Faded Into Blue

Patrick M Heffernan

#$'%&'($')*+&"',&&-."/0$"*)"1)2&"$3'*")*+&"'"4'5."'"
$,6*"$02/)782)8"2)4&"08"$3&"*&+-9(":2';&%"2)'4<$3&")*&"
$3'$"(8%6$"$3&"#4'19("'88%&"40*&("6*"$,)<'*4"()+-&4"
$3&"3&'4"26:3$"6*"$3&"-',."(8%6$$6*:"6$("%68"+%&'*")8&*>"?)"
$3&"&'($."+'0:3$"&@$&*46*:"6*$)"$3&"/'5."'%1)($")"$3&"
(3)0%4&2.",&2&"$3&"3'62(."$3&"/&'24."$3&"+)*:%)1&2'$&"
)A"&0$2)836&4"10+-"$'*:%&4"6*"'*"6*$&2,);&*"'%:'%"1&(("
'%)*:"$3&"/&*$36+"B)*&>"?)"$3&",&($."+'0:3$"':'6*($"$3&"

òTo Carrickþnn?ó

òTo somewhere new.ó I þt the butt beneath my

my þnger across the trigger, each ridge catching the

The gooseÿesh rose beneath my layers, mammalian

A ÿy buzzed out of his right socket. òYou want what

I lowered the riÿe.

are.ó He stepped in close and traced his þnger around

the wind invaded the holes, resulting in a snot-þlled explosion. The maggots wriggled in the rotting ÿesh,

òMay I ask you one question?ó he said with a ÿicker

òWhy do you no longer þnd this necessary?ó

dwelling place. Then the holes þlled in, the rays

Thatõs why I brought a solution.ó I shifted my riÿe.

doorway and yanked out a þstful of roots from the dune.

sun, but through the crack, there was a ÿicker of light.

military sack pack over my shoulders. It was þlled with

I begged for crp ‘ ‘ rs.th

o ch.

A glimp e be ond. A c ack in he face, no coming o ha e. I an ed o p nch i , ea he he c , abo i e i , b ea he he ilica ai . E ophied n ck g e f om m chin in plo che angling a o nd m h oa and collap ing m achea. The nd had no he e o go, o i d g deep and e p ed, a p e i ed bomb e off b m o n agnanc .

I opened he doo , and he man i h onl a mo h en e ed.

Wipe o fee I old him. Yo al a lea e foo p in e e he e.

He eaked m elcome ma i h g ain-fed m d. Hi oe o ld ne e h ne, b i d d he job. No ha I ca ed m ch. M fee e e plen di oo.

Thank o . I d opped ome ice c be an a emp ed al age mi ion in o m ea and ook a fe good ip

Dea me, he hi pe ed h o gh a g in, i q i e da k in he e. I feel like ome iggling ea h o m, and I m e o do oo. Do o mind if I open he blind ?

Yo an e en ee.

He h gged and le he ligh in h o gh m fo - paned indo .

Th ee pho o e e on he all. One old, one ab en , and one ne . The old a of an infan o ing hi ffed bea do n he ai . Hi plaid o e all e e opaq e h o gh he n ained bl e inge. The ab en a a ock pho o o nded b a ea- hell f ame. A do i o elf ma e piece made f om a d o i m a ki . The n a of a beach, clean and oli a i h mo on ock i ing f om he plain. Rain-jacke a mo o e a e -logged kin.

Wh a e o he e again? I a ked. I eem a li le de o ho p nan no nced.

If I a n an ed, pe hap i o ld be.

Yo a e n an ed

Yo fa ade i cha ming, no e e dele e io . No ma e . A mo e p e ing ma e i a hand i eem . So, if o don mind me a king, h he knife?

I fel a m in m hand. Ten inche of e a ed eel molded into a þne point. By the pricking of my thumbs, i hadn been ha pened in ea , b i ill o e.

I hink I an o be id of o , I aid. Seem þtting.ó

Yo don an o be id of me. Yo an o be id of ha I can ho o . He ook a ep o a d me, la ing one pla ed oe do n a a ime. Yo need me. Yo e no happ i ho me.

I m no happ i h o .

I m o onl connec ion o he ime o lef .

Yo e a i o he ime ha e lef .

He g abbed m hand and b o gh he blade o hi h oa . Then kill me. Kill he onl hing o ha e lef .

Eigh -fo hook , ca o ed eel od , b o ed in o me Thei ba b ome eble, ome jig ca gh me. The ing a held a gh . The e a no ep I co ld ake i ho being p lled back. The e a no ho gh I co ld hink i ho being anked back o he head.

Yo need o ee, he hi pe ed.

I an o be done i h hi .

Yo belong he e. Le me ake o back.

I can go back on m o n. Wi ho o .

He la ghed. Ho ill of o , m dea . Do o eall belie e ha ? He p hed he knife again hi kin. Yo ill ne e be ha f l again. B i o l an o, go ahead, g a p a o a . J emembe ha I am o onl op ion fo ome hing mo e.

A if o e gi ing me an hing mo e han a .

Wha I ho o i eal. When o ee, o e l he e.

I can do be e han o .

Then kill me. D ag ha blade ac o m h oa, a ch me die, and emembe ha i a o ha h e a a o onl chance a life.

I q ee ed he handle.

I m o onl pa age o ha momen , o onl a of ac ali ing o aim.

