Students Become Teachers
Spanish Class Assists Learning Center for Project

By Chis Trent
Spanish-speaking adult and children go to the Western Oklahoma Learning Center to practice their English conversational skills every Monday night from 6:30-8:30. So, students in Mrs. Judy Haught’s Spanish class were assigned a service learning project to attend and converse.

“It’s a good learning experience,” said Brisa Garza, who speaks Spanish and is taking the Spanish class at SWOSU. “I had a fun time.”

“It was nice to speak Spanish with people who actually speak it on a daily basis, instead of just with our English-speaking professor,” stated Holly Jones, also taking the class.

This assignment was a service learning project, which involves learning while providing a service to the community.

Those participating were De Shawna Smith, Holly Jones, Lee Houston, Alexis Fanshier, Lindy Smith, Brisa Garza, Miranda Aranda, Alicia Crum and Ashley Brewer. The class at the Western Oklahoma Learning Center is always free of charge.

Are YOU Published?
OKLAHOMA Magazine is printing our research!

By Terry Ford
Are you a past or present student of Mrs. Terry Ford’s English Comp. II class? Then your research on a noteworthy Western Oklahoman may be published in the Oklahoma Heritage Association’s magazine, Oklahoma.

The magazine has already published three articles written by SWOSU students. In the April issue, Dani Ferrell, of Elk City, wrote “W.C. Austin—The Man Behind the Dam.” It’s about his fight for the Lougart Lake’s dam at Quartz Mountain State Park.

In the August issue, Merinda Dawson, a student from Wheeler, Texas, wrote “Maxi Anderson—The Sky Is the Limit” about a world-record setting balloonist from right here in little old Sayre!

And, Loretta Hash, formerly of Elk City, penned, “Mattie Beal: The Belle of Lawton,” a great historical piece on a lady who was lucky in a man’s world.

The writing assign-

(Continued on page 3)
**Top 5 Things to Do This New Year's Eve**

1. Do something outside your comfort zone. I don't mean something “dangerous” like smoking at the gas pump. But, for gosh sakes, people, the West wasn't won by reading labels and following safety precautions.

2. Become one with nature. People these days don't appreciate the beauty of mother nature like they should, so spend the day alone in the wild for once. Make a snow angel or something.

3. Play games. Nothing brings people together like games. Try Camera Hot Potato, Edward Scissor Hands, Forty-handed Tennis, or Saturday Night Live—the board game, which part trivia and part stand up comedy from your favorite SNL skits! Celebrity Couples involves giving everyone upon arrival a post-it note taped to their back with the name of one half a famous celeb duo. Object: Find your partner. You can ask other people yes or no questions about your identity until you guess right. Ideas: Sonny & Cher, Starsky & Hutch, Cee Lo Green and fluffy white cat.

4. Get a Tattoo. They're cool, except for tattoos of Chinese symbols—that ship has sailed.

5. Throw a New Year’s Eve Party of legendary proportions. Throw the kind of party you tell your grandchildren about after their college graduation, and they say, "Grandpa, you just blew my mind."

*By: Dalton Karley*
Spend Spring Break in England!

By Rowdy Cloud

Would you like to spend your next Spring Break in England? SWOSU students and faculty are invited to learn about an exciting opportunity to join Study Abroad. A group is being formed to go on a 10-day trip to London and Oxford over Spring Break 2014.

Program director, Christian Alyea, will be answering questions and providing info during an afternoon and evening session.

“Come and check it out. We would love to talk to you about the trip,” said Alysa. Phone him at (972)-464-9609 or (405)-549-3329 or e-mail him at Christian@oklahomastudyabroad.com. Additionally, you can contact Amanda Smith at (580)-774-3734.

Start saving money now, and you even have time for a bake sale or car wash fundraiser. It’s never too early to plan for an epic spring break excursion like this one!

Thank You, Fall Festival Sponsors!!

The Southwestern Oklahoma State University-Sayre Campus wants to thank all of the Fall Festival Sponsors who made the day successful.

