

**Diploma in Creative Writing for Television and New Media**  
**SC8104 Creative Story Making**  
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**'A Short Story'**

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***Finally Free***

"America's advance in Normandy spells near the end of the war. President Truman has stated that Germany's time has come. However the war in the East rages on," I folded my documents, puffing out smoke from a cigar. My hand thumped the table along to every word transmitted from the radio. "Britain's Prime...Winston Chur-...unclear when...war...East...will end..." The radio was acting up, its transmission became more unclear by the second. I stood up from my seat and turned it off. The room became dark and silent, the only source of light coming from the rays of sunlight through a small opening of the concrete building. Slipping the folded documents in the umbrella, I looked at my watch. Two-fifteen. I walked out of the hideout, making sure to lock and leave no trace of suspicion. Continuing my path, the streets were quiet, only cries of plea were heard from the helpless but rightful owners of our country. "Please my daughter is 16, she'll marry...please..." I couldn't help but listen as I continued my path. Japanese soldiers were dragging young, single girls back to camp as comfort women. I winced at the sick thought of these foreign, war-thirsty bastards taking our land and stealing our homes, food and most sickening of all, women. Young

girls even the age of thirteen were taken from their families. "No...please," the older woman cried as she tried to grab her daughter. The soldier stood heartless as he raised his weapon. A loud shot and scream echoed in the narrow distance. No remorse. No pain. He simply spat at the woman's corpse as he roughly pulled a young, weeping girl away. I lowered my hat and walked on, fixing my gaze at the gravel below. I could not be distracted, what I had in possession was far too important to stop and help any of my countrymen. I simply could not afford to be questioned by the Kempetai.

I turned around the bend and saw an Indian man dressed in unassuming clothing. Two-thirty. If it was him, he was early... too early. "Are you Jaguar?" The Indian man calmly replied me. "Who's asking?" "Pigeon. You dropped your umbrella." I slipped my umbrella into his hand. "Colonel Rex gives thanks. Glory to Syonan-to," Jaguar responded and handed me a small piece of paper before leaving hurriedly. I scanned it, memorizing the coordinates of vital Japanese strongholds. I then proceeded to pick out my lighter and burned the paper once I was done. Suddenly two Kempetai patrolling the area saw my lighter and burning piece of paper. "Halt! What are you doing!" I immediately rolled the burning paper to make it look like a cigarette. "Glory to Syonan-to," I bowed as I responded in Japanese. They did not take the bluff. Before I knew it, I was knocked to the ground and a blow came to my head.

When I opened my eyes, I was too weak to move. Or maybe the constraints were too strong. My vision was blurry and red from blood as a figure walked closer, clicking his heels at every opportunity. He spoke English but in a strange accent. "Codename Pigeon, real name Hou Gan. Member of Force 136 and two years of service. A man of your talents, why fight for the losing side?" I examined

the man. Three stars on his side, the green neatly-pressed uniform and cap and of course a pistol. "A Captain I presume?" I asked groggily. He smiled. "Why, what an observant slave. Pity your talents are wasted in the wrong hands." He walked back and forth as he spoke. "You and I will be working closer than you think so best we get acquainted and to show you some hospitality." The man bowed as he mentioned his name. "Captain Suto. Call me by my first name if you like, Mi." He barked commands at the guards and my hands were free of knots. Grabbing a chair, he sat in front of me. "You sent intelligence to another Force 136 member at 1430 hours. What I want to know is what you so desperately tried to burn." I scoffed at the captain. "A cigarette, nothing more. I don't even know what I'm here..." "Hou Gan, if you joined Japanese Intelligence you would have mastered the art of lying. Now tell us what Jagtar Singh gave you, or should I say Jaguar." My eyes widened in shock and I started hollering. "I'll never talk to scum like you! You'll never know what I've uncovered! Syonan-to will be no more!" He chuckled. "I will get what I want eventually. As for Jaguar, his fate lies in your hands." I was then escorted and thrown into a cell by two guards. All around me was crying and torment, other prisoners curled up, trying to reassure themselves.

I looked around, hoping to find Jagtar, when suddenly an arm grabbed my leg and pulled me to the ground. "You're Hou Gan?" I nodded. "I delivered it, and replaced the original with a fake." "What of the original?" I questioned. "Burned it, along with many other files. Did they get the note I handed..." "Burned it but it's in here." I interrupted as I tapped my head. "Suto would have to kill me for it." Jagtar looked hopeless as I spoke. It was after all a very dire moment for either of us. Suto's offer echoed in my mind as I considered saving my life and his. The

coordinates. Strange how a few numbers would decide my fate. "Why did you decide to fight boy? You're young, you've got a whole life ahead." Jagtar asked, his voice monotone. "They raped and murdered my wife. It was her birthday and..." I choked back tears as I spoke. "...that morning, I remember her saying everything would be fine but...but...those dogs...took everything from me!" Jagtar watched solemnly as I sobbed, his hand rubbed my back. "My son was killed in battle, my wife captured by the Japs. I searched everywhere but I doubt she's alive. Now I'm just an old man with nothing to live for. If I were to die, I'd contribute my remaining life to liberation from these assholes." "Suto offered me a deal..." I mumbled. Jagtar raised his eyebrows. "If I don't reveal the coordinates, he will kill you," I continued. "That crafty fucker!" he growled in a syncopated whisper, punching the ground with such force he bled. Breathing heavily, he sat silently for a moment, exasperated. "So be it. Tell him nothing or what we worked so hard for would be fruitless. Take this as my last wish," Jagtar responded at last. I nodded solemnly.

The coming weeks became increasingly tough. Every alternate day, Jagtar and I were interrogated separately. We kept up our zeal, our will had never been stronger. Receiving pain became a formality and at night, Jagtar and I would talk about our lives before the war to keep our spirits up. One day we were talking and Jagtar said, "I won't live to experience the day our people get their freedom. But I will find freedom in death." I was confused. "How?" He shook his head. "Nothing. Crazy talk, must be this war huh?" he replied as he laid down and slept. I was left dumbfounded but would remember that conversation.

The following week, Jagtar and I were brought to be interrogated together for the first time. "Today is your last chance to confess to your crimes," Suto

stood behind his desk as he spoke. "I will never reveal anything to you!" Jagta growled, the guards holding him back. Suto walked towards Jagta and whispered, "Your wife, Rani, is alive, Jagtar." Jagtar's eyes widened. "And it is your decision whether he goes free with his wife," Suto turned to look at me. I was in a dilemma. Jagtar looked at me with tears. "Take me instead!" I pleaded. Suto smiled, enjoying the moment, evil in his eyes. "The coordinates," he demanded. "Do not! He's lying! Even if he's right, I'll be with my son. Remember my last wish," Jagtar assured me. Suto raised an eyebrow. "Fuck you," I growled. "So be it," his words slipped so easily, yet so cold. Suto took out his pistol and shot Jagtar in the head. I flinched. The captain threw his pistol and spat at the lifeless body in anger, humiliated his plan failed. I knelt next to Jagtar's body. I finally understood what he meant by finding freedom in death. "Thought I could trick him, I guessed wrong. Tell me those coordinates then die!" Suto seethed. I wanted to leave my mortal self, to be free of pain and suffering. The war will end, my people will be free soon. I picked up the pistol. I worked so hard to gain freedom but the freedom I find is not on this good earth but above. Ironic. I aimed it at my head, finding the trigger. "No!" Suto exclaimed as I fired. I am freed.

(1500 words)