

The Bodyguard

A UFO Challenge Story for the SHADO Writers Guild

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© May 16, 2010

Based on the Characters and series created by
Gerry Anderson



Historian's Note: The events depicted here take place in early 1982 in a mirror universe.

Author's Note: Although this story is rated PG, it is not meant for younger readers.

The man on his knees in front of Commander Straker's desk pleaded for his life. His hands were tied behind his back and he was flanked by two security guards. Next to the servitor Colonel Alec Freeman was enjoying a glass of whiskey. Behind his desk Commander Edward Straker stood with his pistol in his hand.

“So Conrad, do you have anything to say before I kill you?”

“It wasn't my fault sir; I had no idea that Colonel Foster was going to try to assassinate you. We did manage to stop him.”

“Yes you did, after he got off three shots, one hitting Colonel Lake. You're lucky that she is still in medical recovering. She would have had you tortured first.”

“Please sir, give me one more chance,” Conrad begged.

Straker lowered his weapon and Conrad visibly relaxed. Very quickly Straker raised his pistol

and fired. Conrad fell back with a hole exactly between his eyes. Straker looked down at his lifeless corpse and smiled.

“You enjoyed that didn’t you?” asked Alec.

“As a matter of fact I did. You see Alec; I like to catch them just as they relax. When they die it leaves a surprised look on their face. It’s quite satisfying.”

“So Ed, that’s the third personal guard that you’ve killed this week. Pretty soon nobody will want the job.”

“Trust me Alec, for every man I kill, you will find ten, who will take his place. They’re all drawn to power.”

“Are you going to see Virginia?”

“Yes, while I’m doing that, find me someone else who would like to be my bodyguard.”

“I don’t get you two, you’ve had just about every woman in this place, and Virginia has been with

every man, including your nemesis. Yet you always end up back with each other.”

“Virginia is also drawn to power, and she is the wildest lover I have ever had. So you see, we both get what we want. Speaking of Foster is he still in the brig?”

“Yes, Jackson had them stop flogging him about twenty minutes ago.”

“Good, I don’t want him to die; I just want him to wish he was dead.”

Straker walked out of the office with his second bodyguard in tow.

When Straker arrived in medical he found Virginia’s personal guard outside her room.

“Wait here,” Straker said as he entered the room.

“It’s about time you showed up,” Virginia said to him as he came to her bedside.

“Yeah, and I love you too. How are you feeling?”

“How do you think? It was only a flesh wound but the bullet cracked a couple ribs. You won’t be getting any for a while.”

“Well you can make up for it later.”

“You may not survive it; by the way did you take care of the bodyguard?”

“Right between the eyes. This one was almost perfect.”

“You are cold, come here,” she said viciously.

Straker regarded the man standing in front of him.

“So why should I make you my personal bodyguard?”

“It’s very simple sir, you need me. Look at my record, I’m a crack marksman; I never miss.”

“These are pictures of the last six bodyguards I’ve had,” Straker said as he opened the album on his desk.

“Are they in sequential order, sir?”

“Why do you ask?”

“If they are, sir, then your aim has improved.”

Straker smiled a vicious smile; this man was just as sadistic as he was. Maybe he had finally found one that would last a while.

“Very well, you start immediately.”

“Yes sir,” he said as he executed a martial salute.

“So where did you find him Alec.”

“Section seven, Colonel Blake’s group. Landers had been looking to transfer to HQ ever since we lifted our cover.”

“In addition to being a crack marksman, he’s also a small arms and demolition expert. He has

a reputation for being able to size up a situation very quickly. He's ruthless as hell."

"I like that. Can he be trusted?"

"I wouldn't have recommended him if he couldn't. He's fiercely loyal to you Ed. You above all people know that I never want to command SHADO. That means I need to keep you alive."

"Not that I mind but why don't you ever want to command?"

"I don't like walking around with a target on my back, besides; I can have just about any beautiful woman I want, why would I throw that away!"

"Have you found a favorite?"

"Ayshea, she's quite the little vixen," Alec said with a saucy grin.

"I always figured you for a blonde."

"So did I."

Straker reached to the intercom, “Landers, come in here please.”

George Landers, Straker’s new bodyguard walked in and snapped to attention.

