

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.”

Aunnita pointed to a section on the computer screen, “There—what’s out there?”

Santigo looked to see what she was pointing at—then he keyed in some commands that brought up a more detailed screen, “Hmmm—just looks like more piping and drilling machinies,” but then the screen started to light up red on the area in question, “What the—that’s not suppose to be doing that.”

Perhaps it was more than a coincidence that Santingo and Aunnita met the way that they did—but sometimes fate has a way of taking hold of a person and turning their life around. Some times the hold-- is for the better—fact is—it is the case—but on the other hand—some times—it is for the worse. In this case—fate had not made up its mind—whether the two of them were meeting for good or for evil—such things were not the will of mankind but of the will of God Almighty.

The area that was under question—in real life—seemed more complicated than just the flashing beacon—there was a lot of equipment on the site—they entered in through the side door—it was locked but Santingo had a pass key for all the facilities. It was dark and they made their way through the structure with big flashlights—finally they came across the main circuit breakers and Santingo managed to get some of the main lights working.

Aunnita was taken back with a strange feeling—it wasn't that she was afraid of the dark—Heavens no—she was a grown woman—too big of a girl to be shaken by the unknown—after all—she'd been in all sorts of situations—being an advocate for the environment—but there was something different about this site—something spiritually unmoving. Finally—they found the main control room—the two of them began to bring the computers online—after a few moments—it was safe to say that--something was very wrong with the facility—and not from a structural point of view. The station's logs had indicated that a crewman had logged into the facility some six months ago—but had never logged out.

Neither of them could find a logical explanation for the problem—was he still there—in the facility—if so—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 activated—so the two began a systematic search of the rather large facility—searching each corridor and hall—each room—there seemed to be nothing—but then—during a routine sweep—they came across something—not right. There was the crewman—sitting at a desk—his back was to the camera so they could not see his face. Santingo used the communications system to try and hail him—but it didn't work—oh the system was working just fine—it was the fact that the man didn't answer—he just sat there.

The obvious thoughts that ran through the two's heads—was that something had happened—and he couldn't move and froze to death. It was after all—the most reasonable thing—maybe it was a heart attack—he poor bastard had been working in the remote facility all by himself—and he had a heart attack. It was possible—the guy looked rather over weight—but that was just picking on over weight people. But still—the obvious thing was there—here was this guy that had been forgotten—how sad—Aunnita thought to herself—to be un-missed—not even noticed that you had been missing—for over six months—good Lord—how awful.

They made their way through the facility and finally came to the room that the dead guy was in—there was no doubt about the cold—Santingo slowly approached the body—Aunnita was amused at the seemingly cautious way in which Santingo was approaching the body. It was at that point that she realized that he was as creeped out as she was—he was better at holding it in than she was. Finally Santingo touched the man's shoulder—it was cold and hard—then he swung the guy around—but that action came much too their surprise—there was some kind of organic material covering his whole face—and it seemed to have actually eaten into his face—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 them—this guy may not have died of a heart attack—at least not from the original condition—maybe later—was this stuff contagious—damn—Santingo had touched him. A chill moved up Aunnita's back—no—it wasn't from the cold—it was unexpected.

Taknok's face seemed strained as he heard Santingo and Aunnita's report about what they had found, "According to our records--no one has gone missing--are you sure of what you have found?"

Santingo glanced at Aunnita then back to the screen, "We have footage of the poor bastard. Can't tell you more than that--we were really hoping that headquarters could shed some light on the situation..."

Aunnita cut in, "Basically--what we want to know--what I want to know--is what was the guy doing there in the first place and what happened to him--was he exposed to some toxins or something?"

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

Santingo said, "So--it is safe for us to remove the dead body? I mean--the guy's been there for six months--he doesn't look too good."

Taknok shouted for a second, "No! I mean--no--don't do anything--we'll send out a special team to handle everything--the fact of the matter is--the two of you are through. You'll be getting new assignments in a few days. Until then--just try and wrap everything up."

Aunnita voiced, "How can you say that--I'm an ecologist and I work for the government--you don't control my assignments."

Taknok stated, "We've been in contact with the government--talked to you superiors--for the time being--you'll be taking orders for us--but just until you get out of Alaska--then you'll be back on track."

Aunnita uttered, "Back on track?"

Santingo decided to cut in, "Will do--we'll wait for further instructions. Looks like a big storm is coming in--so I'm guessing no one will be out here to take care of things until it passes."

Taknok nodded, "Our thoughts exactly--but until then--the two of you try and stay warm--Taknok--out," and the screen faded off.

Santingo went to the refrigerator and got out two frozen meals--he placed them in the oven. Up on the top of a cabinet was a tall bottle of booze--he got it and two glasses--poured them both a drink and sat back down, "I don't like this..."

Aunnita spoke, "Notice how Taknok kept looking back of himself--to someone not in the field of vision on the screen and notice how his voice never indicated that the company didn't know anything about the poor guy's death?"

Santingo put forth, "The company is lying to us--they knew about this guy--maybe even his death. But why cover it up--why not go and get the body and do the right thing--let him rest in peace?"

Aunnita stated, "You would--if you had nothing to do with his death. But--if you knew what was going on--and it was illegal or even worse--part of a government coverup--for something top secret--maybe even National Security."

