

Outline

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A DEADLY REMEMBRANCE

by Ken Follett

Historical note: The launch of the first American space satellite, Explorer I, was originally scheduled for Wednesday 29 January, 1958. Late that evening, it was postponed to the following day. The reason given was the weather. Observers at Cape Canaveral were puzzled: it was a perfect, sunny Florida day. But the army said that a high-altitude wind called the jetstream was unfavourable.

Next night, there was another postponement, and the same reason was given.

The launch was finally attempted on Friday 31 January.

“...from its beginning in 1947, the Central Intelligence Agency...has spent millions of dollars on a major program of research to find drugs and other esoteric methods to bring ordinary people, willing and unwilling alike, under complete control—to act, to talk, to reveal the most precious secrets, even to forget on command.”

—John Marks, *The Search for the 'Manchurian Candidate': The CIA and Mind Control*, 1979

Part I

1. A man wakes up terrified. He does not know what has happened to scare him, but he feels as if he has been through some dreadful experience. It is like waking from a nightmare—but without the feeling of relief. He is cold, he aches everywhere, and he has some kind of hangover.

He opens his eyes. He is astonished by what he sees. He is lying on the floor of a public restroom. He thinks: *What the hell am I doing here?* He sits up. He is fully dressed in dirty clothes. He looks around in bewilderment. He cannot remember how he got here.

Panic overwhelms him, a moment later, as he realises *he cannot remember anything at all.*

He opens his mouth and yells: “Who am I?”

There is movement in what appears to be a pile of old coats nearby, and a man rolls over and says: “You’re a bum, Luke, pipe down.”

“I’ve lost my memory!”

“Yeah, yeah. It’s a miracle you haven’t lost your mind, the amount you drank yesterday.”

That explains the hangover. Luke is dismayed. Clearly, he is a drunken bum. How did he get this way? He begins to question his companion, Pete, but Pete has another idea. He knows where they can get free breakfast.

They stagger out of the rest room. It is six o’clock on a winter’s morning, still dark. They are in Union Station in downtown Washington, DC. Pete takes Luke a few blocks to what he calls a “gospel shop” on H Street. There they get hot oatmeal, coffee, and a sermon.

Luke begins to feel better physically, and he starts asking questions again. How long has he been this way—a month, a year, five years? Has he ever tried to dry out? Does he have a family who might help him? Pete does not have any answers.

Luke picks up a newspaper to check the date. It is Wednesday 29 January 1958. Idly, he starts doing the crossword. Five minutes later he has finished but for one clue: Small place in Denmark, 6 letters. A gospel shop helper sees the filled-out grid and quotes: “Oh, what a noble mind is here o’erthrown!” Luke immediately gets the clue, HAMLET, then he thinks: *How did I know that?*

His eye is caught by an article about the US space program. It is International Geophysical Year (actually July 1957 to December 1958). Both the USA and the USSR announced, some years ago, that during the Year they would launch earth-orbiting satellites. Five months ago, on Friday 4 October 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik—profoundly shocking the entire Free World, whose people had been taught to believe they must be technologically superior to the communists. But there was worse to come. A month later, on Sunday 3 November, the Soviets launched Sputnik 2, with a dog on board. Americans were dismayed. A dog today, a man tomorrow. President Eisenhower said the space program “has never been conducted as a race,” but this was generally seen as further proof that the old man was out of touch.

Ike promised an American satellite in December. On Friday 6 December a Vanguard rocket, developed by the Naval Research Laboratory, was launched in front of the world’s press. Two seconds after ignition, it exploded on the launch pad. American humiliation was complete.

Today’s newspaper reports that a second Vanguard launch, tentatively scheduled for yesterday, has been abandoned. But the US has another rocket, Jupiter C, developed by the Army Ballistic Missile Agency, based at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama, under the direction of the legendary German rocket scientist Wernher von Braun.

Luke finds all this thrilling. Outer space is unknown territory—what could be more exciting than to explore it?

The army rocket will be used, within the next few days, in an attempt to launch the Explorer I satellite, the newspaper predicts. (Cape Canaveral no longer trumpets launches in advance, to avoid the bad publicity resulting from postponements and cancellations; but reporters on the space program beat can see the activity at Cape Canaveral with their own eyes, and can guess pretty accurately what is going on.)

However, the newspaper points out, the US does not have a third rocket. If the army’s Jupiter C should fail, it says soberly, the USSR will dominate outer space for the foreseeable future, in much the same way that the English dominated North America for two centuries.

That’s right, Luke thinks. All this seems familiar to him. Maybe he had something to do with rockets in his former life. He suggests this to Pete, who treats it as hilarious.

He must find out who he is. He questions the helpers, who say they have not seen him here before. He wonders why. He asks Pete, who says: “What we need is a beer.”

Luke realises that Pete does not want him to inquire about his identity—perhaps for fear of losing his companion. Too bad. Luke tells Pete firmly that he wants to be alone for a while. Pete argues but Luke is adamant.

Luke leaves, wondering what to do next.

2. It is still dark in Florida. A few miles south of Cape Canaveral, in the small town of Cocoa Beach, a cluster of newly-built motels has sprouted in the sand dunes to accommodate the constant stream of space-program visitors. Von Braun’s team from Huntsville are staying at the largest and most popular motel, the Starlite.

In one of the rooms, Elspeth is about to leave for Cape Canaveral. She checks herself in the mirror. She is slim and pretty. Age 37, she wears the same dress size she did when she was a freshman at Radcliffe nineteen years ago. Her hair is cut in a chic short bob, and she is carefully made-up. She wears a sleeveless shirtwaist dress with a wide patent-leather belt, a fashionable look.

She is the top secretary on von Braun’s team. She is also a spy for Moscow. And she is desperately afraid that she may have been unmasked.

She does not want to use the room phone, for fear of being overheard by the hotel operator; so she goes to the lobby and uses a payphone. She calls a number in Washington, DC, but there is no reply.

She gets in her car and joins the stream of traffic heading north on Route 126. The weather is warm and humid, but she drives with the top up and the windows tight shut to keep out the mosquitoes.

The daughter of a conservative union boss, Elspeth grew up in a political household. She was traumatized by the Depression, especially by the abject failure of her father’s union to help its members. During a long and bitter strike, she saw families terrorized, marchers attacked by the police, and union officials beaten up by hired thugs. At the age of 17 she fell in love with a charismatic young organiser who was murdered by such thugs. She came to see America as a

battleground where ordinary people fought for a decent life against the forces of brute capital. She joined the Communist Party, and was asked to keep her affiliation secret and pass on information about her father's union. And so she became a spy.

Her view of America has not changed with the years. While the space-program people drive along in their multicoloured cars with tailfins and radios, they pass the shacks of the negroes who cannot vote, or buy homes in the suburbs, or send their children to the white people's schools. At Cape Canaveral there is not one black scientist.

Nor are there any women scientists. Elspeth herself has a maths degree, but she is a secretary.

She pulls into a gas station. She has a rendezvous here with a comrade, Theo Packman—but he is nowhere to be seen. She checks her watch: it is 6.30am. He should have got here first: a man waiting is less conspicuous than a woman. She is angry, but not surprised.

Theo is a freelance journalist who covers the space program for some minor European publications. (He is staying at the Starlite, too, but she does not like to meet with him there too often.)

She has her tank filled, windshield wiped, oil checked, and tires checked, then she goes to the ladies' room. Having run out of excuses to wait around, she is about to leave when Theo pulls in. She says: "Where the heck have you been?"

"I'm only fifteen minutes late." He is nervy and seems frightened.

"We're supposed to be a disciplined team—this isn't a game!"

"Jesus, I know that, don't you think I know that?"

"Where is the transmitter?"

"In my trunk."

She looks around. There are no other customers. "Show me."

He opens the trunk of his car to reveal a sophisticated and powerful radio transmitter.

Elspeth nods approval. "It's tonight," she says.

He swallows. "What...what time?"

"Ten-thirty. Park on the beach. Watch for the flame of the rocket. When it takes off, press the button. Then go home.

“One thing,” he says. “I need to test the transmitter when I get to the beach—but I don’t want an explosion ahead of time. When will the device be armed?”

Elspeth thinks: *Damn—I should have thought of that.* “I’ll check,” she says crisply, sounding more confident than she feels. This means she will have to phone him. “When I call you, disregard everything I say except the number I mention—that will be the time.”

“Okay.” Now he asks an unexpected question. “Is it true Luke vanished?”

So that’s why he’s nervy. He’s heard. Elspeth is desperately worried, too, but she tries to hide it. “Who told you that?”

“I’m a reporter, I hear things.”

“He didn’t vanish, he went to Washington.”

“Why?”

“I’m not sure, but don’t worry, someone is keeping tabs on him there.”

“What if he suspects? What if he’s found something out?”

“I’m checking.”

“I don’t like this. I don’t mind telling you, I’m scared. The Rosenbergs got the electric chair—and what they did was nothing compared to this, *nothing!*”

He is right. Ethel and Julius Rosenberg spied for Moscow, but all they did was pass information, yet they suffered the death penalty only five years ago. Theo and Elspeth will certainly be executed if they are caught. But Elspeth does not want to talk about the Rosenbergs. “I told you, I’m checking on him.”

“You ought to understand him. You know Luke better than anyone.”

“I do,” she says. “I do.”

3. We flash back to December 1941.

Elspeth is an undergraduate in her third year at Radcliffe, sister college of Harvard, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Still working for the Communist Party, her job here is to scout for likely recruits for Soviet espionage. She has her eye on Anthony Carroll, the brilliant but unhappy son of an admiral in the US Navy. Through her friendship with Anthony, she has met and fallen in love with his room-mate, Claude “Luke” Lucas, a physics major.

Luke is the golden boy of his class, smart and popular, with youthful good looks. His father is a prosperous banker, his mother a French countess. The eldest of four children, he has a happy home life, and looks forward to getting married and having children of his own. He plans to be a scientist, and is fascinated by books and magazine articles about the theoretical possibility of space flight. He is attractive, if somewhat boyish.

He is also a bit narrow in outlook. Never having known real unhappiness or pain, he is slow to understand people who are less fortunate emotionally. He has a strong sense of duty, values integrity above all else, and is ungenerous to people who fall short of his high standards. He does not appreciate that good people sometimes do bad things, and when it happens he may fly into a rage.