Sayre sponsors include the The Sayre Record-Democrat, Sayre Ace Hardware, Sonic, Sayre Floral and Gifts, The Flying J, McDonalds, NAPA Auto Parts, Hutch’s EZ Shop, Eagle Alley, and Granny’s Old Closet.

Elk City sponsors are the Rib Crib, Portobello Grille, Flix-on-Six Theatre, D.J.’s Rentals, and Atwoods.

From Willow, Clint Graham’s C&C Construction also sponsored the event.

Students, if you enjoyed any of the free food, prizes for the games played, and winnings from the drawings, then thank these sponsors the next time you are in their place of business. SWOSU appreciates their generosity.

Students Published, from front

(Continued from page 1)

ment given by Mrs. Ford was to research a noteworthy Western Oklahoman. The students’ papers have been compiled and are being published in a book edited by Bob Burke, prolific Oklahoma writer and historian. Meanwhile, the Oklahoma Heritage Association is publishing one or two of the articles in each issue.

The magazine can be accessed on-line by going to oklahomaheritage.com or at this link: http://oklahomaheritage.com/Publishing/OklahomaMagazine.aspx.
Spend Spring Break in England!!
By SWOSU student: Belinda Graham
As discussed in the previous article, Self-Concept is formed through many different factors and is fluid and ever changing. Did you find your self-concept is in need of work? Most do. Rest easy, there are many ways to boost your self-concept. Below are just a few of the numerous ideas that have proven successful.

- The first step is to figure out who you are, to love yourself, and to be true to yourself. How you might ask does one do that?
  1. To know yourself is to be able to assess your strengths and weaknesses.
  2. To love yourself is to accept these but knowing that you can choose to improve.
  3. Being true to yourself means being honest and sticking to what you value. You must take responsibility for your actions and choices.
- Recognize you are unique. Focus on what you can offer the world. What a drab world indeed if we were all the same. Thankfully we are all individuals. Embrace that fact.
- Always give it your best. When you know you’re giving your all, you will feel confident.
- Never give up. Failures are bound to happen in life, but you must keep trying.
- Triumph over adversity. Obstacles give us opportunity to learn and grow.
- Do not let a single event define you. Be who you choose to be, not what a single event in your past has defined you to be.
- Conquer fear. Never let fear of failure immobilize you. Take the chance. You can do it!
- Never base self-concept on physical appearance. Physical beauty as defined by the world has no place in self-concept. Strive to be healthy inside and out and do not focus solely on outer beauty.
- Be good to yourself. Pamper yourself, take care of your body, eat healthy, get plenty of rest, and stay in shape. In doing so you will be mentally sharp and emotionally clear.
- Be your own cheerleader. Sure input from others helps, but when you feel down, give yourself a pep talk. Reflect on past success and realize that you will make it through the situation. Focus on the light at the end of the tunnel. And the famous quote, “This too, shall pass.”

It is important to remember that you are who you choose to be. Never accept roles or titles given to you by others. Take the tips above and be who you are. Figure out what you need to improve and come up with a plan to do so. In being honest with yourself and standing up for who you are and what you believe in, you can develop a positive self-concept and in doing so, inspire others around you.

Your self-concept should be of utmost importance to you. Why? When employers consider candidates, those with a strong, positive self-concept are at the top of the list for jobs, internships, and promotions. Your self-concept can either open doors for your future, or close them. The choice is up to you. Take the time to honestly look at yourself and address your self-concept and in doing so you will reap rewards now and in the future.

For more information, check out the article at the following web address: www.essentiallifeskills.net/buildself-confidence.html
By Abbey White

It’s that time of year again, final exams, from books, to papers, to presentations, and everything else in between. While some people are cramming for finals, others tend to be struggling to finish up everything they have waited until last to do. To make your life a little easier, here are some ways to help prepare. With a little preparation, finals can be turned into something manageable.

Plan your schedule. Spend a few extra minutes to write a list of everything you need to do. Time seems to slip away during finals week, and keeping track of your time will help you manage it. Getting your priorities in order will help make things more manageable. In most classes, a good percentage of your grade depends on your performance on your finals. Don’t let all your hard work go to waste over not using your time efficiently for the finals. All night study sessions aren’t the best idea when it comes to your finals, “Immediately after cramming, you may feel as though you are an expert on the subject matter. However, when the test comes the next morning or a few hours later, the information has left your brain,” says ehow.com.

