

# Ian got angry at being duped and volunteered to help out

(From A1)

devoted my life to because it's an occupation that grows on you. It gives you job satisfaction, but it is frustrating at times. Your mother asked me in the early '60s during her visit with your grandmother to Europe the nature of my job. Although I could not answer her because of classification, I did, however, ask her to read the book, 'War of Wits' by Ladislav Farago. But I do not know if you will be able to retain that book now.

"Ian, what you want to get into will have to be your choice. However, if you choose to be employed by the CIA, I can put you in contact with a friend of mine who works out of Roslyn, Va. He can evaluate your educational background and assess your capabilities. He can then take you to the CIA screening officer for formal application."

During his mid-term break in late February, Fritz took Ian to the farm where he and his father had spent so much time. Susie and the boys went with them. Susie wore a .45 in a shoulder holster. Fritz made what he called shape charges from dynamite and cut-off wine bottles and set them off. He was hoping the blasts would uncover "lava tubes" under the ground.

Fritz hinted then that he'd been involved in secret activities. Ian told him that he'd like to get into intelligence work and showed him the letter from his uncle. Fritz told Ian he'd like to visit him at Washington & Lee and have a look at the campus.

Late in March, Fritz came to Lexington. Ian showed him the campus, and after visiting the famous chapel built by Gen. Robert E. Lee, where Lee's remains are interred. Ian and Fritz sat on the chapel lawn and talked.

Fritz said he'd been working for the CIA for many years, that he'd been recruited while he was at Woodward Academy in Georgia. It had been difficult but rewarding work, he said. He'd been involved in many covert operations and had come close to being killed several times. It had brought him very close to God, he said with all the earnestness of an evangelist.

Fritz began talking about an upcoming operation in Texas. Weapons were being stolen from military arsenals in the Midwest and smuggled to South America in exchange for drugs, he said. The drugs then were brought back to this country and sold. The Russian KGB was involved indirectly through South America.

Fritz said that he was going to be involved in an operation in Texas to help shut off this traffic. He'd have to make some "touches" — killings. He needed help, though, and he wanted somebody he could trust. That was why he was turning to Ian.

It would be a chance for Ian to prove himself and perhaps break into a career with the Company, as Fritz called the CIA. The Company had consulted Ian's uncle, Gerald, who had given his approval for Ian to take part. Fritz said.

It would be only a four-day trip. The operation would be quick. Ian would have to stay in the vehicle, provide cover, maybe drive an escape. That was all. Would he be interested?

Ian would.

Fritz said he'd get back to him. Several times, the operation was planned and called off, once because Fritz said he had car trouble. Early in May, he scheduled it for Wednesday, May 15. But that week he called and canceled again. On Wednesday, he called and said it was on for sure, but the location had changed. One touch would have to be made in Winston-Salem, another in Charlotte, both on the same night. He wanted Ian to meet him at the state park on Roanoke Mountain at 6 p.m. Friday, May 17.

## Ian burst into tears

Gentry and Sturgill got to Lexington about noon and found Ian at a rooming house owned by Violet Fireball on Nelson Street, only a few blocks from campus. Another student was in his room, so the detectives asked Ian to come out to their car to talk. They told him they were investigating the Newsom murders in Winston-Salem and advised him of his rights.

When they asked about the weekend of May 18, Ian began reciting the same story Fritz had told about the camping trip. It bothered him to lie. He was worried about the university's honor code. But Fritz had assured him that lying was necessary in the interest of national security.

Still, Ian wasn't doing a very good job of it. He was shaking. He smoked one cigarette after another. Sweat beaded on his forehead. His mouth was dry, his tongue sticking. His voice kept breaking. He wasn't going to make a good cover operations man. He could tell that.

After Ian had finished his story, Gentry began

pointing out some discrepancies. For example, Fritz had said they left for the night hike at 8 p.m., but Ian had said 5. They could have made a trip to Winston-Salem in that time.

Did Ian realize he might be facing complicity in three murders?

Ian burst into tears.

Yes, he said, he had gone to Winston-Salem. He and Fritz. But they were on a CIA operation, not a murder mission.

The detectives sat incredulous while Ian told the true story.

