

The following scenes were deleted for various reasons: they slowed the pace, the direction of the book changed, or I needed to make the book shorter and I had to cut something. They aren't necessary for a full understanding of *Deadly Alliance*—they're just for fun. I strongly recommend reading them only after you've finished *Deadly Alliance*. Also, these scenes may not be as polished as the rest of the book—I've read them only four or five times instead of the normal dozen. Even if book length wasn't an issue, I wouldn't put any of the following scenes back into *Deadly Alliance*.

This first scene is how the book originally began. You see, the last chapter of *Sworn Enemy* wasn't added until shortly before the book went to press. Originally, it ended with Peter, Krzysztof, Jamie, Moretti, and the Ionescus on the plane, heading to Bari. As you can see from this scene, they never arrived. Several of *Covenant's* test readers begged for a reunion between Peter and Genevieve at the end of *Sworn Enemy*, so I added it. Then I had to change around the beginning of *Deadly Alliance* because they were starting in Bari rather than in an airplane somewhere over the Balkans. I'm glad I made the changes. It was fun to brainstorm how to get the characters into Yugoslavia, and it made me come up with Kimby and the camp on Bisevo. After I created Kimby, the rest of the book practically wrote itself. "Add a villain" is now one of my favorite pieces of advice when other writers tell me they aren't sure what to do with a partial manuscript.

If you'd rather not read an alternative beginning, you can skip to page 13 for scenes that legitimately could have been in the book, but were cut because they weren't vital.

Early Morning, Sunday, September 3, 1944

First came the noise: a nearby explosion, then the sound of flak ripping through the wooden side of the converted Royal Air Force bomber. Next came the sudden drop in altitude, making Peter Eddy think his stomach had somehow moved to his throat. Peter had been sleeping only seconds before, despite the engine noises, but he was wide awake now. Sitting across from him in the Mosquito's bomb bay were Jamie and Moretti, awake and looking just as concerned as Peter by the sound and the airplane's reaction to it. So much for a quiet trip back to Italy after finishing their latest assignment behind enemy lines.

Peter carefully moved the little legs belonging to Anatolie Ionescu from his lap. The boy, almost three, was the only passenger still asleep. Iuliana Ionescu and Krzysztof Zielinski sat between Peter and the airplane's tail. He could tell Iuliana was concerned by the way the skin between her dark eyes had wrinkled into furrows of worry. Peter couldn't read Krzysztof's face, but knew anyone who could hide

pain as well as Krzysztof—he'd been shot in the shoulder the day before—would also be able to hide fear.

Worried about what he might find, Peter stood and made his way around the pile of equipment to the cockpit. Holes peppered the windshield and the navigator's blood stained the remaining glass. The pilot glanced over his shoulder as Peter drew near. "See if you can do anything for him!"

Peter could see the navigator's eyes in the dim light of the cockpit. They were open, lifeless, staring at the instrument panel. He checked for a pulse, not expecting to find one. "I'm sorry. He's gone." Peter wanted to say something more, but there wasn't time for condolences.

The pilot glanced up at Peter and bit back a tremor in his lips. "We're losing altitude. Unless I can get my second engine working again, we're not gonna make it to Italy. We won't even make it over the next mountains. I think we're gonna have to bail out soon, while we're still high enough for our chutes to open."

Peter felt his throat go dry and ran back to the cargo area. "The pilot says we might have to bail. How many parachutes do we have?" he asked his friends. The plane had been prepared for four passengers and two crew members, but at the last minute the team had decided to take on two additional travelers.

Moretti was already on his feet. He helped Peter dig through their equipment until they found four parachute packs. There were seven people on the plane, but the pilot would have one near him in the cockpit. So would the navigator, but he wouldn't be needing it anymore.

"Jamie, the navigator is dead, but we'll need his parachute," Peter said.

Jamie nodded and went to the cockpit. Peter looked at the parachute in his hand, then at the small child still sleeping on his mother's lap. The pack was as big as he was, and Peter wasn't sure Anatolie could be depended on to pull the ripcord. Or even if he did, would he be strong enough to pull it all the way? And the parachute was designed for an adult, not a toddler. Where would the wind take someone as light as Anatolie? Peter supposed they could jury-rig it somehow, but they needed to hurry,

and they still needed one more parachute.

