



GREENSPIN



A NEW NOVEL BY
JOHN PILMER

"When News
turns **Deadly.**"

Green Spin

A Novel

By

John Pilmer

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Edited by Jack Shirts & Andon Carling

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This is a work of fiction. Characters, corporations, institution, and organizations in this novel are the product of the author's imagination, or, if real, are used fictitiously without any intent to describe their actual conduct.

Prologue

The spring resisted as the shadowy figure pulled back on the slide. Finding the neutral point where the slide stop pin moved for cleaning frustrated the gun novice. Muttering under his breath, he finally got the pin to budge. Searching his memory for the seller's hastily-delivered cleaning instructions, he accidentally let the slide slip, almost breaking his finger in the process.

“Blasted! Need a manual,” muttered the man as he suddenly straightened from his slouch. In a fit of rage, he cocked his arm to sling his new metal enemy against the wall. Realizing the role of the gun for tomorrow's plan, he instead grabbed a nearby stool and smashed it against the kitchen floor. Sufficiently satisfied that justice was served, he returned to his work. *But, then again, buying an untraceable weapon from a guy in a dark alley doesn't allow for such luxury as a manual*, he complained to himself.

Moving now with more confidence, clumsy fingers coaxed the pin to give way, and it dropped onto the newspaper covering the dimly lit kitchen table. The light fixture overhead was missing two out of four light bulbs, straining middle-aged eyes. Exhausted by the last hour and his own internal turmoil, he set the pistol down and rubbed his eyelids and forehead.

Ought to change those bulbs so I can see, he thought. No matter; I won't be coming back here in

the morning. He picked up the weapon and continued to disassemble it. The slide came off easily enough now with the pin removed. Dark grey gunpowder residue covered the inside of the chamber. The neglect of the previous owner made the new gun owner glad he was cleaning the equipment he would depend on tomorrow. *Can't complain for \$150.*

As he held the main gun spring, he lifted out the barrel, revealing more burned powder residue. "What the—," he did not finish. *Did that punk ever clean this thing?* The brooding vigilante set down the gun parts and reached for the cleaner. He had worn a disguise and paid cash when he bought the gun cleaning kit at Wal-Mart earlier in the day.

The strong scent of the spray assaulted his airways as he covered the gun parts. The excess cleaner dripped onto and spread across the newspaper. *You could get a buzz off this stuff.* He reached for the barrel cleaning brush and continued. Once he had probed the barrel a few times, he replaced the brush tip with the rag attachment. Forcing the piece of cloth down the barrel, he was surprised how the pink spray was now black on the rag. He ran the rag through the body of the weapon until he was satisfied. Then, he reassembled the 9mm Smith & Wesson.

Fine and dandy, he thought, congratulating himself as he ran a rag over the grip one more time. The room now reeked from the aroma. He pulled back the slide and pushed up the safety pin to keep the chamber open. Grabbing a loaded ammo clip, he shoved it home, arming his newest instrument of death. He pointed the gun, aiming at an imaginary

target. *That ought to get the puke's attention tomorrow.* As he stood, tired eyes scanned the table, taking inventory of the other tools he would employ in the coming day. Ignoring an empty pizza box and other clutter, he turned off the light switch and headed to bed. Tired eyes glanced at the lighted digital clock on the way through the kitchen doorway: 11:40 p.m. Sunday, May 1, 2016.

Chapter 1 – The Library

A forty-eight inch barrel chest on a five-foot-ten frame made for a formidable lineman on a rural Idaho high school football team—not so dominant when talking to girls, however. A poor self-image, compounded by his discomfort over a growing bald spot, made the twenty-three-year-old Jack Knighton nervous as he approached the study table by the window of the Utah Valley University campus library.

“M-m-may I sit down?” inquired Jack of the table’s only occupant. Jack stiffened as the brown-haired beauty looked up from the textbook that held her attention.

“Sure,” she replied while taking notice of Jack’s stocky, yet sleek features honed on the farm and on the field of play.

Jack thought he needed to explain that which needed no explanation. “I usually s-s-sit over there.” He pointed to a group of tables, now full of students doing more talking than studying. “They were making so much n-n-noise, I couldn’t hear myself think.” *That dang stutter*, thought Jack, increasing his discomfort. The verbal tic had dogged him for ten years—ever since the fight. Fortunately, it only bothered him when afraid—or facing a pretty girl.

Julie's smile disguised her slight disappointment that the good-looking young man was not selecting her table because he thought she was pretty. "Well, I promise to be quiet so you can think." She smiled again.

"I d-d-didn't mean it like that," replied Jack, now off balance. "I'd be happy to talk to you." *Oh*, he thought. *That sounded too forward*. He took his seat with a weak grin.

Seeing her advantage, she continued. "I didn't mean to distract you," she smiled flirtatiously.

You're probably studying for a grueling calculus test or something."

"Actually, it's media law . T-T-Test is tomorrow."

Julie lit up. "You're a PR major!" She caught herself and lowered her voice. "

"That's r-r-right," Jack offered, pulling the thick book from his backpack and displaying it proudly.

"I took that last year," chirped Julie. "I'm in the same major."

"Do you have Wilson or Walton?"

"W-W-Walton," offered Jack, his body relaxing in the chair. "She's a really good t-t-teacher. At least I think so. And you?"

"I had Wilson. Tough on exams, but I learned a lot. I'm Julie, Julie Janson." She extended her hand with a smile.

