

DEAD MAN LAUNCH

BY JOHN J. GOBBELL

DURING THE THICK OF THE COLD WAR in the 1960s, the United States and the Soviet Union were entangled in an undersea naval chess match. One false move on either side could have touched off a nuclear firestorm.

By the summer of 1962, the Soviets were building submarines, armed with nuclear-tipped torpedoes, at a breakneck pace, in many cases sacrificing quality standards for expediency, while putting crews at risk.

In *Dead Man Launch*, the sixth historical thriller featuring American naval officer Todd Ingram, John J. Gobbell puts a human face on those from both sides who embarked on perilous, often deadly, cat-and-mouse missions.

Rear Admiral Ingram, nearly two decades removed from World War II, commands cruisers and destroyers in the Pacific. His son, Jerry, a third-year midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy, is on a summer cruise aboard the destroyer USS *Mallilieu*, shadowing the Soviet nuclear submarine K-12 south-east of Okinawa.

It's unsettling even for a career navy father, who knows his son is in danger, with a "mushrooming Soviet submarine threat." And, worse, he's not able to share much with Helen, his retired army nurse wife, who went through plenty with him after the Japanese invasion of the Philippines during the war.

In true Gobbell fashion, the fervor surrounding the Ingrams is about to escalate.

After graduating from the academy in 1965, Jerry earns his wings at Pensacola and opts for anti-submarine warfare (ASW), flying the Lockheed P-3 Orion, "a four-engine turboprop with long legs." Marriage to an eye-filling model and an assignment to a squadron based in Sicily unexpectedly thrusts

the newlyweds into the cross-hairs of the Italian police, Mafia and U.S. State Department.

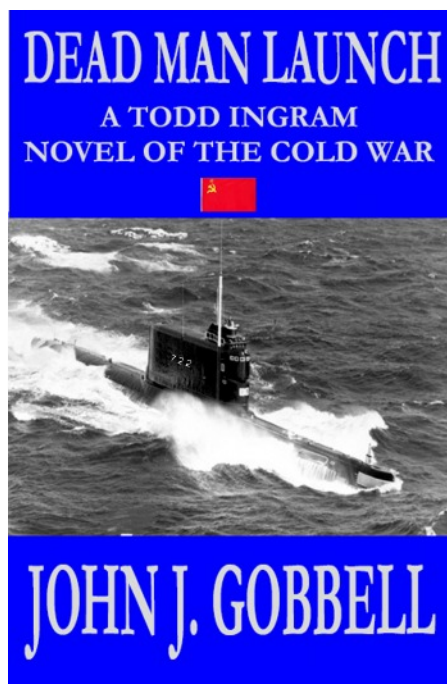
On the island of Oahu in Hawaii, now Vice Admiral Ingram has his hands full at the Kunia Regional Signals Intelligence Center, tracking a Russian sub sailing from Vladivostok.

At Sochi, Russia, on the Black Sea, Captain First Rank Eduard Dezhnev, Soviet naval officer and an agent working for the CIA, is about to run for his life, with the KGB in close pursuit.

Aboard the nuclear submarine USS *Wolfish* in the North Pacific, Jerry Ingram, on a training mission, witnesses a horrific incident, which reverberates all the way to the Kremlin and Washington, DC.

In the early '60s, Gobbell served as a deck and ASW officer aboard the destroyer USS *Tingey* (DD 539) in the South China Sea. His meticulous attention to historical, naval and cultural detail – a signature in his novels – is reflected in a stirring and briskly paced narrative.

Dead Man Launch brilliantly brings to life an era when mankind teetered on the brink of Armageddon and promises to keep the reading lamp lit into the wee hours.



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