“Give him to me, Iuliana,” Moretti’s voice said. Peter glanced at him. He was buckling his holster belt around his waist and hadn’t put a parachute on yet. “I’ve jumped out of more planes than the rest of you combined. Anatolie will be the lightest load I’ve jumped with since training back the states.”

“But what if you let go?” Iuliana’s voice shook as she spoke.

“I won’t.” Moretti promised. “You don’t really trust yourself to jump with him, do you? There’s a pretty strong pull when that chute opens up.”

Peter was certain Iuliana had never jumped out of an airplane before. She shook her head, swallowed hard, and led her sleepy son over to Moretti.

Jamie returned with a blood-covered parachute pack in his hand. “The pilot said we have about two minutes.” Jamie glanced at Moretti, dug through the equipment, and brought out a rope. “Aren’t we glad we brought a boyscout along?” It wasn’t the first time Jamie had referred to Peter as a boyscout, but it was the first time he had used the term in a favorable way. Jamie tossed the rope to Peter, then began strapping on his pistol and his parachute.

Peter began making a harness for Anatolie. Peter knew how to tie knots, but he’d never had to tie them well enough to keep someone alive before. Moretti picked up Anatolie, who began crying the instant he was parted with his mother. Iuliana tried to comfort him as Peter tied the rope around both Anatolie’s legs, then around his waist and chest. Iuliana’s efforts reduced Anatolie’s protest to a whimper. Next Peter tied the little boy to the burly Italian-American paratrooper, forcing the rope around Moretti’s waist and over both his shoulders.

“Do you have a knife for when we land?” Peter was making the knots tight enough that it would be difficult to untie them, especially if Moretti needed to move quickly once he landed.

Moretti nodded, then carefully put the parachute pack on, doing his best to ignore Anatolie’s whimpers. The poor kid had had a rough week, and it wasn’t getting much better.

Iuliana and the injured Krzysztof were helping each other with their packs, Iuliana looking at her son and blinking away tears of her own. Peter had his parachute and his pistol strapped on when the bailout bell sounded.

“Lead the way, sergeant,” Peter told Moretti.

Moretti nodded. “Remember these chutes are different than the ones we normally use,” he reminded them. He and Krzysztof were both paratroopers by training—they weren’t used to pulling a ripcord. Paratrooper parachutes were the only kind Peter had ever used before, and he suspected the same was true for Jamie. Moretti put one hand on Iuliana’s shoulder. “Come out right after me. Count to three, then pull your cord.”

A gust of air swept through the modified bomber as Jamie and Moretti opened the door. Then Moretti and Anatolie disappeared through it, Moretti calm, Anatolie hysterical. Iuliana was next, then Krzysztof.

The pilot appeared from the cockpit and Jamie looked at the pile of equipment sadly. “I do wish we had a few more minutes. Something tells me we are going to wish we had our gear.” Then Jamie, too, was gone.

“After you,” the pilot said.

Peter saw the radio only a few feet away. He quickly grabbed it, then bolted from the airplane, wishing he’d had enough time to grab food and ammunition. Peter felt himself falling and slowly counted to three. Then he pulled his ripcord.

Nothing happened.

Peter pulled it again, but the results were the same. He stared at it, in the dark, wondering why it hadn’t worked, then looked down into the darkness, horror filling his chest. It was hard enough to breathe while tumbling through the sky—the extra panic made it nearly impossible. The plane had been close enough to the ground that speed was urgent. If there wasn’t sufficient time for the parachute to deploy fully, he would hit the ground at a fatal velocity.

He realized what his only chance was and reached behind his head, digging into the pack until he could feel the smooth fabric of his parachute. He began jerking it from the pack, hoping the silk would catch before it was too late. It took six desperate tugs, but it finally caught and Peter felt the harness yank him to a slower speed.

A small prayer of gratitude had just passed Peter's lips when his feet ran into something that wasn't completely solid. Then Peter felt the branches of a tree engulfing him, and then his entire body smacked into something very hard, and Peter dropped the radio and lost consciousness.

Krzysztof Zielinski forced himself to his feet. He'd jumped out of planes before—during paratrooper training and on several SOE missions—but his most recent landing was the worst of his career. It didn't help that his shoulder, already in pain because he'd been shot the day before, had turned to misery the instant his parachute opened and jerked his entire body into a fall of significantly reduced speed.

