

Copyright © Robert A. Webster 2008

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book or portions thereof in any form whatsoever.

Email: powerdives@yahoo.com

In loving memory

I think of you both now and then
I live my life and let you enjoy your peace
I have spoken to you often
I have listened to you at times
I know you're both here if I need you
Thank you both for your unconditional love and
happy memories
Pearl 'my mum' Nielson 1919-2004
Chunky 'the dog' Warner 1991-2004
May you both enjoy your eternal slumber

Deal with difficult situations like a dog.
If you can't eat it or hump it.
Piss on it and walk away

-Foreword-



The world already has Bond: James Bond.

Jones: Indiana

Man: Super, Spider and Bat.

Now meet the next generation of super heroes as they begin their second adventure in South East Asia, once again thwarting the plans of some very dodgy characters in the face of adversity.

Stu, Spock, Nick and Pon, who can crush an empty beer can with one hand, leap from a girl's bedroom in a single bound. Emit lethal methane flames sometimes without scorching arse hairs; face their adversaries once again in the land of smiles (Thailand) and the beautiful and friendly country of Cambodia.

Enjoy the adventure as they unknowingly enter once again into a deadly chase to recover a holy relic and solve an age old mystery. All this they achieve whilst undergoing a metamorphism from being juiced, through spannered and shitfaced to totally wankered, by taking the magic potion otherwise known as beer and although forced to drink their nemeses fruit based drink for ladies, remain in total control, as they fight for a place near the bar.

Follow once again their hilarious antics as they take another voyage of discovery in search for chalices. A

journey which takes them from the hustle bustle of the streets of Phnom Penh to the splendour of Angkor Wat and the tranquil, golden beaches of Sihanoukville in the pursuit of women and good times, whilst aiding their friend in Cambodia to recover the holy relic.

Join in the fun, whilst they fumble around discovering lost worlds, making new friends and unlocking a mystery straight out of the pages of science fact.

-Prologue-



The telephone ringing brought Detective Inspector Crinigan out of his daydream. He picked up the receiver. “Hello Inspector Crinigan, Scotland yard” he announced. “Hello detective, this is Dr Timothy Clerk, I work for H.M Ambassador, David Reader from the British embassy in Cambodia and we seem to have a mystery here.

“How can I help Dr Clerk?” said the detective now thoughts fully focused on the conversation.

“A body was found a few weeks ago in one of the shallow dry wells in a recess in the main temple at Ta Prohm, about 1km away from one of Cambodia’s main tourists sites, Angkor Thom. A tour guide and party of tourists found the body after the guide decided to frighten the party by taking them off the usual route and into the dark back recesses. It backfired, as he shone his torch into the well, saw the body and scared himself shitless. We are having difficulty with identifying the corpse. All we really know from the autopsy is the man had been brain dead for about a week. He wasn’t carrying any form of identification or in fact anything at all. He was dressed only in a flimsy hospital gown, but the nearest hospital is 12km away and they have had no berang

(foreigners) admitted in the last few weeks, none that have gone missing anyway. We have kept the body on ice for about a fortnight to try and work out the puzzle and identify him, but we have had no success in doing either I'm afraid. We had a few people come forward when we put a photo in the Cambodia Daily and said they had seen this individual around Phnom Penh several weeks ago, he was an Englishman but they only knew him as Nick, a tourist from Brighton, in the UK. I was wondering if I could send you blood and DNA samples taken from the body and dental x-rays along with photographs and fingerprints to see if you could positively identify him" explained Clerk.

"Yes of course" said Crinigan after listening with great interest and enquired

"How did he die?"

"That's the mystery" said Clerk. "He only seems brain dead and we just don't know how, it appears he had some kind of fright that caused a Berry aneurysm which subsequently burst, but there are some major anomalies which we can't fathom out and the facilities here aren't great. We have done all we can here, at this stage I will send my report to you and you will see what I mean, it is incredible but I don't want to talk too much on the phone"

"What do you mean by only brain dead?" enquired a now confused detective.

"That's one of the things I don't want to discuss on the phone" repeated Clerk.

"I understand" said Crinigan "if you send what you have to my office, I will see to it".

"Thanks I will dispatch them immediately" and make arrangements for repatriating the body."

“Could you send the corpse to our coroner’s office well so we can investigate further” Crinigan requested, now his Detective juices tingling with anticipation of something to get his teeth into at last.

Clerk thanked the detective then hung up the phone and wrote on the top of a small package already address to:

New Scotland Yard,

Broadway,

London

SW1H OBG:

**Urgent: For the attention of: Detective Inspector
Donal Crinigan.**

Head of Special projects investigation unit.

Detective Inspector Donal Crinigan was born in Dublin the son of an Irish Garda he had followed in his father’s footsteps and family tradition and joined the police straight from school. He then went on to join the Metropolitan police and moved to London where he became a homicide detective and due to his fastidious nature and thorough detective work, rapidly moved up the ranks, now after 18 years with the Met, at 53 years of age he was bored with the police force, he had two grown up sons, both in the police and an ex wife, who he still kept in contact with and still had strong feelings for, even though she had remarried. His Irish accent though still audible, had all but gone, unless he got angry then a string of Irish obscenities could be heard echoing around the corridors of New Scotland yard, his subordinates knew they were in deep shit, when he would come out of his office point to the offending individual and with a broad Irish twang shout “Johnson come here you little bollix.” Nowadays the only thing he got to investigate

was dead Yardies and drug dealers, although he knew who committed the murders, he knew months of investigation and footslog, would only result in some slick city lawyer getting the accused murderer set free on some technicality. He was now ready for taking a redundancy payment if offered and doing something different.

“I am sick of these bollixes getting away with murder because we didn’t describe in detail what their fart smelt like” he used to moan to his colleagues “Bloody red tape”.

Maybe this case will be different it certainly sounds intriguing he thought.

He swung around on his chair and gazed out of his office window overlooking St James Park and the pelicans, it was a warm sunny beautiful day in June.

In the morgue at Phnom Penh’s Royal Rattanak hospital, a corpse lay on a large metal post mortem table, around it stood bemused men from the Cambodian coroner’s office and Dr Timothy Clerk. After just getting off the telephone to Detective Crinigan, was now stood looking at the post mortem corpse.

“This will baffle them in London” he thought “it certainly mystified me, I will keep up to date with this strange case”

Orderlies came in and swathed the body and Timothy signed the orders to have the corpse and all tissue and organ samples sent to England urgently.

He left the hospital and headed to the Frog and Parrot a small bar situated on the banks of the Tonle Sap River for a well deserved beer and to see if the owner Steve

could assist, as he knew most of the happenings around Phnom Penh.

***Angkor Thom** was the last and most enduring capital city of the Khmer empire. It was established in the late twelfth century by king Jayavarman VII. It covers an area of 9 km², within which are located several monuments from earlier eras as well as those established by Jayavarman and his successors. At the centre of the city is Jayavarman's state temple, the Bayon, with the other major sites clustered around the Victory Square immediately to the north*

***Ta Prohm** is the modern name of a temple at Angkor, Cambodia, built in the Bayon style largely in the late 12th and early 13th centuries and originally called **Rajavihara**. Located approximately one kilometre east of Angkor Thom and on the southern edge of the East Baray near Tonle Bati, it was founded by the Khmer King Jayavarman VII as a Mahayana Buddhist monastery and university. Unlike most Angkorian temples, Ta Prohm has been left in much the same condition in which it was found: the photogenic and atmospheric combination of trees growing out of the ruins and the jungle surroundings ensures privacy and only very few brave visitors*

***Angkor Wat** (Angkor temple) is the central feature of the Angkor UNESCO World Heritage Site containing the magnificent remains of the Khmer civilization. Angkor Wat's rising series of five towers culminates in an impressive central tower that symbolizes mythical Mount Meru. Thousands of feet of wall space are covered with*

intricate carving depicting scenes from mythology. Soon to be classed as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

-Chapter One-



“I’m going in squadron leader, bandits 12 o’clock high” said Stu, in a well spoken English straight from the annals of a world war air ace accent, as his head jerked forward a familiar black triangle came up to meet his hanging out tongue He was stopped mid way down by a slap across his ears.

“Don’t yap, just work” exclaimed a perturbed but horny Dao, Stu continued on to her olive brown skinned chalice and tasted her nectar. It was his first day back on his third visit to the land he now called home and he was pleasing the woman he now knew as the love of his life. A woman he wanted to spend the rest of his life with and couldn’t imagine being without. His friend Spock was also getting up to similar antics in the adjacent room at the Sawasdee hotel with his little angel Moo, also happy to be back in Thailand with the woman whom he fondly referred to as ‘the little shit.’

It was now May and the lads had been saving again for their third visit to Thailand. They had spent a fortnight there in March and although not as magical or adventurous as their first visit, still enjoyed it immensely and with the exception of nearly missing their flight out, due to getting Nick some medical attention at the airport, things went smoothly and they again returned to U.K.

depressed and within a few hours of arriving home went to the travel agents and booked a flight out for a few months time. They had phoned the girls daily and hoped that they did not have other men (customers), even though they knew that they probably would, but had come to accept the fact and tried not to dwell on it too much, at least when Spock and Stu went back they would be with them and who knew what the future held?. Both Stu and Spock had mellowed since they discovered Thailand. Spock had even been nice to Chunky, who was Stus faithful old boxer bitch and had willingly shared his chocolate with the dog, which previously she had to steal off his table. Stus mum Pearl had seen her son turn into a right gooey Jessie, always talking about Dao and how he wanted to bring her to meet Pearl, “you’ll love her mum” and despite the fact Dao could hardly speak English, Stu convinced his mum they would sit and chat all day and compare treasures. Stu was referring to the ornaments Pon had given them. The carved flawless ruby that Pon gave Stu, who then gave it to his mum, was now being kept in Pearls ‘treasure box’ as she used to fondly refer to a small wooden box, hand painted and made by Stu in woodwork class when he was 12. It had become a handy home for all the junk that Stu had given his mum over the years.

“Well bring her over then son” Pearl would say.

“Cant get a bloody visa” Stu would grumble “too difficult and we haven’t been together long enough, but Spock and I will try again next time”.

They had tried to contact Nick several times by telephone, but they only got to speak to his sister who, when they announced who was speaking became very nervous and agitated and one time when Stu announced

“Its Stu here, Nick’s mate from Thailand, is he there?” Nicks sister repeated “Stu”, he was certain he heard a panicky groan in the background followed by the sound of wood breaking and another groan, this time one of pain, but Stu put this down to the television. Stu and Spock decided not to try to contact Nick again and maybe run into him in Pattaya.

Nick had other plans and after Stus phone call and falling back off the kitchen stool and cracking his head on his sister’s oven, decided Pattaya was too dangerous, he therefore decide to try somewhere different. He had friends who had visited Cambodia and had a great time, so he decided to try there and booked a flight for May 3rd to Phnom Penh the capital.

Now shagged and showered, Spock, Stu, Dao and Moo decided they should go out and have a bite to eat. They all met in the reception of the Sawasdee and the two lads were contently beaming smiles ear to ear announced “Tonight girls we are going eat steak”. They had heard about a small restaurant called Tranquillity at the top of walking street, that had the reputation as serving the best Kobe steak in Thailand and after finding out what Kobe steak was and the usual price elsewhere in the world, they decided to splash out 450baht and try some.

They left the hotel and got on a baht bus and travelled around the one way system and alighted at the bottom of walking street.

Walking street is a large street closed to traffic, on either side there are large bars, discos and go-go bars and the most concentration of entertainment establishments in Pattaya.

They had just entered the street when Spock noticed a large complex filled with small bars, in the centre was a boxing ring with two Muay Thai fighters exchanging blows, all to the whooping of the crowd when one landed a punch or a kick.

“Shall we go have a look after we finish eating matey?”

Spock asked Stu

“Good idea” came the reply.

Continuing down, something in one of the shops caught Spock’s eye.

“Hang on a minute” he said and went into the shop returning several minutes later, to the bemusement of the other three, wearing a hat, which looked like something the Australian soldiers wore for jungle warfare. A big grin came across Spock’s face.

“I’ve been looking for one of these for ages, look you can put the sides up or down” and he removed the hat and folded one side up and popped in the press-stud,

Then replacing it on his head announced

“Errol Flynn eh, what do you think?”

Dao, Moo and Stu all agreed he looked like an absolute twat.

Undaunted Spock mumbled “well I like it” and sauntered off in the direction of the restaurant, with the other three following on behind, so nobody would think they were with the ‘twat in the hat’

They entered the Tranquillity Restaurant, which was a small but very plush restaurant and the group were led to a small 4 seat table and sat down, Spock removed his hat.

“Right” said Stu we will start with two beers and two fruit based drinks for the ladies.

“Coke” announced Dao and Moo ordered a beer

They browsed through the menu and ordered two Kobe steaks with Rockford cheese in the centre, the girls as usual ordered fried rice but when the meal came and Dao tried the delicious steak, she ordered a plate for her and Moo to share. As the rumours suggested, it was the best steak the lads had tasted plumb, juicy and served just how they ordered it one medium, one well done, it just melted in their mouths, with the cheese in the centre exploding with a tangy sensation, which left the lads loving every fork full.

Now fed and happy, they wandered back down walking street and into the boxing bars they had noticed earlier. They positioned themselves at a small bar directly in front of the ring and ordered three beers and a wine cooler, then settled down to watch the boxing. After 30 minutes had passed, the ring announcer asked the audience if anyone would like to try their luck against a Thai boxer.

Moo volunteered Spock and looking confused and not wanting to embarrass himself decided to give it a try. He removed his daft hat and handed it to Moo for safe keeping and he entered the ring to roaring cheers mainly from Stu Dao and Moo. Spock was led to the centre of the ring facing a small Thai man.

“They want me to fight this toothpick” thought Spock.

They had given Spock the largest boxing gloves they had, although still too small for his large clubbing maulers, he squeezed into them and the bell sounded to start the fight. Toothpick man was like a small whirling dervish, as he rounded on Spock and rained down high kicks, elbows and fists mainly against Spock’s chest which was as high as he could reach. Spock shaken by this flurry tried a wild swing which the fighter easily avoided and

punched Spock in his gut, bringing a gasp to Spock and another sound, familiar with his usual trick. Again Spock swung wildly but the Thai moved to his right and moved behind Spock. This move was a terrible mistake, as the Thai came face to arse and a large hair blowing methane gas deposit erupted from Spock's sphincter, full into the face of the horrified toothpick.

The fighter got a lungful of this deadly mixture and coughed and spluttered trying to expel this foul odour.

Spock swung around and brought his fist down like a hammer on the head of the Thai. The Thai stunned, looked at Spock and smiled, then fell face down unconscious.

A loud cheer came up from all the ferang (foreigners) present. The Thai ring announcer and trainer rushed into the ring to check on their fallen and cyanosed fighter, followed by the complex manager and herded the now stomping around the ring in a victory march Spock out of the ring. Spock returned to his seat and recovered his hat from Moo. The trainer led his still stunned fighter out of the ring, shouting obscenities at Spock in Thai to which Moo shouted and screamed back at him. Moo then turned to Spock "Man speak no good, say you cheat".

Stu, amused by all this turned to his old friend and said "Cheese and Singha beer mate".

"Yep" replied Spock "lethal mix" and to prove a point, Spock let rip again.

"Nasty" grimaced Stu, getting a whiff.

Dao and Moo also got a nostril full and they got off their seats and started to move away.

"Go take dump" said an unimpressed Moo as she headed off around the other side of the bar.

Still amused, Stu turned to Spock.

“Moo’s English is getting better mate”.

“Yep” said Spock you should hear what else I’ve taught her.

“I can guess” replied Stu as the two lads carried on nonchalantly drinking their beer.

The four returned to the hotel around 1 am and after replenishing their beer, whisky and the girls Listerine mouthwash supplies, they decided to have an early night and plan what to do the next day.

Stu was awoken by Dao early the next morning.

“Somebody knock on door”

“What?” said Stu still half asleep.

“Somebody knock on door” repeated Dao.

Stu got out of bed and slipped on his shorts grumbling under his breath, “If it was a bloody cleaner screeching, clean loom, clean loom there would be an arse kicking coming in the vicinity of room 114.

Again a short sharp tap came on the door.

“Wait stupid, I’m coming” growled Stu as he swung open the door.

His face turned from anger to a large smile and a chuckle.

“Hello mate” he said “What brings you here?” he looked at his watch and again scowled.

“At 6 bloody 30 in the morning.”

-Chapter Two-



Professor Norman Rumble sat in his easy chair listening to Holst the planets. He stared again at the clock, which he'd been doing for the past few hours, now and his gaze fell upon the framed photograph on his wall "Soon", he thought "soon and at last the world will give us the recognition we both deserve and was stolen from you and it will be good to get out of here and live a normal life, instead of the life of a mole". He stared again at the black and white photograph of himself as a young man, with short wavy hair and a slightly older woman both smiling and holding microscopes in their hands.

Rumble looked around his office at other photographs hanging on his wall. Many were of a younger Norman with a pretty lady with olive brown skin and round brown sparkling eyes and a young boy of similar complexion, but with deep blue eyes the same as Rumbles. His eyes flitted to other photos in the room which had the same people in, but at different times. The last photograph was of a handsome young man in academics robe holding a diploma in computer science. Rumble smiled with pride when he saw this photo and with tears now welling up in his eyes he looked at an old faded colour photograph of just the woman.

“Sorry my darling I was just too late” he said out loud to the photograph wiping the tears from his eyes,

“But soon, I promise we will be back together again”.

Norm smiled at the photo.

The concerto reached its climax just as the door burst open.

“Norm” said an agitated and panicky professor Boran Ngem.

“Is the process complete” Rumble interrupted.

“Norm, the process is complete but you had better come and look”.

“Why?” said Rumble “what’s the matter old friend?”

“Please, just come and look” repeated Ngem, now calmed down to a state of submission.

The two professors walked down the brightly lit 18 and clinically white corridor, Norm asked question after question, but Boran just remained silent by his side. They entered an adjoining corridor and walked past a glass screened room.

Rumble stared into the large room where a male figure lay in the foetal position, with his back facing away from the window on a large bed. Behind two partitions near the bed, bitmap machines, Infusers, ventilators, scanners and other machines were beeping and lights flashed intermittently. Several orderlies were in the room and taking away stained sheets and cleaning what appeared to be a large rubber electric blanket, with thousands of fine needles coating the underside and strands of fibre optic cables leading to some of the machines and through the wall. At the side of the bed a woman was speaking to the figure, but he never responded. Rumble and Ngem entered the room, which had an odour of Hycaline and the smell of a maternity theatre, post birth. Handel’s

water music softly filled the room. The woman was still speaking to the figure in ancient Indian-Pali language but fell silent when the two men entered.

“He doesn’t appear to understand” said the woman in Khmer.

The man in the bed then turned to face the professors. A look of shock came over the face of the usually composed professor Rumble “What the hell?” said a shocked Rumble in English.

The figure then started to sit up, as if he understood what the professor had said and rubbed his eyes, looked around the room appearing very bewildered and confused, then he laid back down and fell asleep. The two professors stared at the figure now in a blissful slumber. The woman mumbled something in Khmer to the orderlies and they left the room.

“What has happened Norm?” said a diffused Ngem.

“I don’t know old friend” replied Norman.

“Shall we wake him?” asked Boran “maybe he has the answers”

“No let him sleep for now, we will have plenty of time later for that. Now if you will excuse me”

Rumble exited the room leaving a puzzled Boran Ngem to set and check the monitors.

He headed back up the corridor and back into his large office. He turned off his ipod and went over to his desk. He removed a key chain from around his neck and unlocked the steel reinforced drawer at the top of his desk and removed a small object which he studied for a moment.

“You have more to tell than we thought” he uttered at the object “what other secrets do you hold I wonder?”

He picked up his mobile phone off the desk and found a number in his contact list and dialled.

“Hello Norm” said a voice on the other end.

“Tighe, we have a problem and it looks like we will be requiring your services again, could you come down and meet me” said Rumble.

“Sure” said the voice on the other end “I will be with you in a couple of hours”.

“No rush today, in the morning will be fine” said the professor.

“It is the morning Norm, That’s the problem with living underground doesn’t know night from day” chuckled Tighe.

“Ok, sorry see you soon” said Rumble as he hung up the phone and picked up the object again his thoughts confused.

“Now we are all sons of bitches” he thought quoting from oppenhiemers assistant after creating the A-bomb.

Professor Norman Rumble was born in Auckland New Zealand to wealthy land owners in 1938. He developed a passion at an early age for science and chemistry and at 14 his parents and teachers, realising he was a genius sent him to Cambridge University, where he became the youngest PhD in the history of the university. He came to the attention of Rosalind Franklyn, a brilliant and innovative scientist, whose work in x-ray diffraction for sequencing and pairing DNA and the connection between DNA and RNA had sent the scientific world into a buzz in the early 1950’s.

Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) is a nucleic acid that contains the genetic instructions used in the development and functioning of all known living organisms and some viruses (the cake)

Ribonucleic acid or RNA is a nucleic acid made from a long chain of nucleotide units. (The recipe)

Franklyn took the young 17 year old Rumble under her wing and got him a research post along side her for John Randall at Kings College in London.

Norman excelled in the field of genetic research and over the years came into contact with many scientists within the same field and other fields of his interests. He and Rosalind discovered forms A & B of DNA and after this Rosalind Franklin with the assistance of Norm also succeeded in developing an ingenious and laborious method to separate the two forms, providing the first DNA crystals pure enough to yield interpretable diffraction patterns. She then went on to obtain excellent X-ray diffraction patterns of crystalline B-form DNA and, using a combination of crystallographic theory and chemical reasoning, discovered important basic facts about its structure. She discovered that the sugar-phosphate backbone of DNA lies on the outside of the molecule, not the inside as was previously thought. They discovered the helical structure of DNA has two strands, not three as proposed in competing theories. The all-important missing piece of the puzzle that they could not discover from the data available at that time was the secret of heredity itself.

Two other scientists in particular stood out to Rumble were James Watson and Francis Crick both brilliant in their field and Rumble had many discussions with the pair about the work he and Rosalind were perusing. These discussions went on long into the small hours of the morning and joined in by the new prodigy on the team Ian Wilmut, who although slightly younger than Norman enjoyed each others theories especially about cloning and the possibility of one day cloning a human, the two became great friends.

***Human cloning** is the creation of a genetically identical copy of an existing or previously existing human. The term is generally used to refer to artificial human or replicant.*

Watson and Crick published a paper in the mid fifties and when Norman read it he knew the information he shared with the two scientist was now right in front of him, all his and Rosalind's hard work and these two shysters had virtually copied it declaring it there own.

Rosalind Franklin never knew how Watson and Crick had gotten access to her results. At the time of the Watson and Crick publication and afterwards, Franklin appears not to have been bitter about their accomplishment. But Rumble was.

Rosalind Franklin died of cancer in 1958 and the now 20 year old Rumble went deep into his shell. His mentor and best friend had gone, so he threw himself deeper into his research of the human genome.

Rumbles parents both died in a car crash in 1960 the same year he was awarded a professorship at Kings College. Norm returned to New Zealand and sold his

families holdings making him a very wealthy man. Norman was not interested in money, he dedicated his life to science and whilst at home he met another scientist, an archaeologist named Boran Ngem, who was a Cambodian national and was visiting New Zealand to research if there was a connection between the ancient Mori-ori tribes (the first known people to inhabit New Zealand and its islands before the Maoris came from the Polynesian islands and ate them all) and the ancient Khmers. Boran and his archaeology team found crude wall paintings and faded parchments in an inner chamber of Angkor Wat in the recently discovered catacombs. One painting depicted two men standing together, one appeared dark skinned and wearing tribal regalia, which was noticed many similarities between that dress and the clothing and decoration of the hill tribes of Ratanakiri province Northern Cambodia. The other was a slightly lighter shaded person and appeared to be a Khmer man holding what appeared to be a dead kiwi bird and handing it to the tribesman. There was also a large drawing of a lizard, which they identified as a Tuatara a species indigenous to New Zealand. Also in the parchments were boats with strange markings that were also found within the wall designs at Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat

This left the Cambodian team who discovered the catacombs in 1960 stunned, could the Cambodians have sailed the seas to New Zealand as early as the 12th century and bring the Mori-Ori, or did the Mori-Ori arrive in Cambodia (as it was widely believed Mori-Ori could both make and sail boats and navigate) and befriend the Khmers? .This had intrigued Boran and at his own expense funded an expedition to the South

Islands of New Zealand. The fruits of his labour paid off by the find of clay skulls of dogs, cat's birds all laid out in monument form and dating back about 650 years, pre Maori, but unfortunately no sign of a Khmer connection. Norman and Boran first met at a luncheon and hit it off straight away and when Boran returned to Cambodia, Rumble kept in contact for about a year.

The year was 1962 and Norman was working in his large recently purchased laboratory, when he saw something on his black and white TV news that made his blood boil. Watson and Crick had just received the Nobel Prize for physiology and Medicine for their ground breaking works in the discovery of DNA.

Although Franklyn had been briefly mentioned for her input, she would not be given the award as it cannot be given posthumously. Rumble was never mentioned. It would be several years before Rumble and Ngem would meet up again.

-Chapter Three-



The Boeing 737 came to a halt on the tarmac of Pochentong, Phnom Penh international airport. The ladder went to the doors and the passengers disembarked. One in particular looked very smug, it had been a long flight but worth it. “Maybe here at least I will safe away from them two and from what I have been told by mates, it is OK here” thought Nick.

It was a hot morning in May and Nick cleared customs, got into a tuk-tuk and told the driver to take him to a good but cheap hotel. They drove out of the small quiet airport and headed off into the city and towards the riverfront. The tuk-tuk stopped outside the Angkor International hotel.

“Here’s very good” said the driver knowing he would get a commission from this hotel. “And only 5 minutes walk to the riverfront and the lady bars”.

“Great” said Nick and went into the reception and took a \$15 room.

Nick decided to have a sleep, watch a bit of TV, then go out to explore Phnom Penh. He had been given by his mate’s, details of several bars to visit along the riverfront and names of British ex pats who owned them. Nick turned on the TV and nodded off.

Pon, the Tinju Prime master, had a vast change in his life since returning the holy relic. He decided to accept the position and title of Prime master of the Tinju in Bangkok for protecting the holy relic and in conjunction with Cenat the Prime master who remained in Salaburi and trained the new Tinju. He also had his other role as defender of the monarch to Crown Prince Vijiralongorn. This duty had taken him to many countries, having just returned from the visit to King Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia in order to repair relations between the two nations, after once again the Thais had accused the Khmers of amassing troops around Preah-Vihear temple in the North of the Cambodia, which the Thais have always claimed was theirs. The Cambodians vehemently denied this and the politicians of both countries seemed to be ignoring each other, so HM King Bhumipol of Thailand and his friend King Norodom Sihanouk (the present Kings father and ex King of Cambodia) decided a state visit was in order, to heal the rift growing between the two neighbouring countries. King Bhumipol sent his son the Crown Prince. This was Pons third visit to the Preah Barom Reachea Vaeng Chaktomuk Royal palace in Phnom Penh and the third time he had seen Kim Doung, the head maid in waiting to Her Majesty Norodom Monineath Sihanouk, the King's mother. Pons love for Kim had grown stronger, a feeling he was not familiar with and it hurt inside to know they could never be together, as she was arranged to marry a rich powerful Khmer by her parents, although they had only ever talked and occasionally held hands. Pon knew he loved this lady and she felt the same way, but Khmer tradition and parental authority in Cambodia is sanitising and his position would not allow him to plan any different.

But at least I get to see her often and she is always in my dreams, which will have to do.

Arranged marriages still go on in Cambodia today between the traditional and usually rich Khmer families. These are usual a joining to increase the parents status and social standing. As in other cultures the girl has to stay a virgin (pure) but the man who is usually a lot older, can take as many concubines prior to marriage as he wishes: The Khmer men are the diamonds. The ladies silk: You can wash a diamond and it is still pure. You can wash silk but it will never be pure again, although now in modern day Cambodia with the foreign influence, more and more families are ignoring this tradition

Kim announced on Pons last visit that her marriage would take place on the next day of the new lunar cycle, as that was considered to be a lucky day. Neither Pon nor Kim considered this to be lucky, it was only two weeks away.

Pon was now back in his large living quarters at the Royal Palace in Bangkok. He was preparing his notes for his English language class, but his thoughts, as usual were on his beloved Kim. His mother Banti entered his room.

“Are you OK my Son?”

“Yes mother I am fine” said Pon, lying.

“Are you in love son?” inquired Banti.

Shocked by his mothers’ awareness of her son after such a short time, replied.

“Yes mother” he then went on to explain about his situation with Kim and when he finished his mother hugged her son.

“Don’t be sad my brave son, Buddha will find a way”
She then held on tighter and repeated “Buddha will find a way”

The moment was abruptly broken by the rapid entry of a Tinju monk into the room.

“Prime master” said the agitated monk, which Pon knew to be one of the guardians of the holy relic.

“Prime master” repeated the monk regaining his composure and respectfully Wai’d Pon

“Please come to the temple of the sacred light, we have a major problem sir.”

Banti broke her hold on her son, Pon and the Tinju hurried out of the room.

Nick had a peaceful nap, showered and headed off to the riverfront “Eat, then on the beer” he thought, still only early but he didn’t want to miss out on anything in his new holiday destination. His first stop was the White Horse restaurant, a recently opened eatery on the riverfront. He got talking to Max the owner, he was told by Max the best places to go for a good time and while he was busy chomping down his chicken Florentine, Richard an English friend of Max came in and Max introduced him to Nick.

“This is the animal” smiled Max and he wants a day and night out and you’re the lucky victim who is going to get the grand tour.

Richard sat down next to Nick.

“Hi mate , hurry up and finish eating we have got a busy time ahead and time, tide and chalice waits for no man”

Richard had been in Phnom for two years and was the sous chef at the Intercontinental Hotel. His drinking antics were legendary and his benders usually lasted for

days and if a poor waif or stray went out with him they usually ended up in some dubious Vietnamese brothel in a bad state of wankered. First on the agenda was the Night Owl bar “loads of girls” announced Richard as they left the restaurant and into the hot and sticky Phnom Penh streets. They arrived at the Night Owl which is on 104 street. This was a street bustling with air conditioned bars similar to Soi 6 in Pattaya.

“Where's the go-go bars mate?” enquired Nick

“Nope, don't have them and you will find Cambodia a lot more subdued than Pattaya, I went there once for a day or two but only remember the first couple of hours, I was spannered the whole time, only came around in the taxi from the airport home.” smiled Richard.

They entered the Night owl and Nick instantly liked the place, there where about 30 girls, all in short skirts and no other men in sight.

“Its only early” said Richard “get in early and pick the best,” which is what he liked to do, but for what reason remained a mystery, as he always ended up wankered and usually either alone or with an old tug he'd picked up at the end of his drinking session at 4 or 5am, at the Walkabout hotel a 24 drinking and free lance taxi girl hang out. (Taxi girls same as Thai bar girls).

On entering the bars the girls all whooped at Richard shouting “Koy-t, koy-t” and he smiled and sat down. Nick not wanting to appear rude never enquired what they meant by Koy-t.

Nick learned quickly about the bars being more subdued after the initial excitement of the lads entering the girls just milled about and chatted amongst themselves. The lads ordered two cans of Anchor beer and sat at the bar. Occasionally the girls would ask the lads if they were ok

and would they like another drink. This was a refreshing change to Pattaya thought Nick, no hassle to buy them drinks or mauling you and try charging for a massage. Nick thought the girls here a lot prettier than the Thai girls, they spoke a lot better English than the Thais and were easier to understand. Several had already caught his eye.

“Yep” thought Nick “I am going to enjoy it here”

“It’s a cheap Charlie’s paradise”.

Cambodia has two main types of beer: Anchor and Angkor, yep you read it right both the same sounding words, but to avoid confusion they pronounce Anchor as Ansh-orr.

Pon and the young Tinju monk ran into the temple of the sacred light. The sun overhead shone through the skylight, hitting the top of the statue and the two jewels side by side, but instead of the usual brilliant light show as the light danced its way between the two, there was nothing, just a sparkle of the emerald.

Three other Tinju guards’ wai’d Pon when he arrived and all five stood in shock horror gazing at the non spectacle. The other people in the temple, tourists who had come to witness this daily wonder had been led out by the monks a few moments earlier.

Pon started to climb the fifty foot statue of Buddha until he reached the top. He found himself a purchase and removed the cover off the Buddha’s tooth relic and removed the rods holding the jewel encrusted housing. He placed the box in his pocket and climbed down.

Once on the ground he inspected the box he had seen many times, it was an old friend to him.

He turned it over in his hand “perfect” he thought “it is exactly the same, it doesn’t appear to have been changed.” Confused, Pon took the box and left the temple and headed into the main part of the palace and Khun Taksin Sawaldees, the head of the palace guard and good friend’s office. The remaining monks were shocked and bewildered “What has happened, have we failed in our duty”? Asked one monk, to the others.

Nick and Richard had been steadily crawling from bar to bar, Nick was having a great time, the drinks were cheap and he hadn’t given anyone a tip all day or night and Richard had paid for any lady drinks bought, so he was in heaven. His only problem was, when it came to keeping up with drinking at the same speed as the younger Richard and by eight o’clock Nick was spannered.

They entered Barbados bar, again to the whooping of the girls “Koy-t, koy-t” and prodded Richard in the cheek.

Nicks curiosity got the better of him and he turned to Richard,

“Why do they call you koy-t?”

“Ah, ha” said Richard “it’s a secret”

Richard then ordered three Sambuca’s, one for him and Nick and one for a pretty young lady he knew.

Richard was chatting to the lady and the shots were put in front of them. He produced a lighter and set fire to the alcohol and passed one to Nick and one to the lady. “Welcome to Cambodia mate” toasted Richard and he blew out the flame and drank the shot down.

“Cheers” said Nick and he blew out the flame and drank the shot. “Cheers said the Khmer girl and she drank down the shot, with a horrified Richard and Nick looking

on as the flames spluttered out of her mouth setting the side of her hair alight.

“Your supposed to blow the damn thing out first” exclaimed Richard, as the girl leapt off her stool wailing. The rest of the bar staff started throwing water on her and slowly but painfully the flames were extinguished and the girl went up stairs at the bar in tears. Nick and Richard hurriedly left with the girls wailing at them it was Koy-t’s fault

“You wont be going in there again mate will you mate?” asked Nick.

“Of course I will, stupid girl did the same last week, with a B52 type concoction I bought her”.

Chuckling away like a couple of clowns they got into a tuk-tuk.

“Shanghai bar” ordered Richard “Bun Man?” (How much)

“Two dollar” said the driver.

“One dollar” laughed Richard.

“OK koy-t” the driver laughed back and the tuk-tuk sped away towards street 51.

Pon knocked and entered Taksins office where a smiling Taksin arose of his chair and wai’d Pon “Hello Prime master what brings you to this part of the palace, it must be urgent”.

Pon returned the wai.

“Khun Taksin we have a problem and I would like your advice.

“Of course Pon, how can I help?”

He explained to Taksin about the sacred light and showed him the jewel encrusted box.

“It does not appear to have been tampered with, it looks the same as always, but I don’t understand why every day

we have had the same light show, every day without fail since we placed the holy relic in the temple I just don't understand" said a worried Pon.

"Hmm" said Taksin as he took the box and inspected it for himself,

"Your right Pon, it does appear Ok, but just to be sure"

Taksin put the box on his desk and picked up the phone

A voice answered from the palace exchange

"Hello Khun Taksin how I can help you" said his Personal assistant.

"Noi" said Taksin "Could you get hold of Ratray Sesilin at the gem lab in Bangkok."

"Of course sir" said Noi and Taksin hung up

"We will get a more thorough look at this and decide then, what could have happened" said Taksin.

The phone rang and Taksin answered "Hello Ratray it seems we have a problem at the palace". Taksin went on to explain what had, or rather hadn't happened and Ratray listened silently to the problem, when Taksin had finish explaining what he would like Ratray to do. Ratray replied,

"Certainly Khun Taksin I will grab a few vital items of equipment and head straight over".

"Thank you" said Taksin "I will look forward to seeing you again, goodbye"

He then hung up and said to Pon,

"then we will know for certain, in the meantime Pon, have the temple sealed and look for any possible clues, I will see what I can find out from here as this does sound very suspect, as I had a call a few weeks ago from someone wanting to borrow the relic for, he claimed, some scientific research and I told him no way, but we

will wait and see if Rattray uncovers anything before I inform his majesty”.

Pon nodded his compliance and wai'd Taksin and left the office. Taksin put the relic in his drawer and again picked up the phone.

“Yes Sir” said a cheery sounding Noi

“Noi I need phone records and files from immigration of any Cambodians entering Thailand in the last few weeks.

“Right away sir” said Noi and hung up.

Taksin deep in thought “just a precaution, maybe it’s unfounded at this stage, but we will have to wait and see”.

Nick was well wankered. He snored himself awake, he had power napped for about 10 seconds and now hazily rejoined the present. He looked around him at an unfamiliar and dirty small room. He felt a strange but pleasant sensation around his todger “Oh yes I remember” he thought.

The small Vietnamese lady who has been sucking and manipulating his sometime flaccid todger now for about 15 minutes noticed a bit of vigour returning to the tool “Good she thought, he has woken up again, I wish he would hurry up and finish, my teeth hurt, all three of them”

She looked up at Nick and smiled.

“Shit” said Nick “you’re old enough to be my granny.”

Richard had taken Nick to about 20 different bars around Phnom Penh and although drink for drink he himself was only spannered, noticed Nick was well wankered, after they left the last bar Richard announced “I know a place on street 127 that has a nice friendly little atmosphere and it was time to meet Lilly”.

Sophie's is a well known, shall we call it a B.J bar for want of a better description in Phnom Penh. As soon as you walk in your todger is out and fought over by hordes of cackling Vietnamese, shall we say mature ladies of the night, for want again of a better description.