Before they left for Winston-Salem, Fritz paid Ian \$300 in \$100 bills but told him no details of the operation. On the way, Fritz explained that he would be "taking out" a drug dealer in Winston-Salem, another in Charlotte. He would try to make both killings look like robberies, he said.

Ian would drive the Blazer to a designated spot, let Fritz out, leave and come back later. Fritz would steal a car at the location of the touch and meet Ian. They would drive to Charlotte in tandem. Ian would wait at the first rest stop north of Charlotte on Interstate 85 while Fritz made the second touch. Then they would drive back to the campground.

They left about 5 p.m. on a drive that normally would take only about three hours. But Fritz always drove slowly. They followed Interstate 81 southwest to I-77, went south on I-77 into North Carolina, took state road 89 to U.S. 52 at Mount Airy.

At Pinnacle, north of Winston-Salem, they stopped for gas at Neighbor's Gulf. They followed U.S. 52 to I-40, went north on Broad Street and out Reynolda Road to Old Town, arriving a little before 11 p.m.

Near Loman's Plaza, at the intersection of old U.S. 421, Ian stopped at a construction site and let Fritz out less than half a mile from Hattie Newsom's house on Valley Road.

Fritz was wearing a gray windbreaker over a mesh T-shirt and bullet-proof vest, dark slacks and soft-soled cloth shoes. He pulled on driving gloves before he got out of the Blazer. In a leather-like briefcase, he carried a Colt .45 pistol, a .22 Ruger semi-automatic pistol, a bayonet, a soft hat and several magazines of ammunition. He had loaded the magazines at the campground wearing surgical gloves.

Ian went to a Hardee's on Reynolda Road where he was to wait. Hardee's was closed, so he continued on to a Burger King, had coffee, then returned to the construction lot about midnight. Fritz soon appeared driving a medium-size gold car.

Ian fell in behind him in the Blazer. Fritz was driving very slowly as usual, and about two miles away, on University Parkway, a police car pulled between Ian and Fritz. The officer turned on blue lights, and Fritz stopped. Ian continued on, stopped at another Burger King, parked the Blazer in a prominent spot by the road and went inside for more coffee. Fritz came along shortly.

Fritz said the officer had stopped him for driving slowly, but he'd told him that he was having car trouble. After checking his license, the officer let him go. It was a good thing, he said, because he was holding his .45 under his jacket and if the officer had asked him to step out, he would have had to blast him.

The car just wasn't running well, Fritz said. They'd have to scratch the Charlotte half of the operation. He told Ian to go back to the construction lot and wait for him. Ian did, and after Fritz appeared on foot, they headed back to Virginia.

On the way, Fritz said he'd had to knife two security guards before he shot the drug dealer.

They stopped at a convenience store near Mount Airy so Fritz could stretch. He changed his shirt and shoes, took out a big knife and shredded the shirt, shoes and hat, along with some blue foam rubber he'd used to keep the weapons in the briefcase from rattling. He threw it all into a dumpster.

Fritz took over the driving. At a rest area on I-77 near the state line, he stopped, went into the rest room and shaved the full beard he'd worn for three years.

Back at the campground, Fritz removed the barrel from the .45, walked to the lake and threw it in. He put the windbreaker into the briefcase, crumpled the case and tossed it into a dumpster. They drove about a quarter-mile up the Blue Ridge Parkway, and Fritz walked into the woods and buried the bayonet and scabbard.

When they got back to the campground, Fritz went to the bathroom and threw up. Ian threw up, too.

## He didn't believe Fritz could do that

Ian told the detectives he was stunned when he heard about Hattie, Bob and Florence Newsom being murdered in Winston-Salem on the same weekend as his and Fritz's mission.

But he thought that the Newsoms had been killed on Sunday, not Saturday, and that it was just coincidence. Besides, he trusted Fritz and couldn't believe he could do that. Even though he knew Fritz had killed some people, he thought it was all right because it was government-sanctioned.

When the detectives told Ian that Fritz wasn't a doctor, Ian got angry at being duped and volunteered to do anything he could to help.

Fritz had come to see Ian the day before and told him that his superiors in the Company had been very impressed with the way Ian had handled himself on the operation, especially that he didn't panic when the police officer stopped Fritz.

