

Dick's Little Secret



Arthur Hoppe

"HELLO, DICK? This is you-know-who. Just thought I'd call up and welcome you home from China."

"Oh, is that you, Jerry?"

"Shhh! No names! You never know when some dirty rat is bugging your telephone."

"Is that a crack?"

"No; no, Dick. I'm sure you wouldn't bug your own phone. Again. It's just that I told the press I wouldn't talk to you when you got back from China. So I thought we'd keep this little phone call private."

"Are you ashamed of me or something?"

"Of course not, Dick. As I explained, I can't talk to every private citizen who goes off to China without consulting me first just as the New Hampshire primary is coming up."

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"OH, I SEE now. You're mad at me. You and your pal, Barry Goldwater. He said I was such a louse I should stay in China."

"Dick, why would I be mad at you just because you almost cost me the first election I ever ran in outside of Grand Rapids after all I've done for you?"

"Don't kid me. You all hate me! You're all ashamed of me! You think I'm an ungrateful wretch. You wish I were dead."

"Dick, if I hated you, why would I be calling you up like this to welcome you home?"

"Because you want to know what's going on in China, don't you? You want to know what the Chairman, the Premier and I talked about in our secret

discussions, don't you?"

"We know what's going on in China, Dick. I was just there. Sure liked the Premier. Tall, thin guy, bushy eyebrows?"

"No, he's short and fat and ... There you go, trying to wheedle my secrets out of me!"

"Just tell me one thing, Dick. They don't want the two pandas back, do they?"

"I'm not going to tell you anything. You hate me. Everybody hates me. Except them."

"We respect you, Dick. You were a great peacemaker, definitely one of the two greatest peacemakers since the Creation."

"Well, I guess I'll have to admit that. Of course, that's why the Chinese invited me over. They wanted to retain my brilliant peacemaking services."

"That's swell, Dick. Why don't you come to Washington and we'll discuss their proposals?"

"Sorry, Jerry, I won't have time. But I'll drop you a postcard from Moscow."

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"MOSCOW! Dick, you don't mean you're making peace between Peking and Moscow?"

"Yes, the world's two largest nations. It will be a fitting climax to my long career."

"But, Dick, if the Communists bury the hatchet, it will be in our heads!"

"Exactly, Jerry. You Capitalist running dogs won't have America to kick me around anymore!"