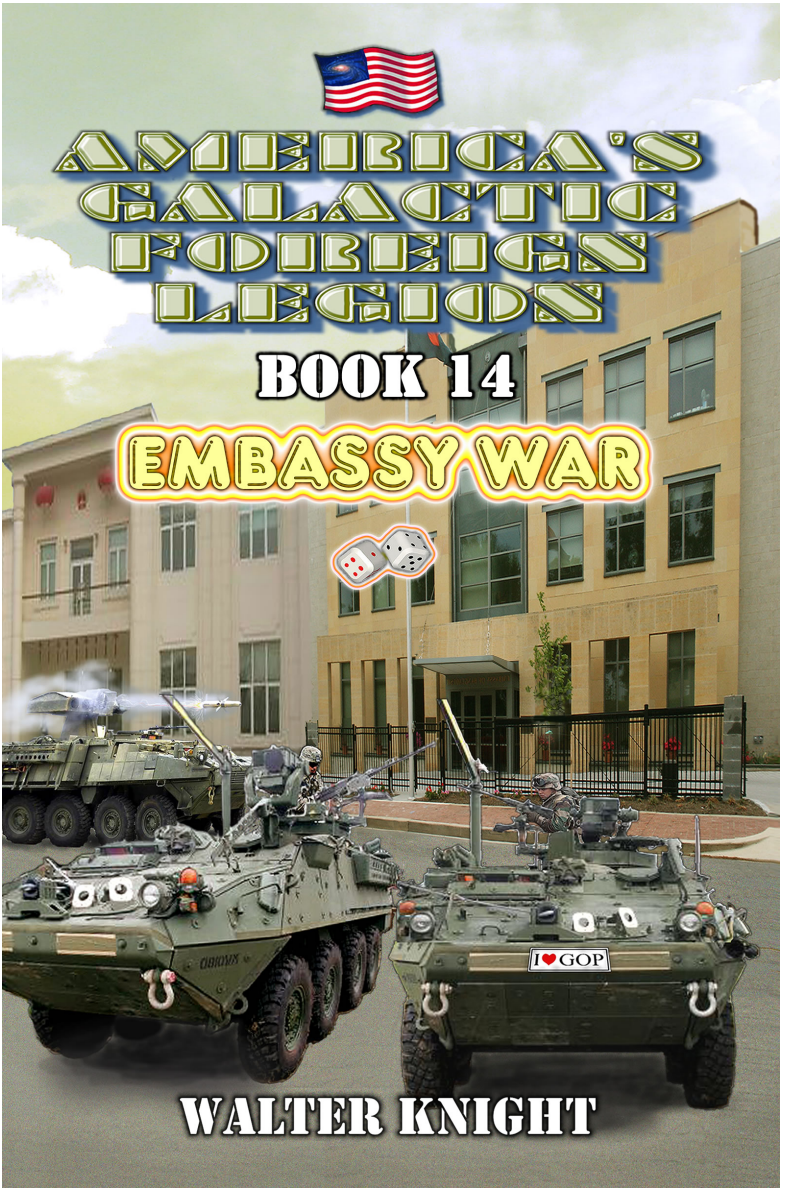
AMERICA'S
GALACTIC
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LEGION
BOOK 14
EMBASSY WAR
I ♥ GOP
WALTER KNIGHT

AMERICA'S GALACTIC FOREIGN LEGION

BOOK 14

EMBASSY WAR

by
Walter Knight

Colonel Joey R. Czerinski's back ... like a bad penny. The Hero of the Legion and Butcher of New Colorado is assigned to the Arthropodan Empire home world to guard the lavish United States Galactic Federation Embassy in Capital City, while also acting as a spy for General Lopez and the CIA.

Things start out reasonably well, considering Czerinski's reputation with the spiders. During a Harlem Globetrotters exhibition game, the usual sports betting ensues, despite staunch spider resistance to Americanized cultural contamination. Things get out of hand when a spider riot erupts. Later, an old 'friend' stops by Czerinski's office and creates mischief that burns down the embassy. Immediately Czerinski blames the spiders. But real trouble's on the table when a legionnaire and member of the scorpion-persecuted Mantidae disappears at the Scorpion Embassy right before the Scorpion Ambassador invites the USGF Ambassador and staff to an Old Earth 'traditional' Thanksgiving meal with all the fixin's – including what they assume is turkey.

