

The background of the cover is a misty forest scene. Tall, dark green evergreen trees are scattered across the landscape, with a thick layer of white mist or fog hanging between them. The sky above is a pale, hazy blue. The overall atmosphere is quiet and somewhat somber.

BETRAYAL

GLEN J. CARD

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by

Glen J. Card



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Characters

Mike Sasq - Innocent Bystander caught up in the events beyond his control, but quickly does what he has to do to survive.

Georgia - Wife of Mike and mother to their child, little Ben, name after Mike's brother.

Kat - Hooker on the East Side of Vancouver, Canada, and friend of Mike's who helps him out.

Big Ben - Mike's older, dead brother, killed by a hit and run driver, Vietnam Vet.

Laura or Leroy - Sgt. With Canadian Armed Forces, Vietnam Vet, one of Big Ben's friends.

Jack - Lawyer for Mike and one of his best friends.

Lo Chin - Chinese, one of the world's wealthiest men, entrepreneur, owns property in downtown Vancouver.

Lai Hai-Fung - Chinese Ambassador to Canada, one of the most powerful men in Canada, only Lo-Chin answers to him.

Bill (the Stork) - Friend of Mike's from days gone by, big time hood and drug dealer.

Wilbur Gilmore - Cops on Vancouver Police Force, cops gone bad. Frank Chan - Another cop on the Vancouver Police Force gone bad.

Shelley - Old flame of Mike's from days passed yet the flame still burns, Vice-President of Major Canadian Film Studio.

Prologue

I was barely able to budge the manhole cover as I crawled out of the Vancouver sewer system onto Hastings Street. I coughed a couple of times, real hackers from the smoke that was still pouring out of the hole. I dragged myself onto the pavement, flipped onto my back, and looked at the murky skies. Exhausted as I was, I knew I had to keep moving or die there in the streets. They wouldn't give up that easily. They wanted me dead.

Turning over onto my stomach, I got to my hands and knees trying to catch my breath, smoke wisping out of my mouth. Finally, I pushed myself up to a standing position, but I was swaying and feeling like the littlest breeze would blow me over. As the dizziness left me, I noticed droplets of blood coming off my body and hitting the ground.

I knew that during the gun battle that had taken place in the lower regions of the sewer, where there was another old city, I had taken a few rounds to my body. Sometimes in the heat of battle a person could be wounded and not even know it, even dying as they drew their last breathe not knowing that it was their last. Thankfully they appeared to be flesh wounds, a crease to my upper right arm, another on my head and also one where a slug appeared to have gone in and out through my left-side love handle. Knowing that I had to find a place to hold up till I could heal, I staggered down Hastings St., hoping to reach Gastown another part of Vancouver. There, maybe I could hide for awhile and lick my wounds.

Grimacing with pain, I reached down to pick up baby, almost toppling over. Baby was my weapon of choice, an M-16 with a 40mm grenade launcher slung underneath. She had saved my life more than a few times, and taken more than a few lives. Heading west, I lurched down Hastings, reaching Columbia St. I had to stop. I noticed that there was smoke starting to come out of some of the manhole covers I passed.

Leaning against a building, catching my breath, I knew I was leaving a blood trail that the people after me were sure to follow. Thankfully it was still night time out, giving me a few extra minutes, hopefully. I could start to hear the sirens and knew that the place would soon be swarming with emergency personal, but first I had to do something about the bleeding. As my shirt was already in tatters, I started to rip up pieces of it to staunch the flow of blood that was coming from the worst wound at my side. Stuffing the holes front and back with the pieces of shirt I bound them together with a length of rope I always carried with me in my battle jacket. Next I tied a piece of shirt around my head pirate style, to stop the bleeding there. As I looked at the wound on my arm, I noticed the bleeding there had almost stopped, one less thing to worry about.

Pushing off the wall I staggered off towards my hideout in the slums of Vancouver, what better place to have to hide than in the most crime ridden part of the city.

As a police cruiser, with its lights flashing and the siren wailing, sped past me, I ducked into a niche of a building till it had passed by. I was almost home, only another half a block to go. Surprisingly enough there were still people on the streets, the dealers, winos, pimps and their whores and other kinds of society's flotsam. The city never sleeps. Pressing the M-16 against my leg I made it to my lair without anyone raising an alarm, but then again a person with a firearm was nothing new in this section of town.

Going down the alley between Hastings and Pender off of Abbot St., I finally reached my destination. It was an old building that had once housed retail stores but was now up for demolition, being condemned by the city which meant it would still be here twenty years from now. The

bureaucracy of the government would see to that. The place I headed into used to be an old Chinese restaurant that held a few secrets of its own.

As I undid the heavy duty combination lock and chain from the door, I was barely able to squeeze my bulk through the door. I had set it up this way for defensive purposes, this way only one person could enter at a time, but this wasn't the only trick up my sleeve. It took me about ten minutes to defuse the booby traps I had set up and then to rearm them as I passed to get to my hole in the wall. Literally it was a hole in the wall of the restaurant, one of the few entrances to the old underground city that Vancouver was built on. By the late eighteen hundreds, most of the city had burnt to the ground, and as they rebuilt the city the major core of the old city was buried intact.

