



The 310 Dispatch

Together We Make A Difference



MAR/APR 2026

Lest We Forget

March

Jack Hopkins
Lavern Lamey
Gregory Shambaugh
Earl Hoag
Frank Keck

April

James Behlmeyer
William Johnson
Robert Crabby
Michael Wallace (MIA)
Clive Mosier

What's Inside:

From President's Desk 1-2
Chaplains Corner 3-4
Minutes 4-5
Mar/Apr KIAs 6-10



National Chapter of the Year 1997, 2007, & 2025 - Five Times National Newsletter of the Year! Two National Veterans of the Year!



As most are aware, Alfred 'Fredo' Merritt passed away February 18th around 2030 hrs at the Ann Arbor VA. Per Luker, he and Wendy spent two days with Fredo at the hospital until the end.

Fredo's wish is that he will be cremated and buried at the National Cemetery at Holly, MI. As more details are known, I'll send out another email.

Al joined VVA April, 3 1985. His membership number was 577. Most of us have 5 and 6 digits on our membership

card, Al has 3. He originally was a member of Detroit Chapter 9, and transferred to 310 shortly after we were granted our charted in February, 1987.

Al, will be missed by everyone. He volunteered for every Chapter activity including merchandise sales at the Clinton Fall Festival, our annual Pig Roast, Ypsilanti Heritage Festival (we no longer participate in the Ypsi event) as well our monthly sales at the VA. Al really enjoyed our Christmas Parties for the patients at the VA hospital, Watchfire, and our Memorial services. He loved conversing with anyone, anywhere, and anytime. When I would call him, he would answer with "What's going on my old friend."

His dog, Tilly, hatted me! He would bark and growl whenever he saw me. Having been a dog handler in the military, I was used to that, but Tilly would show his teeth with his lips pulled back when he growled, which told me he did not like me. My nickname for him was KILLER! Al had another dog name Kit. Kit and I never met, but I sure Tilly told him that I was a scoundrel, and not to be trusted.

Al was a Board of Director member for many years and rarely missed a meeting. He was one of the founding members of the TLC (The Liars Club) coffee group that meets weekly at the Brewed Awakening Cafe in Saline. He was also instrumental in reestablishing the breakfast group that would meet at different restaurants on Friday's, following our Thursday membership meetings.

His other love was the Memorial. He spent many hours daily at the Memorial. If not working on improving the landscape, he was dreaming up projects with Luker to improve an already fabulous setting for the Memorial. Rest In Peace My Friend, Rest In Peace...





2025 Miss Michigan, Hanna Palmer

Pictured with Hanna are, Vance McCrumb, Stan Harrison and Berry Bourne.



John Kinzinger arranged for the 2025 Miss Michigan, Hanna Palmer, to visit patients at the Ann Arbor VA on February 13th. Hanna resides in Brighton, Michigan and is a third grade teacher in Ann Arbor. She placed 6th in the 2025 Miss America Pageant!

Needless to say, she brighten the day for the patients as well as the three of us, who were fortunate enough to have our picture taken with Hanna.

We had a nice turnout for our February meeting, and the first round of officer and board member nominations were completed. If you would like to pitch your hat in that ring, please come to our April meeting. That meeting will be the last round of nominations, followed by the election. Please plan on attending and support your chapter.

We had a good day of merchandise sales at the VA this past February. Our sale's date was changed from Tuesday's after our Thursday meeting to Friday's. Not sure why, but it didn't seem to affect our sales in a negative way. The sales team consist of Stan Harrison, Ed Scruggs, Tim Driscoll and me. Occasionally Marty Cathorn, George Betts, and Bob Kurtz would show up. And as mentioned on page one, Fredo was a regular as well.

Our once-a-month Friday hours are 0800 to 1330 hrs. We do have a good time socializing with the VA staff, family members of patients and outpatient veterans. We could always use additional help.

I read in a VVA Press Release that another Vietnam Veteran, Marine Major James Caspers, Jr, was awarded the Medal of Honor. Then-Second Lieutenant Caspers lead his nine-man Force Recon team through four days of intense combat against a far superior enemy force, calling in close-air support, artillery and mortar strikes to within 50 meters of their position. He also led counterattacks that saved every Marine on his team. Oorah!!!

Our Chapter will host the Vietnam Veterans of America, Michigan State Council (MSC) meeting that will be held on March 14, 10 am to 12 pm. Rev. Bull will provide the donuts and we will supply the coffee.

