

Chapter XXXVI

Missions

February 5, 1952 – May 13, 1952

Ramona kept a close eye on Janet all week, worried that she might have another seizure. Each day she changed the dressing on her bandage. From the looks of things, it was going to leave a noticeable scar. Ramona suggested that she could hide it by combing her bangs down over it.

On Friday, Ramona took Janet back to the doctor. If she were to have had another seizure, she would have had it by then. That reaffirmed his conclusion that the seizure was a result of the brain injury caused by the accident. He was fairly certain that she wouldn't have another one, but as a precaution he instructed her to continue taking the Primidone for the next three months and to not participate with the track team for the same amount of time.

Janet was crushed. She had worked so hard after her last accident to get back into shape and now only three weeks from the first meet, she was out of action again. By the time the three months were over, it would be tournament time and she would be too out of shape to compete. Without participating on the junior varsity team, she was afraid that she wouldn't have much of a chance to make the varsity team in her junior year.

Since the kid's old red 1939 Buick Century convertible was a total loss, Norman resorted to driving Sheffield's car to school and work. Besides Ramona's car, that left Janet with the old pickup. She wasn't very excited about being seen driving it with its dents and rust spots. After all it was ten years old and showed the abuse that it took on the ranch.

The insurance company came through the following week with a check for the value of the car and the medical bills. Since one of Samantha's conditions was that the kids have their own car, Ramona and the girls started looking around for another one.

While looking at used cars, Ramona couldn't help but notice the new cars. She had really liked her green Ford Super Deluxe Coupe in with the tan interior, but it was eleven years old. As apposed to the pickup, it was in great shape, without a scratch or a dent. She asked the girls if they would like to have it.



divide down the center.

They were agreeable, so Ramona began looking for new car for herself. After looking at several, she decided on a brand new 1952 Ford Crestline Victoria. It was dark blue two door coupe with a white top and a curved one piece windshield. The new style of windshield gave a much better view than having the

Now that the transportation issues were resolved and Janet was going to be fine, except for not

being able to participate in track, life at home was back to normal.

In the meantime, The Reprisal arrived back in Yokosuka on Saturday the 9th of February for a ten day stay. On Sunday morning, Lieutenant Moncur saw an opportunity to approach Sheffield about what he had on his mind. He simply asked if he minded if he accompanied him to church.

“Not at all.” Sheffield assured him. “In fact, I'd like that very much.”

Together they left the ship and caught a ride to the train station just outside of the gate. Lieutenant Kirk with his arm still in a sling, Seaman Carter, Quinn, Sedric and others of the Reprisal's Serviceman's group were already there waiting for the same train, all with the same destination.

On the ride into Tokyo, Phil told Sheffield and Dan about the dilemma that he and his wife were in when it came to attending church and that they were looking for something they could both agree on. He had written to her about the kind of person that Admiral Brason was and that he was a Mormon. She told him to look into it and let her know what he thought.

When they arrived at the mission home, Phil was promptly introduced to the missionaries and was made to feel welcome. Since the last time that Sheffield had been there, Elder Rowan had gone home and his companion had been transferred and a new set of elders had been assigned to the serviceman's branch.

Phil was very attentive during the meeting and was willing to meet with the elders afterwards. Sheffield and Dan sat in on the cottage meeting as the elders gave him the first lesson. For Dan it was a good refresher and he shared his recent conversion with Phil. From time to time, Sheffield would interject something into the lesson. Whenever, he had anything to say, Phil listened intently. At the end of the lesson, he agreed to come again the next Sunday. He took with him a copy of the Book of Mormon and several tracts and promised to read them.

After a couple of days, While Lieutenant Moncur was filing away some papers in the Admiral's office, he asked, “What was it that drew you to the Church, sir? If you you don't mind me asking.”

“Not at all, Phil.” he answered. “It is the concept of husbands and wives being sealed together for eternity and having their children sealed to them. Every since our third child died at birth, my first wife, Geannie, was looking for someone to tell her that that was possible. She and our other two children died before she found it.