Many students are interested in politics as a way of changing the world, but Luke's imagination takes a different channel, and he envisages a world made better by scientific advance.

Elsbeth loves him and wants to marry him. She has not figured out how she would reconcile her work for the Communist Party with marriage and children, but she has a youthful confidence that all problems can be solved. She is more worried about losing Luke to one of the hundreds of other pretty girls in Cambridge.

Luke has borrowed a car for the weekend, a two-seater doctor's coupé. On Friday evening, he and Elspeth drive into Boston, see a movie and eat hamburgers. On the way back, they stop at a secluded spot and neck.

Both are virgins. Elspeth believes what her mother told her, that boys do not marry girls they have already slept with. But, short of that, how far should she go?

She and Luke are both in their final year. It would be quite normal for them to become unofficially engaged. They would announce their formal engagement at the end of the academic year, and get married some time in the following twelve months.

So far, Luke has said nothing about marriage. Elspeth worries that she is not letting him take enough liberties, sexually. But she is afraid that if she lets him go too far, he will think she is not the kind of girl he wants to marry.

They kiss, he becomes aroused, and he touches her breast through her cashmere sweater. After a moment, she covers his hand with hers, squeezes briefly, then takes it away, and breaks the clinch.

They talk for a while. Elspeth leads the conversation around to married life. Luke confesses that he would like to have four children. Elspeth holds her breath. He says: "How would you feel about that? Having four children?"

She smiles happily. This is what she wants to hear. "If they were yours, I'd love it," she says. They start kissing again, and this time, when he touches her breasts, she does not take his hand away.

4. The CIA in 1958 is a fast-growing bureaucracy with offices in some thirty different Washington buildings. A vast multi-million-dollar headquarters complex is under construction across the river in Langley, Virginia. The Director of the CIA is Allen Dulles, hawkish brother of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.

Under Allen Dulles are four deputy directors, only one of whom is important, the Deputy Director for Plans. The Plans Directorate is also known as CS, for Clandestine Services. The (real-life) DDP, Frank Wisner, is having a nervous breakdown, so the Directorate is not a tight ship. Intermittently, the reins are picked up by Wisner's (real-life) No.2, Chief of Operations Dick Helms.

Within the Plans Directorate is the Specialized Services Division, run by (fictional) Carl Hobart. Specialized Services includes the Technical Services Division, also known as Dirty Tricks, which organizes burglary, forgery, phone tapping and other illegal activities.

TSD is housed in Q Building in Alphabet Row, a rank of barracks-like temporary structures hastily erected during the war on park land near the Lincoln Memorial, and due to be demolished as soon as Langley is ready.

TSD is run by Anthony Carroll, a revered figure in the CIA. A veteran of the Office of Strategic Service, wartime precursor of the CIA, he planned the successful assassination of the Vichy leader Admiral Darlan, which took place in Algiers on Christmas Eve in 1942.

Tall and patrician, Anthony speaks in dry tones with precise diction. He comes from a wealthy family and dresses beautifully in well-cut old-fashioned suits. The young men are all wearing single-breasted jackets with small lapels and narrow ties, but Anthony sticks to the traditional double-breasted suits with draped pants. His minor eccentricities only enhance his legend, and he is tipped to be the next-but-one DDP.

He has been up all night. He went home to shave and change his clothes. Now he returns to his office in Q Building at 6.30am and immediately asks Pete for a status report on Luke.

Pete is feeling mortified. "I called him 'Luke'," he says. "It was the first thing out of my mouth. I could have bitten off my tongue. Then I told him my name! I feel like a damn beginner."

Anthony is not very concerned about this. "Luke isn't even his real name," he says. But the rest of Pete's report is more worrying. Anthony needs Luke to believe that he is a drunken bum for the next few days, or at least until 10.30 tonight. However, although the amnesia is holding, Anthony is unnerved by the crossword, the interest in the space program, and most of all the persistent questions about the past. Luke already suspects he is not a drunken bum.

Anthony begins to wonder if he has been too clever.

His questioning of Pete is interrupted by a phone message to say that his new suit is ready to be tried on. It seems commonplace, but Anthony pales and his heart beats faster. This is a coded summons from the KGB. It means: *Drop everything and meet me now.*

For Anthony is a Soviet agent.

5. We flash back to 1941.

The young Anthony Carroll is awkward and anxious, the downtrodden son of a bullying father. Admiral Carroll has risen to the top in the US Navy by reason of enormous force of will. He also married an heiress, Anthony's mother, and the family lives in high style.

Anthony fears and hates his father, who takes every opportunity to humiliate him and his mother. Anthony was one of those boarding-school boys who never looked forward to the holidays. When he came to Harvard, his father ensured his motivation by telling him that if he failed his exams, his allowance would be cut off. Anthony works like a slave at his studies

because he dreads returning to the family home. Combined with his natural intelligence, this makes him a star student.

Theoretically, of course, he could leave the parental home, get a job, and support himself. But he is not sure he could get a job, he has no idea how to live on a modest income, and, most important of all, he does not have the nerve to defy his father openly.

For the first three years he was not very happy at Harvard. He is socially inept, he plays no sports, and he has an unfortunate supercilious air. Consequently he had few friends. He decided to do something about this. By means of a subterfuge, he arranged to become roommates with the most popular undergraduate of his class, Luke Lucas.

Luke has no idea that he has been manipulated, and has introduced Anthony around and included him in events with effortless generosity. Under Luke's guidance, men who previously regarded Anthony as an antisocial freak have begun to treat him as an amiable eccentric. Some of the many pretty girls who always cluster around Luke drift into relationships with Anthony, and he becomes something of a lady-killer, in his own unique way.

He has begun a timid rebellion against his father, espousing things the Admiral would hate, such as jazz and Jewish friends—but secretly. Majoring in government, he has read widely and deeply in political theory, and he is a convinced communist—but he is afraid to join the party lest his father find out.

He even has a Jewish girlfriend, Bilhah Josephson. Her father was a poor tailor in Dallas. There she got the nickname Billie-Jo, and the "Billie" stuck. Her father died young, of stomach cancer, and Billie's mother, Becky-Ma, brought up five children in grinding poverty. Billie is majoring in human biology at Radcliffe. She is an outstanding student who easily wins all the scholarships she needs. She is fiercely ambitious. The trauma of her father's early death turned her towards medicine, but she is more interested in mental than physical health. She plans to do medical research, uncovering the secrets of the body and the mind.

On Saturday night, Anthony introduces Billie to his friends, Luke and Elspeth, and another couple, Dan and Peg. Dan is a Jewish intellectual communist, witty and wisecracking. At 24 he is three years older than the others, and he has fought in Spain.

These young people, all students at Harvard or Radcliffe, belong to an elite. The bright children of mainly affluent parents, they wear expensive casual clothes, go to lots of parties, and share a relaxed conviction that, without too much effort, they will become the next generation of judges, surgeons and bank presidents. But they have grown up in the Depression. They believe their country was saved by Roosevelt's New Deal—which their parents opposed as “creeping socialism”. They are ashamed that America and the other democracies stood aside while the Nazis armed Franco and enabled him to seize power in Spain. So, despite their affluence, they are all more or less left-wing.

On Saturday night they argue about politics in a bar in Boston. Anthony is deeply interested in the discussion, but he cannot help noticing the effect Billie is having on his friends.

Billie is small, dark and vivacious, and both Luke and Dan are absolutely mesmerised by her. She has a wicked grin, and talks with delicious frankness about risqué topics such as adultery and homosexuality. Both Luke and Dan dance with her. Anthony watches with wry amusement as Peg and Elspeth become increasingly jealous.

They split up into couples at the end of the evening. The girls have engaged in elaborate deceptions to avoid returning to their dormitories at the curfew hour. Billie plans to stay at an apartment in Boston, but when she and Anthony get there, they find there has been some kind of mix-up, and no one is home. (In fact Anthony has arranged this.) Billie has relatives living an hour's drive away in Newport, Rhode Island, and Anthony proposes asking Luke to drive her there. But Luke has gone off with Elspeth and won't be back for a couple of hours. It is too cold to walk the streets, and Billie can't return to her Radcliffe dormitory without revealing her deception. So Anthony proposes—what he has been planning all along—that they sneak into his room and wait for Luke. It is strictly against the rules, and if caught they would both face expulsion from their colleges; but in fact it is done all the time, and Anthony is confident of getting away with it.

Billie agrees; but once inside, she does not do what Anthony hopes for, and submit to his embraces. In fact she is surprising cold and distant, though in the past she has been passionate. Does she suspect that he arranged all this? Is she frightened, being in his room? Or has something happened to change her feelings towards him?

He keeps trying, holding her hand and kissing her. Then the door flies open. It is his father, paying an unexpected visit.

The admiral insults Billie and humiliates Anthony. Anthony cannot stand up to his father, and comes close to tears. This weak behaviour enrages the admiral even more. The row is overheard by other students, and Anthony has to get Billie out of the building post-haste. Fortunately, they see Luke and Elspeth outside, driving by, and stop them.

Luke agrees to drive Billie to Newport. As the car is a two-seater, Anthony says he will walk Elspeth home. He tells her of his father's outrageous behaviour. He is going to defy the old man at last, he tells her, and join the Communist Party.

Elspeth says: "I've got a better idea. If you're really serious about working for communism, don't join the party. Get a job in the government and pass secret information to the party. That's much more valuable. You have impeccable Establishment credentials—no one would ever suspect you."

Anthony is thrilled with this plan. It enables him to subvert everything he hates and his father loves—but without ever having to do what he fears most and confront his father.

And so he becomes a spy.

6. Billie Josephson is now 37, divorced, with a seven-year-old son, Lorenzo, named after a hero of the Spanish Civil War, but actually called Larry. She lives in Washington with her mother. Becky-Ma is becoming frail, and is only just capable of taking care of Larry for a few hours every day.

At 7am Billie is racing around frantically doing chores. She changes the beds and bundles up the sheets for the laundry service. She tells her mother: "All you have to do is pay the laundryman and give him this sack of dirty washing, okay?"

Her mother says: "I've run out of my heart pills."

