

**TEXT
ADVENTURE**

*' THE
GOLDEN
ASS '*

stanley lieber

1

Fukushima, Alpine Electronics factory.

Snow on duck wings. Frozen power lines.

Paris Mold disembarked the ocean and scaled the wall of ice.

Specialized tools, plated with gold for superior conduction. That had been in the RFP. So, monitor engaged. But, too much noise. Damned thing.

Shift change, orderly fashion.

Scan the crowd.

Face not detected. Target missing.

Equipment was trash. Disconnect. Set it aside.

Re-up.

2

Fukushima, Alpine Electronics factory.

Slake Bottom finished his cigarette and wandered back inside.

Shift change, orderly fashion.

Things were running smoothly.

Wait.

Walked back to the wall. Glint of sunlight on a curtain of frost. Maybe nothing.

No, there it was again.

Up the mountain.

3

Target.

Logged in, armed.

Wait.

Focus.

Wait.

Paris halted. One by one, his limbs timed out, declining to respond. This surprised him. His connection was persistent. And yet, areas of his expertise were gradually obscured from his apprehension.

Conclusion: Remote shutdown, presently completed.

Drives clicked as Paris sank to the ground. Sensation of cold as nylon split, exposing plastic skin. Then, all feeling was gone.

Final view: Golden donkey helmet reflecting sunset from the lake. Lights glistening on concrete. Flick of a lighter, and now a waft of purple smoke.

Slake, standing over him.

4

Sickly yellow plastic peeking through tufts of dirty snow and what remained of the cigarette.

Weapons splayed, suggesting a lapse of trigger discipline.

Backpack. Mold photography, hardcopy.

Curious.

Searching the nylon pockets, a flash of the gold-plated hindquarters. Ineffective, so far as armor goes.

Erect now, Slake proceeded to violate the body.

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