He was a little dizzy as he stood. He leaned on a tree trunk and gave himself orders, knowing he had to fight the pain and move on despite it. *Hide your parachute.* He struggled out of the harness, accidentally aggravating his wound again. He inhaled sharply and suppressed a moan of pain. At least a few things were working out for him that night—the parachute hadn't caught in any of the trees. Krzysztof found a thick bush and shoved the parachute underneath it.

Gather your equipment. But he hadn't brought anything with him, other than his pistol. He didn't even think the clip was full. He checked it and sighed. Missing two rounds, but better than no weapon at all. He wished he'd managed to bring the radio. Krzysztof was a communications specialist and it was his job to carry the radio.

Find Iuliana and Anatolie. It hadn't taken much effort on Krzysztof's part to convince Iuliana to leave her native Romania. Her family, other than her son and a few of her late husband's cousins, were dead; a persistent Romanian Fascist seemed bent on making her life miserable; and the newly arrived

Red Army wasn't giving the Romanians much hope for a bright, independent future. She'd been willing to leave, but he had been the one to suggest it, because he hadn't been ready to say good-bye.

Krzysztof remembered giving one of his older sisters a hard time when she fell in love with a loud, passionate baker. He'd wondered how they could love each other so completely so quickly. The two of them were opposites: his sister quiet, refined, and reserved; Slavomir gregarious, simple, and stubborn. And they'd known each other such a short time—only a few months—when they decided to marry. Krzysztof had also thought Slavomir foolish when he rejected Krzysztof's father's offer to evacuate him before the German Army rolled through their native Poland. And Krzysztof hadn't until recently forgiven his sister for choosing to stay with her husband instead of fleeing to England with her family.

Now he understood. If Iuliana had refused to leave Romania, Krzysztof would have been tempted to stay with her, knowing he might never see his family again, knowing he would likely be subject to Communist rule. Of course, Krzysztof didn't really expect to see his entire family again anyway. His sister Cecylia had stayed in Poland for Slavomir. His sister Ania had stayed in Poland because she and her husband hadn't wanted to travel over their first child's due date. He'd not heard from either of them since Krzysztof left with his parents and his younger sister in mid-August, 1939.

Krzysztof knew the plane he'd jumped from had been headed west. Iuliana had jumped before him, so he expected her to be to his east. He looked up into the night sky, completely disoriented after the jump, and wondered which way that was. Then there was the other mystery. He had no idea where they'd jumped. They might be in Bulgaria. They might be in Yugoslavia. Both were preferable to being in the middle of the Adriatic Sea without a boat, but being in either country had its complications.

Just last week Bulgaria had left its alliance with Germany, but there were still German soldiers there. There was also an armed rebellion against the government that was yet to be sorted out and Soviet troops entering the country. Krzysztof wasn't sure what their flight plan had been, but he assumed if they bailed over Bulgarian airspace, it would have been into the northwest part of the

country. If they could get to the other end of the country, the southeast corner, then they could make it to neutral Turkey. He doubted they had money for train tickets across Bulgaria, and it was a long way to walk, especially while trying to avoid run-ins with German and Soviet troops. Krzysztof hated the Nazis, and felt the same about the Communists. He was hoping not to repeat the messy run-in he'd had with the NKVD in Bucharest.

Then there was the other, more likely possibility, that they were in Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia: occupied by the Germans, and in the middle of a civil war between General Tito, a Communist, and General Mihajlović, a Royalist. The team might have landed in the middle of three warring factions. Or they could have landed further east, in the puppet state of Croatia, where they would have the added danger of being tracked by the Ustaše, the Croatian Fascists aligned with Hitler's regime. None of the possibilities seemed very promising. And he'd dragged Iuliana right into the middle of it all.

Krzysztof finally made out the constellation Cygnus, also known as the Northern Cross. The pain in his shoulder had kept him from sleeping much during the flight, but he still didn't know how much time had passed since they'd left Bucharest. He sighed and headed in the direction he thought was east.