“Then through a miraculous chain of events, Ramona and I found exactly what Geannie was looking for. We investigated the Church and came to know that it was true and were baptized three years ago. Then a year and half ago I had Geannie sealed to me and our kids sealed to us and Ramona and I were sealed together and our kids to us.”

Lieutenant Moncur closed the file drawer and said, "Thank you sir. I think that is what I'd like what for Anita and I and our daughter. It sure is something to think about." he said as he left Sheffield's office.

Sheffield also spent some time with Lieutenant Kirk talking some more about the concept of angling the landing area and some of the challenges that it presented. The whole idea still needed a lot of work. Hopefully someone in Washington was working on it.

During the time in port, Sheffield went ashore a few times. There was one thing in particular that he wanted to do for sure before leaving Japan. Being a wrestling coach, he wanted to see some professional sumo wrestling. When he mentioned what he wanted to do, his trusted chief of staff and longtime friend, Commander Ronald "Cowboy" Perry, himself a former wrestler, thought that it sounded fun and asked if he could go along.

On Friday night they rode the train into Tokyo and took a three mile cab ride from Tokyo Station to the Kuramae National Sports Stadium to attend a tournament. The stadium had been built in 1950 to replace the original bomb damaged stadium that had been taken over by the allied occupation forces.

Sumo wrestling is Japan's national sport and originated in ancient times to entertain the Shinto gods and is steeped in tradition and ritual. Before entering the ring, the wrestlers wash out their mouths with water sipped from a wooden ladle, and ritually rinse their mouth with the sacred water.

Before the match, sumo wrestlers perform ritual exercises and rub themselves with a towel to cleanse the mind and toss salt in the dohyo to purify the ring to protect themselves from injuries. Before the match, the wrestlers exchange a respectful bow and crouch in the "get set" position and touch their fists to ground. They often stare down each other a couple of times, retreat to their corners before returning to their starting positions before the match starts. This ritual is called shikiri and usually the wrestlers do it for the full four minutes allowed by the rules. It helps the wrestlers psych themselves up and builds up the anticipation of the crowd.

The basic rules of sumo are simple: the wrestler who first touches the ground with anything besides the soles of his feet, or who leaves the ring before his opponent, loses the match. Matches take place on an elevated ring, called a "dohyo", which is made of clay and covered in a layer of sand. The matches themselves usually last only a few seconds, but rarely more than a minute.

Most professional sumo wrestlers are between 20 and 35 years old. They typically live together in a residential training complex, called a "stable", where all aspects of life, from sleeping and eating to training and free time, are strictly regimented by the coach, called the "stable master". There are no weight restrictions or classes in sumo, meaning that wrestlers can easily find themselves matched up against someone many times their size. As a result, weight gain is an essential part of sumo training.

At the end of the match, the decision of the referee and judges is final and the wrestlers and the

fans must accept the decision and never complain. The wrestlers are expected to take their victories and defeats with equal dispassionate stoicism. When a match ends, the wrestlers bow respectfully to each other and the loser departs immediately while the winner remains while being recognized as the winner by the referee.

On Sunday, Sheffield attended the Serviceman's Branch again. Lieutenant Moncur was ready and eager for his next cottage meeting with the elders. He had written to his wife about what he was doing, but hadn't heard back from her yet. Again, Sheffield and Lieutenant Kirk sat in on the lesson, as did Seaman Carter. At the end of the meeting, Phil wanted to learn more. Seaman Carter assured him that he would continue working with him when they went back to sea.

Before sailing again, Sheffield wrote home telling all about his port call. He sent along a letter to the wrestling team describing sumo wrestling and the tournament that he attended, complete with a copy of the program, which was in Japanese.