Richard liked to bring all the wankered newbie's here to initiate them into the seedier side of life in Phnom Penh. Lilly was his favourite lady she was 62 years old and in Richards description 'a real friendly, toothless old hag and expert in the noble art of oral phallation', Lilly loved him. Richard had taken Lilly to his heart as his adopted mother. It was Richard who had weaned her off tequila, she was hooked on the strong spirit, Richard used to go just to see Lilly and the old girls, to try to stop Lilly from drinking tequila and after several weeks of his constant pestering, Lilly gave up the tequila and to prove it, every time he went to the bar the girls would show him the bottle that Richard had marked and it was genuine, Lilly his old mum had given up her deadly intake of tequila. She was however, unbeknownst to Richard, now hooked on the stronger Mekong whisky. Richard always bought his victims straight to her.

Nick flopped down in an easy chair as Lilly and another lady removed his pants, Nick just looked blankly into space as the last few shots of tequila kicked in. He was happy in his own world, glad that the shit things that happened to him in Pattaya had not been repeated here.

"It was them" he growled referring to Spock and Stu"

"What?" said Lilly

Nick grunted again and nodded off.

Lilly and Richard led him to a small bedroom at the rear of the bar and he came around again, they laid him on the bed and Lilly continued with the job in hand.

“Enjoy mate” said Richard to a slightly more aware Nick.

“See you later Lilly”.

“Thanks Koy-t” said Lilly taking Nicks todger out of her mouth and rubbing the shaft.

Now Nick after nodding off a few times became aware of his situation, Lilly was putting all her heart and soul into finishing this quick.

“What the hell” thought a now re-mellowed wankered Nick “this isn’t so bad”

He put his hands behind his head laid his head on the pillow and bravely thought of England.

** I will put you out of your misery Koy-t only means
dimples*

-Chapter Four-



Several years had passed when Professor Rumble received a telephone call from his old friend Boran Ngem with some exciting news about a recent discovery in his native Cambodia. Although Boran was an archaeologist, he had a great passion for chemistry, obtaining a PhD in university and when he used to talk to his friend Norman would always get onto his and Norms favourite subject and discuss in length, the pros and cons of their (mainly Normans) research.

Professor Rumble had spent the last few years engrossed in his work and spent little or no time in contact with old friends, or little interest in making new ones, so with the exception of keeping tabs on his old friend Ian Wimutt's research, which Rumble was already well advanced on, this phone call was a nice distraction.

"Hello Norman this is Boran, How are you old my old friend?"

"Boran" exclaimed Norm "I am fine it is great to hear from you after all this time, to what do I owe this surprising but welcome call".

"Norman I have made a great discovery in Angkor Thom, but I would like your expertise in making some diagnostics possible and I know your techniques would assist me and it would be great to see you again".

Rumble stroked his face and sat back deep in thought. He looked around at his lab, his cocoon for many years.

“Ok Boran” said Norm “I will book a flight. Do I need to bring anything with me?”

“Just you, my friend” chuckled Ngem.

“Will you book me a hotel?” enquired Rumble

“No need, you will stay with my wife Roth and I, we have a large house in Siem Reap and I insist.” said Boran.

“How can I refuse an invitation like that? I will book my flight and be there in a couple of days”.

“We will pick you up at the airport, see you soon” said Boran and he replaced the phone on the receiver.

Professor Rumble intrigued by this made his way out of the lab and into his adjacent apartment “It will be a nice break” he thought, put on his Trilby hat and went into the Auckland streets and to the flight agent’s office.

Norman took a flight one week later, he left a cold New Auckland international airport behind and flew in a Fokker Friendship to Duong Muang Bangkok international airport, there he chartered a small private L-410 turbo prop through the Thai Airways Company and flew on to a small airport outside Siem Reap (now international).

A smiling Boran and his wife Roth were waiting for him, they exchanged warm greetings and then drove 6km south to Siem Reap town and to Borans house.

They sat and chatted about Borans discovery whilst Roth and her sister Theory prepared a meal. Boran was excited about his amazing discovery which had left him and his team both confused and intrigued. It could also prove his theory correct and with Rumbles help, turn it from just a theory to a 100% fact. They ate and chatted until the

early evening and an exhausted professor Rumble retired to bed for a blissful nights sleep.

Norman was awoken by Theary the next morning with a steaming hot cup of tea. He thanked Theary, who spoke no English but smiled and left his room. "She is very pretty" thought Rumble, about Borans 17 year old sister In-law. He showered, dressed and went downstairs, where an eager Boran was waiting, dressed in hiking boots and thick cotton trousers and shirt.

"Here Norm, put these on they should fit" said Boran, handing Norman the same attire.

They both drove off in Borans small Fiat towards the temple at Angkor Thom. They drove for about 20 minutes along the road, then Boran turned his Fiat sharply left and entered the jungle. The small car bumped and twisted its way through large jungle foliage and stopped in front of a large Dipterocarp tree.

"On foot from here I'm afraid" said Boran as he exited the car, machete in hand.

They hiked through the dense jungle for about an hour until they came across a large dip and what appeared to be a rocky overhang from a jungle mountain. Boran picked up a rope that was lying tied off to a tree and both him and Rumble abseiled down about 50 feet, until they touched down on the ground within a valley. Norm looked at the rocky outcrop now above them and underneath saw the mouth of a cave. "Wow" exclaimed Norm, "how did you ever manage to find this?"

"We found mosaics in Angkor Wats, catacomb roughly outlining it on a map, we just followed the directions and hey presto" smiled Boran.

They continued into the large cave mouth and walked about 30 yards along a pre lit corridor.

“My team is already here, they lit the torches on the wall, but we have another climb I’m afraid” said Boran.

They reached the end of 30 yard corridor and the sight that greeted Rumble took his breath away. A large precipice dropped away to reveal a large cavern, which Rumble estimated to be at least the size of approximately eight English football pitches and as high as the Empire State Building. The cavern was littered with stalagmites and stalactites and what appeared to be small shelters and houses made from small rocks and wood construction. The archaeologist’s teams had rigged up a generator which clunked away in the distance and powered several lines of 40kw bulbs strewn around the centre of the stalactites, lighting the majority of the cavern. The two friends climbed down the makeshift ladder and after approximately 100 yards reached the cavern floor. Norm heard the sound of running water and turned his head to the right and looked at a large wall of water to the right. The waterfall in the corner of the precipice went into a large Olympic swimming pool sized lake, which was a milky brown haze appearance under the string of 40kw bulbs. The pair walked over to the lake and waterfall and Rumble noticed the end of the lake tapered off and the water disappeared under the side of the cavern wall. Boran looked at the amazed expression on the face of his usually calm and composed colleague and smiled. “Taste it Norm” instructed Boran, “it’s quite safe we have tested it”

Rumble cupped his hands and scooped up the cool water and took a drink. The cool water was refreshing in the searing Cambodian heat.

“Where does it come from and where does it lead?” asked Norm.

“There is a larger waterfall at the top of this small mountain and we traced the exiting water to a smaller river about half a kilometre to the west. The river contains the largest and easiest caught freshwater catfish you ever saw. We usually catch a few to take home” spoke Boran licking his lips.

“Wow” this place is incredible.

“Wait Norman, we haven’t got to the good part yet” said a proud Boran.

They walked back along the cavern until they reached a large trestle table, where some people were standing. Boran introduced Norman to five more of his team and he greeted each in turn.

“Show him” said one of the men.

Boran laughed and handed the professor a hard hat and an old miner’s gas lamp.

“We haven’t lit the next bit, that is what we are starting now, come with me” said Boran and led Norman through a small chamber and the back of the main cavern. Norman noticed many sheets laid out with skeletal remains on them and boxes which looked like the contained forms of dress, tribal jewellery and weapons, plus patches of black charcoal, which were from fires lit centuries ago. Boran walked to a large wall and shone his light at a large flat stone on the ground.

“Stand on that” he said

The professor did as instructed and Boran went to the side and cranked a handle. The stone started raising with Norman, now unsure and watching the speck of Borans light disappear.

The ancient elevator went up into the darkness for about a minute with Boran shouting diminishing behind him, for Norman not to be alarmed, then he heard a creak as

the ceiling behind him seem to open up and become a wall, he was in a small copse in front of a glassless window in what appeared to be a large ancient run down temple. The elevator had become the floor and it clicked into place.

Rumble surveyed his surroundings and noticed the place was deserted, and then a familiar voice from behind him spoke.

“You ok Norm?”

Norman spun round, but there was nobody there

“Yes Boran where are you?”

Look on the wall to your right, there is a stone missing.

Rumble did as instructed and found the space which Boran was referring.

“Yes” said Norm it appears to go somewhere

“That’s right” said Boran “it goes here, the world’s first intercom” chuckled Boran.

“Now stay on the stone I will bring you back” The floor moved and Norm descended back into the abyss, as the wall above him returned to be a floor. He stepped off the stone and he and Boran returned to the main chamber and the waiting team, who patted Norman playfully on the shoulder and the lady on the team enquired as to whether he’d enjoyed a 12th century elevator ride in 1972. Norman said he did but he could now use a 20th Century toilet as adrenaline shouldn’t be brown.

Boran laid out his theory and his interest in the remains and how Professor Norman Rumble could assist. Boran explained from the writings and drawing he had found both at Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom, the cavern was used as a military garrison and housed soldiers and their families. It was a last line of defence against any invading Thai army descending on Ta Promh temple.

They would have lookouts in the temple and if any army was spotted, they could get the monks to safety and March warriors through the cave, which would bring them out to the rear of Ta Promh temple and therefore provide a surprise attack on the flank of the invaders. The attacks never transpired but a community developed, as they had found evidence of livestock in the form of partially fossilized droppings and tracks from carts to the start of the precipice, obviously bringing provisions from Angkor Thom. The professor looked puzzled “What has that got to do with the Mori-Ori tribes and why do you need me?” enquired Rumble.

Boran then went on to show the professor the trinkets found in a few of the boxes and some skulls of the old cavern dwellers and how a few had more Negro characteristics. He went on to explain how he had teeth and bones from the two different peoples, which he wanted the professor to use his techniques to check for DNA difference and he had a vial of blood and urine taken from a living member of a hill tribesman in Ratanakiri, wanting the professor to try to determine the hereditary and thus prove his theory that the Khmers sailed to New Zealand and returned and integrated the once thought extinct Mori-Ori tribes into Cambodia to serve as soldiers. The professor agreed to try, but it may take some time as computers, that now existed, were not fast and the one Rumble had took up nearly one room in his lab. The other problem was they had no sample from the original Mori-Ori's. That was maybe an obstacle that could be overcome at a later stage, if and when they dug one up. Boran told the professor his other team members were on the islands scouring for remains. He went on to explain that there were only a few skeletal remains

around the cave and most in shallow graves. There was no evidence of violence amongst the remains, so it appeared from the age and stage of the teeth that the skeletons were young and old folk who had probably died of natural causes or disease.

Later that evening Boran and the professor, laden with his samples and a cache of catfish returned to Borans house and ate. They drank several glasses of wine and Norman tried to communicate (with the assistance of Boran and Roth) with Theory, who was flattered and amused by this very polite Barang (Khmer word for foreigner).

Norm tried over the next few days using Borans crude makeshift laboratory within the cavern, but he needed his own equipment and planned to return to New Zealand, but first he wanted to spend a few more evenings in the company of Boran, Roth and especially Theory.

Rumble flew back to New Zealand a week later to continue with the analysis.

Cambodian people refer to themselves as 'Khmer'

-Chapter Five-



Detective Inspector Donal Crinigan was sat writing a staff progress report on a Detective Nathan Rock, when there came a knock on his office door.

“Come in” said Crinigan and looked up to face a man in a white laboratory coat.

“Brendan me old bollix, what brings you to the real side of the police department?” joked Crinigan.

“This does” said Brendan O’Donnel also from Ireland and head of forensics at the Met.

Crinigan shoved his report to one side and shuffled the file O’Donnel had now placed in front of him.

“What is it?” asked Donal

“It’s the report you asked for, from the office in Phnom Penh to identify the dead body they found” said O’Donnel.

“And?” enquired Crinigan

“And nothing” said O’Donnel, “these DNA fingerprints and blood samples don’t match the dental records we have obtained for this individual. There are two people here, not one, and according to the blood sample the cells are certainly not pertaining to anything I have ever come across before.

Crinigan looked again at the report from Phnom Penh and again at O’Donnell.

Looking confused he picked up the telephone and asked the Met operator to dial the number Clerk had given him previously.

“Hello Timothy here, how are you Donal?” said the voice on the phone.

Crinigan switched to speakerphone,

“Confused” said Crinigan “according to our forensic team these are samples from two bodies”.

“I know it’s baffled us too” said Clerk “but I can assure you inspector, I was there when the samples were taken and it was only one body they were taken from. Has the body arrived yet?” asked Clerk.

“No” intervened O’Donnel “due in this afternoon”

“Ok” said Clerk “maybe wait until you examine that, maybe that might shed some light on something, but it has confused the hell out of us”

“Ok Timothy, we will do that, thanks” Crinigan then hung up and faced O’Donnel.

“Have you got anything at all on this Brendan?”

“I have a name address and next of kin details for the blood, DNA and fingerprints, but the dental records are no use at this stage, the ones from Phnom Penh don’t match the ones we obtained from Dr Baker, the Brighton dentist this morning.”

“Ok” said Crinigan “anything would be a start; let’s have what you’ve got”

O’Donnel handed Crinigan another folder and he took a glance.

“Right” said Donal “I will wait and see what you can dig up from the autopsy, thanks Brendan.”

He then shuffled the files to one side and returned to Nathan Rocks staff report.

“See you later then” said O’Donnel and exited the office.

Crinigan put his pen down and glared blankly at the wall.
“This” he thought, “is going to be very interesting.”

-Chapter Six-



The wind of change was blowing through Cambodia like a fierce tornado. Governments were being overthrown and the monarchy was on the verge of collapse towards the late sixties, early seventies. The country was in disarray and nobody felt safe. This uncertainty gave way to the easy rise of the Khmer Rouge.

Both Norm and Boran were aware of the rising tension within the country and although Rumbles analysis of the Mori-Ori link, was only a 90% certainty of a connection. He had isolated and compared genomes and chromosomes but without the final piece of the puzzle a specimen of DNA from the original Mori-Ori tribe remains, which at present could not be found. However there was a link between both remains and the blood sample taken, so they could only surmise that the Mori-Ori were bought from New Zealand, used as warriors to defend the Khmer empire, then as peace ensued, they and the Khmers filtered out into the countryside and made their way up to the north of Cambodia, where they flourished and integrated along side the Khmer people and thus saving their race from total extinction as previously thought.

Rumble was tired with New Zealand and disturbances to his work. Officials were always interfering with his work and the inspections by the health and safety officials, when he occasionally developed a new chemical formula, which sometimes gave off a nasty smell, made Professor Rumble sick of the bureaucracy, after all he was a scientist. He decided to move all his lab equipment and life to Cambodia, to be with his good friend and colleague Boran, Roth and Norman's new wife Theary. He transported his equipment by boat up the Tonle Sap River, then to the smaller Siem Reap River then the remainder of the journey by lorry and into the cavern near Ta Prohm. With the help of a team of builders and other scientists that Boran knew, they had created over the space of three years, a small but functional community in the ghosts of the twelfth century homestead. As time went on, due to the state and disarray of the country, they all spent more time in the cavern and Norman spent most of the day within his laboratory. As days turned into weeks, then months, then years more and more people came into the cavern. Norm paid well for any building or work done and after a few years, heavy machinery started to get brought in altering the look of the cavern into a large flat area, a blueprint for a city. They had a short wave radio and transmitter that they could keep up with events from the outside world. News came in the afternoon of 17 April 1979; the Khmer Rouge had marched victoriously into Phnom Penh. The extermination had started the total annihilation of the Cambodian culture and people had begun.

YEAR ZERO

17 April 1975 brought a mass influx of people and machines from Siem Reap. Teacher's, doctors,

electricians along with their families and animals looking for sanctuary. Bulldozers and heavy excavating equipment and building materials all started pouring in, as people tried to get their livelihood and assets hidden away. All academics and intellectuals contractors for outside building companies in fear of their lives, started to enter the cave as rumours of its existence spread. There were now 220 Cambodian men, women and children inhabiting the underground citadel and one brilliant New Zealand scientist. They all worked together to secure the cavern and cut large “sentry ports into the rock” above the level of the ledge to the right and left side walls, these were entered by railings, so the guards could enter the sentry holes and have a vantage point overlooking the ledge, similar to the archers slit in old English castle defences. This was an early warning system for the citadel and easily defended, as it was difficult to see the ports form the ledge, so even an untrained person with an AK47 could easily take on any intruders with great success.

They built basic wooden dwellings, school rooms and a small hospital was added to the laboratory, near the elevator to Ta Prohm, in case any lookout scouts on the outside were injured.

They also blocked the entrance to the cave, leaving only a small entrance for cattle and provisions and installed several lifting cranes, bulldozers and ball breakers and flattened out the small and large stalagmites and stalactites. Air was supplied by pumps fitted on the surface and the machinery for these was hidden behind the large waterfalls to hide the noise. Although the air was quite stale within the cavern, it contained the right oxygen and other gas mixtures to sustain life.

The lighting system had been improved and upgraded and the cave was flooded with diesel generated large 100 watt bulbs that was strewn around the cave and the precipice, the sewerage waste was disposed of through a series of pipes leading into the running stream outside the cave and a large opening was dug out of the rock for any solid waste and storage tanks.

Building and improvement work was constantly altering and there were several projects being worked on at any given time within the citadel.

Small dune buggy type vehicles flitted around with supplies and workers, it was a 24 hours a day hive of activity within the cavern. They posted lookouts and scouts around the cave and temple armed with AK47 rifles and thunder flash grenades, to warn the inside should they come across any Khmer Rouge patrols, so the other occupants could assist. Life inside the cavern was relatively normal, unlike the rest of Cambodia and its people, who were unbeknownst to the citadel occupants, being exterminated in their droves. The scientist spent their days working on their specific projects and Norman was coming on in leaps and bounds with his research, assisted as always by Boran. They were for now, relatively safe.

-Chapter Seven-



Ratray was escorted into Taksins office by a smartly dressed lady in traditional Thai dress.

Taksin and Pon where sat at Taksins large mystat teak desk and going over some final details to have the temple closed off to the public.

“Good afternoon Khun Taksin and Prime master” said Ratray giving both men a respectful wai.

“Good afternoon Ratray” said Taksin and he and Pon returned the wai.

Noi, Taksins personal assistant, the Thai lady who had brought Ratray into the room wai'd and left the room. The group talked for a while about how they were and how their life was now after the excitement of their previous encounter.

Ratray Sasilin is the head geologist, mineralogist and gemmologist from Bangkok who charted and identified the minerals around Salaburi and surrounding mines.

“We have a problem” explained Taksin as he slid over the box to Ratray.

Pon joined in and told Ratray what had happened or not happened, as it was in this case and told her they thought the box could have been switched.

Ratray went into her bag and took out enlarged photos of the box, Ratray picked up the box and examined it against the photos and looked again at the top of the box. She took her jewellers loupe from her pocket and looked again, she then shone a pinpoint bright light from her pen torch at the precious stones on the lid and sides.

“Chatham’s” she exclaimed.

“What?” enquired Pon and Taksin.

“Chatham’s” repeated Ratray “the box, she went on to explain “is perfect in every detail, but two of the rubies and three of the sapphires on the lid are Chatham’s, in other words, grown in a lab. The box gentlemen, I am afraid is a fake”

Chatham’s : In 1938 after many years of research a young scientist Carroll.F Chatham from San Francisco discovered the secret to growing Emeralds by duplicating conditions within the earth (the proper temperature, pressure and chemical properties)he was able to actually grow gems in his laboratory. Possessing the same physical and optical properties as mined gems. This process has remained a closely guarded family secret and in the 60 years following, has developed and grown all types of gems, rubies, sapphires and diamonds flooding the market with cheaper and easily affordable gemstones indistinguishable , except by experts from the real gems

A worried look came over the face of Pon and Taksin. They surmised the box must have been replaced between yesterday afternoon and this afternoon.

Whoever did this has only the maximum of a 24 hour head start. Taksin thanked Ratray and apologised for his

hastiness in dismissing her, but she understood, as she realised this was a serious situation and would require immediate attention. Taksin got on his intercom.

“Noi has the information from immigration arrived yet?” asked Taksin.

“Yes sir” came the young lady’s reply “just in”

“Ok bring it in and then escort Khun Ratray to the kitchen and get her some food” Taksin ordered and turning to Ratray said

“I trust you’re hungry Ratray, we will join you if we have time, but if not Noi will take care of you.”

Noi entered and placed a pile of files on Taksin’s desk and escorted Ratray out of the room. Pon and Taksin waded through the files immediately.

Taksin felt a new tension in the air and noticed Pon had become very sullen, but he knew what was going through the warrior’s mind ‘the Tinju had failed again’ and Taksin also knew whoever did this, would certainly pay the ultimate sacrifice at the hands of Pon. They had been two hours going through the entry forms from the immigration, when Taksin looked up and smiled,

“Pon look at this”

Both men scrutinised the immigration document that contained a photograph in the right hand top corner.

Family name: Namsok First name: Tar

Date of entry 5th May 2008

Pon looked confused,

“What makes you suspect him?” he asked

“Look at his employment and his employer”

Pon looked again and did not understand, but the name of the employer was familiar.

“He has put down security force and his employer Colonel Tighe Nye. Colonel Tighe Nye is a well known

ex Khmer rouge, turned government forces soldier and leading politician in the CPP (Cambodian Peoples Party, the ruling party of Cambodia) and it was Colonel Tighe who requested to borrow the relic a few weeks ago. “This is the culprit” said Taksin. Pon looked at the document again and noticed the date of departure from Thailand.

“That’s today” he said and Taksin immediately picked up the phone.

“Noi” he said “Speak to immigration and check whether Mr Tar Namsok has left Thailand. Oh and has Rattray left.”

“Immediately Khun Taksin and yes Rattray left, she thanked you for a delicious meal, but didn’t want to disturb you, she sends her luck and goodbyes.”

Pon and Taksin decided the next course of action; this would be easy to pick this man up at any border crossing when he tried to leave, so they both gave a sigh of relief. “Don’t worry Pon we will get it back” comforted Taksin although knowing the Tinju was not concerned with the recovery, he was annoyed it was allowed to be taken in the first place.

Switching the relic was easier than Tar had imagined, the timing and planning was perfect, which he expected as the Colonel was a meticulous planner and great mentor. He had entered Thailand two days prior to observe the temple and it s routine, posing simply as a tourist he was easily allowed access into the temple and palace grounds and looking Thai nobody gave him a second glance. The box he carried in his pocket was an exact replica of the one he was about to take and nobody would ever suspect the relic had ever been switched. Tar had been told by the Colonel who in turn had been assured by the master jeweller who had copied the box a few days before, the

box was a perfect copy. The jeweller however, thought he would cut corners and purchased some Chatham ruby and sapphire, thinking they would look exactly the same as the original, same hardness same colour and easier to work with and of course a lot cheaper, so he could pocket the extra. Unfortunately not the same brilliance or refraction under the intense sunlight the Buddha's light.

Tar had spent a few days now working out the monk's routine and had snook in behind the massive Buddha statue on the second night and watched as the four guarding monks herded the tourists out and bolted the door. The monks would then come over to the statue, light some essence sticks and spend the next four hours chanting and meditating. Then two monks would then leave the temple and eat, leaving two to meditate and on the return of the monks who had eaten, would swap over, so the remnants were guarded 24 hours a day. At midnight the monks would roll out their mats and sleep in front of the statue.

Tar had been advised to time the switch for when the Prime master was away, in case he came to the temple, as he would figure out something was wrong. Tighe informed Tar of the story of how the box was originally stolen; he would know something was wrong especially with this method. Tighe informed Tar that the Prime master would be in Cambodia on the 7th and 8th May with the Crown Prince for an audience with the King of Cambodia. Tar decided on the 8th to make the switch, but only giving him that morning to make his get away. Tar went unnoticed when the monks went about their duties. He found himself a purchase on the statue. The monks just meditated, but Tar had read about these monks and knew both in their meditative state and asleep

their senses would still be alert, he went unnoticed because of his training in the military as a sniper, he could stay camouflaged and motionless for days and his gold coloured undergarment and his now inside out backpack were a perfect colour match against the statue.

The next day while the monks unbolted the door to let the throngs of tourists in, he again changed and mingled with the crowds, he was planning his escape route, but he knew even with his inside contact he had limited time to get away, the Prime master was due back later that day. That night whilst the monks slept he climbed stealthily down from his hiding place and carefully removed a small cylinder from his back pack and a small face filter; he slowly turned the valve pointing it at the sleeping monks. The high mix nitrous oxide bathed the monk's faces and Tar left the cylinder in situ and scaled to the top of the statue. Once at the head he removed the casing to the holy relic and removed the holding rods, he placed the box in his bag and removed the copy. He slid the copy into position and replaced the case. He slid down to the base of the statue and turned off the sleeping gas and replacing it in his bag, he returned to his hiding place to await the arrival of that day's tourists.

The following day, unaware of what had happened, the monks opened the great doors, the masses came into the temple for the morning viewing and although the holy light show never occurred until the sun was on the setting cycle, people just came and went throughout the day to look at the palace and book a space for that afternoon's display, although unbeknown to them, they would not be seeing that night.

The tourists wandered in and were watched by the four guard monks armed with their 'Siemen' swords. The

tourists milled around the temple pointing at the relic, the emerald, the statue, the architecture and the monks. From all over the world they came and most would spend the whole day at the Royal Palace as it was an interesting place, especially with the annoying Japanese and their clicking cameras.

Siamen swords are the swords used by Tinju. Similar to the Katana swords of the Samurai. The Siamen swords have a serrated side and are made by folding two types of steel together then coated with clay and baked six times. They are very sharp and very strong and easy to resharpen. The handle is longer than the Katana, but heavier due to the weight of the pitou contained within it, so balanced to throw

The guards stood motionless at the side of the temple, eyes straight ahead and unaware that they had had a blissful night sleep with a little help from Tar, who had now joined the tourists wearing his shirt and jeans, casually walked out of the temple and palace grounds and into a taxi “Where to?” asked the driver in Thai language

“Aranyaprathet” replied Tar.

“That will be 2500 baht” said the driver suspiciously.

“Make it in less than 3 hours and I’ll give you 3000” said Tar holding out 3 x 1000 baht notes

“Are you going to the casino in Poi Pet?” asked the driver assuming Tar was Thai

“Yes” said Tar not wanting to get into a conversation with the driver.

They arrived at the border at noon, Tar got out, thanked the driver and headed to the border crossing, and he exited Thailand and went into his beloved Cambodia. He rushed into the nearest food shack and ordered three plates of Luk Lak he had not eaten for two days.

Gambling in Thailand is illegal and many Thais enjoy a flutter and most now are wealthy. They go over the borders into Cambodia, Burma or Laos and many plush casinos have been built to accommodate this exodus. It's a strange sight to see high rise plush casinos amid the poverty and begging of the many border crossing. The first and most are at Poi Pet the Cambodian northernmost border.

The intercom squawked in Taksins office, it was Noi.

“Khun Taksin, immigration reports say Tar Namsok exited through the Aranyaprathet crossing late this morning and into Cambodia at Poi Pet”

“This is now a different game altogether” groaned Taksin.

Pon looked enraged and knew what he must do now.

“Excuse me Khun Taksin, I have work to do”

“Wait Prime master, we must plan our next course of action carefully we have the monarchy to consider”

Pon knew Taksin was right and went and sat again at Taksins desk.

They were now facing several problems. Tar was now over the border and Pon could not cross into Cambodia as himself because of his position and the border crossings knew him, as his position as Defender of the monarch and for him to be there without the crown prince would be too suspicious, The Cambodian Royalty

would be interrogated over this, which could cause yet another rift in the Thai, Cambodian relationship. Colonel Tighe Nye would be expecting the Thais to send the Prime Master of the Tinju to recover the relic and as Tighe knew of Pon, this would again cause problems for the Thai/ Cambodian fragile relationship as Pon worked for the monarch.

He could try to sneak over the same as before, but if caught, not only would he have the above problems but also he would have entered illegally and end up in jail. Pon tried to argue, that he had done it before, but Taksin replied that before they never knew who he was and now every militia and police would be on the lookout as Tighe was a powerful man.

“We will have to send someone else” said Taksin

“No” said Pon “I am the only one who will recover the relic, to send someone else is out of the question.”

Taksin removed his glasses, he knew that Pon would insist, he also knew he would not talk him out of it.

“Ok prime master” said a defeated Taksin, then after a few minutes of silence, a plan formulated in his mind

“I have an idea” said Taksin but it will be risky and he laid out his rough plan.

“You still may get caught” he said “but we can get over that hurdle as and if it happens. I will call my friends in Cambodia to make the arrangements” Said the now worried but positive Taksin.

Pon looked like an idea had also popped into his head,

“To make it more believable what about if

Pon laid out the second part of the plan.

“That sounds great but it also is dependant on some important factors Pon”

“I know” said Pon now with a devilish smirk on his face, but I am sure Buddha will assist with that”.

Pon picked up the phone and asked Noi to check something with immigration. She returned on the intercom a few moments later, affirming what Pon had just enquired about.

“Told you” said Pon, to a now even more worried Taksin.

Pon again picked up the telephone and asked Noi to get him a telephone number,

“If you can get what we discussed with the paperwork Khun Taksin, I will leave as soon as the documents are ready, and I will now take my leave and get my equipment” announced Pon

Taksin knew that equipment meant his weapons and he knew that the defender of the Monarch was now back as he should be, Prime Master and Tinju warrior, now having to fulfil another duty. “I have that number for you Prime Master” said Noi over the intercom.

Pon picked up the phone and the number on the other end started ringing.

A few seconds later a voice answered, “Sawasdee Hotel, how may I help you?”

-Chapter Eight-



From the years between 1975 and 1979, the Citadel underground grew exponentially. It was now named ‘Let-cum-baan’, the Cambodian word for sanctuary, during the first few years everybody worked night and day to turn it into a home for the future, with the uncertainty of what would happen within Cambodia. The Khmer Rouge had systematically exterminated all educated ‘new people’ and the whereabouts of the cavern and citadel had remained a secret, as all the people who knew of the caves existence and who had decided to remain outside, had now all been slaughtered.

Boran, who knew his archaeology days were over for now, had boxed and stored all the remains and artefacts that he and his team had found,

“Maybe one day” he thought as he closed the lid on his last box of bones. He and his team now spent their time with Rumble, learning his techniques and assisting with his research. His wife Roth had given birth to their son in 1976 followed by the birth of Norman and Thearys son in 1977.

The citadel dwellers had worked hard throughout the years. There was now, as well as basic houses, a fairly well equipped hospital, school, small radio station and at the back of the cavern, a large well equipped (Rumbles

equipment) laboratory where Rumble and Ngem would spend the majority of their time. Their work had now taken on an extra urgency just to survive. The ancient lift that led to the temple above had been modernised and was now well lit with electric power that was faster and would allow the lookouts they placed in the temple an easy, quick and invisible getaway, in case any Khmer Rouge patrols were spotted and small metal rungs were built into the rock along the side of the elevator to maintain the machinery. This basic ladder ran up to the surface via a small ledge and into a compartment approximately 1 metre high. This would come out underneath an ancient burial slab outside the temple wall, this could also be a second form of escape for any lookout trapped outside the temple to crawl down. The mouth of the cave was sealed leaving a small space for people to leave in order to fish, hunt and collect vegetables and meat for feeding the occupants of Let-cum-baan. Air was now being pumped into the cavern from outside by natural occurring fissures and pumps, strategically placed and powered by hydro-electric power generators that an engineering team from the cavern dwellers had set under the waterfalls and these had replaced the noisy diesel generators both outside and inside the Cavern. This power supply was enough for all the power needs within the cavern. A new lighting system was developed, so the cave could be lit in the day, the same brightness as sunlight, dimmed for the evening and off in emergency. It was dangerous to leave the cavern, if anybody was caught they would surely be killed. Rumble and Ngem knew that they and the other inhabitants could be in the cavern for the remainder of their lives and could possibly be caught, if the scavenging

patrols got careless, so they all worked towards being totally self sufficient. The entire citadel all worked hard for their future and the new civilisation they could be creating in this age of uncertainty.

Boran and Norm's research picked up momentum and they worked tirelessly. In 1977 the first banana was picked from a tree in a large orchard section of grassland within the cavern.

Norm and Boran had been working on genetically modifying flora and fauna, vegetables, grass and fruit by altering their genetic structure. With the introduction of RNA enzymes and nucleotides from the moss which thrived around the small freshwater lake inside the citadel and altering the grass and floras DNA, they created a hardy form of plant life, that required little or no light and photosynthesis was accelerated within the plant. They germinated the seeds they developed and grew a small patch of grass within a few days. This was followed a few days later by spinach, beans then a few weeks' later by carrots and potatoes. They brought soil in over the next few weeks from the surrounding areas and with the addition of chemicals developed by Norm and Ngem to enhance the soil, a large area at the side of the cavern was now a sustainable pasture. Although they still had to go outside to obtain their staple food source, rice, but due to the storage time of dry rice, they rapidly built up a vast stock annually. Their hidden rice fields were again a closely guarded secret and they had planted rice paddies within the fertile wet fields of Angkor Thom. It took a while longer for the fruit trees to grow and to produce fruit, but the accelerants in the soil took several years off the natural development and so when the first

banana was picked it was a great day for the inhabitants of let-cum-baan.

These trees would produce 4 crops a year instead of the usual one. They also grew mango and pineapples, which would be ready to harvest in a few weeks.

This, Norman named as 'The Garden of Eden'

The people within the citadel were always up on recent events, due to a small wireless and radio station, which they could also transmit (although they kept their location secret) through a FM radio one of the technicians had bought with him. Norm kept up with events in the world, especially groundbreaking news in his field of research. There was of course none of interest. He had, due to his circumstance become far in advance of his nearest rival. Ta Prohm had been pretty much ignored. It was not a place the Khmer Rouge patrols would trespass as the Angkor grounds and temples (although the odd statue got destroyed by mortar fire) were taboo as the Khmers still held great fear of ghosts and thought the temple at Ta Prohm was haunted and rumours of strange noises and light pulsing out of the ground (building machinery and light through the air pump holes) kept the soldier patrols away.

The citadel dwellers were well armed (AKA 47 easier to get hold of than rice) and within the citadel they could have easily defended against a small army. There was only one way into the cave and now only a small walkthrough remained, with only enough space for a few at a time to slip through. The elevator entrance from inside the temple (if by some fluke ever found) was controlled from below and only had room for two people, so they lived in relative safety.

Cattle that used to be slaughtered outside and the meat brought in, (nomadic cows) were now being herded in alive and survived on the modified roots and grass on the field within the citadel, so the occupants had fresh milk and meat. Although the cows never lived more than a couple of weeks underground, this Norm put down to something in their genes not being able to survive on the modified food, he spent the next few months isolating the offending genomes.

Norm and Borans next project kicked into high gear and at the end of December 1978. One of the herd of cows produced a calf that had been cloned and DNA altered by identifying and replacing the 42000 offending strands by the two scientists. The cow had a lab created embryo implanted and although the pregnancy was short, the cow had to be left outside the cave in order to survive, then being brought in just prior to giving birth. This was a nerve racking time and the cow had to be tethered and well hidden, if found by a passing patrol, a search would be on to find out who tethered the cow and the citadel could be discovered. The calf grew rapidly, although its mother had died a few days after its birth, developed and flourished. Borans son named the cow 'Jake' (Khmer for banana, as it liked to eat them)

Rumble had successfully cloned an animal 11 years sooner, than his good friend professor Ian Wilmut cloned 'Dolly' the sheep.

This ground breaking revelation and birth meant the citadel could now look forward to a total self sufficiency for the future. The technicians and engineers could now work on a new and valuable source of power in

conjunction with the hydro; they could now develop methane fuels. They decided to impregnate two more cows. Although Norm and Boran were overjoyed with Jake, they both realised this process could be improved upon and then they could do away completely with a host. They realised though, this could take a lifetime to develop, as massive information storage technology was not available to them at that time.

“Look Comrade Commander” said a young soldier dressed in Khua Khmoa Arve Khmoa (black pyjamas) and wearing the Kror mar Kror harm (red and white checked bandana) the Khmer rouge uniform and carrying a rifle almost the same size as him, was pointing through the undergrowth at something.

The commander went over to look at what the young soldier was pointing at.

The commander stared at the two hectares of empty freshly picked wet rice paddy. There are no comrades working this near the temple from my province. This field should not exist. His mind puzzled by this, decided this was a group of ‘new people’ hiding rice from “Angka” (the organisation) and feeding themselves, this is violating every code for being a good citizen. They will be found and re educated (beaten to death).

“They are the cause of our downfall” he told his men.

He ordered his soldiers to look for any trails and waited in the bushes. His six man patrol waited, and then decided after two hours to send four of his men further into the jungle area and scout there. The patrol returned two hours later with reports of two pregnant cows tethered near a large cave mouth. The six soldiers followed the scouts and found the tethered cows and cave entrance.

Now suspicious and weary his soldiers entered the cave, they had one torch between them which the commander held onto and went about 50 yards to the rear of the cave. "It's a dead end comrade" said one of the soldiers.

"Wait" said the commander, "listen"

A faint hum was emanating from behind what appeared to be behind a solid wall of stone.

The commander edged around a mound of rocks and found the entrance to the cavern. They silently crept around and walked down the large cavern corridor until they stood on the precipice, in total shock and awe at the sight that greeted them.

Artificial sunlight bathed the citadel and people and machines were busy going about their work, it looked like a small busy ant colony. The soldiers were amazed to see lush green pastures and a few livestock happily grazing. They noticed the orchards and fabricated buildings some looked like homes, some like offices or a school and hospital. Children were scurrying about and swimming in the now extended cavern lake.

They did not understand, what was this Garden of Eden.

