

UNNECESSARY HABITS

by

John P. Nordin
jpn@jpnordin.com

Approximately ____ words.

Chapter 1

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Vasilleios and his son did not see the yacht until it was too late.

At his father's urging, and the plea evident in his mother's eyes, Yorgos had agreed to one more fishing trip with his dad on his dad's tiny boat. They had left Mytilene, the main harbor for the northeast Aegean island of Lesbos, and motored up and down the waters near the Turkish coast making a halfhearted attempt to catch the fish that weren't really there anymore.

As the yacht closed in on them, Yorgos was thinking that he did love his dad but that world was not for him—if it even still existed. Yorgos was home from college in Athens, afraid that his parents would make another attempt to suck him into taking over the boat. That world was gone. Yorgos had changed his mind on one thing though—perhaps sitting in a box and taking orders from some fool in a company in Athens wasn't all that appealing. Instead, maybe

he should accept the boat, convert it to a tourist shuttle and go into business for himself. Much more money to be made fishing among the tourists who shed cash like water, especially the girls who thought a Greek boat owner was totally romantic. He could save enough to upgrade the boat after a while, maybe branch out into related businesses.

It was dark now except for the stars, but his dad didn't need either daylight or radar to find his way home. They'd taken a run south and turned and were now puttering along headed roughly north along the eastern coast of Lesbos. They could see the lights of the harbor in the distance and the hills of the Turkish mainland to starboard. Yorgos was sitting on the stern of the boat, having a smoke when he looked up and recognized the looming form of darkness off their starboard side as a ship. It was on an intercepting course, coming up on them and now less than 100 yards away. He ran his eyes over the yacht. *Where'd you get your money?* He snorted derisively at the poor navigation being displayed by the crew. As always, the little guy has to do the work for everyone. *Just run over a little fishing boat.* Turning toward his father to alert him, he saw his dad slump away from the wheel to the deck. Alarmed, Yorgos jumped up and started towards him. A sharp pain erupted in his upper chest, and he too fell over on the deck.

The marksmen on the yacht signaled a clean hit to the pilot, who cut the engines. Two other men, dressed in black wet suits, stood at the aft rail above a rubber dinghy that had already been placed in the water. As the yacht slowed they climbed quickly into the dinghy and cast off. Heading toward the fishing boat, they noted that it had begun to circle to the left, Vasilios having pulled the wheel in that direction as he fell. Reaching the boat, they attempted to tie along side, a tricky maneuver due to its turning motion and lack of assistance from on board, but a grappling hook was cast over the low side of the fishing boat, and one man scrambled over the side, received a second line from the dinghy and made it secure.

The yacht, its lights still out, had started to turn away from the fishing boat. The marksmen put their rifles away and one went to the stern to await the dinghy's return, while the other climbed up toward the bridge, being careful to maintain a visual fix on the location of the fishing boat.

While the second man came aboard the fishing boat, the first walked quickly to the wheel. He turned the boat back towards Lesbos and retarded the throttle. The second man inspected the bodies. Hearing groans from Yorgos, he placed the silenced pistol he carried up against Yorgos' temple and fired one round, not bothering to check to see if it was sufficient. He went to check Vasilleios and found him dead. Removing a piece of paper from a zippered pocket, he unfolded it, and stuffed it under Vasilleios' arm.

The two stood in silence, surveying the surrounding area as the boat continued to approach the harbor. After a minute or two, the two looked at each other, exchanged nods, and the second man went back to the dinghy, eased over the side, and reboarded. The first man was lashing the wheel in place with a line he pulled from a pocket. He waited until his companion was fully in the dinghy, before checking the direction of the boat a final time. Satisfied that it was heading directly for the harbor entrance, he inched the throttle up to half power, turned, ran back to the stern cast off the grappling hook and dived into the rubber boat.

The dinghy's motor surged as they swung around and headed back to the yacht which was now positioned heading south and some distance away. After the dinghy was recovered, the two men climbed up to the bridge. They reported their success to a thin, wiry man who sat at the rear of the bridge, smoking a cigarette. He heard them out carefully, asked several sharp questions and nodded at their answers. The yacht spent nearly a half an hour on its southerly course before the thin man authorized the running lights to be turned on.