Be the wise college student who takes advantage of all the opportunities the school has to offer to help with finals, such as library, tutoring, study groups, and “Dead Days.”
Choose a setting to study that accommodates you best whether it be in your room with music (experts recommend classical or at least music with no lyrics), a quiet library at a big desk, or even at a kitchen table with your friends.

Don’t forget to take care of yourself? Being sleep deprived, wearing dirty clothes, and fighting a cold is no way to take on a final. You more than likely won’t get the ideal sleep you need, but do get enough to be mentally sharp and able to show those finals whose boss. Stay away from stimulant drugs including: caffeine, ephedrine, cocaine, and other things. You just end up with a crash and being awake too long to actually absorb the information you are studying. “The worst case scenario is that you stay up so long that you finally crash during the test and give a crappy performance;” says CollegeScholarships.org.

Set reasonable expectations. Be realistic about your schedule. Your brain needs a break from all the studying. Use time to sleep, get exercise, eat well, hang out with friends, surf the internet, or whatever. Make sure to schedule it in!

Don’t forget to take care of yourself? Being sleep deprived, wearing dirty clothes, and fighting a cold is no way to take on a final. You more than likely won’t get the ideal sleep you need, but do get enough to be mentally sharp and able to show those finals whose boss. Stay away from stimulant drugs including: caffeine, ephedrine, cocaine, and other things. You just end up with a crash and being awake too long to actually absorb the information you are studying. “The worst case scenario is that you stay up so long that you finally crash during the test and give a crappy performance;” says CollegeScholarships.org.

Tips From Your Teachers
- “Show your work!” Mrs. Coker
- “Don’t take advice from Dalton Kirtley.” Mrs. Ford
- “Get good sleep.” Mrs. Bagzis
- “Go with your first instinct. Don’t talk yourself out of a correct answer.” Mr. Brewer
- “Remember, you can’t drop after your finals” Mr. Froneburger
- “Break study time into small sections.” Mr. Swartwood
- “Study, if your instructor goes through the trouble to give you a study guide then use it.” Mr. D’Alessandro

Questions on Some Finals
- Where was Mark Twain born? Mrs. Haught, Literature
- How is SID related to resolution on a radio graph? Mr. Stufflebean.
- What is “yellow journalism”? Mrs. Ford, Newspaper

Dates you best whether it be in your room with music (experts recommend classical or at least music with no lyrics), a quiet library at a big desk, or even at a kitchen table with your friends.

You don’t want to risk your grades by settling for a setting that doesn’t benefit you—like trying to study with a crush. So a moment of silence for all the guys who thought they were getting lucky on finals week. She wants that “A” way more! Studying with your crush might be a good excuse to spend time with him or her, but in the end, it is only a distraction and possibly will result in a final failing disaster.

Think positive and be confident in taking the exam. KNOW you have the mental ability to do well. If you are not feeling smart enough, always turn to your parents. They will always reassure you on how smart you are! If the finals don’t kill you, the lack of sleep and amount of coffee you need to get through them will, but with these tips and pointers you will live on to see another semester!

Good luck to you all!
Your Favorite Song?

Christmas songs! Love them or hate them, they are already here. Students at Sayre listed their favorite seasonal tunes, and “Jingle Bells” won big with nearly 40% of the votes! Second was the ode to Rudolph, followed by “Jingle Bell Rock,” and “Little Drummer Boy” just made the survey.

Grad Tassels Trim the Tree

Don’t know what to do with that tassel after graduation? Simple! Just get an empty, clear ornament and drop the tassel down inside. Make sure there’s a hole in the top piece and pull the string to the tassel through it and WAL-LAH!

A remember-able piece that can be added to your home and still be kept in perfect condition.

Mistletoe Trivia - Did You Know?

By Erica Lynch

Mistletoe is involved in a strange old custom in England. Young girls would take a mistletoe leaf and put it under their pillows at night.

