

GREEN CARD SOLDIER

An Historic Adventure Novel

by **Bruce E. Zielsdorf**

Major Character Briefs

Heath Winslow – Protagonist and overall story teller. Sanctimonious, cynical freelance journalist. He's covered military conflicts and political upheavals worldwide for decades. The 6-foot, pudgy, 50-year-old is socially bold, venturesome, thick-skinned and uninhibited. Provides adventure insights through recollections and shared experiences, as well as detailing actions of characters met along the way. Highly enthusiastic with a keen attention to detail. Passionate about travel and adventure, but terminally curious and sometimes even mischievous. As a tavern philosopher, he long ago gained the reputation of being an incessant talker. Women are dazzled by his quick repartee and sexy comebacks.

Adrijan Ackov – Story antagonist and Heath's nemesis. Pushing 50, Adrijan's short and stout with a pronounced "beer gut" that affirms his regular and often excessive indulgence in food and drink. He's appointed puppet director of Yugoslav state-run radio and TV. Job is ideal for feeding his massive ego. Comes across as flamboyant, charismatic, bigger than life character. Facade hides a mousy, frightened and lonely individual who continually seeks validation and appreciation from others. Fails to ever balance work with play. Although married with two children, one-sided job focus blocks access to a fulfilling personal life.

Andro Babich – The *Green Card Soldier* and story's main character. Hard-working, conscientious, yet frustrated 19-year-old. Hollywood handsome, strapping soccer jock who's intellectually curious, appreciative of the arts and sensitive to beauty. Takes an optimistic view of life, but has little chance to expand his world involvement while living on the family farm. Believes people are basically honest, decent and trustworthy. Kindhearted Andro doesn't suffer rejection well. Barely escapes Bosnian conflict. Becomes a cargo ship crewman in Greece. Sails to America. With "green card" in hand, joins the Army, earns his citizenship and returns to Bosnia as a U.S. AID worker. Myriad of life challenges slowly shape this wanderer into a contemporary Renaissance man.

Dragana Kowalchuk -- Serves as story's impact character verses Andro, the novel's hero. The 40-something, single, never married woman is a tall and very fit, yet a willowy creature who demands attention wherever she goes. Seen by many as the ultimate villainess, she's still highly admired by Serb rebel fighters. Personality traits are as alluring as she is wicked, frightening and shameful. Seems quite original and even humorous at times. Has a strange, compelling impact on most any man she desires. Years of mental anguish and physical abuse heaped on during her youth are apparent in Dragana's hard-edged facial features and intimidating gestures.

Baba Sofija -- Andro's grandmother and matriarch of the Babich extended family. The 70-plus widow is a skeptic who exudes genuinely sympathetic qualities. Baba Sofija's bright green eyes, broad smile and welcoming gestures always make people feel immediately comfortable in her presence. Sofija's coarse and somewhat unkempt graying hair combines with her wrinkled brown skin to validate her maturity. She's a strong, robust woman who appears somewhat downtrodden

and stooped over from years of hard labor on the farm. The full-figured matriarch may be short in stature, but long in ability to take on almost any chore put before her.

Mara Cesarec -- Andro's neighbor and youthful sidekick. Mara is as physically beautiful as she is mysterious. Stereotypical Eastern European woman of enchantment with a small body frame and an hour glass-like figure. She's clever far beyond her 18 years. Her personality appears to be that of a chameleon. Mara has the uncanny ability to switch between being an extrovert and an introvert pretty much at will. She can be aggressive, competitive, stubborn and even bossy. Although Mara's family is Muslim, she and Catholic Andro are lifelong friends. They share an adolescent sexual fling, resulting in Mara's pregnancy.

Jason Banks -- The story's guardian figure and Andro's mentor. The 61-year-old widower and illegitimate father of Denasha Rivera is a strong, mature man and career merchant mariner. Jason's 6-foot, 4-inch frame assures his presence is readily known. A dark-skinned African-American, Jason's physique is complimented by his always erect posture, broad cheekbones and a wide smile that broadcasts his sociability far and wide. His rough and tough exterior hides the far gentler and caring side of a very generous man.

Cashton Steel -- The voice of reason. The 32-year-old convinces Andro to join the Army – a quick way for him to gain American citizenship as a ***Green Card Soldier***. At the same time, the recently divorced career infantryman is eager to get out of the recruiting business and back into the fight as a cavalry scout with his combat buddies. Sergeant Steel is very much a "by the book"

kind of guy. He optimizes the ideal soldier with his recruiting poster good looks and Army "Hoo-ah!" attitude.

Denasha Rivera -- Story's contagonist. Denasha is a strikingly beautiful woman of color in her early 20s with the voluptuous figure of a 1940s Hollywood actress. With Cashton's guidance, she becomes a dynamic Army computer specialist. Tends to exude negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety and depression. She's likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. A proud Nuevo Rican, Denasha is the child of a tough, inner city upbringing that has scared her psyche in many ways.

Anita Antonucci -- An emotional archetype. The 30-something bombshell's long silky black hair was meant to gently caress her radiant skin and vibrant green eyes. She dresses her tall slender frame in an array of almost costume-like ensembles. Anita appears to almost float as she strolls about. An extroverted, struggling vocal artist, she's talkative, sociable, sometimes bold and can even seem aggressive at times. With those in her loving inner circle, she's always sympathetic, understanding and helpful. Anita has a soft heart and is openly affectionate.

###