On Tuesday morning, the 19th, the Reprisal slipped her moorings and was pulled away from the dock and got underway, heading back to Korea. Two days later, she rejoined Task Force 77 and Sheffield once again assumed command. His first mission was to provide escort for some Air Force B-29s on another bombing run up north. Once back on station, the seemingly unending sorties against the enemy resumed. Hopefully they would wear down the communists' resolve to the point that they would have had enough and give up, but that didn't look like it was going to happen anytime soon.

The next month was more of the same as it had been ever since Sheffield arrived in the war zone. His recent letters home focused on the progress that Lieutenant Moncur was making. His wife had started meeting with the missionaries as well. Seaman Goodey was wondering why he hadn't received a letter from Norma lately. He had written twice but got no answer. Airman Orchard was still getting letters from his pen pal, Janet. Most of all, he expressed how glad he would be to come home, even if for a little while.

The letters from Ramona were filled with news from home. Janet got her stitches out, Norma was seeing a lot of Wade Rowan. Craig had been to Norfolk for another weekend drill. The Magicians were still undefeated with two matches left before the district tournament. She was enjoying her new car. Another house sold last week that she made more money on that she had anticipated. The calves were growing. It looked like it was going to be an early spring. Most of all she expressed how much she missed him.

It had been had been nine months since he had left on the Essex and the separation was wearing on both of them. Sheffield couldn't help but think they'd be sending the Reprisal home before long, and hopefully him with it. The Essex was detached to go home in early March, Reprisal was supposedly to be next up.

But first, there was still more work to do. During the last week in March the mission was targets in

the extreme northeast corner of North Korea. The cities of Rajin and Sonbong, along the border with the Soviet Union, had previously been off limits for fear of provoking the Soviets.

Sonbong, less than 15 miles from the Soviet border, was home to a large oil fired power plant, oil refinery and an oil storage depot that supplied the rest of the country. The area was also North Korea's rail link to Russia with a railroad bridge across the Tumen River, which was the border. Both cities were sea ports with docks that were often frequented by Soviet tankers.

Well before dawn on March 25th Task Force 77, less a bombardment group which had been detached during the night, was in position about two hundred miles due south of Vladivostok. It was composed of the carriers Reprisal, Philippine Sea, and Princeton which were accompanied by the light cruisers Manchester and Roanoke and several destroyers. The pilots were briefed of their targets. Precision was an absolute must and under no circumstances was Soviet air space to be violated.

Sheffield ordered the task force to turn into the wind and commence launching. He observed the flight operations aboard the Reprisal from the flag bridge. As before, first to be catapulted off were the radar equipped Corsairs and Skyraiders, followed by the rest of the propeller aircraft.

Once aloft, the jet fighters were brought up on deck and spotted for launch. One hour after the initial order was given, the Panthers were launched. They caught up with the rest of the strike group about fifty miles off shore.

At dawn, they began their attack at the same time that the battleship Wisconsin and the heavy cruisers St. Paul and Rochester escorted by four destroyers began their shore bombardment. The enemy was caught completely off guard because of their prior immunity to attack. By the time anti-aircraft batteries could be manned, much destruction had already taken place. Several MiGs were scrambled at the nearest airbase at Orang seventy five miles down the coast. The Navy Panthers were waiting for them when they arrived.

The attack drew a quick response from the Soviet Union as well. The Be-6 Madge flying boat that had been tracking the task force arrived earlier than usual due to their proximity to Vladivostok. Rather than keeping its usual distance, it closed to within visual range. The two submarines that had been shadowing the task force also took up a much more aggressive stance. Two destroyers were sent out to keep them company. Their MiGs were scrambled as well as nine of the Soviet Navy's newest Tu-14 twin engined jet maritime attack bombers. The MiGs took up positions in their own air space but did not engage. Some came close, as if to tempt the Americans to cross the line, giving them reason to engage. The bombers flew south in case the American fleet showed any signs of approaching Soviet territorial waters. Three broke off and encountered the bombardment group but did not engage. As the remaining six approached the task force, they were greeted by four Panthers, which took up station above and behind with two off to either

side of the bombers. Three of the six made a low level pass ahead of the task force with their bomb bay doors open as a symbolic shot across the bow.

