

IN THE CORRIDORS OF THE KREMLIN AND THE KGB, THE UNLUCKY LOVE OF OLECHKA RUSAKOVA

Author: Chekhonin, Boris

The Australian scent of the CIA. It almost got a further continuation in Moscow. A colleague from TASS introduced me to the daughter of [Konstantin Rusakov](#), an assistant of Brezhnev, who later became a Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The sweet young woman had recently returned from Japan with her husband. Family life was not going well. She decided to fill the resulting vacuum in life with post-graduate studies at the [Institute of International Relations](#) selecting Australia as the topic of her future PhD dissertation. Who else but me, who had just returned from this country, was able to help her with advice and literature.

So I began to visit the house on Malaya Bronnaya, where her parents' apartment occupied an entire floor next to [Mikhail] [Suslov](#), a member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee. The daughter wanted to study and become independent. Mom, on the other hand, thought that study is study, but first of all it is necessary to arrange her personal life. She wanted grandchildren quickly. But how difficult it is to successfully marry the daughter of a father holding such a high post in the Central Committee of the CPSU! There are a dime-a-dozen candidates for marriage, but they must meet the strictest requirements: attractive appearance, promising career and, of course, an ideal resume. After a long search, a candidate was nevertheless selected. It turned out to be a certain Ogorodnik, a promising diplomat. Behind him there were years of work abroad in Latin America. Mom was triumphant. He proposed formally and she accepted with a new passion.

And suddenly fate took an unexpected zigzag. The candidate for the marvelous Olya's* hand died. I felt really sorry for her. However, sympathy was soon replaced by great joy for dear Olya. It turned out that two very authoritative world organizations were directly related to the death of the candidate: the

Committee of State Security of the USSR and the US Central Intelligence Agency. The fact is that Ogorodnik turned out to be a talented and promising agent recruited by the Americans several years ago in Colombia, where he had worked as a second secretary at our embassy. According to some, the CIA played on his financial difficulties.

*[Olya and Olechka are diminutives of *Olga*]

The embassy demanded that the young Soviet diplomat immediately pay back 800 American dollars to the accounting department which he received upon the sale of a car. Where could he get what was such a substantial sum in those days? He turned to a Columbian he was acquainted with for help. The Columbian turned out to be an agent of local counterintelligence. As a result, Ogorodnik was handed over to the CIA.

According to different evidence from the most honored ace of Soviet counterintelligence, [Lieutenant General Boyarov](#), whose chest is decorated with 32 governmental awards, the CIA played the woman card. A beautiful Spanish woman, specifically brought from Europe, was entrusted to seduce the potential agent. Be that as it may, after becoming an American agent, Ogorodnik established himself as a jack of all trades, not only obtaining the information the CIA needed, but also on assignment for American intelligence he carried out actions to physically eliminate unwanted persons. In particular, with the help of a quick-acting poison produced in the USA, he liquidated a Soviet citizen, his mistress, who was the wife of a trade representative in Colombia. She suspected him of espionage.

It was not easy to expose Ogorodnik. He had the trust of our counterintelligence. While still a student at Moscow State University of International Relations ([MGIMO](#)), he maintained close contact with the Moscow KGB Directorate, reported on friends, informed about the attitudes of students from socialist countries. After he returned from Colombia, this tie to the KGB continued.

He had 16 operational meetings with Igor Peretrukhin alone. Several of them took place in a [banya](#). Upon returning to Moscow from abroad he was offered graduate work at MGIMO. In a year or two, he could possess an enviable scientific

degree. This would open up brilliant job growth prospects for him, as well as for his Langley owners. But, apparently, across the ocean, they did not want him to waste time and gave a thumbs down to further study. Of all the proposals, the one Ogorodnik chose was the job in the Directorate of Planning for Foreign Policy Issues of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [aka "Global Affairs"]. There he obviously lost in terms of salary and didn't have career prospects. This couldn't help but draw the attention of counterintelligence officers. By the way, there were quite a few of them in the directorate. And brilliant minds had led this MFA subunit for many years. One of them was my good acquaintance from work in the "USSR-Japan" society, a career intelligence officer and a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, [Sergei Leonidovich Tikhvinskiy](#), the author of brilliant books and scientific works. One other peculiar behavior drew attention to Ogorodnik as opposed to other "normal" workers of the directorate: he displayed a burning desire to stay on night duty. When the offices had practically become deserted, he took a portable Minox camera out of his pocket and photographed the encrypted messages and reports of the ambassadors, primarily from Washington. Everything that Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin reported ended up on the tables of the CIA leaders.