Later, Czerinski's reassigned to a plum job back on New Colorado, watching a volcano. His former terrorist girlfriend and their teen son show up. Like father, like son, Joey Junior proves to be a handful of disciplinary problems looking for a place to happen – just in time for the imminent birthing of a new hybrid exoskeleton species. Eventually Czerinski discovers the spiders are tapping the volcano's power to develop a new technology that could change everything.

With the usual inappropriate aplomb, Czerinski and crew take political incorrectness to a laughably absurd level in this fourteenth installment of the mind-damaging military space opera.

AMERICA'S GALACTIC FOREIGN LEGION

Book 14: Embassy War

by
Walter Knight

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~BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR~

America's Galactic Foreign Legion series

Book 1: Feeling Lucky
Book 2: Reenlistment
Book 3: Silent Invasion
Book 4: Demilitarized Zone
Book 5: Insurgency
Book 6: Culture War
Book 7: Enemies
Book 8: Allies
Book 9: Scorpions
Book 10: Peacekeepers
Book 11: Cemetery City
Book 12: The Ark
Book 13: Salesman from Mars
Book 14: Embassy War

Novella related to the series

Vampire in the Outfield

~AUTHOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT~

I dedicate ***America's Galactic Foreign Legion – Book 14: Embassy War*** to American hero Scott Morgan Beamer.

A special thank-you to Penumbra Publishing editor Patricia Morrison for a fine edit of the entire AGFL series, and a shout to my wife Barb for her support.

AMERICA'S GALACTIC FOREIGN LEGION

BOOK 14

EMBASSY WAR

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PART I – *Embassy War*

CHAPTER 1

I am Colonel Joey R. Czerinski, hero of the Legion, Butcher of New Colorado, former casino owner, and commander of a Foreign Legion garrison tasked with security of the United States Galactic Federation Embassy on Arthropoda. The spiders of the Arthropodan Empire are not happy that I am back in their capital. I have been assured that I am protected by diplomatic immunity, but I have doubts.

Today I meet with spider spies to sell top-secret private-sector human technology. Being a spy, a double agent, and more is all part of my job description. Do not think me as a traitor. I have certain self interests and business partners to look out for when I patiently explain to spider techs complicated operating systems to our latest electronic devices.

* * * * *

"You put the Wonder Bread in these top slots and push down the lever until it clicks into place," I instructed. "In about a minute, the bread pops up toasted!"

"Wow, amazing," gushed the spider spy. "What about maintenance? A device this intricate must be a nightmare to maintain."

"How do you keep the cheese from gumming up

the works?" asked another spy.

"Turn the toaster upside down and rap on its bottom," I continued, ignoring that last fool. "Most crumbs will fall out. Be sure not to make toast while taking a bath. It could be shocking."

"Can you guarantee toaster durability?" asked the spider spy skeptically.

"Of course. This appliance will outlive both of us. I guarantee it. A limited warranty is issued with each toaster."

"How can you guarantee illegal, unlicensed, and untested technology like this?" asked the spider spy, always suspicious of human pestilence promises and boasts. "Your limited warranty is not worth the scrap of paper it is printed on."

"If you are not interested, I have other buyers," I replied, making an exaggerated show of getting up to leave, but not going anywhere. "These toasters are cutting-edge, state-of-the-art technology from the General Electric Corporation."

"We will buy a thousand toasters," advised the spider spy, impressed. "What else does your General Electric have to sell?"

"I just received a million electric toothbrushes, guaranteed to clean pearly white the nastiest yellow fangs of the Empire. For half price, I also have the latest fang-care accessories, including tooth paste and much needed extra-strength mouthwash. I can see you are in dire need of mouthwash, so to show goodwill, I am giving you a complimentary bottle of Scope with each purchase."

"More guarantees?" scoffed the spider spy, holding the bottle of magic green liquid up to the light. "Why would I want to mask my breath? How do you expect me to attract females if they cannot smell

my breath from a distance? Your mouthwash destroys the aroma."

"Exactly. At least I hope so."

"What?"

"The mouthwash will help you attract females," I insisted.

"You are a fool," replied the spider spy, tossing the Scope aside. "You know nothing of our females. This is worthless!"

"You can also use Scope to scrub toilets," I suggested, still smiling assuredly. "Did I tell you this is the New & Improved Extra-Strength Scope?"

"Our business is concluded."

"Not yet. I want to buy the blueprints to your new portable atomic generator."