“Reporting as ordered, sir.”

Straker smiled as he admired the subservience being displayed. *This is much more like it.*

“At ease, Lieutenant,” Straker said after a while.

“I want you to go round up Foster’s personal guards and execute them. One shot, right between the eyes. And make sure you do it in front of the Colonel, and I want pictures of them after it’s done.”

“With pleasure, sir; do you require anything else?”

“Yes, swing by medical and have Colonel Lake released and brought here. I’m not leaving her to Jackson’s tender mercies overnight. After that, have Foster brought here as well. In chains!”

Landers snapped to attention, “Yes, sir!”

Landers walked into the medical center and faced Dr. Jackson.

“Can I help you Lieutenant?” asked Jackson in a sarcastic tone.

“I have orders from the Commander to secure Colonel Lake’s release and have her brought to his office.”

“Colonel Lake is not ready to be released. I’m keeping her overnight.”

“I’m sorry sir, I have my orders.”

In a lightning fast move Landers pulled his pistol and leveled it at Jackson.

“I would strongly suggest that you comply, or I will be killing three people today.”

Jackson looked at the man across from him, “Yes, I believe you would. Very well, it’s her funeral.”

Landers arrived at the detention center to find two men, on their knees, in front of the cell that Foster was being held in.

“These two are his?” asked Landers as he looked over to the security chief.

“Yes sir, his personal bodyguards.”

“Remove the blindfolds,” Landers ordered.

Turning to Foster he said, “Well Colonel, you made a very poor decision, and now these two men are going to pay for your indiscretion. Do you have any thoughts about that?”

Foster looked at him with savage contempt, “Go to hell, you son of a bitch.”

“I don’t believe in hell Colonel Foster.”

Landers drew his pistol so fast that Foster jumped back. The two men in front of the cell fell back almost in unison, both of them having holes between their eyes. Foster was noticeably

shaken. He had never seen such a stone killer before. *Where the hell did Straker find this man?*

Landers turned back to the security chief, “Have Colonel Foster put in chains, and then bring him to the Commander’s office, and I need a face shot of these two as well.”

Landers walked out of the cell block heading for control.

“Thanks for getting me out of there Ed. I think Jackson had ulterior motives for wanting to keep overnight,” said Virginia sitting in a wheelchair next to his desk.

“I had the same concern.”

“You were worried, I’m touched,” she said saucily.

“I could always send you back, I’m sure Jackson wouldn’t mind. Imagine all the experiments he

could run on you,” Ed said with a malevolent grin.

“I don’t think that’s what he had in mind, and being impregnated by Jackson doesn’t appeal to me. By the way Ed, I was serious when I said it would be a while before we could be together. My ribs hurt like hell.”

“That’s all right, my back needs to heal anyway.”

“Sorry, I got carried away,” she said giving him a viciously seductive grin.

At the climax of their last sexual tryst, Virginia had dug into his back with her fingernails, drawing blood.

The intercom buzzed and Straker answered it, “Yes!”

“Lt. Landers is here with Colonel Foster and security.”

“Send them in.”

The doors parted and Lt. Landers followed by Foster and security. Straker walked around to the front of his desk.

“Put him on his knees,” said Ed.

The security team forced him to his knees. Foster looked up at his commanding officer; eyes filled with contempt.

“So *Paul* can you give me a reason why I should not execute you?”

“You’re a bastard Straker, go to hell!”

“Now Paul, is that any way to treat someone who holds your life in their hands?”

Full of condescension, Foster said, “If you’re going to kill me Straker, do it. Unless you don’t have the guts?”

Straker reached down and backhanded him. Foster looked up and spat at him.

“As much as I’d like to and as much as you deserve it, I have no intention of killing you. I’m

just going to humiliate you. I'm sending you back up to Moonbase; that should keep you out of my hair for a while. If I were you I would be very careful about trying to form a mutiny. I have eyes up there as well. The next time you try this, I'll let Virginia loose on you. By the time she is finished you will be praying for death."

Foster swallowed hard. He had seen Virginia Lake oversee the torture of a traitor last year. She had managed to stretch out the suffering for three days before he finally died. And right now Paul was not her favorite person.

"Get him out of here!"