"Where did it come from?" asked one of the soldiers

"New people" sneered the commander and shouldered his AK47

The other soldiers followed suit, cocked their weapons and aimed into the cavern at the men on the bulldozers. One of the young soldiers suddenly and violently spun around as a bullet smashed into his shoulder followed by a croaking sound, as another silenced bullet hit a soldier through the mouth and exited out of his neck. The remaining four panicked, they could not see or hear the direction of the shots then as another soldier fell down dead the commander saw a muzzle flash, from a opening

on the wall of the cavern. Another flash from the opening above and a fourth soldier fell, blood exploding from his torso. The commander ran to the edge of the precipice to get a clear shot at the opening and aimed. A bullet then suddenly struck him in the knee and his leg gave way sending him plummeting into the abyss. The last soldier ran towards the entrance and freedom, but was cut down with two bullets in his back and one in his head.

Darkness gave way to a bright light and the Commander opened his eyes.

“He is awake doctor,” shouted a homely looking woman in a nurses’ uniform

A man in a white coat came over and spoke to the Commander.

“You are a lucky boy you should be dead after that fall”

The commander had a lot of pain in his legs and looked down at them, both now in a plaster cast.

“We took the bullets out, but you broke both your legs in the fall. Lucky for you we have our refuse tip under where you fell, shit broke your fall” chuckled the doctor.

“New people” the commander said through grated his teeth and tried to move but the pain in his body kept him still.

“Now sonny” said the doctor “what’s your name?”

Tighe Nye had been taken from his parents and indoctrinated into the Khmer Rouge prior to the fall of Phnom Penh. His parents were peasant farmers in Kandal province which made Tighe one of the *base people and therefore eligible to join the Khmer rouge. He had proven his courage many times in clashes with the government forces and quickly rose through the ranks and the province leader had made him his number 2 in command. He was ruthless with the new people. “Brother

number one (Pol Pot) and Angka doesn't need them why do I, they are only useful as fertilizer for the crops" was his philosophy. He had executed many of the new people within his province sometimes killing and gutting a mother just for fun, he hardly knew, or wanted to know his. His family did not exist, he only had Angka (The organisation) and that's all he needed or knew. He was 15 years old the eldest of his now dead scout troop and liked to go on patrols in case he came upon a straggler, then he and his men could have some fun, especially if it happened to be a girl they could rape and kill. Now with the Khmer rouge being forced to retreat into the jungles by the liberation forces, he had decided to hide out amongst the ruins and ambush any soldiers behind them and to show his men he wasn't afraid of ghosts, although they were, they thought Tighe would protect them. To stumble upon some renegade new people, would have indeed been a bonus.

His platoon had been attacked a few days before by liberation forces and most of his men had been killed. He had left the remaining 60 or so soldiers at their jungle encampment near Siem Reap and lead the now ill fated patrol to find a better camp site, or to fight to the death.

*base people were the existing country folk /farmers.

Tighe dozed again in his hospital bed, he now had no pain, he had received morphine and as the narcotic took effect he went off into a blissful sleep.

He was suddenly woken by shouts and screams coming from outside his hospital room, then laughter and the nurse sobbing uncontrollably outside his door.

He heard the Doctors voice just before he burst into the room,

"Are you awake?" said the doctor to the boy.

Tighe just stared at the doctor

“We have just heard the news it’s terrific, you have lost, the liberation forces have overwhelmed the Khmer rouge and like the beasts they are, they are scattering into the jungle.” Snarled the doctor “and good riddance” he continued.

7th January 1979 is a date etched into every Cambodian man woman and child. It is the day when the Vietnamese along with many disgruntled Khmer rouge factions in the east and south of the country ousted the Khmer rouge from power and regained Control of Cambodia. Although it would take many more years to stabilise the country it was a start. Cambodia was liberated.

Tighe lay in his bed unable to move, the shock news plus his broken and shot legs and battered body made movement impossible. He wanted to rip the doctor’s throat out. “This” he thought “Is the worst day of my life”

He thought wrong; it was to be the first day.

The people within the Let-cum-baan had no real idea of the atrocities being committed by the Khmer Rouge. They were a society closed off and all the news came from the BBC world service on their radios and that (due to reporters and any outsiders being also on the Khmer Rouge shit-list) was sketchy. The townfolk of Siem Reap had all been moved in a mass exodus to the countryside to work, so that was a ghost city. This little knowledge was important for Tighe’s well being; if they had known the actual truth (which they later would) Tighe would have surely been killed. The doctor left Tighe’s room and rejoined the celebrations. Hours passed

and Tighe was in and out of consciousness. The door opened and a foreign man entered looked at Tighe's chart and went to sit on the chair at the side of the bed. Tighe had never seen a foreigner before and turned to face the jovial looking professor.

"My names Norman" said the professor who spoke fluent Cambodian.

Tighe just stared at this strange man.

Now you know my name, how about you tell me yours?" asked Norm.

Tighe just stared silently.

"Ok lad, have it your way"

Norm went on to explain to Tighe about his injuries and his treatment and prognosis,

"You may have a limp, but at least we have saved your legs"

Norm concluded, then there came a tap on the door and Theory entered the room carrying Norman Junior.

"There you are" said Theory "I've been looking everywhere for you" she said and went over and sat on Tighe's bed.

"Hello" said Theory to Tighe "say hello Norman" and waved the infants arm at Tighe, Norm Jnr smiled and chuckled.

"He's the quiet type, wont even tell us his name" said Norman.

"Here, hold the baby Norm, the poor boy's sweating" and Theory handed the baby to Norm and went over to the sink, got a bowl of cold water and a cloth, she proceeded to wipe the sweat off Tighe's face.

Tighe stared through Theory and gazed at the baby and Norm, who was raising the infant up and down, the child was gurgling happily at his father's entertainment.

“Don’t do that darling” Theory said to Norm. He has just been fed and he will be

The warning came too late and on the downward stroke a large gush of milky vomit splattered the top of Norms head.

Theory grabbed the still chuckling baby and Norm got his handkerchief and started wiping his head.

“Serves you right” said Theory.

“My name is Tighe” said a now smiling Tighe

“Nice to meet you Tighe” said Norm still wiping the vomit from his face “This is my wife Theory and that little monster is Norman Junior”

Tighe smiled at the family, he had never really had a childhood and this felt good and normal.

Over the next few weeks the citadel became quieter as some of the dwellers had started to leave and return to rebuild their homes and start a new Cambodia. This though, would take years to stabilise the country, but still they could make a start. The people had a meeting and they all agreed, as and when they returned to the outside world, they would keep the existence of Let-cum-baan a closely guarded secret, as they may one day have to return and would visit and help out from time to time.

Within three weeks, all but 60 of the inhabitants had left the place they called home and returned to the old lives and homes, that had been violently forced away from them.

The Citadel was silent which suited Rumble and Ngem, their research was getting difficult and they realised the enormous task that lay ahead would not be achievable in their lifetime or indeed for several generations unless technology improved.

Tighe had started his painful rehabilitation and could now hobble around on crutches. He had grown close to Norman and Theory and he doted on Norman Junior, at last Tighe could start enjoying a normal childhood and over the years the teenager started assisting Theory in the upbringing of Norman Junior and Tu Ngem, Borans son. As Tighe's mobility got better, he started helping around the citadel and the remaining occupants had found him a likeable lad, he assisted in the general chores and spent his time tending the cattle, especial Jake, the first of the now 8 cloned cows in the herd.

He ate well and was tutored in both reading and writing Khmer (many Cambodians still cannot read or write because during the Khmer Rouge era education was banned) and Norm used to teach him English in his spare time, along with his now two year old son. Tighe had no longing to return to the outside world, he had come to realise the brainwashing of the Khmer rouge, had been in total violation of humanity and he was ashamed of the part he had played. News was coming in over the TV and radios of the sporadic fighting of the liberation forces and the small groups of remaining Khmer Rouge fighters. So with a heavy heart, three years after arriving at the citadel, he told Norm and the others of his intention to return to the outside world and join the fighting, as a government soldier and to quash the Khmer Rouge once and for all. Rumble had given Tighe a few thousand dollars out of his safe in order to help him with his life outside and the whole community wished him a safe journey.

Tighe left the citadel on 3rd June 1982 and set off to join the infantry battalion at Siem Reap. He would return many times to the citadel to visit his adopted family,

Norman and Theary, his father and mother, but especially his younger brothers Norman Jnr and Tu.

-Chapter Nine-



Cattle Some cattle in Cambodia seem to wander anywhere un-tethered around towns and villages. Nobody seems to own them and nobody seems to care. They just happily amble on looking for the best Cud and sleeping where they feel like it, usually in the middle of roads .The Khmers are used to this but it is strange for foreigners to comprehend, as you have to spend most of your time avoiding them on motorbikes and as they have no highway code sense, they can just step out in front of you and cow vs. man on bike, cow always win. Buses however, different kettle of fish.

Nick woke up around lunchtime. He felt rough, his head throbbed and he had a taste in his mouth like he had just eaten a lump of elephant dung and when he cupped his hand to smell his breath it was like the farts of 1000 camels.

Richard had returned to the brothel to collect Nick after Lilly had made his todger screechy clean, Nick was sobering up and returned to, a just spannered state.

“Fit mate” enquired Richard

The pair then headed out into a tuk-tuk and got off at the Heart of Darkness disco, a lively late night disco on street 51. It didn't take Nick long to return to the wankered

state and his face drooped, he was knackered and wanted to sleep. Richard helped him into a tuk-tuk gave the driver instructions and they sped off.

Richard went back inside the Heart, grabbed a girl and headed home, his fun with the Cambodian newbie Nick was over “probably see him tomorrow” he thought.

Nick showered and dressed and went out of the hotel, into the hot sunny Phnom Penh Street. The sun beat down on him blinding him and aggravating his hang over.

“Sod this” he thought and went back inside, to his room and back to bed.

“Bloody Richard is an animal” he thought “I will avoid him, but at least nothing bad has happened to me, those two jinxes aren’t here”.

He pulled the covers over his head and snoozed, and then he got up at 7pm showered again and went out into the night air and walked along the riverfront. He bought a Cambodian Sim card for his phone. He walked on until he reached a nice looking air-conditioned restaurant called the Cadillac he went into the cool restaurant and ordered some food. “I only want a quiet one tonight” he thought and hopefully won’t run into animal Richard. Nick had a few drinks on several bars along the riverfront and noticed some very nice ladies, but he was put off by having to pay a bar fine, so he went on a motodop (bike taxi, referred to as mottos’) to the walkabout and had a walk around. A young freelance lady caught his eye and he bought her a beer. They chatted for several minutes and left together for Nick’s room.

The lady left at 10am and Nick was bored he had wasted a day in bed yesterday (courtesy of animal) and wanted to make the most of his holiday. He went downstairs to

where a myriad of tuk-tuks and motordops converged, waiting for customers, Nick was approached by one driver who asked him where he wanted to go, giving him 4 options. He decided, he didn't want to see the killing fields or S21 and he had emptied his sacks already so another brown chalice was, for now out of the question, so the shooting range it was. The tuk-tuk made its way out of the city and the driver turned to Nick.

"Do you want the regular range or something a little bit special?"

"Special sounds good" replied Nick and the driver headed into the countryside and called his friend on his mobile. They had driven for about 30 minutes into the country, when they pulled up at the bottom of a large field two other men were waiting for them and on the floor lay an old 1950's Bazooka.

"Great" thought Nick as he got out of the tuk-tuk and proceeded toward the men.

"\$50 to shoot our cow" said one of the men pointing to another man some distance away leading a cow along the field.

"Ok said Nick not particularly wanting to shoot a cow, but certainly wanting the chance to fire a bazooka, even one the sights had been well adjusted to make sure you never hit the cow. The man in the field held the cow on a long rope and signalled OK.

One of the men picked up the bazooka and handed it to Nick who rested it on his shoulder.

"Aim here and pull here" instructed the Cambodian.

"Pull this" enquired Nick, as he pointed on the trigger, the shell erupted out of the muzzle. The recoil knocked Nick off his feet, and he wasn't ready and never aimed the bazooka which had a hair trigger. The shell impacted

into the side of the terrified animal exploding on impact and killing the poor creature instantly and sending bits of prime steak flying into the air over the field. The two Cambodians next to Nick look shocked and horrified. The Cambodian holding the cow was now running toward them in a state of total panic. Nick got to his feet and was herded back into the tuk-tuk,

“Hurry” said the driver shoving Nick back into the vehicle as a bullet ricochet off the side.

“What’s happening?” said Nick, now in a panic as he saw a quad bike driving towards them along the field in the distance with the driver armed with a rifle now aiming at the three fleeing Cambodians running off in the opposite direction.

“Not their cow” said the driver now frantically throttling the little tuk-tuk in a quick getaway.

Nick, still shocked got the driver to take him back to the hotel. The driver explained that nobody had ever hit a cow before as the bazookas sights were altered, so usually the shell landed harmlessly in the next field.

Nick never aimed.

Nick 1.....Cows 0

Still in a state of shock, Nick decided to make himself scarce and on arrival at the hotel asked the reception where would be good place to go, preferably with a beach .“Sihanoukville is a nice place, it’s about four hours away and right on the coast, would you like me to book you on the 2:30pm bus” said the receptionist.

“Yes” he said “Thanks I will go pack my belongings”

Nick checked out of the hotel, collected his bus tickets and was now on a Mekong express bus, on his way to Sihanoukville.

*Sihanoukville, also known as **Kampong Som**, or Kampong Saom, is a port city in southern Cambodia on the Gulf of Thailand. The city was founded in 1964 to be the only deep water port in Cambodia (in part due to the waning power of the French leading to the Vietnamese tightening their control over the Mekong Delta and hence restricting river access to Cambodia) and its beaches have made it popular as a tourist destination.. The city is named after King Norodom Sihanouk. Beaches that line the west contour of the city from north to south are Victory Beach, Lamherkay Beach, Koh Pos Beach, Independence Beach, Sokha Beach, Serendipity Beach, Occheuteal Beach and Otres Beach. The most popular beaches are Occheuteal, Sokha, Independence and Victory. Tourists can take water taxis to the nearby islands for diving, snorkelling, and game fishing. The town centre is located in the centre of the peninsula and is seen as a distinct area for tourism promotion. It contains the banks, bus station, shops, supermarkets and an outdoor market,*

The bus pulled into Sihanoukville at 6:30 as the daylight was just fading, Nick ignored the hordes of tuk-tuk and moto drivers and walked along the side of the open air bus station. Nick noticed a few guesthouses and restaurant bars. One caught his eye “That must be English owned” he thought and made his way toward the sign. He entered the ‘Britannia bar’ where he met Mark a large red faced gentleman, who was running around behind the bar serving drinks to customers, Nick sat down at the bar.

“Mate, are you the owner” enquired Nick

“Facking owner, barman, waiter, cook, cleaner, bottle washer, you name it, I am facking it” hollered Mark in a cockney accent with a beaming smile.

Nick taken aback by Marks abruptness stammered.

“Have you got any rooms?”

“Facking rooms, where you from?” asked Mark

“Brighton” said Nick.

“Brighton, facking Brighton, me old cokka, course I have a room for you.

“I’m Mark” said Mark and he introduced himself and continued “Nice to meet you, this is Tony, John and Steve” Mark went on introducing other customers at the bar “and that lovely lady” continued Mark pointing at a pretty Khmer lady who was sat on a comfy chair rocking a baby “is my lovely wife Men and son Billy”.

“Nick” said Nick as he shook Marks hand.

“Are you still serving Sunday roast?” enquired Nick after noticing the blackboard outside.

“Yes we are” said Mark “You drop your stuff in your room and I’ll have a nice hot plateful waiting for you. Nick went to the room Mark had shown him and laid on his bed “this is alright” he thought “and only \$7 a night”. Nick showered and went down into the restaurant. He ate a delicious roast and spent the next couple of hours talking to Mark, an ex lorry driver from London who also used to spend his time in Pattaya, but had visited Sihanoukville fell in love with both it and his wife Men and married the previous year. They had their first son Billy a few months ago. Mark explained to Nick where to go in Sihanoukville for a good time, these areas are out of the tourist beach areas, but easy to get to and Mark gave Nick the Sihanoukville Advertiser and told him everything to know is in there. This area is known as

‘Downtown’ Mark informed him. He got on a moto outside the Britannia and told the driver to take him to one of Marks suggested points.

“Victory Hill” ordered Nick and the driver smiled and sped off

Ten minutes later they arrived at the hill. He paid the driver, who said he would stay with him and take him around at his leisure for \$5 all night. Nick agreed and proceeded to walk along Victory Hill.

Victory Hill is outside the downtown area and well away from the beach resorts, it is a small street bar complex. Either side is lined with several bars, similar to Pattaya but on a lot smaller scale. The majority of girlie bars are in this area due to its location and away from the tourist spots. They all, similar to Pattaya try to out-volume each other with music. Nick went into a lively bar called Bonobon and ordered a draft Angkor. He had just sat down when lady sat down next to him and started rubbing his neck,

“Massage” she said.

Nick ignored her and started thinking how much this was like Pattaya. He thought to himself that he didn’t think that this was such a good thing, which is something he thought he would never feel, as he used to love Pattaya. He ordered another drink and his massage lady, who was a bit of an old tug demanded,

“I massage you, buy me drink”

Nick bought the girl a drink and when an overpriced glass of wine came he thought

“Yep, same as Pattaya.”

Disgruntled with the hill he got on the waiting moto,

“Snake house” he said.

The moto drove ten minutes and entered a large resort set back on its own.

The snake house is very modern and a well designed resort that catered for mainly Russians, it was owned by an old family from Russia .They have snakes and crocodiles in large tanks around the restaurant and a small but very elegant beer bar with swimming pool at the side. Nick went into the bar and ordered a drink. He was browsing around the bar noticing how tasteful it was, with a swimming pool and very large flat screen TV, a young attractive girl caught his eye. She came over and politely asked Nick if he would like another beer.

“Not yet” replied Nick “but let me buy you a drink” where them words come from, he will never know

“Thank you” said the lady “Can I have a beer?”

Nick ordered the girl a beer and motioned for her to join him on the next stool.

The Cambodian thunderbolt had struck

Nick and Shanti spoke for about an hour on all kinds of subjects. Shanti spoke great English and she explained she studied at university. Nick was getting spannered and totally immersed in Shanti.

“Right” he announced “I will pay the bar and we’ll go”

“Go where?” enquired Shanti.

“My room for a shag” slurred Nick.

“Sorry” said Shanti with a shocked expression “I am a hostess, not a taxi girl”

“What’s the difference?” asked Nick now desperate.

“A lot” fired back Shanti and got of her stool.

Nick sat there gob smacked. What was this?

“Ket Loy” (the bill) he growled.

He paid his bill and was just about to leave when Shanti returned to his side and pecked him on the cheek “Sorry” she whispered “but if you want I will go on the beach with you tomorrow” and handed him a note with her phone number on it

Nick placed the note in his pocket and smiled at Shanti. Nick got onto the moto and asked the driver where to go for brown chalice at this hour.

The driver informed him, either freelance girls at Freedom or G’day mate, or if he didn’t want to chase it, Blue Mountain would be the place.

Nick decided on neither and returned to the Britannia and had a few more beers with Mark then went to bed. He had decided tomorrow to rent a motorcycle and take Shanti to the beach.

The next morning Nick woke early. He had a great nights sleep in a very comfortable room and thought about Shanti.

He ate a full English breakfast at Marks and went off to find a motorbike to hire. He rented a nearly new black Honda wave and phoned Shanti,

“Hello Shanti its Nick, We spoke last night and I was wandering if the beach date is still on”

The phone went quiet, as Shanti collected her thoughts, “Nick” she said “How are you? Thanks for calling I thought I had upset you”

“I’m fine” said Nick “and no you never upset me I am sorry I tried to push you, I haven’t learnt about Cambodian people yet”

Shanti laughed “You will” she chuckled.

“I want to” said Nick not knowing were the bollocks that was spewing out of his mouth had come from.

“Ok” said Shanti “I will meet you outside Dolphin Shack on Occheuteal beach at 2 pm is that Ok”?

“Perfect” said Nick “see you then.”

Nick hung up and looked at his guide book and found a map with directions to Occheuteal. Happy as a sand boy he decided to look for the beach that would bring him closer to Shanti, he set off towards the beach. He drove round the golden lion roundabout and took the small road leading to the beach, something ahead caught his eye. Three figures were walking towards him from the opposite side of the road. He stared with shock and disbelief as he passed the figures and they looked around at him. Two he recognised. Fear cut through him and he stared at the figures, who were now themselves looking in horror at something on the road ahead. Nick looked forward.

“Shi.....t”. Nick pulled the front brake lever with such force the front wheel stopped dead, bringing up the rear end of the bike and launching Nick airborne, flying through the air like a dart..

“He must be one of the most accident prone blokes on the planet” said Spock as he faced Stu

“He’ll blame us, you know that?” mumbled Stu

“I know” said Spock,

“Still I suppose we should help him get his head out of that cows arse end”.

The poor creature along with her calves and three other nomadic cows had been eating at the grass verge at the side of the road and were now lazing in the centre of the road at their usual sunny spot. The old cow was stood at the rear of the group and checking on her month old calf, that was laying contentedly by her mothers hooves. She never expected that her lazy morning would be violently

shattered by a sharp pain that had just entered her old vagina. After the initial shock; she let out a painful wailing Moo!! The others in the group got up and bolted.

She also started to run, with Nicholas Godfrey of Brighton's head stuck firm and arms and legs flaying wildly.

Spock and Stu ran and caught hold of Nick's thrashing legs and held on firmly as the old cow carried on running and with a pop and a squelch, Nick was free. Pon had recovered Nick's bike and wheeled it to a nearby bar, where Spock and Stu were now leading the shocked and stunned Nick.

The commotion had drawn a lot of attention and customers and staff at the restaurant were now in fits of laughter, as the two lads sat Nick down outside the Cool banana restaurant. Nick groggily looked around at Spock and Stu then noticed Pon, who although he had a vague recollection of his face, didn't recognise the man with the Elvis mullet.

"Spock give him your hat and let him wipe that slime off his face" chuckled Stu

Spock's retort went unnoticed, as a laughing waitress appeared with a bowl of soapy water. She gave a towel to Nick to dry himself, she then proceeded to wash his face and head and remove the cow snot. Nick was now coming around a little and looked at his two nemeses.

"What are you doing here?" he enquired

"We are on a secret mission" beamed Spock and nodded towards Pon.

"With the mad monk, with the mullet" continued Stu pointing towards Pon.

"What are you doing here?" asked Spock.

“Holiday” said Nick, wiping the slime off from around his mouth.

The owner of the restaurant came out and enquired about Nick’s health and trying not to laugh, offered Nick a brandy which he accepted and knocked back in one gulp.

“Where are you staying matey?” asked Stu

“Downtown” replied Nick

“Fancy bumping into you here mate” chuckled Spock,

“We only arrived here an hour ago” he continued and handed Nick a business card “We are right on the beach its fantastic”

Nick looked at the card ‘Coasters’ Serendipity Beach.

Nick placed the card in his pocket “Won’t be needing that he thought”. His faculties returning as the waitress removed the bowl and went off chuckling to the kitchen.

“Sorry lads” mumbled Nick “I will have to go back to the hotel and clean up. I will join you later for a beer”

“OK mate” said Stu and helped him stand up and onto his bike “take it easy” said Stu

Nick, head still sore got on his motorbike and started it up, he looked ahead of him and saw the herd of cows which were now happily chewing the foliage off a bush at the patch of land at the top of the road. He noticed the old cow giving him the evil eye, then thought he saw her smile and wink. Convinced he was hallucinating he got on his bike and sped off leaving Stu, Spock and Pon who could no longer hold back the laughter, roared out loud joined by Paul the owner of Cool Banana.

“He is a very unlucky sod” Stu mentioned to Paul.

Nick rushed into the Britannia and Mark asked him if he was OK.

“If you call getting your head stuck up a cow’s fanny as being OK, then I’m peachy” said Nick sarcastically.

He rushed to his room packed his rucksack and returned to Mark, paid for his room and told him he could keep the bike until tomorrow, then return it and gave Mark the money and receipt and left. Nick ran over to the bus station he noticed only one outgoing bus.

“Where’s this bus going and what time?” He wheezed.

“Siem Reap” said the girl in the office “and leaving in 5 minutes”

“Right” said Nick catching his breath “Give me a one way ticket.”

He got his lonely planet guide out of his bag, put his rucksack in the storage compartment and got on the bus and sat down opening the pages to the Siem Reap section. His thoughts then turned to Shanti. He rang her to explain and apologise, she was a bit confused and wondered what had made him so scared. The bus started up and pulled out of the station with Nick cowering behind the curtain of the bus window. Until the bus left Sihanoukville far behind, that’s where he would remain.

Nick..1 Cows...1 a draw

-Chapter Ten-



**In the beginning, God created the earth and rested.
Then God created man and rested.
Then God created women. Since then, neither God
nor man has rested:**

Except for germs like viruses and bacteria, just about every other living thing on Earth is made up of cells. This is probably why cells are called the building blocks of life. Most forms of life are made of many cells. It is estimated that the average human adult body contains about 10 trillion cells. Placed end to end, they would stretch around the earth 47 times. A ten year old, has about half that many cells. If you could count them at a rate of one cell per second, it would take you over 2600 years to complete the task.

Numbering in the trillions, it is not surprising that most cells of the human body are very small. In fact, an individual cell is invisible unless viewed through a microscope. The largest human cell, an egg cell produced by females when they are able to have babies, is about the diameter of a human hair. The smallest, a sperm cell produced by the male, is one-tenth of the diameter (the distance across) of a human hair.

Even though they are quite small, not all cells are alike. They differ in size, shape and function (how they work). Bone cells differ from blood cells and nerve cells differ from muscle cells. Each one is designed to do a different job. Red blood cells carry oxygen throughout the body. Nerve cells carry electrical signals to and from our brains to muscles all over our bodies. Bone cells, which are very rigid, form the skeleton that gives our bodies shape. Muscle cells contract to move these bones to help us get around. Stomach cells secrete an acid to digest our food. Special cells in our intestines absorb nutrients from the food we eat. And no matter what they do, many of these cells change food into energy to keep our bodies working. Cells are packed tightly together. They combine to form tissues, like skin and muscle. Tissues combine to form organs. Muscle cells combine to form muscle tissues. Muscle tissues combine to form organs like your heart. Organs cooperate (work together) to keep us alive.

All human body cells are covered by a membrane. This layer holds the contents of the cell in just like the sides of a container. The membrane lets good things, like nutrients, into the cell. It also keeps bad things, like germs and bacteria, out.

In four square centimetres of skin there are 3 metres of nerve fibres, 1300 nerve cells, 100 sweat glands, 3 million cells, and 3 metres of blood vessels. Except for your brain cells, 50,000,000 of the cells in your body will have died and been replaced with others, all while you have been reading this sentence. Except for red blood cells, all other cells in our bodies have a nucleus. Because it controls what the cell does, the nucleus is often called the brains of the cell. A nucleus appears as a

large dot in the centre of a cell. The word nuclei are used to refer to more than one nucleus. Each cell nucleus contains D.N.A the genetic instructions. The formula for life. There are approximately 3 billion genetic recipes in each DNA sequence and in each sequence millions of recipes for proteins and enzymes that the RNA messenger is responsible for mixing up to create the DNA.

So working on the given information above, it would take millennia to isolate the cells, sequence the DNA and replicate the recipes of the RNA. Millennia, unless you are two brilliant geniuses, develop a shortcut and have a super fast revolutionary computer then it may take just one lifetime.

The only other expert in the same field was God and he had given up after creating women.

“That’s it” exclaimed Boran as he ripped a report out off the printer and took it over to Norm, who was sitting in front of ‘The oven’ an immense machine Norman and Boran had developed and had built. Norman was sat in front of a computer screen attached to the front of the machine. Norm took the printout from Boran and looked closely at the printed paper.

‘Programme complete and ready to access it read.

A beaming smile came across his face.

“Well old friend, after all these years at last we have the information we require to help the whole of humanity”.

Norm picked up his mobile phone and dialled a number.

“Norman it appears ‘Theory’ has finished

“Great dad, I’ll grab the others and be right with you”.

Yelled excitedly Norman Jnr.

“Now my friend” said the old professor to his colleague and lifelong friend Boran “our work can begin.

The twenty years from 1982 saw an amazing change in both Cambodia and Let-cum-baan. There were now about 70 inhabitants, some of the old citadel citizens had returned, mainly technicians and scientists, as they knew they could learn much more from Rumble and Ngem than any other human being could teach them.

The citadel now resembled a township for the 22nd Century. Small modern domed buildings and now powered not only by hydro–electric but also solar with the plastic and fullerene panels coloured to match in with the green tree canopies and so invisible from the ground and air, also a methane converter all these techniques giving enough power and electricity to sustain a large city, let alone a village of seventy. They had created and built an eco system with sunlight and rainfall, regulated within the cavern as the now vast pastures and orchards flourished with fruit and flowers. Cows and sheep grazed in the fields all happy and contented, chickens and ducks scurried around being chased by the town’s dogs and with Jake the first cow joining in with the chase. All the animals were cloned by embryo and genetically modified.

“You added dog DNA in with that cow Jake” Roth used to joke with Boran.

“I bet if it had a 'lipstick' it would be licking it" added Roth. ('Lipstick' dogs todger)

At night the ceiling of the cavern would be transformed by plasma screen pictures of the night sky, all filmed from the outside so ever changing. The laboratory was now a glistening square structure the size of a cinema containing rooms of equipment electron-microscopes,

enhanced and modified *magnetic resonance scanners*, Visual Reality computers and other home made machines, some completed and some work in progress. The laboratory area was always a hive of activity with builders, technicians and scientists far more advanced than the world outside. The cave mouth had now an electronic rock designed shutter within 50 foot of the entrance that made the cave look like a dead end and an intercom and night vision C.C.T.V cameras, so no unwanted intruders would know of its existence. Plus bright floodlights added and an elevator had been installed against the side of the precipice which was large and strong enough to hold large and heavy machinery, so now getting equipment and tools to within the cavern was a lot simpler. Another faster elevator was added to the back of the lab and the entrance to Ta prohm temple and both entrances could be monitored and operated from the many monitors scattered about within the citadel. Although the floor and wall workings were improved the original stones remained, as not to attract attention especially now the tourists were returning to the area. Two small monorails ran along against the walls that could rapidly take a person up to the sentry ports on the cave sides and would get an advantage point for directing machinery coming into the cave.

***Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)** is a medical imaging technique primarily used in Radiology to visualize the structure and function of the body. It provides detailed images of the body in any plane. MR has much greater soft tissue contrast than computed tomography (CT) making it especially useful in neurological, musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, and*

oncological imaging. Unlike CT it uses no ionizing radiation, but uses a powerful magnetic field to align the nuclear magnetization of (usually) hydrogen atoms in water in the body. Radiofrequency fields are used to systematically alter the alignment of this magnetization, causing the hydrogen nuclei to produce a rotating magnetic field detectable by the scanner. This signal can be manipulated by additional magnetic fields to build up enough information to reconstruct an image of the body. Rumble had enhanced and modified this technology to imaging at the cellular level

Norman and Borans research, which due to the ever changing modern information technology, satellite and mobile communication and faster and higher storage computers, now sped up to a feverish pace. Cambodia now had a return of banking institutions which allowed Rumble to gain access to his fortune and with the help of his adopted son Tighe, he had managed to acquire all the best and most modern high tech gadgets and equipment they'd required. Normans work in specifying and identifying genomes had taken a rapid upturn with the new magnetic resonance imaging technology. They could now categorise the DNA a lot faster than the old x-ray system could.

In 1999 Normans beloved wife and juniors mother Theory passed away with liver cancer, despite Rumbles research and treatment at cellular level. The cancer, a particularly virulent form, spread rapidly and killed Theory.

Rumbles and Ngem's sons had been studying in America and like their fathers and because of their fathers' tuition in the early days, were known as geniuses. Their passion

was however not science, but computers and they were getting quite a reputation for being leaders in this field, although still quiet young, they had both been poached out of university by IBM to head their research and development. Norman Jnr and Tu had returned to the citadel to bury Normans mother and Norman Jnr had noticed his father looking strained “to much work” thought Jnr and tried to convince his father to now leave the citadel to which his father replied, “Now is the time to stay and work, if I had have worked faster your mother would still be here” the old professor turned his head away from his son and wept. Norman Jnr and Tu were always interested in their fathers work and Norman and Borans research with DNA, neurons and brainwaves, had led the two sons into computer technology.

“What if we could develop a machine the same as a human brain” Tu once said to Norm Jnr

“Maybe some day we will” joked Norman Jnr. They were only children when that was said, but now adults and researching the technology of the rapidly advancing computer technology and with their knowledge of their fathers work in the field of Cells and DNA, their thoughts for creating a human brain computer was no longer a pipe dream, but maybe a possibility.

The funeral of Theary bought the families back together, the sons had not been back to the citadel since they had left for the U.S four years ago, now together and with their older adopted brother Tighe, who they had not seen for so long, the misery they all felt about Thearys passing had its compensations. The brothers talked and joked long into the night. Tighe looked very handsome in his uniform and now a Colonel, the brothers were very

impressed. Norman had been proud of his adopted son, he owed a lot of the technology and equipment he now had at his fingertips to Tighe's arm twisting and political connections.

Tighe had left the citadel and joined the Government troops as a foot soldier in 1982. Due to his courage and dedication to his task, he quickly scaled the army ranks, plus the money Norm had given him bought himself a captains rank and then major and after 15 years of dedicated service he was bestowed the rank of Colonel in 1997 by Hun Sen the Prime Minister and good friend. He was an active member of the CPP (Cambodian People's Party) and met and toured the country with Hun Sen, who had Tighe promoted and put in charge of his security. He had handpicked his guard of Commandos from the troops he served and commanded as a major and had assembled a crack team of six bodyguards, all willing to lay down their lives for Hun Sen and Colonel Tighe if necessary. Tighe had never married but had a lot of ladies. He had visited his adopted family frequently to see Norman and Theory and to eat her pumpkin filled with egg custard, his favourite sweet and no one made it like Theory and he, like every other inhabitant of Let-cum-baan, had never told anyone about its existence, not even Hun Sen. He had pulled his political clout to ensure that Rumble had everything he needed for his research.

After the funeral of Theory the two boys returned to their jobs at IBM and Tighe returned to duty. The life seemed to have been sucked out of Norman Rumble and he continued with his research at a frantic pace, but once again he changed direction, he had a new and determined direction which to follow and although he was getting old, he knew unless some miracle happened, he would

not complete his work in this lifetime, but he didn't mind, he now had nothing better to do.

Four years after the death of his wife, as Norman was sitting by a model for something he was working on, there came a buzz on his intercom from the elevator in the temple. A route only Tighe used as a rule, as now nobody never ever came or left the citadel. He turned on the C.C.T.V that was positioned within the temple above the elevator and embedded out of site, disguised as a rock. He saw the smiling face of Norman Junior and a young lady.

"Its ok dad there aren't any tourists about, let us down" requested Junior

Norman hit the switch and the elevator brought the young couple down then returned to the surface 4 more times. Rumble puzzled by this, left the room and went outside the laboratory area and greeted the seven newcomers. Norman hugged his son and Tu. Boran was also alerted by the commotion, came out of the lab and hugged his son and Norm Jnr.

Norman introduced the party of Americans "This is Patty my colleague and wife" he smirked

"This is Greg and Jerry and Jerry's wife Liz" they are software geeks, geniuses all three

"And" interrupted Tu "this lovely lady is my wife Anne and a computer designer one of the best"

Boran and Norman hugged them all and asked them what they where doing there.

The group made quite a stir in the citadel and seem to breathe a new life into the stagnant work place. Norman telephoned Tighe to invite him to the citadel. Roth and a few others had prepared a feast. They would all eat together on the pastures, a large BBQ was prepared and

seventy seven people old and young had a loud joyful party. They turned the citadel environment controls from afternoon to night time mode at two o'clock in the afternoon to give them a long night of merriment. Colonel Tighe arrived at 7 o'clock and the party continued long into the night. The prodigal sons had returned.

The following day the group gathered in Norm's office to explain why they were there.

Norman Junior led the discussion with Tu and Boran in attendance. Norman Junior went on to explain they had all left IBM. Their research programmes budget had been cut back and beside that, the fact they could not develop their new invention any further without the help of Professor Norman Rumble. Computer technology had to embrace science to proceed, but IBM was not prepared to pursue this cross research. Junior went on to explain how they all wished to remain in the citadel and carry on, with the assistance of Boran and Norman's knowledge the next stage of computer development. Norm then produced from his bag a plastic box and placed it on Norm's desk. The box was about the size of a car battery and had sockets in the side for USB ports and outlets that computers keypads and electrical components could be plugged in. Rumble and Ngem looked confused at the box.

"This is the housing" said Norm Junior "the real brain lays within," as he opened the box and pulled out a large blue package the same size as the box filled with a blue gel and a mass of small optic fibre strands inside.

He placed the package on the table and Boran picked it up and inspected the blob.

“This said Norm Junior is the new shape of computer technology and with your help father and Boran, it will make the silicon chip obsolete. This” he went on, “will have the same speed of thought as the best computer on the planet, the human brain and the storage capacity of just one of these cells (battery) will be approximately 10,000 times greater than any other computer.”

Norman Junior carried on explaining about his project and how the gel had some amazing properties of growing and replicating. Due to its high magnetic properties anything placed in it grew at an expedient rate and stored that information in the microscopic storage cells within the fibre optic cables.

Norman Junior’s research was pulled after IBM sank billions of dollars into the project, but thinking the gel didn’t work, because Norm Jnr and Tu told them they now needed to get the scientific world involved to discover a way to activate it, IBM thinking it was stalling tactics, the project hit a brick wall with the board at IBM. Norm Jnr, Tu and their colleagues, who had worked alongside them and believed in this project, had left with him and now were at the citadel and with his and Tu’s father’s help, They could design and build their ‘Theory computer’.

