence. The net was closing. “The cable. Someone must have passed it on to Seville.”

“They’re searching for the documents. Otherwise, why waste time and effort on an old shepherd.” Vanessa set the milk bottle inside. “Alex must have threatened them with the documents.”

John agreed. “If Alex has made his move, and our troops are at San Carlos, then Seville is in a real bind.” John watched a gull circle in the sky above, trying to put the pieces together. He figured before they move the gold they’d want to eliminate loose ends. Seville’s chasing people we’ve seen. Sinclair, next will be., “Leonard Gibson.”

“What?” Vanessa asked, putting on a pair of black leather gloves.

John placed both hands on her shoulders. “Leonard. They’ll be after him next.”

“They’ve got nothing tying him to the document, or the gold.”

John thought on that. “He’s on the *Domonico* crew list. I’ve heard the Argies have dossiers on every resident. Someone’s bound to figure it out.”

“I’ll bet the people on the Lear knew.”

“Right. Well they’re dead. But it’s only a matter of time before they place Leonard and me together.”

“I’m afraid so, and when they do find out...” Vanessa’s unspoken words hung in the wind.

John took Vanessa’s hand and stepped off the porch. “Let’s go, something will come to us.”

Sunshine appeared through ragged grey clouds driven by high winds signalling another miserable night for the troops they passed, most looking dejected. Many, having come from milder climates, were obviously feeling the cold and spent a good deal of energy trying to keep warm. When they saw three sad-looking lads cooking a chicken on a rubbish bin lid over a small fire, Vanessa spoke with them. This was their first food in two days.

No wonder eggs were in short supply, John thought, before their stove spawned an idea. “Come on.”

Vanessa ran a few steps to catch up, taking his hand as he set a brisk pace. “What on earth?”

“We’ve got to find Dick and his dumper truck. He can get a message to Leonard for us.”

They set off for the rubbish dump, but found Dick four blocks over.

Ed Zaruk

John flagged him down. "You been to Mr. Gibson's place?"

"Nope. Tomorrow, why?"

"Just wondered how he's getting on. I quite like the old gent."

"E'll be all right. 'E's a tough one that. Seen action in World War Two, you know."

John did, but didn't let on. "Dick, could you deliver a message to Leonard for me?"

"Suppose so, though you could walk over there right now and tell him yourself."

"Can't do that, Dick. The guys on motorbikes have taken a dislike to me."

"Don't mess with them. Mean bastards, they is. This message then?"

John told him, and Dick promised he'd swing over on his next round. "Dick."

"Yeah."

"Mum's the word on this."

"Don't remember talking to you, John."