

Shadow Soldiers Excerpts

FREE

*Check out the adventures ...
by Wrathé W Aceing*

Shadow Soldiers

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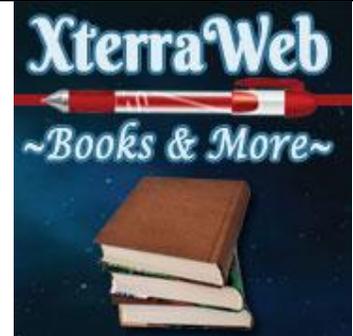
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Credits and Gratitude

All great undertakings have team members who are invaluable. Kelly provided the gentle hands to smooth out the author's uncultured wording (She turned my gobbledygook into literature.) and provided the readable voice you find here on these pages. Thank you, friend.

Kelly Hartigan
XterraWeb Editor, Blogger, Reviewer, & Beta Reader



<http://www.xterraweb.com>



The journey of an author can sometimes be hidden and appear too difficult. It is then when many, including myself, are blessed with a friend on the same road, filled with encouragement and extra joy to share.

Barbara, you have made my journey a joyous one and you gently removed the fears that held me back. For this I will be eternally grateful

Barbara Horton is a writer, publisher and friend to those who seek to share their world in writing.

<http://www.dreamwriterpress.com/>

It is stated that a picture holds a 1000 words. After the journey of writing, I have the wonderful opportunity of seeking just the right picture to capture the essence of my writings.

When I saw Chen's Dark Soldier, I had my cover. His grateful permission and new friendship adds to the joy of finding just the right vision of the thrills written on the pages to follow.

<https://pixabay.com/en/users/Chanzj-1170762/>



Zijian Chen
undergraduate majoring in
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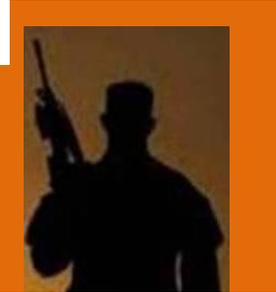
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About the Author

Wrathé W. Aceing

Wrathé W. Aceing is a pseudonym, an anagram created to remove celebrity from the author, and place the focus on the central message of these adventures and other books contemplated. The “e” is silent. So is the warrior. But the vigilance, while silent, is real.



The author can be identified as a part of these novellas, a character either unique or composite that moves through these military thrillers. As the publishing editor and an advocate of these adventures, I requested more background but the dark stare ended my inquiry.

Anonymity is an asset to those who walk the dark side of our world. It is a double-edged sword taking away the rights of the individual for full disclosure but providing shelter for the bearer of the burden of our protection.

In my last conversation with the author, he indicated his prayer was that someday dark soldiers would not be necessary. On this and the underlying message of these stories, I place my credence of the author’s good character.

William Joyce
Project Advocate

Historical contact with author Wrathé W. Aceing:

- Initial contact via cell phone to editor: 4/18/2012
- Receipt of draft and consultation of contract: 5/16/2012 to 8/14/2012
- First Draft of Screenplay bringing Chris Tinsley on board: 2/7/2013 to 9/17/2013
- Editing and preparation for publication: 8/15/2012 to 5/1/2014
- Call to cell, received “out of service” message: 5/12/2014
- Call from author, stated he follows our progress and would initiate all future calls: 5/12/2014
- Audible shiver down the back of editor: 5/12/2014

For inquires, contact the Project Advocate at bill.joyce@vismgt.com, but do not expect an interview with the author.

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Excerpt from A Mercy Strained

I checked my surroundings carefully. It is second nature and gives me a calm sense of control. With the full 360-degree surveillance completed, I tensed my calf muscles beginning another round of exercises. I had been in hiding for eighteen hours, and as usual on this type of mission, hourly isometric exercises were vital for staying prepared. In a few minutes, the target would emerge from his garage, carrying his newspaper and whistling some made-up tune.

He stood five feet ten inches tall and had a paunch belly from too much beer. His hair grew gray and long, a sign that his life had been lived too long in my estimation. He had been sent to juvenile detention in his youth for statutory rape, and he had been apprehended twice in his adult life but never again convicted.

I looked down at the four pictures my research had uncovered. Four sweet young girls destroyed by a monster, a monster whistling tunes only known within the confines of his demented skull.