When Norm Junior mentioned his project name he smiled at his old father. His father smiled back and understood why the project was named after his deceased mother. Theory is pronounced Tearry the ‘h’ being silent but when Norm saw the spelling he called his wife affectionately, Theory.

“How can we help son?” asked Norm.

Junior went on to explain the gel needed a synthetic brain stem and the only way this could be achieved was by

scientist who had researched brain cells and understood how the brain functioned and how specific cells could be harvested. Norman and Boran both looked at each other and smiled, their work now had become tedious and mundane, Norm realised if they could get Theory to function, it could conceivably mean they could complete the work they were doing a lot sooner, maybe in this lifetime. They both agreed and the whole group cheered. It wasn't about money, they all had enough to last them a very long time, but if they succeeded they would have wealth beyond their wildest dreams, but more importantly for them, it would secure them all a place in history alongside the genius's of the human race, and for Norm it was part of a bigger plan.

The work started the following day after the newcomers were settled into the citadel with another welcome party. The three software specialist set about correlating Norm's data and creating a programme for Theory. Norman and Boran were working in the lab recovering old research from their laptops and Norm Junior, Tu and their two spouses were making a list of needs that Tighe could acquire in order to replicate the gel. The process was relatively simple with the very basic synthetic neurons they had invented. (Although the gel would not function yet, it would replicate itself in the right environment, which they could already create).

The project was named CAIN: Created Artificial Intelligent Neurons.

The problem facing Norm and the others was how to create a neural brain cell with DNA that held no genetic information, but a memory capacity which had to be a clear slate and have no information already stored up, so the computer would not have any personality. That was a

problem that took a year to resolve. They had found a single cell organism in plankton and through the help of the MRI, sequenced its DNA structure, which was too basic to be of any use. However if they could alter the structure by the RNA messenger to that of an almost human genome, it would work. But it had to be a fresh strand that contained no memory and the catch 22 was the machine they were creating could do this with ease, but without the help of Theory, they could not create Theory.

Norm, Boran and Norm Junior eventually solved the problem, but not by research or calculations it was pure luck that intervened. They required the genome from a human, one with no memory, but the capacity for learning.

A newly created human.

Norman Jnr and the now six months pregnant Patty agreed to allow Norm to take a stem cell sample from their developing baby's hypothalamus. This was a tricky microscopic procedure, but with the help of his friend Professor Rom Pyett, an eminent neuro surgeon and resident of the citadel and Rumbles 'cell sniffer' as he called it (an instrument for detecting the presence of cells) and Visual Reality scope and MRI micro scanner, they successfully removed two microscopic cells from Patty's unborn infant with no damage to either mother or baby. They used the CAIN teams gel to rapidly duplicate the cells.

*A human interface called **Virtual Scope** that enables computer graphics (CG) data to be manipulated without*

the use of traditional computer devices and that facilitates the appreciation of pictures and paintings on a large, high-definition screen. This capability of manipulating CG data without the use of a mouse or keyboard has been developed originally for the art world and now used extensively in medicine giving surgeons high-definition images for microsurgery.

More recently, the scope of VR applications in medicine has broadened in diagnosis of diseases. The scope of this survey reflects the range of medical and surgical applications to which VR is being applied.

The next obstacle was to get the cell to merge with the single cell plankton without creating a cell with human DNA characteristics; this was a million to one shot. But three months after trial and error and on the same day Norman Junior's son Cain was born, the MRI scanners computer beeped. Rumble and Ngem rushed from the maternity room to the machine and looked at the TV screen from which a picture from an electron microscope showed cells dividing and growing at a vast rate.

"Where?" said Rumble as he looked at the screen

"I don't see it" said Ngem the machine still beeping.

"False alarm" said Rumble and switched the alarm off then on again, but the beeping continued.

"There" exclaimed Ngem.

There it was, within the millions of cells, one perfect cell with a short DNA strand and no human characteristic.

Pure trial and error, LUCK

The two scientists removed the cell and placed it in the Gel, where it immediately divided and replicated itself once, twice, ten, hundred a thousand fold in the space of a few minutes.

Over the next few days it was mayhem, they had loaded the cells into the original battery size cells and the Nerals cells had nearly all converted to Neurons although no activity was visible with the naked eye, it was happening and the team were buzzing with excitement.

They now had to see if the CAIN pack worked and a few days later they hooked it up to Greg's laptop which buzzed into life. They turned the fibre optic memory storage on which glowed for a second then nothing.

"Nothing's happened" said Jerry

"It bloody has" growled an angry Greg, "that fucking contraption has erased all 600 GB data off my computer and it doesn't even work" He carried on frantically tapping away at his now memory erased computer.

They all stood and stared at the screen that they had plugged into the CAIN battery pack. Nothing but a black blank screen.

"What a waste of time and money" growled Greg at the screen.

The disappointed team were about to leave the room when Liz said "wait a minute. Greg what did you have on your computer"

"Every bloody thing" Greg snapped.

"An example?" asked Liz.

"All my software programmes, including the one I am writing for the professor, named 'Rumble soft' Greg moaned.

Liz typed into the attached keyboard 'Run rumble soft' programme

Within a blink of an eye the screen came to life as files flashed on and off at a rapid rate.

"You only have to ask, its learning" said a smug Liz.

Things after the creation of CAIN moved swiftly. They had already built 'Theory' the central system, a large network of storage fibres which information could be stored, as and when it came in. They housed Theory separately in a small garage sized dome with 500 CAIN battery cells, they could add more if required they had introduced the original cells from CAIN to the batteries. The machine was silent until they plugged into the World Wide Web. The information super highway went silent for a split second, then returned to normal with just a glitch, but not before Theory had ingested and stored all its knowledge. The team had made a successful start, but now they wanted to put this to some practical use and a use that would benefit mankind. Norman Rumble and Boran Ngen's work would be the project that Theory would now work on and with Rumbles other planned machine they would benefit mankind.

The only thing the team would not know is how long Theory would take to solve the problem that without this super computer would take generations.

The software team developed a programme in conjunction with the two professors for the computer to sequence every cell and its DNA recipe (the RNA) and give the formula to replicate the cells of every living creature, they added a shortcut the professors had been working on as some of the recipes (RNA) were duplicated approximately 1.2 billion DNA strands and several trillion cells. Although the professors never knew the specifics Greg, Jerry and Anne developed a programme to ask Theory.

Rumble was also working on a machine that, with the power of the CAIN cells, is able to take the relevant instructions from Theory and mix up the various

synthetic enzymes, proteins, and acids to exactly cook up the recipe of each and every DNA gene. This machine they named quite simply 'The oven'. This machine was similar to a paint colouring machine. Put the colour into the computer e.g. peppermint green with a lilac shade, the machine would put in the right amount of each colour to make your preferred colour.

The oven, would work on the same principle but on a very much larger scale and with pinpoint microscopic accuracy. So they could not only detect faulty DNA, they could grow, alter or remove what genes they wanted and thus curing every virus and cell attacking disease known to man, including Cancer and aids. Theory could, if worked, create life from nothing, 'Genesis'

The results could be phenomenal, gone would be the need for painful plastic surgery, just inject the altered DNA and hey presto a raven haired girl could be a blond in the time it took the old cells to be naturally impregnated with the new recipe and multiply. A few minutes, depending on which cell it was.

14 May 2006, the team were ready to enter the software and connect to the MRI devices and monitors so Theory could work on the information. A large group gathered around the large building that housed Theory and the programmers stood back.

"There you go dad" said Norman Jnr the next honour is yours and the rest of the team and other scientists stood back and let Rumble through.

"Press this" instructed Anne.

Rumble hesitated and took baby Cain from Patty's arms.

"Lets do it together" the old and new generation,

Baby Cain cooed and Norm holding Cains' finger pressed the button as instructed by Patty. The machine glowed for a second then nothing.

"Bloody useless" mumbled Greg.

"No" said Liz, "its working, just thinking and learning and unlike you Greg, it actually thinks without belching and farting and grinding its teeth".

After this anticlimax, they all left the building and spoke to the crowd outside, who went about their work but would party tonight.

"The truth is" Norm told the crowd of scientist and technicians.

"We don't know how long it will take, or if it will ever finish its calculations. I am afraid ladies and gentlemen we are in the dark over this one.

April 2nd 2007 four years since the computer group arrived and less than one year after they had the Theory programme in action, the machine beeped to life for a brief second and sent a signal to the printer. The Theory group (what the computer experts were now known as) had now assembled in the room and were tapping in instructions on keypads that were set into and around the machine. Large screens were set along the wall of the room and within an instant of the instructions being type in: 'RUN programme', the screens in the room came alive, flashing information wildly across the monitors, molecular cell structures, DNA strands, chemical formulas, atoms, molecules all whizzed before the scientists and the Theory group.

The three software programmers plus Anne and Patty all looked bemused at the screen the two old professors and their two sons looked in amazement.

"What is it, darling?" Anne asked Norm Jnr

“Life” was all Norm Jnr replied.

Theory had not only mapped out the cells and the DNA components, it had as instructed worked out the formula that the RNA messenger carried. They now not only had the cake, but also knew the recipe and how to bake it. ‘The oven’ was almost complete (due to the fact they weren’t expecting Theory to finish so soon, or even at all, this was a monumental task that should have taken millennia.) but a few weeks more and the group once again gathered in front of the large machine that looked like a futuristic paint mixing machine with the small pots hidden away behind metal containers, although the paint containers were infinitely smaller and contained variety of synthetic proteins and enzymes, carbons and base chemicals. These chemicals were deposited by nozzles onto small black pads along the edges of a 10’x10’ table the centre of the table was one large pad where several large nozzles were suspended, this would deliver the mixed suspension and with several banks of CAIN cells and fibre optic cables leading to scanners and monitors ‘The Oven’ looked like something from the star ship enterprise engine room. The machine was housed behind Perspex walls, along one side wall was a door cut into the Perspex for gaining entry to the machines heart.

Outside of the mixer compartment were screens and monitors, the Theory team were busy entering instructions to the CAIN cells that powered ‘The Oven’. The oven sprang to life as it connected to Theory and information was passed from one super positron brain to another. There was a sound of whirring as the machines started mixing and understanding. Then silence.

The screens went blank, the machines stopped mixing and there was an eerie quiet within the room

“What’s happened?” asked Jerry “bloody thing stopped working again” still annoyed about the computer wiping his laptop of its memory.

“What’s happening son?” asked a concerned Norman.

“I don’t know dad” admitted an equally concerned Norm Jnr.

“Any ideas team” Norm asked the Theory team.

The team looked as confused as the rest of them.

Several hours then passed as the team checked everything and found everything in working order.

“Back to the drawing board” said Jerry “I knew it was too good to be true”

“Of course” said Anne with the realisation hitting her.

The group looked at her.

“Of course what?” said Jerry

“We have given the oven an instruction to map out the cells and replicate”

“And?” interrupted Jerry

“We have given it nothing to map and replicate” said Anne ignoring Jerry

“Of course” said Norm. “Well done Anne” said Tu.

“Dad the oven needs a sample of something” Norm Jnr spoke, now understanding.

Professor Rumble left the room and looked for something that Theory and the oven could use, but not human and something small.

He returned from the lab a few minutes later with a large brown lab rat in a cage.

“Perfect” said Norm Junior and with a pair of tweezers removed a hair from the rat and placed it on the ovens scanner. He typed in an instruction and a scanner light bathed the hair.

“How about a white one?” joked Norm Jnr?

The machines CAIN cells glowed and the oven hissed and spewed into life and within a few minutes there were chemicals and lights getting deposited on several pads around the centre, and then reabsorbed by the machine as it assembled them all into order and deposited a large blob in the centre of the machine. The blob grew and quivered; small electrical discharges were released and sent into the blob. The team watched in awe through a screen at this metamorphous occurring.

For two hours the team watched as the blob grew and began to take shape. It resembled a multicoloured balloon being very slowly filled with dripping water. After twelve hours, the now pinkish blob resembled something like a small rat but it was still growing and the team all decided to retire for the night and check in the morning. With the exception of the two professors Norm and Boran and several other scientist onlookers, the younger ones retired for the night and although never slept, they all chatted about the miracle they where creating.

After three days the team were still there watching the rat when the machine's screens came to life.

'Process complete'

Then information started flashing around the Oven screens and the Theory screens, the professors and the other scientists understood, but nobody was interested. Tu went into the heart of the machine and collected a perfectly cloned white rat. Heart, lungs, brain, eyes, fur, tail an absolute perfect copy of the professors' brown lab rat, except for the fact it was white and very dead.

-Chapter Eleven-



“Nick must be the unluckiest bloke that ever lived” said Spock to Paul the owner of the Cool Banana bar, as Nick hazily drove off on his motorbike and the laughter had died down. They ordered three draft beers and sat outside the bar and Pon made a call on his mobile. Pon, Stu and Spock waited about 30 minutes, and then a black Lexus Lx 470 cruiser stopped in front of them. The electric window slid down and the Cambodian man that was driving spoke to the group,

“Chai?” he directed his question at Pon

“Yes” said Pon.

“Come with me please” said the driver and “hurry” said the agitated man in Khmer

“What does he want?” Stu asked Pon.

“ I have to go with him to meet my contact” said Pon who nodded to the driver, then rose off his chair, picked up his bag and went toward the passenger side of the car.

“Don’t worry my brothers I will be alright, you enjoy yourselves and I will call you later”

“OK” said Stu slightly concerned.

“See you later shit head” said Spock even more concerned “Any problems call us”

Pon got into the car and it drove away.

“Do you reckon he will be OK?” Spock asked Stu.

“Yes mate” replied Stu “Who in their right mind would hassle a man with a mullet like that, you should have give him that daft hat, and then he would have double protection”.

Concerned for all of a minute they finished their beer and decided to go change some Thai Baht into dollar and Riel and go back to Coasters and wait or leave a message for Nick.

Riel the currency of Cambodia, but the preferred currency is the US Dollar .There are approximately 4000 Cambodian Riel to 1 US Dollar

The notes range from a 50 riel to 50000 Riel note. So a pile of Riel is worth very little, so people and business's prefer Dollar notes .But Riel is handy to pay taxi's and tuk-tuk's as they never have change.

Pon had arrived early the previous morning at Stu's room, after he'd collected his relevant documents that Taksin had rushed through and that had Thai immigration working on all night. After the initial happy shock by Stu, he has calmed down enough to invite Pon into the room and composed himself enough to slap the little monk around his ear for waking him up at such an ungodly hour, also because he hadn't done it for months and he felt Pon was due one.

Pon asked Stu to get Spock, as what he had to discuss was for them both to hear.

Stu left the room and thumped on Spock's door.

“Fuck off” bellowed Spock.

“Mate we have a visitor” laughed Stu.

“Tell him to fuck off too” growled Spock.

“It's the mad monk” said Stu.

With the sound of wind breaking and Moo wittering, the door eventually opened and Spock stood in the doorway in a pair of loose boxer shorts inside out, with his tackle hanging out

“What does he want?” asked Spock and looked at his watch.

“I don’t know, put your todger away and we can go find out” laughed Stu as he walked back to his room next door, followed by Spock as he jumped around slipping the old todge back into his shorts.

Pon was sat on the bed talking to Dao about Kim when Stu and Spock came in and sat by the side of him, Spock clipped Pon around his ear, for the same reasons Stu did. Pon related the story of how the box had been switched and his problem with getting into Cambodia unaided, also how he and Taksin had devised a plan, but he would need their help to carry out the plan. His English had improved greatly in the 5 months he had been learning and not seen Stu and Spock, but he still needed Dao to translate, as her English had vastly improved with the constant teachers she had (customers). Pon was relating his story when a sleepy Moo entered the room and sat down.

“What’s the plan then?” said Stu.

Pon told them he had to enter Cambodia as a tour guide and how it would be easier and safer to travel with a group of foreigners, saying he was their Cambodian guide, as he spoke Cambodian fluently and nobody would suspect if he travelled with a group. They would be expecting him to find the relic alone and he now had a fake Cambodian passport. He went onto explain how he was only maybe a day at the most behind the man they knew was responsible and produced out of his bag the

passport photograph taken off the Thai immigration form.

“This is the man” he said as he showed the Photo of Tar to the group “He works for this Colonel and produced a photograph of Colonel Tighe and he is the one I have to avoid if at all possible, he is very powerful and would cause a lot of problems with the monarchy of both countries should I get caught. Although the box had not been reported swapped and maybe Tighe didn’t yet realise the Thais had found out, but Pon and Taksin could not afford to take that chance.

The lads thought for a moment.

“Cambodia” said Stu.

“Yes” said Pon but we have to go in through the southern border at Hat Lek, they will be expecting me at the Poi Pet border”, he went on to explain how Taksin had arranged a contact in Sihanoukville the seaside resort, who was gathering information about Tar’s whereabouts and Taksins contact was not a big fan of Colonel Tighe and he was also Kim’s uncle “so I may get to see my love” smiled Pon.

The two lads thought long and hard about what was being asked of them.

“So” said Spock “You want us to escort you into Cambodia as our tour guide, then go to the seaside and relax while you nip off and get that bloody box back, then come back in a couple of days , correct?”

“Correct” said Pon “that’s all and the palace will pay all the expenses.”

Stu, Spock, Dao and Moo thought long

and hard, after all if the relic was never found it would suit them, but Pon was a friend and Stu and Spock

wanted to see the lady that had captured the heart of the mad monk and the girls were wittering about helping the king and Thailand and more importantly, it was free. (Nick would have loved it if he wasn't already there) Spock looked at Stu,

“Right mate we're in, girls pack your bags we are going to Cambodia”

The girls looked at each other and spoke in Thai to Pon. Pons face turned from a happy smile to a sad droop and spoke again to the girls in Thai and then to Spock and Stu.

“It's Ok my friends, I understand but thank you anyway.”

“What” said Spock “what's happening?”

“We no have passports” said Dao “we cannot go over the border.”

“And we have no time to get them” added Pon

Pon got off the bed and the girls looked at the lads with the pride they just felt at the thought of helping the king, now turned to disappointment that showed on their faces. Pon headed for the door and smiled at the group. “I will see you all when I return” he calmly spoke but knowing now having to regroup and rethink his plan with Taksins help.

“Hang on matey” shouted Spock and looked at Stu who looked at the girls, Stu knew what Spock was thinking and so did the girls and they smiled, pride restored. Pon walked back over to the bed.

“So” went on Spock and nodded at Stu, who returned the nod,

“You want to go into a strange country recover that bloody box, laze on a beach, rescue a damsel in distress, have a wild adventure and go into the heart of danger without us. Spock paused for effect and continued. “Not

on your Nellie” he said and in unison Stu and Spock announced,

“Count us in, when do we leave?”

The two girls came over and hugged their heroes

“We leave immediately” said Pon his happiness and relief etched on his face.

“Have we time for shag first” said Stu and received a clip around his head from an embarrassed Dao.

Pon sat down again and produced a passport and showed it to Stu and Spock.

“Please call me by my new name and handed his Cambodian passport to Spock, who read out loud.

“Shite” said Spock.

“Its pronounced Chai” said Pon.

“Chait-ead” spelled out Spock.

“Its pronounced Chai te-ad” corrected Pon

“Shit head” Spock announced “well that should be easy to remember.

Pon not understanding what a shithead was decided Spocks pronunciation was near enough.

“That’s great beamed Spock I have a little shit” he pointed to Moo “and a shithead” he looked at Pon and chuckled at his own scathing wit.

Pon not knowing what the big lad was prattling on about reached in his bag for his next surprise.

Stu looked at the passport photo of Pon and noticed,

“This isn’t you, this mans got a stupid mullet (bad hair cut) and you’re as bald as a bell end. Pon then produced a wig and slipped it on. The two lads looked and burst out into fits of laughter, joined in by the two girls

“I thought Elvis was dead” cackled Spock tears of laughter welling up in his eyes as Pon adjusted his wig

and smoothed it down. He couldn't see what the fuss about, besides Kim liked Elvis.

After the laughter died down Pon got his bag (containing his pitou, Glave, wharm Lorn and other herbs and potions, his monk's robes plus a few civilian clothes) and left the room. He would wait downstairs in the foyer. Spock and Moo had gone to their room to pack and Dao started packing Stus bag. They would only be gone for about four days Pon had told them if things went to plan, but four days without Dao was a sad prospect.

"But" assured Dao "you are helping the king you will be my superman and Pon did say we have time for a shag" she smiled and left the packing for 30 seconds.

Stu and Dao then went outside the room joined a few minutes later Spock and Moo. Moo had a gleam in her eye but it wasn't the same gleam as Dao's post shag gleam, this was a mischievous grin.

"Ready matey" said Spock.

"Ready" said Stu, a little sad.

"Right girls" announced Spock "we are going to save the world" and he put on his daft hat.

"That's all I need" thought Stu "a mad monk with a moronic mullet and a twat in a hat, some adventure this is going to be."

"Urrrrrh" groaned Spock as white shaving foam oozed out from under his hat, much to the delight of Moo, who burst out laughing joined in by Stu and Dao. Spock looked stunned, but coolly composed himself and carried a kicking screaming Moo back into his room grumbling about 'showing the little shit'.

Howls and screams emanated from Spocks room followed by a slight buzzing hum and then a moments silence, followed by the returning of Moo's ranting and

raving. Spock came out of his room wiping the foam out of his hat and heading toward the elevator

“Come on then lets go, see you in a couple of days Dao” he chuckled as he walked on, leaving Stu to kiss Dao goodbye and join him in the elevator.

Stu looked at Spock beaming from ear to ear and calmly asked

“Remington?”

“Remington” confirmed Spock as the elevator door closed.

Dao rushed into the room too see a tearful Moo standing by the mirror cursing at the now departed Spock and rubbing her eyebrow. The one that remained, that Spock had not shaved off. The lads got out of the elevator and walked towards Pon.

“Come on shithead” ordered Spock and continued walking out of the hotel with Stu and Pon at his side and into the street outside the Sawasdee Hotel. They looked like The Earp brothers walking into the OK Corral to face the Clanton’s. The lads were on another adventure.

They caught a bus from Pattaya to Trat about three hours away, then a mini bus to Hat Lek and the border crossing. Pon exited Thailand with his Thai passport that was the easy part. Then he, Spock and Stu crossed over the 50m stretch of no mans land and across the border into Cambodia. They all went together to the immigration booth and the immigration official looked briefly at Pons passport and engaged Pon in conversation, not paying too much attention to Pon’s Cambodian passport. The lads got an entry visa and went out of the office, where they and Pon got into a waiting taxi.

“What was he talking about” asked Stu referring to the immigration official’s conversation.

“He wanted to know who cut my hair, he liked the style” replied a smug Pon.

The taxi pulled away. Nobody outside the office heard the conversation within a laughter filled office, about the stupid haircut the Cambodian had. He should shave his head rather than parade around with hair like that said one official, which brought roars of laughter from his colleagues, but at least there was no suspicion. The lads had crossed their first hurdle and were now crossing the bridge at Koh Kong and on the way to the Sihanoukville ferry. Pon spoke to the driver and turned to Stu and Spock.

“We have a problem” said Pon and continued on “There is only one ferry a day it left at 0830 and one of the bridges are closed, so we can’t go by road.”

“Oh well” said Stu “we will have to stay the night in Koh Kong its only 1pm we have all day to explore, driver, take us to a hotel.”

There are four river crossings in total between Koh Kong and Sihanoukville. All are being bridged, of which two already completed. The remaining two are almost finished, but at present are being crossed by floating platforms.

The taxi pulled up in the centre of a small town and pointed to a guest house.

“Here is very good” said the driver, knowing he would get a commission should they stay. The lads walked into the reception and booked three rooms, they paid the taxi, who said he would pick them up in the morning and take them to the ferry. They thanked the driver and got their bags from the trunk and went inside the restaurant and

ordered three beers, informing Pon it was a well known fact Cambodian beer was alcohol free. Pon tried to phone his contact to tell him the plan to meet him tomorrow and the lads tried to phone the girls, but their phones wouldn't work so they went to a small mobile phone shop and bought three Cambodian Sim cards, then they all phoned their respective contacts.

Pon arranged a meeting with Kim's uncle Lee, his contact for the following afternoon and Stu phoned Dao and gave her his new Cambodian telephone number. Spock phoned Moo who answered the unfamiliar number and when he spoke, she hung up.

"Got a shitty on mate?" asked Stu

"Yep" replied Spock unconcerned "The one eye browed stropy little shit."

They ordered another beer and decided to order some food then explore.

*Most people know **Koh Kong** as the passage town to and from Thailand, or a convenient stop-over for a visa run from Thailand and the ferry and busses to Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh. It's generally a quiet town, Located on the South-West side of Cambodia, Koh Kong, the capital of Koh Kong province, is a large forested area connected to the mainland by bridges and ferries. Around the town is the Bay of Thailand, Koh Kong Island, the country of Thailand, and mountains and jungles. The people of Koh Kong, speak mainly Khmer (the Cambodian language), and most speak some Thai as well. Most also speak broken English. Prices are usually in Thai Baht. Several Westerners have restaurants, bars, and tour services in Koh Kong, and they all speak English, as well as a host of European languages. Travellers from most countries*

can get a Cambodian visa at the border in Koh Kong for \$20 to \$30 for a 30 day visit. What to do in Koh Kong: Bugger all

Whilst they were eating the owner of the restaurant came from his room and introduced himself.

“Jock from Aberdeen” said a gnarly looking old Scottish man extending his hand.

The lads introduced themselves Stu, Spock and shithead and they enquired of what to do in Koh Kong.

“Flap all” said Jock “you can go back over the bridge to the casinos at the border, or snorkel at one of the beaches, but again this meant crossing back over the bridge. The only other alternative was Safari world.”

The lads never fancied going near the border again, wanting to remain inconspicuous and zoos were on their shitlist, after the last one they visited, a monkey shit on their ice cream. Jock informed them the only thing to see in Koh Kong was the 'chicken farm' which never opened until late so all they would see there at this time of day would be chickens. The only thing really to do during the day would be to get spannered, which was fine by Spock and Stu, but Pon, after a few more beers had realised he had been *Goh hocked* to again (*both in Cambodian and Thai Goh hock means 'lie'*) and after an hour Pon went to lie down feeling worse for wear, shitfaced to be more accurate.

Stu, Spock, old Jock and his young Vietnamese wife sat drinking and chatting all afternoon, there were no other customers in the restaurant or in Koh Kong for that matter, it was a pass through town and people (unless missed connections) rarely stayed. At 4pm the lads went to their rooms for a nap.

They returned to the restaurant at 6 o'clock after unsuccessfully trying to wake Pon and ordered two mince and mash meals and a couple of beers. They were half way through eating when six ladies came in and Jocks wife brought them to the lads table,

"Which lady you want?" said Giau, Jocks wife.

The lads nearly spat their food out.

"What?" said Spock.

"You want fuck" repeated Giau.

"It's a little early" said Stu and not wanting to upset the ladies added "maybe later."

Giau sent the ladies away and the lads carried on eating they were going to wait for old Jock who would drive them to the chicken farm, but Jock was still sleeping off his afternoon session.

Several hours passed now 8 o'clock and the lads were getting juiced. Six more ladies came into the restaurant and Giau brought them to the lads table,

"You want fuck yet?" she enquired

"Not yet" said Spock although a large lady caught his eye, she was not pretty and had home made tattoos but Spock thought she would be sturdy old shag and winked at her "how are you horse?" he joked. The lady smiled and with the others left the restaurant.

Jock eventually came down around 8:45pm and enquired as to whether Giau had been taking good care.

Giau was an attractive small Vietnamese lady who was a lot younger than Jock, the lads took her for being mid twenties, while Jock looked well into his sixties.

"Yeah we're good" said Stu smiling at Giau

"Ok" said Jock "I'll grab a bite to eat and we will go to the farm."

Stu phoned Dao and Spock phoned Moo while they were waiting but again Moo hung up.

“Ready” said Jock and as Giau cleaned away the plates. Stu, Spock and Jock got into his ancient Toyota car and headed for the chicken farm. Jock carried a bottle of Mekong whisky under his car seat and swigged it as they drove. The chicken farm was about 10 minutes away and was along a dirt track road, lined either side with large wooden shacks, each containing girls, mainly Vietnamese all quite young and most very pretty.

The car stopped in the centre, they got out and went and sat at a table, outside one of shacks and ordered three beers. Several ladies came out and sat with them and they bought the girls a drink.

After about two hours the lads now spannered walked into the last shack on the strip, Jock was getting wankered as he was also slurping his whisky.

“Have a few beers here lads, then head back” announced Jock “and if you aren’t taking a lady we will get pissed at my place and Giau will have some come to the restaurant for you” he continued.

Three more beers arrived and Spock looked at the lady bringing the beers.

“Horse” he shouted at the lady.

The horse put down the beers and grabbed Spocks hand and put it up her dress and smiled as Spock probed her knicker-less brown chalice.

“She’ll do” said Spock and the lady sat down with Spock still probing. The four went back to Jocks guesthouse, Spock and Horse went to Spocks room and Jock, Stu and Giau sat and drank some more. Jock drank whisky and beer, Stu stayed on beer and Giau had wine, whilst moaning at Jock about drinking too much.

After an hour, a wankered Jock said he was closing, he and Giau were going to bed. Stu knew this was his cue to leave and go to his room, so he said goodnight to the now arguing couple and went to his room.

Stu could hear Spock and the horse going at it hammer and tongs in the next room. No sign of Pon all evening, he was still rough and slept through. Stu showered and got into bed he was going to watch a bit of TV but decided to sleep and wake up in time for the ferry. Stu was just nodding off, when there came a knock on his door, he got out of bed and put a towel around himself and answered .To his surprise it was Giau who walked passed him and into the room. She had a large towel wrapped around her and stood waiting for Stu to come back inside the room. Stu closed the door and turned to face Giau.

“What’s the matter?” asked Stu.

“Jock no good” she said “too drunk, fall asleep snoring” she then pulled off her towel to reveal a small slender body, with small pert breasts and a little hairy black triangle covering her chalice

“You want fuck yet?” she smiled and slid between Stus sheets.

The next morning Stu, Spock and Pon came down and ate breakfast, served by a happy looking serviced Giau, who had left Stus’ room in the early hours and returned to a still snoring Jock, none the wiser.

Jock was still asleep when they left and Stu told Giau they would maybe return in a few days. The horse had left Spock at 6 am, again another one nicely serviced. The taxi arrived and drove them the five minutes to the waiting ferry, where they bought tickets, boarded the

boat and went to sit downstairs in the large air conditioned seating area within the ferry.

The four hour boat journey was uneventful and they sat mostly on the roof compartment where there was a nice breeze and they could smoke. Both Spocks' hat and Pons wig had nearly blown, off much to the delight of Stu, but managed to hold on to their respective head dresses much to Stus disappointment. The boat docked at 12:30pm and the lads got off, they had to stop at the immigration box. Pon mingled with the other Cambodians and walked past, not being stopped. They caught a waiting tuk-tuk and told the driver they wanted to stay on the beach. The tuk-tuk headed off from the port and through the downtown area to Serendipity beach and into Coasters resort.

They checked into three air-conditioned rooms with private balconies, with spectacular views of the main beach and islands and met David one of the partners. David was a cheerful Australian and introduced himself

.He then introduced them to the Khmer manager

“This is Mappy” informed David “his real name is Ravuth, but everybody calls him Mappy” (Cambodian for porky) anything you need to know or if you want to hire motorbikes just speak to Mappy,” then David went to chat with some other customers while the lads checked in and Mappy furnished them with free guide books and explained where some of the more interesting places in Sihanoukville were located. Ravuth was mid thirties and a happy round faced Cambodian who looked like General Urko from planet of the apes. He had been working at Coasters for five years and he loved it and was well

known in Sihanoukville as the manager of the busiest resort in town, he spoke fluent English, but with a stutter. “You want to hire a mow, mow, motorbike” stammered Mappy, who only stuttered in English.

“Not yet mate we want to look around for a while” said Spock.

The lads went to their rooms, unpacked their small bags and came down to the reception and walked out of Coasters, up a small dirt track to join a tarmac road, they noticed earlier when they arrived. They walked along the road that was lined with restaurants. They then ran into Nick (and Nick ran into a cows fanny).

Pon had now gone to meet his Cambodian contact, so the lads decided to go back to Coasters and wait for Nick (who unbeknownst to them had already scarpered). They got chatting to an ex pat in Coasters restaurant who had lived in Sihanoukville for years, named Shifty the baker. Shifty was a well known jack the lad character who ran a bakery in town but liked to drink on the beach during the afternoons. Shifty told Spock and Stu where the best places to go for good food, English conversation and shag; while the lads listened they marked off the places on the free guide book that they had taken from the reception.

“Tonight lads I will show you around, I will meet you at Spinning Bobs and marked off the Tiki shack on their map.

“See you later” said Shifty after about an hour and left.

“That sounds Ok” said Stu to Spock “and I like this place already” he continued

“Yeah but I don’t know how long we will be staying that’s down to the mad monk, shithead” conveyed Spock.

The two lads went outside the coasters restaurant and lay down on two sun lounges and ordered two beers that were bought over by a pleasant young lady.

“Everything alright lads?” said Dave as he walked on the beach.

“Yes mate” said Stu “everything fine.

“Great lads enjoy yourselves. Oy Dragon!!” David shouted at the lady who just brought over the drinks.

“ Make sure you take good care of these boys and who knows,” David winked at the girl then turning to the lads announced “her real names Srey Longdy but everyone calls her Dragon, she is always looking for a foreign boyfriend, but always scares them away” David once again went to talk to other customers. The lads looked at the two serving girls, both very pretty and they could not understand why srey Longdy had been called Dragon, until she stuck her hand up at Spock, middle finger extended. Stu on the other hand was closely watching the other girl.

“I hope Pon takes his time, I am going to enjoy it here. He looked again at Srey Mom, the other waitress.

Srey means girl and is usually placed before any girl's name Proht is the same for boy but is not used as frequent. Bong or Owahn can be used as an alternative. Bong meaning older and Owahn meaning younger person, same as Non and pee in Thai language.

Pon arrived at Lees' house the other side of Sihanoukville near Hung Sen beach, after about a 15 minute drive. He was taken into the large house by Lee's driver and met Lee, who asked him to take a seat in the conservatory while he got the maid to bring them some

fresh lemon juice. Pon knew briefly of Lee he had seen him a few times at the palace in Phnom Penh and Kim had told Pon Lee was her favourite uncle. He was the Cambodian Royal family foreign affairs officer, who held an unofficial army rank of Brigadier. He was Taksins counterpart and good friend, although Lee never knew of the developing love between his niece and the Elvis impersonator now sat opposite. Pon relayed the full story to Lee and showed him Tars photograph.

“I know, him he is one of Colonel Tighe’s elite commandos, I believe his best.”

Lee went on to tell Pon both Tighe and Tar stayed in Siem Reap, Tar lived in the army barracks and Tighe lived in a large house on the city’s outskirts. Lee produced a large map of Siem Reap and pin pointed Tighe’s house. Lee informed Pon that nothing had been heard about Tighe searching for him, so they must therefore assume that Tighe is unaware that the Thais knew a switch had been made and therefore Pon still had the element of surprise.

“Good” thought Pon “we can leave straight away.”

Lee then produced another map showing the route from Sihanoukville to Siem Reap. They were studying this when the door bell sounded. Brigadier Lee looked at his watch and mumbled “she’s early” and went to answer the door. Lee returned a few minutes later with a very beautiful lady alongside him. The lady looked at Pon and Pon looked back at the lady his heart pounding.

“This is my niece Kim” announced Lee

Kim looked at Pon and smiled

“This is Chai” said Lee “he is an old friend” not realising they knew each other and were now very much in love.

Pon and Kim wai’d each other.

“My niece is marrying soon and wants to discuss something” said Lee “but you must stay for dinner Chai.” “Thank you” said Pon and the brigadier left the room, leaving the two love birds to chat.

Pon explained what he was doing there briefly to Kim and why Kim could not say anything. Kim said she would keep the secret and they kissed briefly before Lee entered the room.

“Excuse me Chai, I must chat to my niece, make yourself at home” said Lee and he and Kim left the room.

“Anywhere Kim is, I am at home” thought Pon

Pon heard the two arguing in the next room but could not hear about what, so he studied the maps Lee had given him. They could hire a car and drive to Siem Reap. Pon could now read maps but he still had one major problem, but thought his two friends could help with this.

Lee and Kim, who had been crying returned to the room after about 30 minutes and Lee announced it was time to eat. The food was ready and they all went to a lavish dining room and started eating. Pon noticed the tension between Lee and Kim but after they had eaten. Lee said to Kim.

“Ok Kim I will see what I can do” which brought a smile to the face of the beautiful Kim.

Then he looked seriously at Pon and rubbed his brow, this was now going to become a big problem.

“When are you leaving Chai?” asked Lee with Kim looking on very interested in the answer

“Tomorrow” said Pon not knowing why, but knowing he still had the element of surprise, so there was no rush, he could spend more time with Kim, even though he knew it would be the last time.

“You must stay the night” ordered Lee “I will have a room made up for you. Kim show Chai around the grounds.”

The two walked around the large grounds and stopped in a gazebo and kissed. It was only the second time they had kissed, the first being a small peck in Lee’s conservatory and this one lingered. With sadness in Kim’s face she told Pon why she had come to see Lee. She explained her parents were traditional and this arranged marriage was going ahead no matter what, but they always listened to her father’s brother and would take notice of him so she had come to ask her uncle to try and get her parents to stop the wedding. Pons heart leapt and he held on to Kim.

“He is the only person I have told that I love someone else” and she kissed Pon again. They had a day just walking and talking around the grounds and at night they ate and together with Lee watched English football on Lee’s 40” plasma TV. Pon had not told Kim exactly why he was in Cambodia, just that he had to find someone and something. Kim never pressed the fact, she didn’t care just the fact he was here was enough for her. They all went to their rooms at 10pm and as the Brigadier closed his door, Kim ran silently to Pons room and entered. They kissed again and lay together on the bed, they fell asleep in each others arms very content.