They would then try to dream about a particular boy or man that they wanted to marry someday. In the morning, they would burn the leaf.

If it crackled while it burned, that was said to mean they would have an unhappy marriage with the one they dreamed about.

If it burned without crackling, they would supposedly have a happy marriage with that person, if they were to wed.

And did you know that mistletoe is a poisonous hemi-parasitic plant? It causes acute gastrointestinal problems including stomach pain and diarrhea, along with low pulse.
SWOSU Hosts Short Story Competition

By Kaley Riley

For all you writers out there, SWOSU is hosting a short story competition. SWOSU’s literary journal Westview is searching for the next great short story. The winner will be eligible for publication in the Spring/Summer 2014 issue and will be honored at the Westview Writers’ Festival on April 8, 2014.

Stories will need to be 2,500-5,000 words. Please email your story to westview@swosu.edu with your subject line being: Short Story Contest. Stories need to be submitted by January 8, 2014.

Please keep in mind that not all works submitted will be suitable for publication in Westview. Works submitted should not be pornographic in nature, nor should they contain explicit language.

The winner of the competition will receive a complimentary copy of the journal, a prize pack, and will be invited to read their winning entry at the upcoming Writers’ Festival.

To review copies of Westview to see what kind of stories its publishers like, ask Mrs. Ford or Mrs. Haught for a copy to review. So good luck to all you writers out there, and go get busy writing an award winning short story. (See Rowdy Cloud’s short story in this issue, pages 8-10)

Our SGA Officer Lands Chamber Job

Belinda Graham named Director!

By Terry Ford

After SWOSU-Sayre student Belinda Graham won the election for SGA officer, she immediately began contacting local business owners about expectations for their Chamber. She also had a brilliant resume showing her extensive leadership experience. Belinda has joined many associations—for example, the National Association of Women in Construction—where she had the opportunity to speak at conventions. She also joined the campus PBL, an organization designed to build leadership skills. She landed the job as Chamber of Commerce Director. And that’s how it’s done, folks!

Meet Lane Wilhelm: Student Athlete Bull Rider

Meet one of SWOSU@Sayre’s fascinating students. His name is Lane Wilhelm and he is a bull rider, competing for SWOSU’s Rodeo Team—when he isn’t injured!

“I started riding at the age of 9 years old,” says Wilhelm. “I had grown up around people who rode bulls my whole life. My father was a bull rider so I guess you could say it’s in my blood. From the time I could walk and talk, I wanted to be a bull rider. The first time I got on was filled with excitement as the chute gate opened from that point forward I was hooked.”

“As I have grown in my career through junior rodeos, junior high rodeos, and high school rodeos, I received many awards. One of the most memorable awards was a state championship in bull riding in 2009. Rodeo has given me the opportunity to come to college. Without this amazing sport I wouldn’t have a chance at coming to college.”

“The most amazing thing about riding bulls is the sense of freedom that it gives you. When I ride bulls nothing else in the world matters for that time period. 8 seconds is the longest time period in sports. Rodeo cowboys are athletes. Most think that we are just dumb cowboys who just hang on and do an easy sport. There is a lot more to riding bulls than just hanging on. It is a short amount of time to react as quickly as possible. When riding bulls there is no time to think just react, when you start thinking is when you start making mistakes.”

Lane is 21 years old now and riding at a professional and college level.

“The things you get to do and the people you get to meet as a rodeo athlete are extraordinary. The opportunities are endless. Just when you think you’ve done everything possible a new opportunity arises.”

Additionally, Lane and his brother, Tyler, 19, (also attending at Sayre) are talented musicians. They sang and played guitar at this year’s Lit Festival Open Mic Night, and for their Demonstration Speech in class. If you see Lane in one of your classes, say hello, but don’t pat him on the back—he might be sore.
Across
2. He stole Christmas.
4. Comes with gifts on Christmas night.
7. What does Santa come down?
9. Light up your house during the Christmas season.
13. Circular decoration that people hang on their door.
14. Who do you spend Christmas with?

