

Outline for the 3rd draft

THE BULL AND THE PEACOCK

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HOTFOOT

AMERICAN EAGLES

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PREFACE

This is the true story of how two innocent men were thrown in jail and escaped, with the help of their friends, in the middle of a revolution.

In telling the story I have taken two small liberties with the truth. One: several people have pseudonyms, usually to protect them from the revenge of the government of Iran. Two: in recalling conversations which had taken place three years earlier, the people who told me the story often remembered what was said but not the exact words. In such cases I drafted a conversation based on what they could remember and showed it to them. They either approved it or corrected it.

With those two qualifications, I believe that every word of what follows is true. This is not a 'fictionalisation' or a 'non-fiction novel'. What you are about to read is what actually happened.

Iran, 1978. After the euphoria of the petrodollar boom, the country is falling apart. The Shah clings to power by a thread, while the exiled Ayatollah feeds the flames of revolution from a distance. Among the US corporations which got in on the boom and now suffer in the bust is Electronic Data Systems Corporation of Dallas, Texas, a computer software company which has taken on the gargantuan task of building a complete modern social security system in an underdeveloped country.

In June 1978 the Iranian government runs out of money and stops paying EDS's monthly \$1.4 million bill.

ONE: Disaster strikes 42 42

1. This problem is on the desk of Paul Chiapparone, 39, Italian-American, head of EDS Corporation Iran. In November, after six months of non-payment, he gives notice of termination of the contract, and the Americans prepare to leave. Paul wonders what the government will do. On the one hand, they have not got the money to pay. On the other hand, if EDS pulls out, the whole social security system will break down completely.

2. The government's answer comes on 5 December to smiling Jay Coburn, 32, Director of Personnel, Vietnam veteran, troubled husband of feisty Liz. Today one of his Iranian employees is asked by the police to confiscate surreptitiously the passports of two senior EDS executives, Paul Chiapparone and his second-in-command Bill Gaylord. There can be only one reason for taking their passports: to prevent their leaving the country.

3. EDS reacts by: (i) evacuating all but a handful of its American staff in Tehran; (ii) erasing the magnetic tapes and hiding the duplicates so that no other company can restart the computers; (iii) hiring three sets of Iranian lawyers and two Washington consultants; (iv) putting Dallas legal hotshots Tom Luce and John Howell on the case; (v) consulting the US Embassy in Tehran.

The Embassy's consul general, portly, balding Louis P. Goelz, offers to hold the passports for safekeeping and learns that Paul and Bill are wanted for questioning in a corruption inquiry by examining magistrate Hosain Dadgar. Paul and Bill turn in their passports, only to learn that if they take them back Goelz will feel obliged to inform Dadgar. Now they are really stuck.

4. On 28 December Paul and Bill go voluntarily to a meeting with Dadgar which has been arranged by Goelz. Based on advice from the Embassy and Iranian lawyers, they are confident that the meeting is routine and they will be home in the States for New Year. However, Dadgar arrests them, throws them in jail, and sets bail at \$12,750,000.

TWO: Perot into action

1. Introducing Ross Perot, 48, superpatriot, puritan, philanthropist, self-made multimillionaire and Chairman of EDS. Holidaying with his wife and five children in their palatial 'mountain cabin' at Vail, Colorado, he learns that two of his men have been jailed and he is mad. Despite a snowstorm he drives 106 miles to Denver to catch a plane back to Dallas. On the way he considers how he will attack this problem. After running over the legal approaches and mentally listing all the powerful people he knows in Washington, he thinks:

If all that fails, I'm going to bust them out of there by violence. In that eventuality, he will call on the help of the legendary Arthur 'Bull' Simons, retired Green Beret colonel, hero of the Son Tay Raid, to whom John Wayne once said: 'You are the man I play in the movies.'

2. Ruthie Chiapparone and Emily Gaylord, ordinary young middle-class housewives, are stunned to learn that their husbands are in jail. Paul and Bill spend their first night in a gruesome cell, convinced that the Embassy will get them released in the morning.

3. All remaining EDS men are evacuated from Iran except Lloyd Briggs and Rich Gallaher, and of course Paul and Bill. Ross Perot and his top executives go to work in Dallas and Washington. Because the Iranian banks are on strike they are unable to get \$12.75 million into Iran. Their political efforts also come to nothing, partly because Henry Precht, head of the Iran Desk in Washington, suspects that Paul and Bill may be guilty of corruption.

