

Chapter Forty

When I finished with breakfast the morning after my meeting with my new crew member, I dug out the number that Able Kane had given me. I punched in the digits and he answered on the second buzz. He must have had caller I.D. He said, “Good morning, Judge. Having fun yet?”

“Yeah, probably more than you. I need a sit down with you and Grant, the sooner the better.”

“What’s up?”

“I’ll tell you when I see you.”

“Can’t we do this on the phone? It’s hard to get Grant out of Dallas.”

“I’ll go there if necessary. I’m about ready to close the deal on our friend and I have some last minute stuff that has to be settled. I won’t go forward until we get together and discuss it.”

Kane sounded slightly peeved when he said, “Okay. I’ll get back to you as soon as I can.” He hung up.

While I was having my conversation with Kane, Bitsy had taken Said’s file out and had been going over it once more, looking for some small item she and I might have overlooked. She had almost closed the folder when she noticed an interesting tidbit about Said’s wife, Ghodsi, which we both had missed up until now. Mrs. Said was a naturalized American citizen who had emigrated to the U.S. in 1980. Her brother, Salim Jarsan, was a high official in the Institute for Political and International Studies in Tehran.

Bitsy said, pointing to the file, "Take a look at this, Duncan. I believe we may have a problem with Alfred Said's wife as well."

I read the section she had underlined. Bitsy said, "I think Ghodsi may be a major player in this business. I wouldn't be surprised if Mr. Said is the President of *Banco J. G. de Honduras, N.A.* because of her connections. I believe she may have gotten him the job. And if that's the case, if something...unfortunate...happened to her husband, she could step in and take over his position without missing a beat. It has also occurred to me that she is the only person besides her husband who has seen us all together. When he goes off to sail the bounding main and never returns, she'll be able to I.D. us."

I didn't respond immediately. This was a curve ball I wasn't prepared to hit. Finally, I said, "Look, Bitsy, we can't expect to do this on a risk-free basis. She may be able to I.D. us later, but for her it will be like trying to identify a couple of wraiths. And as far as her assuming the reins at the bank is concerned, I don't think that would ever happen. Remember, she would have to be approved by Muslim men. I don't think they would pass muster on her, not in a month of Islamic holy days. And anyway, if we do what I'm planning, there probably won't be any bank left for her to take over."

She said, "Well, maybe you're right. I'm getting into this thing with a vengeance, maybe too much so. The more I think about our friends that were blown all to hell in the Brown Center, the madder I get. So I figured, what the hell, why not do her as well."

I didn't say anything. Instead, I put my hand on her cheek. She placed her hand over mine. We sat that way for a long time. I was leaning in to kiss her (I love to do that, as you may have picked up) when the phone rang. It was Kane.

“Grant and I will be at your place about eleven tomorrow morning. He can only stay for two hours. I hope that’s enough time.”

“It’ll have to do. See you then.”

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