He had a family with two daughters, but that didn't weigh into my decision, except to keep them from harm. One was just beginning to blossom and knowing this type of reprobate, she would become fair game.

The black stone he had received six days ago sat on the desk in his study. It had the Roman numeral VI on its cut and polished surface. He had forgotten about the funny gift taped to his steering wheel when he had come out of the bar. Chances were no one would consider it important, as long as Detective Christian from Texas did not receive the incident report.

The light rain moistened the driveway making it a little slippery. The garage door's electric motor engaged and it slid up on its tracks. He whistled but seemed perturbed by the drizzle. Holding his newspaper over his head, he walked out to the car and fumbled one handed with the lock.

I was 1500 feet away and the wind would have no effect. Sighting, I took the first shot. His scream startled the neighborhood as he reached for a crotch that no longer existed. I had used a hollow-point round that tore through his flesh. The second solid brass projectile was much more merciful. It entered his temple and ended the tormented sound of his screams forever. His body slumped over in a crumpled mess of blood, gore, and brain matter.

Calmly picking up my brass and weapon, I began my exit. I broke the gun down and placed it in a foam-filled suitcase that fit right behind the truck toolbox, its hidden panel well defended by my mastery of metalwork. I slowly folded the tarp, making sure none of my evidence slipped off, and stored it at the bottom of the toolbox. One final check of the hideout and I considered it cleared. It was time to move on to the next phase of the escape.

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I took off the military coveralls I had purposefully dyed to match the surroundings of the hideout. The boots and the formfitting gloves were also removed and bagged. These would be deposited in a furnace across town, but for now, they were stuffed in with the gun case.

On the passenger seat of the truck was a stylish pink summer dress. I loved the way it made me look, and after using face cream and paper towels to remove the camouflage from my face, I donned the dress. Letting my hair down and shaking it into place, I took out a compact and painted on my next mask, that of a young lady driving to work on a drizzly day.

Traffic clogged the neighborhood as the egresses were guarded by the flashing lights of police vehicles. I drove by the entrance observing the arm waves of the cop directing traffic. I had no reason to look into the neighborhood and ask questions. Smiling at the officer as he waved me through, I cleared the impediment, headed south for a few miles, and then changed direction toward the furnace to finish my cleanup.

I will admit the stone was an evidence issue, but something deep inside of me wanted these monsters to know that doom was upon them. The problem with being a sniper was that it was not up close and personal. Of the forty-two kills so far, thirty-four had shown major signs of worry, and most had been found with the stone in their pocket at their time of death.

So far, the stone had stumped rather than helped law enforcement. Two major city detectives came up with the theory that the stone was an access token to one of the many deviant underground networks. Show your stone and get inside the deviant den. This caused a nationwide hunt for a criminal network, leaving me to my solitary stalk.

The stones were the only physical evidence my detective from Texas had, but this had not stopped his inquiry. He knew something was out of place and these killings were not random. He had the uncanny ability to put small snippets of information together and come up with a solid theory. He was a good detective, and as far as I could observe, a good man.

Unlike the wonderful detective movies I loved to watch on a rainy day, this criminal was not caught up in her fatal flaw. Everything I did was planned and properly executed. I had a great deal of work to accomplish, and getting caught was not part of the plan. Since my picture had first appeared on a milk carton, I had been in training for my life's work—to rid the world of 100 rapists.

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Excerpt from Enough

The slow procession from the hearses to the small painted church under the pecan trees held all in silence. The shuffle of feet on the worn tile floors and the creaking of pews beat out the rhythm of the last march of the Benning family.

He stood in at the back, not venturing into the church of his boyhood, out of respect, not fear. He looked at the last of the family he had known lined up in dark pine boxes down the center aisle of the church filled with mourners.

One by one, the five caskets were carried by pallbearers out the side of St. Mary's Catholic Church to the waiting graves. Alice and Charles had taken their three children on the adventure of a lifetime—an eight-week spring vacation to the national parks in Wyoming. On the trails of Yellowstone, they were beaten, raped, defiled, and left as carrion for the wild beasts.

Mary, Jeff, and Courtney Benning's mangled bodies held the vestiges of fear and torment they had suffered. The boy had been found still half-tied to a tree amidst the stones used to bludgeon him to death. The two girls and the mother had suffered a fate much worse. The father's shocked expression had frozen to his face the moment the bullet had struck his temple. The mother's look of anguish was beyond all the soldier could stomach, and he had retched when he saw the strawberry hair of the little one matted with blood and dirt.