The fishing boat was almost in the harbor of Mytilene before it attracted the attention of the old men on the dock. They called to one another, and commented derisively on the pilot's lack of skill, as he was heading in too far to one side, risking hitting the end of one arm of the breakwater. They watched in growing concern as the boat, now past the breakwater was not slowing, nor heading to the dock area for small craft but aimed at one of the large concrete aprons for the large ferry boats.

When it became apparent that the fishing boat was going to hit the quay at some speed, they raised the alarm and sent one of their younger members scurrying for the harbor police. The boat slammed into the quay, the stern swinging around as the bow scraped along the edge. The old men ran towards the boat, calling to each other.

Inside the tavernas and restaurants around the harbor, no one noticed anything at all.

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A few hours earlier and 150 kilometers south, Craig Davis waited for the auto ferry *Meltemi* to dock at Naparos in the Dodecanese chain of Greek islands. He stood on the auto deck, his back pressed up against the wall, feet spread slightly to counteract the gentle rocking of the boat. He scanned the crowd without seeming to, his position affording him good visibility.

It wasn't necessary to do that any more, he thought. He could safely have been eyeing the ripe young tourist girls that stood in groups of twos and threes, chattering to each other. How could they face all the cruelty of the world with no more armor than flip-flops, shorts and a T-shirt? How could they be so trusting as to leave their possessions dangling from backpack straps? How could they talk so loud, and give away so much information? How could they stand amid the cold, sharp edged metal of this boat deck, bare inches from ...

He broke off his thoughts for another silent scan of the crowd and then broke off the scan as well. Treating the crowd as a source of potential adversaries and wondering at how those in the crowd could avoid doing that were two sides of the same debased coin. Someday, he thought, I will have truly left the old life behind and will simply enjoy this.

The ferry was entering the enclosed harbor at a speed alarming to the uninitiated. The concrete dock projected north into the bay. The ferry plowed west, until it was almost even with the dock. Then the captain turned hard to starboard, and with the assistance of bow thrusters, the ferry skidded quickly around a quarter turn, killing its forward momentum. The engines were reversed and the boat backed up toward the dock. The low note of the ferry's engines increased as the pilot maneuvered to kill his backwards momentum, and lines were thrown to shore, the crew calling commands, the front anchors thrown out.

The door at the stern of the vessel just in front of him came down with a crash forming a wide gangway leading to the concrete dock. The crowd of people pushed forward expectantly, as a crewman tried to hold them off with extended arms and shouts. In a few seconds the engines had taken up the slack in the lines, and the end of the gangway stopped grating around on the dock. The crewman dropped his hands, and people flowed down the gangway: tourists with their wealth and self-possession mixing with the Greeks, middle-aged men in battered suits with luggage wrapped in twine, older women in long dark dresses, young men hustling along with big boxes hoisted above their shoulders.

The boat held cars and small trucks on the same deck. Their engines had been started several minutes ago by impatient drivers, filling the enclosed deck with smog. They also pushed down the gangplank mixing with the travelers on foot, all being perfectly easy in a way no American would have been comfortable with. Davis placed himself in the middle of the crowd,

using it as cover as they walked across the concrete apron of the dock, passing the harbor master's office on the left. Local hotel owners and those with rooms to rent were accosting the tourists, and here and there individual owners had corralled little groups of the tourists to negotiate over rooms. He smiled and waved off one man who approached him with a photo album of pictures of rooms.

He crossed out of the harbor area into the central square of the island. He had no eyes for the colorful fishing boats, the harbor-side restaurants, the monastery with its fortified walls perched dramatically on top of the main hill or the rows of whitewashed buildings that wrapped around the harbor, spilling up the sides of the hills. He timed it so that he separated from the last little group of tourists just as he crossed a quiet square. Several restaurants had outdoor seating here, and a few less active tourists whiled away the afternoon writing postcards or talking.

He turned right, walking down the second street back from the harbor and was surprised at how quiet it was. Greece was never supposed to be quiet, and yet, here it was so still he could hear the echoes of his steps rebound from the walls. It was almost five, near the end of the half-observed siesta period when many shops closed up and the Greeks seemed to disappear behind the walls of their enclosed houses. He needed a place to wait the hours until he felt he was safe to approach his contact.