This would be a good time to meet your state officers and other chapter representatives. Jon Luker, Sandie Wilson and Tim Driscoll are regular attendees at the MSC meetings. Please mark your calendars and support your Chapter by attending. That is, if this gets published prior to the meeting.



Jon and Wendy, with regard to Fredo

Greetings,

While Fredo was clear-minded, he made clear that he didn't want a lot of hubbub after he passed away. He wanted to be cremated and buried (not put in a columbarium) at Great Lakes National Cemetery with military honors.

He knew VVA folks loved him and thought of him. He smiled whenever we brought your messages and love to him and talked about everyone all of the time. He would have found it most fitting and been the happiest if we remember him at the Watchfire Ceremony, drink a beer (or a shot of Jack) in his honor and retire a flag. Since we do not know if his family will honor his wish to be buried with military honors, it seems appropriate to Wendy and me that we conduct military honors for him at the Watchfire ceremony. (We hope the Honor Guard would be able to do that).

Fredo would have been very happy with this plan and it will be during one of the events he cherished the most, at the place he loved the most.

Jon and Wendy.

Minister's article: March/April 2026

Rev. Gordon Moore

The Easter celebration season is upon us. I have decided to allow Scripture to speak for God with a selection from Acts 13:16-33. It is lengthy but sums up the promises God made to His people that are valid for us today.

Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: "The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it. "For a period of about forty years He put up with them in the wilderness. "When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance—all of which took about four hundred and fifty years. "After these things He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. "Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. "After He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.'

"From the descendants of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, after John had proclaimed before His coming a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. "And while John was completing his course, he kept saying, "What do you suppose that I am? I am not He. But behold, one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.'

"Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent. "For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him. "And although they found no ground for putting Him to death, they asked Pilate that He be executed.

"When they had carried out all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb. "But God raised Him up from the dead; and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people."

"And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'YOU ARE MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU.'

Easter blessing to all who fear God.

Regular Membership Meeting Minutes

12 February 2026

Call to Order by President Vance McCrumb at 1900



Pledge of Allegiance: Vance McCrumb

Opening Prayer: Bob Bull

Moment of Silence for POW/MIA's, their families and those who are serving in hazardous places around the world.

Roll call: A quorum was established. Welcome Home Everyone!

Introduction of New Members: None

Introduction of Guests: Prospective Member Berry Muller served as a medical officer in the middle of the Mekong Delta in 1964&5. He also worked with a Vietnamese doctor helping indigenous people.

Motion by Budd Frye/Brian Bayha to Approve the January Minutes published on the VVA310.org website.

Adjourned to Nominations

President: Bob Kwiecinski declined

Vice President: Stan Harrison, accepted

Treasurer: Berry Bourne, accepted

Secretary: Jon Luker, accepted

Sergeant at Arms: Eric Downie, accepted

Two-year board members moving to 1-year positions are:

Marv Rivers, Dale Throneberry, Budd Frye

Two-year board nominees (Need at least three)

Absent: Bob Bull, Tim Driscoll

Accepting: Ed Scruggs

Declining:

State Council Delegates: (We are authorized up to 5) Driscoll, Wilson, Luker.

Meeting Resumed

Officer Reports:

President's Report: See report on VVA310.org/newsletter website in *The 310 Dispatch* in the Nov/Dec issue

Treasurer's Report: Reports were emailed to the board. Reports are also available to members via email upon request.

Non-restricted Fund Revenue

- a. \$508 merchandise sales and \$18 donations at Ann Arbor VA with \$224 cost of goods sold for a 56% profit margin on merchandise sales before a \$102 fee at 20% to Ann Arbor VA
- b. Nothing else significant

Non-restricted Fund Expenses:

Nothing significant

Restricted Funds Revenue:

- a. \$400 donation to Ann Arbor VA Patients Restricted Fund
- b. \$100 donation to Vietnam Memorial Long-term Landscaping Plan **Restricted Fund:**
- c. \$100 donation to Vietnam Memorial Maintenance Fund

Restricted Funds Expenses:

- a. \$3,161 for three steak upgrade dinners for Ann Arbor VA patients
- b. \$370 cost for Vietnam Memorial maintenance

AVVA Report: Please see the AVVA report published on our website <https://www.vva310.org/newsletter>. Kathy Driscoll gave a brief report.