The identification required by law festered in his mind. The cool respite of the ancient church with its scenes of miracles and love could not remove the darkness growing within his mind.

A witness hiding among bushes on a hill above the trail had described Juan Macias, a known drug trafficker on the Homeland Security watch list.

No arrests had been made, and while the world continued to spin, a soldier stood ramrod straight at the foot of the grave of the littlest Benning. The drizzle and the darkening sky blunted the scene from the highway as the last of the cars pulled out into the night.

He remembered the strawberry-haired tot always getting into all kinds of trouble, just too cute to reprimand. He remembered her giggle and her plea for one more story. He remembered the one place he had felt at home since the day he had left for the service. Standing above the graves through the night, he remembered and he wept.

Sarge, the only name he had used for more than thirty years, stood watch that night and the next day. Finally as the sun set again, he slowly saluted the place where Courtney lay and turned

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toward the west. He would let the hill country of Texas hold the graves of loved ones. There they would rest but he would not.

A hatred he had never felt before welled up in his very soul. Not a tool used by soldiers in battle, not a force of nature to be explained away by shrinks, but a powerful instinct to abandon his humanity and seek out revenge. He had had enough.

Excerpt from *A Child's Cry*

Somehow the Good Lord had found a way to blend tomboy playfulness, crusader dedication to mission, and fairytale princess beauty into one human being. Her somewhat husky voice always echoed with laughter, hinting that something more intimate was possible. And those crystal blue eyes ... They captured you and made you wish to never be let go. Colette Vandebosch was all of this and more. She was a true freedom fighter and an advocate for democracy.

When she called, there was no hesitation. The mission parameters were not necessary. She was one of the few souls I would go beyond the edge of the world for. As she described the situation, the tears I heard instilled urgency. Those tears also held an ominous note of revenge, incongruous to the very nature of this princess from my past.

I reread the article she provided with her notes for the mission:

A Child's Tear

The body of a thirteen-year-old boy was found in a ditch outside of a factory in the town of Liège, Belgium. Officer Dietrich Dumont had carefully examined the scene, demanding the crowds move back so as not to destroy evidence. There were signs the boy had crawled to the place he had died, and the officer had a very queasy feeling. The bullets were sprayed across the child's back haphazardly. Finally he found the telltale signs he was looking for, and calling others to help, he followed the blood-spattered ground into the abandoned factory yard and a partially collapsed garage. The extent of the massacre on the garage floor flooded into the eyes of the officer, even though the brain attempted to refuse the reality.

Falling to his knees and allowing the horror to escape in a spine-tingling scream, Officer Dietrich looked at the bloodied bodies of thirty-two young children all horribly shot multiple times. In the center of the gore, one child sat stunned beyond voice, looking at the officer and pleading for him to turn back time. The child, no more than four years of age, held the hand of an older girl who would not be able to help her little brother anymore.

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Abram Bobrik, the sole survivor of the massacre, was a victim of abductions from a village in Belarus and had been missing for six months. The reason for the massacre was still being investigated and the police had no leads.

Colette did not call me for Abram or the others slaughtered. She called for a young girl of fifteen who was abducted from her apartment. The police would work the past events. Colette intended to change the future and bring Amelia De Vos back to the arms of her mother and father.

The massacre was a sign of a gang's complete lack of humanity. They had a rat among them and they terminated everything, escaping just before the police could round them up. The only prize they had kept was Amelia. She was nearly priceless in the child slave trade, and they needed money to rebuild their kingdom of crime.

It was time for an update on her progress, so I picked up the phone, dialed the international numbers that would connect me with Belgium, and heard her whispered greeting.

There was sadness in her hello so I jumped right into the details. "Colette, we will be landing in two days. Are the supplies ready?"

"James, I have never felt this way before. I have a rage building up that is ready to explode. Your guns are ready. When I purchased them, I purchased one for myself." Her sobs took over the conversation and I waited for a cue to speak.

"I want to kill them, James. No matter what we find, I want to kill them all." She broke down on the phone as the pain of the massacre pushed something beautiful toward the dark world of the avenging soldier.