Fritz also said he wanted to put a new slide on the Gold Cup National Match .45 pistol he had given to Ian. At the officers' request, Ian got the gun for them. They thought Fritz might have put the slide from the .45 used in the murders on it. If so, they could match it to the ejector markings on the empty shells they'd found.

They asked Ian to go with them to the mountains the following day to see if they could find any of the items Fritz had disposed of after the killings. Ian agreed.

Gentry and Sturgill then headed for the SBI lab in Raleigh to see if the pistol slide would match the shells. They were disappointed that it didn't.

## 'It was like they were doomed'

About 2:30 that afternoon, Thursday, May 30, Sandy Sands got a call from Susie. She was again near hysteria, even more terrified, Sandy thought, than when he'd seen her nearly two weeks earlier. Her voice kept breaking. Fritz had gone to pick up the boys at school, she said. He would protect them, but she was concerned that she was going to be killed and the boys kidnapped because of Tom's mob connections.

"What happens to my inheritance if I die?" she asked.

## Fritz Klenner's movements when the Newsoms died

Friday, May 17

1. At dinner time, Fritz Klenner leaves his mother's house in Reidsville.

2. Fritz arrives at Roanoke Mountain late for a rendezvous with Ian Perkins, who has since returned to his roominghouse in Lexington.

3. Fritz goes to Lexington to pick up Ian.

4. Fritz and Ian go to a campground at Peaks of Otter.

Saturday, May 18

5. At 5 p.m., Fritz and Ian head to Winston-Salem in Fritz's Chevy Blazer.

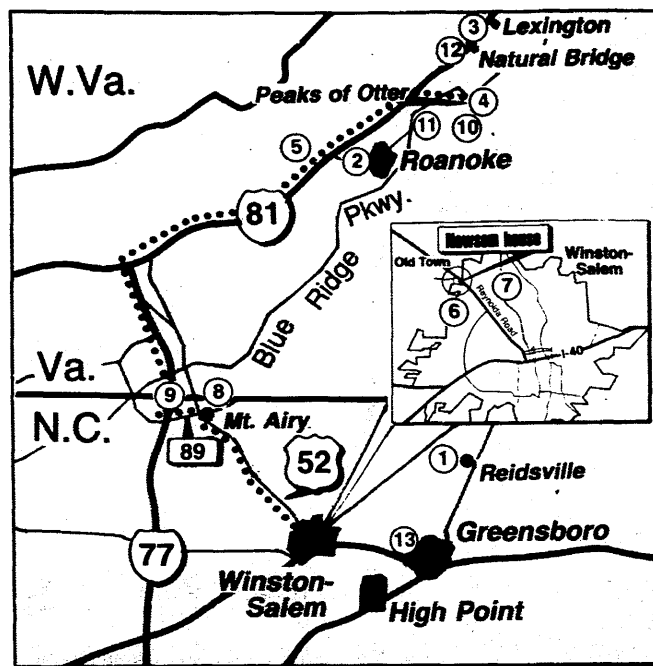
6. About 11 p.m., Ian lets Fritz out within a half mile of the Newsoms' house in Old Town. Just after midnight, Ian and Fritz rendezvous again.

7. Fritz, now driving Hattie Newsom's Volare, is stopped briefly by a police officer for traveling too slowly. Fritz returns Hattie's car, and he and Ian head back to Peaks of Otter.

Sunday, May 19

8. Early Sunday morning, Fritz shreds and dumps his shirt, shoes and hat into a convenience-store dumpster near Mount Airy.

9. In a rest-area men's room, Fritz shaves his beard.



10. Back at the campground, Fritz throws a pistol barrel into a lake and tosses his windbreaker and weapons case into a dumpster.

11. Fritz buries a bayonet and scabbard along the Blue Ridge Parkway. He and Ian return to camp.

12. Later that afternoon, Fritz meets Susie Lynch and her sons for dinner at Natural Bridge.

13. The four return to Greensboro about 11:30 p.m. About two hours later, Susie is notified that her grandmother and parents have been murdered.

Keith Simmons/News &amp; Record

It would go to the boys, and if anything happened to them, it would go to their father, Sands explained.

"That can't happen!" Susie said. "They'll kill me and the kids just to get it. What can we do?"