"Contact," he softly snorted, readjusting the backpack he had slung over one shoulder. Hell, no one knew he was here, and more to the point, no one cared even if they did know. But he couldn't shake off the fear that kept him doing things the old way.

He had taken a bus across the Canadian border and flown on a one way ticket to London. Then he had taken buses and trains into the new borderless Europe so it would be harder to tell that he had left England. A long uncomfortable ferry boat ride from Brinsidi, Italy had brought

him across the Adriatic to Greece, to be followed by a bus ride to Athens' port of Piraeus to catch the ferry that had, hours later, deposited him on this island at the east edge of the Aegean. It wasn't a procedure likely to have foiled a massive manhunt, but it wasn't necessary either; he could have taken a direct flight to Athens and saved himself the trouble and several days. He just couldn't do it.

Down three blocks, a right hand angle at the fork of the street and two more blocks. At the intersection on the left was the entrance to the hotel. He gave its whitewashed walls, profusion of brightly colored flowers and blue door trim a quick look and turned right. Good luck, because at the corner of this stone-lined lane was a cafe, half in and half out on the street. He slowed down and found a metal chair at the far end of the outdoor section. It let him put a solid wall to his back and afforded him a view of the entrance of the hotel. He could see who went in and out easily, but they would have to make a sharp side glance to see him. He was the only customer.

The waiter arrived, and it wasn't a slick young blade, or an American college kid working for enough cash to hang out on the beach chasing the European girls either, but a Greek of indeterminate age and weather-beaten appearance. "And you," he said with that rudeness that was familiarity, "what do you want?"

"Ah. Parakalo, Thelo kafe Ellenico," he said, remembering that much.

"And with what?" the waiter continued.

"Metro, me galla," he said, completing the order for Greek coffee with a little sugar and water.

The waiter nodded and went off. The waiter had impressed him with his knowledge of English, and he impressed the waiter with his knowledge of Greek. Another ritual that served no

purpose. Demetrios was probably behind the front desk of the hotel and he could be talking to him right now instead of playing spy in a cafe. Maybe next year he would be as bold as a tourist, but not just yet. He wanted to see who went in and out of the hotel first. Even though there was nothing he could do with that information.

The coffee came and he settled in to wait.

Chapter 2

Wednesday, May 25th

After the running lights were turned on, the yacht turned west and cruised through the night, arriving just after dawn at Zea Marina to one side of Athens' Piraeus harbor. The men had been awakened and dressed in tourist garb, floral shirts and shorts with sandals. A close observer would have noticed the bulk and muscles of the men, and their unsmiling appearance.

The thin man threw his cigarette overboard and clapped his hands for attention. Four men gathered around him. "You each know your jobs. You," he said, pointing at one, "will get the motorcycle. Make sure it is gassed and functioning properly. And you," he said, pointing at another, "you know you have to think carefully about the maps and have at least two routes prepared." The men looked intent. After a bit more of repeating things they all knew, the thin man dismissed them.

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The argument was in full swing.

Demetrios hadn't so much as introduced him to this group as the group just sort of happened. One moment, he was talking with Demetrios alone, the next, he was part of a huge political argument. Demetrios had said, "This is Craig, the son of Mark Davis who saved my life in World War II." It had gained Craig respect with the older members of the group. For the most part they were talking in English out of hospitality to the guest.

"I am telling you, this is the work of the Turkish military!" one said, leaning forward, intently peering at those around him. "It has every sign. You know they fly over our islands, they harass our fishing boats. It has even been admitted by them that their intelligence services started forest fires, and planted that bomb on Rhodes. This time they have gone too far!"

“They just spread that story about the fires to discredit Tansu Ciller. It is all politics,” another said, arms thrust forward, outspread.

“No, no, no. It is not the Turkish military it is the Gray Wolves, this is obvious. The military knows better than to expose themselves to our army’s retaliation. These Gray Wolves want revenge for every imaginary thing. A war would help them overthrow that prime minister and put in a right-wing dictatorship to suppress the Islamic forces in Turkey.”

“Why should you assume it is Turkey at all, that is too obvious. I suspect the CIA!”

“Based on what?”

“Tradition! They are always meddling in our affairs! From the time of the World War they have been telling us who we should have as Prime Minister, and their actions during the time of the Colonels’ rule is only too well known. Even the American ambassador has admitted that.”