"We will be there soon, Colette." I kept my voice steady. "I called to ask you a favor."

Her sobbing didn't cease, and I focused on controlling the conversation.

"Maria is coming and she is going to pester you for details about my life. I need you to resist. We need her on the mission, but she is ruthless when she gets hold of a good bit of gossip."

She stopped sobbing and drew a long shuddering breath.

"Will you keep our fun times secret for me?"

She giggled—a lilting, wonderful sound of life. Laughter frequently emanated from this brave freedom fighter, and while this mission would take her to dark parts of my world, I prayed her spirit would remain in the bright sunlight of joy.

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“Take care and we will see you at Café Van de Liefde in two days. Tell Mathis to have plenty of Carbonade Flamande ready. I have been boasting about his cooking for days.”

She laughed, fully this time, and promised to be ready for our arrival.

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Excerpt from Tarnished Guardian

Vacation Interrupted

Megs, Naval Lieutenant Commander Katharine Marie Callaghan of JSOC, carefully marked off the basement of the upscale residential home in the suburbs of Toms River, New Jersey. This was not her type of case but there was no questioning the orders received in the middle of the night. When ADM Alexander Peoples gets you out of bed, you jump however high he commands.

The crime scene was completely contaminated by the debris Megs found. State Police, Toms River detectives, and even two reporters destroyed the scene prior to Meg's arrival.

The cement floor stained a dark rusty red by the dried and caked blood, affirmed the massacre. The six victims were tied to chairs and tortured, according to the reports for up to three days. They were then summarily executed by slitting their throats. Blood pools and the multiple cutting tools left scattered around the room, showed a complete lack of humanity by the perpetrator or perpetrators.

The scrap of a blueprint, evidence item number 638-21, had no scale of reference and was blown up beyond valid recognition. She made a mental note to inspect the original, muttering under her breath. With all the CSI TV shows, you'd think real crime scene investigators would have gotten the hint.

It did not matter. A scrap of blueprint woke up the Admiral Chief of Naval Operations along with fourteen other high-ranking officials in and around their five-sided labyrinth in Washington DC. The Department of Defense swung into action because a rookie detective, just released from his stint in the army, knew something his detective buddies did not.



Training Remembered

Detective Benjamin Collingsworth served with distinction and began his second career in his hometown of Toms River. Still on the short end of rookie jokes and coffee runs, he carefully logged in every piece of evidence until he handled the scrap of blueprint. Calling for someone to take his place at the table, he carefully picked up the evidence bag and found better light for his inspection. Then, shouting to the ranking officer on scene, he broke procedure running across the crime scene and up the stairs, evidence in hand.

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Reaching the detective in charge, Emily Burke-Hansen, he demanded her attention most likely ending his career.

“Detective Hansen!” getting her to stop and turn. “This is national security and top priority.”

Emily paused, making sure she gained eye contact, then took three steps bringing her within inches of the new detective; her smoldering rage curiously enhanced by her Chanel perfume. She held her silence to make the first words uttered emanate from the quaking voice of the condemned.

Benjamin had stood in front of terrifying drill sergeants and thunderous commanders without withering. His shoulders straightened and his gaze hardened. “Ma’am.”

Eternities passed and finally the chief of detectives broke. “What is so important that you would risk your career?”

“This scrap came from a military blueprint and, unless I’m mistaken, it is top secret and highly dangerous in the wrong hands. You need to stop everything and call the Department of Defense and Homeland Security.”

“Can you give me one sane reason why this scrap of paper is so important?”

“Sure can.” He moved to the detective’s side and brought the evidence bag into the proper light.

“See that ignition switch right there,” using a pencil to direct her eyes. “That has never been outside the pentagon’s weapons vault since the day my team escorted it there eight months ago.”

Emily turned to her assistant and quickly had him clear the crime scene. Calling for a phone, she made the call that got generals jumping and pulled Megs back from vacation.

“No promotion and you’re still on coffee detail but your job is secure, Benjamin. Good work.” The chief of detectives did not get to her position by walking on her fellow detectives. She got there by keeping the case at the center of her actions.

Decisions Made

Megs arched her back and slowly scanned the basement one more time. Walking carefully through the scene, she gained access to the stairs and went up and out of the building through the kitchen door.