Sands said he could draw a will for Susie leaving everything to her children in a trust to age 30. If anything happened to them before 30, she could have the inheritance go to her brother's children.

Susie told him to draw the will. She wanted to take it to the newspapers and make it public so that anybody planning to kill her and the children for the inheritance would know that it wouldn't do them any good.

Sands said he'd work on the will and get it to her to sign next week.

That night Annette Hunt dropped by Susie's apartment. Susie told her again about her fears and about having the will drawn. The hopelessness that Annette had sensed in Susie the week before now was overwhelming.

"It was like they were all doomed and there was nothing they could do," Annette said later.

On Friday, Nancy Dunn, Susie's cousin, called her grandmother's house, where her mother, Frances Miller, was trying to clean up and set things in order. Her mother's voice sounded strained.

"What's wrong?" Nancy asked.

"Susie's here."

Nancy was concerned. "Is anyone else?" she asked. "Katy Sutton and the guards."

Nancy asked to speak to Susie, and she came on the phone bubbly and chattering. Suddenly, her voice took on a strange tone.

"My attorney told me not to move," she said.

"What do you mean move?"

"It would look awfully strange for a person who had inherited so much money to move quickly."

"All what money?" Nancy asked.

"You know Delores left all the money to the boys in a trust. All of my daddy's money and Nana's money was split up, and all that went to the boys in a trust."

Nancy knew that no such thing had happened.

Susie started talking about the murders.

"They say it was robbery, but I told the SBI that it was professional killers. I've told them, but they don't believe me. I've tried to tell everyone that this is a professional killing. We're all going to have to accept the fact that professional killers are never caught. That's why they're professionals."

This was the strangest telephone conversation Nancy had ever had.

"We're going to have to keep in touch," Susie said. "Nobody knows your address."

"I'll mail it to you," Nancy said.

## 'Say a prayer for me,' Ian said

Also on Friday, Gentry, Sturgill and J.W. Bryant of the SBI drove to Lexington, picked up Ian and went to Peaks of Otter to search for evidence. They found none, even though they used a metal detector.

They did pick up the registration envelope Fritz had signed at the campground. Dr. Fred R. Klenner Jr., it said.

Ian and the three detectives returned to Lexington late Friday afternoon, and the officers went to a steak house across the street from Ian's rooming house. Ian, who wasn't hungry, went to his room to rest.

The officers still had trouble believing that Ian really thought he was on a CIA mission. At the steak house, they decided to ask Ian if he would tape a conversation with Fritz in the hope of getting a confession.

Ian said he would. He followed the officers back to Winston-Salem in his own car. They got Ian a room at the Inn at Winston Square downtown, had him call Fritz and tell him that the police had come to see him and he needed to get with him to talk. Fritz said to meet him at Pennrose Mall in Reidsville on Saturday morning. The detectives immediately began planning the necessary surveillance.

While Gentry, Sturgill and Bryant were in the mountains, Capt. Ron Barker of the Forsyth County Sheriff's Department sought out the Winston-Salem officer who'd stopped Fritz the night of the murders.

Officer James F. Hull remembered stopping the car and radioing the tag number — PSL 360. But the police computer was down that night, and he couldn't get a report back on the car. The driver was polite, hadn't been drinking, told him he was on his way home from work, was having car trouble, so Hull let him go.

Hull thought he might be able to recognize him if he saw him again. Barker wrote five names on a piece of paper and asked Hull if he recognized any of them.

"Klenner" looked familiar, but he wasn't certain.

Other SBI agents were gathering information on Fritz. An SBI file on Fritz had been found. Four years earlier, two former friends of Fritz, Doug Birch of Raleigh and John Forrest of Hillsborough, had reported him to the SBI for practicing medicine without a license.

Agents talked to Birch and Forrest, who told them that Fritz was psychotic, that he could be armed with automatic weapons, perhaps explosives, and that he likely wouldn't be taken alive.

Some officers thought enough evidence was in hand to go ahead and arrest Fritz, but Gentry and Sturgill wanted to make a solid case. A tape, they thought, might do that. Don Tisdale, the district attorney, agreed.

Five cars containing SBI agents and Forsyth County detectives took up stations around Pennrose Mall on Saturday. Ian arrived in a blue Mustang driven by a youthful deputy, Stephen Carden, who was posing as Chris, a college friend. Another officer watched from an SBI airplane overhead.