Then he had a sickening thought. The normal weight limit for a parachute drop was 185 pounds. Krzysztof was sure Moretti was over that. He'd managed to survive so far, and Krzysztof doubted Anatolie weighed as much as the equipment Moretti normally jumped with, but what if the extra weight caused one of the parachute panels to blow out? *I should have been the one to jump with Anatolie*, he thought. He still hadn't earned Anatolie's complete trust, but at least the boy wasn't terrified of him. The same couldn't be said for the other men on the team. That was mostly because the boy had only yesterday been rescued from very neglectful kidnapers. That was also why there was a hole in Krzysztof's shoulder, and why he couldn't have really been the one to jump with Anatolie. He muttered a prayer that the rest of the team would be alive when he found them, hoping it wasn't too late to pray.

As he marched, Krzysztof decided calling out loud for Iuliana or any of the others would be a mistake. He had no idea how many German patrols made it into the mountains. Besides, it was too dark for him to see how high the mountains were—for all he knew, he was only in the foothills. He wondered if it would be wiser to wait until daybreak, but he knew Iuliana wouldn't hold still until she found her son.

Krzysztof guessed he had been walking for about an hour, moving slowly so he could keep quiet, when he heard a dog barking. He froze. But the more he listened, the more he was sure the dog was too far away to be barking at him. Then he heard something else—something or someone moving through the trees a little to the south of him. Krzysztof headed south cautiously, then ran when he saw it wasn't an enemy.

“Iuliana!” he called softly.

She stopped and turned toward him, then rushed to his side. He wrapped his good arm around her and kissed her forehead.

“Have you seen Anatolie?” she asked.

“Not yet, but we'll find him. Are you alright?”

She nodded. “I got too close to a farmhouse and startled a sheep dog.”

“Better that than a Nazi patrol dog. You haven't seen anyone else?”

“No. I've just been wandering around, not knowing where I should go.”

Krzysztof looked more closely at her face. He could see a few scratches across her left cheek and gently fingered them, making sure they weren't serious. “Rough landing?”

She nodded. “And the jump was even worse. Have you ever jumped from a plane in a skirt before?”

Krzysztof suppressed a smile and shook his head. “What did you do with your parachute?”

“I contemplated saving all that white silk for a fancy dress, but ended up shoving into a dirty log instead. I need to find my son, Krzysztof. I wasn't even going in the right direction, was I?”

“Let’s try this way,” he said, taking her hand and continuing east. Five minutes later, a soft, very unauthentic bird call made him stop. He recognized that signal. “That’s someone on our team.” He turned a bit to the north and began walking toward the sound’s source. A few minutes later, it repeated itself. Krzysztof quickened his pace, now certain he was headed the correct direction. The sound kept coming, every few minutes, growing louder and louder as they approached it. Then Krzysztof heard something else—almost an echo. But though it was softer and several seconds after the initial bird call, it wasn’t quite identical.

Krzysztof and Iuliana walked into a clearing and the mimicking cry was suddenly explained. Moretti sat on the ground with his back against a tree. With one arm, he held Anatolie Ionescu. With his other arm, Moretti held his pistol. Moretti let out another bird call, and Anatolie tried to repeat it.

“Not bad, kid,” Moretti said. “You’re getting better.”

“You know he doesn’t speak a word of English?” Iuliana asked. Anatolie jumped up and ran to his mother as soon as he heard her voice.

“Yes, ma’am, I figured that out,” Moretti said. “But that don’t mean our little game wasn’t helping to pass the time and calm the poor kid down a bit.” Moretti hobbled to his feet then, and Krzysztof noticed the limp when he began to walk.

Moretti noticed Krzysztof’s stare. “Wretched my ankle.”

Krzysztof nodded. Moretti was a level-headed, daredevil paratrooper, pushing the normal weight limit for airborne troops with his brawny build. And when it came to children, it seemed that he was also a big teddy bear.

“What will we do now?” Iuliana asked.

Krzysztof and Moretti exchanged glances. Moretti spoke first. “First, we need to stay hidden from the bad guys. I’m assuming we ain’t in friendly territory. Then we need to find the others. And before too long we’ll need food, which means we might need help from the locals—but whether we can trust them or not’s a mystery.”

Peter heard himself groaning as he regained consciousness. At first he just felt pain, but after a minute or two he pinpointed the sources: his ribcage and his face. He forced his eyes open and saw nothing but blackness. As he used his hands to force himself into a sitting position, he felt dry hay rustling underneath him.