There, patiently waiting for his next order, the young detective used his boot to trace zigzags in the dirt below the swing he was on. Seeing Megs, he jumped to his feet and stood at attention only making a half salute this time. He caught her momentary smile. It made her face more

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beautiful than anything his dreams could imagine. He stared shamelessly, watching her approach.

“All right DB,” she nicknamed him from the moment they met. “You and I have a lot of detecting to do. Let’s get you processed for JSOC clearance and get on with it.”

Not sure if DB stood for Detective Benjamin or dumb blockhead, Benjamin didn’t care. This was the case and the investigator to be assigned to. My God, she is beautiful!

“Yes Ma’am, where is our next stop?” Ben awaited her command.

“Number one, it’s Megs; drop the Ma’am crap. Number two, I may have rank, but I am a working Navy brat. While we are together, we are equals until you prove different.”

Megs pointed to the car and Benjamin took off at the trot to get there before his new teammate. Unsure if chivalry was allowed, he opened the passenger side door and stood aside to let her in.

“DB, stop horsing around and get in. I’m driving.”

Excerpt from Cold Return

I finished the preparation of my cave encampment, building a small fire at the entrance just as the sun retreated behind the western mountains of the stone filled valley. The roasting rabbit and the pot of snow would be a feast after two days running from a determined assassin. Taking to the desolate mountains was the last resort and I knew it.

Once the fire was refreshed and the meal put away, I moved back into the cave. Not to use my bedding but to shinny up the natural chimney within the cavern. It was a seventy-foot climb and I did it in complete darkness, feeling for the handholds and crevasses as I inched my way up. Near the top, a small side tunnel to the face of the cliff allowed me to observe the mountains to the west.

There were three places I would have set up an ambush. The sniper was in the third and the least likely because of the extreme distance of the shot. I used an infrared scope while I knew the assassin focused his targeting on the fire I had made. From my vantage point, the lower half of the assassin’s body was blocked by the stone of the mountain. I eased behind the rifle sights, taking a deep breath and letting the air out slowly clearing my mind of all but the target.

Muscle memory and years of practice took over and the projectile was launched. Seconds passed and the body slumped. I maintained my position and reloaded but there would be no need.

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Fifteen minutes later the winter's cold faded the infrared image as the assassin passed into eternity.

Getting back down was a little more challenging but I knew I needed the fire and its warmth if I was to survive the mountain. I had survived the second assassin sent to kill me. It would be a very sad story if I ended up a frozen corpse huddled in these lonely mountains. I had an ending to this particular stalk I preferred. An ending where I was home and the nightmare of being hunted came to an end. My journey was far from complete. Home would have to wait while I searched for the person who sent the assassin. It was time to take action.

Excerpt from Payday Blues

Mission Parameters

Stuffed chairs, full bellies, and deep rich coffee made for easy conversation. Alan was a close friend and I allowed his southern charm to guide the evening's agenda. I knew that I would get a head full of NOLA history, providing details of what everyone we knew was up to. In time, he would get to the mission.

Alan's team had a tight grip on everything drug related in southern Louisiana. Inviting me into a case usually centered on linking up resources not generally a part of the normal DEA environment. We had grown accustomed to helping each other and while he did not know the extent of my clandestine activities, he relied on my resources.

Tonight's case was different. Alan had been asked to look into a surge of drugs in the northern states. There was a new pipeline and no one had a lead. They did know that tons of the South American poison was showing up in northern cities across the country.

"I have had my men pull in all the normal suspects and the locals have done the same." Alan was ready to get down to business. "We are not seeing any of the drugs that the rest of the country is crying about."

I waited for him to continue. I could see he had more to say.

"I have a gut feeling that something big is happening right under my nose and I don't like it, Pete." Putting down his mug of coffee he leaned in to get my attention. "This is something we have not seen before and somewhere a new cancer is growing in my neighborhood. I need you to help me find this pipeline and close it down. I need your interesting friends to shine a light on this new epidemic."

"Well, now this sounds like a lot of fun Alan. I'm in." I could see his shoulders relax as he moved back into his chair, retrieving his mug and another plantain beignet to savor.

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“Get me all of the background documents and let me review the casebook to date. I will also want to do some snooping on my own. Can I have one of your guys for transportation?”

Alan nodded and I continued. “You do understand that if it is hidden from the locals and your DEA guys, there is a real chance my guys won’t dig up any leads. Do you have a deadline?”

