



Ho Lin

Henchman

Employee Dossier 2893: Stingray
Global Projects
Report Compiled by #3

Background:

Employee (hereafter referred to by code name “Stingray”) was born in 1964 to single mother in Philadelphia Badlands. Mother was nurse at Kindred Hospital and died when Stingray was 12. Cause of death: After long day at work, mother mistakenly boarded limited express bus, and driver refused to let her off at her stop even though it was on the same route. Mother disembarked in crime-ridden neighborhood, and was knifed to death. Stingray subsequently found bus driver and assaulted him with baseball bat, resulting in probation and placement with foster family. In these formative years, Stingray came to be infatuated with *Star Wars* and actor Mark Hamill, and developed a fascination with the 1978 Hamill film *Corvette Summer*, inspiring his later code name.

At age 16, Stingray tested for a driver’s license, certain he would soon own a Corvette similar to the one in the film (candy-red,

bristling with pistons and the snout of a shark). He failed the test twice. Disillusioned, he stole a Corvette, and for 21 minutes he enjoyed freedom and the wind in his face as he dashed through Philadelphia's midnight streets, before the Corvette met a telephone pole. This was the first of many incarcerations; by age 23, Stingray been arrested for numerous petty crimes.

Recruitment:

According to Associate 1254 (code name: Komodo), Stingray was on parole and drinking at The Dive Bar when he met Komodo, who had just completed an intervention in Berlin (see Mission Report 85A). Komodo reports that without prompting, Stingray bought him a drink and began disclosing his personal history. In Komodo's words: "Sometimes one feels compelled to chat up a total stranger, even when the stranger shows no sign of interest. Stingray was in such a mood that night." Stingray ultimately expressed his desire to "drive fast and fuck shit up." Sensing the young man's aptitude, and cognizant of the Organization's recent memo re: employee recruitment, Komodo referred Stingray to Interviewer 42 (code name: Blackstone).

Interview/Intake:

As recorded by Blackstone (Appendix A), Stingray's interview for position of associate occurred on 22 December 1987. Organization goals were explained, along with the benefits: international travel, the likelihood of quick advancement, and an optimistic profit forecast. At time of recruitment, Organization was seeing record revenues under leadership of B.E., with a focus on extortion, assassinations, WMD acquisition, and related projects (Almanac 14, section 1987). Apart from a fear of needles, perhaps due to late mother's occupation (Appendix B: Psychological Profile), Stingray was judged to be a good fit with the Organization's needs. Stingray was particularly impressed by Blackstone's summation of the position: "This is not a get-along, go-along kind of job. It rewards daring, innovation and sheer bloody-mindedness." Final vetting took place in Everglades HQ, with Stingray enduring standard examination under torture and participating in a Difficulty-5 Obstacle Course. The other candidate who participated in this

round did not survive (see Almanac 13: Compendium of Failed Candidates). Stingray passed with satisfactory grade.

First Assignment: Project 747

Stingray was assigned to NYC Bureau and tasked with liquidating an air traffic controller employed at JFK. Plan called for Associate 436 (code name: Ovid) to take controller's place during control tower night shift, and ensure the covert landing of aircraft carrying shipment of conflict diamonds from the Congo (full details in Mission Report 4879). Stingray was under orders to make controller's death appear accidental; he would endeavor to access controller's apartment, drug him, and throw him off his tenth-story balcony. Stingray did not anticipate the controller's Airedale terrier, however. Stingray was attacked upon entry, and received bite wounds on right arm and left thigh. Alerted to his presence, controller was ready to bash in Stingray's head with a golf club (seven iron) when he died of a coronary on the scene (autopsy indicated heavy nicotine and cocaine usage). His mission accomplished by sheer accident, Stingray violated policy and reported that objective had been fulfilled exactly as planned. Immediate outcome was success of Project 747, and a positive evaluation for Stingray. Ten years later, the true nature of the incident would come to light through the confession of Stingray's former supervisor, Associate 1777 (code name: Vandrella). Stingray admitted to Vandrella what had happened within minutes of completing his assignment (his words, according to Vandrella: "All my life I've dreamed of this, and I came *this close* to fucking everything up.") Taking pity, Vandrella suggested Stingray "whitewash" his report. (Vandrella's eventual confession would lead to his dismissal from the Organization, from a height of 10,000 feet—see Dossier 987).