National Meetings Report: See website for full report. Topics included:

- a. Mission 75 Plan
- b. AVVA and VVA merger
- c. Mission POW-MIA

Honor And Remember

To Learn More Please Click On Their Underlined Name

- d. Legacy Task Force
- e. Role of Council of State Council Presidents
- f. Whether there should be a Leadership Conference, and, if so, what do we use the time for
 - i. Training new officers or
 - ii. Discussing the new long term strategic plan
- g. National Budget and officer raises.
- h. Presentation by Under Secretary of VHA, John Bartrum focusing on three of four levels of care:
 - i. Not doing anything with 139 healthcare centers we already have.
 - ii. VHA level should state policy and get out of the way
 - iii. Replace all the bureaucracy between hospitals and VHA with a medical operations center – the G2 for VHA
 - iv. Reduce 18 VISN's to 5 whose sole focus will be healthcare outcomes. They will report directly to the secretary
- i. Should we move the national office?
- j. Motion to make one last revenue share with chapters and state councils

Committee Reports:

Merchandise: Stan Harrison – We had \$508 gross sales at the VA. The next sale is tomorrow from 0830 to 1300 on the third floor. Inventory will be done here on Sunday at 1300. All the pins have been counted. I have challenge coins here if you want to buy one. We have free \$5 gift cards that are good at the Applebee's on Carpenter and in Belleville. Please use only one at a time.

Washtenaw County Council of Veterans: Bob Bull – The next meeting is on Monday.

Michigan State Council: Sandie Wilson – The next meeting is here at 1000 on 14 March. It would be good if many members showed up.

Memorial Maintenance: Luker, show of hands for volunteers for next season – 3. We need more volunteers.

Website: We have had 512,311 hits since the website was late rebuilt.

Membership: 227

Newsletter: We reduced the November/December issue to 10 pages. We did not include pictures of our KIA's because there were so many. Check the patron page to see if you are up to date with your subscription. Expired subscriptions will be removed from the postage mailing list and added to the email list if we have an email address.

Health Care: Sandie Wilson

- The VA is converting to a new computer system and the new computer medical record.
- Dr. Lawrence, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, was in Ann Arbor to meet with some of us. The meeting was well attended by younger veterans and by people that live in the area.
 - o Lack of 988 information in the VA
 - o The VA no longer does PSA tests
 - o The rumor about 35,000 layoffs coming up – turns out to be false

There have been many cuts in the recent past, but the VA is now hiring nurses and other healthcare professionals.

The minutes are incomplete due to space considerations. If you received this via email please click [here](#) to read the complete minutes. If you received the Dispatch via USPS, visit our website at vva310.org. Once there click on About Us and select Meeting Minutes.

Honor And Remember

To Learn More Please Click On Their Underlined Name



Corporal Jack Maynard Hopkins was born on April 11, 1944 in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Mr. and Mrs. Charles X. Hopkins of Ypsilanti, Michigan. Corporal Hopkins was severely wounded on February 27, 1966. Jack died of his wounds on March 2, 1966.

Jack Maynard Hopkins is survived by his parents and a brother, Charles X. Hopkins, who is also serving in the Marine Corps in South Vietnam. He lived 21 years, 10 months and 21 days. He is resting in Washtenong Memorial Park in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Jack's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ypsilanti. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 05E Line 095.

Private First Class Lavern Michael Lamey was born on November 7, 1949 to Mr. and Mrs. Ralph J. Lamey of Milan, Michigan. Private First Class Lamey began his tour of duty in Dak To, Kontum Province, South Vietnam on December 16, 1968 serving as a Grader Operator with the 15th Engineering Company, 299th Engineering Battalion, 937th Engineering Group, Lavern Michael Lamey. Lavern was killed by enemy mortar fire on March 5, 1969.

Lavern Michael Lamey is survived by his parents, his wife, a brother and two sisters. He lived 19 years, 3 months and 28 days. He is resting in Marble Park Cemetery in Milan, Michigan. Lavern's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Milan. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 30W Line 047.



Corporal Gregory Randall Shambaugh was born on October 2, 1947 in Ann Arbor, Michigan to Mr. Robert Shambaugh of Toledo, Ohio and Mrs. Geraldine Shambaugh of Ann Arbor, Michigan. According to First Lieutenant McLemore in a letter to Mrs. Shambaugh, "On March 6, 1968, while Gregory was participating in a search and destroy mission with Company D, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry, he was struck by an enemy bullet and instantly killed."

Gregory Randall Shambaugh is survived by his parents and his wife. He lived 20 years, 5 months and 4 days. He is resting in Arborcrest Cemetery in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Gregory's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ann Arbor. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 43E Line 034.

