

DISTANT SECRETS by Richard L Cole

EXCERPT

PREFACE

“I’m not a well-known politician, an influential investment banker, or a sports legend. I’m not even a movie star who thinks he has all the answers to the world’s problems. I’m just a normal person. My family and friends would probably say “abnormal,” but I’m sticking with normal since I’m the one writing.

Being in my seventies, I find myself reflecting on my life much more than when I was younger. My memories play back like so many highlight scenes from old favorite movies. Each scene pops up accompanied by mental comments such as “Oh, I had forgotten about that” or “I can’t believe I was that stupid.” Sometimes I get a “Way to go, Richard, you were the man!” and there are always a few “I wonder what would have happened if...?” thoughts.

Those old memory highlights came in handy when my high school class of 1962 was preparing for one of our reunions. The organizers gave us a homework assignment to provide some information about our lives since high school that could be posted on the reunion website.

I started writing, but I just couldn’t get the ideas flowing, thankfully, it turned out to be easier than I first thought. All I had to do was relax and let the old memories play back in my head while I took notes.

As I wrote about myself, I made it a point to be very honest, although I’m not sure that’s expected when you’re trying to look good for your old school friends.

I included representative highlights of the good and the not-so-good, and it wasn’t long before it was finished. There it was, my entire life’s story reduced down to a page and a half.

It was more than a little depressing. My entire life only filled a page and a half. That little punch to my ego felt better after I thought about all the interesting and unusual things that didn’t make the final cut for that short article. I realized there was more than a page and a half to my life.

That one act of writing down a summary of my life led me to an unexpected and pleasing realization. While I have not conquered the world like every high school kid thinks they will, and I don't believe anyone will be making a movie about my "incredible" life, I have had a good, full life punctuated with many interesting and unusual experiences.

That realization, and having friends telling me I should write a book, got me thinking about it. I had never written a book, and since I had suffered a condition that made it difficult to read, I found the idea both challenging and appealing. Then it started; a little but highly annoying voice in my head joined in to pester me. "Write a book, write a book, write a book."

That is why I wrote this book. The next question is, why should you read it? Well, I think you will find it interesting, entertaining and worth the price, but I can't guarantee that. However, I can guarantee that every story and every event I describe in this book is presented just the way it happened. I promised myself I would keep it factual.

Oh, I should also let you know I have not used the real names of many people mentioned in this book. But, if they want to tell you it was them, that's fine with me.