“And how would killing two poor fishermen help the global superpower America?”

“It has to do with large corporations and oil.”

“Greece doesn’t have any oil!”

“That is what we are told, but how do we know for sure? Perhaps some company with its satellites has secretly found out that we have reserves under the Aegean.”

“And in a war, people are going to be drilling? With rifles? This is madness.”

“America and all their corporations are tilting to Turkey, maybe they want Turkey to defeat us in a war so Turkey can extract the oil. After all, America is pushing for that pipeline to be developed through Turkey, not the one through Greece.”

“Ahhh....”

This was in turn shouted down by advocates of drug lords, some leftover right-wing Greek military plot from the 50s and other proposals. Davis was sure that at least one member of the group was arguing two different positions simultaneously, but he was getting confused.

Actually, he just couldn't get engaged in the speculation over the death of a fisherman and his son in some mysterious incident to the north. More death. Always death. Why should this one be so special? Well, he thought, because it was close at hand.

He sipped his glass of the resinous retisina wine and tried to keep part of his mind in the conversation. Soon the passion for the argument overcame them and they slipped into rapid-fire Greek, and he didn't have to try to follow.

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At CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, three men had gathered in a windowless room. An older man sat at the end of a table covered in plastic wood grain, sitting on one of the gray chairs. He toyed with an array of paper and Styrofoam cups. A younger analyst from the technology-based intelligence division stood at the other end. The third man leaned against the pale yellow walls, hands thrust in his pants. The analyst spoke. "As you know we have very sophisticated predictive programs that can process the multiple documents of a Subject Event Records File and estimate the likelihood of various actions of the subject. We've put former agent Davis' file through this program and it has given us some very plausible suggestions."

He was interrupted by the older man at the end of the table, "Sort of like a spell-checker on steroids?"

The analyst looked pained. "There is no comparison. As I was saying, we have our revised results here. It shows Paris with a 15% probability, Russia—I think this is of concern—at 12%, Rome at nine and the west coast of Mexico at seven."

“No wait a minute, don’t you mean Alaska?” the older man said.

“Alaska doesn’t appear on our results.”

“Well, I’m looking at the paper you sent me, and it sure says Alaska, 14%”

“Let me see that. Oh, you have our *preliminary* results; you really should shred those.”

The older man squinted, “Well, I’m confused. Here,” he said, tapping the paper in front of him, “you’ve got Alaska in first place, but now your telling me it isn’t even on the list? How can that be?”

The younger analyst looked like someone suffering a fool. “We have new information now.”

“Really, more than the boarder crossing into Canada? What have you got?”

The younger analyst looked at the third man. The man nodded. “Well, we now know he got on a plane for London. Bought his ticket at the last minute in the Toronto airport. We find that significant.”

“Significant of what?” The older man found it necessary to hold his hand over his mouth.

“It completely revamped the odds; that’s why we need this sort of program and why developing it further, particularly for pictorial analysis, would be a wise investment.” The younger man smiled smugly, and glanced at the third man.

“We need a fancy blinking box and a million dollars in software to tell us that a man going to London from Canada is not likely to wind up in Alaska?”

“Gentlemen, gentlemen,” the third man broke in, “I think we all have the same goal here, we really want to know where Davis has gone—and what he intends to do there. He possesses many important secrets.”

Like all the screw ups you fools have put this agency through, the older man thought. His face didn't move. "Well," he spoke after a second, "do you think this warrants a category III action?"

"We think," the third man said gravely, "that this is one of our top ten current problems."

The older man restrained his impulse to argue about how maybe thousands of people dying wherever they were dying at the moment would be of a higher priority. He'd make no progress attacking the modeling program either, he thought. The paper file on Davis he had in his desk revealed much more probable scenarios. Davis had served in El Salvador in the late 80s, an experience that had disenchanted him. He was as likely to go there as anyplace else. But he didn't want these bureaucratic idiots to actually get a hold of a good idea, even though they'd be likely to botch it anyway. "So what are you proposing?" he said.

"We feel that there are several standard practices we should employ. First, we are in contact with the appropriate British officials who have indicated their desire to cooperate fully with us in this important matter. Then, other assets are being put in position to facilitate our work. You will excuse me if I do not specify them."

