



**Al Philipson**

# God's Agent



When you're a spy and assassin in the middle of an interstellar religious war, life can be a bit hazardous.

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By  
Al Philipson

Charlotte carefully slid the package into her leather purse, slung its strap over her shoulder, and casually walked around the corner into the heart of the spaceport and up to the customs desk. The fat albino behind the desk looked up from his monitor to stare at her, his right hand sliding slowly out of sight and down by his side.

"Ah, Miss Stereo, back so soon?"

From behind her, a familiar voice growled, "Charlotte! Stop!"

Charlotte froze as she heard the recognizable whine of a Mark 3 blaster powering up behind her. She carefully held her hands out to the side, palms open. "Brother Bliss," she spat without turning her head. "What are you doing on Merlin?"

"Following you, of course, Sister Charlotte. I'm worried about your soul," he paused. "And the intelligence on the Lord's troops you managed to lift from our offices here."

Charlotte continued to look straight ahead. The albino smiled through blubbery lips while his piggy pink eyes scanned back and forth.

She stalled for time as the last passenger in the terminal left through a gate halfway across the spacious room. “What makes you think I have anything like that, Brother Bliss?” She couldn’t help making the word “Brother” sound like something dirty.

She cursed herself for getting talked into this fool mission. One of these days, her luck was bound to run out.

The terminal was now empty except for the three of them.

“You neglected to disable one of the monitors in the office when you broke in and removed the package,” he snickered with a slight wheeze in his voice. You shouldn’t feel bad about it, Charlotte. The camera was well disguised. Most of those you blinded were dummies meant to distract sinners like you.

“Now, will you kindly, and very carefully, remove the package from your purse, lay it on the floor, and then we can take it, and you, back. We have a nice reeducation facility here on Merlin. I’d be honored to personally conduct your course of treatment,”

Bliss’ voice sent chills of fear down her spine. She’d escaped “reeducation” two years ago. It had taken six months for her to recover from the

damage to her body and her mind. She'd almost lost faith in God during that time. Charlotte didn't think she could survive another bout with the "kindly" ministrations of the Angels of the Lord, much less those of a fanatic like Brother Bliss. She vowed then and there to retire after this was over -- if she survived.

The albino raised his eyebrows, then looked left and right without moving his head.

Charlotte blinked her eyes once deliberately, then started a slow count.

On two, she faked a faint. On three she dropped to the ground as the albino pulled a needle gun and fired three times over her now prone body.

She looked frantically over her shoulder in time to see Brother Bliss collapse to the floor. The exploding needles had left two five-inch bloody holes in his torso and the third had blown away most of his face.

"Hurry," barked the albino as he caused the needler to disappear. "We need to be out of here before someone reviews the monitor recordings."

"Where?" Charlotte leapt up from the floor.

"There's a ship lifting for New Jerusalem in two minutes. We can go through gate 3 and sneak

over to gate 5. I know a way to avoid the monitors.”

Charlotte sprinted after the surprisingly swift bulk of the albino. They slipped through the arch of gate 3 and broke to the right. She asked, ‘Do you really want to go to New Jerusalem? That’s kinda like jumping from the frying pan into the lake of fire.’

“The ship makes a stop at the transfer terminal above Hadrak. I issued a request for Vengeance to meet us there. Once aboard, we’ll be safe.” He pulled a piece of paper from his pocket and handed it to her. “Here’s your boarding pass.”

Forty-three hours later, she relaxed in the wardroom of her bosses’ flagship, trying to figure out how to tell him she was quitting. The tacticians at the other end of the wardroom were pouring over the intelligence she’d provided. Admiral Collen Frazier of the Protestant Alliance sipped coffee from the opposite side of her table.

“Charlotte, you and your Sergeant have given us a huge tactical advantage over the Angels.”

She nodded. “Thank you, Sir.”

“It turns out that Admiral Favored of the Lord will be visiting his family on Bethlehem in a month.”

Charlotte sat up as a stab of apprehension coursed through her body.

“Would you care to take a shot at assassinating him?” The Admiral smiled ingratiatingly.