“No deadline to worry about. I would like to see if we could have something cracked open in about two weeks.” We were back to the quiet meandering conversation that was Alan’s southern style. I knew to put my Yankee pushiness aside and let the evening slip by.

“I will get Rene to stop by in the morning and she can be your guide.” He smiled that quirky, I know something smile that always created havoc when I visited. At least the havoc would be centered on Rene who is a very lovely Louisiana storm to be caught in.

Rene Byrne is a red headed, Irish girl who found her way to Louisiana State University and joined the DEA right out of college. Infectious laughter coupled with athletic physique made for many wonderful adventures throughout the city of New Orleans. She knew the city and she knew the people. I was going to be in very good hands.

“Keep this up Alan and I will have to be paying you for this visit.” He laughed and I reached for one last beignet. “Time for me to get some downtime—will I see you in the morning?”

“We’ll meet up tomorrow evening. I have some political boot shining to do. Rene will get you what you want and take you where you need to go. How about meeting for dinner right here at 8:00 PM?”

There is something very special about the late evening hours in New Orleans. A gentle rain had come and gone during our conversation and the open French doors to the balcony filled the room with the hint of a fresh dawn. One lonely street performer picked at their guitar quietly, adding to the night’s peace.

Morning Adventures

The balcony, coffee and pastries, a beautiful tavern owner in a shimmering lacy house robe and slippers—again I wondered why not New Orleans.

Then I heard the rumbling below—the deep mechanical throb of a bike, ready to take on the highways and byways of NOLA. The sound immediately harmonized with another throaty machine. My ride was pulling up outside and the day was about to get exciting.

Katie jumped up, kissed me on the cheek and ran down the barroom stairs. I rearranged my blushing face and found the appropriate vantage point on the balcony. In moments, the tavern

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door swung open and Katie flew into the arms of the biker with long red hair flowing behind her black helmet.

Their excited exchanges and laughter accompanied the clatter of their entrance as I found my way down to the tavern. A third bike rumbled through the streets and picked up the second biker. Walking past the bar I was pulled into the embrace of an Irish whirlwind.

“Hey Texas, how come it takes you so long to visit? I haven’t seen you since Mardi Gras.” Her voice filled the bar with joyful abandon as I let myself find a place in her embrace.

“I can’t be playing with mud bugs and banjos all the time, girl. Some of us have got to make a living!”

She poked at my belly turning to Katie, “looks like we need to fatten him up again. The boy would lose his head if God hadn’t attached it. Let’s make him take us to Coulis for Eggs Benicio. I’m starving and we both get to eat on his expense account!”

My bike had a sidecar filled with case notes that were transported to the office on the second floor. Work needed to be delayed. Right now two beautiful women needed to whisk me off and spend my money. I have always been good with priorities.

Eggs Benicio is moist jalapeno cheddar corn cakes topped with perfectly seasoned pulled pork debris, two poached eggs and house-made hollandaise. Besides being a signature dish at Coulis, it is a favorite of the redhead who now guided my steps.

Grabbing my arm she pulled me to the table the girls had chosen and fell into a conversation of NOLA happenings and the newest gossip heard. It did not matter if I knew who or what. I embraced the joyful banter as a very special gift. Time would come for business, now I was a guest of the real beauty of life.

Trouble in Cajun country

Breakfast and gossip complete, Rene led me through the streets to the west parishes of New Orleans and down by the docks where the shrimp boats start their gulf adventure. There we met with an old fisherman sitting on the doc with two poles bobbing for dinner and a charred rimmed pipe clenched in his teeth.

“Pap, tell my friend about the trouble in the Bayou.” Rene's voice was soft, cajoling the elder fisherman to let go of his gossip. “He is a friend and maybe he can find some help.”

This was a man from the deepest part of Cajun country and while his gruff voice carried, I was going to need a translation after the fact. The sign-song cadence continued as he spoke about

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families no longer sharing with their neighbors and being secretive. Something had him upset and Rene wanted to find out what it was.

We had a few more stops, checking in with local police and some of the city's movers and shakers. They provided background and insight into the drug world of southern Louisiana and provided their take on the newest epidemic. Most had little or no time for problems that seemed to be located north of the Mason-Dixon Line.