Hong Kong Abduction:

For next major assignment, Stingray was seconded to the Hong Kong Bureau of Global Projects, and tasked with abducting a foreign dignitary for blackmail purposes (Mission Report 5123: Chungking Express). This was Stingray's first trip abroad, to a city that had played a large part in fueling the fantasies of his youth:

Bruce Lee, Shaw Brothers martial arts movies, and John Woo gangster epics. While awaiting the target's arrival, Stingray was seen frequenting bars in Lan Kwai Fong dressed in an overcoat and sunglasses, a matchstick jutting from his mouth. (See Hong Kong Cultural File 7: Chow Yun-Fat, actor.)

Stingray intercepted target upon latter's arrival in lobby of Peninsula Hotel. While Associate 433 (code name: Li Po) provided public distraction, Stingray was to inject target with incapacitating agent, then escort him to waiting car outside hotel entrance, which would transport them to Organization safe house. However, target had martial arts training (unmentioned in dossier), and disarmed Stingray, then tackled him using elbow strike and single-leg takedown. By good fortune, Stingray's needle landed in target's neck, resulting in partial injection before needle was crushed. While target was dazed, Stingray fulfilled remainder of objective. During getaway, target regained consciousness and attempted escape. Displaying "bloody-mindedness," to quote Blackstone, Stingray restrained target and maintained control of car despite sustaining a broken left forearm (Stingray's later comment: "Who needs a driver's license, bitch?") When target leaned out of the window during the struggle, a passing truck side-swiped his head, killing him instantly. Nevertheless, the mission was deemed a success, as the target's nation was blackmailed for a sum of \$50 million dollars (his colleagues were unaware that he was deceased). Stingray was cleared of wrongdoing, as he had not been sufficiently informed of the target's prowess. Due to the incident, Stingray earned the moniker of "Brick Wall" for his ability to withstand pain. That night he stood on the rooftop of the HK Bureau, shot glass of whiskey in his good hand, the lights of Hong Kong Harbor spread beneath him like fireflies, his comrade Komodo at his side. He murmured, "For the first time, I feel like I belong in this world."

Professional Development:

In his first half-decade of employment, Stingray was a model employee. Not given to vices, he was receptive to coaching in demolition, disruption and infiltration. He received satisfactory marks on all his evaluations, save for two demerits for not

submitting a field action report in a timely manner—a common deficiency for those at his experience level. His loyalty to the Organization was unquestioned; it has been documented that he would yell “Oorah for the Org!” whenever a mission was declared successful. During B.E.’s visit to the NYC Bureau on 6 August 1990, Stingray was on the day roster and ordered to supply B.E. with tea and scones. Later that day he was required to chaperone B.E.’s pet panther in the ready room, a duty he would later describe as “a fantastic honor” (Appendix C). Stingray’s major missions during this span included participation in the Ankora Gambit (Mission Report 1587 and File 1879: Disinformation Campaigns) and the Haldeman Interdiction (Mission Report 1622). For the latter he received a commendation, with the following citation:

Displaying bravery in the face of enemy resistance, Stingray diverted attention from his colleague Stormhaven by hot-wiring a Mustang and barreling straight at opposition forces, allowing Stormhaven to successfully snipe Haldeman at a distance of 100 meters. Although Stingray crashed his vehicle and sustained injuries to his left shoulder and L3 and L4 vertebrae, he evaded the opposition despite his own team having already evacuated the area. When reunited with his team, his first statement was “You bastards left me to die!” This comment was received as a joke and proof of his unconquerable spirit.

Stingray’s injuries required surgery; due to security requirements, surgery was performed internally, with mixed results (Appendix D). Stingray was prescribed morphine for pain management, and soon developed an addiction. During rehabilitation, he was taken off active duty and assigned to NYC Bureau administration. Although his performance was adequate, his career track had stalled. Colleagues described him as morose, and on one occasion he was heard to utter, “Maybe I wouldn’t have signed up for this shit if I knew this was going to happen.” (He would later complain about his hazard pay, which led to internal review and revision of Workman’s Compensation—see Policy amendment 15.) Stingray’s difficulties during this time coincided with the Organization’s disastrous Bakudan project, its first major failure during B.E.’s tenure (see Mission Report 2345; File 4577: Nuclear Blackmail; and File 1546: British Secret Service Interventions). As Vandrella

would later recall, “The shock and disbelief were palpable. We all thought we would be successful for decades to come—to have it all come down like that was a huge blow.” The setback resulted in cutbacks at every level, loss of annual bonuses, and increased workloads for all remaining members. This necessitated Stingray taking on more administrative duties, which further forestalled his return to field work.