Billie could scream. "I went to the doctor's office yesterday, and waited half an hour to for your sleeping pills—why didn't you tell me then? Now I'll have to waste another half hour in that goddamn waiting room!"

Becky-Ma goes to her room in a huff. Billie starts making a sandwich for Larry's lunch. The phone rings.

It is her ex-husband, Dan Simons. Their relationship is good: he has plenty of money and cheerfully pays his share of Larry's keep, and he sees Larry a couple of times a week.

Dan says: "Have you heard from Luke?"

"Luke? Why would I? No, I haven't—is something wrong?"

"I'm worried." Dan explains that Luke called him on Monday. Dan was somewhat surprised to get the call, as they have not been close for some years. Luke said he was coming to Washington, hinted that he was involved in some kind of clandestine activity, and mentioned the old days of OSS during the war. He said he wanted to meet up with Dan, and would call from his hotel when he reached Washington. "But he didn't. That was Monday. Today's Wednesday. I just called the hotel and found out that his bed wasn't slept in last night."

"Maybe he's out caddin' around."

"And maybe Billy Graham smokes reefer, but I don't think so, do you?"

Dan is right. Luke has a powerful sex drive, but he needs intensity, not variety. "No, I don't think so," Billie says.

"Call me if you hear, okay?"

"Sure, of course." She hangs up. Then she sits down, the chores forgotten, thinking about the past.

7. Back in 1941, the atmosphere is intimate in the little two-seater as Luke drives Billie to Rhode Island. He is charming, she is vivacious. They talk animatedly. They are falling in love, and falling headlong. When he stops the car, they embrace passionately.

This is crazy, they agree. But Billie has lost all interest in Anthony, and Luke confesses, shamefacedly, that he has fallen out of love with Elspeth in the few hours since first meeting Billie. What are they going to do?

Luke tells Billie that he has talked to Elspeth about how many children they will have. He feels dreadful. And he believes that Anthony's fragile self-esteem will be shattered if Luke steals away his girlfriend. This is an earthquake waiting to happen in all their lives.

Luke and Billie agree they will forget one another. Then they kiss like crazy, until Billie breaks away and runs into the house.

8. Back in 1958, Luke is walking the streets when he begins to suspect he is being followed. He runs a couple of checks. This comes naturally to him, and he wonders where he learned it. Maybe he used to be a detective, not a rocket scientist.

Sure enough, he has a shadow. He sets a trap, then jumps the guy, saying: "Who are you? Why are you following me?"

The shadow (Steve) is young and scared, and he says nothing. Luke gets him by the throat, yelling at him. Then he thinks: *Why am I acting like I'm going to kill the poor guy?* He lets go. Quick as a flash, Steve runs away.

But Luke has recognized him, close up. He saw him earlier, outside the gospel shop, talking to Pete.

What the hell is going on?

9. Anthony meets his KGB controller in a Washington parking lot. It is still dark.

Arch-manipulator and master of deceit, Anthony is playing a triple game which is dangerous even by his standards. His boss, Carl Hobart, and others in the CIA believe he is carrying out surveillance on an American rocket scientist who is behaving strangely. His immediate team of agents, Pete and Steve and a handful more, who are intensely loyal to him personally, believe that Luke is a Soviet agent who has been given an experimental drug treatment in the hope that he will lead them to other agents. Only Anthony himself knows the truth

Nik is a blocky, tough-looking character who has been wearing the same cheap suit for ten years. Ruthless and dedicated, he despises everything American except candy, his weakness. He is a natural bully.

Anthony is intimidated. His air of natural superiority disappears, and we see the boy who was so scared of his father.

“Where’s your shadow?” Anthony says anxiously. Like every Russian in the Soviet Embassy, Nik is followed 24 hours a day by the FBI. Consequently Nik and Anthony almost never meet, preferring to communicate by encrypted letter. But this is an emergency.

“He’s outside my building,” Nik says. “I slipped past him. Now, what the hell is going on?”

Anthony takes a deep breath. This is the greatest crisis in his career as a spy. He knows Nik will not approve of the way he has handled it. He himself is by no means sure things will work out.

“Monday I got a call from Elspeth,” he says. Spies do not normally know one another, but of course Elspeth recruited Anthony. “She was worried. Luke had left Cape Canaveral unexpectedly on Monday morning, headed for Washington. He didn’t say why, and Elspeth was afraid he had found her out. She asked me to call Luke at his Washington hotel and find out what was on his mind before he had time to do any damage. I know Luke well—we were room-mates at Harvard. I reached him Monday night, soon after he checked into the Carlton hotel, and arranged to meet him for breakfast on Tuesday morning.”

When they met, Luke told Anthony this story.



On Sunday afternoon at Cape Canaveral, Luke is using the Xerox copying machine in the Command Shack to duplicate some pages of calculations from the computer. The machine has a copy counter, and Luke has to sign his name and the copy numbers he is responsible for in a security log. While doing so, he notices that 19 copies have been made by “WvB”. But he happens to know something few others realize: Wernher von Braun is not here at Cape Canaveral—he has gone to Washington. So who has been making copies clandestinely?

Luke reports what he has learned to the head of security for ABMA, Col. Hyde, who is lazy and ineffectual. Hyde says: “Someone copying dirty pictures, I’ll bet.”

Not satisfied, Luke goes to the post room and looks for a fat envelope that might contain 19 photocopies, but he sees nothing likely. He can’t think of any other precaution he could take without the backing of Hyde. He hopes Hyde is right.

Then chance intervenes.

Next morning at the Starlite Motel he happens to see, on the lobby concierge's desk, an Army envelope of the right size. He steals it and opens it.

What he finds is worse than anything he feared.

The copies detail the Jupiter rocket's self-destruct mechanism. All missiles have such a system. If the rocket should veer off course and endanger life, for example by heading for Miami Beach, the range safety officer can explode it in mid-air with a radio signal. To prevent accidental detonation, the mechanism responds only to a complex radio signal, like a code. The code is in the package.

Luke sees immediately that anyone having this information, plus a radio transmitter, can blow up the Jupiter rocket in mid-air. He remembers the headlines around the world just eight weeks ago when the Vanguard rocket exploded on the launch pad: FLOPNIK! is the one that sticks in his mind. Another disaster would strike a devastating blow at American prestige worldwide, destroy the space program, and ensure Russian domination of outer space for the foreseeable future.

The envelope is addressed to Theo Packman, a journalist on the space beat. There is nothing to indicate who sent it.

In dealing with this discovery, Luke follows standard counterintelligence procedure, learned in the war. The spy must be neutralized but not alerted. If alerted, he will retire and be replaced by someone unknown to counterintelligence, and so a competitive advantage will be lost. Left in place, he will lead investigators to his collaborators.

So Luke copies the documents, including the front of the envelope, then surreptitiously returns the original package to the clerk's desk.

Not knowing who sent the package, he feels it may be unwise to trust anyone in ABMA. So he decides to fly to Washington and go to the Pentagon.

On arriving at his hotel, he gets a message from an old friend in the CIA, Anthony Carroll.



At breakfast, Anthony listened to Luke's story with mounting alarm. His greatest-ever project, the climax of his life, was under threat. But, thanks to Elspeth, he had a chance to save it.

However, the strategy he adopted was wildly unorthodox, and now he needs to persuade Nik that it was the right thing to do.

“I doped Luke’s coffee and got him into my car. Then I took him to the Georgetown Mind Hospital. We finance a research project there that has developed a technique to induce amnesia—”

“I know about your experiments. Does the technique work?”

“It *has* worked. Luke has no memory of being a rocket scientist or finding a package of secret documents. He thinks he’s a drunken bum.”

“How long does it last?”

“Indefinitely. But for our purposes, it needs to last...” Anthony checks his watch: it is 7.30am. “...only fifteen hours more.”

“What if it doesn’t? What if he remembers?”

“I’ve got him under surveillance. I know about every breath he takes.”

“As I recall, Luke did undercover work in the war.”

“He was the second best secret agent OSS ever had.”

“Who was the best?”

“I was.”

“Maybe.” Nik frowns. “You should have killed him, yesterday, while you had him in your car, unconscious.”

Anthony winces. He knew Nik would take this line. “The war’s over. We don’t kill people in our line of work. It’s too conspicuous.”

Nik says: “Let me tell you something. I’ve been in this country ten years, and I hate it. It’s like working in a whorehouse, surrounded by things that are supposed to be desirable but end up making you sick. I want to go home. I have two grandsons I’ve never seen. If this rocket blows up tonight, I’m made: desk job, car, holidays on the Black Sea coast with my family. But if I screw up...Siberia.”

Anthony says: “Listen. A dead rocket scientist is a story, a scandal. Everyone would want to investigate—police, FBI, CIA, army security. That’s dangerous. But this way, we’re protected.

The strain of the space race got to Luke, he went on a drinking binge, he lost his memory, what's to investigate? Believe me, my way is safer."

"Maybe," says Nik. "But that's not the reason you did it."

And he's right.

10. We flash back to 1941.

On Sunday morning, Luke is wretched. Anthony asks him what is wrong, and he confesses that he no longer loves Elspeth. He has to end their relationship, and he feels dreadfully guilty, because they are almost unofficially engaged, and she is going to be heartbroken.

While they are discussing this, a messenger arrives with an envelope for each of them. They are both summoned to see the Dean of Students at 4pm. Such messages always mean trouble. They know immediately what has happened. Someone has reported the presence of a girl in the room last night. This is very serious. It means automatic expulsion from the college for both Anthony and Billie.

Anthony is devastated. He dreads returning to the family home. Just six more months and he would have had his degree, would have easily got a government job in Washington, and would have been free from his father. Now it is all in ruins.

Things are worse for Billie. Her scholarships will be withdrawn and she will not get into another university. Her career is over.

Someone bursts into the room saying: "Turn on your radio—we're at war!"

The Japanese have bombed the US fleet at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii (at 8am local time, 1pm EST).

Luke sees a solution to all the problems. He tells Anthony to leave the talking to him. They go to the Dean's office.

Luke tells the Dean it was he who had a girl in the room. She was Carla Diangelo, a waitress at a Boston restaurant.

Anthony cannot understand why Luke is doing this. It will never work.

Predictably, the Dean says he cannot take Luke's word for it. He and the Radcliffe dean must hold a disciplinary inquiry.