OK, you've made a phone call to London. The older man spoke, "Well that sounds like a good plan. We should probably allow it to work. Shall we conclude our business here?" He looked around hopefully.

They consulted their schedule books, or in the case of the technical analyst, his palm computer, and made plans for the next meeting and left.

The older man walked back to his office, keeping a neutral expression on his face. He was very glad he had gone down to the old records room and checked on Davis' file. The modern records had been scanned into the computer, but older information was thought not

worth the effort. He had taken a 15 page document, a “Narrative of Agent Activities” and worked the pages back and forth until the last three had pulled off the staple. He then extracted the critical pages 13 and 14 and placed the first 12 back in the folder with the loose page 15, wrapping his hands in a handkerchief for this work. He folded the two separated pages and placed them in his jacket pocket. With any luck, no one would remember this old file and with even average luck people would think the missing pages were just missing. He didn’t know if there were any other copies of this report in some dusty file cabinet somewhere, but he doubted it. No self-respecting analyst read paper now when he or she could squint at a computer screen.

But a thought hit him, “Wait a minute Art, you forgot they would scan the document, spend a day tweaking the optical character recognition program, and *then* squint at it on their screen.” He was a little worried that his disguise of pretending to be a fuddy-duddy was becoming real. He told himself that he had used a handkerchief rather than latex gloves because he didn’t want to risk being caught with the gloves, but he suspected he did it that way because it better fit his role of creaking anachronism.

He was worried about their interest in Davis. He had voiced the Category III issue in hopes that their momentum hadn’t carried them that far and so by proposing a conclusion at a distance from where they were, he could get them to recoil and thus remove the risk. It hadn’t worked. “Good thing I didn’t propose Category IV.” This was the current euphemism among the political appointees for arrest with an authorization for “termination” if the subject resisted. Fortunately most of the upper level officials at the CIA had at last figured out that killing people with relatives in the U.S. was an idea that didn’t play well with congress. Fortunately, only those brought into high positions in the agency from outside still lusted after the erotic thrill of ordering a killing.

Art Kilpatric, 28 year veteran of the CIA, sighed. His self-appointed dual role in the agency was getting too personal. At most they'd try to arrest Davis, or have some other government's people arrest him. More likely they'd just send an agent, do an interview and then file the report. Even more likely they'd spend a million dollars and then forget about it when the next fracas came up.

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From a report in the Athens News Agency's daily summary of news, as distributed on the Internet:

Athens: Murder of Father and Son Denounced by Government Spokesperson

Government spokesperson Costas Reppas denounced the murder of Vasilleios Lykadis and his son Yorgos while fishing off Lesbos. "This cruel attack raises many questions. Our sympathy is with the widow and the family." He declined to blame Turkey for the attack, saying only that "Investigations are underway and being pursued with vigor."

Petros Zaphiris, leader of the main opposition party, The Center Democratic Alliance, replied, "Why does the government refrain from making the logical conclusion? Why does the ruling party not indicate what we all know, that the boat had been close to Turkish waters before it was attacked, and that this is a tragic and serious escalation of Turkey's fiction about 'gray areas' in the Aegean. There are rumors of a note that states this explicitly, why have not we been informed?"

The leader of the KKE, the communist party of Greece, noted that “It is always the working class who suffer when the needs of large governments and large corporations collide. A correlation of the factors involved in this tragedy must point in directions not desired by the government. This presents a reason for their reticence. We demanded a full investigation by independent authorities of weight.”

Spokesperson Reppas pointed out that the government had reported the matter to both NATO and the UN and was urgently requesting NATO and the U.S. to supply any satellite surveillance information that might assist the investigation.

Ionniades Tzanates, leader of The Coalition for the Left and Progress, attacked Prime Minister Kostas Michalidis as ineffective. “Appeals to the superpowers will not produce fruit. Why do they know more about us than we do ourselves? These scandalous incidents keep occurring, and we do nothing. I am for a more aggressive defense of our sovereignty. I predicted what would happen if we did not defend ourselves about the Macedonian name issue, and during the Imia crisis. Now we see the fruits of passivity.”