Gradually other suspicions arose. Ogorodnik was shadowed constantly. No matter where he went, his "external surveillance" tail followed him. Suspicions were also raised by his persistent courting of Rusakov's daughter. After the counterintelligence workers were completely convinced that they were on the right path, they decided to brief Andropov about it. At the beginning he vacillated. They were talking about a person joining the family of "the right hand" of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It would be easy to run into serious unpleasantness. And nevertheless, in the end, the head of the KGB showed bravery and gave his blessing to conduct "special measures". They put a [Vizir](#) observation camera in Ogorodnik's apartment and placed a counterintelligence officer at his neighbor's apartment on the same floor. Thanks to the smart apparatus, he could record the diplomat working on decryption of radio transmissions received from Langley. During the next meeting with Ogorodnik in the bathhouse, an officer took the keys to the apartment from his pockets and made copies of them. The next day, as soon as Ogorodnik left for work, they conducted a search of his apartment. Items found

there indicated the suspect could be taken. The batteries hidden in the flashlight contained tapes with cipher pads, specific CIA missions, and contact instructions.

Ogorodnik was arrested on the 21st of June 1977. Around 10 pm, when he returned home, counterintelligence agents were waiting at his door. Inside the apartment they opened up a cache with spy equipment in front of their host's eyes. The fiancé of the daughter of a Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and at the same time an American agent, had nowhere to go. Not holding back, he confessed to cooperating with the CIA, showed them all the caches in the apartment, and informed them where the cipher pads and equipment were. After the interrogation they suggested that he write a confession then and there. He sat at the table, took a pen that was laying on it and wrote: "I, Ogorodnik Aleksandr Dmitriyevich, want to declare the following..." and suddenly with a sharp movement lifted the pen to his mouth, clenched his teeth and bit into a poison capsule. Before the eyes of the Chekists, the agent began to wheeze, leaned back in his chair, and stony spasms convulsed his body. Then he went limp, fell into a coma, and bloody foam ran out of his mouth. All efforts to save him on the spot were unsuccessful. A couple of hours later, Ogorodnik died at the [Sklifosovsky Institute](#).

And then the whole superbly designed operation almost burst like a soap bubble. The American agent died with dignity. The counterintelligence officers seemed to have blundered and were unable to identify his specific contacts with diplomats from the US Embassy. And yet they managed to jump, as they say, above their heads. Showing an ocean of ingenuity, General Boyarov and his subordinates Vyacheslav Kevorkov and Vladimir Kostyrya were able to save the seemingly hopelessly lost game and arrest a CIA employee red-handed when she was laying a spy container intended for Ogorodnik: a Vice-Consul of the US Embassy, Martha Peterson. The CIA did not know that the agent had been exposed and committed suicide. In the course of the investigation, the counterintelligence officers intended to summon Olechka [Rusakova] to a conversation for testimony. Fortunately, she escaped the fate of a wife of an American agent. The intention was not destined to come true. The ban on conversation with Olechka was imposed personally by the chairman of the KGB Andropov. "Do you want to embroil me with the secretary of the CPSU Central Committee?" he told his generals.

In 1977, when life finished writing this sad page in the history of a marriage that did not take place, I was, fortunately, already far from Olga and Malaya Bronnaya. Otherwise, life would have threatened with new troubles. But I did not know at the time that fate would soon have me cross paths with General Kevorkov, and with Colonel Kostyrya, and even with their chief, First Deputy Chairman of the KGB, Lieutenant General [Grigory Fyodorovich Grigorenko](#), chief of Soviet counterintelligence.

<https://scicenter.online/smi-jurnalistika-scicenter/korridorah-kremlya-kgbneudachnaya-lyubov-44109.html>

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In his memoirs, international journalist Boris Chekhonin talks about the fate of a journalist of the second half of the twentieth century and shares his impressions of meetings with Soviet and foreign statesmen. An eyewitness and participant of the events described in the book, he covers the KGB's struggle against dissidents, reveals some secrets in the work of our intelligence officers and diplomats abroad.