Down
1. Snowman who comes to life when his hat is placed on his head.
3. Pull Santa's sleigh
5. Santa's main reindeer, who has a red nose.
6. _______ Bells (name of song).
7. What do you leave for Santa?
8. Walking in a Winter _______ (name of song).
10. What is wrapped around your Christmas tree?
11. What do children love to get on Christmas?
The Crime Wars A short story by Rowdy Cloud

Run! Run! Run! That’s all that was going through Rudy’s mind as he sprinted down the dark street. Rudy could only see two light posts working in the entire four block stretch towards the dead end. The storm from earlier that evening left puddles everywhere. SPLASH!! Rudy’s left foot and leg, just to the bottom of his calf, were now dripping with water from the pot hole he stepped in. Do I dare look back? As he began to turn his head, SCHREECH!! The 1966 Charger swung around the curve, headlights off, and sped straight for Rudy. His heart beat skyrocketed and his body shot out adrenaline. He picked up his pace and whipped down an alley. The old brick houses were so close, Rudy knew they wouldn’t risk entering the car. The Charger slammed to a halt and Rudy heard the doors shut and the sound of shoes on the asphalt.

Rudy turned his head and THUMP!! His body hit the ground hard. He jumped up and realized he tripped over an old card-table someone threw away. It became difficult to breath. I must have cracked some ribs, he thought. He leaned against a brick wall and tried to blend in the shadows. Trying to silence his breathing was difficult. The footsteps stopped right in front of him. One large shadow and one small shadow stood there silently. Their rain coats and fedoras would send fear right to the soul of any civilian, but Rudy was no ordinary civilian. They each whipped out a pistol. The larger of the two held a Glock, the other a Colt .45 revolver. Trying to be quiet, Rudy stepped to his left and MEOW!! He had stepped on a cat! Dammit! The two thugs immediately turned and ran at him. Rudy jumped over the tin trash can, but his pant leg was caught by the bigger thug and he crashed into it. To his surprise no one ran outside to check out was going on. Then again, this wasn’t Beverly Hills. The bigger guy picked him up and threw him into the brick wall. Rudy crashed to the asphalt breathing hard.

“You messed with the wrong people, bub,” the big guy said. His voice gave him away: Roscoe. The man who thinks he’s in charge, classic. Rudy thought.

“The Boss wants you dead,” said the smaller guy, who Rudy now recognized as SS, aka Short Stack. The sound of a dog barking rang down the sleepy neighborhood. A flash of lightning filled the sky and all three of them knew that a storm was coming. Rudy caught the sly grin of Roscoe in the next flash.

“Goodnight, Roll,” Roscoe said. Rudy heard the hammer pull back and then darkness.

SIX MONTHS EARLIER

“So,” the dark, deep voice said, “you want a job?” The man took a puff of his cigar and smoke filled the room. The room was dim and the two men who stood behind Rudy were loyal to a fault to the man behind the desk. The smoke began to burn Rudy’s eyes and he coughed twice.

“Answer him,” said the man to Rudy’s right. The man shoved Rudy forward a few steps. Rudy glared at him. A sly grin crossed the man’s face. Rudy stood straight.

“Yes,” Rudy said. The man behind the desk had a strong set jaw and a crooked nose. Those features plus a missing ring finger on his right hand told Rudy that he was talking to Ivan Tankov, the Crime Lord of the Russian organized crime circle. Finally, Rudy had been tired of being tossed around from district boss to district boss. Now, he had finally hit the top of the pyramid.

“What makes you think I’m looking to hire?” Ivan asked. Rudy stood there silently. Ivan leaned forward and took his pistol out from under his desk. CLUNK. He sat it on the desk but kept his right hand on it. “You know, I’ve only ever killed two men with this gun. One of them was my father. He was a lousy SOB. He beat my mother every night when he got home.” Ivan sat there for a minute, distant to everything around him. He was back before it became too awkward. “The second man was my idiotic son. Now don’t get me wrong, he was already thirty years old, but he was going to assassinate me and take control of the business. I can’t have that, not even from my own son. So I ask you again, who told you I’m hiring?” A smirk crossed Rudy’s face.