The rooms I entered would have done an interior decorator proud; after all, I had to spend some of the millions I had on something. The first thing I did was head for the war room, a room I had built from scratch to monitor my surroundings, and to control the traps I had set up. Making sure everything was just right; I relaxed as much as I could. Knowing that things were as good as they were going to get for now. I started to dump my clothes on the ground as I headed to the shower and Jacuzzi to clean myself up and look properly after my wounds.

The wounds needed to be attended to first though. As I cleaned and bound the minor wounds to my arm and head, I could see that the wound in my side would need stitches front and back. Grabbing a bottle of rum, I poured myself a couple of good shots to ease the pain. Going to the cabinet where I kept the medical supplies, I grabbed some surgical thread and a curved needle for the stitches.

As I stood in front of the mirror, with my shirt off, I noticed a lot more scars than were there a year ago. Taking a swig of rum, I thought back to how in that year I had lost my family and most of my friends. They had all been killed by the Chinese government and their agents in Canada. I had exacted some revenge against them and exposed their plan to take over Canada and the United States. The only thing was that the traitors held so much power that they made it look like I was the bad guy and had covered everything up, at least what they could. There were a few people who knew the truth and could be counted upon, but they were few and far between. I was one of the most hunted men on the face of the planet and if anyone was caught helping me it would be an automatic death sentence. These people took no prisoners.

Taking another swig I set about to do the sewing up of my body. Grabbing the needle I started to pass the needle through my skin after first pouring some rum over the wound to sterilize it. The pain from the sewing was nothing to the pain I had felt when I poured the rum on the wound. The shot had gone in at an angle and the hole in the back was larger than the one in front, being the exit hole of the bullet. The back hole was more difficult to stitch, and as I finished I took another swig of the bottle. I figured the shower could wait and barely made it to my couch before I passed out. The bottle of rum hit the floor, spilling the last of the liquid on my Persian rug, but by this time I was past caring. The shock of being shot, the adrenaline rush from fighting and killing had finally taken its toll. The last thought was how it all began.

Chapter 1

It had started out as just another ordinary day, up at 5:00 am to make it into work for the 7:00 am shift. The sun was already brilliant in the sky, on this late spring morning. I lay in bed a few extra precious minutes, slowly waking to the dawn.

I reached over to turn off the clock radio and shook my head not understanding this strange thing I had. Whenever or whatever time I decided to wake up, no matter how drunk, stoned, or sober, I always woke up before the set time, by at least ten minutes.

Slipping out of bed so as not to wake my wife, Georgia, I gathered up my work clothes from the bottom of our four-poster brass bed. Tiptoeing past the pine hutch, I picked up my socks and steel-toed work boots. Quietly closing the drapes of our bedroom window as I slipped out of the bedroom door, I looked at my wife lying under the down quilt. Feeling a great rush of love from her, I felt like the luckiest guy in the world, still wondering what she saw in a guy like me.

I know her parents weren't too thrilled with their baby daughter going out with a hood like me, but don't get me wrong; I'm actually a good guy.

At the time we met I was into partying, black leather jackets, motorcycles and all that goes with it, still I was at that age when I was actually thinking about settling down and starting to take it easy.

We met, where else but at a party, she with her boyfriend, me with a few friends. This party was rather large, a couple of hundred people or so. It was the strangest thing, people talk about falling in love with just one glance and knowing you were going to spend the rest of your life with that person, come hell or high water. Well, that's what happened to us. I was pounding back a couple of tequila puffs, to go with my beer, when this beautiful blonde, I won't say girl because she was all woman, came walking by my friends and I.

As her deep blue eyes met my hazel ones, it was like someone had stuck my finger in a light socket while my feet were in a tub of water. The electricity just flowed between us, jilting not only me but as I could see, her as well.

Needless to say, we weren't the only ones to notice. As she kept walking, her eyes never left mine even though she had her arm through her rather large boyfriend.

The boyfriend must have been a full back or something like that, which, as it turned out, he was. As the magic continued between Georgia and I, he caught the looks between us and glared right at me.

Glares from people I can handle pretty well, it's the bullets and lies that really bother, as you'll see as my tale continues.

The party was one of those frat parties, keys of beer, haze or marijuana smoke, even a few streakers.

One of my good buddies belonged to the house with his other university students. Jack Casca and I went a long way back to when we were living on the streets. He came from a very well off family that just about cut him off because of the lifestyle he was leading. About the same time I started to smarten up, so did he. So here we were at the University of British Columbia. Jack, at that time, was into his second year of studying law, and I, I had a full time job making good money. Well, as the night wore on and the party got rowdier and raunchier, I happened to spy Georgia here and there. At last, gathering up my courage, I decided to go over and talk to her while her boyfriend was away getting her a drink.

As we started to talk, it seemed like we had known each other for years. She actually asked me for a dance, which to tell you the truth, I kinda like it when the woman takes the initiative. The only problem was that her boyfriend took exception to the fact I was dancing with her.

Like I said before he was a fairly big guy and thought he could intimidate me. Wrong.

In a matter of seconds it went from verbal to physical. What this jock couldn't understand was how fast his ass hit the ground but he never felt it because I laid him out with one punch. At that point, I looked at Georgia who looked a little flabbergasted, and all I said was "Him or me?"

I could see the indecisiveness in her eyes, should she go help her boyfriend or go with me? Finally, she told me "Let's get outa here." With that we walked out and hopped on my Harley. She's been by my side ever since. As the years rolled on, we grew together.

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