Pon awoke at 4 am and gently stroked Kim’s face; she woke up and kissed Pon.

“I will return to my room and see you later my love”

Kim got off Pons bed, knocking over his bag containing the maps and files given to him by Lee. A photograph spilled out and Kim picked it up and stared at it. Pon sat up and said “it’s Ok”

“I know this man” said Kim, handing Colonel Tighe’s photograph to Pon “He is ex Khmer Rouge and very dangerous, is it him you’re after?” Kim enquired

“Not at this time” said Pon, unsure what to say.

“Please my love do not anger this man, he will kill you for certain” pleaded Kim not knowing that Pon was a Tinju assassin, all she ever saw Pon as was an escort to the Crown Prince.

Pon held her again and pecked her on the cheek “Don’t worry my love, I will be perfectly safe, besides I have two trained bodyguards with me (referring to Spock and Stu) I will return to see you again, my mother has already foretold this.

Kim left the room not convinced and with a heavy heart returned to her room, closed the door and fell onto her bed and wept “I should have told him” she thought.

They all gathered outside Lees house after eating breakfast and then exchanged pleasant farewells, it tied Pons heart into knots just to Wai Kim as a goodbye, this could be the last time he sees her if her uncle could not dissuade her parents, the wedding was only a few days away. Lee handed Pon a set of car keys and pointed to a Range Rover Intercooler 4WD “take this” said Lee “save you hiring one and keep you inconspicuous”.

Pon thanked Lee.

“The only problem is” said Pon “I never learned to drive a car, only a motorcycle, but if your driver could drive me to Coasters resort I will collect my team, I am sure they can drive.”

The Tinju prime Masters two trained bodyguards and chauffeurs, were still festering in their beds, snoring their heads off after a great night out. They had spent the day relaxing in the sun outside Coasters and trying to chat up

unsuccessfully the two lady staff. They had arranged to meet Shifty at 8pm and had managed to get Dragon and Mom to eat with them first.

The two girls could not spend the night time with them they had to get permission from their parents and not on a first date.

“Harder than Thailand” said Spock.

“Yes mate” said a disappointed Stu.

They had told the girls they weren't sure how long they would stay it was down to their friend shithead. The girls agreed that if the lads were staying a few days, they would go to Bamboo Island with them for a swim on their day off. The lads were happy about this as Stu thought Mom would look great in a bikini. Although he wasn't that concerned about a relationship going anywhere, he loved Dao and he missed her, but he thought he might as well enjoy himself.

***Bamboo Island or Koh Russie** is a small island within a group of small islands about 50 minutes boat ride from the mainland beaches. Bamboo Island has several traditional bungalow resorts. The most popular of these is the Coasters run bamboo beach bungalows, which has the only restaurant on the beach and owned and managed by an old, selectively deaf, randy Canadian named Wayne. Bamboo Island is a popular tranquil get away for both foreigners and Khmers, as there is nothing to do but relax, swim or snorkel on the many reefs at tranquillity bay which is a small bay on the island. The island is the only one in this group inhabited. There is no mains power to the island and it is only run on small generators, which are usually turned off early evening leaving you to just enjoy the light of the moon and if you*

*listen carefully it is said to be so peaceful you can hear
the stars twinkle*

Spock wasn't concerned at all about Moo. She had not spoken to him since they left and she kept hanging up the phone, besides Spock wanted to get into Dragons bikini. The girls finished work at 5pm and they all went to eat at the Aquarium, a beach front restaurant. They chatted and ate. Spock had noticed something on the wall in the Coasters reception that had interested him and he asked Dragon about it.

"You need to speak to Rob, one of the other partners, he did the course" said Dragon "he will be there now, he works the night shift."

They finished eating and the girls went home. The lads returned to Coasters and met Rob, a small Englishman, with a similar build to Stu. Rob explained to them that the 1 metre high wooden broken propeller and the pictures on the wall they referred to, was from a paramotor that he had crashed whilst on the four day course, that he had done with his friend, 'Swoop' Oliver.

This had wetted the lad's appetite, until Rob explained that you had to do a lot of running to take off, hence why he crashed. His running consisted of two paces, then instead of soaring up into the clouds like a majestic eagle, ended up on his arse in the sand, with the propeller whirring away and breaking against the sand. They all had a laugh and Rob bought them over two drinks. "Try this" he said as he handed the lads two John Collins cocktails "very refreshing" smiled Rob.

Stu and Spock not wanting to offend, thanked him and tasted the fruit based concoction

"Very nice, cheers matey" said Stu taking another swig.

Rob went about talking to other customers.

The lads poured the cocktail into the sand and ordered two beers to take the taste away. Nick had not turned up, so the lads decided they would wait no longer and set off for their first night in Sihanoukville.

Powered Paragliding or Para motoring, as it's known in Europe, is one of the fastest growing sports in the world. Due to its simplicity (no hangar, runway, or trailer needed) and surprisingly low cost, the freedom of flight is available to all .A pilot quite simply straps on a 2 (or in some cases 4) stroke motor, launches a paragliding wing, runs and lifts off. After an hour or two of buzzing around at heights varying from 1 - 3000ft, you can touch down lightly either at the same take off point or another. The beauty of powered paragliding is its portability. You can transport all of your equipment easily on a plane, in a car or even a tuk-tuk! This allows you to access varied flying sites throughout the country and the rest of the world. The training is short and one of the world's best training schools is in Sihanoukville.

At 7pm they went back to the main road and to the first place Shifty had marked off for them to meet, The Tiki. It was there they met the man Shifty fondly referred to as spinning Bob.

Spinning Bob had a large wooden built bar on stilts, the lads went up some wooden stairs; they sat down at the bar and ordered two beers. They were the only two in the bar and they told Bob (A friendly American from California who resembled the actor Robert Shaw, but older and of Croatian and Irish parents) that they were waiting for Shifty. Bob, happy about having two new

customers at the bar immediately ordered himself a drink and turned up the volume on his C.D player, which was blaring out Bob's favourite Hawaiian singer Gaby Pahanui, which sounded to the lads like Pavarotti gargling a bumble bee . Bob then proceeded to tell Stu and Spock how he ended up in Cambodia He had left Nelles air force base prison after 5 months on probation. He was arrested after he had taken a hooker home and while doing the business he noticed she had stopped groaning, in fact she was dead. He went on to tell the lads that he liked prison so much tried to open a pizza hut inside.

When the case eventually went to trial he was acquitted. He attempted other dubious activities to get back inside prison and when all his attempts failed, he got into trouble with the FBI, he fled to Hawaii, there he operated big game fishing tours, then after many years went to Thailand and then to Cambodia, where he married and had a beautiful baby daughter which he and his wife named Sarah, it was Bobs first child at the ripe old age of 65. The more of the story Bob told, the faster he drank, the more excited he became and the young girl serving behind the bar cringed, she had seen and heard the story many times and knew what was coming next.

“And the best part” shouted the now excited Bob “the hookers name was Merci” then he got off his stool, laughing out loud and started spinning around, laughing to himself, every now and then stopping, looking at the lads then continuing with his laughing and spinning.

“Sorry I'm late lads,” came a voice from behind them.

“Oh you got Bob spinning already, a little early Bob,” said Shifty as Bob stopped and said Hi to Shifty, then carried on with his routine.

“An Anchor please Tina” Shifty requested from the barmaid.

“How about you lads?” He asked Spock and Stu

“No mate were fine” answered Stu

“Ok we will drink up and hit the town” said Shifty and ordered Bob a vodka to stop him spinning, it was making them all dizzy.

They tagged along with Shifty all night. He took them around the downtown area to several bars that he knew, these, observed the lads was unlike the tourist beach, it was a lot quieter and more of a community of ex pats. They went to victory hill and were getting quite spannered when Shifty announced “We’ve done the Hill now lets go mountaineering” and got into the tuk-tuk that had been with them all night.

“Blue mountain, Windy” Shifty ordered the driver and he smiled and they set off.

The tuk-tuk headed out of the town and up a dirt track road. It rocked back and forth as Windy the driver tried to avoid the mounds and potholes on the small dirty street that contained small huts and shacks that was buzzing with life, small massage parlours with girls whooping at Windy to stop. The tuk-tuk pulled into an open courtyard with a large covered seating area and surrounding the courtyard were 20 chalet type rooms, the outside painted in a bright luminous green. The lads were shown to a table in the seating area and about 30 young Vietnamese ladies surrounded them. They ordered their beers and surveyed the gaggle of beauties now all around them. Their beer came and Shifty said with a glint in his eye.

“When in Rome lads” and took a small lady from the back of the bunch. The mamasan who knew Shifty told

him room 1 was available, Shifty and the girl headed off to room 1. The mamasan was slightly older than the other girls and quite tall and lean.

“Must be his regular” said Spock to Stu seeing how quickly Shifty had chosen.

“The large mamasan then turned her attention to the lads.

“Which lady you want, short time” she asked

There were so many and the lads hadn’t been given any chance to look.

“Maybe later” said Stu

Within seconds the mass of girls dispersed to wait for the next batch of eager customers. Spock and Stu looked around for the next few minutes; both foreigners and Khmers were going into and coming out of the rooms. all looking very contented. The mamasan returned several minutes later to the boys table.

“Well” she said “Seen anyone you like yet?”

“You’ll do” said Spock to the mamasan, expecting her to go and get a replacement.

“Ok she said but I am \$10,”she grabbed Spocks hand and led him into one of the rooms.

Stu sat, drank his beer and tried to look as if he wanted to be left alone. Spock and the lady entered the room. The dirty room must have housed at least three girls, piles of clothes were discarded everywhere. She calmly removed her clothes and instructed Spock to shower in the filthy cubicle at the back, which he did, noticing a bin full of used condoms on the floor, this put Spock off a little and he returned after his cold shower (which was a ladle of cold dirty water taken from a large stone well full of water). The lady was waiting on the bed, with her next pile of new condoms within easy reach. Spock lay down and tried to kiss her, she immediately pulled away and

put a condom on his now active todger and started to rub and suck Spock's todger, she then mounted Spock and rapidly thrusting Spock in and out of her. Spock came quickly, the lady removed his condom and went into the shower room and washed herself down. She put on her clothes and held her hand out for \$10. Spock gave her \$10 and went to rejoin Stu.

"Bloody hell mate that was a short time, less than 4 minutes" laughed Stu

"That was shit" mumbled Spock "I was raped" and calmly took a swig from his still cold beer.

Shifty joined them about 20 minutes later and enquired why they hadn't taken anyone.

"Someone did" said Stu pointing to Spock and laughing.

"I was violated" mumbled Spock.

The two others laughed at Spock, they finished their beers and got back into the tuk-tuk, and the mamasan came up and said "See you again"

To which Spock replied "Not in this life you won't."

The tuk-tuk went back to the dirt track and returned the two spannered lads to Coasters and they went to bed.

The next morning Pon woke them early and after the morning ear clipping had been dished out, Pon told them of his meeting with Lee and they had to leave now and get to Siem Reap. The lads looked at the map Pon had brought and estimated the journey would take approximately eight hours. They checked out of Coasters and said goodbye to Dragon and Mom, but said they would be back and take them to Bamboo Island. They left instructions that if Nick turned up to give him their mobile number, as they were now heading to Siem Reap. They got into the range rover. Now they were kings of the road. They dropped Lee's driver off at the brigadier's

house, where Pon caught another glimpse of Kim and they headed off towards Siem Reap with a still tired Spock at the wheel and Stu snoring away in the back.

-Chapter Twelve-



The gathered scientist stared at the dead rat not understanding what had gone wrong. They had all the calculations correct and the dead animal was an exact copy of its living breathing donor. This was now a problem for the scientists to solve and the three software specialists decided to leave the citadel and introduce CAIN to the outside world and after a huge party they left the next day promising to keep the citadel a secret. Now it was the task of Rumble and Ngem to solve the riddle with the help of their sons, daughters in laws and remaining scientists.

Boran named this project: Ophiuchus, the new beginning.

Ophiuchus the 13th sign of the zodiac which was well known through 15-1700's as the centre of the universe The costellation is situated in the dark rift between Sagittarius and Scorpio and it is speculated the Catholic Church had the sign removed from records in the late 16th century during the inquisition periods. It was predicted when three solar eclipses occurred in the same lunar year and when the sun rose in alignment with Ophiuchus it would mark the return of the antichrist and Armageddon. This date was worked out on the Gregorian calendar by Nostradamus and the ancient Mayans as

2012. This is also the reason the number 13 is considered to be unlucky.

This prediction Boran also firmly believed in. He had studied and was interested in Nostradamus' work but he interpreted the scriptures very differently to the doom and gloom merchants. Boran saw it as not the end of civilization. But with a little help from the human race it could be a new beginning for the planet we fondly call home and the only planet we know that has chocolate.

They performed an autopsy and microanalysis on the dead rat; they took countless tissue samples but could find no reason why the animal had not lived. They repeated the process several times over the next few months with different specimens, monkeys, dogs, cats but all produced the same result, a perfect replica but dead. Even attempting to artificially ventilate and shock start the heart failed to animate the animals.

Then in the August of 2007 Norman Junior had an idea and spoke to the team.

“Maybe the problem is, we have just thrown the thing all together in the mixing process and not done it the same way as nature, in other words slowly and piece by piece” Norm Junior continued “maybe we should start at the beginning with a plain canvas and add the picture later, then same as a computer build the machine the circuits and hardware, then add the memory and programs. The other scientists listened to Norm Junior’s analogy and Boran and Rumble looked at each other and smiled.

“Of course” said Rumble “that makes perfect sense well done son” and patted his son proudly on the back.

“Ok” said Boran “back to the drawing board”

It only took several more weeks for the Ophiuchus project to be tried again, although this time with some changes. The oven made the cells first for the skeleton and within a few days a skeleton appeared on the centre pad, then the muscles, white cells, red cells and platelets. After several more days a rat had taken shape on the centre pad. The rat was covered by a layer of transparent membrane, through this skin you could see all the organs and muscles formations, it looked liked someone had skinned the poor creature, but the heart and lungs were both visible and both functioning. They had developed a way of injecting all the cells into the body at specific times, by an apparatus that resembled a small rubber blanket with 1000's of tiny needles, which could be enlarged or reduced in size depending on the region they were trying to implant, this they called the 'shroud of life'

"Right" said Rumble now add the paint

The oven injected through the shroud, the synthesized DNA cells that contained the characteristics.

Then they waited.

It only took several hours for the cells to bind with the plain DNA cells and when the shroud was removed, there was a white living breathing rat which stood motionless on the pad.

"Right" said rumble "lets program it."

This time a small robotic syringe came into action and injected the rat at the base of its skull and injected 100000 Nerals, RNA enhanced neurotrophins cells into the rats hypothalamus.

There was silence for several moments. This they expected, it would take time for the Nerals to convert to Neurons, but after only one hour and a half, the rat

seemed to twitch into life and as its short term memory returned, it started to look around, then slowly walked on the pad, looking around at its new surroundings, then dropped dead.

There was a silence as the scientists just stared at the rat. The silence was broken by Boran

“Well” said the happy optimist “at least it works and I think I know the problem. I suspected this could happen, but we will have to autopsy the animal to confirm my hypothesis.”

The team although a bit deflated gathered up the dead creature and started more tests. A few weeks later they were ready to try the experiment again. The same process as before skeleton, muscles and blood only this time they had altered the cells to create a synthetic oxygen carrying cell, which adhered better to chromosome and enzymes more efficiently. They discovered from the post mortem, that most of the original blood cells in the previous test had died before the DNA characteristic cells had been added, also as Boran suspected they could not use a live subject, as it was shock that primarily killed the first test subject. The memories were the same and as the neurons grew the memory cells were formed. As the short term, recent memory returned the poor creature couldn't fathom out why it was in two places at once. The shock on its new brain tissue was too much for its unready new body. The internal carotid artery in the centre of its brain exploded killing it instantly.

25th December 2007 was not only a special day

in the Christian calendar, but also in the citadel as a living breathing walking rat was now happily chewing on some cheese in the centre of the oven pad, with the sound

of Mozart playing in the background and happy cheering team of scientists merrily praising each other for their contribution in creating 'Adam' the first.

They gathered up Adam and put him in a cage outside, in the pasture area. All the inhabitants stroked him and petted him, he enjoyed the attention but couldn't understand it. His last memory was in a glass case and smelling a strange substance, then falling asleep alone. Then he only remembered waking up a few hours ago and was a little unsteady "and now the humans are feeding me and petting me" he thought and he couldn't understand what the fuss was about, but he would enjoy it and when he was released from the cage, he strutted around lapping up the attention. When all the merriment had died down, Rumble and Ngem returned to the lab and started the process again this time using a monkey hair from a humanely killed macaque, commonplace in the jungle surrounding Ta Prohm. The result was the same after only a fortnight a monkey was scampering around the lab with the two old professors trying to catch and cage it. With the continued success of the Ophiuchus project Professor Rumble and Ngem sat down and in deep discussion decided on whether to give their process to the world. They were joined by their sons and other scientists who were involved in the project. They nearly all agreed that the world was not ready for this technology yet and knowing the superpowers they would use the project for military use.

Rumble disagreed, he wanted the process available and credit his original mentor Rosalind Franklyn as playing a large part of this find, as it was her work that started the whole thing off and she deserved the recognition that Rumble had always thought was stolen from her. The

team discussed this long and hard and eventually came to the conclusion the outside world neither could, nor would use the process for the correct reasons, but if they could educate and bring together the world and make it a more peaceful place to be, then they would allow the process to be shared, but that time was certainly not now. Norman Rumble was now almost 70 years old and alone, he had worked his entire life for science and most of his middle age researching in this field to give Rosalind recognition and in the years since his beloved Theory had been gone, he had been working tirelessly in something he never dreamed would be achieved in his lifetime. But it was, now, he wanted something for his tireless and unselfish work, he wanted something that because of his work he could now get. He wanted his life back.

“We will make a human being” he announced.

“What?” said the gathered scientists.

“We will make a human” Norman repeated

“We aren’t ready for that step Norm” said Boran, knowing who Rumble wanted to reincarnate.

“We are” said Rumble “it is the same for any living creature, we can create anything, the process as we know is successful and therefore, theoretically can make anything or anyone”

“It’s too soon” said Boran.

“Too soon” bellowed Norm “We are generations too soon .We never expected to achieve what we have in our lifetime we have no reason to wait and I say we go now.”

The team looked shocked, especially Boran and Norm Junior who had never seen his father lose his temper before. Boran went over to the enraged old professor and put his hand on his shoulder.

“I understand old friend” said Boran.

They had been colleagues and friends now for most of their adult life and Boran had to make Norm understand that now was not the right time

“Why?” said Norman and kept on asking the same question which the group could only reply we need more tests, to which Norm stated that this would be a test like any other, he called them all short sighted. After a few hours of lengthy and heated debate and private talks between Boran and Junior, the team finally yielded.

“Ok said Boran as chairperson for the rest of the group to Norman “You have done so much for us we will grant your request and create a human. The playing god card came into the equation which Rumble shrugged off saying it was too late for that and if god had given them the knowledge to create the machine, he must have a plan.

“There is a stipulation though” said Boran

“Well! What is it?” said the now happy and victorious Rumble.

“We choose who will be cloned” said Boran.

“That’s obvious” pointed out Norman “Someone recently deceased, someone whose life touched so many others in the citadel, it is obvious who it will be” exclaimed Norm.

“My beloved wife, his beloved mother and Cain’s grandmother” Norm continued and pointed at Norm Junior for a back up.

The back up never came and as the rest of the team left the room leaving Norman, Boran and Norm’s son all holding hands, the sadness now etched in the tearful old eyes of Rumble.

“Why son, why my old friend?” he pleaded.

Both old Boran and Norm Junior had tears running down their faces.

“Because father” whispered Junior “I don’t want to lose my mother again if we fail, do you want to take that risk. Let us try someone else that the world has already forgotten, then if we succeed then we can bring back mum, but if we fail we can keep working towards it.”

Rumble had a long hard think, his life was coming to an end, this may be his last chance, they were all uncertain of the time frame to create a human, or if with the complicated human structure and brain it would be even at all possible, although Theory should have no problems with sequencing, so therefore the oven should have no problem producing a human.

Professor Rumble pondered what had just been said by his son and replied,

“You are right my son and you my old friend, I am sorry for my outburst” croaked Norman they all hugged and kissed

“But if not Theory then who?” asked Norman

That answer came several days later as they were putting instructions into Theory for creating the human blueprint.

One of the most anticipated targets for cloning was once the Woolly Mammoth, but attempts to extract DNA from frozen mammoths have been unsuccessful, though a joint Russo-Japanese team is currently working toward this goal. In 2002, geneticists at the Australian Museum announced that they had replicated DNA of the extinct Thylacine (Tasmanian Tiger), from DNA extracted from a fossilised canine tooth.

Patty walked into Norman’s office, with Norm Jnr, Tu, Anne and Boran.

“Here is who” said a smiling Patty and tapped at the keypad on Norms’ desk top computer and linked with her own.

The screen filled with newspaper articles from the Bangkok post dated 26 December 2007 about a sacred holy relic that went on display to the public that day. It went on to describe the bejewelled box and its 2500 year old contents, stating the box had not been opened for around 2000 years.

Norman read the article with interest

“How will we get cells after 2000 years” asked Norm now intrigued.

“It’s a well known fact” said Patty “teeth enamel lasts for millennia, all the archaeologists will tell you that cells have been found in tooth enamel, if the box has been sealed for 2 millennium they should contain at least a few cells for the ‘cell sniffer’.” Boran nodded his agreement “and” continued Patty what “better person to introduce back into the world, it was what the Ophiuchus project was designed for, to bring peace and tranquillity back to the world, a new beginning and what better person to return to the planet than the ultimate enlightened human being:

Prince Siddhartha Gautama

The Buddha:

Siddhārtha Gautama, in Sanskrit, or Siddhattha Gotama, in Pali, was a spiritual teacher from ancient India and the founder of Buddhism. He is generally recognized by Buddhists as the Supreme Buddha (Sammāsambuddha) of our age. The time of his birth and death are uncertain: most early 20th-century historians date his lifetime from circa 563 BCE to 483 BC.

Gautama, also known as Śākyamuni or Shakyamuni (Skt.; Pali: Sakyamuni; English: “sage of the Shakyas”), is the key figure in Buddhism, and accounts of his life, discourses, and monastic rules were said to have been summarized after his death and memorized by the sangha. Passed down by oral tradition, the Tipitaka, the collection of teachings attributed to Gautama by the Theravada, was committed to writing some centuries later.

-Chapter Thirteen-



It was hot July day; Detective Inspector Donal Crinigan was sat in his eight floor office, at New Scotland Yard holding a telephone receiver in his hand and a shocked look over his face.

“What just happened there?” he thought as he replaced the receiver. “This is becoming well out of my league, I am only a footslogging copper and this is becoming like something off the x-files.”

“Rock” he hollered through his open office door

“Yes sir” came the reply from Detective Nathan Rock from the workstation outside.

“Get me the number of Mulder and Skully you little bollix,” he hollered, much to the amusement of the other detectives in earshot.

“Pardon sir?” queried Rock.

“Nothing, get back to work” said Crinigan as he got up and closed his office door and reflected the events that had recently occurred.

The body from Cambodia had arrived two days ago and taken to the Morgue, where O’Donnel and his forensics team had started work immediately and redone the post mortem examination. They acquired all relevant data and set to work. O’Donnel had called Crinigan to the morgue first thing that morning. Donal hated the morgue it

always left him with the smell of Hycaline and formaldehyde, lingering on his clothes for the whole day, but today he had spoken to O'Donnel, who had told him that it was necessary he attended. The report was finished, but he advised Donal to come down before he filed it.

"Here is something you really need to see and get your teeth into" said O'Donnel with excitement in his voice.

Crinigan walked out of the metropolitan Police main building and into the forensic section at the rear. He was met in the corridor by O'Donnel and escorted with a chattering Brendan saying they were wrong. They entered the morgue through large vulcanised rubber swing doors. The forensics lab in the Metropolitan police was one of the worlds best, it contained all the most modern and up to date analysis machines available and the walls of the large morgue was covered in blue cobalt ceramic tiles giving the feeling of being in an immense bathroom.

"Wrong about what?" asked Crinigan.

"The samples" said O'Donnel "they do come from the same body and not two as we first suspected," he led Crinigan to an autopsy table where a large operating theatre light hung central to the table, which was shining onto where a body of a thirty something year old Caucasian male lay, the torso splayed and the internal organs were either in sample jars, or on plates of analysis machines and dissected. The face of the corpse Crinigan noticed was contorted in a look of pure terror.

"I thought the body was in the dry well, therefore in the heat for about 10 days before being discovered" commented Crinigan "this body looks fresh" he went on. O'Donnell knew the shrewd detective would pick up on this fact straight away and stated

“The Internal carotid artery seemed to have exploded, brought on by some kind of shock and the brain has been dead for at least two weeks” explained O’Donnel “but the cells in the body are still active and reproducing, albeit now very slowly.”

“How is that possible?” Crinigan asked

O’Donnel went on to explain how the blood cells had been somehow altered to carry their own supply of synthetic oxygen that didn’t die, but he went on to explain they would and at the rate they were now replicating and it should be very shortly. He showed Crinigan a photo scan of the femurs bone marrow which looked like a honeycomb. This was not a natural structure and neither were the cells. O’Donnel went onto explain about as far as they could figure out the bones of the skeleton were the oldest thing in the corpse, he then went on to tell the shocked detective that according to the tests they had performed on the bones they were only a few months old, in fact nothing about this corpse was usual said a puzzled O’Donnell.

“Have you got an identity for me so we can at least inform someone’s next of kin” said a still confused Crinigan.

Crinigan was handed a medical folder and an identification sheet.

“Not exactly” said O’Donnel and went over to the side wall where x-rays light boxes were displayed in a bank of ten.

“The DNA, blood and fingerprint suggests this person” and he showed Crinigan the completed identity form with a name address date of birth occupation and next of kin “but look” he said

And he slid a small dental x – ray next to the skull and dental x- ray already on the display.

“This is our friend’s here.” he said as he pointed to the corpse. “And this is the person who we have identified” and tapped the ID paper Crinigan held.

“Unless his teeth grew back, they don’t match” noticed Crinigan.

Then O’Donnel opened another envelope and slid another two x-rays side by side.

“Our John Doe here is this one” he said and pointed to the x-ray on the right “and this one is supposedly the ID.”

Crinigan studied the identical x- rays but picked up on the fact one had, had a recent fracture on his right clavicle. O’Donnel congratulated Crinigan on picking up on that and showed Crinigan an accident and emergency photograph taken December 2007 from Pattaya Bangkok Memorial Hospital of a small shaven bald spot on a head and ten sutures, O’Donnel went over to the head of the corpse

“According to the photographs and diagnostic casualty reports, it should be right here” and pulled the hair away from the spot marked.

Crinigan looked.

“No scar” he noticed.

“Right” said O’Donnel “and no indication of any childhood disease or any illness, in fact if you want me to put an age on this body despite how it looks, I would say this body is only several months old, furthermore I could state, this man has been made or at least altered.

“Is it a hoax?” asked Crinigan clutching at straws “did this person actually live?”

“Briefly” added O’Donnel.

“What is the cause of death” inquired Crinigan

“His internal carotid artery literally exploded due to shock, he died terrified of something, which is all I can tell you.”

“So” said Crinigan “what you are telling me is.... A,” Crinigan looked at the notes he had and continued, “A supposedly 36 year old man with a few month old body, died of fright.”

O’Donnel corrected him “a modified or created few months old body. Yes that’s about the size of it.”

“What a load of old bollocks” shouted Crinigan, “are you talking about little green men?”

“I honestly don’t know inspector” said a confused and mystified Coroner.

“Its got us all beat here” he went on to add,

“This level of genetic engineering could not have occurred in this date and time” he went on “we just haven’t the technology to sequence, replicate and grow a human. This technology was still centuries, probably millennia away” explained O’Donnel.

“What about that CAIN process the computer world has gone crazy upon?” asked a now frustrated Crinigan.

“That has supposedly enhanced computers to the next level of evolution, or so they boast.

O’Donnel thought for a moment and replied

“That has only been developed a short time and they still don’t know the possibilities for that. This technology is still far advanced, maybe even for CAIN.

“So” said a now perturbed detective,

“We are back to little green men” he glared at O’Donnel.

“Maybe”, said O’Donnel “or Frankenstein, we just don’t know”

“Let me get this straight” said Crinigan formulating his facts.

“Little green men travelled the stars, spent light years getting here, grabbed a.....again he looked at his papers,” grabbed a 36 year old builder’s labourer from Brighton, genetically altered him, and dropped him off in a well inside an ancient Cambodian temple. Then scared the bejesus out of him and left him dead for us to find. Is that what you’re telling me Brendan?”

O’Donnel looked at his Irish colleague and stated

“Donal, I have given you the fact, that’s all I can do.” He continued. “You are the detective, you piece it together, and my report will state only this man died of a ruptured Berry aneurysm of the internal carotid artery in the circle of Willis (blood vessels in the base of the brain).”

Crinigan looked at the ID papers in front of him. He studied the next of kin details.

“Right” he said out loud

“It’s time to do some real detective work then isn’t it?”

Crinigan then strode out of the morgue and walked back into the main building and back into his office,

“Rock” he shouted.

“Yes sir” shouted detective Rock.

“Bring me a coffee and come in here, you may be useful for once in your life” hollered the inspector.

Rock brought in the coffee and they both sat in front of Crinigans’ crime computer.

“Right” he said to detective Rock “Here is the problem, we have a body possibly a homicide, no motive, don’t know what opportunity don’t have a murder weapon in fact we have sod all, where do we begin?” he waited for a response which came surprisingly quickly for Nathan Rock

Detective Rock took the ID information from the folder.

“We have a next of kin name and address sir, how about we start with that?” he said and tapped in the name and address into the computer

“Then we might get some light shed on this mystery” thought Crinigan.

“Good lad we will make a copper out of you yet” laughed Crinigan.

A name address and phone number with other information about two people flashed across the screen. The victim had no previous convictions and that’s what I need thought Crinigan, as he studied the screen and wrote down a telephone number.

“Make yourself scarce lad, this is going to be difficult enough” said Crinigan and detective Rock left his office.

Crinigan composed himself and dialled the Brighton Police station and spoke to the chief constable, then after a few minutes dialled the number he had written down.

“Hello” said a ladies voice on the other end after a short ringing.

“Hello” said Donal “Is that Mrs Lorraine Stephenson?”

“Yes” said Lorraine “Who is this and you had better not be selling anything.”

“This is Detective Inspector Donal Crinigan of the Metropolitan Police and I am afraid I have some bad news for you. We have a Mr Nicholas Godfrey on report as staying at your address is that correct?” asked Crinigan.

“Nick? Yes he’s my brother, he stays with me and my husband, why what has he done?” asked Lorraine.

“He has done nothing Mrs Stephenson, I am afraid I have some bad news for you. I am afraid your brother Nicholas is dead, I am truly sorry but we have your brother’s body with us here, I have sent a woman

constable to your address to counsel you and arrange for you to visit us here in London. We have some questions you maybe able to help us with.” said Crinigan with remorse in is voice.

As expected the phone went silent.

“I am truly sorry for you loss and I am sorry to break the news over the telep.....

“Hang on” said Lorraine interrupting the Detective.

“Nick” she hollered then silence

“Nick” she shouted again “Get your arse down here, one of your numb nut mates is on the phone and wants to speak to you, don’t worry it doesn’t sound like those two. This idiot’s Irish”

-Chapter Fourteen-



Some of the scientists and technicians in the citadel were still in doubt over whether they should be replicating a human, all were Buddhists and to have the chance to meet their holy prophet in their lifetime was a chance too good to pass up, after several hours of debate all decided to agree and all set about with gusto at the project in hand.

The Oven made a plain human cell (only bone and muscle and synthetic oxygen carrying blood cells, sequenced with no characteristics) and completed the instructions to Theory and waited after a few hours the oven sprang to life mixing and whirring.

“All we can do now” said Rumble “is wait and see”

Norman had asked Tighe to use his connections and influence to obtain the holy box.

“You can assure the Thais that it won’t be harmed and they also benefit from this project, as will the rest of the world.” assured Rumble.

Tighe went to the citadel a few days later to obtain information on what the professor actually wanted and to see his brothers and get some pumpkin custard. The brothers and Norm were happy to see Tighe, who, now due to his political and military duties had little spare time to visit. Tighe wanted to come now, he had some

news he wanted to share, so the timing was good for them all. Tighe came in through the temple elevator and straight to Norm's office. He hugged his old adopted father and asked where Norm Junior and Tu were.

Norman said they were at Tu's residence dome and were waiting with Roth for Tighe to go and eat. Tighe asked Norman and Boran to leave their work for a short while and come to the living area and Tu's house, he had an announcement.

The family gathered at Tu's residence dome and Tighe produced a bottle of Johnny Walker black label whisky and four golden envelopes, he handed one to Norman and Junior. One to Boran and Roth and one to Tu and Anne.

"You sly old dog" said Norm Junior as they all gathered around and hugged Tighe, the betrothed.

"Who's the lucky lady?" asked Tu.

Tighe told them all about his fiancé and Norm Junior shouted,

"The lucky sods got a virgin" which he received a dirty look off Patty for his outburst.

They opened their golden coloured invites and looked at the date 20th May "that's only a few months away" said Tu.

"If things work out well here, we may have someone rather special to conduct the service" he laughed.

They all, with (the exception of Boran and Norman who were busy monitoring the oven) partied that night and the next morning, Tighe visited Rumble who showed him the few month old news article about the holy box.

"I will see what I can do Norm" said Tighe "and don't worry you shall definitely have it one way or another."

"Thanks son" said Norman and hugged Tighe and gave him an envelope containing \$20000 which Tighe refused,

until Norman pleaded with him to accept because Norman had not contributed to Norm Juniors secret wedding, so he didn't want to feel ignored this time for this son and he said it would help Tighe and his new wife with a new start.

"As long as you are there with the rest of the family, it will do you good to get away from the mole hole" said Tighe, then reluctantly accepted the money.

"I wouldn't miss it for anything" assured Norman and that goes for the rest of us" he continued.

Colonel Tighe left the citadel and went home to start making phone calls to obtain the box for his adopted father, by fair means or foul.

Over the next few weeks as they were waiting for the Oven, they made a few changes to the machine. They didn't want the replicated human to wake up in the middle of the machine, which would have caused the ancient holy soul (that had never seen a light bulb, let alone a 21st century looking machine) to have a seizure, because at this stage his body would not have readjusted or settled and any shock would have surely caused a major reaction, the same as the rat previously. They made a small hospital ward in the room adjacent and attached the fibre optics from the oven to the monitors, scanners and shroud of life, through the wall so the large machine wasn't visible. They also partitioned off the room so the monitors would not be visible from a bed, which was now in the centre of the room. The only screens they could see were the CCTV screens from the temple and cave, these were placed high up on the wall in most rooms of the lab and in some residence domes. They added a DVD player in the room and would play soothing classical music. Srey Dar one of Borans old

team of archaeologists and now a teacher in the citadel had started to learn basic Indian-Pali language, she would talk to the Buddha and try to explain to the holy one what was happening and not to be afraid. Everything (after a short refurbishment) was prepared; all they had to do now was wait and hope.

Colonel Tighe had telephoned after a several weeks and told Norman the Thais had agreed to release the box, but it would probably be a few more weeks before it arrived, as they had to provide security, this Norman had no cause to disbelieve and carried on waiting. After only a few weeks the skeleton had grown and the oven was busy spraying and injecting cells.

The muscles formed a few weeks later and after just six weeks Theory flashed up an instruction on the ovens screens.

Process complete, awaiting further instructions.

The scientists had watched this process nearly all the way through and where now glaring at a transparent body, all the organs were in perfect condition and blood flowed through the body, being pumped by a healthy heart and the chest rose and fell with the aid of a small ventilator, but at a very slow rate . Other than the rise and fall of the chest, the body lay motionless, cold round colourless eyes in the sockets of the skull fixed and staring into nothingness. It looked like a large new born chick, skin lifeless and transparent. Although it did resemble a human. The process had incredibly taken just over six weeks

“That’s the canvass and box of circuitry, chips and wires” said Norman Junior (using his analogy) all we

need now is the paint, artist and software program” he continued,

“That’s the thing about science son” said Norman “It won’t be rushed”

They moved the replicant to the bed in the ward and wrapped the shroud of life around it. They spent their time checking and double checking the workings of the machines and monitors.

They did not have to wait long, two days later a buzz alerted the citadel someone was at the temple elevator. Boran checked the CCTV and saw it was Tighe and another man. Boran checked his watch and brought down the elevator.

He met Tighe in the corridor of the lab and told him he had sent someone to get Rumble as it was late and Rumble was taking a nap. Tighe introduced Boran to Tar and they went to Borans office to await the professor. Norman entered the room 10 minutes later and Tighe apologised for the late hour, Tar had only arrived that evening at his house and they wanted to get the item here immediately. Norm said hello to Tar and Tighe handed him the holy box.

“Thanks son” said Rumble as he carefully examined the treasure “Why don’t you show your friend around, any friend of yours is welcome here.”

Norman noticed the way Tar treated Tighe with great respect, he must be a subordinate thought Norm and the two left the office and went into the false starry night of the citadel and to Tu’ s dome. The two scientists looked at the box and wondered would it be possible after 2500 years would it still actually contain the code for the enlightened one and what ramifications was this going to have on today’s modern world. Would Prince Siddhartha

Gautama once again be a holy leader and bring peace and enlightenment back into a world gone crazy. It was too late for conjecture now, they had come too far to be having doubts.

The next problem facing the scientists was how to search and remove the cells without damaging the precious contents. They worked on through the night and by morning had harvested four DNA cells, which to the surprise of them all were easily obtained. The removed cells were now in Theory being analyzed and replicated by the oven. At ten am Tighe and an amazed Tar left the citadel and the professors went to sleep, after an exhausting night. The waiting game had begun again.