“Let’s be honest, the Italians are going in and out of your territory without punishment, and they’re starting to take over some of your ends of the city. Now, maybe I’m wrong, but I thought the Russians would do a little more than slap them on the wrist. However; now that I’m here, I see that you’re obviously not the kind of men I thought you were. Maybe I’ll go and ask Michael Nazzaro of the Italians and he’ll give me a job,” Rudy said. Well, that set Ivan off. He jumped to his feet and pointed his pistol right at Rudy.

“How dare you insult me!” The two men behind Rudy grabbed him and held him there. “You think I’m weak. You think I’m going to let those pompous fools walk over me? You got another think comin’ kid.” Ivan turned around and softly said, “I’ve got something special planned.” Ivan turned back towards Rudy and grinned. “Bring ‘em in.”

The only door to the room opened and two gagged police officers were brought in and shoved to the ground. The horror on their faces was enough to scare Rudy if he wasn’t in the position he was in. “Now then, you must pick one to live and one to die. Hand

(Continued on page 10)
The Crime Wars, Continued

(Continued from page 9)

him your gun, Peter.” Ivan said. The man who was on Rudy’s right took out his sidearm and handed it to Rudy. They let him go and he just stared at the two cops. “Choose,” Ivan’s thick voice said.

“Can I do this? This wasn’t part of the plan. Rudy held the gun in his hand and stared at it. He then lifted it and pointed the barrel to the one on his right. The cop’s pupils widened and his body began to bleed sweat. The cop started breathing hard. Rudy pulled back the chamber and...click. Rudy just stood there for a few seconds before lowering the gun. The laughter from Ivan filled his ears, and he handed the gun back to Peter. The two cops suddenly began to laugh and stood to their feet. They untied themselves and took out their own gags. Dirty cops. “Now, you are hired.” Ivan said. Rudy just stared at him. “What did you say your name was?”

“Roland, but everyone calls me Roll,” Rudy said.

Three Months Later

Rudy was walking down his neighborhood that he now patrolled for the Russians thinking about his life back home. Rudy had been recruited, secretly, by the Brooklyn Police Department to go undercover and find out what’s going to go down, because the heat between the Russians and the Italians has been increasing over the last eight months. Rudy only barely got in because only a dozen of the police officers aren’t owned by either one of the gangs. I’ve only had the job for three months and I’m already sick and tired of it, Rudy thought. The back alley behind the apartment complex where he lived was a regular meeting place for the weapons trade and black market goods. This conveniently made it the perfect place to have his meetings with the police. As long as they blended in well, which most of the time they did.

It was about three in the morning and Rudy was ready to hit the sheet. The street was quiet as usual. The only two street lamps that worked were on and all he had to do, according to Chief Harris, was “Wait until we know what Tankov is planning,” regardless of the fact that Rudy knew of all their dealings and could pin everyone in the gang for something.

Rudy was almost to his apartment when he was grabbed from behind and taken into an alley. Someone threw him against a building and let him fall to the ground. They then picked him up and held him against the wall. “So, you’re the new guy Tankov hired. Pathetic,” a voice said from the shadows. A tall slim man stepped into the dim light. He had black slicked back hair and wore a black pin-striped suit and black pin-striped fedora to match. Italians. “You think you can come into our territory and take our custody away? You think you can come into our territory and take our custody away? You think you can come into our territory and take our custody away?”

Rudy closed his eyes and held his breath. Pew! The silencer was a surprise to Rudy. An even bigger shock was Rudy felt no pain. He opened his eyes and saw the man that was holding him was now on the cold, wet asphalt with a hole in his skull. "What!?" Rudy mind was racing at all the possibilities. "When," Rudy reached the conclusion it was too late. The Italian’s gloved hand was already inside his temple. Rudy felt against the wall with a thud.