When they were alone Virginia said to Ed, "I still wish you had handed him over to me."

"Be patient my dear, you may yet get your chance."

Virginia gave him a wicked grin.

"I like that," she said.

Paul Foster sat at the command station on Moonbase having been there for two weeks since Straker had him flogged. His back was just beginning to heal.

Ed Straker was going to pay; as well as his woman, that treacherous little tramp Virginia Lake. She had dropped him like a bad habit when the Commander told her he wanted her back. Paul was out for revenge and it was just a matter of time before he could get the pieces into place. The only wildcard in the puzzle was George Landers. He knew that Landers was going to have to be eliminated if he was going to take his vengeance.

Anytime he was on Moonbase Paul was assured of female companionship in the form of Joan Harrington. While she wasn't as wild as Virginia she still kept him entertained, for now. And she was loyal knowing that she would be elevated in rank, if Foster moved up. Paul figured that if he

could eliminate Straker and Lake, he would rise to command as Freeman didn't want it. He just had to make sure it wasn't traceable to him, otherwise Freeman would kill him.

Joan Harrington walked into the control sphere and approached Foster.

“Did you make contact with them?”

She gave him a saucy grin “Of course, they are ready to help.”

“Good,” said Foster.

“The call won't be traceable here?” he asked.

“I have an alibi. The middleman is someone working in supply. We had a fling a few years back and he is still sweet on me. I could get him to pull the trigger himself if I wanted.”

George Landers looked through the communications logs. He had been Straker's

bodyguard for over two weeks now and he was going to make sure nothing slipped by him. Landers set the computer up to run an intentions search on the comm records. Anything out of the ordinary would be flagged for closer scrutiny.

Straker was in his office trying to catch up with reports. He was dragging today and the coffee wasn't helping. Virginia was on the mend and last night she was in a wild mood. They were lucky if they got an hour worth of sleep. At least she didn't tear into his back this time.

Landers looked at the computer readout. Six transmissions had been flagged for review. He looked over the details of the transmissions. One transmission worried him; he had to see the Commander.

“So what you are telling me, George, is another attempt on our lives might occur tomorrow night?” asked Straker.

“That’s what the information leads us to believe. We do know that someone in security is the ringleader and there are at least two other people involved.”

“Anything that ties back to Foster?” asked Virginia.

“The only out of the ordinary message from Moonbase was a call from Lt. Harrington to an old fling in supply.”

“Ed why don’t we just kill him and get it over with,” said Virginia. “Call Moonbase and have him spaced. That should be painful enough.”

“Ginny my *love*, let’s not be too hasty. You know as well as I do that Henderson is good friends with Foster’s father. If we assassinate him without good cause, Henderson will retaliate.”

“Henderson, that bastard, he disgraced my father during the empire’s conquering of Germany during World War Two. I’ve sworn a blood oath against him.”

“Patience my *dear*, you will have your revenge.”

A corner of her mouth turned up in a sinful smirk. Straker turned back to Landers.

“Well George how do we deal with it?” he asked.

“I have a plan, but it’s risky. It will put both of you in the line of fire.”

“I don’t mind that as long as I know it’s coming, but I want them alive.”

“That’s my intention sir.”

“Very well Lieutenant, carry on.”

Landers snapped to attention, “Yes sir!”

When he had left Virginia looked over to Ed, “He’s working out rather well.”

“At least this time we can be ready, this is what the others should have been doing.”

“I hope he takes at least one of them alive, I have a score to settle,” she said viciously.

“You know Ed; Foster and Harrington have been sleeping together, I wonder if her call to supply is more than it seems?”

“You could be right; I’ll have Landers keep an eye on him.”

“Colonel Freeman?”

Alec turned to see Lt. Landers running up to him.

“What can I do for you George?”

Quietly he asked, “I understand that you are the person to see for undetectable surveillance equipment?”

“Maybe,” Alec said with an evil grin.

“I’m sure now that the security Chief, Captain Roberts is involved. The problem is I can’t

prove it. And I still need to find out who he's working with."

"Are you sure?" Alec asked very surprised.

"Absolutely sir. This came from a very reliable source, but it won't stand by itself. I need solid evidence."