In addition, the Soviet Pacific Fleet in Vladivostok, less than 100 miles from the target, put to sea with the light cruisers Lazar Kaganovich and Kalinin along with six destroyers. They too sailed south to intercept any American advance in their direction. The bombardment group withdrew from the area, giving the Soviets no chance of catching up with them. Had they engaged, they would have been hopelessly outgunned by the Americans.

The added attention didn't deter the Americans from conducting their business. Sheffield knew that they were bluffing and really didn't want an international incident and felt confident in responding with a bluff of his own, but was prepared respond, if necessary.

When the attack was over, thick black smoke filled the air as the oil refinery and storage tanks burned. The power plant had been knocked out and the port facilities were in shambles. Unfortunately a Soviet commercial tanker that was in port had been damaged as well. Certainly there would be some diplomatic wrangling over that.

Once the strike group had been recovered and the bombardment group had rejoined, the task force withdrew and the Soviets backed off. Once the losses were tallied up and the task force retired to the east, further into the Sea of Japan to refuel. For the next week, Task Force 77 continued to attack targets throughout North Korea.

During that time Sheffield received a letter from home

March 23, 1952

Dear Sheffield

As always, it was good to hear from you. I'm grateful that you are well. I do worry about you half way around the world like that. I never have gotten used to the notion.

All is well here at home. Janet is doing fine. The cut on her forehead is healing and she never has had another seizure. At this point I truly think it was a one time episode. She is begging to participate in track as she has already missed three meets.

On the subject, the Magicians won the district tournament hands down on Friday night. They are favored to do very well at state in two weeks. The team really got into the sumo wrestling information you sent them. They are talking of putting on an exhibition sumo match later in the semester when the season is over.

Craig is away on drill this weekend. He really seems to enjoy it. I just hope

his squadron doesn't get activated and sent over seas. Having you there is all I can handle at a time. He is really getting into his new major. He has made several adjustments to the Staggerwing, based on what he has learned.

Norma is doing well in school, now that she is over her initial infatuation with Wade. They go out at least once a week and attend all of the M Men and Gleaner activities together. She is now dating him exclusively. After seeing them together so much, the other boys got the message and quite calling.

Even Read quit coming over to check on things like he had been doing. He realizes now that he was too slow and his brother bowled him over. So now, its Wade who checks on things which gives him another excuse to be around Norma.

Yesterday was the round up. Roger brought both Wade and Read over to sort out the calves and do the branding and everything that goes with it. The girls and I got in on it too. Naturally Norma was on Wade's heels the hole time. She even helped hold down the calves while he castrated them.

While we were working the cattle, Chantelle, Jolene, Regena, and Beverly whipped up a batch of fried chicken and some mashed potatoes and gravy and brought it over about the time we were done. It sure was a busy day but you'll be glade to know that everything got taken care of.

Oh, here is some exciting news. I got a call from John Steinmann out in Los Angeles the other day. He said that Neptune's Realm was set to debut on April 5th. Thats just two weeks away. He's sending me five round trip airline tickets to Los Angeles and a voucher for overnight accommodations for myself, Craig and Edith, Norma and Janet to be there for the premier showing. He felt bad that you were overseas and wouldn't be able to attend, but I guess as they say, "The show must go on."

Certainly, it can't be much longer now and you'll be heading home. Its been almost ten months now. I don't know how long you'll be able to stay or what your next assignment will be, but having you home for just a little while would sure be nice. And then when this war is over, you can retire for good and come home to stay.

I don't want to dwell too much on how much I miss you because I know that you miss us too and would be here if you could and will be when you can. However long you'll be home won't be enough to make up for the time that you've been gone.

Just know that I love you and will be here waiting. Be prepared for me to show you just how much I really, really love you.

Love, Ramona.