Then Luke plays his trump card. He is dropping out of college to join the military.

The Dean realizes his options are now limited. It is difficult to conduct a disciplinary inquiry against a student who has left the college. Without the male perpetrator, it will be difficult to proceed against the female. And it is made even more difficult by the heroic nature of Luke's sacrifice. The Dean will have to drop the matter.

Anthony is saved. He will be forever grateful.

11. Anthony recalls the events of 1941 as he hurries back to his office in Q Building. He and Billie both stayed at college and finished their degrees. Their romance ended almost as soon as Luke departed, however. Elspeth was heartbroken, and made a bitter resolution to rededicate her life to the cause of world communism. But they were all to meet up again, sooner than they thought...

Anthony finds Pete waiting in his office with Steve. Anthony has a premonition of disaster. He says to Steve: "What the hell are you doing here? Who's watching Luke?"

"Nobody," says Steve, his voice trembling. "We've lost him."

Part II

12. Luke realizes he is worse off than ever. The people following him presumably know who he is. Now that he has lost contact with them, who can he turn to?

Maybe the police. They must have lists of missing people. Someone may be looking for Luke. Maybe his description is on a list.

He approaches a cop and asks where the nearest precinct house is.

The cop says: "Beat it, bum."

Luke is offended. "I asked you a polite question, Mister."

Unfortunately, this cop happens to be a bully and a sadist. He pushes Luke into an alley and starts beating him up. For a few moments Luke takes it, shocked and dazed. He curls up in a ball on the ground. The cop kicks him.

Something snaps in Luke. Suddenly he fights back with ferocious skill. The cop, hurt, draws his gun, but Luke expertly disarms him. Moments later, the cop is on the ground, bleeding and groaning. Luke wonders where he learned to fight like that.

He deliberately breaks the index finger of the cop's right hand, making him scream in pain. "That will stop you beating up bums for a while," he says.

Then he walks away.

13. Anthony summons his team. He orders searches of the three Washington neighbourhoods where (in the fifties) bums hang out: Mission Row, east of Union Station, where Luke had breakfast; Sailors' Row, on 8th Street near the Navy Yard; and the Bowery, at 9th and Pennsylvania Avenue.

He also sets up a system for monitoring police reports. "A man on the run has to commit crimes," he says. "He needs money, a car, places to hide. That's how we can pick up his trail."

His boss, Carl Hobart, summons him. Hobart spent the war in Navy Intelligence. He is wary of the OSS veterans with their liking for dirty tricks. He asks Anthony what is happening with the rocket scientist. Anthony says they have lost him but they hope to find him soon.

"Sounds more like a job for the FBI," Hobart says.

"It's good training for our people. And the FBI never give us anything."

“Pass it to them anyway,” Hobart says dismissively. “I’ve got something more important for you to do. I want you and your whole team in my office at ten o’clock for a brainstorming session. The White House has called for a report on ways to combat Fidel Castro and his rebel army in Cuba.”

“We’ll be there,” says Anthony, thinking: *Now how the hell am I going to deal with this?*

14. Billie takes Larry to school. Outside the gates, she greets the father of Larry’s best friend, a widower of her own age. He asks her to have dinner with him. He has asked before, and she has made excuses. He is a pleasant guy, affluent, nice to his kid. Billie thinks: *Who am I waiting for—Prince Charming?* She thinks of the life she leads, the chores, the constant worry about Becky-Ma. What she needs is a partner in life, a good-hearted man to share the load.

She agrees to the date.

15. We flash back to 1943.

Billie has graduated, and has won a scholarship to do her master’s in psychology. However, she wants to join in the war effort, and the committee has agreed that she can take up her scholarship at any time.

She is posted to the Office of Strategic Service. OSS is autocratically run by the millionaire Wall Street lawyer General William “Wild Bill” Donovan. It is staffed by a quarrelsome mixture of Republican businessmen who are buddies of Donovan, communist academics who are the only people who know anything about places such as Yugoslavia and Egypt, and well-connected youngsters who have pulled strings to get a glamorous assignment. The organisation is famous for its lavish budgets and its independence from the normal military hierarchy. It is resented for pulling many of the brightest youngsters out of other branches of the military.

Its headquarters is Q Building in Alphabet Row. When Billie arrives there, she finds her old boyfriend, Anthony, already ensconced.

He is still carrying a torch for Billie, but in other respects he has changed. The awkward college boy is rapidly giving way to the smooth, deceitful bureaucrat. There is no more talk of revolutionising American society. He appears to hold conservative views. But he still likes jazz.

He tells Billie that he used his father's influence to get into OSS, and has since arranged for all his friends to be assigned here. Elspeth is working for OSS in Cairo. Luke and Dan are together in occupied France, working with the Resistance there. Peg is in London.

Billie's heart misses a beat when she hears Luke's name. She knew him for only a few days, and kissed him once, but she remembers him so vividly, and often thinks of him. Will she run into him again?

Anthony has seen action in North Africa, but is now working as assistant to General Donovan. He tries to restart his romance with Billie, but she is not interested. He accepts her rejection calmly. She soon learns that he has a succession of pretty girls, none of whom last long. Perhaps he is a serial seducer who loses interest as soon as he has conquered. The reason for his lasting interest in Billie could be that he never conquered her.

While Billie is on her training course, learning about radio operation, ciphers, unarmed combat, and firearms, Luke and Dan return from France, and Billie runs into Luke again. He has changed. Thin as a rail, strained by undercover work, and hardened by action, he has grown up fast. Billie wishes some of that boyishness would come back.

They fall in love again immediately. They are sexual dynamite, but they do not sleep together, and Billie remains a virgin. Their relationship is stormy. They quarrel and make up, get passionate and pull back, enchant and infuriate one another.

After a few weeks, Luke is posted overseas again. Before he leaves, he and Billie make love at last. They do it all weekend, crazy with desire and grief, knowing they may never again see one another alive. They use no contraception.

Billie is posted to Madrid. Shortly before she is due to leave, she finds that she is pregnant.

16. After the fight with the cop, Luke realizes that no one will take him seriously while he looks like a bum. He needs a shower, a shave and a change of clothing. Oddly enough, he knows exactly how to go about getting these things.

He heads for Union Station, where there are always hundreds of people carrying full changes of clothing neatly packed in suitcases, complete with shaving tackle and other toiletries.

On the way, he wonders whether the people who were following him are now searching for him. He keeps his antennae up, watchful for the signs: the man who stops when he stops, the slow-moving car, the pedestrian who matches his pace on the other side of the road. He is not sure what he will do if he spots someone.

He walks along Louisiana Avenue, where people headed for the station can park at the roadside. He watches a two-tone Ford Fiesta, white and blue, being parked. The driver takes a bag out of the trunk. Luke follows him into the station and hears him ask for a ticket to Philadelphia. He is going to be away all day at a minimum. Luke returns to the car, pushes a window down, gets in, and hotwires it. Satisfied that he can make a quick getaway, he stops the engine and leaves the car.

He must have done this on a regular basis at some time, he realizes. He finds himself thinking in French, and concludes that he did undercover work in France, maybe in the war. Was there a war? He thinks so.

He enters the station and waits for a big incoming train. Remaining alert, he notices two fit-looking young men pass through the concourse, looking everywhere except at the arrival/departure information board. They're not interested in trains, they're searching for someone. Should he confront them and see whether they know who he is? His instincts tell him No. He feels at too much of a disadvantage. He hides until they leave.

The train from New York arrives and hundreds of people get off, all in a hurry. Luke picks out a man of his own size carrying a large leather bag. In the crush, Luke trips the man, who falls heavily, letting go of the bag. While other passengers crowd around and help the man, Luke vanishes into the crowd with the bag.

He hurries outside, jumps into his Ford Fiesta, and drives away.

17. At 10.30am, Cape Canaveral is buzzing. Elspeth moves between the Command Shack, where her desk is, and Central Control in the blockhouse, where rows of shirtsleeved scientists wearing headphones are already sitting at their panels of dials and lights. So far there are no major technical hitches, and the launch is still set for 10.30pm.

Elspeth's job is to produce hourly updates of the launch timetable, which changes constantly. Her boss is the launch conductor, Herbie Welles.

She finally reached Anthony a couple of hours ago, and was told that Luke was safely under surveillance. However, she is still tense.

For Theo's benefit, she needs to find out exactly when the rocket's self-destruct system will be armed. At the first opportunity, she goes to see Col. Hyde, who is a flirt and is always touching her. First she asks him if he has heard any news of Luke. He tells her the FBI is searching for him but so far has not found him.

She asks him about the arming of the self-destruct mechanism, pretending that she needs the information for her timetable. He says it's classified. She pretends to accept this, saying coquettishly: "We don't want everyone to know our secrets, do we?"

He is quick to pick up her mood. "Of course, if it was worth a kiss...."

"You can have that for nothing." She kisses him briefly, but lets him feel her breast pressed against his shirt (easy enough with a 1958 pointed bra!) "All the same, I'd like to know."

He is putty in her hands. "Thirty-five minutes before ignition," he says. He pats her bottom. "Off you go, before I do something foolish."

Back at her desk, she calls Theo. When he picks up, she says: "Is that room nine fifty-five?"

"No," he says. "Seventeen."

She is not sure whether he has realized who she is. "'Not nine fifty-five?" she repeats.

"Oh, it's you," he says, spoiling her act.

"I'm sorry," she says. "I wanted room *nine fifty-five*."

"Oh, I get it!" he says stupidly.

Disgusted, she hangs up the phone.

It rings. She picks up. Anthony is on the line. "Let me know if you hear from Luke," he says. "I've lost him."

"God almighty," she says. "Now we're in trouble."

18. Billie arrives at the Georgetown Mind Hospital, where she works.

She has achieved her ambition. She is one of the leading psychology researchers in the United States. She heads a team working on the psychology of memory. Her research is funded by the CIA, specifically the Technical Services Division, run by her old boyfriend Anthony Carroll, though the money is channelled through a dummy charity, for security reasons. Anthony is also godfather to Larry.

She is on the verge of a breakthrough. There is a link between memory failure and mental illness, she believes. She has developed a treatment which combines drugs and electric shock to induce amnesia, and this produces a marked alleviation of symptoms in some schizophrenics. She is about to apply to have her funding doubled. This treatment is not what the CIA is looking for, of course, but on the other hand, Anthony is an old friend; so she is optimistic.