Personal Life:

Stingray did not regularly fraternize outside the Organization. During his seventh year of employment, he began a sexual relationship with a social worker, code name Cassandra (see File 6756). Cassandra had no ties with the Organization or its competitors, and under her homeopathic influence Stingray was able to break his morphine addiction; the relationship was therefore allowed to continue. In the relationship’s seventh month, Stingray confided to certain colleagues that he was contemplating a return to civilian life, and the couple’s activities were monitored from that point on. Utilizing his savings, Stingray finally bought a Corvette (a sizable investment—records indicate he could only afford \$1200 in monthly rent), and on weekends he and Cassandra would speed away to holidays in the Catskills. (He had qualified for his driver’s license by this time.) During one of these trips, on a golden autumn afternoon common to upstate New York, the air fragrant with the smell of dry leaves, the highway spinning out like a ribbon, Stingray proposed to Cassandra. His words: “I want to make a change, and you’re the one I want to change for” (Appendix E: Field Recordings). The matter was tabled for discussion among NYC department heads; all measures were considered, including termination. Before a decision was reached, it was discovered that Cassandra came across communications that hinted at the Organization’s existence. Special Branch was assigned the case on 12 November 1994. On 14 November, the matter was closed in satisfactory fashion, with all traces erased save a fabricated “Dear John” letter addressed to Stingray. After a brief stint at a sanctioned rehabilitation facility, Stingray returned to duty; after a probationary period of one year, his loyalty was determined to be intact, with no further action required. Stingray sold his Corvette and never drove again after the incident.

Operation Colossus:

In 1997, the Organization undertook its riskiest venture yet: Colossus (see Mission Report 9374 and File 6570: Bacteriological Warfare). Resources were at a low, and all employees with prior field experience were recalled to active duty. Stingray was assigned to Austrian branch of Global Projects, and stationed at South Tyrol HQ. Displaying initiative, Stingray requested to join ski squad, but due to lack of recent activity, he was assigned to equipment maintenance at main lodge. Komodo reported that Stingray was displeased with the assignment, but nonetheless performed all tasks required of him. In the process, he gained proficiency with a snowboard, and confided to Komodo that he was pondering a new cover identity as an instructor.

On evening of 24 December 1995, South Tyrol HQ was infiltrated by an outside agitator (Appendix F, MI-6 Operatives), while Stingray was on duty. Stingray was taken by surprise by the agitator, knocked unconscious within seconds, bound and gagged, and stuffed in a closet while agitator made his escape using skis from Stingray's workshop (subsequent chase resulted in death of six associates). After Stingray was freed, Manager ST considered various punishments, but was dissuaded by Komodo (Komodo's statement: "If you kill him, kill all of us, because we all bear responsibility"). Stingray also acquitted himself well, accepting responsibility and once again requesting ski squad duty as atonement. Impressed with Stingray's resolve, Manager S granted permission. According to Komodo, he and Stingray shared a celebratory drink after the decision. Stingray noted that the two comrades had outlived many of their contemporaries. "After all this shit, everything I've given up, I just want to make a difference before it's too late—leave my mark for all to see," Stingray said. The two of them regarded the sunrise peeking over the Alps in silence, overtaken by awe.

At 0700 on December 26, Stingray was gearing up to join morning patrol when South Tyrol HQ was raided by a group later identified as an international task force supported by HMSS. Reports indicate Stingray was among the first to charge into the fray. Before he could fire a single shot in anger, he was caught in the middle of a

grenade explosion, which collapsed the floor underneath him and sent him and three other associates tumbling into a snowbank below the lodge. The last recorded account of his condition comes from Associate 69823 (code name: Valentine), who observed that Stingray was half-buried in the snow, bloodied, his right leg gone, still conscious. “All I wanted was a Corvette,” he was heard to say. “What happened? What happened?” Valentine was forced to retreat before he could effect a rescue. At 0825, explosives planted by attacking force eradicated South Tyrol HQ, bringing Operation Colossus to an ignominious end. This outcome resulted in the death of B.E., and inaugurated the Organization’s decline.

Summation:

Lacking evidence to the contrary, Stingray is classified as deceased, with no known living relatives. In lieu of posthumous testimony provided by Vandrella and Komodo, Stingray’s name was stricken from official rosters, and deleted from list of 379 casualties from Project Colossus. However, it was ruled that his commendation for the Haldeman Interdiction, amended with name redacted, should remain on record as proof of the value of the “nameless foot soldier.” Although the Organization has been inactive since 2000, this dossier, along with all others, will be housed at Outpost T, until such time as the Organization rises from the ashes once again, and finds new recruits to continue its important work. Oorah for the Org.

Ho Lin is the co-editor of *Caveat Lector*. His collection of short stories *China Girl* is now available on Amazon in paperback, hardcover and e-book formats.