"Ha!" hissed the spider spy, obviously annoyed at what he felt was human pestilence naivety. "If you want one of those pieces of junk, all you have to do is go to the Walmart Superstore and purchase it. They're on sale all week. I hope it explodes in your face!"

* * * * *

"What am I going to do with a hundred thousand bottles of mouthwash?" asked Quartermaster Sergeant Donald Crisp as we walked to the front gate of the embassy. Sergeant Crisp was a born salesman and taught me all about marketing. But he constantly complained, letting inconsequential details upset him. "You promised Scope would be a sure thing on Arthropoda."

"It should have been," I replied. "Spiders have terrible breath, but just don't care. All is not lost. We just need more marketing. That's your job. I have

more important responsibilities to worry about, so handle it!"

"What could be more important than a multi-million-dollar mouthwash deal?" asked Sergeant Crisp. "This debacle is costing money!"

"General Lopez only permits our little deals if we work on his CIA projects, too," I reminded Crisp. "There is a lot going on here you don't see."

"Yeah, like Lopez getting a cut of our action," complained Sergeant Crisp. "I know how that works. Lopez needs to start carrying his weight instead of shaking us down for a percentage."

* * * * *

At the front gate, we were confronted by early morning spider demonstrators protesting American contamination of Arthropodan culture. Frivolous complaints were another unfortunate part of doing business on Arthropoda. I delegated most complaints to Crisp. The protest leader, waving a 'No Walmart' sign, presented a list of grievances.

"Not you again!" I sighed, accepting the list. "I thought we resolved all differences on Walmart. The Teamsters will be allowed to organize employees, and shoplifters will no longer be vaporized."

"You have been vaporizing shoplifters?"

"Not really."

"Walmart is just the tip of the claw!" shouted the spider protest leader. "Americanizing our culture is the main problem."

"Go tell the Emperor your problems," I suggested. I knew this particular protester well. We called him Barney because of his dyed purple exoskeleton. A real troublemaker. "Stop disturbing

my peace!"

"It's illegal to protest at the Emperor's Palace," advised Barney. "So I am stuck protesting at your Nest of Spies. Our grievances will be addressed, or else!"

"Bring it on!" I replied, dismissing Barney as a fool. I slammed the embassy gate. I glanced at the grievances, about to walk away. Barney and his followers rattled the bars, chanting, 'Yankee Go Home!'

The grievance list complained about Walmart insensitivity, McDonald's hamburgers being too dry, Taco Bell using cat meat and road kill in their burritos, human pestilence Satellite TV contaminating Arthropodan culture by corrupting youth with gratuitous violence, porn, and reruns promoting scary purple dinosaur toys marketed to babies, and Fox News not being fair and balanced.

"This is ridiculous!" I fumed, wadding the list into a small ball and tossing it aside. "I have a mind to file a defamation complaint against all of you! There are no cats on Arthropoda, so there can be no kitties in the tacos!"

"We have lab results proving otherwise," exclaimed Barney, triumphantly waving documentation.

"The spiders have been importing cats as pets," whispered Sergeant Crisp.

"I thought you spiders were dog lovers," I commented. "Why all this sudden concern for cats?"

"Of course I am a dog lover," replied Barney, rattling the gate with his claw. "Dachshunds rule! That is not the issue. The issue is dietary fraud! Today Taco Bell serves up cats, tomorrow it will be our beloved doggies."

"Cat tastes like chicken," added Sergeant Crisp, trying to be helpful.

"Does not!" insisted Barney.

"Remind me not to eat at Taco Bell anymore," I told Crisp, in a hushed tone. "This is a bunch of rubbish!"

"I'll show you rubbish!" shouted Barney.

I was startled by the metallic thunk of a toaster crashing nearby, followed by more toasters. Electric toothbrushes sailed through the air like arrows. Soon the embassy yard was raining toasters and toothbrushes. Legionnaires scrambled for cover. A shot rang out. The entire incident was recorded by multiple video cameras and immediately broadcast over the Intergalactic Database.

My communications pad rang before I scrambled to the safety of the Embassy Administration Building. It was General Lopez, shouting, "What the hell are you doing? I turn on the news, and you're already making a spectacle of yourself, dodging my black market toasters! Why are you always creating bad press for me and the Legion by provoking those damn spiders? Can't you go one day without a riot?"

"It's not my fault," I replied defensively. "You think it's easy running a nest of spies? No one appreciates the job I'm doing here, especially you. If you think I'm screwing up, send me home! I'll be glad to leave this place!"