Honor And Remember

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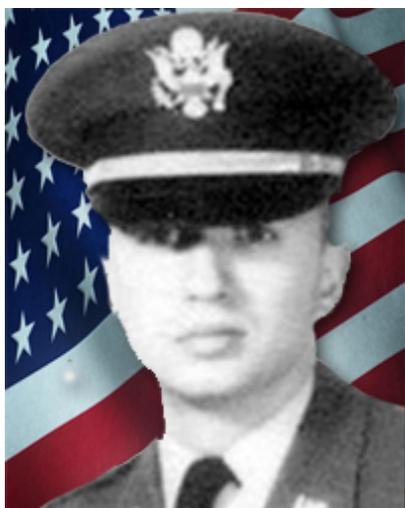
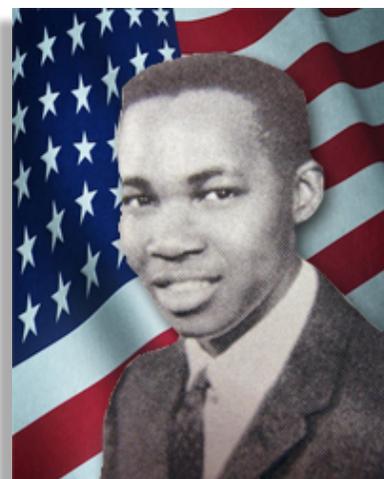
Private First Class James Roy Bihlmeyer was born on November 12, 1946 in Manchester, Michigan to Mr. and Mrs. Roy J. Bihlmeyer. Private First Class Bihlmeyer went through Basic Training at Fort Riley, Kansas. James began his tour of duty in Long An Province, South Vietnam on December 1, 1966 serving with A Company, Second Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division as an infantryman. He died as a result of enemy small arms fire on April 15, 1967.

Private First Class James Roy Bihlmeyer is survived by his parents, a brother and a sister. He lived for 20 years, 5 months and 3 days. He is resting at the Bethel Church Cemetery in Manchester, Michigan. His name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Manchester. James Roy Bihlmeyer also appears on the

Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 18E Line 028.

Corporal William Henry Johnson was born on December 9, 1943 in Union City, Tennessee to Jewell and Johnnye Johnson of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Corporal Johnson began his tour of duty near Danang, Quang Nam Province, South Vietnam serving as a rifleman with E Company, 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Amphibious Forces. William was killed on April 17, 1966 as a result of small arms fire from a sniper while manning a defensive position.

William Henry Johnson is survived by his parents, a sister and a brother. He lived 22 years, 4 months and 8 days. William's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ann Arbor. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 06E Line 119.



First Lieutenant Robert John Crabbe was born on June 12, 1941. First Lieutenant Crabbe began his tour of duty in Binh Dinh Province, South Vietnam on January 11, 1966 serving as a Field Artillery Unit Commander with Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, Division Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division. He was in a UH-1C Helicopter Gunship from Troop A, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry that was shot down while making a rocket run on a Viet Cong position. He was killed on April 18, 1967 after serving one year, three months and seven days "In-Country".

Robert John Crabbe lived 25 years, 10 months and 6 days. He is resting in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, Section 4, Site 2969-C. Robert's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ann Arbor. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 18E Line 045.

Honor And Remember

To Learn More Please Click On Their Underlined Name



Sergeant First Class Michael Jon Wallace was born on November 21, 1939 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Sergeant First Class Wallace began his tour of duty in Thua Thien Province. On April 19, 1968, Michael was a crew chief on a CH-47 Chinook helicopter flying a mid-day supply mission. The helicopter was descending through an overcast sky and was on its final approach to Landing Zone Tiger in Quang Tri Province when it was struck by enemy .50 cal and 37mm ground fire and crashed. On February 6, 1974, Michael's status was changed to "Died While Missing In Action (MIA)."

Michael Jon Wallace is survived by his wife and two children, and a sister. He lived 28 years, 4 months and 28 days. Michael's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township as MIA. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 51E Line 002.

Private First Class Frank Leslie Keck was born on June 1, 1946. Frank attended Saline High School in Saline, Michigan for six years returning to Kalkaska, Michigan after the death of his father in 1965. He would have been in the 1964 graduating class in Saline where he played varsity basketball. He worked in construction before entering the Army in June of 1968.

Private First Class Keck began his tour in Tay Ninh Province, South Vietnam on December 22, 1968 serving as an infantryman with C Company, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry, 25th Infantry Division. He died as a result of enemy small arms fire on March 29, 1969.