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Later that night, after the dinner had broken up, Davis lay in his room in the hotel. In the dim reflected light the walls were no longer their almost painful white. The room was bare: a low bed, a small side table, only the narrowest of space around the bed and the amazingly compact bathroom where the floor doubled as the shower. A couple of small landscapes looked lost on the expanse of bare wall. Yet, the room felt expansive, more than enough for him. He had opened the window and the sweet night air came wafting in bringing the distant rumble of

the discos punctuated by the occasional higher notes of conversation from the square below. It was late, he had drunk, but he couldn't sleep.

He'd drunk more Ouzo than he planned, but they kept proposing toasts to him, and the only way to respond was to buy them a round in return.

He got up and went to the window, resting his arms on the sill. "Well, Father, I am here. I am here." He observed the view down to the harbor a few blocks away. From the third floor, he could see a dozen or so people sitting in the square, a cruise ship in the distance out to the east, and a few lights scattered around the town. He thought of the dinner conversation, conducted with such passion. It held no interest. Instead, he was being seduced by the breeze and the almost physical air of peace and happiness that seemed to emanate from the atmosphere itself. He kept drifting into union with the air, the colors, the clear water. And he kept recoiling from that serenity, seeing in it something pulling him down, making him defenseless.

"I am here." He said it again. "But—what do I do? What do I do?" he added softly. He had been executing a plan to get here. That had eliminated the need to think about a plan for after he got here. But now he was here and he really could not remember why he had thought it so important to get here. He had thought some answer would be here, but he had never defined the question. He had told Demetrios that he was on vacation, but he didn't tell him that the vacation could last a decade, a lifetime.

He wondered that the sad and pointless murder of the fisherman, his son and the mysterious note that had been rumored to have been found affected him no more than a twenty year old weather report for China. He should be frightened by this odd, untreatable disease that left him going through the motions of espionage but had sucked all passion from him. He knew

he should just take a real vacation and then assess his feelings. But analysis was a hard habit to break.

Chapter 3

Thursday, May 26

There were many motorcycles in the clogged streets of Athens this morning. Few were ridden by people wearing helmets, few were as powerful, and few indeed had two riders both with helmets that had smoked visors obscuring their faces. The motorcycle had been idling in traffic, content to stay in the line of cars. However, apparently the driver got impatient, for an observer would have seen him touch his helmet, say something to his rider, and then take off between the rows of cars.

In a minute they had gone several blocks to a main intersection and turned left in front of oncoming traffic, producing more honks from the irritated drivers struggling with the morning commute. They were on the fringe of the fashionable Kolonoki district of Athens, on the foothills below Lycabettus hill. The area was filled with expensive shops, restaurants around Drexemi Square, and the residence of the Prime Minister and other senior officials. The cycle came to an intersection and, despite an opportunity to move out into the street, pulled to the curb. They watched some cars go by including a dark Mercedes that had both a driver and a passenger in the rear. The motorcycle waited just a few seconds, and pulled into traffic.

They proceeded with the pace of traffic until they got stuck in the line for another intersection. Pulling around to the left of the cars they moved up. They stopped on the center line just as they came even with the Mercedes. The rider reached inside his leather jacket, pulled out a silenced pistol and fired it at the rear passenger window of the Mercedes. The glass was reinforced, but at this distance with a direct shot, it was not proof against the large pistol, with its special bullets designed to penetrate armor. In an explosion of glass, the bullet ripped into the

car and went through the neck of the Turkish Ambassador to Greece, who had not looked up from the memo he was reading. The shooter put another bullet into the Ambassador and turned and shot at the driver. Hitting the window at such an angle, the bullet ricocheted off across the street missing a car and embedding itself in the crumbling concrete of an office building. The rider smashed at the rear window with his elbow to enlarge the opening, and reached in to shoot the driver in the back.

By then the driver had time to react. In close traffic, he'd been taught to hurl his armored car backward, gain space to maneuver and pull forward. He slammed the car backward smashing into the car behind him. As the car lurched backward, the rider's arm was hit by the door jam and he dropped the gun in getting his arm out of the window. "Go!" he shouted at his companion in English. The driver gunned the bike, making a U-turn into the unoccupied opposite lane and roared off .

* * *

In the parliament later that day, Prime Minister Kostas Michailidis was under attack. That was normal.

"Now the government has allowed the Turks to demand that their police investigate a crime on our soil? This is unacceptable! They should be told off! Tell him 'No' like we did to the Italians in World War II!