By mid afternoon, we were back at the Blues Balcony pouring through the case files and other documentation pertinent to my assignment.

“OK Rene, I am ready to understand what our fisherman was talking about and how it relates to the drug case.” She had been nervous since our meeting at the docks and I wanted to get into it.

“I've known him since I first arrived in New Orleans. Pap was pointed out to me by my mentor and I cultivated the relationship ever since. He is not used for investigating crime but to get a sense of the community—how everyone is doing and if there is trouble brewing.” Rene paused fidgeting in her seat.

“My first partner told me that you need to know the community's soul if you are going to help them. Our job is not to go after bad guys; it is to make sure the good guys have a life. He died loving the Bayou and its people. He was a tall skinny Norwegian who could never get a handle on the accent but they loved him all the same.” She looked up at me and smiled.

“They have taken me in and I need to find out what is wrong in the backcountry. I am not sure if it is related but I need to help Pap.” She leaned back in her chair and awaited my response.”

So I had two cases and they may or may not be related. I had two beautiful women who enjoyed tormenting me and I had two places I loved to call home. Add all that up with the fact the Alan and the DEA were paying for my holiday. Welcome to the land of spices and blues. I am a very lucky man.

Excerpt from *Passion's Pathway*

A Peaceful Life

My daily routine has become a natural progression of peaceful days. It is an enjoyment I never expected but I daily rejoice in its happenstance.

What the world sees each morning is a man shutting the main door to a three story mansion and, with walking stick in hand, descending the steps to the flower-lined pathway leading to the

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boulevard Del Santos which gradually wanders down to the sea and the docks filled with merchant vessels.

Directly across from the busy piers, where the boulevard gives way to the industry of shipping, stands a long row of warehouses. The third one in from the boulevard has a windowed front that provides a view of a tired old office with a simple desk and a well-worn office chair. The rest of the unadorned room holds wooden crates of different sizes to help shippers decide how their cargo will travel. It is my office and the destination of my morning's journey.

Each morning I arrive promptly at eight and after a full day of phone calls, I leave and hurry back up the boulevard promptly at three, my workday completed. Entering the main door I once again embrace the joy I found in the jungle doing the chores of another life I once lived.

Of Boys and Adventure

The youth of the neighborhood race around the docks looking at the marvelous display of interesting people traveling from the furthest parts of the world and they are bitten by the desire for adventure. I remember the feeling from my youth and I remember the US Navy recruiter who painted a picture of excitement placing me in its scene. He did not lie and I did find all the excitement he foretold and much more. I had eight years in the service and eight more as a mercenary. I've seen adventure.

Two young men, prodding each other finally open the door and strut into my office.

"Why do you sit here all day when you can be out there riding the waves and finding adventure?" He stood tall in his youth, still needing some definition to his muscled body but filled with an attitude of action.

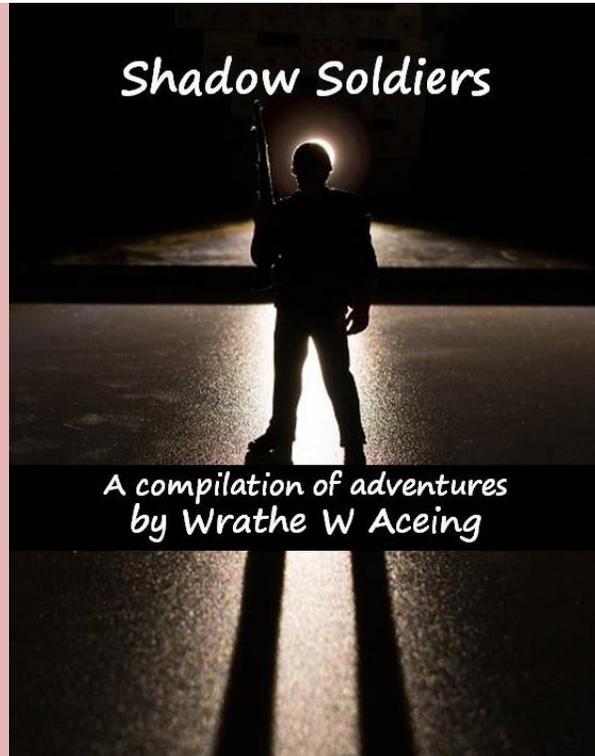
"Do you really want to know about adventure?" I set down the paper I was reading and looked at the two boys. "Or do you want to know what true happiness is?"