“Awake at last?” he heard Jamie ask.

“Yeah. What happened?”

“The plane was crashing, so we jumped out.”

Peter remembered that much. “And after that?”

“I had a perfect landing, then spent all night looking for everyone else. You managed to land in a tree and knock your head into it.”

“My ribs too,” Peter said, feeling them with his hand and wincing in the dark.

“That does not surprise me.”

“Why can’t I see anything?”

Jamie laughed. “Because you have been unconscious for almost twenty-four hours, old boy. It is past sunset, and past curfew, and we are currently sitting in the bottom of a Serb peasant’s cellar. I can’t see anything either.”

“So we’re in Serbia?”

“Yes. The southern end: Kosovo.”

“Where’s everyone else?”

Jamie was quiet for a while. “I haven’t seen Moretti or Krzysztof nor either of the Ionescus. Not that I have had much opportunity to look for them since I found you. It isn’t exactly easy to haul you around all day.”

“Sorry.”

“You should be. I am completely exhausted from my efforts on your behalf.” Peter heard Jamie

yawn. “To be honest, I thought you were dead when I saw you in your tree, hanging from your parachute straps like a broken puppet. I had to climb up, cut you loose, then untangle your parachute from the branches. It was a rather thorough mess. And just as I was finishing a German patrol came through. So now my pistol is three rounds short of full.”

“Have you seen the pilot?”

“Yes,” Jamie said. “From a distance. He was captured. But by the time I saw him I had you on my back and not enough bullets to shoot all his escorts. At least he was in uniform. He should get sent to a Luftwaffe camp. Not an ideal way to wait out the war but he should be treated better than any of us will if we are captured.” The passengers from the plane were in civilian clothing. If they were captured, they would be considered spies.

“Did the radio make it?”

“I am not sure. I brought it along thinking Krzysztof might be able to fix it. If we find him.”

Peter ran one hand through his hair, breaking through a tangle where blood had crusted over.

“Yugoslavia. Can we trust anyone in Yugoslavia? Is there a resistance movement or anything like that?”

Jamie laughed. “‘Where we are there’s daggers in men’s smiles.’ We have landed in one of the messiest countries in Europe. First we will need to avoid the Germans. And their local Fascist allies—the Ustaša, most of them Croats. We might get assistance from the Partisans—those are the Communists. Or from the Chetniks—those are the Serb Royalists. But if we get caught between the Partisans and the Chetniks we will be in a bit of a jam. They hate each other as much as they hate the Germans. I am simplifying things—there are other groups around as well, but those are the main ones.”

“Do you speak Croatian? Or Serbian?”

“It is one language: Serbo-Croat. They just use different alphabets. And yes, I speak Serbo-Croat. The Danube flows through Belgrade, so I have been through Serbia a number of times.”

Peter nodded in the dark, remembering. Jamie had grown up helping his father smuggle things—mostly refugees fleeing the Nazi regime—out of Germany along the Danube. And if a language was spoken along the river, he was fluent in it. “Any ideas on what we should do next?”

“Sleep.”

“And after that?”

“Weary with toil I haste me to my bed, the dear repose for limbs with travel tired; but then begins a journey in my head to work my mind when body’s work’s expired.”

Peter sighed. Though his mother had taught English literature before she had children, Peter wasn’t an expert on Shakespeare. Jamie, however, tended to quote the bard extensively. Peter rarely had difficulty picking the quotations out due to the change in Jamie’s voice, but with his head and ribs both aching, he wasn’t quite sure what Jamie meant. “Is that supposed to be an answer?”

“It means I don’t know what we should do next, but by morning I expect at least one of us will have a few ideas.”

Readers of *Espionage* may remember Peter's letters from home. Originally, I had included a few letters from home in *Sworn Enemy*. I had to make *Sworn Enemy* shorter, so I took out the letters. Since Peter's family in Idaho played such a small role in *Sworn Enemy*, it made sense to cut these scenes out of *Deadly Alliance*. I also cut mention of the real Chetnik practice of sending telegrams to the families of Allied troops they rescued, because it didn't seem important to the story anymore.

