



Buddy Angel's Lucky Break

The New Mexico sun beat down on the desert. Most of the soldiers at Roswell Army Airfield, 509th Division, were staying in the shade, but one in particular refused to change his daily plans.

Sergeant Buddy Angel placed two more, ten kilogram, weights on to the bar and stood behind it. There were now one hundred kilos on each end. Two hundred kilograms would be his personal best and would put him in range of the commie world champion - Grigory Irmovich Novak.

Sweat glistened from his naked torso, and his palms were slippery. A bag of chalk hung from his weight lifting belt, and he covered his hands before crouching down. His sausage like fingers wrapped around the bar, and he took the strain. The large muscles in his shoulders bulged and veins in his thick neck began to pump.

With an almighty roar, Buddy Angel lifted the bar. He held two hundred kilograms in his hands and lifted it in one powerful movement. The bar rested on the top of his chest, under his chin. His body was feeling good; the weight was uncomfortable but bearable. He took a few short breaths and then roared again.

The bar rose quickly above his head. The weight unbalanced him and, as his quads pulsed, he adjusted his position, so it didn't fall. All the muscles in his body worked together to keep it there, and he looked like a bear about to pounce.

Buddy Angel roared again, and as the roar faded away, he threw two hundred kilos onto the ground. The weights hit the desert ground, and two large cracks opened up on the baked earth.

"Not bad, Angel," said a weasely voice from behind. "A new base record, if I'm not mistaken."

"You're not mistaken, Corporal Grant," replied Angel without turning around. "Mark this date – third of July, nineteen forty-seven. It's the day Sergeant Buddy Angel set a military record that will never be beaten."

"Not even by yourself?"

Buddy Angel looked at the bar in front of him but didn't bother to answer. He would smash his own record, then become a national champion and then go to the London Olympics. He hoped the Soviet Union would turn up. This would give him the chance to crush the red, Novak, and begin a period where he would dominate the world.

Sweat was pouring off him, and he bent down to pick up his T-shirt. He wiped it over his chest and turned to face Corporal Grant. A squat man with army regulation length hair stood beside him, it was Major Marshall.

"Attention," Buddy Angel said automatically, flinging his T-shirt on the dirt and saluting the Major.

"At ease, Sergeant," Major Marshall ordered. As he spoke his head retreated into his shoulders. "Impressive lifting."

"Thank you, Sir."

"In fact that's not all I'm impressed with Sergeant. Since you've been with us, you've shown a determination to better yourself both mentally and physically. You have a good brain, and you make good decisions. What's more, you lead by example, and you follow orders to the letter."

"Thank you, Sir."

"I wanted to see you informally to discuss something with you."



“Yes, Sir.”

“What am I about to tell you is classified. Do you understand?”

Corporal Grant looked visibly uneasy as Major Marshall spoke and rocked slightly from one foot to the other.

“Yes, Sir.”

Major Marshall looked around. The sun had kept everyone else in the shade, and there was nobody near them.

“For the last twenty-one months a team of scientists have been building a flying disk craft. It is ready. Tomorrow, it will be taken from Hangar 84 and a manned prototype will be launched. The scientists are all civilians. They do not understand the roles of the military in the world. We need someone to lead them. To direct proceedings using these latest technologies and control what happens in Hangar 84. What I’m saying is that I’d like you to accept the role of Master Staff Sergeant.”

Buddy Angel could not hide his disappointment.

“Permission to speak freely, Sir,” he asked.

“Granted.”

“That’s a desk job, Sir, and I’m a fighter.”

“And a damn good one, Sergeant, but the world has just had a war. People are recovering and, for a while, they’ll be a period of relative peace.”

“What about the reds, Sir?”

“That’s a good question, Sergeant and one that I’m glad you asked because that’s why I want you to head these projects. At some point, the Soviets will challenge our superiority. When this happens, we must be in a position to act quickly, decisively and with the element of surprise. Your work will ensure that happens and when it does you’ll be in the thick of it.”

A small smile appeared on Angel’s face. Suddenly, he could see the possibilities.

“I would like to accept, Sir.”

“Great,” Major Marshall replied. “Take a shower and meet me in my office at sixteen hundred hours.”

“Yes, Sir.”

Buddy Angel saluted again. Major Marshall and Corporal Grant returned the salute and then walked off into the welcome shade.

“Do you think he can do it?” Corporal Grant asked.

“It doesn’t much matter,” replied Major Marshall. “Tomorrow nothing extraordinary is going to happen. The prototype will fail; the government will stop funding, and Hangar 84 will just become a footnote in history.”

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