The other boy spoke up. "Both!"

"Then let me tell you a story ..."

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Shadow Soldiers

This is the first in a series of novellas that explore the world of the mercenary and the challenges they face keeping evil from overrunning society.

They face a moral challenge as the very nature of their job goes against what we consider proper moral behavior. And yet they stand the line and face evil when we cannot.

Come and meet Sarge, Angel, JT, Megs and the others. Read their adventures. You are the judge as to their moral code. If you do judge, you may find that society is the one who has made the shadow soldier necessary and our only outcry should be a blessing for their protection.

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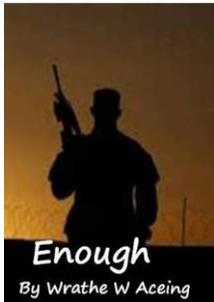
Who will stand the line and protect us from evil? Who will protect the ones who cannot defend themselves? The Shadow Soldier holds back the darkness so that we may live in the light.

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Stories by Wrathe W. Aceing

Wrathe W. Aceing is a pseudonym, an anagram created to remove celebrity from the author, and place the focus on the central message of these adventures and other books contemplated. The “e” is silent. So is the warrior. But the vigilance, while silent, is real.

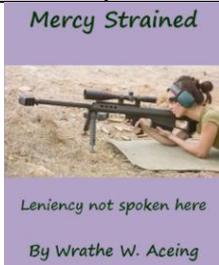


“ENOUGH” is a military thriller delving into the dark areas of the soldier’s conscience. Set in the Texas and northern Mexico deserts, the action explodes as the characters smolder dealing with their understanding of revenge.

“ENOUGH” is the story of a lifer sergeant whose family is brutally killed by a Mexican drug cartel in the US national forests. The pain of loss moves the soldier to go beyond all he has fought for and to seek revenge. He gathers others to his cause and they too must deal with going beyond their calling.

Called by a friend from his military past, Sergeant James Terrance (JT) Welder forms a team of mercenaries to rescue a little girl and destroy the gang who took her from her family. JT sets up a mission to remove the Dementyev gang from existence. Aligned with law enforcement from Belgium, Interpol and NATO, his challenge will be when the law and the darker side of the mercenary world collide.

How long will society allow our children to be ruined by greedy people? Will a warrior stand and draw the line to end this vile crime? Is this beyond the code of the soldier? Travel with JT and experience the reality of child slavery in the world today.



The mission of one dark soldier who entered the military to build the skills necessary to exact her revenge on the monsters that stole her childhood and her womanhood.

The price of allowing child abuse to continue is real and it is time to stand up against this onslaught of evil.

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By Wrathe W. Aceing - Page 23

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Making a living is not all that different from any other walk into hell and back again mercenary consulting gig. Building up a clientele base that provides the funds you need and the fun you like is a talent only a few ever master. This adventurer is another romp around the globe with Sergeant James Terrance (JT) Welder introducing a ton of new friends to add to a party!

Scheduled for release in Shadow Soldiers 2

Payday Blues

It is a connected world



By Wrathe W Aceing



Tarnished Guardians

By Wrathe W Aceing

A murder mystery explodes into an international thriller as one of the best from our country's investigative services guides a new detective through the puppet masters seeking world domination.

Scheduled for release in Shadow Soldiers 2

It is one thing to live the lonely life of the mercenary, always drawn away from home by your chosen career. It is another to be hunted down and have home removed as a place of safety. Follow one soldier as he evades those sent to kill him and returns from the darkest part of the mercenary's world. Home is important and sometimes it is where we finally belong.

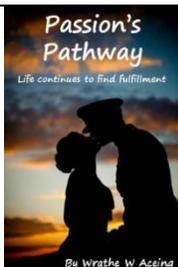
Scheduled for release in Shadow Soldiers 2



Cold Return

Home is important

By Wrathe W Aceing



Passion's Pathway

Life continues to find fulfillment

By Wrathe W Aceing

They teased the man with his silly daily routine until he sat them down and told them a story. In youth we cannot see the life lived by those who traveled the world before us. Hopefully we will seek them out and not let their wisdom get lost in the clutter of our own adventures.

Scheduled for release in Shadow Soldiers 2