"Let's wait until the low watch. I'll pull a drill and then we can go down to security and bug the place. I'll make the drill real enough that we should be able to work undisturbed for at least an hour."

"Yes sir."

"Security breach, security Breach!" the voice of Lieutenant Anderson echoed through the underground complex.

Freeman and Landers watched as the security detail ran down the corridor.

“It should be clear now,” Freeman said to Landers.

The two men walked into the security section, making sure it was abandoned. Freeman pulled a small box from his pocket and opened it. He set it on the table.

“These small devices on the right are for the phones,” Alec said.

The two men worked very quickly to install the surveillance equipment. By the time the drill was completed Freeman and Landers had bugged the entire security section. Because of the newly designed transmitters, the bugs were virtually undetectable.

The next morning Landers walked into the supply room. The clerk looked up from his paperwork and snapped to attention.

“Can I help you sir?”

“Yes, I need to requisition a block of C4 explosives, and three remote detonators with a matching transmitter.”

“Yes sir. Do you have an authorization form?”

Landers handed him a signed document. The clerk looked at the name on the bottom.

“Commander Straker?”

“That’s what it says.”

“Give me a few minutes to get this together,” said the clerk.

After a while the clerk returned with a white handled box. He set it down on the desk in front of the Lieutenant and opened it.

“Everything you asked for is in here, sir”

Lt. Landers looked it over. Satisfied, he closed and removed the box from the desk and walked out of the room. The clerk noticed a small coin on the desk. He reached over and picked it up to

examine it. A slight grin came to his face as he picked up the phone.

In his quarters, Paul Foster was laying on the bed staring at the ceiling. Next to him Joan Harrington was cuddled into his shoulder.

“So would you like to hear some good news?” she asked.

“Straker’s dead?” he asked hopefully.

“Soon, I got a call this morning; the last piece is in place.”

“Really?” he asked as he turned to her.

“Yes, do you want to know how it’s going to happen?”

“Yes, but first, who is the trigger man?”

As Joan whispered into his ear, a growing smile of malevolence came over his face. *Straker you bastard, this time you’re getting yours. And you’re not even going to see it coming!*

George Landers stood at attention in front of the Commander's desk.

“It's been confirmed. Captain Roberts is the ringleader. We've identified the two accomplices as well. It's all the tape.”

“Arrest them,” said Straker.

“Yes, sir.”

After Landers left, Ed turned to Virginia, “I told you that you would get your chance.”

“I'll let them sweat overnight; we can start the interrogation tomorrow.”

Straker leaned back in his chair, “Virginia, you enjoy this too much.” He looked over at Alec.

“Alec, I want you to go over that tape with a fine tooth comb, make sure we didn't miss anything.”

“I will; I am just shocked. Jeff Roberts has always been loyal. Something about this doesn’t make sense.”

“If you’re waiting for the world to make sense, you might be waiting a while.”

“Right, I’ll see the two of you later.”

“Are you ready to leave my dear?” Ed asked her getting up from behind his desk.

“I’m ready.”

Virginia took his arm as they walked out of the office.

Landers sat in the lead car of the security escort detail. He saluted as the Commander and Colonel Lake got into their car. Behind Straker and Lake were two more escort vehicles. The caravan started out onto the road on the way to Straker’s home.

“So why did you do it Jeff?”

Captain Roberts looked up at him, “What do you think I did Alec?”

“Betray Commander Straker, how could you do it? I thought I knew you better than that. When Landers told me you were involved in this I didn’t believe him. I played along figuring it would be one of your underlings we would catch. I never dreamed you would be involved.”

“I don’t know what you are talking about, Alec. Where’s your evidence?”

“I had the phones and offices bugged last night. I have a recording of you and you’re two buddies planning to assassinate Ed and Virginia.”

“What equipment did you use?”

“The new B9 series micro bugs.”

“Did you verify the encryption checksum?”

Alec thought for a moment. He hadn't checked because he trusted Landers. Freeman walked over to the computer and accessed the voice records. He ran the tamper check routine. Alec's heart froze when he saw the results. He shouted to the duty officer, "Release them!" he ordered as he picked up the phone.

Ed and Ginny are walking into a trap and I recommended this guy!

In the Commander's car Virginia looked over the service record of Jeff Roberts. Alec had been shocked that Roberts was involved and that worried her.