Time suspended for a long moment as Jack returned the smile. After a lingering pause, he took her hand and tried to remember that his farm-fed grip had to be tempered. "I'm Jack, J-j-jack

Knighton.” *Can’t say my own name without that gimpy stammer*, Jack complained to himself. *I hope she doesn’t notice.*

“Well, I better not keep you from that thinking you were going to do.” Julie withdrew from the large, strong hand, but the smile remained.

Jack lingered in her eyes, feeling yet unworthy, but strangely comfortable. “N-n-no, not at all. I like talking too.” *Oh, that sounded smart*, thought Jack’s worst critic.

Trying to help Jack relax, she started back in. “Well then, where are you from?”

“I’m from a town about twenty miles south of here. Well, actually a town would be big compared to our spot in the road. I think our place puts the ‘R’ in rural.” Jack smiled, admiring Julie’s muscular, yet feminine features. Her tan looked like it came from outdoor farm work; not the tanning salon. “I’m guessing, but looks like you may have tossed some hay before.” *Oh, maybe that came across badly.*

“You better believe it,” Julie replied mockingly. “Shall we compare biceps?”

Jack blushed, sure that she had taken the compliment poorly. “I meant that in a good way. It looks good.”

Seeing his discomfort, Julie could not resist teasing. “What looks good?” She placed her hands on her hips for emphasis.

“I mean you, you look good. Oh, I’m making a mess of this.”

Recognizing his wounded ego, Julie offered solace. “No, don’t feel bad. I knew what you meant. I just had to tease. I’m the only girl in my family;

well except for my mom. Growing up with older brothers on the farm, I had to tease back to survive.” She glanced away for a moment, as if remembering. Then, in a subdued voice, she continued. “Don’t get me wrong: I have great brothers. When I was a kid, I gave my parents grey hair with my whining about child labor laws. Now, I don’t mind.”

Jack marveled again. “Yea, I know what you mean—I mean about work and brothers. I have one named Robert. We’re best buds. That farm work helped me get ready to work my fool head off here at school.”

“Exactly,” replied the increasingly interested Julie. She noticed that Jack had stopped stammering, but she kept that to herself. “So, why communications?”

“Why what?”

“Why a communications degree?”

“Well, I like to learn about different ways we interact with and influence others. Since I was young, our family has made communicating with each other a top priority; and, my brother has some challenges.” Jack did not elaborate as his voice trailed off, not wanting to share this private part of himself just yet.

Julie sensed the soft spot that she had just hit and redirected the conversation. “Well, I want to run a corporate public relations team. Not sure where things may lead from there.”

“That sounds fun,” replied Jack—happy for the subject change. “I’d like to get an internship next year in a technology company. When do you graduate?”

“This December. I’ve got some interviews lined up already.” As soon as she said it, Julie realized that might sound boastful.

“That’s great,” offered Jack. “You sure haven’t wasted time. Guess that’s why you’re here in Summer semester. I’m trying to make up time from taking two years off for a mission.”

“Good for you. Actually, I’m just finishing up one class and then it’s off to help the folks a while before I do a short internship.”

“That’s cool. Why haven’t I bumped into you before?” Jack thought he knew the answer, but wanted an excuse to talk now.

Julie hesitated with the answer. She did not want to intimidate this one. She looked down and said, “Well, Fall is my last semester. You’ll have most of my classes in a few months, I would guess.” She glanced up hoping not to dampen the young man’s interest. “Well, Jack Knighton, it’s been good to meet you.” Her hand reached out to make the connection again.

Jack’s hand thrust forward without thinking, his heart rate slightly up and his speech quickened. “You too, Julie.”

“What time is it? I forgot my watch this morning and I’ve been late all day.”

Sounding now like the audio on an online time-reporting service, he offered, “It’s ten forty-seven, June 10th, 2015.”

Julie tensed and threw her books in her backpack. “I’ve got to get to the bookstore before the next class. Sorry, but I’ve gotta run.” She stood to go.

“Maybe we could stay in touch?” asked Jack, suddenly out of breath with the boldness of his question.

“Just look up Julie Janson on Facebook; I’m there. Also, in the student directory. I’d like to talk again, but now I really have to go. Bye.” With that, she turned and walked quickly to the exit. She waved over her shoulder as she walked through the turnstile at the front entrance, somehow sensing Jack’s eyes as they followed her out the door.

She’s awesome, he mused to himself. Then, he reminded himself that she was likely just being nice to a stranger.

*"I couldn't put Green Spin down.
I was spell bound until the end."*
**- Rona Rahlf, President and Publisher,
The Daily Herald**

Set in the Pacific Northwest, Green Spin takes Jack Knighton on an unwanted thrill ride viewed through the lens of future technology, while he doubts his own worthiness for the heart of Julie Janson.

Jack is an aspiring college public relations intern at Portland technology giant MicroGXT. Bad guy Bernard Ruetten is a mental whiz with an amazing recall capacity. His unique talent lands him on top in the media, then plummets him to the bottom of the roller coaster ride that is Green Spin. In a careless media moment, Bernard gets himself fired and takes his notoriety down a dark road, putting him on a collision course with Jack.

Lives hang in the balance, including Jack's and 2016 presidential candidate Gerald Hunte, in this life-or-death struggle, controlled by the mental whiz gone postal. Julie, the girl of Jack's hopes and dreams, struggles along with Jack's family to cope through the hellish ordeal as SWAT works feverishly to save lives - even if some must die.

"Green Spin kept me reading from the outset! As the story unfolded, I was drawn into the lives of the characters wanting, with each page, to know how it would end! This is a must read that not only tells a story, but addresses some of our major societal issues of the Twenty First Century."

- Jack R. Christianson, DPhil, Author, Public Speaker

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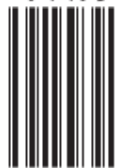
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