At the hospital, she has an ambitious and untrustworthy deputy, Howard Ransome, who resents her because she was promoted over his head.

When she arrives, at 11am, she learns that the experimental new schizophrenia treatment was given last night to a patient who was admitted yesterday and discharged in the early hours of this morning. She is horrified. She would not normally give any treatment without first observing the patient for several days. And this particular treatment should not be given to anyone without permission from Billie. Apart from the main issue of the patient's welfare, there could be legal trouble. She summons Ransome to carpet him.

He tells her the patient was brought in by Anthony Carroll, who said it was a matter of national security, and he would take full responsibility. Ransome went along with it because Anthony holds the purse strings. Billie knows he did it to curry favour. But her anger is mainly directed at Anthony. What the hell did he think he was doing? She goes off in high dudgeon to see him.

19. At 11.30am, Luke drives his stolen Ford to a quiet street in the suburbs. He must find some way to compensate the people he has robbed, he thinks. *After all, they're not collaborators.*

What the heck does that mean?

He knocks on doors until he finds an empty house, then breaks in. He showers, shaves, and dresses in clothes from the stolen suitcase. (They fit him, because he was careful to select a victim his own size and build.)

When he is done, he looks in the mirror and sees a tall man in his thirties, with dark hair and blue eyes, apparently healthy and fit, though strained.

He is about to leave when he hears someone enter the house.

He escapes, but he is forced to leave behind the stolen suitcase and his discarded clothes.

20. Anthony sits in a brainstorming session about Cuba, fuming with impatience and worrying about Luke. All his people are wasting their time in here while Luke is wandering around town. God knows what damage he may be doing.

At noon Anthony proposes a break. Back in his own office briefly, he scans the police reports that he has ordered, and seizes upon one. A patrolman is in hospital with a broken index finger after being attacked, he claims, by a drug-crazed bum. "That was Luke," Anthony tells Pete. "It's his trademark. He used to do it to the Gestapo—break their trigger fingers."

Then Billie arrives, spitting nails, to accuse him of abusing her hospital.

"I had to do it," he says. "It was a matter of grave national security."

"Not good enough!" says Billie. "I can't let this pass."

"Trust me," says Anthony. "You did once before, when you were in real trouble...remember?"

21. We flash back to 1943.

Billie comes in great distress to Anthony and begs him to summon Luke home from France. She is pregnant with Luke's child.

Anthony is angry and jealous. He still hero-worships Luke, and will never forget how Luke saved him from being expelled from Harvard; but he cannot bear the thought of anyone else having Billie. And if Luke comes home, he and Billie are sure to get married.

The character flaw that makes Anthony sly and manipulative has been magnified by secret work. Here in the clandestine world, deceit is an everyday tactic. It comes naturally to Anthony to tell Billie that Luke cannot be brought home, cannot even be contacted.

She is distraught. If she has an illegitimate child, her scholarship will be revoked—this is 1943. She contemplates concealing the child and trying to raise it while continuing her studies, but she sees a nightmare vision of her own mother raising children in penury, and she rejects that destiny for herself. As long as she can remember, she has worked towards her goal of being a great medical scientist, and she will not give up her ambition.

Anthony suggests an abortion. The going rate is a thousand dollars—a small fortune in 1943—and neither Anthony nor Billie has the money. Anthony goes to his father, saying the baby is his. The admiral is horrified by the prospect of a Jewish grandchild, and he puts up the money.

Anthony makes Billie promise never to tell Luke.

22. Luke, now looking respectable, drives to the Central Public Library at the corner of New York and Massachusetts Avenues. There he browses psychology textbooks, looking for information about memory. He learns that there is a technical term for his condition, “global amnesia”. The patient forgets all information but retains skills such as foreign languages or mathematics. The condition is brought on by drugs and/or shock, and may be permanent. However, the patient’s retention of skills means that he is generally able to re-learn forgotten information and resume normal life.

This gives Luke an idea.

He looks through a book on rocket design. It is a technical tome, full of equations, but he understands it effortlessly, whereas the psychology books were hard going. Browsing further, he finds math and physics easy, chemistry a little harder, and biology challenging. This confirms his feeling that he was once a rocket scientist.

Rocket science is not that large a field.

Excited, he checks the *Dictionary of American Scientists* for someone named Luke. He finds Wernher von Braun, but no physicist or mathematician called Luke. The only photographs are of the most famous figures.

However, he reasons that he must be personally known to a large number of scientists in his field. If he could find some of them, he could learn his identity. He checks colleges in Washington and decides to go to Georgetown University.

23. Anthony spots a new police report about a housewife who returned from shopping to find that someone had broken into her house and used her shower, leaving behind a pile of dirty clothes and a half-empty suitcase. He guesses that this was Luke.

He sees a way to get the police to do his work for him.

He calls the precinct house and tells them that they will find that the suitcase was stolen from a man about six feet tall, athletic build, about 160 pounds, who arrived in Washington earlier today.

Anthony then makes an excuse to Hobart for not returning to the meeting, and jumps in his car. By the time he gets to the precinct house, the cops have confirmed his theory and are impressed. He explains that the CIA has an interest in the person he believes to be the perpetrator. He points out that the police can put out a description of the man based on the fact that he is the same build as the owner of the suitcase, and is wearing whatever clothes were in the bag.

He goes with a detective to the scene of the crime, and suggests door-to-door interviews to establish whether the perpetrator parked a car here while he was in the house. They find a typical suburban busybody who noticed a blue-and-white Ford and even remembers the licence plate number. Anthony tells the detective that the car was stolen at about the same time as the bag, in the same neighbourhood. They check the identity of the owner and call his home. His wife tells them he went to Philadelphia—parking his car near Union Station.

The police add the car details to the description and circulate it.

24. Luke drives to Georgetown University and finds the geophysics department. He half-hopes someone will recognize him walking along the corridors, but it is not that easy. He locates the secretary and asks to see the department chair, but he is refused because he does not have an appointment. Another difficulty is that he does not know his full name.

After further problems, he learns that the department chair is giving a lecture downtown at the Smithsonian Institution. This is a cloud with a silver lining: there will be dozens of physicists all in the same room—surely one of them will recognize Luke!

But is it now 2.30pm and the lecture ends at 3.

He jumps in his car.

25. Nik phones Anthony, who has to tell him that he has lost Luke.

Nik demands to see him immediately. Anthony is appalled: this is a major breach of security. But Nik has thrown caution to the winds.

The entire Soviet political establishment is watching us, Nik tells Anthony. More hangs on the outcome than Anthony imagined. The conservative faction in the Kremlin, which includes the KGB, is fighting for power against a liberal wing led by Krushchev. Krushchev is First Secretary of the Communist Party, but is not yet Premier of the Soviet Union, so his grip on power is still shaky. However, if he wins this power struggle, he will implement his ideas of peaceful coexistence with the west, the dream of world socialism will die, and people like Nik and Anthony will become men of the past.

“I’ll find Luke,” Anthony says. “It won’t take long.”

“When you do,” Nik says, “kill him.”

26. Near the Smithsonian, Luke is stopped by a cop who recognizes the stolen Ford Fiesta. He escapes, but the delay causes him to miss the end of the lecture. Only a handful of people remain, arguing in a corner. But one of them catches his eye and says: “Hello, Luke, what the heck are you doing here?”

Luke is so relieved he could weep.

Part III

27. At 3.30pm, Luke uses a pay phone in the Aviation Building of the Smithsonian to call the ABMA at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. He learns that he has a secretary and gets her on the phone. She is a maternal black woman called Marigold. She is relieved to hear from him—everyone has been asking where he is.

He explains that he has lost his memory. She tells him he left Cape Canaveral on Monday morning. He flew to Huntsville and stayed there about two hours. (N.B. Neither Anthony nor Elspeth yet realizes that Luke made this stopover.) Then he flew on to Washington, DC, and checked in to the Sheraton-Carlton hotel on K Street and 16th. She arranged his flights on the armed forces airline MATS (Military Air Transport Service) and made the hotel reservation.

She confirms that the launch is set for 10.30 tonight.

The scientists who recognized him were surprised to see him in Washington when his rocket is about to be launched at Cape Canaveral. This is the climax of his entire career, the launch of the first American satellite—he should be there!

Luke asks her: “Did I tell you why I wanted to go to Washington?”

“Sort of,” she replies. “You said the rocket was going to blow up on the launch pad.”

Luke is electrified. A threat to the launch would explain why he left his post in such a hurry. But his amnesia means he has done nothing to counter the threat. And the launch is only seven hours away!

He must try to warn the team at Cape Canaveral. Marigold says he should talk to the head of security, Col. Hyde.

She also tells him that his wife is at Cape Canaveral.

Wife, he thinks. *I have a wife.*

I wonder what she's like.

“What’s her name?” he asks Marigold.

“Elspeth,” she replies. “Your wife’s name is Elspeth.”

28. Dan Simons shows up at Billie's hospital. Still worried about Luke, he has been calling Marigold every hour or two, and he has now learned that Luke lost his memory. He is very angry with Billie. "You did this!" he yells at her. "You and Anthony—you messed with Luke's brain!"

Billie realizes that her mystery patient was Luke.

Dan goes to Luke's hotel. Luke is not there. Dan leaves a message warning him that his life is in danger.

29. Cape Canaveral is frantically busy at 4pm. The atmosphere is electric as the launch draws closer. Although it has not been announced to the public in advance, half the world seems to know that tonight is the night. Is America in the space race, or out of it? This launch will decide.

Col. Hyde calls Elspeth into his office and hands her the phone. It is Luke.

Elspeth is horrified. How can it be Luke? He is supposed to have lost his memory! If he knows who his wife is, what else has he rediscovered?

He says: "The strangest thing has happened. I've lost my memory. I don't even know what you look like."

He still has amnesia, she realizes; but her relief is short-lived. He is recovering his past by other means. This is almost as bad, but at least it gives her time. All is not yet lost.

He begins to tell her how it happened. She realizes she has to let Anthony know where Luke is. She interrupts him and asks where he is calling from, and he tells her. A few moments later, Hyde steps out of the room. She picks up the second phone on Hyde's desk and dials Anthony's number. But Hyde comes back in and she has to hang it up hurriedly.