Even though it was cut, this was a fun scene to write, because Ruby and Uncle Pete are so much like Peter.

Ruby Eddy wasn't surprised to see Derek Young knocking on her farmhouse door when she finished milking the cows. "Hello Derek," she said, catching him by surprise. He turned around to look at her, standing tall and straight. He had curly brown hair and blue eyes, and used a cane to support himself. Despite his handicap, every inch of him showed the careful discipline of the United States Marine Corp. "Pearl's not here right now," Ruby continued. "She and my mother went to Relief Society."

"Actually, Ruby, I was hoping to speak with your father," Derek said.

Ruby studied him carefully. She knew her sister Pearl was completely smitten with the ex-Marine. But did Derek love her back? "He's out in the south field. I'll tell him you're here—you can go on in and make yourself at home." Had it been any of the other men Pearl had gone crazy over, Ruby would have pointed them in the right direction rather than actually fetching her father. Derek, however, had been badly wounded on some obscure island in the Pacific Ocean. He still walked with difficulty. Ruby respected him, Pearl was in love with him, and the rest of the family seemed just fine with that, even though Pearl was scarcely out of high school.

Ruby found her dad and Uncle Pete shoveling dirt as they widened a canal. "Derek Young is here."

"Pearl will be sorry she missed him," Ruby's uncle said.

"He wants to talk to you, Dad."

Bob Eddy grunted.

"Do you want me to get your shotgun out?" Ruby offered.

Uncle Pete laughed. Ruby's dad sighed. "No, Ruby, you can finish your chores. I'm sure whatever Derek wishes to discuss with me is none of your business."

"Come on, Dad, can't you guess what he wants to ask?"

"Don't jump to conclusions, Ruby. And don't interrupt us unless Japanese paratroopers appear out of thin air."

"Yes, sir." After her father left, Ruby turned to her uncle. "You know, Uncle Pete, I think I may finally get my own bedroom pretty soon."

"Pearl's young."

"But she's in love. And she could do a lot worse. Derek's probably better than she deserves."

Uncle Pete started humming the wedding march and Ruby laughed.

As she walked toward the barn to finish her chores, Ruby saw a lone figure on a bicycle. She watched for a while, hoping it wasn't really coming to her house. The rider, Jonas Tippetts, was a little older than her. He was smart and shy, but always had a smile for Ruby Eddy. He planned to join the navy as soon as he turned seventeen. In the meantime, he was employed by Western Union as a delivery boy.

Ruby didn't want a telegram; they were usually bad news. A telegram had told her that her brother Robert was dead at Peal Harbor. A telegram had told her that her brother Peter was wounded in Sicily. And when she's thought Peter was finally safe and whole, the family had received their most recent telegram from the war department: *We regret to inform you that your son, 1st Lieutenant Peter Eddy, had been reported missing in action.* Jonas rode his bicycle up to her and her heart stopped. She knew the telegram would be from the war department, and she knew what it would say: Peter was dead.

"Hello, Ruby," Jonas said.

She didn't answer.

Jonas looked uncomfortable. "Um, Ruby, I've got a telegram for your parents. Do you want it or should I leave it at the house?"

“What does it say?” she asked.

“I don’t know.”

“Is it from the war department?”

“You could open it and find out.”

Ruby’s hands shook as she took the telegram from Jonas.

“You know, about a month ago I delivered a telegram to the Wright family. It said that their son was missing in action. Two weeks later I delivered another telegram—from Josh himself, safe in England again.”

“But Joshua’s in the Air Corp. Peter’s in the army,” Ruby whispered.

“Would you like me to open it for you, Ruby?”

She hesitated, then nodded. Jonas had told her once that he often opened telegrams for mothers of servicemen. He hated being the one to deliver the bad news, but knew that sometimes the mother, or in this case, the sister, needed a shoulder to cry on. He stared at the message, surprised.

“Is it about Peter?” Ruby asked.

“Yes,” Jonas said. “But it’s not from the war department.”

“It’s not?”

“It’s from the Yugoslav embassy in Washington DC.”

“From who?”

“You know, diplomats, in the capital.”

Ruby grabbed the telegraph. “*IN SERBIA WITH CHETNIKS STOP PLEASE INFORM GENEVIEVE OLIVIER HAMMERSMITH HOSPITAL LONDON STOP PETER.* Jonas, he’s alive!”