"Ed?"

"What is it?"

"Did you know that Paul Foster is listed under the known enemies section, of Robert's service record?"

"No, I didn't," he said looking over at her.

While Ed considered this, the car phone rang, “Straker.”

“Ed it’s Alec, the two of you are in grave danger. Landers is working with Ginny’s second personal guard. I’ve got a detail heading out now.”

Ed said to Ginny, “It’s Alec, we’re in trouble, Landers is going to kill us.”

“Shit!” she said as she grabbed her sidearm.

“Alec we’re on Burlingame Road, we’ll try to make a run for it.”

“On more thing Ed, Landers requisitioned a block of C4 and remote detonators.”

Straker slammed on the brakes, “Virginia, get out quick!”

Virginia and Ed dove out of the car and ran for the woods.

Landers looked in the mirror and noticed that Straker's car had stopped. "Oh no you don't Commander; your ass is mine," he said as he reached for the transmitter.

An explosion ripped through both the Commander's car as well as the two escorts behind him. Virginia and Ed dove for cover as the shrapnel flew.

"Virginia!"

"I'm all right, Ed."

They looked back at the car; the engine compartment had been destroyed, but the passenger compartment was still intact.

They want us alive.

"We're going to have company."

"And sooner than you think *Commander.*"

Straker recognized the, thick with irony, voice of George Landers.

“Drop your weapon Commander, you too Colonel.”

Begrudgingly they both dropped their pistols.

Alec and the SHADO security team raced down the country road that led to Straker’s place. Jeff Roberts had handpicked the three other men with them. He had a score to settle with Landers.

“Can this thing go any faster Jeff?” asked Freeman.

“Yes sir, hang on!”

Landers and his accomplice tied both Straker’s and Lake’s hands behind their backs and had them sitting down leaning against the stone wall.

“So *Ed*, right now you are probably wondering why I didn’t just kill the two of you outright, am I correct?”

“The thought had crossed my mind,” said Ed sarcastically.

“Well it’s like this; I think I’d like to start an album of my own. And having SHADO’s first and third in the book would be so nice. You seemed to enjoy it so much. Besides one of the men you killed was family, and that demands revenge.”

“Look your problem is with me; let Colonel Lake go.”

“Oh not a chance in hell Straker, leave her alive to avenge your death? I don’t think so. Besides she’s going to get it first, while you watch. Both knees, both shoulders, then right between those pretty blue-grey eyes, such a shame.”

Landers raised his pistol savoring the moment smiling sadistically. He took careful aim. Lake flinched with the sound of the gunshot.

Landers stood there, the smile slowly leaving his face as the blood trickled down his forehead. He collapsed to the ground as Alec Freeman and his team ran up guns drawn.

“Drop it!” they ordered.

Landers’ lackey complied, but before they could get to him, he fell to the ground.

Jeff Roberts checked him finding a capsule in his mouth.

“Cyanide, no doubt.”

“Alec, I’m very glad to see you, but you cut that to the wire.”

“I got here as quick as I could. You okay Ginny.”

“I am now, thanks Alec.”

Straker got up as the team untied him and Lake. He looked down at the two bodies shaking his

head. “Landers was more ruthless than I am, that’s a sobering thought.”

“He scared hell out of me,” said Virginia.

“That’s not like you,” said Ed.

Virginia put her arms around him, “Offering your life to save mine isn’t like you either. I didn’t know I meant that much to you.”

“Don’t tell anyone, it will ruin my reputation.”

Virginia gave him a saucy grin, “Well you can prove it tonight.”

On Moonbase Joan Harrington finished her call to earth. She was not looking forward to this as Foster was prone to tantrums when things did not go right. *I might as well get this over with.*

She walked into the control sphere where Foster had the low watch.

“Any word?” he asked.

“I’m afraid it’s not good.” Quietly she continued, “Landers is dead, shot in the head by Colonel Freeman. Jacobs committed suicide per his orders.”

“Damn, damn it all to hell! I was sure we had him this time.”

“Straker has made quite a few enemies. Just be patient; given enough time and rope; he’ll hang himself.”

Straker you will pay, Foster thought to himself. Someday you will pay, and I will be there to watch you fall.

END