She tries to find out how much Luke now knows. He tells her what Marigold told him, about the rocket blowing up. Elspeth's blood runs cold. He has learned so much, so fast!

He tells her he has warned Col. Hyde, who is going to double security and have all fuel installations checked out. (An explosion makes rocket men think of fuel, which is incredibly volatile.) But Luke does not feel this is enough. He wants to find out what happened to him between Tuesday night and Thursday morning.

This is bad news for Elspeth.

Hyde leaves the office again, and she makes another attempt at getting Anthony on the other phone. This time she reaches him. Covering the mouthpiece of the black phone, she whispers into the white phone: “He’s at the Smithsonian, in the Aviation Building, using a pay phone, talking to me!”

Anthony says: “Keep him on the line—I’ll be there in five minutes.”

Elsbeth tries to keep Luke talking, but he points out that it is 4.30pm, only six hours until ignition, and the launch could fail if he does not discover the nature of the threat. She realizes she is not going to be able to hold him. Then she has a brainwave. “You know who you should call,” she says. “Anthony Carroll is your oldest friend, and he works at the CIA—he could help you.”

“I’ll call him,” says Luke.

30. Anthony misses Luke at the Smithsonian. But when he returns to his office in Q Building, Luke calls him.

“Where are you?” Anthony says.

“I’m just renting a car, but I’m on my way to the Carlton hotel.”

They arrange to meet there.

At 5.30pm Anthony is waiting in a car outside the Carlton. Pete is on guard in the lobby. Anthony fits a silencer to his gun. As soon as he gets Luke alone in his hotel room, he will shoot him. He will put out the Do Not Disturb sign, then leave. He will tell Pete to stay in the lobby, saying he fears the Russians may try to assassinate Luke.

When the murder is discovered, he will make sure the CIA’s interest in Luke is kept secret. This is the great thing about working for an organisation like the CIA: you can always use the excuse of national security to cover up your crimes.

He sees Luke enter the hotel. He puts the gun in his overcoat pocket and follows.

31. Luke picks up his messages at the desk. The first asks him to call Dr Billie Simons urgently. He goes to the lobby phone and dials the number. A hand reaches past him and

depresses the cradle, breaking the connection. It is Pete, who says: “Talk to Anthony before you call anyone, okay?”

Luke is bewildered. Nine hours ago, Pete was a bum. Does he work for the CIA? Luke recalls that this morning Pete tried to discourage him from inquiring into his past. He is probably doing the same thing now. “Get out of my way,” Luke says. Pete persists in trying to prevent his making the call. They are in danger of coming to blows when Anthony steps in.

Luke says: “I want to know what this is all about, and I mean now.”

“Okay,” Anthony says. “Let’s talk in your room.”

Luke opens his second message, which is handwritten. It is from Dan Simons. “Your life is in danger. Trust no one, especially Anthony Carroll—he did this to you. Call me the second you get this.”

The presence of Pete confirms Dan’s accusation. Anthony must be responsible for the amnesia. That means Dan may also be right to say that Luke’s life is in danger. Luke realizes he has to get away from Anthony.

He invites Anthony to his room and says Pete must stay here. Anthony has to accept this. They go to the room. Luke holds the door for Anthony, then slugs him from behind and runs off, leaving the hotel by a back door.

32. When Anthony comes round, he realizes he has blown it with Luke. He calls Cape Canaveral and does damage-limitation with Col Hyde, saying: “Luke is having some kind of nervous breakdown. He slept rough last night and seems to have lost his memory. We’re trying to locate him but he’s avoiding us. Meanwhile, anything he says should be treated with extreme scepticism.

Hyde buys this.

33. Luke meets up with Dan, who explains how he knows that Billie and Anthony made Luke lose his memory; and we flash back to 1953.

Dan and Billie are married, but not happily. They have a son, Larry, aged two. Dan is a radio scriptwriter hoping to get into movies. Billie has done her master's and her doctorate in psychology and is part of a research team investigating the effects of drugs on memory.

Dan dislikes what she is doing, calling it brainwashing, and he is confirmed in his suspicions when he learns that the research is funded by the CIA. Billie defends herself hotly, arguing that her work advances the understanding of the mysteries of the human brain.

Dan writes a script about a government agency that brainwashes unsuspecting citizens. The movie is a smash, and he is deluged with Hollywood offers.

But the CIA is furious. Anthony says Dan has used confidential information he got from his wife to make a film that denigrates the CIA. Billie is profoundly embarrassed, and the research project almost loses its funding. This is the last straw, and their marriage breaks up.

The CIA takes its revenge. Dan is targeted by Senator McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee. (Dan is sure this is Anthony's doing, but Billie denies it.) Dan is blacklisted by Hollywood and his short career in movies comes to an end. He cannot even get radio work. He begins to write children's books under a pen name.

34. Billie has been trying to call Anthony ever since Dan left her office. At 7pm she reaches him. He says he can explain everything. They meet.

Anthony tells Billie he is in terrible trouble. He has made a bad mistake—but his intentions were good.

Luke is a Soviet agent, he tells her, and has been since the war. As evidence, he shows her the Xerox copies of the missile's blueprints, with explanatory notes in Luke's handwriting, which Billie recognizes. She buys this story, especially when Anthony says: "This is why Luke would never marry you."

(Anthony makes sure she does not see enough to understand how the missile will be blown up.)

The CIA was about to unmask Luke. To save him from the electric chair, Anthony took him to Billie's hospital and persuaded Ransome to wipe his memory. This makes him impossible to prosecute—and also renders him harmless as a spy.

But it has not worked. Luke is too tough and persistent. Now, sadly, Luke must be arrested. However, Anthony has not given up hope. If he can get to Luke before anyone else, he will broker a deal whereby Luke will not be executed. By contrast, if the FBI get to him first, there will be no deal, because they are interested only in getting publicity for catching commie spies.

“What can I do?” says Billie.

“If you talk to Luke, persuade him to give himself up to me. It’s the best thing he could possibly do.”

Billie agrees.

35. Luke calls Col. Hyde from Dan’s place at 7.30pm, three hours before launch. He tells Hyde he now believes that he had uncovered a plot to sabotage the launch, and his memory was deliberately wiped to prevent his revealing the plot.

That’s some story, says Hyde.

Luke asks him to postpone the launch for 24 hours while the threat is investigated.

“You’re out of your mind!” Hyde explodes. “The *president* is waiting for this launch! No one is going to postpone it on the say-so of a mathematician who’s lost his memory!”

Luke realizes he must go over Hyde’s head. He must also come up with a more convincing story, preferably with some evidence.

He asks for von Braun, and learns he is in Washington, preparing to give a triumphant press conference at the Pentagon. This is a stroke of luck: Luke will be able to talk to him personally rather than on the phone.

Luke figures that if he can persuade Billie to tell von Braun about her memory-wiping experiments, the story will gain enormously in plausibility. But he has only three hours left.

He goes to see Billie.

Luke has no memories of Billie but he knows, the moment he sees her, that he has loved her all his life. He is instantly bewitched by her, mesmerised by her flashing dark eyes, her quick mind, her neat figure in a clinging sweater, the impulsive sympathy she shows for his plight. And he can tell that she is equally drawn to him.

She tells the story Anthony gave her. Having no memory, Luke is inclined to believe her. He agrees to give himself up.

36. Brooding over Luke's escape, Anthony surmises that he must have been warned, and the only person who might have warned him is Dan. Anthony and Pete raid Dan's apartment, but no one is there. Anthony calls his office on Dan's phone. He is told that Luke has bought the story Anthony told Billie, and he is on his way to Q Building to surrender.

37. Dan is hiding in his own apartment and overhears this conversation. He races Anthony to Q Building and intercepts Luke.

Dan is sure Anthony is lying. I know, he says, because I *was* an agent for Moscow, and it was you, Luke, who put an end to my career. Then he tells the story.

38. We flash back to 1944.

Luke and Dan are working with the French resistance. There are two groups, the larger communists and the minority Gaullists. Dan and Luke and a small Gaullist force daringly blow up a railway bridge and capture a German supply train. During the skirmish, Dan saves Luke's life. As they are unloading the wagons, a large force of communists attack and steal their booty.

Luke angrily accuses Dan of tipping off the communists. Dan admits it. He wants the communists to be in a strong position to win elections after the war. (British Intelligence is favouring the Gaullists for the same reason.) But, Dan says, he would never do anything against his own country. He is an American first, a communist second.

"But what about your loyalty to me?" says Luke. "Whether or not you betrayed America, you deceived me!"

"I just saved your damn life!"

"And I'd do the same for you—but I wouldn't lie to you!"

They make a deal. Dan agrees to cease his clandestine activities, and Luke in return agrees not to denounce Dan to OSS. Both men keep their promises. But their friendship is never the same again.

Both have behaved characteristically: Dan in putting political loyalty above personal, Luke in being unforgiving.

39. Hearing this story, Billie changes sides. It makes much more sense that the ever-devious Anthony is the secret agent. She agrees to help Luke.

Luke meets with von Braun at 10pm and takes him to the hospital where Billie is waiting. She backs up his story. Luke tells von Braun the sabotage plot could still go ahead, and proposes that von Braun postpone the launch for 24 hours and investigate.

Von Braun agrees.

Part IV

40. Elspeth is devastated when the launch is postponed. Anything can happen in 24 hours—so many things could go wrong! Weeping tears of anger and frustration, she calls Anthony and gives him the bad news.

He is furious. How did this happen? he screams. She does not know. He calms down and says all is not yet lost. They will blow up the rocket tomorrow. All they have to do is keep their nerve—and stop Luke interfering.

Anthony tells Elspeth to find out exactly why and how the postponement occurred. She must also seek clues to Luke's whereabouts. And she must reassure Theo.

She questions Hyde. At first he says the details are classified. Elspeth becomes tearful, and says that as Luke's wife she should not be treated as a security risk. Hyde puts his arm around her and she cries on his shoulder. Pretty soon he is telling her that Billie took von Braun to the hospital where Luke's amnesia was induced.

She tells Anthony this.

