

Juanzi
Hum Distinction
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In this trimester for my distinctions, I wanted to read, *Left of the Boom* by Douglas Laux and Ralph Pezzullo. The book is about a CIA operative, Douglas Laux, who infiltrates the Taliban and tries to dismantle their IED network. He describes everything he did in the years he worked and gave an in depth explanation of how the CIA functions. He describes the daily stresses of working in enemy territories, as well as the impact on his personal life. I wanted to read this book, because I didn't have a lot of knowledge on either the CIA or about the Taliban. His book gave me a better understanding of what the US is doing in Afghanistan, and how his work is helping.

After reading the book, I wanted to summarize some important themes he talks about: how the CIA works in Afghanistan, what their goals are, and how working for the CIA impacts him. For all of these I choose to do a black out poem/ summary. Since the book is not very descriptive, it was difficult to make it sound like a poem, but the pages I choose did help summarize the different themes. For how *the CIA works in Afghanistan*, I choose a passage where he talks about running assets like a chess game. He explains how he has to constantly think five moves ahead, or else he could put everything, including the asset, in jeopardy. Along with the black out summary, I drew an image of two chess pieces, one queen, one king, and the king has fallen. This represents the dangers of the CIA process, and how it could result in death.

For my second theme, I choose a page summarizing his determination to catch the lead distributors of IEDs. I drew CIA papers with redacted lines, a common interpretation of CIA reports, to show them writing the details of what their assets have said. Finally, for the last theme, I choose a page talking about him feeling overwhelmed. Through the book, as he works more and more, he becomes increasingly more stressed both because the job itself is very stressful and because it takes a huge toll on his personal life. To represent this, I drew a man holding his head in frustration. This book has both taught me more about how CIA operatives work in Afghanistan, as well as give me a better understanding of the Taliban.

[REDACTED]

"I know," Chief Neely added. [REDACTED]

Fahim al-Banani said to myself, "I'll be [REDACTED] killing [REDACTED] American and ISAF soldiers and hundreds more Afghan police [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. An MVD worn by an AQ [REDACTED] had killed [REDACTED] in Khawaja Janitara. Now the MVD had killed [REDACTED] source in Afghanistan."

The experience with Converse had taught me [REDACTED] the [REDACTED] work of sources deep into [REDACTED] and in [REDACTED] terrorist organization. I also learned that each asset I ran was its own [REDACTED] chess match.

[REDACTED] It was a tricky game that had the potential to result in "checkmate" for [REDACTED] us out [REDACTED] my death [REDACTED] our base.

Of course, I had the ability to slap the pieces off the board when the game no longer made sense to play. Meaning, the asset was wasting my time. With some of them, I took weeks to determine when to flip the board over. But for anything else, the more real [REDACTED] with them, the better and faster [REDACTED] able to determine their very [REDACTED] utility.

I picked up with Abdul and Hajj Jan where I had [REDACTED]. I met with them [REDACTED] separately [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED] the information I got from [REDACTED] didn't want me to [REDACTED] Hajj Jan at all because of his [REDACTED] ties to Taliban leadership. Orlan said I should [REDACTED] contact with Hajj Jan until he proved he was who he said he was.

My response to all of them was simple: He gave us phone numbers. [REDACTED]

The more he told me, the more the bosses at HQ started to come around. Within a short period of time he identified dozens of Taliban

[REDACTED]. We [REDACTED] knew their names, their faces, and [REDACTED] their phone numbers, [REDACTED] we could track their movements.

[REDACTED] of a suspect [REDACTED] they might kick a [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] themselves. [REDACTED] used, and [REDACTED] idea [REDACTED] were the special-ops guys [REDACTED] who to arrest [REDACTED]

During one of [REDACTED] meetings with Abdul and Haji Jan in a shipping container, I told Haji Jan that I wanted to stop the Taliban, and specifically their IED network. He told me that the Taliban command and the IED network were two separate entities, which we had never realized before. [REDACTED] assumed that Taliban leaders in Quetta

[REDACTED] purchased explosive material, which was then sent to [REDACTED] where it was packed into IEDs and suicide vests. The vests and IEDs were then distributed to bombers recruited in the nearby areas.

Haji Jan explained that the Taliban outsourced the entire IED operation through [REDACTED] businessman. In other words, the Taliban placed orders for a certain number of IEDs and suicide vests, and the [REDACTED] businessmen fulfilled the orders.