"Those are my toasters they're throwing over the wall!" fumed General Lopez. "Do you realize how much this debacle is costing me?"

"Forget about the cost," I advised, flinching as toasters cracked against the shatterproof embassy windows. One of those spiders had a hell of an arm. "We have a chance to deal the spiders a crippling

blow, and you're concerned about costs? I've got the spiders right where I want them, eating out of my hand."

"This had better be good!" said General Lopez doubtfully. "Tell me what you have."

"The spider public is demanding the Teamsters unionize all Arthropodan heavy industry, and they think it was their idea. The Emperor is helpless to stop us now."

"At least there is some good news. What's all this nonsense on TV about Taco Bell? I've got the CEO of Taco Bell on hold, wanting to know why his new upscale restaurants are being persecuted by spider health inspectors."

"I'll pay someone off," I replied, trying to placate Lopez.

"Not with *my* money you won't!" fumed General Lopez, disconnecting.

I looked out the window again. Legionnaires were retreating to the reception lobby, firing shots into the air. Several spiders scaled the front gate, teetering at the top, undecided about whether to drop down into the embassy yard. More shots rang out. One of the spiders perched atop the gate dropped back into the crowd – more sensational news for the Intergalactic Database.

* * * * *

Arthropodan Intelligentsia State Security Police arrived and cleared the streets of protesters. A litter bearer removed a dead spider found at the gate. I greeted the ranking Intelligentsia officer through the front gate grill.

"The Emperor is going to be upset about this,"

he commented.

"Sorry about the mess," I replied. "That rioter was trying to breach the front gate."

"Shoot as many trespassers as you want. It is that purple pest I am concerned about. Why could you not shoot him?"

"You mean Barney? Barney is harmless."

"Barney does not know when to shut up," insisted the Intelligentsia officer, annoyed at the mere mention of Barney's name. "The Emperor has noticed that purple traitor and is not happy. There are important trade deals being negotiated, and public support is important. We do not need these agitators rioting in the streets."

"So arrest Barney," I suggested. "Who will care?"

"Freedom of speech is another new concept you human pestilence have infested the Empire with. It is all your fault. They read your Constitution drivel on the Galactic Database. Believe me, I long for the good old days when I could just throw malcontents like Barney into the mulcher."

"Mulcher? Do you have a surplus mulcher I can buy?"

"What, your gulags are full again?"

"We don't have gulags," I replied defensively. "Our gardener has some pruning to do."

"Sure, like I believe that."

I shrugged, satisfied there would be no serious political repercussions caused by the front gate incident. As I left, Corporal Guido Tonelli hung back to talk to the spiders.

* * * * *

"Is the game still on?" asked Corporal Tonelli,

waving tickets at the Intelligentsia officer. “I got front row seats just for you. You’re not going to let one little riot cancel the game, I hope?”

“No way,” answered the Intelligentsia officer, snatching the tickets. He scanned the tickets, reading the human pestilence writing with his translator. “The Harlem World Trotters. Are they any good?”

“They’re average,” advised Guido. “Care to place a bet that your all-stars can beat them?”

“How many points can you give me?”

“It’s a straight up bet,” insisted Guido. “After all, this is a home game for you spiders. You have home planet advantage.”

“Put me down for fifty thousand credits on our all-stars to beat your World Trotters.”

“That’s Globetrotters.”

“Whatever,” said the Intelligentsia officer, swiping his card to record the bet. “Others may be placing wagers, too.”

“Not a problem,” advised Guido. “I can handle all the action you bring.”

“Just remember, I get a percentage of all action I send you.”

* * * * *

I briefed Ambassador James Yamashita. He was concerned about fallout from the riot. This was my second assignment with Yamashita. In my opinion, he was a worry-wart, but he seemed to be a professional, competent diplomat.

“Was it really necessary to shoot that spider demonstrator?” asked Ambassador Yamashita. “Did you know the President saw the whole thing on TV and called me personally about it?”

"We're still reviewing helmet camera downloads," I advised. "Maybe that spider had a heart attack or something."

"He was shot off his perch at the front gate! Everyone saw it on the database news."

"That has not been confirmed. There was a lot of confusion, and we do not know for sure he was shot. We were ducking toasters. I plead self-defense. It's a jungle out there."