41. Luke has 24 hours to prevent the sabotage of the rocket. He might find a clue among his personal possessions—a note, or something else, that has been overlooked by anyone who previously searched his stuff. He decides to return to the Carlton.

He calls his room, as a precaution, and finds that someone is there. (It is Steve.)

Luke and Billie drive to the Carlton. Luke starts a fire near his room and sounds the alarm. Steve leaves. Luke and Billie search the room but find nothing.

Luke decides that his best bet is to go to Huntsville. Marigold told him he spent two hours there on Monday—there must have been a reason.

He packs his bag, and Billie drives him to the airport.

42. Anthony checks the hospital but he has missed them. When he returns to his office, Steve calls in. Anthony immediately guesses that the hotel fire is a ruse by Luke, who always liked to set fire to hotels used by the Gestapo. He goes there and searches the room. He sees that Luke has packed and left. But where did he go?

43. Luke and Billie are sitting in the airport car park, running the engine to keep the car warm, looking at the parked planes on the moonlit airfield. They hold hands and talk, waiting for the airport to open.

Luke asks Billie why their love affair ended. She burst into tears and says: “You got so mad at me, you didn’t speak to me for five years!”

44. We flash back to 1945.

Billie is working on a hush-hush OSS project investigating the effects of drugs on prisoners under interrogation. Luke has returned home from Europe and they have resumed their passionate affair. Anthony is jealous of their happiness. He still wants Billie for himself.

Anthony organises a reunion of the six Harvard friends; Luke, Dan, Billie, Elspeth, Peg and himself. They meet at the magnificent Carroll family ranch in Virginia. While they are there, the Japanese surrender (on Thursday 16 August).

They have all been changed by the war just ended. They are weary, cynical, mistrustful, hardened. Anthony’s tendency to be sly and manipulative has continued to grow, and he has become the arch-manipulator, brilliant, unscrupulous, and twisted.

Anthony’s father predictably disapproves of Billie, and he lectures Luke, warning him not to throw himself away on “that Jewess”. Luke defends Billie hotly, and says Admiral Carroll does not know what he is talking about. The Admiral then plays his trump card: Billie had an abortion, which he paid for.

Carroll believes Anthony to be the father, but Luke knows better. He is enraged beyond reason. First, he has been humiliated by the Admiral. Second, he is bereaved by the loss of the first child he fathered. Most important, he has been deceived by Billie, and feels he can never trust her again. He ends their relationship.

Billie is heartbroken.

45. Luke speculates that the whole bust-up may have been planned by Anthony. However, he reflects, Anthony shrewdly used the genuine weakness in Luke’s character, the way he exiles

people from his life when they transgress his code. He did this to Billie and Dan—both of whom have since proved themselves good friends.

Even so, Anthony did not get what he wanted. He tried to comfort Billie, but she turned instead to Dan.

Luke and Billie did not speak again until 1950, by which time she was married to Dan. Since then they have kept in touch.

The airport opens for business, and Luke takes his leave of Billie and goes inside. He buys a ticket on the first plane to Huntsville, Capital Airlines flight 571, leaving at 6.55am.

Billie is so obviously the woman for Luke that he cannot understand why he is married to Elspeth. He decides to call her.

She asks where he is and what he is going to do. He tells her he does not want to say over an open phone line. Then he asks her to tell him how they got married.

46. We flash back to 1954.

Luke has completed his doctorate and, after four years working for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California, he has achieved his ambition and got a job working for the ABMA under von Braun. He longs to marry and have children, but no woman has won his heart since Billie. However, the years are slipping by: he is now 34.

He is invited to the wedding of Peg, Dan's old girlfriend. Elspeth is there. They spend the whole afternoon together. They seem able to pick up their relationship just where they left off. That night, they make love.

In the morning, Luke proposes.

47. At the Starlite Motel in Cocoa Beach, Elspeth lies awake, remembering what happened next.

She asked Luke for time to think. She was working at the CIA as a secretary and passing information to the Soviets via Nik, who was already her controller. When she told Nik about Luke's proposal, she expected to be ordered to turn him down and continue her work at the CIA. But, unknown to her, the KGB was desperately searching for a way to penetrate the space

programme. Nik seized the opportunity, and ordered Elspeth to accept Luke and spy on the ABMA.

He also ordered her to have herself sterilized, so that her loyalties would never be divided by children.

This was the moment when she came close to breaking with Moscow. Nik put heavy pressure on her, but she knew how Luke wanted a family.

The balance of her decision was tipped by something the CIA did in one of the poorest countries in the world.

Guatemala had long been dominated, politically and economically, by the US corporation United Fruit. The company was prosperous—its annual profits were more than double the total tax revenue of the Guatemalan government—but the people had no education, no health care and no civil rights. The country remained poor partly because United Fruit kept most of the land fallow, to drive up the price of bananas. In 1954 a mildly reformist government aroused the ire of United Fruit by passing labor laws identical to those in force in the US. Worse, it nationalized some of United Fruit's uncultivated land and gave it to impoverished peasants to farm.

In mid-1954 the CIA organised and financed a coup which overthrew the reformist government and installed a right-wing regime amenable to United Fruit. Elspeth was incensed, especially when the US press obediently reported a popular rising against communism, when she knew, as a CIA insider, that the coup was an exercise in raw power.

What hope was there for the world, she thought, if a nation of penniless peasants could not climb up out of the mud without being crushed under the jackboot of Uncle Sam? The coup reinforced her youthful conviction that the world would never be a better place until the brute power of American capital was defeated. Once again she pledged herself to the cause of world communism. She had the operation, a tubal ligation, and married Luke.

The marriage never worked. It was poisoned from the start by her deceit. Luke struggled to make them both happy with a dogged loyalty that broke Elspeth's heart. She could have slept easier if he had given up on her and had affairs. But his sense of duty was too strong. So they lived in misery.

And it was all for this, the opportunity she now has to strike an historic blow against the bully of the world.

Why has Luke called her in the middle of the night to ask her questions about their marriage? She can guess. She picks up the phone and calls Anthony. Luke would not tell her where he was, but she knows who he has been talking to. She gets Anthony on the line and says: "I'm sure Luke is with Billie."

48. Billie is sitting in an all-night cafe, smoking cigarettes and crying. She has never really stopped loving Luke. But now he is on his way back to his wife. This has been an interlude, caused by his amnesia. Luke knows his duty. He will return to Elspeth.

She thinks about Anthony. She is enraged by his lies. He has betrayed them all. But what will happen to him now? Surely he and Luke will end up trying to kill one another.

She looks at her watch. Larry will be waking up. She goes home.

Larry is gone.

Becky-Ma tells her that Anthony, who is Larry's godfather, picked him up, saying he had arranged to spend the day with him. Cold with fear, Billie calls Anthony. Larry is fine, Anthony says. Where's Luke?

"I'll tell you when I see my son," says Billie.

He tells her where to meet him.

She finds her old pistol from the war. It is clean and oiled. She used to be the best shot in OSS. She killed a man once, a Nazi spy, in a back street in Madrid. But she has not fired a weapon since 1945.

She loads the gun and slips it into her handbag. Then she goes to the rendezvous. Anthony and Pete show up with Larry in a car. She tells them: "Luke caught a plane to Huntsville."

Anthony tries to renege on the deal and keep Larry while he checks the story out. Billie surprises him by pulling the gun and threatening to kill him. He is forced to hand Larry over.

49. Anthony is mystified. Why has Luke gone to Huntsville? He calls Elspeth, but she does not know.

However, it is clear that Anthony must follow Luke to Huntsville and kill him there.

At the airport he is able to establish that Luke caught Capital flight 571. It stops at Newport News, Norfolk, Raleigh, Greensboro, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Asheville, Knoxville and Chattanooga before arriving at Huntsville at 2.23pm Central time. He and Pete get aboard a MATS flight that arrives at 11am.

50. Billie knows that her betrayal of Luke's whereabouts could kill him. She calls the airport and finds that flight 271, which leaves at 9am, uses a Viscount, and stops only at Winston-Salem and Chattanooga, arriving in Huntsville at 11.56am CST, more than two hours earlier than Luke's flight.

She drives Larry to Dan's place and leaves him with his father. Then she catches the plane.

Part V

51. When Anthony arrives at Huntsville airport with Pete at 11am, he is dismayed to receive a message from Carl Hobart, ordering them both to return to Washington immediately. Hobart has discovered that Anthony defied his orders and continued to work on the Luke case all day yesterday, instead of handing it over to the FBI.

Anthony has no thought of obeying the message, of course, but his disobedience is going to cause trouble just when he needs space to solve the Luke problem. He tells Pete they must ignore Hobart's message: he will take full responsibility. Pete is troubled, but he still hero-worships Anthony, and he accepts the decision.

Pete stays at the airport to watch for Luke's arrival while Anthony rents a car and drives to Luke's house. Following instructions from Elspeth, he finds a key in the garden and lets himself in.

He sits waiting, gun in hand, to kill his oldest friend.

52. Huntsville airport is busy by 1950s standards, with around fifty flights a day, but the terminal is small, and Billie and Pete spot one another soon after her plane lands at 11.56am.

Billie confirms that Luke's flight is on schedule to land at 2.23pm. Her plan was to wait for Luke and warn him that Anthony is here. Pete's presence is a complication. She will have to get rid of him.

She rents a car. Pete hotwires a car in the parking lot and follows her. She stops on a quiet country road and ambushes him, then shoots out his tires. She heads back to the airport, calculating that she is just in time for Luke.

Then her car breaks down.

She is desperate. Anthony is lying in wait and Luke is going to walk straight into his trap!

53. Elspeth calls Marigold and questions her. She learns that on Monday Luke arrived with a folder of diagrams which he was not carrying when he left. Elspeth guesses that this was a backup set of Xerox copies. Obviously, Luke stashed them in Huntsville.

Excited, she calls Anthony.

54. Luke's fight arrives on time and he gets a taxi to his house.

55. Anthony, waiting at Luke's house to kill him, gets a call from Elspeth. She reports her conversation with Marigold. This changes everything. Luke's backup package could be fatal to the plot. Anthony must get the papers and destroy them.

Luke is presumably here in search of the same package. Anthony must follow Luke until Luke finds the documents then take them from him and kill him.

While they are speaking, a taxicab draws up outside the house and Luke gets out.