Ian was wearing a small, flat recorder taped to his back and a small transmitter in his belt so that officers in the cars could hear what was happening. They all knew it was a risky operation, and Ian was nervous. If Fritz discovered the tape recorder, Ian might be killed before anybody could get to him.

"Say a prayer for me," Ian said when officers asked him to test his transmitter.

After Fritz arrived, Ian climbed into his Blazer and said he'd told his friend they were just going to sit and talk. Carden went into the mall.

"Let's ride somewhere," Fritz said, starting the engine and sending the surveillance cars into a scramble.

Ian told about Gentry and the two SBI men coming to talk to him.

"What did the SBI people look like?"

"Oh, cop types."

Ian tried to describe them and what they asked him. He said he described the camping trip for them.

"They told me the murders had taken place on Saturday night," Ian said. "I was sweating. I hope I didn't seem too nervous. I was scared to death."

They were in traffic now, and the noises made it difficult for officers to understand all that was being said.

"Well, what do you think?" Ian asked.

"Well — first off, we had nothing to do with that."

"Right. I know that."

"We're just the fall guys."

Fritz asked about the agents' names, and Ian said he wasn't sure about them.

"It's quite possible the third guy was a Company person who was there to judge your reactions," Fritz said, then remarked on some new construction they were passing.

"I told Chris I wasn't going to be too long," Ian said. "We were thinking about going and seeing 'Rambo' today. I've got to get my mind off this."

Fritz gave Ian a papaverine capsule that he said would slow his heart and respiration, and Ian swallowed it, causing much consternation among the officers.

Fritz told Ian to tell him everything he'd told the officers, and Ian began. He got to the part about calling Fritz's mother. "That'll be on the phone records," Fritz said.

As Ian continued, Fritz pulled into Greenview Cemetery and stopped near his father's grave. The surveillance cars took positions out of sight.

Fritz got out a map.

"Show me exactly what you showed them," he said. "Where did you show them that we started from?"

Ian pointed out the spot, and they talked about the trail.

"Okay, about tomorrow morning," Fritz said. "There will be, back at the rock, off the trail, there will be remains of a —"

"A fire," said Ian.

"— of a fire. You don't have anything to do tomorrow, do you?"

"I got this polygraph thing."

"Oh, it's tomorrow morning?"

"Oh, no, Monday. I was going to go back to Lexington tomorrow."

Fritz talked more about the trail, going over it on the map. "Now, I'll meet you somewhere tomorrow morning."

"I'm going to be with Chris tonight. I could probably change that. I don't know. I'd have to talk with him."

"That's fine. I was just thinking we could go up there tomorrow and hike a section of that trail. OK, you do not have to take the polygraph."

"Be kind of suspicious if I backed out of it. I'm going through with it. I've just really got to get myself composed."

"That's a tactic people like that use. If they really were going to give you a hard time, they would want you to do the polygraph then, not give you three or four days to think about it. See, that's psychological. They want to get your head screwed out. You always have the option to tell them that —"

"You don't see any need for it?" Ian asked.

"All you have to say is that —," Fritz said, then took a long pause. "— you're privy to information that falls under the national security act."

(Continued on A7)

# BITTER BLOOD

## A Genealogy of Murder

**Sunday: The Dying Begins** — Both murder scenes suggested robbery. Police suspected professionals. Family members suspected one of their own.

**Monday: His Father's Son** — Fritz Klenner's proud Prussian papa taught him to love guns, hate commies, charm women and expect Armageddon.

**Tuesday: Susie Q** — Susie Lynch lived a fairy-tale youth: May Queen at 5, high school princess, fraternity sweetheart.

**Wednesday: The Gathering Storm** — Fritz was ready for the world to fall apart, but not for his father to die.

**Thursday: Victims and Survivors** — As the family arranged funerals, the detectives analyzed alibis.

**Today: A Spy Gets Spooked** — Ian Perkins dreamed of joining the CIA. He thought he had passed the first test until the police came calling.

**Saturday: The Bloody End** — A shootout, a chase, an explosion — now nine people were dead.

**Sunday: The Unraveling** — The family was devastated, the community captivated. One by one, the bizarre details surfaced.