They had come across two obstacles removing the cells:

1. If any air had gotten into the sealed box (they assumed sealed by vacuum for 2000 years) the old remnants may disintegrate and any cells would be lost.
2. If they had used MRI or x-ray scans on the box the radiation from these would have killed any cells of that age.

They had to obtain the cells blindly and with the box sealed in a vacuum. They had figured this out prior to the box's arrival and had built a large square container, inside contained a sealed laser cutter, minute drill and sealed cell sniffer. All accessible with pre positioned gloves. The box had been placed in the container and all the air sucked out to create a vacuum. They then measured to the micrometer the thickness of the lid and cut with the pinpoint laser, a micron size hole depth until 1 micron of gold lid remained, a sort of pilot hole, they then inserted the drill and through it centre the hair like sniffer and continued the last stage until the sniffer was now fully inside the box. The drilling and inserting took

around 8 hours they all expected the sniffer to be routing around finding cells amongst the decaying 2500 year old teeth for hours. But after a few seconds of inserting the sniffer, the scanner beeped with the discovery of cells. The sniffer was then removed and its precious cargo placed in CAIN gel and taken to Theory scanner, a minute blob of gold was then (with pinpoint accuracy) placed into the minute hole to reseal it, then the box was removed and placed in Normans safety drawer where it would be ready to return to Thailand. It was a complete and surprisingly quick success. The two old professors rested in their studio apartment within the lab checking on the progress of the shroud, once again surprisingly after only 68 hours the monitors from Theory flashed.

Process complete awaiting final instructions

Norman went into the large black blanket covered body and checked all the monitors and machines were still functioning perfectly, then went to the head of the shroud and picked up an infuser that was attached to the shroud and a large laser needle that penetrated the base of the skull into the medulla and the hypothalamus of the replicant. He had removed a liquid filled cartridge from the Oven and placed that in the infuser and set the buttons on the side to delivery at intervals, 2 million RNA enhanced Neral cells.

Then again they waited. Norm estimated the delivery and bonding of the cells and the body to create Neurons and short term memory for breathing on its own would take possibly another 24 hours, Norman left Boran, Srey Dar and a few technicians that were now assigned to orderly positions, in the ward to monitor the replicant. Norman went to his office and daydreamed, whilst looking at his photographs.

He was interrupted by Boran 4 hours later.

Now he had seen the replicant, he was shocked and confused. He and Boran had to now decide what had happened and what to do. He had telephoned Tighe, but now they had to figure out why a 2500 Asian man, who should have black hair and brown eyes, was a blue eyed, brown haired Caucasian and why did he not respond to Srey Dar speaking Pali language. Was the machine wrong or were the history books wrong, it was a mystery he couldn't answer, only one person could. The scientists knew the replicant would sleep a lot at first, whilst his mind and body hardened, but thought Norman, "only he holds the answers"

He and Boran returned to the ward .The replicant now dressed in a hospital tunic was awake again and only power napping at several intervals.

"This is natural" thought Norm, the brain will switch off at intervals whilst things adjust.

The figure looked at Norm.

Srey Dar told them that the replicant had motioned something and spoke, but she could not recognize the dialect. Norman looked at the monitors, then at the replicant and then to the heavens. Norman only spoke Khmer nowadays, everyone in the Citadel with the exception of Patty and Anne spoke Khmer, and most of the inhabitants never understood English at all. Srey Dar never spoke and rarely heard anyone speak English, so when Nick's replicant spoke again, only Norman and Boran understood.

"Can I have a cup of tea" he whispered to the surprised party.

A very confused Norman was first to react.

"You speak English?" he asked.

“Yes” said the clone “are you a doctor?” he asked Norm.

“What do you remember?” asked Norm.

The replicant looked around the room and whispered.

“Someone fell on my head, so I assume I have been brought to the hospital. I don’t remember much from before though, who am I?”

Boran, Rumble and Dar stared at each other and back to the Nick replicant.

“How much is all this going to cost?” asked the clone and fell back asleep. Norman had decided to take blood and tissue samples and give them to Tighe to try to identify the replicant, as now it was evident he was not the ancient holy man, but a far more recent and modern individual, which confused the scientists, why was this replicant still alive, when all other attempts to clone living cells had resulted in death. They put this down to, maybe somehow the sample they took the cells from was already dead, or came from some man made object, false teeth for example. Over the next few hours the replicant spent longer time awake and he told them he could only remember the past events of maybe a day or two, he thought originally his name was matey, but after several hours as the RNA mixed more memory cells into the DNA enhanced Nerals, he announced his name was Nick and was for some reason in mortal fear of something or someone, but didn’t know who or what. All the monitor leads had been removed from the replicant and after two hours he attempted to walk, assisted by the Scientists and their sons. He took his first tentative steps and walked slowly and feebly to the window of the citadel and gasped.

“This isn’t Pattaya, where the hell am I?” and stumbled, but the scientists hobbled him over to the bed and he laid

down. Norman didn't know what kind of shock the truth would put on the still fragile clone, so he told him that he had been unconscious a while and they transferred him to another hospital here, he would be staying a while until he was healed and it was free of charge. This relaxed the replicant and he nodded off again. They all decided they would have to come clean, but at least this respite gave them some thinking time.

The Nick replicant was awoken a short time later from a buzz from the CCTV cameras in the corner of his room, the one that received pictures from inside Ta Prohm temple. It was Colonel Tighe who spoke into the intercom "Sorry I have taken so long getting here, I had a small problem at home"

"That's OK son" said Norman I will bring you down and he pressed a button to lower the elevator.

The two older scientists were discussing Nick, when Tighe entered Norm's office looking a bit tense.

"You alright Tighe" said Boran

"Fine" smiled Tighe looking behind him.

Norman went on to explain they had a small problem they were having difficulty in fathoming out, but maybe Tighe could help. Norman never finished the conversation, as the intercom buzzed again from the CCTV camera within the temple.

-Chapter Fifteen-



Colonel Tighe Nye had grown in his status over the last few years, now in sole charge of Hun Sens security, he wielded a lot of power, which he used and with all the land and property that a grateful government had given him for his dedicated service, was becoming very wealthy. Stockily built and hard features made him quite a formidable individual, that most people were afraid of on contact and his firm but fair methods made him a very popular commander, but his fits of rage especially with other ranks and political opponents and anyone associated with Royalty made him many enemies. He was a staunch democrat and hated the royal family and when the royalty was reinstalled after the conflicts, he was not a happy man. “Where was the monarch hiding when the Cambodians were fighting and dying for their freedom?” He used to ask his colleagues.

Tighe had visited the royal palace many times with the prime minister and although the royal family knew of his views, they tolerated him and when he met his fiancé and approached her parents to force her into marriage he was happy. Not only would he be getting a loyal virgin he would also have another contact inside another palace. He had a large house built near Siem Reap in the centre of a large walled off plot of land, previously a mango

plantation. He had cleared the centre and raised the earth level so he looked out above the trees and had built a large brick and wooden bungalow with 6 en suite bedrooms, with all the mod cons available, satellite, Jacuzzi, swimming pool etc. He had banana, Guava trees, and pineapple bushes, growing along side the remaining mangos, which surrounded the house. A 500 yard 6 metre wide driveway led to and from his house and through the trees to a large gate and onto a tarmac road that led to a fork in the road one kilometre away. One of the routes went to Siem Reap and one led direct to Ta Prohm. He had bought and paid for the road. Tighe lived alone. He had serving staff and drivers that would take him places and owned several cars. A Mercedes for formal visits and a Hummer for when he visited his adopted family and for his jaunts into town for the temporary companions he used to like for a night of fun. He was not a lover of the Thai nation and he would take any opportunity to piss them off. He had a military exercise planned and executed in Preah-Vihear temple in the North of the country, which the Thais construed as an act of aggression. Tighe was also not a lover of foreigners and saw them as an invasion force, although he loved his adopted family and Norman was the only real father he had ever known. Even though he was no longer Khmer Rouge, killing to him was second nature and his crack team of six commandos (that were hand picked bodyguards of the Prime Minister), had also been accused of many murders to get the Colonel up the political ladder.

Tighe had returned home from his visit to Norman, who had requested the box and phoned the palace in Bangkok. He spoke to Taksin Sawaldees the chief of the palace

guards and requested the use of the box. Taksin knew of this mans reputation and loathing of the royal family, from his friend and Cambodian counterpart Brigadier Lee and turned Tighe down flat.

“If you won’t give it to me, I will just take it then” he thought and set a plan in motion for his best commando Tar, with the assistance of his contact within the imperial palace to exchange the box. He’d obtained many pictures and photographs from his palace spy, of the box and set Mr Heng Ty, a local and well respected, skilful, jewellery craftsman who after several weeks made an exact copy of the box, same shape, same weight, and a perfect replica. He had planned a military exercise at Preah-Vihear knowing that the Royals would be left to smooth things over and knowing that the Prime master, (who he knew had a fearful reputation and who, it had been rumoured to have killed a foreigner and a Cambodian in Caw Kong last year (Towhee and Kip), would be escorting the Thai Prince and so that would be a perfect time to execute the exchange. The plan was worked out and Tar was dispatched and executed the plan perfectly, Tighe was gloating to himself that the stupid Thais would be none the wiser and that the holy remnants that the world was worshipping, was now a box full of Cambodian soil from Tighe’s garden. (A gloating, he could have saved himself, the lads got there first)

He received a phone call from Tar at noon on the 9th May and arranged for a limousine to bring him from Poi Pet to his home. Tar arrived in the early evening and after celebrating with fine malt whisky, they got in Tighe’s hummer and drove to Ta Prohm and delivered the box to Norman.

Tighe had just woken up and was giving the lady from his night of fun \$10 and her moto fare, when Norman had phoned and asked Tighe to return to the Citadel.

“I wonder what the problem is.?” thought Tighe

It had been almost four days since he had delivered the box and so Tighe thought Norman needed something else. “I hope its not urgent” thought Tighe “I have a wedding to attend and a peach to pluck” he laughed to himself and looked at a photograph on his desk of his intended “beautiful” he thought “I look forward to deflowering you my love” and kissed the photograph.

The maid came in with his breakfast and he sat down in his sarong and ate. He had just finished his food when the phone rang, he thought it was Norman and picked up the phone.

“Hello darling” said the women’s voice at the other end and continued,

“Darling we have a big problem”

The woman went on to explain they discovered the box had been switched on the same afternoon, the palace had been sealed, no one in or out and all staff at the palace were not allowed to leave their quarters or place of work, there had been uproar and the lady told Tighe its relaxed a

bit now, but she still had to sneak out of her quarters to call him, as all phones within the palace had been banned from use, so the outside world would not find out about the switch.

“Calm down darling” said Tighe reassuringly “How did they discover the switch?.”

“The box didn’t throw off the halo around the head and when I had lunch with the geologist, she told me some of

the rubies were fake and didn't radiate the same as the real gemstones." she said

Tighe felt himself getting angry and cursed the jeweller. The woman continued and told him that they had dispatched Prime master Pon to recover the box and "They know Tar had switched the box and escaped with the original and they also know he works for you, Pon is travelling with a Cambodian passport," she continued "but I cant get close enough to Taksin to find out what name he is travelling under, but you have a photograph already on your file of him so he shouldn't be hard to find."

"Damn" thought Tighe.

"When did he leave?" he asked.

"Very early hours of the morning the next day" the frightened woman said, and continued "Darling I am so scared, when are you coming to get me away from here and be with you

."Soon Noi my darling, very soon" said Tighe in a reassuring lie "Keep me informed if you find out what name he is travelling under, now get back to Taksins office and take care, I love you"

Tighe hung up the phone.

"Damn" he thought "Pon could have entered three days ago, why didn't that stupid bitch sneak out and tell me sooner and why didn't she get more information, the bastard could be waiting outside for all I know, or worse be in the citadel" he cursed out loud and sat at his desk and phoned Lieutenant- Colonel Pagna chief of immigration and border patrols. Tighe gave details to Pagna about the Prime master and knew they would have held details and photographs of him, as he had visited in his role as defender of the monarch with the Thai Prince.

Lieutenant-Colonel Pagna confirmed they had a passport photo and would dispatch it immediately to all border posts, he would also check with the palace in Phnom Penh on the off chance he was hiding there. Tighe then called the army barracks at Siem Reap and spoke to Tar.

“Tar I need you here as soon as possible we have a major problem, although it may work to our advantage, but before you come here detour to Heng Ty’s jewellers in the town and shoot the bastard.

“Right away Colonel” said Tar and hung up.

Tighe got to thinking while he was waiting for Pagna to call, maybe this wasn’t so bad .If the Thai had crossed illegally into Cambodia when we catch him we can shoot him first as a spy and then discredit the Thai royal family and our own, we can report they sanctioned this and Tighe could flatly deny any involvement with the relic, as they could prove nothing and Cambodia has no motive to steal the box Tighe smiled to himself “Hell we can even accuse the Thais of not having the box switched and just trying to provoke Cambodia, as they wont open the box as that would be sacrilege. Yes this could work out well in my favour” he smirked.

A bell above the door tinkled as people entered the small shop, an old man sat behind the counter as a man approached him, and then as another person entered the first man diverted and went to look at another glass counter.

The other customer left after 10 minutes with a happy smile and a small bag containing a hand crafted engagement ring. Tar approached the old man.

“How may I help you sir?” asked the old man

“Are you Heng Ty?” asked Tar

“Yes I am Heng Ty master jeweller” he said proudly

“Tar produced a photograph of the box and showed it to the old man, who looked confused

“Can you make a box like this?” asked Tar

The old man again looked confused

“I already did” he said, now looking very worried.

“Well next time, make it real” said Tar as he produced a silenced Glock 17, 9mm pistol from his jacket and shot the old man through the centre of his forehead, the old mans eyes instantly rolled back and Tar watched as the exiting bullet splattered the old mans blood and brains over the back wall of his small shop. Tar calmly turned and walked out of shop and turned the sign on the door to close and locked the door behind him.

After an hour the phone rang. It was Pagna reporting nobody matching Pons description had crossed any border into Cambodia or into any airport and there had been no reports of any suspicious looking shaven headed characters or monks had crossed. They did have a Cambodian cross three days ago at Koh Kong, but he was a tour guide for two foreigners, he wasn’t suspicious, just had a bad hairstyle that they are still laughing about. His name was....

“Never mind” sighed Tighe it won’t be him, the Prime Master is as bald as a Ka-bharl

(Cambodian for bell end) and he would be travelling alone.

Any news from the palace?” Tighe continued.

“Nothing, they are preparing for King Norodom Sihamoni birthday celebrations on the 13th and also a wedding there. I believe congratulations are in order Colonel Tighe”

“Thanks for your help Pagna I will see you at the wedding, I will send you an invite” said Tighe

“Anything else you need call me” said Pagna and hung up the phone.

Tighe sat in his easy chair, now he knew Pon would have snook in and therefore was now a fugitive, he would circulate his pictures and description around all military bases and police stations. Tighe hoped Pon would soon be found and apprehended, but in the meantime he would wait for Tar, and then go to the citadel. He heard a noise outside that caused him to look out of his window but saw nothing and returned to his chair and waited.

Pon covered the ringing phone and slid down a small embankment and behind the base of a tree and pressed the answer button.

“Pon we have a big problem” said a panicky Brigadier Lee “They know you are here”

“How?” said Pon.

“I don’t know there must have been a leak, I can only assume it was in Thailand” said Lee “But as far as I know they don’t know your new identity or who you are travelling with. The immigration called me at the palace and we have been given a stark warning about assisting you and to tell them if you should get in contact with me, so I am taking a big risk, but I and the royal family cannot afford for you to get caught, it would create a massive problem.”

“Thank you for the warning my friend” said Pon “I wont get caught don’t worry and if I do I will take the necessary precautions, to neither implicate you or the Royals.”

“They can’t question vapour” thought Pon, as the way a Tinju committed suicide was by swallowing the “Wharm Lorn” mixture and a sword or Glave through the stomach, the acid in the stomach would react with

mixture and with the introduction of steel from a sword or Glave it would cause it to ignite and evaporate the Tinju instantly.

“Take care master monk” said Lee “and make sure you stay safe. My niece would die of a broken heart if anything were to happen to you” Lee then turned off his phone leaving a shocked Pon staring at his mobile.

“How does he know”? Thought Pon and then he smiled to himself and climbed back up the embankment surrounding the house and from his hidden perch in a large mango tree, carried on watching Tighe’s house. After an hour of phone calls to various friends and colleagues, circulating by fax, Pons photograph to armed force and police departments. He heard Tars Toyota tiger 4 wheel drive pull up and there came a knock on the door. Tighe invited Tar into his drawing room and laid down his plan.

“Go to the window” said Tighe and Tar did as instructed and nodded.

Several minutes later, Tighe left his house and got into his Hummer, shouting back at Tar to keep a lookout as it was likely the monk would come to the house looking for him.

“Yes sir, I will stay here and keep a close watch” shouted back Tar.

Tighe started his Hummer and slowly drove down his driveway and to the gate at the bottom of his grounds, then onto the road and took the fork to Ta Prohm and the citadel.

Following a short distance behind, was Pon on a hired Yamaha Raid 250cc, dirt bike.

Then, a short distance behind him, Tar in his Toyota Tiger.

-Chapter Sixteen-



Pon, Stu and Spock drove into the outskirts of Siem Reap town at 7pm. It had been a long journey but apart from getting lost one time and having to dodge the occasional herd of Nomadic cows that stepped out in front of them, the drive was not too much of a problem.

They had stopped in Phnom Penh and bought some English music CD's as they were tired of the music Lee had left, it was all Khmer and sounded like a wailing cat, whose nuts were being tightened in a vice and Pon explained, it was all about a poor boy losing his girl to a rich boy and getting her back with some disease.

“All very depressing” said Pon, (after learning the word depressing from Spock and a few other words not for the faint hearted).

They were also fed up listening to Stus snoring, but the countryside was beautiful and after they stopped in Phnom Penh, Stu took over the driving. They had learned a few basic words in Khmer, from the short time they had spent with Dragon and Mom. Pon had corrected them on the pronunciation, but they knew the basics,

‘Ock Khun’ thank you ‘som’ please, and beer was still the same word in any language. They were taught ‘cadoy-gam-gow’ and told by a smiling dragon, that it was a pleasant greeting to a lady. Pon told them it actually meant ‘your knickers are too tight and going up your

pussy' (an insult) the lads decided to use it anyway, seeing that they had remembered it. They also learned that 'Bong' (older person) was used quite frequently in the conversation and when they found out what it meant, they decided it was a good word, so everyone became a Bong. Waitress Bong, shop keeping Bong and sexy Bong, as they referred to the lady that sold them the CD's, also village idiot Bong.

They had travelled about one hour from Phnom Penh when they hit a fork not on the map, they turned right and after 10 minutes saw a Khmer man leant against a gate. They stopped and Pon asked if they were on the right road. The man just stared at them and pointed straight on. The lads set off in the direction the man had pointed and after the road narrowed and turned into dirt tracks, they knew the man had sent them in the wrong direction. They eventually drove into a small village, stopped and got out of the car to ask for directions. The villagers had never had any foreign visitors before and they all came out of their houses, all happy smiling people saying "Hello" the only English word they knew. One of the villagers spoke to Pon and he relayed to Stu and Spock that they had been invited for some food and led them to one of the houses, where they were sat at a stone table and as one by one the villagers came and gave them food and drink. Spock and Stu noticed how happy and contented the Khmers were, they had never seen hospitality like this anywhere, they were total strangers and were being treated as long lost family. They stayed for about an hour, then after Pon had been given the correct directions, they set off back down the dirt tracks with Spock shouting "When we see your idiot again, we will send him home, he is not safe wandering around" leaving confused

village inhabitants waving them off. They passed the village idiot again, still stood at the gate, but he ran off when the car stopped as he was in mortal fear of getting a damn good ear slapping. They got back on the right road and after an 11 hour drive saw the lights of Siem Reap. They checked the map and the hotel that Lee recommended was not too far from the town and Angkor Wat. Thirty minutes later they pulled into the courtyard of Angkoriana Hotel.

“I’m ready for a beer” announced Spock.

“Me too” agreed Stu.

“I have to prepare” for tomorrow said Pon

“Ok then, lets check in and go look around” said Spock and they all walked into the reception and booked three rooms.

“Make them with good views bong” ordered Spock to the receptionist “And bring us three beers while you do the paperwork.”

Then Stu phoned Dao and Mom.

Spock phoned Dragon.

Nick had, had a boring night and another boring day which he’d spent in his hotel room watching TV and phoning Shanti. She had affected him in a big way and the more he thought about their brief encounter, the more besotted he had become with her. Nick had decided to have a night on the town then head back to Sihanoukville via Phnom Penh the following morning on the early Phnom Penh bus and thought “sod it, I know where they are staying, I will just avoid the beach”

Pleased with his plan he decided to go out and eat, have a few beers and sleep early. He showered, changed and went downstairs to the foyer of the Angkoriana Hotel; there he met his three best friends in the entire world.

“Hello matey” exclaimed Spock as Nick walked past them “This is where you shot off too then”

Nick then noticed them standing at the reception and his heart sank into his mouth, he went from being euphoric thinking about seeing Shanti, to extreme panic. Tongue tied, he looked at the smiling faces of Stu, Spock and Pon and groaned

“Hi lads, yeah I had to meet someone, I have to go see you shortly” said a deflated and scared Nick, who then went out of the hotel and fell over a noodle trolley. The three lads just stared and then looked at each other, no words were exchanged over the incident, there wasn't any need; it was now an expected occurrence. The lads went to their respective rooms and showered. Pon was staying in the hotel to hire a motorcycle and study his maps and get his bearings. Pon had told Spock and Stu that they would be of no assistance in the next step of his quest, as they would slow him down, but the real reason was, although he never told them, was that he knew it would be too dangerous for them. Spock and Stu had no problem with this, which meant they could tour Siem Reap, get spannered and laid and meet the mad monk back at the hotel when his business was concluded. “Probably run into Nick somewhere” they thought, “he can show us around.”

Nick hobbled back into the hotel reception after about an hour, made sure the coast was clear (no Spock or Stu in sight, they had already gone out) and went to his room packed up his clothes and checked out, much to the confusion of the staff as checkout was noon, they charged him for a night extra, he paid from the small wad of dollars in his pocket, from the travellers cheques he

had cashed the previous day and hurried out into the waiting taxi that he had ordered.

“Phnom Penh and quick” said Nick to the driver who smiled and reminded Nick it was \$120

“No problem” said Nick, although seething about the price; he would probably save that on the hospital bills he would have accrued if he had stayed. He reclined in the front seat and started to plan his next move. Phnom Penh by early morning, then get early bus to Sihanoukville, that’s Ok he thought and relaxed back into the front seat. The taxi got on the main carriageway and sped out of the city towards Phnom Penh with Nick feeling safer.

The hotel staff, still confused, called down the hotel manager and told him Nick had rushed out of the hotel.

“What is the problem with that, did he not pay?” enquired the manager

“Oh yes he paid, but he has left an envelope with us in the safe which he's forgot” said the reception bong.

The manager opened the safe and took out the envelope with Nick Godfrey room 12, written on the front. They opened it and found his passport, return flight tickets to UK. £800 in Stirling traveller’s cheques and his visa cards.

“His friends are here, we will ask them if they know where he has gone” said the manager who had noticed him talking to Stu, Spock and Pon earlier.

“He has gone Phnom Penh, I heard him tell the taxi driver” interrupted one of the tuk-tuk drivers who milled around the hotel reception.

“Seal up the envelope and put it back, he will have to come back when he realises” ordered the manager.

Nick started to drift off to sleep in the front seat of a southbound taxi, blissfully unaware he was on his way to Phnom Penh, without a pot to piss in.

Pon remained in his room studying his maps, information and routes, he had been outside briefly and hired a 250cc Raid off road dirt bike and drove it back to the hotel, although the bike was large, the hire shop had one with the suspension already lowered and so Pon could just reach the floor. He had bought himself a Honda steed in Thailand, so was used to the gears and handling.

Spock and Stu went out as soon as they showered and went to an area marked on the map as 'Pub street' They took a tuk-tuk and left Lees car at the hotel as they knew they would more than likely get spannered. Both tired after the long journey they ate a happy herb pizza, this they didn't realise contained marijuana and not being used to it, were instantly wasted. Now a bit hazy, but not understanding why, they fell into the Red Orchid bar and listened to a band which consisted of three foreign lads that called themselves The fabulous beer brothers, they were thumping out pretty good versions of cover songs of the Beatles, two on guitars and one singer, who also played the harmonica. The lads got settled and ordered a beer. The bar was fairly quiet and during the break, Strat, one of the guitarists came and sat with them, noticing they were looking a bit out of it, especially Stu who just smiled and gazed blankly into space .Strat chuckled when Spock said he felt terrible and told him they only had a pizza and this was their first beer, Strat explained what a "Happy Herb" was. Spock and Stu both felt strange and half listened to Strat until he asked them if they liked fishing

“Course we do” mumbled Spock “we are from Cleethorpes and most of our family works on the Grimsby trawlers it’s in-bred”

“If you want something to do tomorrow, I know a great little spot not too far away, but you will need dirt bikes or a 4 wheel drive jeep to get there” said Strat

“Got that covered. What about rods and bait?” murmured Spock.

“Hang on” said Strat and spoke to a Khmer tuk-tuk driver that was hovering around.

“Give him \$30 and he will sort that out and also get you a polystyrene cooler box” said Strat

Spock gave him \$30 and spoke to Stu,

“Mate were fishing tomorrow”

“That’s great news darling” mumbled a spaced out Stu

“Can we take one of those pigs, that’s just crawled out from under the bar with us.”

“Wasted”, said Strat

“Wasted,” confirmed Spock looking at his old friend with a dopey grin on his face and trying to pick his nose unsuccessfully. Strat and Spock chatted for about 30 minutes and Strat marked off on a free tour map the turnoff to the fishing spot.

“It wasn’t far, just off the main road and about 2 km from Wat Po along the Tonle sap. Take you about 20 minutes to get there” Strat informed Spock.

The Khmer who Strat had sent to the market returned with two telescopic fishing rods, with reels attached and a small white hesky type container.

“Your hooks, lines and sinkers are in the cooler box” said the Khmer.

“I think we better get back to the hotel now and have an early one” said Spock still only half finishing his first can of Anchor and feeling anything but happy after the pizza.

“Come on matey, we will get up early and go exploring and catch our lunch” Spock told Stu

“Ok sweetheart, can we take one of those green elephants with us as well” enquired Stu.

“No matey, they are busy” said Spock and got up and dragged his old stoned friend out of the bar and into a tuk-tuk. They had only been out about two hours and returned to the hotel, the receptionist mumbled something about their friend leaving his valuables in the safe, but the two just ambled past the reception, took their keys and went to their rooms, oblivious to any conversation that had just taken place.

Pon was up at the crack of dawn. He packed his Glave, Pitou and wharm Lorn and gold filing mix into a small backpack along with the photographs, mobile phone, maps and information on his target and went through the quiet hotel lobby, only seeing the security guard who was asleep in the reception area. He crept passed the guard and went outside. He wasn't concerned about the guard and knew he had never seen him enter the hotel, so would not know that he wasn't wearing his wig now.

He went to his bike, put on a crash helmet checked his bearings and set off towards Tighe's house.

Spock and Stu awoke around nine o'clock and felt quite good, they had both had great nights sleep due largely to the pizza .They came down to the reception and noticed Pons key hung up, so realising he had gone they sat down and ate breakfast. They stocked up their cool box with ice and beer from the hotel and some bread and a carton of ARA blue cigarettes (only \$2.10 a carton). A tuk-tuk

driver went out and brought back a small bag of charcoal and a small but heavy round stone Khmer BBQ so they could cook up their catch for lunch. They headed out to the forecourt and put their equipment in the back of Lees cruiser, checked the route on the map that Strat had marked off with the fishing spot and drove out of the forecourt and onto the main road. They were going on another adventure and a nice day out fishing.

-Chapter Seventeen-



Pon found Tighe's house with relative ease from the directions given to him by Brigadier Lee. He pulled his bike up by the side of Tighe's property wall, then leant the bike against a side wall off the road and covered it with shrubs and foliage from the embankment. He scaled a wall that seemed more densely covered on the other side with trees and dropped down the 25' wall, landing on the soft ground at the bottom. He made his way along the high mango trees keeping within the shorter dense foliage thick leaved covered banana trees that were planted between the mangos. Pon sprinted between the trees giving himself maximum cover and reached the 5' embankment that Tighe had raised and built his house onto. He climbed a large thick (in season, so high foliage) mango tree and wedged himself into a crook of the tree and covered himself with bark, which he had peeled off with his Glave and waited. Pon had an excellent view of Tighe's drawing, dining and living room in front and driveway and porch to his right. He stayed in his camouflaged hiding place for about 2 hours waiting to get a glimpse of Tighe and confirm his identity and then formulate his next course of action.

Tighe and a young woman came to the door and exchanged some words and the woman started walking

down the driveway cursing that she would be waiting ages for transport, as vehicles rarely went along the bottom road.

Pon had his identity confirmed and formulated a plan to get into the side of Tighe's house, away from the maids and gain the information and dispatch Tighe if necessary. Pon saw Tighe on the phone in his living room. "Ideal opportunity he thought as Tighe was distracted and he started to climb down the tree.

He then saw the gardener exit the quarters at the rear and get on a sit on mower and start driving around the grounds. Pon climbed back into his hiding place and decided to wait until the coast was clear. He was watching for three more hours when the gardener finished and was driving the mower back to the back of Tighe's house.

Just then his phone in his bag rang, it was Lee.

Pon jumped to the ground and answered. After he finished speaking to Lee, Pon got back into his tree and searched the house for Tighe, who wasn't in his dining room or living room. "Damn" thought Pon then he saw Tighe in the drawing room briefly, then leave and return minutes later with documents which he put in his fax machine, he had a lady, presumably his secretary bring him more documents. Tighe looked out of the window several times but his camouflage was excellent only a very experienced trained sniper would have had any chance to spot him. Pon decided to wait till the secretary left the room.

Pon was still watching, when a Toyota Tiger pulled up the roadway and into the drive and pulled up to the left of Tighe's hummer, Tar got out and went to Tighe's door.

“Tar” thought Pon “Now I have both my targets and the secretary has gone.”

Pon saw Tighe and Tar speaking and Tar goes to the window, he decided to act now and started his slow invisible climb down. He reached the bottom, removed his Glave and sprung out the blades. He stopped still when he heard the side door open and Tighe shouting at Tar to remain there. He climbed the embankment and saw Tighe get in his hummer, Pon knew even with his speed he would not be able to reach the vehicle without being spotted, or in time to stop the Colonel, who had now shifted into gear and the hummer started to move. Pon retracted the blades of the Glave and tucked it into his jeans and picked up his backpack and sprinted off to the wall and his bike. He uncovered his bike and started it. He sped along the side of the wall and turned left to join the main road. He thought himself fortunate Tighe’s Hummer was still in view and he pulled hard on the throttle and managed to catch up and stay a short distance behind. Having no mirrors on his bike and the noisy 250cc engine, he never noticed the midnight blue Toyota following a short distance behind.

“We’re bloody lost” said a frustrated Stu.

“No we’re not” said Spock.

“Where are we then?” enquired a still frustrated Stu.

“I’m not 100% certain, but we must be on the right track now” said Spock in a reassuring tone.

“You’ve been saying that for nearly three hours now and we’re still bloody lost. I thought you said Strat told you it was only twenty minutes away” said Stu

Spock grumbled under his breath and carried on bumping along a small trail. Spock was now driving through a dense palm and coconut tree jungle, they both knew full

well they couldn't turn around, they wouldn't have found their way back. They drove on for another thirty minutes and decided to stop and look at the small map Strat had given them. They stopped in front of a large tree and scrutinized the map and the turnoff.

"According to this we should have taken the first turn off and the lake was on the right hand side" noticed Stu.

"I did" said Spock indignantly as his mate doubted his navigational skills.

"No you never, we must have passed at least three turnoffs before you took one" said Stu.

"Shortcut" said Spock.

"We're lost then" Stu repeated.

"Not exactly, if we just turn around and follow our tyre marks, we should come out around here" Spock said, pointing at the map "Then we just turn right and that should bring us up here."

Stu looked at Spock and raised his eyebrow and pierced his lips. Spock knew this cutting look and had been given it several times, usually before he got bollocked over something.

"Yeah OK, we're lost" confessed a beaten Spock, "but I think we are somewhere near this place" and pointed on the map to Ta Prohm temple, to which he received another of the looks.

"Or maybe not" He conceded.

They both stood with hands on hips surveying the area and Spock hollered.

"There it is" and pointed to a lake just visible through a small clearing of trees.

Stu looked and said,

"That's not it, we are miles away."

"It's a lake isn't it? And there is fish in a lake."

Stu couldn't argue with this logic and walked a few paces forward and stopped at a ledge and looked down at a fifty foot drop to the ground and the lake on higher ground beyond

"Right then brains of Britain; tell me how do we get there? We can't drive around there are no roads or paths and if we walk, how the fuck do we get down here?" said Stu returning to his agitated state. Spock walked to the edge and looked down into the gulley and then around the trees that lined the edge.

"There, Mr. glass half empty" said Spock pointing to a rope ladder" see must be a good spot someone's put a ladder there."

The lads went back to the Range Rover and unloaded their fishing tackle and drank a can of beer before they started having to do something physical. Twenty minutes later they and the equipment were at the bottom of a small valley. They thought the lake would only be a short walk but now they were level with its base, it looked a long way off and the foliage that covered the floor with rocks which looked small from the top of the rock wall, was now dense and large foliage. They sat on a rock and looked around.

"We'll have another beer and go that way" said Spock pointing to the left, that should take us around those rocks and as the lake seem to disappear around there it should be"

"Another bloody shortcut" interrupted Stu and his eyebrow started to rise.

Spock then announced,

"Bollocks, I haven't locked the car and I've left the keys in the ignition.

“Oh great” said Stu and looking at the ladder and the prospect of having to climb up there again

“It’ll be Ok” said Spock “who’s going to find us out here let alone steal the car” also not relishing the thought of another climb

“Yeah you’re right; just remember where it is” said Stu then “come on then, up and at em”

They picked up their gear and headed towards the rocky outcrop.

Tighe arrived at the temple and parked his Hummer in the grounds at the front, he went into the temple and over to the elevators intercom and asked Norman to be brought down into the citadel. Pon stopped his bike along the side, he had cut the engine and free wheeled it into dense undergrowth, and then he covered it over. He then ran along the side of the temple. He had seen Tighe walk toward the temple and as Pon looked around and through the glassless ancient windows, could see no sign of him. He sprinted around to the rear of the temple, which would be a perfect place for an ambush, but still no sign of Tighe. He never noticed Tar walk into the temple and position himself behind a walled copse inside, watching his every move.

Pon was confused, he stayed round the back of the temple and looked around at the burial slabs strewn around the grounds. He noticed one was slightly raised. He went over to the slab and shone the light from his Nokia N95 mobile phone, he put his head into the small gap which was deceptively wide, he could easily crawl under the slab, which opened out into a small compartment (which was easily wide and high enough for a man to crawl through) and he stared down the man made compartment and saw up ahead a light, (from

inside the citadel) as he crawled he saw the metal rungs of a ladder at the end and the side of the elevator. He continued along to the end of the compartment and came face to face with a descending slab and a Glock 17 being held by Tar as he descended on the elevator, there also came a sound of a guns action being cocked from the floor below.

Tighe had laid his trap. He had been trained and was a skilful sniper with the Government forces and it was him who trained Tar, they had both easily spotted Pon. Tighe had gone into the citadel and waited for his signal from above. Tar watched Pon disappear under the escape route and alerted Tighe, who left Normans office when Tar buzzed on the temple CCTV and went to the elevator and brought it down to the level of the escape compartment. Pon knew he could not move quick enough to avoid a bullet and was ordered out of the compartment and down the rungs of the ladder with two guns aimed at his head. Pon had his hands bound around his back and he was walked down the corridor past the hospital ward, where he noticed through the large glass window a familiar figure in a room, whom was looking directly at him. He was led into Professor Norman Rumble's office.

-Chapter Eighteen-



Brigadier Lee Tangh was a worried man. He had returned with his niece Kim to Phnom Penh and the Royal Palace the previous afternoon and had a pointless discussion with his brother, Kim's father, which had resulted in another shouting match, Kim was still marrying and that was that, her fiancé had already paid a \$100,000 dowry, which the family were not prepared to return. Now another problem faced Lee, not only was he Kim's family, he was also afraid of her fiancé Colonel Tighe Nye and involved with the conspiracy to trace and possibly kill him. He knew of Pons fearful reputation, but Tighe also had a ruthless streak and was also a fearless warrior, but it was his choice to involve himself. Taksin was a friend and the peace between the two royal families had to be maintained, even if it meant Lee would be in danger if things went wrong and now Pon had been discovered, Lee had to think fast in case Pon was successful and had to escape in a hurry.

He knew Kim was in love with someone, it certainly wasn't Tighe, but when Pon had stayed the night with them, he saw the way they looked at each other he suspected. His suspicions were confirmed on the drive back with his niece to Phnom Penh the previous day, He

asked Kim “Chai is a nice man, and I hope he will be Ok.”

Kim never replied for some time, she just started crying, then after ten minutes Lee said

“Is he the one you love?”

Again Kim cried and through her tears mumbled,

“Yes and his names Pon.”

Lee could see how sad and unhappy his niece was. He was now determined to ensure this wedding would not take place. He reassured her by telling her everything would be fine, but Kim only cried and told him Tighe was a dangerous man and Pon was only a small man, only an escort for the Thai prince, he knew nothing about fighting, and he was too gentle. Lee continued reassuring her and reminded Kim Pon had two foreign bodyguards and one was a giant, referring to Stu and Spock, who had met Lee when they drove back his driver. Kim remained sobbing.