On the 2nd of April, Admiral Brason was relieved of command of Task Force 77 and the Reprisal was relieved by the Boxer, which was back for her third tour of duty off Korea. The Reprisal along with the light cruiser Roanoke and four destroyers were detached to return to Yokosuka and then begin the return trip to their home port in Norfolk. However, Sheffield had not received his orders yet. He didn't know if he'd be going back with the Reprisal or remain in the Far East.

The answer came two days later when they docked at Yokosuka. He was also relieved of command of Carrier Division One and was tasked with the mission of bringing the Reprisal, Wisconsin, Rochester, Roanoke, and eight destroyers, back to the States by way of Pearl Harbor. Beyond that his orders were to report to the Pentagon and take over the project assigned to investigate and evaluate the concept of angled landing areas. His letters on the subject must have caught someone's attention. His staff, who had been with him the entire time were to stay with him at least for the trip home, at which time they would be reassigned.

Sheffield wrote a letter to Ramona with the news that he was coming home and about his next assignment. It occurred to him right from the start that with his Staggerwing he'd be able to commute back and forth and spend most weekends at home.

When Lieutenant Moncur brought Sheffield his mail, there was a packet of information on the project for him to familiarize himself with while en route. There was also a big square package for him from John Steinmann. He opened it to find movie reel with his own copy of Neptune's Realm. He made arrangements to have it shown that evening aboard the ship.

A makeshift movie theater was set up on the hangar deck with a few hundred folding chairs. Sheffield waited in anticipation all day to see it. He hoped that they had remained true to his story. That evening the theater filled up as men who were interested in a little piece of the ship's history gathered for the showing. They would actually be the first to see the film since the premier in Los Angeles wasn't until the next evening.

The movie began with the crossing the line ceremony. Sheffield thought that Ronald Reagan did a good job portraying him. He even grew a mustache for the role. They did a good job of setting up his character as the grieving husband and father a year after the deaths of his family.

The entire encounter with the Edelweiss was both suspenseful and action packed, even down to fighting off the sharks. Captain Gottfried was portrayed as a compassionate pirate and Debra Watson was portrayed as the vulnerable damsel in distress. Captain Brason was the hero who rode up on a white horse, actually the Reprisal, as the survivors were brought aboard. The scene where he gave Debra the dress and

comforted her in her loss was particular touching. They even included the part where Petty Officer Porter was killed by the Edelweiss's political officer and how Sheffield reacted to that.

They did a good job of blending the footage of the ship and air group from the film shot of the ship prior to her first cruise into the movie. The only thing that was out of order was that they moved the incident with Murry Puchesky from the Azores to Rio. Sheffield was amazed in the bar fight scene to see Ruth Ann as one of the extras.

In the end Sheffield sent Mrs. Watson and Molly on their way home and he returned to the ship with a much lighter load than he began the movie with, we was now finally able to let go.

All in all, Sheffield thought they did a superb job in telling the story. In a letter that accompanied the film, John Steinmann indicated that since they had the sets, models of the ship, and the cast, he was looking into doing a picture based on the what happened at Salerno, depending on how Neptune's Realm did at the box office.

The six days that the ship spent in Yokosuka seemed to pass slowly for Sheffield who was anxious to get home. On Sunday he did attend the Serviceman's Branch and sat in on Lieutenant Moncur's lesson with the missionaries. He was progressing nicely as Seaman Carter and others aboard the ship had been meeting with him regularly as well. When the opportunity presented itself, he and Sheffield would discuss various aspects of the church as well.

During the time in port, Sheffield did leave the ship on occasion and ventured into Tokyo. On the morning of the 10th the small group of ships got underway and set course for Pearl Harbor. The pace of the voyage was quite relaxed, compared to the almost continuous operations off Korea. Admiral Brason saw to it that it wasn't too leisurely for the little force and took the opportunity to conduct various readiness drills. Sheffield found it ironic that exactly ten years earlier, he was making the same trip, only in the opposite direction aboard the old Hornet while taking the Doolittle Raiders to Tokyo.