"There will be no more incidents," warned Ambassador Yamashita, pacing about his office. "I worked hard to get this plum appointment to Arthropoda. Do not screw it up for me, or else!"

"Yes, sir."

"Why are the spiders throwing toasters, of all things? Have they gone crazy? Or is this a result of more games by you and your CIA buddies? Why was I not informed the spiders toasted their bread!"

"They don't. That's the problem. That, and a few malcontents and agitators. It's nothing to worry about."

"Security is getting lax," complained Ambassador Yamashita. "I expect you to be more diligent."

"Yes, sir."

"Are you going to the Globetrotters game?"

"I don't have tickets yet."

"Neither do I. You tell Guido I expect front-row seats for two behind the American bench!"

"Yes, sir."

CHAPTER 2

The Emperor and his Americanized wife, Queen Rainbow from planet colony New Colorado, sat in a deluxe box seat high above the basketball arena.

"How come I have to sit way up here?" asked the Emperor, pointing unhappily at the basketball court below. "Look at that. Even that fool Barney has a front row seat!"

"Oh!" shouted Queen Rainbow. "Ambassador Yamashita and Lulu have front row seats, too. Do something! Everyone has front row seats but us!"

"Your Majesty, this deluxe box is necessary because of security concerns," replied the Intelligentsia officer. "It is unsafe for you to sit among the peasants."

"But the rabble have a much better view!" complained the Emperor.

"That reminds me," said the Intelligentsia officer. "The game is about to start, and I have to get down there. My wife gets upset if I am late."

"You have front row tickets?" asked the Emperor.

"Someone has to keep an eye on that anarchist Barney," explained the Intelligentsia officer. "He has devious ways."

"Give me those tickets!" demanded the Emperor, snatching the Intelligence officer's stubs. "The Queen and I will be sitting courtside."

"But Your Majesty, it is not safe. What about security?"

"That is why I have Imperial Marines. It is about

time they started earning their pay!"

"But my wife will be upset. I will get the silent treatment for weeks."

"Tough! It's about time I got out among my loyal subjects. An Emperor needs to be seen and to make his presence known. Otherwise, the peasants get restless."

"It's so nice of you to give up your tickets!" exclaimed Queen Rainbow, kissing the intelligence officer on his mandible, and excitedly following His Majesty down the stairs to courtside. "Everyone who is anyone is here. Oh honey, I'm so happy to be out of that box! Go Globetrotters!"

"We are cheering for the home team," admonished the Emperor. "Remember your position."

"Yes, dear," answered the Queen as she ran off to greet and hug Lulu.

The Emperor let Queen Rainbow run amuck. Better she give Lulu an earful than him. A marine security detail chased after her. The spider all-stars, having finished their warm-ups, were seated directly in front of the Emperor. He leaned forward and tapped one of the players on the back. "I expect you to win this game, or else!" threatened the Emperor. "I have money riding on you."

"We will try," replied the startled spider player. "But you know the human pestilence Globetrotters have won over ten thousand games in a row."

"What? That is impossible. If this game is fixed, heads will roll!"

"It is their ball handling," explained the spider player. "Globetrotters pass the ball at the speed of light."

"We shall see about that," commented the Emperor, upset. "Speed of light indeed! You have

eight hands and feet. You have eyes in the back of your head. Your superior evolutionary exoskeleton design gives you a distinct advantage. I expect superior ball handling and passing, or else. Do your Empire proud!"

"Yes, Your Majesty."

* * * * *

Skyhook Johnson captivated the crowd with his skilful dribbling and quick ball handling. An artist with a basketball, Skyhook was the de facto leader of the Globetrotters. He relished the spotlight, and all eyes were on him as he put on another fine performance for his fans, literally running circles around the spider all-stars.

Skyhook waved to the adoring crowd as he dribbled. With the lead secured, the Globetrotters now performed their antics. Skyhook grabbed the jersey of the spiders' team captain, stretching the fabric several feet until the referee finally called a foul. As the spider player stood at the foul line, preparing for a free-throw shot, Skyhook snuck behind and pulled down one of the spider's socks.

Annoyed, the spider player kicked at Skyhook but continued concentrating on his free-throw attempt. Skyhook darted in to pull down another sock. This time the spider player turned to confront Skyhook, chasing him past the three-point circle. Skyhook was too quick to be caught, taunting the spider player from afar. The crowd loved it, cheering loudly.