“Yeah, but I thought the Chetniks were the bad guys in Yugoslavia,” Jonas said, obviously confused. Ruby didn’t care who the Chetniks were, as long as they were taking care of Peter. She ran toward the house, telegram in hand, not caring if Derek Young was asking for Pearl’s hand in marriage. This telegram changed everything.

This scene was originally between chapters thirty-seven (*The Golden Swastika*) and thirty-eight (*Persuasion*). I liked the scene, but the book was a little long and I felt it's placement took away from the building tension around the rendezvous in Trieste. I don't believe in fudging historical dates just to fit the story, so I didn't want to put it somewhere else. Readers may recognize parts of the scene from Moretti's description when he talks to Peter later in the book.

Sunday, April 29

Stalag VII-A POW camp, near Moosburg, Bavaria

"Here ya go, kid," Moretti handed the skinny boy from California his belt. Moretti had just cut another few holes in it—like all the other prisoners, Private Garcia from Los Angeles was losing weight. Moretti had managed to hang on to a small pocket knife one of the Serbian villagers had given him, so he was Moosburg POW camp's unofficial leather smith.

"Huh, I guess I didn't need you to fix it after all. I still have one more hole before I have to cinch it in again."

Moretti shook his head. "Nope, kid. I put two new holes in it. You'll need the next one next week." *If any of us are still alive next week.* Moretti was supposed to have been sent to a Luftwaffe camp, but as the war moved into Germany, the German military was becoming less able to deal with their prisoners. Moretti had been rounded up with a couple hundred other prisoners and sent to Stalag VII-A. The camp was just north of Moosburg in Bavaria, with the Amper river to the west and the Isar river to the east. There were over 100,000 Allied POWs there, surrounded by wire double-fences, constantly watched from tall wooden towers, and every day a little more hungry.

Moretti knew he was better off than many of the others. Sure, he'd spent months in Serbia eating almost nothing, but many of his fellow prisoners had endured a grueling forced march from other camps as the Red Army advanced in the east and as the British and American armies advanced in the west. They were crowded, they were starving, and they had no idea how quickly or how slowly the Germans might be losing the war. Their German guards were hungry too, but Moretti had trouble

finding any sympathy for them.

Moretti took out one of his cigarettes. He thought about lighting it, but he only had five left. Cigarettes were the camp's currency, and he knew he should save them. Besides, he'd already used them to place his bet. There was an ongoing pool to predict who would come first: the Americans, the Red Army, or the vultures. Moretti was betting on the vultures. He ran the cigarette between his fingers, thinking of Peter and his belief that cigarettes were bad for one's health. Moretti managed a smile. Smoking was one of the safest things he'd done since enlisting. But he put it back in his pocket anyway. If he smoked one, he'd want another, and then he'd run out. Knowing he still had a small supply was something, anyway.

The camp seemed to grow a little restless, and then Moretti heard a loud explosion. He stood up, looking the direction of the sound but not seeing anything.

"What was that?" Garcia asked.

"Don't know, kid."

"You think the army's getting close?"

There had been rumors to that effect for weeks, but they had all proved false. The last few days the rumors had reached a more frenzied pitch, but Moretti didn't want to get his hopes up, so he just shrugged. They waited for a while, surrounded by several hundred other curious POWs. Then the rumor caught up to them.

"The SS put a panzerfaust through the guard's barracks."

"What?" Moretti asked. *Why would the SS fire an anti-tank weapon on their own army?*

"The Americans are coming, and the guards didn't want to fight," someone explained.

Moretti bit his lip, trying not to let his hopes get too high, because if the rumor was wrong, the effect on morale would be crushing. Some of the men were so sick and undernourished that it wouldn't take much to send them into despair, then death. But if the army really was nearby, well, then there would be food, and freedom, and he could start thinking about going home.

Garcia looked at Moretti, hope and doubt competing on his face.

“Look, kid, even if the army’s close, they’ve got the Amper river to cross. The Germans could blow up the bridge in their faces and then we’ll still be stuck. Or they’ll march us east, and half of us’ll die before they let us stop.”

Garcia looked at the ground, his shoulders slumped. Moretti felt bad for dashing his hopes, but thought it was better for them to crash now, before they’d soared too high.