Consciousness slowly came and Rudy was worried to open his eyes. His left temple felt as if a hammer had hit it. He sat up and the smell of wine suddenly filled his nostrils. Well, I’m not in the alley anymore. Cold water suddenly hit his face. Rudy gasped and opened his eyes, jumped to his feet, but was shoved back against a wall. When his vision finally cleared, he noticed that he was in a really nice building. The walls were maroon. A giant chandelier hung from the ceiling. A single table was in the middle of the room with a white table cloth and silver china on top. A lone man sat and ate. He was probably waiting on Rudy to wake up. He was wearing a three-piece suit, and had a napkin in his shirt. His black slicked-back hair shined in the light. His large, firm jaw was set and his cold gray eyes were piercing at Rudy. The big man himself, Rudy thought, Michael Nazzaro.

Nazzaro nodded at a man to Rudy’s right. The man turned and walked out of the room. The Italian took the napkin from his shirt and wiped his mouth. “You’ve been causing me a whole lot of trouble, Roland.” Rudy just stared at the man. “You know, I’ve been wondering, how much longer is Tankov going to wait to start this war of his?” Nazzaro stood and walked toward the side of the table and leaned back against it, folded his arms and attempted to read Rudy’s mind. “Because after this bally move of his, to send someone into my territory, well, I think the time for patience is past.” The man was much larger than Rudy imagined. His shoulders and bi-

(Continued on page 11)
cops were almost bulging out of his expensive suit. He walked toward Rudy. An evil smile took over the man's face. “Tell Tankov, it's his move.” He turned and walked back towards the table. “Let them in.”

Suddenly two doors, one on either side of Rudy, swung open and cops strode into the room. Rudy's eyes widened. One burley man grabbed Rudy by his shirt, whirled him around and put handcuffs on him. “You’re under arrest for the murder of Alanzo Rossi.” It hit Rudy like a tidal wave. The man that was shot in the alley, they were blaming him. This was not good. Now he was really stuck between a rock and a hard place. The cops that hired him couldn’t bail him out. That would ruin the entire operation. His only hope was that Tankov would wise up and get him out.

Three Months Later

Tankov had finally paid the bail and had gotten his dirty cops to put pressure on Nazzaro. However, the Italians' move worked. Tankov was ready to blow, but he wouldn't tell Rudy when.

“We need to know the day,” Chief Harris said during a private meeting. The man’s cigar filled the room with smoke, and Rudy was half tempted to grab it and flush it. “If we don’t figure it out until after the fact, it’ll be too late. Hundreds of thousands of innocent people will die.”

“I know, but he won’t let me in on it,” Rudy said. “Why don’t we just bust them now? We’ve got plenty of charges on everybody.” A board creaked out in the hallway. They both stopped and waited.

“Because he’s got enough bacon in his fridge to get him off of all of them except attempted mass murder, and you haven’t gotten us one decent sliver of solid evidence that even gives us probable cause.” The chief of the Brooklyn PD turned toward the door and left.

It was nearly ten at night when Rudy reached the headquarters of the Russian mob. He walked straight toward the office like he was told. Something’s not right, Rudy thought. He opened the door and, as usual, there stood Ivan Tankov, the Russian Crime Lord of New Jersey. However, his back was turned to Rudy, which was unusual. Before Rudy could speak, a black bag was thrown over his head and his arms bound behind his back. My cover’s blown was the last thought before the darkness overtook him again.

When Rudy woke up, he was in the back seat of a car. He couldn’t see anything with the bag on his head. Although, his hands weren’t bound anymore, he slowly reached for the door handle when a familiar voice reached his ears from the front seat.

“It’s a good thing you recorded his conversation with the chief. If you hadn’t followed him, we may never had known he was a pig,” said the voice.

So that’s what had happened. There’s no time to lose, Rudy thought. He grabbed the door handle, opened the door and bailed out of the moving car. He hit the asphalt hard. Rudy rolled a couple of times before he stopped. He jumped up and pulled the bag off his head and took off down the street.

SCHREECH!!! The 1966 Charger swung around the curve, headlights off, and sped straight for Rudy. His heart beat skyrocketed and his body shot out adrenalin...

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“Goodnight, Roll,” Roscoe said. Rudy heard the hammer pull back. I failed. I’m never going to get married, never have a family. I’m never going to get to know true love. I can’t believe this is happening. I’m going to die. This is it. These were Rudy’s final thoughts.

BOOM! Blackness engulfed Rudy’s world for the final time.

The End