Frank Leslie Keck is survived by his wife and son, his mother, and one brother. He lived 22 years, 9 months and 28 days. Frank's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Saline. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 28W Line 082.



Specialist 4 Earl Thomas Hoag was born on March 9, 1948 in Detroit, Michigan to Mr. Robert and Mrs. Mary Hoag of Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Earl was killed when his patrol was ambushed and he sustained multiple fragmentation wounds on March 8, 1969. He died just one day before his 21st Birthday.

Earl Thomas Hoag is survived by his parents and three brothers. He lived 20 years, 11 months and 29 days. He is resting in Grand Lawn Cemetery in Detroit, Michigan. Earl's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ypsilanti. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 30W Line 076.

Private First Class Clive Vere Mosier was born on January 3, 1943 in Campbell, Missouri to Mr. and Mrs. John Mosier of Chelsea, Michigan.

Private First Class Mosier began his tour of duty in Military Region 3, South Vietnam on February 16, 1967 serving as an infantryman with B Company, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division. Clive was killed on April 24, 1967 as a result of an explosive device.

Clive Vere Mosier is survived by his wife, parents, and four brothers. He lived 24 years, 3 months and 21 days. He is resting in Arborcrest Cemetery in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Clive's name is listed on the Vietnam Memorial in Ypsilanti Township under Ann Arbor. His name also appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC on Panel 18E Line 080.





Dispatch Patrons

Al (Fredo) Merritt ~ March 2026
Cynthia Alfred Calhoun ~ April 2026
Elizabeth Wong ~ Sept. 2026
Berryman Bourne ~ Aug. 2026
Sara Rodeck, in memory of her brother (KIA) Michael Hunter ~ September 2026
Glenn Sakcriska ~ Nov. 2026
Ralph Henry ~ Nov. 2026
Gary L. Couture ~ Dec. 2026
Jane & John Kinzinger ~ June 2027
Dave P. & Gloria G, Marshall ~ June 2027
Linda Laey-Leonard ~ In Memory of (KIA) Lavern Lamey ~ July 2027
Ronald Oliver ~ August 2027
Louis Kennedy ~ Sept. 2027
Paulo & Ann Dempsey Pereira ~ Oct. 2027
Chris Wetzler ~ Nov. 2027
Sandy Martinez ~ Nov. 2027
Corrine Gignac - In Memory of her Uncle Neil Gignac USAF - April 2028
Bruce Ross ~ March 2028
John & Mary Laher in memory of John Holenbeck - March 2028
John C. Shook ~ July 2028
Rudolph Kozole ~ July 2028
George Boone ~ Feb. 2029
Stan Harrison in honor of Russ Michalke ~ March 2029
Darlene Imus ~ Jan. 2030
Alice Lee ~ March 2031
Sarah and Brent Gephart, Sr. ~ March 2031
Jim Sharp ~ April 2031
Eric Downie ~ February 2032
Ray Hunter ~ Dec. 2032
Hank Woods ~ in memory of Past President Paul Dumsch ~ Sept. 2032
Steve & Shirley Hitte ~ June 2034
George Perrault ~ Oct. 2035

If VVA 310 members or others receiving the *Dispatch* via USPS desire to assist with the printing cost, a suggested donation would be: one year at \$12.00, two years at \$22.00, and three years at \$30.00. Payment can be made payable to VVA 310 and mailed to P.O. Box 3221, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3221 indicating *Dispatch* on the memo line.

All other donations may be made payable to VVA 310 at the same mailing address by indicating 'Donation' on the memo line.

VVA 310 award-winning newsletter reaches approximately 500 people each month with 100 mailed USPS, 50 hits off the website (www.vva310.org), and 350 emailed. With good stewardship and networking, the cost to print the *Dispatch* approximates \$1,250 per year.

Who We Are

We Are 227 Strong, And Growing

Chapter President: Vance McCrumb
Vice President: Stan Harrison
Secretary: Jon Luker
Treasurer: Berry Bourne
Chaplain: Rev. Gordon Moore
Sergeant-at-Arms: Eric Downie
Membership: Vance McCrumb
Dispatch Editor: Dogman

Website: <https://www.vva310.org>
Follow us on [Facebook](#)
Contact: membership@vva310.org
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Please Direct Any Questions About Membership or Our Website To: membership@vva310.org
Thank You!

- VVA's Founding Principle -

"Never Again Will One Generation Of Veterans Abandon Another!"

Vietnam Veterans of America
Charles S. Kettles Chapter 310
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Please Forward. Thank You