The next rumor soon followed. “An armored division’s coming to liberate us,” someone said.

“How do you know that?” someone else asked.

“The senior British and American prisoners went with an SS major and a Red Cross rep to try arranging a cease-fire.”

Moretti looked more closely at the man spreading the rumors. He was an American airmen, an officer. He might know more than the average prisoner, and what he said was believable enough. A truce might prevent friendly-fire casualties for the prisoners in camp, so there was reason for the Americans to accept it. It would also give the German Army plenty of time to retreat, blow up the bridge over the Ivar river, and maybe even evacuate some of the prisoners.

“Did they agree?” Moretti asked.

“No,” the officer said. “So take cover.”

The men sheltered behind walls and in ditches as the sounds of small arms fire picked up. As the morning passed, there were also a few louder explosions—coming from both directions. Moretti was antsy, not knowing what to expect. Most of the battle sounds were coming from the Moosburg area, to the south. He didn’t know how many troops were defending the city, or how many troops were attacking it. He just hoped the attackers didn’t start using their heavy artillery—thus far he hadn’t heard it, but a few shells hitting the POW camp could do a lot of damage.

Then the next rumor caught up to them. “The Americans are here.”

Moretti heard the crowd of prisoners off to the west cheering. He didn’t believe it until he saw it

with his own eyes: American GIs in their camp.

Something caught in his throat as he went along with the surge of prisoners, moving toward the jeeps with white stars painted on their hoods. Moretti looked around for Garcia and finally saw him, in a crowd of about forty other POWs, surrounding a Sherman tank, cheering, crying, reaching out to touch their liberators.

And then, someone ran an American flag up the flagpole. He couldn't see who it was, could only see the result as the stars and stripes caught the wind. Moretti felt something wet on his cheeks and brushed his fingers there in surprise. *Tears?* Moretti *never* cried. But this was different—he wasn't a prisoner anymore; he was liberated and free. Suddenly, he felt like a man again.

I originally planned to have more scenes with Peter in Idaho, but I'd already reduced Peter's family in Idaho to teeny-tiny roles, and let's be honest, I was already pushing it on the length of the ending. So I cut this scene, but readers of *Espionage* might like the extra closure it gives on Peter's relationship with his father.

Peter thought it would be easy to transition back to civilian life. After all, he'd been a civilian for nearly nineteen years, a member of the military for less than four. The end of the war had been the answer to millions of prayers, including many of his own. Yet as the train approached the Shelley, Idaho, train station in early August of 1945, he felt the knot in his stomach constricting. He almost jumped when Genevieve put her hand on his shoulder and leaned toward him so she could look out the window.

"What is it, Peter?"

He thought for a few moments before answering. "It's just been a long time."

"They're your family. They love you."

Peter nodded. Genevieve was right, but he was still nervous. She brought her hand to his and held it, leaning onto his shoulder and softly humming a song until he felt himself relaxing.

The train slowed and stopped. Peter kept hold of Genevieve's hand and led her off the train. He looked around the platform, expecting to see his whole family, but his dad was the only one there. As they walked to meet each other, Bob Eddy explained.

"They all wanted to come, but I wanted to catch a glimpse of you all by myself first."

Peter remembered his father's farewell at the same station almost four years ago. At that time, his father had been furious at Peter for joining the army without thinking it through. Remembering their argument, Peter began reaching for his father's hand. But his father wrapped his arms around him and pulled him into an embrace.

"Welcome home, son."

This last letter was cut because Luke wasn't a character in *Deadly Alliance*. But for those readers who liked him in *Sworn Enemy*, here's a little information about what happened to him, and a little more about Moretti.

Dear Captain Eddy,

I met Luke up in Boston last weekend. He's got a cane now, but gets around all right. He's working for his dad and bored to death. His dad's business doesn't involve explosives. I think he wants to get back with OSS, but with demobilization that might not happen. When he got home, he found his girlfriend from the pre-war years married and seven months pregnant. Her younger sister, however, is single, and according to the kid, she's prettier, smarter, funnier, and better in every way than his original intended. I think Luke's gonna marry her. I've got a couple women chasing me right now, but for the most part I'm managing to paw them off.

Congrats on the upcoming wedding.

Moretti