Easter was on the 13th and that day was unhurried with only mandatory watches that had to be stood. In addition to their group meeting, Sheffield attended the Chaplain's Easter service. The next day at the midway point in the voyage, eight hundred miles northeast of Wake Island, the task force rendezvoused with a tanker from Pearl Harbor and refueled.

Then on Friday the 18th, the Reprisal and her brood sailed into Pearl Harbor for a stopover that was to last a week. When the Reprisal tied up to the dock, the long awaited mail was brought aboard. In it was a letter from Ramona.

April 7, 1952
Dear Sheffield

I can't tell you how excited I am that you're finally coming home! I can't wait to see you. The kids are anxious to see you too. That's great that you'll be assigned to the Pentagon. Most importantly, I like the idea of commuting back and forth and spending weekends at home. Will you have anytime to spend at home before you have to report for duty? Do you know when you're scheduled to arrive at Norfolk? I'd like to meet you there. Let me know.

I'm envious that you get to stop over in the islands for week. The girls and I only got to stay for a day and half on our way to see you at Christmas. I hope you take advantage of it. Who knows when you'll be back again. Hopefully it will be with me.

That was nice of Mr. Steinmann to send you a reel of Neptune's Realm and that you got to see it. What did you think of it? I thought they did a great job. The kids and I played hooky from school on Friday the 4th and flew to Los Angeles, compliments of MDM. They put us up in a swanky hotel and gave us the royal treatment. They also rolled out the red carpet for Debra and Chet Maryfield and John and Kathryn Godfrey. We were all in the same hotel. By the way, the Godfreys have met with the missionaries off and on a few times when his schedule permits. They asked about you and I told them that you had spent the last several months off Korea aboard the Reprisal.

At the film's debut, Mr. Steinmann introduced the movie and had us come up on stage to introduce the real life characters who were portrayed in the movie and our on screen counterparts. Like I said, I thought they did a really good job of it. I must say that regardless how attractive and dashing Ronnie Reagan is, I prefer the real deal.

Mr. Stienmann pulled me aside and mentioned that he was wanting to do a sequel about Salerno and us getting together. He said that he still had some details to work out and he'd be getting in touch with you.

Did you see Ruth Ann in the bar fight scene? I was surprised. She and a lot of the extras were at the debut and she made it a point to come and talk to me. She insists that she is "living the life" as she put it. She and the deputy that she ran off with are no longer together. Evidently he had gone back to Texas and got back together with his wife. Ruth Ann told me to tell everyone that she was just fine, and that she had no intentions on ever coming home and refused to give me her address.

Everyone here is fine. Janet is doing really good and hasn't had anymore

issues. The coach may let her participate at the end of the season when the doctor lifts his restriction.

The kids are all doing well in school. The Magicians won the state title over the weekend while we were gone with several of the boys winning individual titles. You'd of been proud of them. Norma is completely smitten with Wade. He was granted a farm deferment by the draft board, but he feels guilty that he isn't doing his duty somewhere.

Our government class is going well. I don't know if you've heard this or not but after loosing the New Hampshire Democratic primary election last month, Truman has decided not to run for re-election. At the same time, your old Army buddy, General Eisenhower won the Republican primary hands down as a write-in candidate. I'm sure you'd love to see him in the White House. Teaching government has made me more aware of what goes on in politics.

Since you'll be here, or at least close by, we can go ahead with the annual Brason Memorial day picnic. And it looks like you'll be able to attend your ship's reunion after all. Some weekend when you're here, I'd like for you to fly me down to Denison to see Harvey. I haven't seen him for long time. I'd also like to get a way to the cabin with you too, and I don't mean for the 4th of July when everyone will be there. Maybe we could even take that cruise to Havana with John Godfrey. We have a lot of lost time to make up for.

Now I'm to my favorite part of every letter. The part where I normally tell you how madly in love I am with you. The part where I get to tell you that I adore you. The part where I tell you to be careful and come home to me. The part where I tell you that I'm anxiously awaiting your next letter.