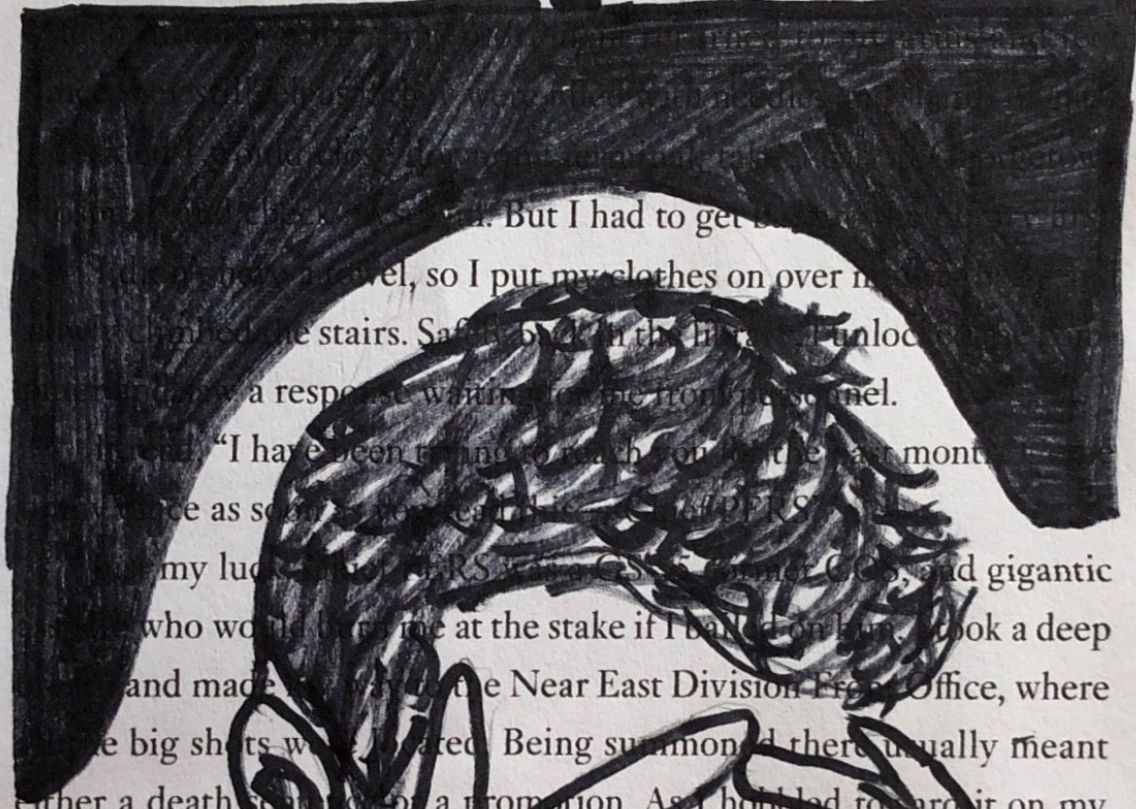
People back at HQ found this hard to believe at first. But Haji Jan named the [REDACTED] businessman who was running the whole operation of [REDACTED]. I gave him the code name Wolverine.

Haji Jan said, "Everybody in [REDACTED] town knows about this. I've talked in my mosque, and they [REDACTED] trying [REDACTED]"

I was determined [REDACTED] anything

My cheeks fluttering uncontrollably [redacted] a strange paralysis spread-
 through my body, I kneeled [redacted]
 thinking, *Is this how I'm going* [redacted]

It was too pathetic to accept. [redacted] I held on for dear life and waited



[redacted] But I had to get [redacted]
 [redacted] level, so I put my clothes on over [redacted]
 the stairs. Safety [redacted] I unlocked
 a response waiting to be [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
 "I have been trying to reach you for the past month
 as soon as you [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]
 my luck [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] and gigantic
 who would [redacted] me at the stake if I bailed on you. I took a deep
 and made [redacted] the Near East Division Front Office, where
 the big shots were [redacted] Being summoned there usually meant
 either a death sentence or a promotion. As I hobbled toward it on my
 crutches, I understood how my sources had felt when called to meet at
 Mullah Omar's house.

My hands were shaking uncontrollably as I walked in the door. I
 informed the secretary that I was there to see [redacted] PERS and no, I didn't
 have an appointment, but he had asked me to come to his office imme-
 diately.

I waited ten minutes before I heard him shout, "Sanchez. Get in
 here."

Sanchez was the pseudonym that I used in cable traffic and official
 Agency correspondence. It's common practice for COs to call each
 other by their pseudos because we type more cables than anyone else

