

Love in the Afternoon, and Flamethrowers

by Joe Nobel

I was clearing brush in the Central Sector with my A53 flamethrower when I spotted a lone enemy scout. I got him in my scope and watched him for a moment before readying to torch him.

That Northern Sector insurgent was standing by a brook. I saw him take off his flamethrower harness and bend down to scoop a handful of running water. He took a drink. When he stood and turned toward me, I noticed that he was a she.

She had short, blond hair beneath her Northern Sector camouflage cap. I watched her unbutton the top two buttons of her camouflage shirt. She was sweating as much as I was in this Central Sector jungle. Then she dropped her pants and peed in the brook.

To think, that stream runs into a river which flows into the Southern Sector. One thing I can't stand is some Northern Sector trollop contaminating our precious Southern Sector water supply. I got

ready to burn her ass. Too bad, she was kind of cute.

I took aim. But then, I wanted to take a closer look, to see this girl warrior with a flamethrower of her own, maybe tell her it's not cool to pee in the Southern Sector water supply before I toasted her. I took a step closer. I snapped a twig, and she heard me.

She quickly sprang up, pulled up her pants and harnessed her flamethrower. But by then, I was out of the brush and upstream of her in the brook.

She fumbled with her flamethrower, but I had mine aimed on her by then.

“Hand up or I'll burn you,” I ordered.

“You! Hands up,” she replied. By then she had her flamethrower aimed at me.

“No, you!”

“No, you!”

“We can be at this all day,” I told her.

“I've got nothing better to do,” she said. “Besides, you're not going to burn me. You had your chance when you were watching me over there.”

“So, I watched you for a moment,” I told her. “Shoot me.”

“That's what I'm supposed to do, you, you Southern Sector —” she was looking for words, “pervert.”

“I am not a pervert!” I said emphatically. “It's just that I haven't seen a woman since deployed to the Central Sector.”

“What? Now I'm easy?”

“No! I never thought that. I bet you are as much stuck in this war as I am.”

She shrugged her shoulder.

We stood looking at each other for what seemed like forever.

“We're going to lower our flamethrowers on the count of three, okay?” I said.

She didn't say anything, but nodded tentatively.

“One. Two. Three,” I said. Neither of us moved. “That didn't work.”

“Let me try,” she said. “Let's do it slowly. Ready? One. Two. Threeeee.”

The flamethrowers were lowered, slowly at first, but soon both our weapons were pointing to the ground.

She hesitantly took off her harness and dropped her flamethrower to the ground. I did likewise.

“Let's start over,” I said. “My name is John.”

“I'm Sally,” she said.

Such a typical Northern Sector name, I thought.

“How come you're all alone here in the Central Sector?” I asked. It wasn't the most original line, but that's all I had for the moment.

“Who says I'm alone? Maybe I've got a whole company hidden in the bushes waiting to fry your ass.”

“No, you don't,” I said, maybe a bit too cocky. “You're alone.”

“So, I'm alone,” she said, shrugging. “But, I can still whip your wimpy ass.”

“If you want to wrestle: sure, why not?” I said, winking.

“Maybe later, John,” she said. “A lot later.”

“You want a power bar?” I asked, reaching into my pocket. “I've got two. Coffee or berry?”

“You'll be short by one,” she said.

“Go ahead, take one,” I told her. “Really.”

“All right,” she said, holding out her hand. “I haven't smelled coffee in a long time.”

I walked slowly toward her, closing the gap between us. Holding out the coffee-flavored power

bar.

When at arms length, she snatched it out of my hand. She looked up at me cautiously, making sure I hadn't moved while her eyes were on my hand. She tore through the wrapper but stopped before taking a bite.

“You first,” Sally said.

I unwrapped my berry-flavored bar, then took a bite. Once I did, she devoured hers in three bites.

“Hungry?” I asked.

“I'm good,” she answered haughtily.

“I've got one can of field rations left, and um?”

“Are you asking me out to dinner?”

“No, of course not,” I stammered. “Okay, yes I am.”

So we shared my can of rations. It was generic Spam. And, I learned that she was a librarian before the war in Northern Sector City, an official sexy librarian. I told her I was an official starving student at the Southern Sector University, but I couldn't get out of the draft.

Then I received a message on the radio. “Attention all Southern Sector troops. We have signed a peace treaty with the Northern Sector. Northern Sector troops are our allies from now on. We have declared war on the Eastern Sector and their Northeastern Sector allies.”

“Wow, that's amazing,” I said.

Sally received the same announcement from her commanders, too. Except, the Northern Sector was now at war with the Western Sector and their Northwest and Southwest confederates.

“That's good news, too,” she said, adding a half-hearted smile. “But, that means you have to head east and I have to go west.”

“I know, but we have tonight.” I just realized how forward that sounded. But before I could

apologize, she reached over kissed me.

“Then, tonight it is,” she said.

“It is?” I said, all of a sudden, surprised. “Um, it is!”

“No, silly,” she laughed. “I don't know you well enough to go all the way. But you can have my ip address and look me up after the war. 8.67.5.30.9”

I quickly keyed it into my phone, then gave her my ip.

As the sun went down we lit a fire and I cradled her in my arms as we sat in front of it. Then I summoned up the courage to ask her.

“I'm cool with not going all the way, being war and all, but how 'bout copping a feel?”

I thought she'd slap me or something, but she quietly said, “Okay.” She then let me reach under her shirt, and her bra. And I touched her soft delicate bosoms. I realized then how long I've been locked in this Central Sector jungle war. She let out a soft whimper.

“You're so tender,” I whispered.

“Okay, enough,” she said. “My turn.” And she reached in my pants and felt my member. “You're burning down there,” she gasped.

“Sorry, you have that effect.”

“Maybe we could go all the way,” Sally whispered. She started unbuttoning her camouflage shirt before waiting for my answer.

“Attention all units,” it was my radio again, “the treaty talks with the Northern Sector have colapsed. We are now at war again with the Northern Sector. Repeat: we are at war with the Northern Sector.”

“Oh,” Sally said, quickly buttoning her shirt.

“That's it?” I asked, the disappointment must have shown on my face.

“I'm afraid so,” she said. “I don't like it either. We'll go in opposite directions and hope we don't run into each other in combat.”

“Okay,” I said.

We put out the campfire and donned our flamethrower harnesses. Then we walked away from each other.

“Look me up after the war,” I said. “Really.”

“I will,” she replied. But when we were twenty paces apart, I heard the tick of her flamethrower's ignition. Before I could turn around, the little bitch toasted my pathetic ass with a burst of flame. It always ends this way with women.

The End

Thank you for reading Love in the Afternoon, and Flamethrowers. I hope you enjoyed my story.

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Be well, Joe

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