Santingo said, "The words--National Security--is just an excuse to violate everyone Constitutional Rights! What if this poor guy was down there--doing his job--got exposed to something--something nasty and deadly that the company and the government were experimenting on--or maybe--he was in the wrong place at the wrong time..."

Aunnita stated chillingly, "You mean--just like us?"

The snow was now falling at an increasing rate—the storm was just starting to come in—and Santingo and Aunnita found themselves by the area where the dead man was discovered. Instead of the company sending help after the storm—they had managed to send a killer—an assassin—no doubt to silence them. A cleanup crew was at that moment going through their records and files—pulling computers—when it all was over—there would be no record of anything. So—what was all of that worth killing for? It had to do with the last well drilled—something came up—something that had nothing to do with oil or the company's idea of profits.

From what the two were able to gather—just before the assassin came—from reading encrypted records—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 fuel—not oil and not natural gas—something different. The substance that was covering the poor guy they found—had properties that was not from this planet—maybe a more accurate description would be—not from this region of space and time.

What had been going on was testing—the cold and the remoteness of the area made a perfect place for scientist to test the substance. The substance produced energy—but did not deplete itself—in fact—it did just the opposite—every time energy was used—it grew back more potential to produce energy. The problem was twofold—how to control it and the fact that it was highly toxic to living creatures—to all life.

Therefore—containment was of the utmost importance—the substance was semi-organic—but not from this planet—or if it was from this planet—not from this dimension of time and space. The encrypted records seemed to suggest that a crew was drilling—machines were going and everything seemed normal—until they hit a pocket—that did not register on any of their detection equipment. There was a hard surface—and it appeared to be synthetic in nature—when the crew broke through it—this ethereal substance came forth—scientist didn't know what to make of it—and quickly found out that it was toxic to all living tissues—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 source—it was decided—at the highest levels—to keep a lid on the whole thing—the greed of the company—imagine that—finding a perpetual power source—it was not radioactive—so under the proper conditions—it could be used to power cars--planes--boats—all manner of electronic devices—with no radiation—imagine batteries that lasted forever—power sources for robotic limbs for amputees—the list went on and on.

Yes—this was a big breakthrough—but it wasn't the first time that a company—or the government—made use of off world technology and outwardly discoveries—trying to backward engineer a product or solution. The stakes were high—and there were billions to be made—hell—trillions maybe. And now the government and the private sector found themselves—strange bed fellows. So—this poor guy somehow got himself exposed and forgotten about for over six month. Now a new cleanup crew was there—making sure this time—that no evidence would be left—not records—no matter how deeply encrypted—would be found—this whole thing was a dragon well. It was to be keep under the deepest and most closest guarded secret. Money was to be made and power was to be coveted.

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

The warm sunshine seemed almost too good as Santingo and Aunnita sat at a table in front of a small outdoor café—sipping a cup of coffee—Santingo picked up a small computer disk and examined it, “I wonder if it was all worth it?”

Aunnita uttered, “If you mean—was any of it worth it to the company—then I guess the answer is—yes—they get a new product—that they can phase in over the decade—a product that will revolutionize the oil and natural gas industry.”

Santingo said, “No—I understand all of that—this alien goo—or whatever you want to call it...”

Aunnita cut in, “It’s actually an organic biological—with properties that do not conform to the known chemical and physical compositions of this realm of space and time.”

Santingo voiced, “So—then it is an alien power source. The point I was trying to make is that—one person is dead—that we know about—the company tried to kill us—to keep us quiet about the coverup—and now we are sitting out here in the warm sun—sipping a rich cup of coffee. You know—if we hadn’t prayed to the Lord Jesus Christ back there—we might have ended up like that poor technician we found.”

Aunnita nodded, “You’ll find no argument there—the Lord does indeed work in mysterious ways—and I for one am glad.”

Santingo took a sip and looked about his surroundings. “You know—we are still being followed.”

Aunnita spoke, “Yeah—that couple over there—I spotted them some time ago—I guess the oil company will keep an eye on us—so long as they think of us as a threat—to their obviously multi-billion dollar research and development.”

Santingo announced, “They probably think we know more than what we do—I mean—this little disk here—oh I made all sorts of copies—they know damning information is on it—they just don’t know how much of the information we were able to get before we had to get out of there.”

Aunnita agreed, “I say—let them think what they will—do you think they have us bugged—listening to our conversation?”

Santingo voiced, “I think that there is more than just them following us—but the real stupidity is that big companies gain control of technology that can help mankind—they hold back prime discoveries that could cure disease like cancer and AIDS and other horrible sickness—and why?”

Aunnita spoke, “For money of course—since the beginning of organized society—there has been a need for some to oppress the others—so that they can stay in power. Can you imagine—perhaps there already is a cure for those things that you were talking about—and more. But if the big companies can’t readily make a profit from it—or worse—choose to withhold this life saving information for sinister greed and gain—like the big pharmaceutical companies do—well—it’s sad that mankind loses...”

Santingo said, “And all for money—ink on paper—the false god of business.”

Aunnita nodded, “People will kill and die for money—and in this case—the company did just that—and they tried to do that to us—the whole situation sucks.”

It was about that time that a reporter from the broadcast station came up—the reporter was with the public broadcast station—Sandra Cohon uttered, “Are you two the ones I’m suppose to meet about the new power source that the oil company is trying to coverup?”

Santingo nodded and then motioned for her to take a seat, “This is one heck of a story...”

