

***The Leveling* by Dan Mayland**

Cast of Characters

Main Characters

Mark Sava—Former CIA station chief of Azerbaijan; employed as a professor of international relations at Western University in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Daria Buckingham—Iranian American, former CIA operations officer. Fluent in both Azeri and Farsi. Mark was Daria's boss when she worked for the CIA.

John Decker—Former Navy SEAL, now a private security contractor. Has worked with Mark before in Azerbaijan.

The Rest

Alty—Full name is Alty Nuriyev. Tends bar in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, at a pub frequented by John Decker.

Amir Bayat—Editor of a conservative Iranian newspaper. Younger brother of Ayatollah Bayat.

Atamyrat Nuriyev—Full name is Atamyrat Nuriyev. Assistant to the ministry of culture in Turkmenistan. Older brother of Alty.

Ayatollah Bayat—High-ranking ayatollah in Iran and member of the powerful political body in Iran known as the guardian council.

Ayatollah Khorasani—Supreme leader of Iran.

Bruce Holtz—Owner of Central Asian Information Networks (CAIN), a spies-for-hire outfit.

Heydar Gambar—Eighteen-year-old son of Orkhan Gambar.

Li Zemin—Head of the Guoanbu (Chinese intelligence agency) in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

Murat—Cousin of Alty. Runs a smuggling operation near the border of Turkmenistan and Iran.

Orkhan Gambar—Azeri minister of national security. Worked with Mark Sava when Sava was the CIA station chief of Azerbaijan.

Ted Kaufman—Chief of the CIA's Central Eurasia Division and Mark Sava's former boss. Works at CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia.

William Thompson—A CIA station chief who works at the embassy in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.