The spider player returned to the free-throw line. This time he kept one of his eight eyes pointed at Skyhook. The shot was up … and missed! Skyhook

clapped his hands, edging closer to the spider player. Skyhook rushed forward to grab the spider player's sock again, but this time grabbed his shorts, pulling them down. The spider player was furious, taking a vicious swipe at Skyhook with his claw. Skyhook avoided injury by deftly dancing back. He turned his back on the spider and waved again to the crowd.

The spider player threw the basketball at Skyhook, striking him in the back. Both benches cleared, followed by a lot of shouting and shoving. When order was restored, the spider basketball player returned the free-throw line.

Skyhook made a great show of apologizing to the spider player, extending his hand to shake hand to claw. They both publicly made amends, and play resumed. Skyhook tossed the basketball to the spider player. However, the ball fell short, bursting into a million ceramic pieces in front of the spider player.

Having switched the basketball for a ceramic ball, Skyhook now waved to the cheering crowd, celebrating his latest gag. The referee was not amused, and called a technical foul on Skyhook for delay of game.

Seeming out of character, Skyhook became enraged at being cited with a technical foul. He picked up a bucket from the bench and threatened to douse the spider referee with its contents. Mortified, the ref ran in the opposite direction, with Skyhook chasing close behind. They ran the entire perimeter of the basketball court, fans on each side cheering as they passed.

Suddenly the referee angled toward the spider all-stars' bench. Arthropodan marines jumped up, forming a barrier protecting the Emperor. Annoyed, the Emperor yelled in displeasure, "Sit down you

fools, I cannot see the show!"

"Your Majesty, that human pestilence intends to throw a bucket of water," responded a spider officer. "We will not allow royalty to be assaulted by the human pestilence."

"Nonsense!" replied the Emperor. "I have seen this show on human pestilence Satellite TV! It is just a gag for our amusement. The bucket only contains harmless paper confetti. Sit down, or else!"

As the spider marines lowered their guard, the referee ran straight toward the all-star bench. Skyhook, close on his heels, threw the bucket contents. Green Gatorade missed the referee and doused His Majesty.

A dozen spider marines rushed forward, grabbing Skyhook, knocking him the floor, and stomping the Globetrotter into unconsciousness. Skyhook was kicked so hard, his diamond stud earring popped out and skittered across the floor. Globetrotters, along with human fans and armed legionnaires from the honor guard, raced to save Skyhook. Several shots were fired, dispersing the crowd surrounding Skyhook. Sensing another riot about to take place, the spider Intelligentsia officer grabbed a microphone, trying to calm the crowd and establish authority. "By order of the Emperor, order will be restored immediately! By Imperial Decree, the human pestilence 'World Trotters' basketball team forfeits this game for unsporting and uncivilized-like conduct! The offending Skyhook is under arrest for assaulting the royal personage of His Majesty, and will be tried and executed at dawn! Go home. The show is over!"

Corporal Tonelli, until now quietly watching and counting his profits, grabbed the microphone from

the Intelligentsia officer and yelled, "Oh no you don't! You can't fix this game!"

"The Emperor's Decree is law!" replied the Intelligentsia officer. "Our all-stars win. Your human pestilence World Trotters lose. I win my bet! Pay up. Do not try to worm out of it. I will collect my due!"

"Not likely," responded Corporal Tonelli. "All bets were registered and bonded through Bonanno Bookies and Associates of New Memphis. This matter will go to binding arbitration before any payouts are authorized."

"You cheat!" accused the Intelligentsia officer, poking his claw at Corporal Tonelli. "Guido, you will not get away with welshing on our wager! You will be arrested if you do not pay up!"

"Read the fine print on the back of your receipt," advised Guido. "Disputes are handled by binding arbitration. It's the law. I think it's even in the Constitution, somewhere in the Bill of Rights."

"You will join Skyhook in front of a firing squad!"

"You want a war? Mess with me, and I'll have the Mafia on you!"

"There is no such thing as the Mafia," scoffed the Intelligentsia officer. "I have heard you say that a million times!"

"I lied. The Mafia is everywhere, and they will invoke the Vendetta if anything happens to me!"

The Intelligentsia officer paused, looking about, half expecting to be rushed by a mob of human pestilence sub-category Italiano. Not seeing any swarthy human pestilence about, he brightened. "You bluff. Your Mafia is a paper tiger, just like your Foreign Legion and your Uncle Sam!"

"You don't know what are talking about," warned Guido. "You better watch your back."