

Chapter Fifty-one

When I arrived, Kane and Grant were already hard at work, trying to prioritize the files.

Kane stood and shook my hand. “So, how did it go down there, Judge?”

“About the way I expected.” I gave him the details of the job. “And the capper was that when I forced him to tell me why he was doing what he was doing he said that in the final analysis, it was for the money. Thousands dead...for the damned money.” I forced the anger from my voice and asked Kane, “And now, how did the bank job go?”

He filled me in, omitting nothing. “I suppose I should have taken Maizie out as well, but to be honest, I didn’t have the stomach for it. I’m convinced Ghadir was in as deep as Alfred Said. He had to go.”

Grant waved me to take a seat. “Judge, you’ll never catch me second guessing either one of you. I might have done some things a bit differently, but I wasn’t there, was I? Right now we’ve got a lot to do and maybe not much time in which to do it. I understand that bringing you in on this alters our agreement to a large extent. I’m hoping you’ll assist in this investigation. If you do, then as of now I’ll consider you a volunteer, and no longer a conscript.”

“And that means exactly what?”

“That you’re free to go any time you wish.”

I stared at the table and the mound of files, rubbing the back of my neck with my hand. I looked Grant squarely in the eyes. At this point it seemed he was relying on my

patriotism. And I didn't think he was double dealing. I extended my hand. He took it and I said, "I'm in. Let's deal the cards."

He looked relieved as he began his instructions. "We are looking at each cell operation with three things in mind. First, what possible target might exist close to their setup. Second, since money is so important to eventual success, who is getting the most. And finally, do we have a line on any of the principal actors in the Bureau files. We are jotting down names that appear in these records. Tomorrow, I'll run them through the database at the Bureau. Here's a stack for you to work on."

I said, "Okay, but is it just going to be the three of us? How about calling in some help?"

Grant leaned back in his chair and clasped his hands behind his head. He stared at me for a long time before he said, with an almost sheepish shrug, "I'm afraid our organization is not quite the grandiose group I had hinted that it is. There's Les Bladen who really can't be here, and there are the Goebbels, whom you met. The Krauts are part-timers and I don't want them in on this. They're busy in Canada anyway. Then there is our financier, and me and Kane. That's about it."

I laughed out loud. "Hmm. Some big fucking cabal, Don." I asked seriously then, "Which brings up another question. This info is volatile as hell. Why don't we turn it over to the Bureau boys and let them pour on the manpower?"

"By the time we got through explaining how we came by all of this, most of the rats in these files would have slipped down the nearest hole. You can bet your ass that each of them has been notified that they may have been compromised. And anyway, I

really don't want to have to make any explanations to the brass at the Hoover Building. You know why, don't you."

"Yeah, you don't like the idea of spending time at Leavenworth any more than I do. And they would get their panties all twisted trying to work it by the book. Well, let's get to work."

I thought Grant's assessment of the data Kane had procured was on the mark. It was a treasure trove of information that could possibly set the American Islamic Jihadists back for months, maybe years. As we worked, we were sharing a road atlas. I made copious notes as I examined my stack of files. None of them jumped out at me as being a prime candidate. They either had no obvious targets, or were practically inactive. After a couple of hours had gone by, I was through with my first pass.

"Sorry, guys. These are probably real assholes, but it doesn't look to me as though they are about to pull another 9/11."

Grant said, "I may have one here. Let me see that map book for a minute."

He flipped it open to the North Carolina page. "Southport. Where in hell is Southport?"

He cross indexed the location and examined it closely. He made a sharp intake of breath as he said, "Oh, my God, it's about four miles south of a place designated as the Sunny Point Military Terminal. I'm not sure what that is, but it doesn't sound good."

I asked, "What else?"

"Well, for starters, Said has sent them nearly three hundred thousand dollars in four months. There are also four photocopies of encrypted messages in the jacket. I can't tell who sent them or to whom they went. But apparently someone at the bank wanted to

keep copies. One of them has a handwritten note on the bottom. It says. ‘up country demille hard copy first printing.’”

“I know that reference. *Up Country* is a Nelson DeMille book. A helluva good one, I might add.”

Grant said, “Okay, then these messages may be in a book code using *Up Country* as the key. Judge, do you still have your copy?”

“Yes, but it wouldn’t help. It’s the paperback.”

“First thing in the morning, we’ll hit the book stores and find the right edition. In the meantime, let’s see what we can find on the internet about the Sunny Point Military Terminal.”

Thirty seconds later Grant’s laptop had the story. He said, “Let me read it to you. *The Sunny Point facility is on a 16,000-acre, Army-owned site. The facility is the key ammunition shipping point on the Atlantic Coast for the Department of Defense. The Sunny Point installation, located along N.C. Highway 133, was built with a large undeveloped buffer zone and huge sand berms for safety. It’s the largest ammunition port in the nation, and the Army’s primary east coast deep-water port. Military Ocean Terminal (MOT), Sunny Point, North Carolina, is the Department of Defense’s key Atlantic Coast ammunition shipping point. It provides worldwide trans-shipment of DOD ammunition, explosives, and other dangerous cargo. Sunny Point is the military ocean terminal in North Carolina where munitions are brought in by truck or train and loaded aboard ships bound for Europe.*

Kane said, “That’s it. But wouldn’t it take a small army to storm that place?”

I said, “It would appear so. But maybe they have exactly that - - a small army.”

We each sat quietly, waiting for a brainstorm to hit. It didn't. Finally, Grant said, "I'm going to call the pentagon and tell them we've picked up some chatter that indicates there might be an attack at Sunny Point. I'll recommend they go on alert status. If they want details, I'll tell them I'll have to get back to them. They are used to a certain degree of obfuscation by Bureau people. In the meantime, let's get some shuteye."

I nodded in agreement. I said to Kane, "In the a.m., I'll hit Barnes and Noble. You check out Borders"

Kane looked at Grant. "Can I put the book on my expense account?" Before Don could jump down his throat, Able laughed quite loudly. So did I. Then so did Grant. We hooted until tears came to our eyes. I remembered the last time I had laughed like that. It was somewhere in the la Drang Valley. My squad was laughing then because incredibly we were still, by God, alive.

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