Anthony sneaks out of the house and hides nearby.

56. Luke looks around the house. It is a curious experience. Seeing the furniture and decor through a stranger's eyes, he gets an impression of the occupants—who are himself and his wife. This is evidently the home of an affluent two-income couple. The car in the driveway is a new Chrysler 300C, the fastest stock sedan in the world, black, with tailfins like space rockets. The house is full of chic, hard-edged modern furniture and gadgets. Both closets are stuffed with elegant clothes.

He studies a wedding photo. Elspeth is gorgeous. He tries to imagine their life together. Somehow, this is not his dream of a home. There should be comfortable old chairs, toys on the floor, a piano, pets.

He spends only a minute or two on these reflections, then searches the house.

He does not find what he is looking for. But he does find a letter to Elspeth from a doctor in Atlanta. He wonders why she went to Atlanta, then he remembers her telling him that they have both been tested for fertility recently, and that he went to the army doctor at Redstone Arsenal, but she wanted a woman doctor and had to go to Atlanta. He reads the letter.

Dear Mrs Lucas,

Following your routine checkup, the results of your blood tests have come back from the lab, and everything is normal.

Luke frowns. It was not supposed to be a "routine checkup", it was a fertility test. He reads on:

However, you are underweight, you suffer insomnia, and when I saw you, you had obviously been crying, though you said nothing was wrong. These are symptoms of depression.

Depression may be caused by changes in body chemistry, by unresolved mental problems such as marital difficulties, or by childhood trauma such as the early death of a parent. Treatment may include antidepressant medication and/or psychiatric therapy.

In your case, I feel sure the condition is related to the tubal ligation you underwent in 1954.

What the heck is a tubal ligation? Luke looks it up in the medical dictionary and finds that it is the commonest method of sterilization for women who do not want to have children.

He is stunned. Elspeth told him they had been trying to have a baby. She had encouraged him to have fertility testing. She had pretended that she herself was having such tests. Yet she had had herself sterilized in 1954!

This procedure may cause depression at any age, but in your case, having it six weeks before your wedding, it was almost inevitable, and some form of counselling should have been prescribed at the time.

Six weeks before the wedding! She has been deceiving him since before they were married! Did she conceal from him the fact that she was having an operation—or did she tell him it was something else, appendectomy or tonsilectomy? Luke is devastated.

He sits there, stunned, while darkness falls. After a while he manages to put his personal troubles behind him, for the moment, and resume his mission.

Hoping that Marigold can help him find what he is looking for, he calls her at home (it is now 7.30pm) and asks her to meet him at Redstone Arsenal.

57. Billie gets her car fixed. She drives to Luke's house, but misses him. She heads for Redstone Arsenal.

58. Anthony follows Luke to the base in the dark. Luke meets Marigold and talks to her for a while. Anthony guesses that together they are reconstructing Luke's movements here on Monday. Then Luke goes to the Computation Lab. Anthony spies on him while he searches his desk. Then Luke drives to the southern end of the base, where the static test pads are, and enters the Engineering Building.

59. Billie runs into Marigold and finds out where Luke has gone.

60. Luke finds the Xerox copies in his file cabinet in the Engineering Building. When he sees the papers he realizes immediately how the rocket is to be sabotaged. He experiences a moment of triumphant vindication: he was right all along! He must call Cape Canaveral right away. He checks his watch: it is 10pm. They will have to postpone the launch while they search for Theo Packman.

He picks up the phone—and Anthony walks in with a gun in his hand.

Luke throws the phone at Anthony and dives for the door. He makes it outside, but Anthony is right behind. They chase across the concrete pad where a rocket is being tested. The noise smothered the shots from Anthony's gun. Luke sees a car screech up. Billie is at the wheel. She throws open a door and Luke dives in. They tear away.

They reach a phone booth at 10.25. Luke calls Cape Canaveral and gets the launch postponed.

61. Elspeth is waiting for ignition when the word comes that there has been another postponement.

She gets a call from Anthony. He tells her she must warn Theo.

She jumps in her car and goes looking for him, but she is too late. She sees him being arrested.

62. When Anthony returns to Huntsville airport, Pete confronts him. Pete has spoken to Carl Hobart on the phone and has received very specific orders. He is to confiscate Anthony's gun and escort him back to Washington.

Anthony kills Pete, hides the body, and gets a MATS flight at 12.30am to Florida.

63. Luke and Billie drive to Chattanooga where, at 1am, they catch a train to Florida. They get a sleeping car. On the train, they make love for the first time since 1945.

64. Elspeth meets Anthony off his plane at Patrick Air Force base at 2am. She tells him it is all over: Theo has been caught with the transmitter.

Anthony is not willing to give up. Can't they buy another transmitter? No, it's a specialized piece of equipment. Well, the KGB must have stuff like that. Anthony calls Nik.

Yes, Nik has a transmitter—but how can he get it to Florida by 10.30pm tomorrow? All Soviet Embassy personnel are watched 24 hours a day by the FBI. Nik can slip away from them—but they would know if he caught a plane. And he can't ship such a piece of equipment without arousing suspicion.

However, he could bring it by road. If he travels nonstop, using relay drivers and a fast car, he can be in Florida in eighteen hours. It is now 3am. He will be there 90 minutes before ignition.

Part VI

65. Elspeth meets Anthony on the beach near Cape Canaveral at 3pm on Friday. This is a favourite spot of hers, she says, despite the mosquitoes. You can see the rockets take off. (N.B. Although there has so far been only one, failed, attempt to send a rocket into *space*, there are frequent launches of *sub-space* missiles, especially ICBMs.)

Anthony has just talked to Nik, who is now four hours away with the new transmitter. They will rendezvous in the car park of the Starlite Motel at 7pm. Anthony will bring Nik to this spot on the beach, from where they will be able to watch the launch—and blow up the rocket as soon as it leaves the ground.

What then? says Elspeth. Anthony says he has blown his cover. He has disobeyed orders, and as soon as Pete's body is found he will be accused of murder. After the rocket blows up, he will get the first available plane from Miami to a neutral country. He has a passport in a false name.

He is on his way to Moscow.

66. Luke and Billie arrive at Cocoa City railway station at 3.30pm. Billie heads for the Starlite Motel to check in. Luke is still worried about the launch, because no one has yet identified the spy who sent the Xeroxes to Theo. It is almost certainly a member of the trusted scientific team. Now that Theo is under arrest, will the spy come up with an alternative sabotage scheme?

He heads for Cape Canaveral.

67. Elspeth is in the Command Shack when Luke arrives at 4pm. He immediately confronts her with the letter from the Atlanta doctor.

She realises that their marriage is over. Few people could forgive a deception on this level, and Luke is not one of those saints. All the same, she has to tell him something. She says she had the operation because she was mortally afraid of childbirth, and she kept it secret because she was sure he would not marry her if he knew.

To her horror, he is sympathetic. Tears come to his eyes.

She tells him brutally that they must divorce.

Then she calls Anthony and says she is coming to Moscow with him.

68. At 5pm Luke meets with Col Hyde, the head of security, and Herbie Welles, the launch conductor. Hyde says there is no longer a security threat to the launch, now that Theo and his transmitter are out of action.

Luke is not satisfied, especially when Hyde confirms that Theo still has not talked. His silence suggests he knows something worth hiding.

Luke proposes changing the detonation code, as a precaution, and Welles agrees.

69. Elspeth is distraught when she hears, at 6pm, that the code has been changed. All her efforts, all her pain will have been for nothing—unless she learns the new code.

She seeks out the engineer who reset the system and tells him she is writing a security report for von Braun. He will not tell her the new code, but he does reveal that only two people know it, himself and Hyde. Hyde has a file in his office safe. Elspeth knows that he keeps the key in his pants pocket.

70. At 7pm Nik arrives at the Starlite Motel with the transmitter and meets up with Anthony, who tells him the code has been changed but Elspeth is on the case.

He also tells Nik that they plan to fly to Moscow. Okay, says Nik, if you succeed—but if you fail, forget Moscow.

During the few minutes they are at the motel, Anthony sees Billie. But he is almost sure she did not see him.

Anthony and Nik head for the beach.

71. At 8pm Elspeth tells Col Hyde she is divorcing Luke. She will not marry again, she says, but she is ready to have some fun. It is an obvious come-on, and Hyde goes for it. He kisses her and feels her up. She feels like a whore, but it's all or nothing now. When he is hot and bothered, she takes the key from his pocket.

72. At 8.45pm Billie arrives at Cape Canaveral and tells Luke she saw Anthony at the motel. Luke is now sure the saboteurs plan to try again.

73. At 9pm Hyde leaves his office for a few minutes. Elspeth opens the safe and copies out the data Anthony needs. She replaces the file, locks the safe, and drops the key on the rug, where it might have fallen when she and Hyde were petting.

74. At 9.15 Luke goes to Hyde's office and asks him if there is any way anyone could have learned the new code. Hyde sears that no one could possibly have opened his safe. "The key is in my pocket, right here..." But it is not. He sees it on the floor and picks it up. He guesses it fell out while he was necking with Elspeth—but he can't tell her husband that.

Luke storms out in disgust.

75. Elspeth leaves the base at 9.30pm and heads for the beach.

76. Luke questions the engineer. "Has anyone even *mentioned* the change of code to you?"
"No, Dr Lucas—only your wife."

A dreadful suspicion dawns on Luke. He calls von Braun and establishes that the boss did not ask Elspeth for a security report, so she is definitely lying.

Luke realizes that his wife is the spy.

He goes in search of her, but she is nowhere to be found.

77. Elspeth meets up with Anthony and Nik on the beach, where hundreds of spectators have gathered in response to rumours that a launch is imminent. Frantically, with only minutes to go, they reset the transmitter.

78. Luke and Billie come upon them in the final seconds of the countdown. There is a fight. Nik and Anthony are killed.

Elspeth pleads to be allowed to flee. Luke agrees.

The countdown reaches zero and the rocket takes off.

As it rises into the sky, Elspeth makes a last-second lunge for the switch. Luke shoots her.

The rocket disappears into space.

The end.

	Age in December 1941	Age in January 1958
Luke	21	37
Elspeth	21	37
Anthony	21	37
Billie	21	37
Dan	23	39

The CIA in early 1958