His good friend Lieutenant-Colonel Pagna from immigration had called to warn him Tighe was looking for a Thai monk and did Lee know anything. He lied to Pagna and said he knew nothing. Then he phoned Pon to warn him. Lieutenant-Colonel Pagna was a good friend of Lee, he also tolerated Tighe because he was afraid of him. Pagna had told him he had been invited to Tighe’s wedding but wouldn’t go, to which Lee replied if it wasn’t for the fact Kim was his favourite niece, neither would he, but he was committed.

“Maybe Pagna would help me in another matter that will kill two birds with one stone” thought Lee.

“I hope Pon is successful and soon, because now there was a deadline.”

The successful Pon was now bound with his hands tied around the back of a chair in Norman's office, with Tar, Tighe Norm and Boran staring at him.

"What does he want?" Norm asked Tighe.

"I want what belongs to my country" interrupted Pon and he received a hard blow to the face from Tighe.

"Stop that!" said Norm "What do you want?" directing his question at Pon.

Pon spat some blood out of his mouth and replied he was trying to trace the holy relic

Norman listened and turned to Tighe "son I thought you said the Thais gave permission for us to borrow it.

Tighe went on to explain about the Thais refusal and he knew how important it was that Norman had the box, he only wanted to swap the box, he could have replaced it later, he lied.

"Now we have a problem, what do we do with him?" asked Norman directing his question at Tighe,

"He knows about the citadel" said Tighe

Norm then went to his drawer and removed the relic and placed it on the table.

"If I give you this, will you keep this place secret?" Norm asked Pon.

Pon thought for a moment, to keep this secret would mean having to keep the truth of how he recovered the relic secret, but as he looked at the face of the old New Zealander, he knew Norman was not involved in the theft.

"Yes" said Pon.

"He lying" snapped Tighe "he cannot keep this secret he is a Buddhist monk, who works for the revered King of Thailand and he dare not lie to him, he will be asked and

this man is also a ruthless killer, he murdered a friend of mine last year, although Andrews body has never been found, he must have cut it up and buried the pieces, so he is also a butcher. He doesn't deserve to live", Tighe sneered.

Norm listened to Tighe and knew he spoke the facts and the confused old man sat in his chair not knowing what to do.

"I have an idea" exclaimed Boran and he went over to Norman and whispered in his ear.

"Of course" said Norm "that may just work"

Norman got on the citadels internal phone system and a few minutes later Norm Junior entered the room with a small Petri dish and a needle.

"I am going to take a sample of your blood" Norm told Pon.

"This is crazy" said a now angry frustrated Tighe we have to kill him and bury him along with his belongings"

"We don't kill anybody" said Norm "we have an alternative."

Norm Junior took the blood sample and the three scientists left the room, this would take all of them to execute the plan and operate the machines.

"Don't harm him" said Norm "we will be only about 30 minutes" as he left the room.

Tar went through Pons bag and threw his belongings on the desk and looked at Pons phone.

"Try and get his contacts in Cambodia" ordered Tighe "we can kill him later and the traitors who helped him."

Tar went through the complicated controls of the Nokia and after a minute Tar stopped and held the phone to Tighe.

"Sir, you'd better look at this"

Tighe took the phone and looked, his face turned red with rage.

“How did you get this photo” he spat at Pon and showed him the screen and one of the many photo’s Pon had taken in Lees garden of Kim

Pon stared at his beloved Kim and knew if he told Tighe who she was, she would be in grave danger.

Tighe smashed his fist into Pons face again and repeated the question. Pon remained silent.

Tighe’s anger and jealousy turned into pure rage

“He dies now” he snapped, “Untie his legs and get him to his feet” and punched Pon again in the face, as Tar cut the binds to his legs and torso and dragged him to his feet. Tighe pressed a button underneath the cave CCTV monitor and they shoved Pon out into the corridor, Tar carrying his bag and both holding pistols pointed at Pons back, pushed him into walking forward and into the citadel grounds. They walked towards the caves elevator, half a kilometre away.

The intrepid fishermen and bodyguards to the defender of the monarch of Thailand were now falling and stumbling around some rocks on Spock’s short cut, with their fishing gear.

“What happened to that river meandering around the back of here” groaned Stu, as once again his flip flop had caught in yet another hole.

“Just round this pile matey, I can hear the waterfalls” said Spock reassuringly.

“I can’t hear fuck all” said Stu.

“That’s why they call me Spock, with ears like a bat, I can hear a gnat fart at 200 yards” he continued, to lighten the mood.

They crawled around the mound and there it was! Yet another mound of rocks.

“Oh great, more bloody rocks” said Stu.

“Look matey there’s a cave” said Spock as he pointed between the rocks.

“And there are fish in a cave then?, hum” said a sarcastic Stu.

“No but we can explore maybe find an underground lake or even treasure” said a cheerful, glass half full optimistic Spock.

“Yeah or be attacked by bears, or step in bat shit” replied a glass half empty, but logical Stu.

They walked to the cave entrance and put the cooler box down and took out two beers,

“And only 4 beers left” said a panicky Stu.

They sat down and drank their beer. Stu then got up and walked into the cave about 20 yards and echoed back at Spock.

“It’s a dead end and bloody dark”

Spock carried on drinking and Stu came back and joined him.

“Shall we call it a day matey” asked Spock

“That’s the most sensible thing you have said all day, but we are still lost so we better head back and try finding our way home.”

Might as well finish two more off” said Spock referring to the beer and they cracked open two more cold Anchor cans.

“So much for an adventure” said a pissed off Stu

They were interrupted mid drink by a grinding and whirring noise emanating from the rear of the cave.

“Bear” shouted Spock and the two lads ran out of the cave and hid round some rocks.

“Are there bears in Cambodia?” asked Stu looking back into the cave.

“Buggered if I know” said Spock and looked back inside the cave.

The rear of the cave was bathed in light and the two lads looked at the light in shock.

“Looks like the back has opened up and there is something there.”

They came out of their hiding place and started walking into the cave and toward the light telescopic rods in hand. They cautiously wandered through the cave and as they drew near the end noticed a ridge that dropped down. They walked to the edge of the precipice and their jaws dropped as they stood and looked over the citadel and its inhabitants.

“Wow” said Stu this place is incredible.

“I wonder where it is on the tourist map” enquired Spock.

They were taking in all the sights, when Spock noticed three figures approaching the wall below them. Spock looked at Stu and asked

“What’s shithead doing down there?”

Norman and Boran returned to his office carrying a syringe, they noticed it was empty except for the discarded bonds and noticed the cave screen open and on a CCTV monitor a large man in a daft hat and a smaller man gazing into their abyss.

“Damn” thought Norman and called to Boran and the rest of team in the near vicinity, they all came rushing into Normans office.

In the confusion nobody heard the blood curdling scream coming from the hospital room and a weak but panicky Nick replicant emerged from the room in absolute terror.

He had also seen the cave monitor and two figures emerged into the light of the camera carrying guns (telescopic rods) and walking toward the entrance. His memory had not fully returned, all he knew were these two were in his psyche and had harmed him before, now they were coming to kill him again and his in-depth fear took hold, like a child imagining he was being stalked by bogeymen. Nick replicant stood in the corridor his head nearly exploding, he must get away and quick. He noticed the lit elevator and side controls, but no elevator only a raised stone, which he could not understand how to use, he did however know how to climb a ladder and ran toward the emergency escape route and up into the small compartment and out under the slab, into the hot afternoon air. He looked around him at the temple and jumped through an open glassless window, still panicked he noticed a small dark area behind a small recessed wall and ran behind it. Behind the wall was a 10 foot ledge and beyond that, an empty well, which was about 10 foot circumference and approximately six feet deep, because it was dry season it contained no water. He crouched down behind the wall and while his body pulsed with pain, he sat back on the dark ledge with his knees raised to his chin and rocked like a child, whist his new body recovered.

Norman, Boran, Junior and a technician ran into the citadel, three figures were going into the elevator at the base of the cave wall someway in the distance.

“Damn and blast” said Norman the intercom was only one way from the cave to the citadel, so there was no way to tell Tighe that two foreign tourists were in the cave and so he had only one course of action.

He gave Norman Junior and a technician each a rifle from a large chest in his office and gave them instructions to stop Tighe. The technician ran to the opposite side monorail and Junior got in the small monorail car at the edge of the lab and pressed the accelerator. Silently the monorail cars started moving up along the tracks, gaining speed as they ascended upwards and along toward the sentry ports.

Spock and Stu had seen Pon being pushed toward the elevator, unsure what to do they moved away from the ledge and against the wall so not to be noticed.

“What shall we do”? Asked Stu.

“Matey, we fight, we are after all from Cleethorpes and Pons our mate” said a proud Spock.

“Matey they had guns” stated Stu.

“Yeah your right, lets just fuck off” said Spock and started to walk away.

“Come back here” said Stu and Spock returned.

“Only joking” said Spock trying to lighten the situation.

“Have you got a plan” Spock asked expecting Stu to come up with a foolproof idea that would rescue them all.

“No” said Stu, “lets just wing it.”

Tighe shoved Pon into the elevator and told him to get on his knees, Pon did as instructed and Tighe and Tar got into the elevator and pushed the button. The doors slid shut and the elevator rose and after a short ride stopped, as the first doors opened, the second rock colour designed large doors then slid back. They ordered Pon to get up off his knees and walk out of the large elevator. They shoved him through the doors and into the cave and past a hidden Stu and Spock in the shadows. As the three passed them Spock and Stu stepped out behind Tar and

Tighe and hit them on the heads with two large rocks. Both Tighe and Tar stumbled but quickly regained their composure, as Stu and Spock knocked the guns out of their hands with the rocks, followed by a large right hook to the chin of Tighe by Spock and a head butt on the bridge of Tars nose by Stu. Pon somersaulted through the air and jumped through his bonds, now reversed, he fumbled through his bag that Tar had dropped from the first assault. Tighe and Tar had fought back and the Colonel punched Spocks face and knocked off his hat. That enraged Spock and a few more hard blows from Spock and he knocked the Colonel into cuckoo land.

Stu was not fairing as well, Tar was a martial arts specialist and a commando, he struck Stu with a high knee in the face and he lost his balance and fell with Tar straddled on top of him, hands round Stus' neck trying to choke the life out of him. Pon removed his Glave sprang out the blades and sliced through his bonds, he looked at Spock who was stood over the unconscious colonel, then he turned his attention to Stu and saw Tar on top choking his friend, Spock had also seen this and was about to go help, but there was no need, Pon somersaulted over Tar and in a flash pierced the nape of his neck with his razor sharp Glave and pushed it into his medulla oblongata killing him instantly. Pon landed on his feet and surveyed the carnage.

Stu rolled Tar off him and pushed him onto his back, Stu assumed his head butt must have had a delayed effect and he stood over Tar and kicked him in the ribs and pointed at the lifeless body.

“Don’t fuck with the Brits” he yelled at the stone dead Tar, not noticing the pool of blood now soaking into the cave floor. Pon went over to the fallen Tighe who was

starting to regain consciousness, but a clubbing mauler of Spock sent him back to sleep.

“Thank you my friends” Pon hugged Stu and Spock.

“We must get down to the floor and over there” he said, pointing to the laboratory and hospital complex. The holy relics there and they are holding your friend Nick there also

“Nick” said a startled Spock and Stu in unison “what are they doing kidnapping Nick?”

Pon instructed Stu and Spock to get into the elevator and told the lads that he would restrain Tighe and Tar. The two lads did as instructed, they were both knackered.

“Just give us a yell if you need any help” shouted Stu as Pon dragged the lifeless body of Tar past the elevator, Stu and Spock sat in the elevator getting their breath back and wishing they had brought the last two beers with them

“That won’t be necessary” shouted Pon as he stood over the colonel, who he had now positioned face forward against a rock, Tighe’s head held at the top and base of the skull by Pon, with one sharp twist Pon broke Tighe’s neck and heaved his body over Tars.

He went into his bag and took out his wharm Lorn mixture and spread the mixture over the bodies, gave a short blessing for a quick and safe journey to Nirvana. Then lit the mix with his lighter (gone modern).He never used the gold filings to direct the blast heavenwards, as he realised this could bring down the cave ceiling.

He quickly ran to the elevator and closed the door.

“What was that?” exclaimed Stu just before the elevator door fully closed

“What” said Spock?

“That flash” said Stu pointing at the now closed door

“I didn’t see anything” mentioned Spock who now felt something different on the top of his head.

“I’ve left my hat” he gasped

“Never mind my friend we can get it later” reassured Pon as the lift started to descend.

The fight was witnessed by Norman and Boran from Norman’s office, Norman looked on in horror as Tighe’s neck was broken, then they were all blinded for a moment while the wharm Lorn completely evaporated Tar and Tighe’s bodies, guns and Spock’s hat, leaving only a dusty ash and scorch marks. Then the cameras went black as the powerful mix blew them to pieces and had melted Stu and Spock’s telescopic rods and polystyrene cooler box at the mouth of the cave.

The room went silent, then after a few seconds, Norm spoke “What have we done?”

“Maybe its god’s way of telling us to slow down maybe the world isn’t ready for another maker” murmured a sad Boran.

“Maybe your right my old friend, what have I become” Norm wiped the tears from his eyes

“Goodbye my son” he whispered at the black screen “may you meet the original supreme being soon”.

He said a silent prayer and waited to see what would happen next. They didn’t have to wait long as Srey Dar burst into the office.

“Professor” said the out of breath teacher

“The clone has disappeared, I only went out for a few minutes to see what the commotion was and when I went back to his room he had vanished.

The old professors looked at each other.

“He can’t be far” said Dar “I will look around”

She hurried out into the citadel shouting “Lord Buddha.”

“Gods will” whispered Boran.

The elevator stopped after a few minutes and Pon peered out. There were some people gathered in the pastures and a few milling around looking above the cave wall where a few moments ago, a terrific light illuminated the cave mouth and now their eyes focused on the lift as the three lads cautiously stepped out. They headed towards the laboratory complex and saw a woman in the distance shouting for Buddha.

“Look at this place” said Stu it’s incredible.

“Yeah I wonder what it is” said Spock followed by:

“Ouch something just stung me”

“What” said Stu then “ouch?”

Spock fell to the ground unconscious followed quickly by Stu. Pon spun around and looked for where the silenced shots were coming from. He spotted a glint from the rocks above him to his left side, just before he was darted in the shoulder and fell unconscious to the floor. Several of the citadel occupants helped to get the three unconscious men to the laboratory area and into the hospital ward. They bound them to beds placed on their sides. Norman and Boran took blood samples and entered instructions into Theory. Norman Junior added extra instructions to Theory for one of the men’s new RNA recipe. “This man killed my brother he will have a constant reminder” he thought.

Theory set about sequencing and making instructions for the oven.

A search party was organised for finding the Nick replicant and after a few hours of searching around the cave and temple they gave up for the day, as the sun was waning and it was approaching dusk. Other members of the citadel started erecting screens around the hospital

corridors and laboratory leaving a 20 yard lit space leading to the temple elevator.

The Nick replicant had remained in the same position for a few hours in his dark recess. He had heard sounds of people moving around from within the temple so he crawled into the well and curled up into a ball and slept.

The lads were just coming around when Norman entered the room. They never spoke, as Norman and an assistant injected each one in turn in the napes of their necks and in the arm. The anaesthetic in their arms sent them back into a deep, but temporary sleep. They all awoke with a start at the same time moments later.

“Where are we?” said Spock as they all surveyed their surroundings. They appeared to be in a small corridor, walled in by white metal walls on three sides and well lit at the bottom only 20 yards away, they saw the metal ladder and a control panel to the side.

“I came in this way” said Pon “that is the elevator Tar used”

They went to look at the controls, two monitors were situated on the outside, one showed the floor of the temple, where the lift came up showing who was coming down, the other had a wide view of the temple and viewed if anyone was inside the main temple. The control panel had two buttons with up and down written in Cambodian.

“What about Nick and the relic?” asked Stu

“Mate we don’t even know where we are and the car could be miles away, but if we find that we know how to get here again” replied Spock

“That makes sense lets go” instructed Stu with the other two in agreement.

They pressed the up button and the lift slowly ascended.

The replicant had woken up and having not heard anything for a while, he climbed out of the well and peered out from his recess, dusk had set. He had no plans he didn't know anything, was hungry and slowly started to move. He had one more check to make sure the coast was clear, he heard a clunking noise as the elevator floor slammed up into the wall position. He stared curiously at this and the large round object now rising up from the floor, followed by two smaller round objects as Pon and Stus head also came into view. Frozen with fear, this shock was too much for the newly formed human to take. He stared in horror at the rising figures of his executioners and his new and unready body shut down. He felt a sudden sharp piercing agony in his head as his brains main blood vessel exploded, killing him instantly. His body stumbled backwards falling arse over tit into the well, returning him into the oblivion that he had not so long ago arrived from.

The three lads, oblivious to the demise of the poor unfortunate creature, ran out of the temple, as dusk started to lose its turn to twilight. Pon had found his bike and helmet, but the lads could not get their bearings and they all had splitting headaches and wanted to sleep.

“Come on” said Pon as he drove up to the confused two foreigners.

“We don't know where the car is, it certainly isn't round here, and we were in thick jungle.

They walked over to Tighe's Hummer, but the door was locked, they had better luck with Tars Toyota Tiger parked nearby, he had left the passenger door open. The lads got in, their heads now felt like they were on fire, Spock broke off the ignition lock with a rock and pulled

the two wires of the starter out. The Tiger roared to life and they pulled away.

“Didn’t know I could break into cars did you matey?” gloated Spock.

“Yes mate, you told me before, your mum taught you” replied Stu,

“Now step on it my head is killing me”

“Mine too” said Spock “and I feel dizzy and sleepy, they must have drugged us.

“Oh no, shit Einstein” said a sarcastic Stu.

They got back to the hotel about 40 minutes later and walked Zombie like to the reception, the manager said something about Nick, but it was just a garbled noise, they picked up their keys and went to their rooms. They fell asleep as soon as their heads touched the pillow, Pon never even removed his crash helmet.

-Chapter Nineteen-



Early the next day Stu's phone alarm woke him up and he got out of bed and looked at his watch 07:30 "blimey" he thought I never get up this early on holiday, then he remembered "Fishing"

He went to the shower and started to shave. He looked in the mirror.

"Where did that come from?" he thought as he looked at a red mark under his eye and marks on his neck. There then came a thumping on the door.

"You awake matey? Don't forget we're fishing this morning have you got the gear in your room?"

Stu shouted back "Hang on" and went to the door to let Spock in.

He opened the door and a smiling Spock looked at Stu, with a nice shiner over his right eye.

"Blimey" exclaimed Stu "who gave you that?"

"No idea" replied Spock "I woke up with it."

"It would have been that bloody happy herb Pizza, we must have gone out and got into a fight, I don't remember anything only coming back here and deciding to go fishing" stated Stu.

" I remember speaking to that lad Strat and both of us coming back in a tuk-tuk but nothing else, it must have been that bloody herb pizza, I am sure that I had the

fishing gear in my room, but its not there now, neither is my hat” said a puzzled Spock. Both confused, they decided to go ask the reception if they could throw some light on this.

They arrived at the reception and Pon was already sat there with a few red marks around his cheek and looking just as confused as Stu and Spock. They sat next to Pon who told them he was about to go off earlier, but the security guard stopped him and gave him a package and his backpack. Pon then reached into his bag and produced an open bubble wrap envelope and reached inside and took out its contents.

“Where did that bloody thing come from?” asked a shocked Spock, now staring at the holy box

“I don’t know” said Pon “or why he had my bag or your car keys” and produced from the envelope the keys to Lees range rover.

The three looked totally bewildered, and then Stu spoke.

“It couldn’t have been the Pizza, he never ate any” pointing to Pon.

To add to the confusion the manager of the hotel came to speak to them and informed them their friend Nick had returned yesterday afternoon, picked up his valuables and left immediately back to Sihanoukville.

“What? We only got here last night and we saw him” said a still confused Stu.

The manager replied, “You’ve been here two nights sir”

They now decided that it was too confusing for them to think about any longer and seeing that somebody had obviously stolen their fishing gear and Spock’s hat and as they now had the relic, they decided to return to Thailand via Sihanoukville and Koh Kong. (Pon confirmed the relic was genuine and the guard from the night shift

didn't know who had brought the items, just a Cambodian man average build and he didn't leave a name.) Pon telephoned Lee and told him he had the relic and asked whether he had heard anything. The phone went silent and the lads eavesdropped as Pon, who looked even more confused, said to Lee "I have never been to Tighe's house, I was going there this morning."

Pon finished his conversation and turned to the lads and said

"We have a problem. They know I am here, we have to meet Brigadier Lee in Phnom Penh this evening, and he will give us further instructions" and continued Pon "he told me he had informed me of this yesterday while I was at Tighe house."

Spock, Stu and Pon, now back in his wig, left the hotel mumbling about how confused they were and about the hotel charging them for two nights. Pon returned his rented motorcycle and the lads got into the range rover, which they thought had been moved from their original parking space and drove out of Siem Reap and onto the highway to Phnom Penh.

The citadel had been in disarray and mourning the previous evening, there was a lot to plan and even more to do. They had search parties out from first light but no sign of the replicant. The search was called off for the day at 10am, as it was the first day of the temple reopening to the public for the season and tourists would be arriving. They held a meeting in the pastures as Norman, Boran with Norman Junior and Tu and other leading members of the community had spent long hours the previous night discussing their situation and the decision they had come too.

They had seen the three intruders leave and while searching for the replicant found Lees Range rover and keys. One of the technicians had followed the three back to their hotel and called another resident to bring the lads possessions and car back to the hotel in the early hours of the morning, including the holy relic (which they no longer had any interest in).

Now all the inhabitants of Let-cum-baan were sitting silently on the pasture, it was Rumble who started the discussion and gave them the decision that they had come up with the previous night. It was a decision for all to make and the starting date to carry out the next instructions, was to be within the next 24 hours. The meeting concluded and Norm Junior spoke to his father “Do you think the formula would have worked on those three.”

The old man replied,

“I hope so son, but that’s why we have to decide on any future action now, just in case it hadn’t and they tell the world about us. This way, by the time anyone investigates, we will no longer exist.”

The builders and engineers started the first phase later on that day, after the tourists departed and after another attempt was made to find the replicant, who now everyone had thought he’d probably would have run deep into the jungle, they all prayed for his safety and well being. They filled the underneath of the temple elevator with concrete, removed all cameras and the elevator itself and filled the escape compartment with rock and cement. That way was now sealed and nobody could ever enter or leave from that route again. Explosive charges were then set in the main cave with enough semtex C4 to collapse the cave roof and walls. The following day a

silent exodus streamed out of the cave and into the ravine and through the jungle to a waiting fleet of 4 wheel drive vehicles that had been ordered, paid for and driven to the designated area, by both present and past inhabitants. The whole community stood silently on the ridge of the jungle precipice all in tears and deep within their own thoughts and memories. Norman Junior stood with a remote control in hand and with tears streaming down his face, pressed the button and detonated the explosives. The ground rumbled and a loud thunderous boom echoed with the sound of rocks tumbling, signalled the end of their lives in Let-cum-baan and a new beginning for them and an eternity of perpetual seclusion for the twenty-two souls who had remained.

Norman, Boran and his wife Roth stood on the pasture along with the other 19 people who decided to stay, these consisted of a few older technicians and their families. They looked on as a loud rumble and clouds of dust billowed out of the cave opening and into their world.

“Have we made the right decision old friend?” Norm asked Boran.

“We have made the only decision we could have” reassured Boran.

They patted old Jake the cow on his head and returned to their living domes to reflect on their past and plan for the future.

-Chapter Twenty-



The RNA formula that the scientist, Theory and the oven had prepared had worked and the three confused lads entered Phnom Penh early evening having lost a full day, they all only remembered going to sleep the night before and waking up to go fishing two days later. The RNA had bypassed the DNA memory marker for a full day and the other little surprise instruction that Norm Junior added was slowly starting to take effect.

The Range Rover pulled into the car park at the rear of the Intercontinental Hotel. Lee was already waiting in the foyer and greeted them all. Lee had booked them rooms adjacent on the eighth floor. He explained all the borders, police and army were now looking for Pon and so leaving by a conventional border would not be advised. He stated the easiest way would be to fly. They were pretty relaxed at the airport and he knew the immigration, it was where Lieutenant-Colonel Pagna was stationed, “But I will only use Pagna as a last resort” said Lee and continued “I don’t want to endanger anyone else.”

Lee was as confused as the other three about what happened and he told Pon that Colonel Tighe did not return home the previous night, or answering his phone today as Pagna and Kim’s family have been trying to contact him about the wedding. Pon could shed no light

on the matter as he had no recollection of ever meeting or seeing Colonel Tighe.

“The only problem is” said Lee “they will be looking for a single man travelling on a Khmer passport.”

He told Pon he had another plan which he and his friend had started to develop, but he did not want to tell Pon of the plan until it was finalised later on in the evening and he added,

“This way, I kill two birds with one stone,”

He went on to explain he had contacted Taksin and he would be more than happy to assist with the Thai side of things.

He advised Pon to stay in his room. Spock and Stu would be OK as they weren't looking for them.

Spock and Stu weren't Ok, in fact far from OK, they wanted to see Dragon and Mom.

“But at least we get to see our girls tomorrow” said an only partially disappointed Stu, as he missed Dao more than he let on.

“Yeah” said Spock “and the little shit will be happy to see me, she should now be over her strop” said a nonchalant but deep down happy Spock.

Brigadier Lee left the hotel and told them he would send another car, with tinted windows to pick them up and take them to the airport for 07:45 their flight was at 08:30. Lee had phoned the airline to tell them they would check in late, the less time they spent at the airport and in Cambodia the better. Pon went to his room to have his food brought up, he would remain out of sight until the flight, which he didn't mind as his lower back hurt.

Spock and Stu went into the plush restaurant in the Intercontinental and ate a delicious all you can eat buffet for \$21, as they sat eating a tall young English man in

chef whites uniform came to their table. The chef asked the pair,

“Are you from England?”

“Yes matey” replied Spock.

“Did you enjoy the buffet” he asked, noticing plates of chicken and rib bones.

“Yep, I was so hungry I could’ve eaten the arse off a low flying crow ,” replied Spock

“Have you been Phnom Penh before?” asked the chef.

“No matey” again replied Spock as Stu was still stuffing his face.

“I am off work in 30 minutes do you want a night out, I will show you around” asked the chef

“Yes matey” answered Spock and Stu nodded and mumbling his agreement while still chomping on a chicken drumstick.

“Great said the smiling chef and stretched out his hand to introduce himself “my name is Richard”

Stu, Spock and Richard headed out into the hot sticky air of Phnom Penh, Richard led them into the first and usual bars on his excursion, to have a laugh with the Phnom Penh virgins.

Spock and Stu loved the bars, a lot more reserved than Pattaya and quieter, so you could actually have a conversation and while Richard started knocking back Jack Daniels and coke, with tequila shots, Spock and Stu drank beer and gave the shots to the girls around the bar. Richard assumed that Spock and Stu had just came over from England and would not be used to the drinking hours and stronger beer, he was sure he would have these two wankered and with Lilly and the old girls by early doors. He was wrong and he tried to keep up drink for drink, but he was drinking double and sometime treble

measures of Jack Daniels when Stu or Spock ordered, also shots of tequila and Sambuca's, plus the fact he had not eaten anything, by midnight Richard was wankered. Spock and Stu were spannered and Richard had been talking about a special place all night he would take them later, so Spock asked,

“Matey, when are we going to that place and why does everyone call you koy-t?”

Richard staggered out of 136 bar followed by Spock and Stu. They got into a tuk-tuk and Richard slurred directions to the driver.

They entered Sophie's bar and immediately were surrounded by women trying to sit them down and remove their todgers from their shorts. Richard was just looking around in a world of his own.

“You Ok koy-t?” asked Lilly, Richard just smiled and lolled his head from side to side

The lads ordered some drinks and while Spock and Stu where re-living their Soi 6 experience in Pattaya, Richard drank a swig of his Jack Daniels and fell asleep. Spock and Stu finished their beer and their respective companions finished what they were doing, Spock turned to Richard,

“That was great mate where next?”

Richard remained in his slumber and all attempts to raise him failed. It was Lilly, who spoke,

“Its Ok you can go, we will take care of koy-t, he comes here all the time and we always take care” and gave a wide smile flashing her 3 teeth.

They thought it must be true as she was a motherly sort of hag and left Sophie's and Richard asleep in a large comfy chair, telling Lilly they would probably see him for breakfast at the hotel. Spock and Stu got into a tuk-

tuk and headed back to the riverside as they had spotted some cuties in a bar earlier and although they didn't know the bars stopped serving at 2am, they would be going home alone, but they didn't care tomorrow and Dao and Moo was that bit closer.

Richard only woke up once he looked around at his surroundings and had a warm sensation in his loins, he half looked at Lilly who was straddling somebody at their knees, her small body bent over a todger. In his confused stupor Richard asked Lilly if she was Ok, from the todger in her hand, near her chin Richard knew she had snared another one of his victims. He smiled at Lilly and said "see you got another one, Lilly", then fell back into his drunken sleep.

Lilly descended on Richards todger like a hungry black widow spider, with at last the prey she had been stalking for months firmly wedged between her three teeth. The animal had been tamed.

Spock and Stu went back to the hotel and in the luxurious bed of the five star Hotel and went into a deep contented sleep.

The next morning Spock and Stu went down for breakfast, Pon had his sent to his room and the lads tucked into another hearty breakfast buffet. They had seen Richard wandering around and said hello and thanked him for showing them around, but Richard just looked embarrassed and avoided the lads.

"Nice bloke that Richard" Spock said.

"Yeah" agreed Stu as he shovelled another lump of bacon into his mouth "Can't hold his booze very well though."

A darkened windscreen Lexus pulled up outside in the car park, two men got out, one went to Lees Range Rover

and drove it away, the other came into the Hotel and collected his passengers. They drove the 12km from Phnom Penh centre to the airport and pulled into the departures section of the Pochentong International Airport.

Lee was already waiting, he led them all inside the building and into up to the check in section.

He pulled them into the corner and said,

“Pon you travelling alone is too dangerous, wait a minute until the counter clears”

They waited a few minutes until the last straggler cleared the check-in desk, Lee signalled his driver out of the window, in the direction of the car park. The car door opened and a lady stepped out. The lads saw the lady walking toward them.

“She is the girl we saw at Lee’s house” noticed Spock.

“Kim” said a happy Pon.

Lee smiled at Pon “not Kim” said Lee, “Goy, your wife.”

Lee explained Kim would travel with Pon as his wife to Thailand. Taksin had all the necessary work in hand there. Lee would tell Kim’s parents that she must have run away. He had also discussed this with the king’s mother who was an old romantic and didn’t like Tighe. So she readily gave her blessing. He would tell Tighe (when he turned up as nobody had seen him for two days now) Kim was probably in Vietnam as she also held a Vietnamese passport. Lee then presented Pon with a Cambodian passport with a photograph of Kim and a Thai visa with her new name Goy te-ad. Kim rushed into the airport and hugged Pon.

“Welcome my wife” and Pon kissed Kim.

“I love you my husband” said a tearful Kim.

“Now we have a shithead and a goythead” said

Spock chuckling to himself, after noticing Kim's passport.

"Quickly" said Lee and ushered them all through the departure lounge and upstairs to the gate.

Kim told her uncle she would call and they waved each other goodbye and walked towards the gate and outside onto a waiting Air Asia Boeing. They got settled, Spock sat next to Stu and Pon sat with Kim, although Pon fidgeted a lot to get into a comfortable position, as the base of his spine was still aching. Stu turned to Spock as the plane taxied,

"What exactly is a goyt head?" he enquired

"I don't know" said Spock chuckling "but it sounds good, I am sure I will think of some use for it" and added "shall we order some tea, goythead".

The large aircraft lifted off the ground and Pon and Kim relaxed, they had made it, she was free.

-Chapter Twenty-one-



The large air Asia 737 touched down on the runway of Savarnabhumi airport, Bangkok, after a 50 minute flight from Phnom Penh. The passengers all disembarked with the exception of four people who had been asked by the flight crew to wait.

A familiar figure then entered the plane and went over to the four. Pon stood and wai'd Taksin. Smiling, Spock and Stu stood up and shook his hand and told him it was good to see him again. Then Pon introduced Kim and she also wai'd Taksin.

Taksin told them they would be escorted out of the airport privately and took their passports from them. They all left the aircraft and got into a large chauffer driven white stretch Chrysler 300 series limousine that bore the royal crest.

The car drove out of the airport from a side gate and onto the highway. They made their way towards the palace and Taksin got a de-brief off Pon. But all he could say was he only remembers getting ready in the morning to see Tighe, then the relic being handed to him by the security guard, very strange he said, occasionally Spock interrupted about his missing hat. Taksin had informed them that his contact Brigadier Lee had asked him to carry out some personal instructions and now he had seen

the prime master and Kim together, he was very happy he had carried out Lee's instructions. Taksin told Pon they caught a spy at the palace "It was my P.A. Noi" he told them "She was caught on the palace CCTV camera outside making a phone call and all use of phones had been prohibited until the relics return, when the palace confiscated the phone they checked the last number dialled and it was Colonel Tighe Nye's land line."

"Where is she now?" asked Pon.

"She is in custody at the Bangkok Hilton prison awaiting trial for treason, but I dare say she will probably get away with a short jail term instead of execution, she confessed that she had acted on her lovers orders, Colonel Tighe"

Kim smiled, she had a lucky escape.

The limo pulled into the Imperial Palace, they all got out and were ushered into the large, plush administration section where Taksins office was and into a large plush conference suite.

They entered the large room where two figures were there to greet them.

"Welcome back Prime master" said two old monk's who then wai'd the party and an overjoyed Pon replied,

"Master Cenat and master Vitthae, what are you two dopey old farts doing here?" He didn't, I was just checking you're still awake.

The monks and Taksin spoke for several minutes in Thai, which neither Stu, Spock nor Kim could understand, so they just gazed out of a large patio window onto the beautiful flora in the royal grounds. They were interrupted by a buzzer sounding and a small old man entered the room. The people in the room all bowed including Spock and Stu when they saw the others doing it.

The King spoke to the monks and Taksin in Thai and then said to Stu and Spock in English

“Thank you for your help” he then turned and left the room.

A few moments later another man, dressed in the same uniform as Taksin entered and handed a small envelope to Taksin, who opened it and returned Spock and Stu their passports. Pons and Kim’s had been shredded. Spock and Stu thanked Taksin and Pon asked Taksin something in Thai, Taksin smiled and replied in Thai.

Another bell sounded and they all sat around a large dining table. Several Thais, dressed in Traditional costume came in carrying cutlery and table decorations, turning the table into an extravagant dining area and several moments later more stewards entered carrying plates of piping hot Thai food. The whole party ate and chatted for about an hour and Taksin asked Stu and Spock if they would like to stay as their guest, or return to Pattaya, that didn’t take a lot of thought to answer and thirty minutes later, after saying their farewells, they were speeding down route 7 on the way to Pattaya in a chauffer driven limousine

“This will put me back in the good books with the little goythead” said Spock chuckling to himself that he had found a use for his new word.

“Hmmm” mumbled Stu as he stared out of the window and thought of Dao and how he could work his and Spock’s bruises into a convincing story of heroism.

Taksin, Pon, Kim, Vitthae and Cenat took the relic to the temple of the sacred light, once again a scaffold had been erected around the statue. Pon made his way slowly up the scaffold and replaced the holy relic and climbed down.

There were two other men in the temple and as soon as Pon had replaced the relic and climbed down the two waiting men took some electrical equipment up to the Buddha statues head.

They were having a touch motion detector fitted to an alarm system around the relics, thus bringing the temple into the 21st century.

The five left the temple and went to Taksins office they would be returning in a few hours for another ceremony. Pon, Vitchae and Cenat left the office and went to the monk's quarters for a discussion. Banti and Pons sister came and after the tearful reunion and introduction to Kim they left, taking Kim to their family quarters. Pons sister could now speak a little English, so she and Kim who could also speak a little English could have a limited discussion. Taksin made the other arrangements that he and Pon had discussed. Pon had told Vitchae and Cenat his wish, he now awaited their wisdom and advice on this.

Several hours later the temple of the sacred light was again occupied with a crowd of people for a religious ceremony, this time it wasn't tourists awaiting the Buddha's light. The people inside were monks, high ranking officials several members of the royal family and Pons family, presiding over the ceremony were Cenat and Vitchae and two figures kneeling in front of the chanting monks was the defender of the monarch and his new wife to be, Kim.

The chanting reached its crescendo just, as the sunlight hit the skylight and the holy remnants, one which still contained Nicholas Godfreys ceramic teeth, minus a few cells, then another member joined the ceremony, which

took the form of an amazing dancing light show ‘the lord Buddha.’

Pon had told Vitthae and Cenat that his love for Kim was too strong and he wanted to protect her, although he would always remain on the path to enlightenment, he would do this with his wife and as it was forbidden for monks to marry he would relinquish his role as Tinju Prime master and no longer be a monk, but he would remain the defender of the monarch and protector of the relic, Pon would always remain a loyal servant of the Tinju and royal family.

Vitthae and Cenat both saw the look Pon had when he was with Kim and could not or would not refuse the brave warriors request. Vitthae asked Pon if the big fellow would consider the Prime masters role, as he looked very handy, (referring to Spock). A quick ceremony was arranged to make them joined in matrimony under the Buddha’s teaching and laws. Kim was sad she never had her parents blessing, or that they even knew what was taking place; maybe, she thought they would come around and Tighe would forget her, then they could have a large ceremony and with the Royal families of Cambodia and Thailand attending, it would be a great day and a boost for the friendship between the neighbours. Unbeknownst to her now, but that day would come sooner than she thought.

