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Edgar Matobato says he killed over 50 people for Rodrigo Duterte, the Davao City mayor who later became the Philippines’ president.

Signs of C.T.E.  
Vexed Soldier  
In Vegas Blast

By DAVE PHILIPPS  
COLORADO SPRINGS — Alicia Arritt spent years as an Army nurse working with combat veterans with brain injuries. And when she started a relationship with Matthew Livelsberger in 2018, long before he shot himself and blew up a Cybertruck in Las Vegas last week, she recognized many of the symptoms in her new boyfriend that she had seen in her patients.

A master sergeant in the Army’s 10th Special Forces Group, he was forgetting words, losing his train of thought mid-sentence and struggling with insomnia. He had headaches and depressive moods that sometimes kept him shut away for days. In a text exchange after they started dating, he mentioned having been deployed three times in three years. She asked if he had been hurt. “Just some concussions,” he responded.

“I think he wanted to get help, but he thought if he said anything, he wouldn’t be able to do his job anymore,” she said in an interview on Friday from her home in Colorado Springs. They dated for two years, and then remained friends.

By the time they met, Sergeant Livelsberger had been in the Army more than a decade and had been deployed into combat a number of times. He had spent years jumping from airplanes and being exposed to weapons blasts in training. He had back injuries from hard parachute landings and had lost some of his hearing from being around explosions and gunfire.

The military has begun to re-

Continued on Page A17

On the Run, a Hit Man Gives a Final Confession

By HANNAH BEECH  
MANILA — There are, the hit man said, many ways to kill. A string tied between two sticks strangles with a tug of the wrists. A butcher’s blade, long and thin, slices into the heart. Edgar Matobato said he fed a man to a crocodile, but only once. Mostly, he said, he ended people’s lives with a trusted weapon: his .45-caliber Colt M1911 pistol. “For almost 24 years, I killed and disposed of many bodies,” Mr. Matobato said of his time with a death squad in Davao City, in the southern Philippines. “I am trying to remember, but I cannot remem-

Desperate to Testify in  
International Court  
About Duterte

ber everyone.” “I’m sorry,” he added. We were sitting in the outdoor kitchen of Mr. Matobato’s secret refuge in the Philippines. A fierce rain sent water skittering into the room. Mosquitoes followed. He slapped one dead, its body oozing someone else’s blood. Mr. Matobato was in hiding. He has been for a decade, ever since he confessed to his crimes and di-

vulged who ordered the bloodletting: Rodrigo Duterte, the mayor of Davao City, who later became president of the Philippines.

Mr. Matobato, now 65, says he killed more than 50 people for the man he called “Superman,” pulling in a salary from City Hall of a little more than \$100 a month and receiving envelopes of cash for successful hits. He rarely hid his identity as he kidnapped and killed, he said, because working for the mayor gave him impunity. Mr. Matobato knew that breaking the omertà of what came to be known as the Davao Death Squad made him a marked man. He was given sanctuary by priests and

Continued on Page A9



KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Enter the Congestion Zone

The toll program, the first of its kind in the U.S., costs up to \$9 in the heart of Manhattan. Page A19.

Midlife Women, Sexy? Pop Culture Catches Up.

By ALEXIS SOLOSKI  
“Babygirl,” the Nicole Kidman movie that opened on Christmas Day, starts with an orgasm. And it ends with one. Others are spread throughout. Kidman plays Romy, the poised, high-femme chief executive of a flourishing robotics company. Romy is married to Jacob (Antonio Banderas), a successful theater director. They have two teenage children, and Romy sometimes trades her pussy-bow blouses for an apron to

It Seems They Needed  
a Change in Narrator

whisk up wholesome family meals. So far, so having-it-all. But Romy is in the business of automation and her life, personal and professional, feels automated, too. Sessions of eye movement desensitization therapy and a passing reference to having grown up in a

cult hint at troubles beneath Romy’s glossy surfaces. That first orgasm? It’s fake. Then Romy meets Samuel (Harris Dickinson), a 20-something intern at her company. Tentatively, they begin an affair, with elements of power exchange. Soon Romy is on her stomach, on the floor of some dingy hotel room, growling like an animal, experiencing real pleasure. An erotic thriller and a fairy tale, “Babygirl” moves like a mor-

Continued on Page A22

If Plains Was His Home, Atlanta Was His Stage

By EMILY COCHRANE  
ATLANTA — The mythology of Jimmy Carter begins and ends in Plains, the small Georgia town that raised him and kept drawing him back. Yet roughly 150 miles away is Atlanta, a city just as essential to understanding the life of the 39th president. If Plains was his home, Georgia’s capital was his stage. If Plains reflected Mr. Carter’s small-town character, Atlanta fit his global ambitions.

Carter’s Power Center  
Mutually Benefited

While it was never a permanent home, Atlanta allowed him to develop policy priorities and kick off a national political career. Then, after leaving Washington, it gave him the space to burnish a humanitarian legacy, housing his efforts to promote equality, peace and democratic ideals.

Now, because Mr. Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, chose to place the Carter Center, their presidential library and the crown jewel of their post-presidential work, in the city, it is where hundreds of visitors will shuffle through the cold to pay their respects while he lies in repose through Tuesday. “It would have been inconceivable to put everything in Atlanta and to move to Atlanta, because that’s not where they’re from, that’s not who they are,” Jason

Continued on Page A15



NATIONAL A14-19, 22

New Orleans’s Uneasy Street

Bourbon revelry is the lifeblood of the city’s tourism. But after an attack, some locals want the party to stop. PAGE A14

Jan. 6 Rioters, 4 Years Later

Hundreds accused of nonviolent crimes in the attack have wrapped up their cases. Here’s where some are. PAGE A18

INTERNATIONAL A4-13

Left in the Cold in Moldova

A renegade region once boasted it would become a Russian-speaking Switzerland. Now it is struggling to stay warm without Russian gas. PAGE A6

Hailing a Cab in Hong Kong

A government push to modernize taxi services comes up against the antiquated and gruff habits of drivers. PAGE A4

OBITUARIES B5-6

An Iconoclastic Playwright

Richard Foreman, 87, founded a theater that put on many of his plays, like “My Head Was a Sledgehammer.” PAGE B6



ARTS C1-6

Making a Connection

The performer Alaska discusses performing in her Off Broadway musical about warring drag queens. PAGE C1

The Mysterious Donor

Aso O. Tavitian grew up poor but bequeathed a trove of art worth hundreds of millions to an art institute. PAGE C1

BUSINESS B1-4

A Tiny Taipei Rises in Arizona

A Taiwanese tech giant brought thousands of workers from Asia to the Phoenix suburbs for jobs at a new microchip factory that the Biden administration helped fund. PAGE B1

Airline’s Problems Mount

Jeju Air, South Korea’s leading low-cost carrier, was already burdened with debt and low share prices. Now it is facing public and government scrutiny after a crash that killed 179 people. PAGE B1

OPINION A20-21

James Carville

PAGE A21



SPORTS D1-8

The Strength of Self-Belief

Giannis Antetokounmpo’s faith in himself doesn’t just help the Milwaukee Bucks; it fueled his work to improve his game over the years. PAGE D1



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