THREE: Desperate measures

1. Paul and Bill realise they are going to be in jail for some time, and begin to learn to live with it.

2. Perot calls the most powerful man he knows, Henry Kissinger. Kissinger calls Ardeshir Zahedi, the Shah's brother-in-law and one of the most powerful men in Iran. Zahedi promises that Paul and Bill will be released the next day. It does not happen.

In desperation, Perot calls Bull Simons.

3. Simons is not the man he used to be. The death of his wife Lucille nine months ago has broken his spirit. Living alone, going to seed, eating out of cans, his only companions a collection of un-house-trained stray dogs, he is contemplating burning his house down. Perot's phone call pulls him back from the edge of a nervous breakdown. He flies to Dallas.

FOUR: In training

1. Simons, with smiling Jay Coburn and six volunteers - all EDS executives, overweight, married with children and mortgages and lawn mowers - plan, equip and rehearse for a jailbreak.

FIVE: More setbacks

1. Optimistic Iranian attorney^e Dr Houman arranges a meeting between Dadgar and Paul and Bill at which - says Houman - Dadgar will reduce the bail to an amount EDS can pay out of funds already in the country. But Dadgar outmanoeuvres Houman and Paul and Bill return to their cell, bitterly disappointed.

2. The rescue team arrives in Tehran. The jail is not quite as they expected, and they must reconnoitre and modify their attack plan.

3. Ross Perot flies to Tehran - despite the distinct possibility that he too will be thrown in jail - in a last-ditch attempt to negotiate Paul and Bill out of jail.

SIX: Perot kicks ass

1. With Perot is Dallas lawyer John Howell, 33, whose professional caution is often overcome by his impatience. Howell's wife Angela is mad at him for going to Tehran and leaving her in snowbound Dallas with a tiny baby. At first afraid that Dadgar will arrest him, Howell later bites the bullet and confronts the magistrate. Dadgar does not arrest Howell, but he reveals that Paul and Bill will not be allowed to leave Iran even if EDS puts up the bail and they are released from jail.

2. Smiling Jay Coburn has a cloak-and-dagger assignment with 'Deep Throat', a flaky American 'business consultant' who offers to act as a bribe intermediary between Perot and Dadgar. Howell, fearing a trap, persuades Perot to turn down the offer.

3. Howell teams up with elegant, short-tempered EDS manager Keane Taylor, and the two of them meet with Dadgar. The meeting is stormy, due to what Taylor's friends call 'Keane's Marine Corps sensitivity training'. Dadgar suggest EDS look for a 'business solution' to their problems. Howell offers to renegotiate EDS's contract with the government. But the government keeps changing: the current Minister of Health, Dr Razmara, has been in office only a few days, and he has no interest in EDS. Another dead end.

4. And now disaster strikes the rescue team. Before they have time to raid the jail, Paul and Bill are moved to a heavily-guarded maximum-security prison.

SEVEN: Simons thinks again

1. Perot, throwing caution to the winds, visits the prison, hoping that no one there will know who he is. He is horrified to meet human rights campaigner and former US Attorney-General Ramsey Clark in the jail - but Clark's bad memory saves Perot from discovery, for Clark thinks he is Col. Frank Borman, president of Eastern Airlines.

2. Perot's visit is a great morale-booster for Paul and Bill, but Perot knows that the prospects of getting them out are deteriorating. He goes to see Simons, wondering whether 'Bull' will have any solutions to this apparently insoluble problem. Simons has three: (i) Paul and Bill might be smuggled out of the prison with the help of a bribed or blackmailed prison official; (ii) John Howell might get them released on bail or under house arrest, giving Simons the chance to snatch them and smuggle them out of Iran; (iii) if the rioting in the city gets worse, the mobs might storm the jails and let everyone out.

Perot leaves the problem in Simons's hands and returns to Dallas.

EIGHT: New plans

1. Back in the States, Ruthie Chiapparone and Emily Gaylord begin to wonder whether they will ever see their husbands again. Liz Coburn threatens to ask EDS to buy her a vibrator. John Howell's wife calls Tehran, is told yet again that he is out of the office, and leaves a poignant message: 'Tell him his son has learned to walk and his wife has bought a house.'

2. Simons works on the new plans. He investigates General Mohari, who runs the prison, and learns that Mohari has two daughters at school in the US. The rescue team discusses kidnapping the little girls, and rejects the idea.

While John Howell continues to try to get Paul and Bill released on bail, the rescue team rehearses a contingency plan for snatching the two prisoners should they be placed under house arrest.

Thirdly Simons considers how to take advantage of the worsening street riots. He talks to EDS employee Rashid, 23, proud, enigmatic, resourceful, impulsive. Rashid agrees to watch the prison and, if it is stormed, to go in and look for Paul and Bill.