I stared into his sockets, into the ÿesh fading into

+,-&.//0'1'&...*'$%'2.3'&%$'45/$'$%'/..0'1'&..*.*'$%'
þre. The pack was still in the basement, the clothes
6.,.'#7.+&3'$8.'#+&/'6.,.'/$"77'9+/$'*5.0'1'#%57*'/$"77',5&0
:;&.'<%,.'$"<.=>'1'/+"*0
:;&.'<%,.'$"<.0>
1'&%**.*'+&*'/#,+$#8.*'$8.'27+*.'%??'8"/'.9"*.,<"/0
@"/'8+&*'/7"$8.,.*'+,%5&*'+&*'#+5A8$'8%7*'%?'<B'
6,"/$3'4+AA.*'&+"7/'*"AA"&A'*..9'"&$%'<B'/-"&0'C'$5A3'+'
B+&-3'+'*",.#$"%&0'@.'9577.*'<.'%D.,'$%'$8.'?%5,E9+&.*'
6"&*%6'+&*'/$%%*'<.'59'/$,+"A8$0
:F..3>'8.'#%<<+&*.*0
1'/+6'<B/.7?'$8,%5A8'$8.'6"&*%60'GB'<5A'6+/'
.<9$B0'H%'<%,.'$.+3'&%'<%,.'<.7$.*'"#.0'C'27+&-'/7+$.0'
I8.,.'1'6+/3',+"&E4+#-.$'/8,5AA.*'+,%5&*'<B'/8%57*.,/3'
+<9'4.+&/'#75&A'$%'<B'7.A/3'+&'6.77"./'59'<B'#+7D./J'
and there I was, ÿannel draped across my back, jeans
8.7*'59'2B'+'?,+B.*',%9.'2.7$3'+&*'."A8$EB.+,E%7*'/%#-/'
$8,.+*.*'+,%5&*'<B'$%./0
:K8+$'"/'$8"/=>'1'/+"*0
:1*.&$"$B3>'$8.'<+&'/+"*'2.?%,.'/8,"&-"&A'+6+B'"&$%'
$8.'#%,&.,0
GB'?+#.'*,"99.*'<%,.'$8+&'$8.'$.+,/3'<%,.'$8+&'$8.'
<"/$0'1$'<.7$.*'"&$%'$8.'?+2,"#'2.7%63'"&$%'$8.'/7%5#8'+&*'
A,5<27.3'.&#B/$"&A'"&$%'<B'/$%<+#8'+&*'+&#8%,"&A'<.'
*%6&3'+&#8%,"&A'<.'?,%<'$8%5A8$'$%',.+7"$B0
1'<5<27.*'$8,%5A8'$8.'6"&*%63'25$'1'#%57*&L$'8.+,0'
1'&..*.*'$%'8.+,0
1'$%%-'$8.'25$$'%?'$8.'A5&3'+&*'1'$%%-'$8.'8+&*7.'%?'
<B'-&"?.3'+&*'1'/8+$$.,.*'$8.'A7+//'2.$6..&'<B/.7?0'I8.'
/8+,*/'#,5&#8.*'2.&.+$8'<B'6.77".'/'+&*'#5$'$8,%5A8'<B'
$8,.+*2+,.'/%#-/'+/'1'/$.99.*'?%,6+,*0'K"$8'&%'*"D"*.3'
+'7%%-M&%$8"&A'<%,.'$8+&'+'A7+&#.M"&$%'<B'.B./3'"&$%'
+&'5&*.,/$+&*"&A0'I8.,.'6+/'&%'/.9+,+$"%&J'$8.,.'6+/'
&%'*"/$+&#.0';&.'"&'$8.'/+<.3'1'6+/'10
:K8B'*%'B%5'-..9'#%<"&A'2+#-=>'1'+/-.*'<B/.7?0
:1?'1'-&.6'$8.'+&/6.,3'1'6%57*&L$0>
1'7%%-.*'"&$%'<B'.B./3'B%5&A3'B.$'6.+$8.,.*0'G.$+7/'
+&*'&5$,".&$/'7.+-.*'?,%<'$8.<3'27%%*/8%$0'N+,,.&'7+&*'
seeping into barren water. The þsh kill was heavy.
òCut the barbs and run to where he canõt þnd you,ó
1'/+"*0':C&B68.,.'25$'8.,.0>
:I8.BL,.'"&'$%%'*..90'1'<+B'#5$'$%%'<5#80>
:I8.&'/$+B0'O7.+/.3'?%,'$8.'7%D.'%?'<.3'/$+B0'P%&L$'
#%<.'2+#-0>
:@.L77'$+-.'<.'2+#-3>'1'/+"*3'/8+-"&A'<B'8.+*0'
:;??./'1'#+&L$',.?5/.0>
I adjusted my grip on the handle and ran my þnger
+7%&A'$8.'2+,,.70':1$L/'$"<.'$%'2.','*'%?'8"<'$8.&0>
;D.,"'&'$8.'#%,&.,3'$8.'<+&'6"$8'%&7B'+'<%5$8'$%%-'
+'2,.+-'?,%<'/8+,9.&"&A'8"/'$..$8'6"$8'8"/'$%&A5.'$%'
/85**.,'+&*'7+5A80
1'/"A8.*0':Q%5'-&%6'1'#+&L$'#+,,B'$8+$'6."A8$0>
:R+&'1'.D.&'7"D.'6"$8%5$'8"<=>
:G+B2.3'25$'"$L/'&%$'6%,$8'$8.','/-0>
1'&%**.*0':I8.&'68.,.'*%./'$8+$'7.+D.'<.=>
:F$"77'7%/$3'1'/599%/.0>
1'85<<.*3'$6%E$%&.*0':F%3'1'/8%57*'/$+B0>
:1&'2%$8'97+#./3'B./0>
:C&*'?%,A.$=>
:Q./0>
1'7+5A8.*3'#,"&-7.*'/-"&'?%7*"&A'+$'$8.'#%,&.,/'%?'<B'