The ceremony lasted two hours and after the sun had set the party dispersed. The monks remained in the temple, which left Pon a little sad, but he had made his choice and he squeezed his wife’s hand. They returned to their living quarters and Pon and Kim made their first joint decision as a married couple, Pon told his mother and the rest of the family what they had just planned. A tearful

Banti hugged her son and whispered "I told you Buddha would take care of his bravest servant" she then hugged Kim and wished them both a safe journey. She then looked at her son and asked if everything was alright, she was concerned about something she had noticed about Pon all the way through the ceremony,

"Yes I am fine mother and I will see you in a few days" replied an embarrassed Pon, amazed again by his mother's awareness of him after only a short time together, she was a wise person that was for sure. Mr and Mrs Meesilli (Pon took his families surname) left their quarters and went to Taksins office, who was expecting them.

"Enjoy your honeymoon" said Taksin and handed Pon a parcel.

"Give them all my regards" he added and wai'd the couple.

Thirty minutes later the happy couple where canoodling in the back of a limousine speeding down route 7. Pon was still in his defender of the monarchy white uniform and Kim, still in her traditional Thai wedding attire.

Stu and Spock arrived at Pattaya in the limousine just after 1pm. The car pulled into the car park of the Sawasdee hotel and unloaded the lad's belongings. They asked the driver to wait, whilst they went up and showed Dao and Moo how they had arrived after their dangerous mission. They got into the elevator to the first floor and went to their rooms. Both the girls where asleep in Stus room, Dao and the eyebrow challenged 'Goythead' Moo. They jumped up when the lads entered, Dao and Moo smiled and got out of bed and went over to kiss the lads, who immediately herded them to the window and looked out onto an empty car park.

“He’s disappeared, the git” said Stu.

The lads had unpacked their things out of the car, they had not spoke to the driver during the journey, every time they asked him something, he smiled knowingly and they just assumed protocol meant he couldn’t speak to the passengers as they were usually royalty. It had never occurred to them the driver didn’t understand a dickey bird of English and when they asked him to wait, he just smiled, and then when the lads went into the elevator he just drove away, his job was done.

Dao and Moo just looked at Spock and Stu unconvinced, even with the lads pointing, cursing and making gestures to highlight the fact that there was a royal Limo outside. They sat down Dao and Moo on the bed and told them the story of how they bravely fought off invading jungle armies and hordes of cut throat, knife wielding natives in the dangerous snake infested Cambodian jungles and how, in the end they prevailed victoriously, retrieving the relic.

(Well they couldn’t say they went on holiday, had a great time and came back without actually remembering doing bugger all. Now could they?)

The girls listened intently to their brave soldiers accounts and after they had finished the room went silent, the girls took in all the facts with the two lads gloating and still pointing to their now faded bruises for effect.

It was Moo that broke the silence, by shouting,

“What a load of old bollocks”

A stunned Stu turned to face Spock,

“You taught her that as well?” said Stu.

“Yep” said a proud Spock “that’s my girl.”

The four burst out laughing and when the girls suggested they go eat. Stu and Spock told them they had already eaten with the King, both girls said in unison, “What a load of old bollocks” This brought more laughter to the room, with Spock mentioning what a quick learner Dao was.

Thirty minutes later they left their rooms. The lads were wearing their swimming trunks and the girls in jeans and t-shirts. The girls were going to eat and the lads were going to the hotel pool to find someone who would listen to their tales of adventure. They all returned to their rooms around 4pm after spending a lazy afternoon playing around the pool. They decided to have a shag and watch TV for a few hours, eat something then go out on the town. The girls decided to return after they had eaten and stay in the room, as Spock and Stu wanted to go watch the boxing on walking street again, the girls knew this would be another embarrassment, so they told them to go alone. They all stayed in their rooms the rest of the afternoon and watched TV, every now and then would get a quickie in, if the TV movie was crap. They only had a week left now and as usual the last week was always a sullen time for the lads, it was the downhill part of their holiday and they had already wasted most of it.

Nick on the other hand was having a great time after all the travelling to escape, although he was always looking over his shoulder. He had realised he had forgotten his valuables, when he was approx 30 minutes from Phnom Penh, so he had the angry driver turn around and go back to Siem Reap, were he recovered his belongings from the safe and paid the taxi \$300 which cheered up the tired driver. Nick was happy to be informed his mates had gone fishing for the day so he would be safe to wait for a

bus to Sihanoukville. Nick then spent his time in Sihanoukville with Shanti, just lazing over on Bamboo Island. He had decided to stay there, it was safe and very tranquil. It had taken a few days to get her to agree to stay. Shanti had caught the boat every day to the island at 10am but always returned to the mainland to work at 5pm. Shanti and Nick only kissed for the first few days, until a few days before he had to go home to the UK. Shanti went over to the boat island in the morning with a small bag, inside a change of clothes and some toiletries. Nick was overjoyed to see her get off the boat and even more so when he saw her bag and she asked him if she could stay, but no hanky panky. Nick happily agreed and that night after the generator on the island went off, they both lay in a hammock on the balcony of their bungalow just listening to the lapping ocean waves and the stars twinkling. Shanti kissed Nick and whispered "If we do anything tonight don't tell anybody."

He readily agreed and knew if something happened this would be it, he would spend the rest of his life with Shanti realising it could be short, if he kept running into those two. Shanti loved Nick's vulnerability.

That evening was the best night of passion Nick had had in a very long time, he was actually making love instead of boom-boom. In the morning they stayed in bed till well into the afternoon and went snorkelling together around the bay, away from the other tourists for yet another aqua shag. They caught that afternoon's boat back to the mainland and stayed at the Coasters resort that night, they just ate and enjoyed a few bottles of wine, but most of all enjoying each moment together.

Nick caught the morning bus to the airport and Shanti went with him to the bus station, to say a tearful farewell.

She wiped the tears away from his cheeks and Nick the Jack the lad builder's labourer from Brighton and owner of the world worshipped ceramic teeth, got on the bus with tears still flowing down his cheeks, he waved his love goodbye. He would return.

Spock, Stu Dao and Moo had arranged to go out at 8pm they all showered and got ready. The girls wanted to eat a K.F.C which the lads eagerly agreed to. At 7:55pm there came a knock on Stus door,

"Hang on matey, we will be 5 minutes" hollered Stu.

The knocking continued, so Dao answered the door and smiled, bowed, wai'd and started chatting in Thai. Stu came to the door and opened it fully to see what the commotion was.

Stu laughed and said "well don't you two look smart" and went out and hugged Pon and Kim

"What's all the bloody noise?" said Spock now opening his door and wandering into the corridor.

"The heads, shit and goyt" He joyfully shouted and went over to hug Kim and clip Pon.

Pon smiled "Mr & Mrs Meesilli now" he smirked which brought another, either hug or clip from them all including Moo, who when Pon enquired what had happened to her eyebrow, gave Spock a contemptuous stare.

Pon explained about Kim and him marrying quickly and told the group they wanted to spend their first night together as man and wife with their brothers and sisters, he also had something to give them. He pulled Spock and Stu to one side and told them he had a little problem that he felt his two brothers could advise him on later. Spock and Stu intrigued by this said of course, but for now Pon wanted to give them their reward and be happy together.

“Glad you have got rid of that stupid mullet” said Stu.

Pon just smiled and reached into his bag.

He produced a small package and opened it and handed one Thai passport to Dao and one to Moo.

They all looked in the pages and there it was, the Holy Grail, a UK tourist visa.

“You little beauty” said Stu and put his arms around Pons shoulder. Pon then gave them four first class tickets on Thai airways with open return seats, so they could extend their holiday, neither Stu nor Spock were on time schedules. Stu had his own business so his time was his own and Spocks, although on a limited time holiday, didn’t really give a shit if they sacked him from his dustbinmans job, he was fed up with that anyway and Stu was always trying to employ Spock, but he didn’t pay as much. The four all jumped up and down with joy and Kim and Pon joined in, Kim was enjoying her new life already.

Pon reached into his bag again and produced a hat, Similar to Spock’s old one, but with the Thai royal emblem skilfully stitched to the front. Spock tried it on.

“Perfect” he said “Thanks matey”

Dao, Moo and Stu cringed, the twat in the hat had returned.

Pon then gave an ornament to Stu. This one was blue and had an elephant skilfully carved into it.

“Thanks matey that will go nicely with my red one,”

“I will tell mum this one is a sapphire and priceless she will put it in Pearls treasure box” thought Stu.

It was a sapphire, a flawless 96 carat one, to be precise and again worth a fortune.

The lads explained their evening plan and knew Pon and Kim would want to enjoy their marital nuptials, so they would see him tomorrow.

“Wait my brothers I would like to discuss something in private with you” said Pon and he opened the room next to Stus’ (that he had taken and put his and Kim’s luggage in 5 minutes before, when he arrived) and walked in, the lads followed and Stu whispered to Spock,

“He hasn’t had much experience of sex before and Kim is a virgin, so he will want to ask us about the birds and bees.”

“And who better to advise him” sniggered Spock.

Pon asked the lads to sit on the bed and he stood in front of them and undid his tunic trousers and turned around, pulling his pants down and exposing his rear end.

“Wooah!!” exclaimed Spock “hold on there bald eagle, you have a lot to learn.”

And “easy there tiger” from a shocked Stu.

“Look” said an agitated Pon pointing at his backside.

The lads stared at Pons buttocks and noticed a narrow flap of skin between his butt cheeks approximately six inches long.

“That looks like Chunky’s docked tail, but bald” said Stu pointing at the proboscis. Then the tail popped up and Pon cried out “look is this normal,” and just like old Chunky’s stump, the tail started to wag from side to side. Stu and Spock looked at the wagging tail of their friend. Pon explained it started growing in the car from Siem Reap to Phnom Penh and he was very concerned, it wasn’t normal. Although it only ached when he sat on it, The lads where aghast and when Pon pulled up his trousers. Spock broke the silence and seeing how

genuinely concerned Pon was and not wanting to alarm him, spoke,

“Yep matey, perfectly normal.”

“Yep” agreed Stu “normal at your age and excitement usually brought it on, but don’t be too concerned it would probably disappear and to reassure him added, it was a fine looking tail and Kim would love it.”

Pon now relieved, wai’d his lying brothers and went outside to fetch Kim into the room. He also took something black and furry out of his bag. The lads, who where now a crimson colour and mouths quivering, silently and rapidly left the room, closed the door and burst into uncontrollable laughter, at Norman Rumble Juniors revenge.

Spock and Stu went out to fetch back two K.F.C’s for the girls and some wine cooler, after all this excitement they decided to go out on the piss and brag how easy getting a visa for UK was. The girls wanted to stay in the room and

phone their family and friends and of course also brag, so it would be a long night for them on their phones. Spock and Stu arrived back 30 minutes later laden with KFC's and bottles of wine cooler. They went into Spock’s room, where the girls were already in mid yap, so the lads checked the Listerine supplies. They knew they were in for a good night when they came home. They kissed the girls who where happily chomping into their drumsticks and left the room. They walked towards the elevator and a smiling Pon opened his door and shouted,

“Wait my brothers”

He went back into his room and brought a smiling Kim out and gently shoved her into Spock’s room with the girls.

“Where are we going?” he asked

The two lads looked at the smirking face of Pon and Stu said,

“Why are you wearing that stupid wig again?”

“Kim likes it” he said and smiled proudly.

“And the tail?” asked Spock

“Oh she really liked that” cooed Pon

“How come you’re allowed out on your wedding night?”

Stu enquired.

Pon chuckled “I told my wife it was an English tradition, after making love on the wedding night, it was traditional to go out with your brothers and announce it to the world that you are married and your wife is no longer cherry.”

“That’s the boy your learning” said Stu, as they got into the elevator and chatted about the 30 seconds it had taken Pon to consummate with Kim. They were still chatting about Pon and how he would do it again when they returned, he felt with a few non alcoholic Heinekens, he would perform better, same as before. Spock and Stu got out of the elevator first and Spock ordered out Pon

“Walkies and come to heel” and a whistle which Pon didn’t understand the meaning of.

“Change of plan” announced Spock and nodded to Stu

“Change of plan matey” agreed Stu and they left the Sawasdee Hotel and swaggered into the night like Wyatt and Virgil Earp with their faithful hound shithead. They jumped onto a baht bus and got off at the top of Soi 6 and walked into the first bar of happy wailing muggers.

IT ENDED WHERE IT BEGAN

-Chapter Twenty-two-



Professor Norman Rumble got out of his bed after the best night sleep he had for many years. He showered and put on a clean white laboratory tunic

“What time is it”? Said a stirring figure from the bed.

“It’s early, go back to sleep you still have an hour” said the old professor as he made his way out of his living dome and slowly made his way over to the laboratory. Norman Rumble loved the dawn. He walked over to the start of the lab and took in the morning air, as the sun started its daily ascent along the top of the cavern’s plasma screened ceiling. He checked his watch and waited. After a few minutes at 6:30 precisely, a low click was heard as the computer that controlled the environment gave instructions to the air blowers and mist making machine by the waterfalls. A cold light mist blew over the

Citadel floor which refreshed the citadel and reminded Rumble of New Zealand. Norman watched (as he did every morning) the curling mist as it bathed the pastures and orchard.

Then he turned and went into his large office and poured himself a glass of pineapple juice out of the fridge and stood gazing out of the window, back into the citadel, while its now 24 inhabitants started their day. He noticed old Bong Toah and his wife walking around the pasture, collecting the dung from the cows for the methane tanks

to process, a chore the old couple had done for years and although the citadel now had Hydrogen power as well as solar and hydro electric, the methane power was rarely used but it kept the old couple contented. Although the citadel used most of the power to keep Theory and The oven running, it still could have enough to power the whole town of Siem Reap. He watched as the brightly coloured parakeets and flowerpeckers (some made by the oven and some by insemination) flew squawking over the herd of cows, with old Jake chasing after them as they headed back to their nests in the tall mango orchards, their morning fun over.

The citadel had all the noises and smells of the world outside.

The old professor was still staring out of the window when a young native woman entered and bought in a fresh jug of pineapple juice and replaced the one in the fridge.

“Thank you Eve” said Norm to the girl who smiled and left the room. Norman then proceeded to the Theory computer and carried out his daily check list.

It had been several months now since they had blocked off the entrances to the Let-cum-baan and were now hidden from the world. There had been a country wide search for Tar and Tighe, which had fizzled out after a few weeks. All Norman and the citadel inhabitants could do was hold a memorial for his adopted son and Tar, as only dust remained, a large brass plaque was made in their honour and placed on the wall of the precipice. The CCTV monitors had been disconnected and the large concrete pillar that had been placed under the floor of the Ta Prohm elevator had been covered in decorations, photos and paintings of the inhabitants that had left the

citadel. Nobody in the citadel was aware that the replicant had been discovered. Their only communication to the outside world was via their own and very private satellite system that Norman Junior had set up. It was now 07:30 and Norman had returned to his office to await a communication to come in from UK.

Rumbles computer signalled an incoming transmission and the smiling face of Norman Junior and his son Cain flashed up on the screen.

“Hi dad” said Junior.

“Hi granddad” joined in Cain

“Hello boys” replied Rumble.

“Father have you been watching the news on your satellite T.V” enquired Junior.

“No son, I have been too busy, why?” replied the old man.

Norman Junior went on to explain, the winner of this years Nobel Prize for science and technology had a heart attack and died whilst receiving the prize, the Nobel committee therefore had to rescind their order of posthumous recognition after a public outcry and governments became involved. They gave an amended list yesterday to the media and Rosalind Franklyn was on that list.

Norman started to weep and thanked his son for the information.

“What a great few days this had been already,” sobbed Rumble.

Norman Junior his wife Patty and his son Cain, along with Tu and Liz, Borans family had moved to London after the immense success of the CAIN celled computer, that had

revolutionised computers and made them and the software team extremely wealthy. They had all been busy with other projects and assisting their old home, the citadel with computer technology and communication which they had brought in prior to the closing of the Ta Prohm entrance.

“Where is she father?” said an exited Norm Junior after several more minutes of chat

“I left her sleeping son, she has only been with us a day and still tired from the effects”

“Ok” said a disappointed junior “maybe later”

The door then opened and a smiling old Khmer woman entered the room and went over to Norman and looked into the screen. Norman stood up to allow the old woman to sit down and with tears in her eyes, touched the screen. Norman Junior who was also in tears as he touched the screen.

“Hello son” said Theary.

“Mum” said a tearful junior and turned to Cain.

“Say hello to your grandma”

“Hi grandma” said the tot “How are you?” Norman Also in tears, put his arms around his wife and said, “She is perfect Cain”

Boran and Rumble had continued with the Ophiuchus project and decided not to share this with the world, as they felt maybe God had interjected with the failure and possible demise of the Buddha replicant and the killing of Tighe and Tar made them feel it would end up being used for sinister, rather than good purposes.

They decided to create a whole new civilisation from cells that had been found in the skeletal remains that Boran had unearthed many years ago. They were not exactly sure whether the bones and teeth where from

ancient Mori-Ori or ancient Khmer or possibly both. The cell sniffer had found a few cells in the dried up marrow of some femur bones and teeth, the oven had created a young native woman, who had turned out better than expected, as Theory and the oven's artificial intelligence were constantly improving and upgrading their own programmes on the technique and the speed of growth was now about 6 weeks. They named the woman Eve. Norman was then granted his wish and the second creation was Theory, Norman's beloved wife, who started life anew the previous day. They had made two replicant at the same time (two canvasses) but could only add the paint and software one at a time, but again this process had been sped up. They wanted to make about a hundred inhabitants altogether, then they could just renew themselves at their leisure as and when their bodies wore out, this would be a perpetual turnover with the same neighbours and friends for eternity if they wished.

The family's tearful reunion was interrupted by Norm's intercom.

"Norman could you come to the ward" said Boran who knew Norman liked to be there for moments such as these.

"Hi Uncle Boran" said Cain when he heard Boran's voice and Norman kept his finger on the intercom button.

"Hi Cain" said Boran "I will call you later when I call Tu."

"Be right there Boran" said Norman and he kissed Theory on the forehead.

"Next time we speak I may be talking to my older brother and sister" said Norman Junior sarcastically.

“Or maybe younger” giggled Norman and your mum may be blonde.

Theory slapped the old professor and told him not to be so cheeky.

Norman left the room and the three remained chatting on the computer.

Professor Rumble entered the ward where Boran and the native lady (Eve) was standing over a large male and while Boran checked vital signs, Eve was stroking the mans forehead and talking in an ancient Khmer dialect. The shroud of life was taken away and cleaned and was being made ready for its next occupant, by a technician and his wife Dar, who had remained with their daughter in the citadel

“Mori-Ori?” asked Norman.

“Mori-Ori” confirmed Boran and smiled at the figure of a mid twenty year old male, who had previously died of a virulent form of flu virus and whose molar teeth had provided the cells. Theory had easily removed the virus and added a *cop to the RNA recipe so it wouldn’t return.

Cop is a term used to stop the RNA replicating a certain type of cell, in this case an influenza virus, previously it was Thearys cancer cells

“Welcome to the new world” smiled Norman and placed his hand on the new arrivals head.

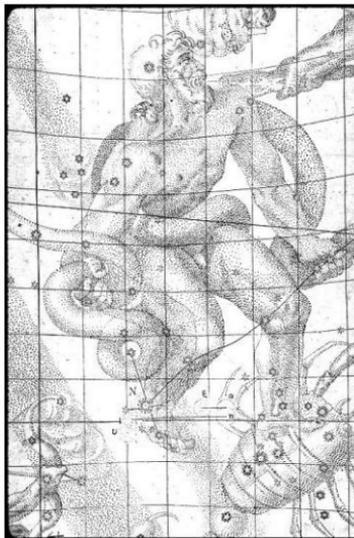
The man returned the smile and fell into a short deep sleep.

The two old scientists and now lifelong brothers just smiled at each other, they knew this was a friendship that was going to last forever. They had spoken many times in

the last few months how they wanted to look; they had certain features they wanted to change. Boran joked he wanted bigger breasts for Roth and she responded by wanting to give Boran no mouth, so he wouldn't be cheeky. They also discussed if the world ever found out, would they be perceived as miracle workers for the plastic surgery brigade or modern day Dr Frankenstein. They didn't really care. They were creating a new civilisation from the ashes of the old. Everything was now euphoric in their little utopia underground, which would remain that way for all eternity.

**Life is not measured by every breath we take.
But by the moments that take our breath away.**

Ophiuchus, the new beginning.



Epilogue



Crinigan hadn't taken a holiday for many years. The last one was in Spain, when his sons were very young and for the last few years he hadn't bothered at all, but this one was an all expenses paid and a mystery Crinigan was looking forward to cracking.

He had requested that he should investigate the John Doe that had remained in the morgue at New Scotland Yard and eventually his superiors agreed, as they wanted the body buried, so the case put to rest, they were getting fed up of the cranks pestering them for stories about alien abductions and government cover ups, after the press had received a tip off from within the Met.

The Singapore airlines Boeing touched down after a seventeen hour flight and although Crinigan had a few whiskey's on the flight and a few nice meals he felt grubby and wanted to shower. Now into mid August, he thought any trail would have gone cold, when he had spoken to Dr Clerk on the phone, he assured him the trail wasn't there to begin with, so there was nothing to go cold. But as Timothy explained, he was a coroner and not a detective and this needed some good old detective work to give it some closure. All Timothy had found out in the several months since finding the body was rumours of strange lights around Ta Prohm and secret cities underground, but these, he had told Donal, had been old

wives tales dating back years and nothing substantial had surfaced.

“Little green men” joked Timothy.

“Yes” tutted Crinigan “I’ve been getting that a lot.”

He recalled his telephone conversation with Nicholas Godfrey, who could not shed any light on the subject, even though he told Donal he would contact him when he returned from Cambodia again, as he was flying out there the next day for a few weeks, but he never contacted him. Crinigan thought it was pointless continuing with that line of investigation, as all Godfrey wanted to witter on about was two Englishmen who where trying to kill him. Detective Crinigan thought Nick was probably bonkers and belonged in an asylum.

“Who knows, maybe Nick is still here and maybe I’ll run into him in a bar somewhere” he thought, that would be fun.

“Hi my name is Nick and supposedly I’m dead” Crinigan chuckled to himself.

The plane came to a stop outside the terminal and the detective gathered up his papers on the case, that he had been studying on the plane, put them neatly back in his briefcase and got off the aircraft and walked into the terminal. He went through customs and immigration and into the open air of the terminal arrivals, meeting point.

“Donal, Donal” came a shout from a small man wearing glasses from behind a metal rail

Donal noticed the man shouting and waved back and walked over to him and shook the hand of Dr Timothy Clerk.

“How did you know it was me?” asked Detective Crinigan.

“You look Irish, Donal” laughed Timothy

“Welcome to Cambodia, this is my wife, Chanda” and introduced Donal to the lady who stood at his side.

“The embassy has laid on a car for you and we have booked you a room in a hotel on Moa Tse Toung Boulevard. It is Sunday, so just relax and freshen up and feel your way around”. Said Clerk.

The party got into the embassies Cadillac STS V6 and drove towards the city centre and to the intercontinental hotel. They chatted about the case and Timothy told Donal that he had gotten no useful information from the tour guide, or group that found the body. He told Donal that a Colonel and an army sniper working for the prime ministers security force had disappeared around the same time, but wasn't sure if or how it could be connected, but maybe it could be a line of enquiry

“Maybe useful” said Donal and took out his notebook and scribbled some details down. Timothy told Donal that he would pick him up that evening and take him to his house for dinner. Then the following day they could head to the scene of the crime and locate to Siem Reap and interview whoever he needed to, until the case could be put to rest and the poor unfortunate individual in the morgue could be buried. Dr Clerk advised it would be better to get out of Phnom Penh as soon as they could, as there was a wedding planned by the royal families of both Cambodia and Thailand, which was taking place on Tuesday in the silver Pagoda, so the streets and roads would be blocked off to traffic, making travelling out of Phnom Penh and within the city difficult.

“Who is getting married a Prince or something?” asked Crinigan.

Timothy chuckled “No, apparently it is two of the respective Royal families employees, a Thai man and a

Khmer lady, according to the press it is a real life fairytale, so it will be a big event for the two nations.”

They pulled up outside the plush Intercontinental Hotel and Timothy took Donal in and confirmed his room on the top 15th floor, the best view in the city Timothy told him, they shook hands and Timothy left the hotel. The bell boy took Donal's bag to his room.

“Drink first” thought Donal and headed to the hotel bar.

“Jameson’s whisky and a Guinness” he requested the Khmer barman.

“No Guinness sir” said the barman “we have ABC stout” he offered as an alternative.

“Fine” said Donal “and make that a double Jameson’s”

Detective Crinigan felt the amber nectar hit the back of his throat, swallowed and let out a satisfying ahhh.

It was too early to make a judgement about Cambodia, so he decided to finish his drink, shower then go out until Timothy called. Clerk had given Donal a mobile phone with a Cambodian sim card and his number in the memory in case he needed him. Donal looked at his watch “just after noon, time for another drink first, then shower and out” he thought, as he gulped down the last of the whisky and took a swig of the bitter tasting stout.

“One more sir?” asked the bartender.

“Aye lad, one more double whisky, but no more of the stout, it tastes like Shite.”

“Top of the morning to you sir and the rest of the day for yourself” came a voice behind him.

Crinigan spun around on his stool and saw a man stood behind him in chef's whites.

“That is the worst Irish accent take off I’ve ever heard” said Crinigan and continued “You must be English.”

The chef laughed and in a posh southern English accent said “how did you guess” and an evil smirk came over his face, as he extended his hand to shake Donals.
“I’m Richard, are you on holiday”?

THE END

Whilst the world slept

A Brief history of the events leading up to 1975, the genocide period of the Khmer Rouge.

After World War II and into the early 1950s, King Sihanouk's politics became more nationalistic and he began demanding that the French grant the country independence and depart, echoing the sentiments of the other nations of Indochina, Vietnam and Laos. He went into exile in Thailand in May of 1953 and refused to return until independence was granted. He returned when his overtures met with success and Cambodia became independent on November 9, 1953. On March 2, 1955, King Sihanouk abdicated in favour of his father, taking the post of prime minister a few months later. Following his father's death in 1960, he gained election as head of state, but received the title of prince rather than king. In 1963, he forced a change in the constitution that made him head of state for life. While he had officially abdicated as king, he had created a constitutional office for himself that was exactly equal to that of the former Kingship.

In the spring of 1965, he made a deal with China and North Vietnam to allow the presence of permanent North Vietnamese bases in eastern Cambodia and to allow military supplies from China to reach Vietnam by Cambodian ports. Cambodia and Cambodian individuals were compensated by Chinese purchases of the Cambodian rice crop by China at inflated prices. He also at this time made any number of speeches calling the

triumph of Communism in Southeast Asia inevitable and suggesting Maoist ideas were worthy of emulation. In 1966 and 1967, Sihanouk unleashed a wave of political repression that drove many on the left out of mainstream politics.

He had alienated the left, allowed the North Vietnamese to establish bases within Cambodia and the prime minister convened the National Assembly which voted to depose Sihanouk as head of state and give emergency powers to Lon Nol. staked everything on China's good will. On March 18, 1970, while he was travelling out of the country, Lon Nol was elected as the first president of the Khmer Republic in a blatantly rigged election. As per the new constitution (ratified on 30 April), political parties formed in the new nation, quickly becoming a source of political factionalism. General Sutsakhan stated: "the seeds of democratization, which had been thrown into the wind with such goodwill by the Khmer leaders, returned for the Khmer Republic nothing but a poor harvest.

On 29 April 1970, South Vietnamese and U.S. units unleashed a limited, multi-pronged bombing attack on Cambodia. Nixon wanted to solidify Lon Nol's position, although the Cambodian leader was not even informed in advance of the decision to invade his country. He learned about it only after it had begun from the head of the U.S. mission, who had himself learned about it from a radio broadcast.

From 1972 through 1974, the war was conducted along FANK's lines of communications north and south of the capital. Limited offensives were launched to maintain contact with the rice-growing regions of the northwest and along the Mekong River and Route 5, the Republic's

overland connections to South Vietnam. The strategy of the Khmer Rouge was to gradually cut those lines of communication and squeeze Phnom Penh. As a result, FANK forces became fragmented, isolated, and unable to lend one another mutual support.

In January 1973, the Paris Peace Accord was signed, ending the conflict (for the time being) in South Vietnam and Laos. On 29 January, Lon Nol proclaimed a unilateral cease-fire throughout the nation. All U.S. bombing operations were halted in hopes of securing a chance for peace. It was not to be. The Khmer Rouge simply ignored the proclamation and carried on fighting. By March, heavy casualties, desertions, and low recruitment had forced Lon Nol to introduce conscription and, in April, insurgent forces launched an offensive that pushed into the suburbs of the capital. The U.S. Air Force responded by launching an intense bombing operation that forced the communists back into the countryside after being decimated by the air strikes.

As late as 1972–1973, it was a commonly held belief, both within and outside Cambodia, that the war was essentially a foreign conflict that had not fundamentally altered the nature of the Khmer people. By late 1973, there was a growing awareness among the government and population of the fanaticism, total lack of concern over casualties, and complete rejection of any offer of peace talks which "began to suggest that Khmer Rouge fanaticism and capacity for violence were deeper than anyone had suspected.

Reports of the brutal policies of the organization soon made their way to Phnom Penh and into the population foretelling a violent madness that was about to consume the nation. There were tales of the forced relocations of

entire villages, of the summary execution of any who disobeyed or even asked questions, the forbidding of religious practices, of monks who were defrocked or murdered, and where traditional sexual and marital habits were foresworn. War was one thing, the offhand manner in which the Khmer Rouge dealt out death, so contrary to the Khmer character, was quite another. Reports of these atrocities began to surface during the same period in which North Vietnamese troops were withdrawing from the Cambodian battlefields. This was no coincidence. The concentration of the PAVN effort on South Vietnam allowed the Khmer Rouge to apply their doctrine and policies without restraint for the first time. The Khmer Rouge leadership was almost completely unknown by the public. They were referred to by their fellow countrymen as *peap prey* – the forest army. Previously, the very existence of the communist party as a component of GRUNK had been hidden. Within the "liberated zones" it was simply referred to as "Angka" – the organization. During 1973, the communist party fell under the control of its most fanatical members, Pol Pot and Son Sen, who believed that "Cambodia was to go through a total social revolution and that everything that had preceded it was anathema and must be destroyed." Also hidden from scrutiny was the growing antagonism between the Khmer Rouge and their North Vietnamese allies. The radical leadership of the party could never escape the suspicion that Hanoi had designs on building an Indochinese federation with the North Vietnamese as its master. The Khmer Rouge were ideologically tied to the Chinese, while North Vietnam's chief supporters, the Soviet Union, still recognized the Lon Nol.

By the time the Khmer Rouge initiated their dry-season offensive to capture the beleaguered Cambodian capital on 1 January 1975, the Republic was in chaos. The economy had been gutted, the transportation network had been reduced to air and water systems, the rice harvest had been reduced by one-quarter, and the supply of freshwater fish (the chief source of protein) had declined drastically. The cost of food was 20 times greater than pre-war levels and unemployment was not even measured anymore.

The final offensive against Phnom Penh, April 1975.

Phnom Penh, which had a pre-war population of around 600,000, was overwhelmed by refugees (who continued to flood in from the steadily collapsing defence perimeter), growing to a size of around two million. These helpless and desperate civilians had no jobs and little in the way of food, shelter, or medical care. Their condition (and the governments) only worsened when Khmer Rouge forces gradually gained control of the banks of the Mekong. From the riverbanks, their mines and gunfire steadily reduced the river convoys bringing relief supplies of food, fuel, and ammunition to the slowly starving city.

Sihanouk showed his support for the Khmer Rouge by visiting them in the field, their ranks swelled from 6000 to 50,000 fighters. Many of these new recruits for the Khmer Rouge were apolitical peasants who fought in support of the king, not for communism, of which they had little understanding. When the Khmer Republic fell to the Khmer Rouge in April 1975, Prince Sihanouk became the symbolic head of state of the new regime while Pol Pot remained in power. The next year, on April

4, 1976, the Khmer Rouge forced Sihanouk out of office again and into political retirement.

The **Khmer Rouge** was the ruling political party of Cambodia—which it renamed the Democratic Kampuchea—from 1975 to 1979.

The term "Khmer Rouge," meaning "Red Khmer" in French, was coined by Cambodian head of state Norodom Sihanouk and was later adopted by English speakers. It was used to refer to a succession of Communist parties in Cambodia which evolved into the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) and later the Party of Democratic Kampuchea. The organization was also known as the Khmer Communist Party and the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea.

The Khmer Rouge is remembered mainly for the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people (estimates range from 850,000 to two million) under its regime, through execution, starvation and forced labour. Following their leader Pol Pot, who referred to himself as brother number one. The Khmer Rouge imposed an extreme form of social engineering on Cambodian society, a radical form of agrarian communism where the whole population had to work in collective farms or forced labour projects. In terms of the number of people killed as a proportion of the population (est. 7.5 million people, as of 1975), it was one of the most lethal regimes of the 20th century. One of their mottos, in reference to the New People, was: "To keep you is of no benefit. To kill you is no loss."

Whilst in power, the Khmer Rouge carried out a radical program that included isolating the country from foreign influence, closing schools, hospitals and factories, abolishing banking, finance and currency, outlawing all

religions, confiscating all private property and relocating people from urban areas to collective farms where forced labour was widespread. The purpose of this policy, to turn all Cambodians into "Base People" through agricultural labour. These actions resulted in massive deaths through executions, work exhaustion, illness, and starvation.

In Phnom Penh and other cities, the Khmer Rouge told residents that they would be moved only about "two or three kilometres" outside the city and would return in "two or three days." Some witnesses say they were told that the evacuation was because of the "threat of American bombing" and that they did not have to lock their houses since the Khmer Rouge would "take care of everything" until they returned. These were not the first evacuations of civilian populations by the Khmer Rouge. Similar evacuations of populations without possessions had been occurring on a smaller scale since the early 1970s.

The Khmer Rouge attempted to turn Cambodia into a classless society by depopulating cities and forcing the urban population ("New People") into agricultural communes. The entire population was forced to become farmers in labour camps. During their four years in power, the Khmer Rouge overworked and starved the population, at the same time executing selected groups who had the potential to undermine the new state (including intellectuals or even those that had stereotypical signs of learning, such as glasses) and killing many others for even minor breaches of rules. Cambodians were expected to produce three Tons of rice per hectare; before the Khmer Rouge era, the average was only one Ton per hectare. The Khmer Rouge forced

people to work for 16 hours non-stop, without adequate rest or food. They did not believe in western medicine but instead favoured traditional peasant medicine; many died as a result. Family relationships not sanctioned by the state were also banned, and family members could be put to death for communicating with each other. In any case, family members were often relocated to different parts of the country with all postal and telephone services abolished. The total lack of agricultural knowledge by the former city dwellers made famine inevitable. Rural dwellers were often unsympathetic or too frightened to assist them. Such acts as picking wild fruit or berries were seen as private enterprise.

The Khmer language has a complex system of usages to define speakers' rank and social status. During the rule of the Khmer Rouge, these usages were abolished. People were encouraged to call each other 'friend' or 'comrade' (Khmer: *mitt*), and to avoid traditional signs of deference such as bowing or folding the hands in salutation, known as *samphea*. Language was transformed in other ways. The Khmer Rouge invented new terms. People were told to 'forge' (*lot dam*) a new revolutionary character, that they were the 'instruments' (Khmer: *opokar*) of the ruling body known as 'Angkar' (Khmer: pronounced ahngkah; meaning 'The Organization'), and that nostalgia for pre-revolutionary times (*choeu stek arom*, or 'memory sickness') could result in execution.

The ideology of the Khmer Rouge evolved over time. In the early days, it was an orthodox communist party and looked to the Vietnamese Communists for guidance. It became more Stalinist and anti-intellectual when groups of students who had been studying in France returned to Cambodia. The students, including future party leader

Pol Pot, had been heavily influenced by the example of the French Communist Party (PCF). After 1960, the Khmer Rouge developed its own unique political ideas. For example, contrary to most Marxist doctrine, the Khmer Rouge considered the farmers in the countryside to be the proletariat and the true representatives of the working class, a form of Maoism which brought them onto the PRC side of the Soviet-Sino Split. By the 1970s, the ideology of the Khmer Rouge combined its own ideas with the anti-colonialist ideas of the PCF, which its leaders had acquired during their education in French universities in the 1950s. The Khmer Rouge leaders were also privately very resentful of what they saw as the arrogant attitude of the Vietnamese, and were determined to establish a form of communism very different from the Vietnamese model and also from other Communist countries, including China.

The main soldiers and disciples of the Khmer Rouge army were the children who were taken away from their parents (uncorrupted by the 'new people' who were many educated Cambodians) and brainwashed to believe in the 'Angka'(the organisation) and became the judge jurors and executioners of anyone failing to abide by the doctrines of Ankar many turned on their parents and killed their own or friends relatives in order to gain favour and rise up the ranks within the Rouge army usual age for a Khmer soldier was 13 and commanders 15

After four years of rule, the Khmer Rouge regime was removed from power in 1979 as a result of an invasion by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and was replaced by moderate, pro-Vietnamese Communists. It survived into the 1990s as a resistance movement operating in western Cambodia from bases in Thailand. In 1996, following a

peace agreement, their leader Pol Pot formally dissolved the organization. Pol Pot died April 15, 1998, having never been put on trial.

This vile period has been etched deep in the Cambodians (Khmers) and affected every present family. It is a period they do not like to talk about openly and a very high percentage had family members butchered during the Khmer Rouge rule. The Cambodian people have come through this period with strength and resilience and seem to be a gentle and peace loving people now hungry for knowledge and are able to move forward with drive and vigour

War trials are still going on nowadays for leaders and butchers of the regime. Including that of the now 80 year old: Kaing Guek Eav a.k.a Duch. Director of S21 and Brother Number two.

Some mass graves from this period can be viewed at the choeung Ek killing fields 12km from Phnom Penh and chilling reminders of this time at S21 the Tuol Sleng genocide museum, which gives a grisly reminder of a time best forgotten, but a lesson best remembered so never repeated.

**If you don't know how to fix the world
Stop breaking it.**