Finally Simons scouts various routes out of Tehran. His preference is to drive north-west, to the border with Turkey, then cross the border on horseback at night using smugglers' trails.

NINE: The escape

1. On 1 February the Ayatollah returns to Iran. Paul is ill with a persistent, painful cough. He and Bill, both Catholics, ask for a priest. Father Williams comes to the prison and they confess their sins and receive absolution.

2. On 10 February Howell is on the point of posting bail by a complex mechanism which involves routing money through Dubai. The rescue team is poised to spirit Paul and Bill out of the country the moment they are released. But, at the last minute, the Iranians ask for yet more changes in the wording of the bank guarantee ...

3. ... and on 11 February Iran explodes into revolution. The mob

storms the prison. Rashid is not just in the crowd but leading them! He gets inside - but he cannot find Paul and Bill among the 11,000 escaping prisoners.

4. Paul and Bill go over the wall and make their hazardous way through the riot-torn city to the Hyatt Hotel where they are reunited with John Howell, Keane Taylor, and the legitimate negotiating team.

TEN: Hiding out

1. Simons moves Paul and Bill to a safe house in the city.
2. Ruthie and Emily are overjoyed to learn that their husbands are out of jail, but quickly sobered by the realisation that Paul and Bill are by no means out of danger.
3. Ross Perot rents a Boeing 707 and puts together the Turkish Rescue Team to meet the fugitives as they cross the Iran/Turkey border.
4. Dadgar's men search for Paul and Bill. John Howell and the legitimate negotiating team join Simons in the hideout. Simons's group now consists of ten men, one woman - who is sick - and her dog, a yappy poodle named Buffy. Clearly he cannot take this group across the border on horseback at night. He divides them into two teams. The Clean Team - those who are in the least danger of being arrested by Dadgar - will throw themselves on the mercy of the US Embassy. The Dirty Team, including Paul, Bill, Simons and Coburn, will go out the hard way.

ELEVEN: On the run

→ 407 (440)
407 (440)

1. The Dirty Team sets off, in two Range Rovers, with the resourceful but uncontrollable Rashid as guide and interpreter, to drive 600 miles through a revolution. Half way to the border, in the town of Mahabad, they are arrested, put on trial by the revolutionary committee, cleared thanks to Rashid's persuasive tongue, and released.

TWELVE: Almost there

→ 442 (480)
442 (480)

1. An hour from the border they are arrested again, by the revolutionary committee running the town of Rezaiyeh.

2. Meanwhile, Ralph Boulware of the Turkish Rescue Team - tall, black, unstoppable - has a hair-raising drive across the mountains of Central Turkey in a 1964 Chevrolet and reaches the border.

THIRTEEN: Out

→ 472 (520)
472 (520)

1. Rashid talks his way out of trouble in Rezaiyeh and twice more on the way to the border. The Dirty Team crosses at midnight and meets Ralph Boulware.

2. A Dallas newspaper breaks the story - while the Clean Team is still in Tehran. If Dadgar learns that Paul and Bill have left Iran, will he arrest John Howell as a substitute?

FOURTEEN: More crises

-7 508 (860)
508 (560)

1. The Clean Team, in a Pan Am 747 filled to overcrowding with fleeing Americans, sits all day on the Tehran runway while Dadgar's men check passports again and again, looking for Paul and Bill. At last they give up.

2. The Clean Team, the Dirty Team and the Turkish Rescue Team link up in Frankfurt and head for home. There is one more crisis: the rented 707 malfunctions and makes an emergency landing at Heathrow.

3. Triumphant return to Dallas, where the wives and children are waiting to welcome their men home.

EPILOGUE: Footnotes, reflections and souvenirs

Unanswered questions. Why I believe Paul and Bill are innocent. The court case EDS versus Iran. Death of Colonel Simons. How the information for this book was gathered. Acknowledgements.

General notes:

In each scene:

1. A sense of place
2. Build major characters*
3. Why is the reader desperate to know how this will turn out?
4. Identify minor characters
5. Simons always on others' minds
6. Extend major scenes
7. More detail
8. No boring bits

*Coburn: More on Liz. The Army and Jay's first look at death by violence. How Ross saved Jay's son's life.

Perot: His charitable parents. His persistence - on everyone's back all the time. Tunnel vision.

Howell: Hard work and caution (contrast Keane) but impatient streak. Troubles with Angela.

Rashid: I can do anything. How he evaded military service by pretending to have the twitching disease.