Love, Ramona.

Sheffield took Ramona's advice and took advantage of being in Hawaii since he had no idea how long it would be before he would have the opportunity to be there again. He spent Saturday at Waikiki Beach soaking up some sun and enjoying the sand and the surf.

On Sunday he and the rest of the men in the Serviceman's Group aboard the ship, including Lieutenant Moncur attended the Honolulu Serviceman's Branch which met downtown at the Honolulu Tabernacle. Phil had progressed to the point that he was considering being baptized, but if he did, he and his wife wanted to do it together.

During the week, Sheffield left the ship on numerous occasions to go into Honolulu. Sometimes alone and other times with Cowboy or someone else. One thing he wanted to do for sure while there was to

go up to Laie and attend the temple.

One of the first things he did when they got in was to have Lieutenant Moncur schedule a place for a banquet for his staff. Several of the men on his staff had already received orders to other assignments. Some of them who's assignments were on the west coast would not be going on to Norfolk. Only Lieutenant Moncur would go with him to his new assignment. The Halewulani Hotel didn't have a banquet hall available but was able to arrange a luau on the beach, since it was on a Thursday night.

Before Sailing on the 25th Sheffield got a letter off to Ramona telling her about his week in Hawaii and when he anticipated arriving back in Norfolk. And yes, he'd love to have her meet him there. Later in the morning, the Reprisal accompanied by the Wisconsin, Rochester, Roanoke, and four destroyers, all on loan from the Atlantic Fleet, steamed down the channel and out to sea, bound for the Panama Canal.

The final voyage home took nineteen days, including a day to transit the Panama Canal. As with the first leg of the voyage, Sheffield spent a good portion of his time going over the material he had for his next assignment. As he had done earlier, he included Lieutenant Kirk and wanted to have him assist him in Washington. During the hours that they spent together, Lieutenant Moncur was often with them. Many times the subject turned from how to reconfigure a flight deck to various gospel topics as Phil had a lot of questions and was eager to learn. Sheffield, who didn't feel that he was that well versed himself, relied on all of those Sunday School lessons that he had taught his class.

Since returning to active duty, he felt as if he had been on a mission, first with Lieutenant Kirk, and now Lieutenant Moncur. In the time since he joined the church, he had been instrumental with several people who came into the church, mainly his own family and the Austins. But he also had an influence on Bill and Marge Casper as well. He had no idea that he would have the opportunity to do missionary work in the Navy as well. As it turned out, his mission was more than orchestrating missions against the enemy.

Excitement mounted for everyone aboard as the task force paralleled the Outer Banks. It had been nine months since the Reprisal left on her second tour off Korea. As for Sheffield, it had been two weeks shy of a year since he left home.

On the afternoon of Tuesday the 13th of May that the voyage was over as the ships steamed into Hampton Roads. True to her word, Ramona was waiting on the dock when the ship tied up at Pier 7. She had arranged for a substitute and took two days off and drove to Norfolk to meet him there. With his mission completed, Sheffield had until the following Monday to report to his new assignment.

Sheffield saw her from the flag bridge and stepped out onto the catwalk to wave to her. He instructed Lieutenant Moncur to send someone to his state room and bring his things down to the dock. He was as eager as anyone else to leave the ship, but before making his way below, he took one last long look up and down the flight deck of the ship that had for so long been his home over the last ten years. When he

sailed on the Essex, he never expected that he would once again be reunited with the Reprisal. As he came down the gang plank, he figured it was for the last time.

* * * * *

The attack on Rajin and Sonbong and the Soviet response is fictional. The area is home to the types of facilities mentioned.

The information on sumo wrestling came from Wikipedia and other on line sources.

The USS Roanoke which was based on the east coast never fulfilled any tours off Korea. But the Wisconsin and Rochester, also based on the east coast did and both returned to Norfolk about this time.