"How weak have we become! Our nationhood is attacked twice in one week, and what does the Prime Minister do? He goes hat in hand to the Americans and begs for assistance. And what do the Americans do? They tell him to come back next week after they are done redecorating their bathroom!"

A member of Michalidis' own party, the New Hellenic Socialist Movement, replied. "As usual, the spokesperson cannot restrain his imagination. Perhaps he should write fiction for children rather than speeches for adults. But his stories might frighten children and would certainly not educate them. Do you suppose that we are not concerned about these violent acts? Of course we are! But unlike those who can sit in easy chairs and pontificate, we must take the hard decisions and do the hard work.

"We have begun investigations with vigor into both of these incidents. Yes, of course we have approached both the United States and Turkey, not to ask, but to expect them to cooperate and we have received such promises. But investigations take time. Unlike our opponents we cannot just snap our fingers and have a technical analysis."

A member of the communist party was having none of it. "Those who produce the wealth of society are always sentenced to death! It doesn't matter if it is the death of a murder on the sea or the death from a bullet manufactured by other members of the working classes whose only choice is to do that or starve! As for the Turkish ambassador, who is to say this death is by the same agent as those who slaughtered the fishermen? You try to create some sort of phony solidarity between classes by conflating this into one crisis, but all you can conceive is doing so by death! Capitalism is always death! We expect nothing from this government nor from the official opposition. Only a genuine people's government will lead us away from this."

The position of official opposition was held by the Center Democratic Alliance. They had led the government until two years ago when a funding scandal involving kickbacks from defense contractors had led to elections and Michailidis' rise to power. The former PM was still the party leader. "We demand action and action now! Unleash our armed forces and tell them to strike back hard against our enemies! This is the true course of Hellenic heroism and stands in

the line of Homer and Pericles. Do you suppose a commander of Athens would have gone to Persia to ask for help? Let us stand as we did at Marathon."

Vasso Grillis, member of parliament for the islands of Lesbos and Naparos among others, rose near the end of the debate. Of medium height, she brushed back her short black hair before beginning. "I cannot believe the foolishness on display here. As my fellow member of the government indicated, we cannot get a ballistic report back in two hours—who thinks that we can? I have been personally in touch with the proper experts and the fishing boat is being examined carefully and I am sure the car is also being looked at carefully.

"The same people bleating at us about being slow are the ones who were in office for seven years and did not solve a single crime by the terrorist gang November 17th! Not one of those crimes did they solve, yet they call us weak and slow because we have not solved two crimes in two days? They should grow up and look in the mirror!

"And leave Pericles out of it! No one has ever suggested that he got paid by the Spartans for buying his shields from them." This produced a howl of laughter from the government side and an outraged protest to the speaker from the opposition.

"Maybe you are taking your advice from Homer, because there is much brave and bold talk in there, but the difference is that his heroes could back up their words."

"I hear you, I hear you", she said over some shouting from where the opposition sat. "You call me a supporter of Turkey? Now you have lost your soul in addition to your reason! How is a vigorous investigation supporting Turkey? How is demanding they help us supporting them? If we did not demand their help, you would yell at us about that as well!

Some catcalls and wolf whistles were heard. This was normal when women MPs spoke. Some female MPs were called euphemisms for prostitutes if they were considered attractive

enough, and those considered less attractive were derided as man-haters who were over-compensating for their looks.

As Grillis kept her hair relatively short and refused to use makeup she was generally attacked as a Lesbian or an extreme feminist.

"I hear your sexist words and I tell you what we all know, that you use those words because you have no logic, no reason, no ideas and most likely no manhood."

That brought a rebuke from the long-suffering speaker of the parliament. Grillis waved him off. "They speak of hypotheticals and so do I. Fortunately, I will never have any occasion to discover the truth or falsehood of my last comment." She sat down.

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The New York Times carried a small item from Greece on page seven. It reported on the flurry in the gossip magazines concerning the long running love affair of married ex-prime minister Papenzotis and a woman who ran a nightclub that was rumored to be a front for prostitution. The woman was pictured in a short skirt, heels and showing considerable cleavage along with a description of the disputes concerning the will of the ex-PM and who would inherit his estate. It claimed that such situations were considered "normal" among Greek politicians. It was the first story on Greece in the paper for seven weeks.